ETNewsletter

ISSUE 02, 2025-07-01

ETN IN NUMBERS

01

ETNews

ETN Data Policy gets a glow up

The ETN Data Policy has just been updated, with improved definitions, and clarity on data sharing and responsibilities. Check it out here.

Not sure how to Cite ETN?

The ETN Citation Guidelines are now available on the website.

Spatial coverage of Open Protocol deployments can now be viewed

The ETN Data Platform (https://www.lifewatch.be/etn/) map now shows which deployments listen for Open Protocol all around Europe! **If your receivers listens to OP, be sure to add OPi or OPs to the protocol combination of your next deployments!** And label your OP-enabled receivers (in the field OP_enabled in the receiver metadata).

02

GIANT SKATES TAGGED IN IRELAND

The flapper skate (*Dipturus intermedius*) is a slow-growing, large-bodied, Critically Endangered species with a small, fragmented range. In Ireland, several research institutes are acoustically tagging flapper skate at their remaining hotspots. Using long-life acoustic tags, research teams are studying the species' residency, connectivity, and dispersal. Working together, and with coastal communities, researchers aim to understand the species' movement ecology across its range and to identify the best steps to conserving this iconic species. Tracking work is being conducted by the University College Cork and MaREI Centre under the **CETUS and Flapper Skate Projects** focused on the south coast of Ireland, and along the southwest and northwest coasts by the Marine Institute (supported by Queen's University Belfast, and the SeaMonitor and MOSAIC projects).

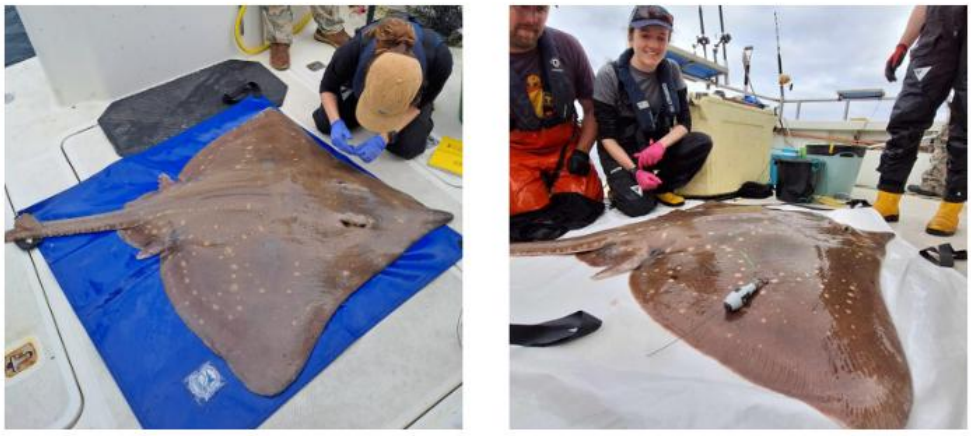

Image: The CETUS Project ©. Left: Dr Danielle Orrell of the CETUS project samples a female flapper skate (Dipturus intermedius) caught off Co. Cork Ireland. Right: A female flapper skate (Dipturus intermedius) satellite and acoustic tagged in Co. Cork Ireland. All work conducted under licence AE19130/P189.

Check out other **cool projects** happening in Europe in our dataset catalogue.

03 TRACKING FOR CONSERVATION

The BELAS and MOVE are two complementary projects that aim to provide information in support of fish conservation.

MOVE aims to understand habitat connectivity and movement corridors while BELAS investigates behavioural variation in coastal elasmobranch species at the spatial-social interface. Both projects use acoustic telemetry to track individuals of several fish species.

		BELAS	MOVE
Funding		**Spanish National Research Agency**	**EU Biodiversa+**
Timeline		2023 - 2026	2023 - 2027
Species	Atlantic cod		X
	European seabass		X
	Undulate skate	X	X
	Thornback ray	X	X
	Spotted catshark	X	X
	Pollack		X
	Octopus		X
	Red porgy		X
	White seabream		X
	Eagle ray	X	
	Marbled electric ray	X	
	Blonde skate	X	
	Spotted skate	X	
Geographic Range		Ria de Vigo, Galicia (Spain)	Spain, Portugal, France, Norway

Capturing all these different species is quite some work and different methods are used to bring up individuals in the best state possible. In Galicia, most of the tagged individuals were caught while diving and... by hand! Even two electric rays that made Kenn and Iñigo feel the energy underwater.

The first results from both BELAS and MOVE indicate that some species move far more than we believed! In the case of eagle rays, we are observing remarkable movement differences between newborns and adults. In Norway, we see that cod and pollack use both shallow and deeper areas and make trips down to more than 120m.

04 VUE bug discovered

A bug in the VUE software was recently discovered, affecting tag IDs

- When downloading detection data as .csv in Innovasea's VUE software, the tag serial number will become 'tag serial number +1' (e.g. 1269518 becomes 1269519)
- The tag serial numbers are correct in the .vrl file uploaded to ETN, so detection data accessed via the ETN R package is correct
- Innovasea recommends using Fathom to offload data

It has not been checked if this also happens with non-OP-IDs, so we'd love to hear from the people who use non-OP tags! (email us at info@europeantrackingnetwork.org)

top: .csv detection table downloaded from VUE

bottom: detection data accessed via the etn R package

25/03/2025 21:40	VR2W-122322	OPI-2481	s-2a	51.02032	3.96965
25/03/2025 21:42	VR2W-122322	OPI-2481	s-2a	51.02032	3.96965
25/03/2025 21:43	VR2W-122322	OPI-2481	s-2a	51.02032	3.96965
25/03/2025 21:44	VR2W-122322	OPI-2481	s-2a	51.02032	3.96965
25/03/2025 21:45	VR2W-122322	OPI-2481	s-2a	51.02032	3.96965

2025-03-25 21:40:32	09R2	OPI-2480	VR2W-122322	s-2a
2025-03-25 21:42:13	09R2	OPI-2480	VR2W-122322	s-2a
2025-03-25 21:43:32	09R2	OPI-2480	VR2W-122322	s-2a
2025-03-25 21:44:41	09R2	OPI-2480	VR2W-122322	s-2a
2025-03-25 21:45:52	09R2	OPI-2480	VR2W-122322	s-2a

05

REAL-TIME DETECTION IN ACTION

As part of a collaborative initiative within ETN's NorTrack project, the Loughs Agency will soon pilot a cutting-edge real-time fish detection system in one of its marine and freshwater catchments.

This system represents a leap forward in aquatic monitoring, enabling near-instant detection of tagged animals and providing researchers and managers with immediate data for decision-making. For ETN members, this is an exciting step toward enhancing network compatibility, streamlining data collection, and demonstrating the transformative potential of real-time technology in aquatic conservation and management.

Real-time detection systems are already proving their value globally. In the US and Australia, they are being used to warn swimmers and surfers of nearby white sharks, enhancing public safety through automated alerts. In Denmark, DTU has been leveraging this technology to track fine-scale interactions between predators and prey—specifically perch and pike—in a freshwater lake, offering rich behavioural insights. The pilot study in Ireland will run until December 2026 and culminate in a feasibility report assessing its operational potential and wider applicability across Europe. Watch this space! If you would like more information please contact Ross McGill.

06

OTN LAUNCHES SURVEY

The Ocean Tracking Network's International Data Management Committee has launched a survey to better understand researcher perspectives on data sharing and open-access telemetry data.

Help us help you by filling out the survey!

OCEAN TRACKING NETWORK

The Ocean Tracking Network's International Data Management Committee is conducting a short **anonymous survey** to gather global perspectives on researcher perceptions and barriers to **data sharing** and **open-access data**. This online survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Interested participants are asked to only complete the survey once.

07

KEEP AN EYE OUT - UPCOMING EVENTS

European Marine Biology Symposium

- The 58th EMBS is happening 6-9 July 2025 in Bodø, Norway. Find out more here.

Living Data 2025

- The Living Data conference is happening 21-24 October 2025 in Bogotá, Colombia. Find out more here.

European Elasmobranch Association 2025

- The EEA 2025 conference is happening 29-31 October 2025 in Rotterdam, Netherlands. Find out more here.

08

ETNmerch

ETN T-Shirts (M, L, XL) available

For those who have missed the two pre-order periods, we have ordered a small stock of around 20 shirts, available for purchase in sizes M, L and XL!

Get yours today - https://shop.vliz.be/collections/european-tracking-network.

All profits go towards travel grants for Early Career Researchers!

09

KEEP IN TOUCH

Stay updated; follow us everywhere!