

Report of Group 4

ASFA INPUT CENTRES AND THEIR ROLE IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE AQUATIC SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE BASE

By

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The discussion concentrated mainly on Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) product development.

The problem of tracing grey literature through commercial databases was raised. ASFA is one of the main tools for tracing grey literature, especially because addresses and e-mail addresses of authors are usually included in records. Grey literature is monitored by both the ASFA input centres and by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts who also monitor web sites relevant to ASFA's scope. One of the issues that arose in the course of the discussion was whether the increasing amount of grey literature published on-line would increase pressure on CSA's web site monitoring service.

Input centres are able to provide feedback for product development through the national partners. For example input centres can suggest changes to the thesaurus or geographic authority list thus improving the database. However, this type of change can take time to be effected. Feedback concerning errors in the database can often be corrected more quickly by being passed from the partner to the publisher or direct to the CSA especially with the introduction of a user feedback button on the ASFA IDS service.

The group also discussed the practicalities of introducing multi-lingual searching to benefit non-English speakers. Whilst it is easy to translate the search screens into other languages, the database currently remains in English.