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DASSH is the UK Data Archive Centre (DAC) for marine biodiversity data. Established in 2005, and hosted by the Marine Biological Association of The United Kingdom (MBA), DASSH is a national hub for accessing, safeguarding, managing, and disseminating historical, current and future datasets. Accredited by the Marine and Environmental Data and Information Network (MEDIN), DASSH also acts as a digital repository for biodiversity images and video, as well as providing tools, resources and expertise to improve UK marine data management.

Data Holdings

Over 2 million records of marine benthic and pelagic survey data including:

- Species, habitats and biotopes lists
- Species and habitat/biotope distribution maps
- Figures, images, videos and associated information resources

DASSH hosts over 2500 metadata records created using UK and international standards. We provide data to support legislative requirements including INSPIRE, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).

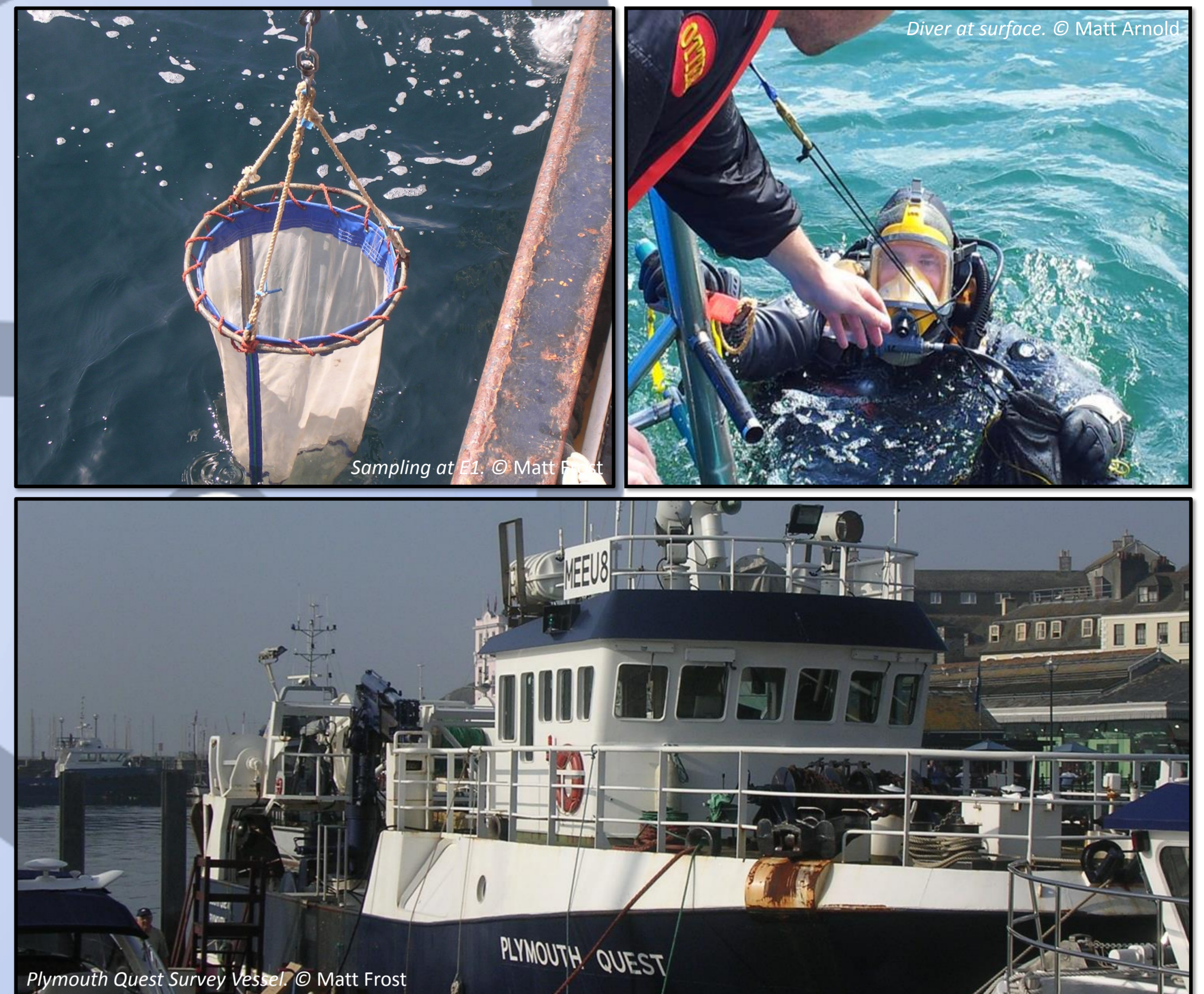
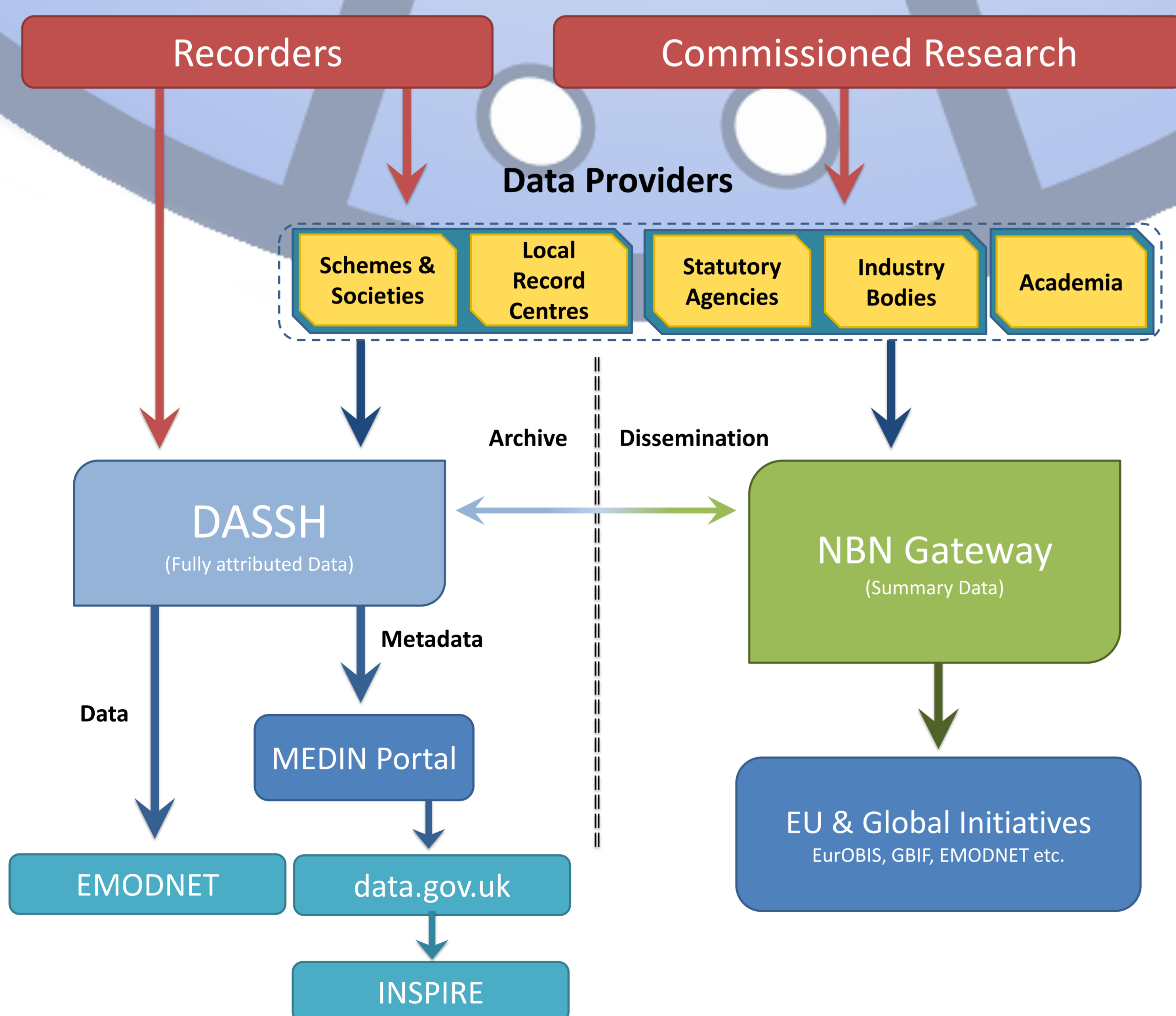


Figure 1. Data stored in DASSH comes from a variety of sources.



Confidential Data

When our contributors archive their data in DASSH they sometimes place restrictions on its use. This is especially so when the data relates to unpublished work or protected species. In these scenarios it is imperative that DASSH has the ability to keep sensitive data restricted.

The DASSH Database Management System (DDMS) allows us to address the key question relating to confidential data 'How can I be sure my data are safe?'

The DDMS allows us to track all the information associated with a particular asset, including any restrictions on use. It also allows us to update restrictions on use should the restrictions only apply for a fixed period of time. This ensures that confidential data are kept confidential.

DASSH also offer data owners the option to disseminate their data at a coarser resolution than originally recorded. This is a common middle-ground when data are required to be made public but contain sensitive information, e.g. the locations of protected species. Reducing taxonomic resolution, temporal resolution and spatial resolution are the most common ways of obfuscating data.

How to submit data and metadata

Contact DASSH via email dassh.enquiries@mba.ac.uk. You can submit metadata using the DASSH online tool www.dassh.ac.uk/medin_metadata, by using Metadata Maestro (SeaZone) to produce metadata offline, or by sending xml directly to DASSH. Marine life ad hoc sightings can be submitted through our Sealife Survey Recording Scheme at www.mba.ac.uk/recording.

How to access data

Metadata and data holdings can be searched online via the MEDIN Discovery Portal portal.oceannet.org. Data downloadable directly through the MEDIN portal or data providers, the Database of Species and Habitats (DBOSSH) search and download service, and via the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) gateway, GBIF or EurOBIS.