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The Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies: Data Files

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Description: Digital files collected from 1975-1977 on the mid-Atlantic continental shelf comprising baseline studies prior to offshore oil exploration and leasing. Parameters include benthic fauna, bulk sediment properties, hydrocarbon analysis, plankton and trace metals. This project was funded by the Bureau of Land Management, United States Department of Interior and often referred to as the BLM Project.

Data dictionaries are included from two sources. The first source is the VIMS data management report for the BLM project, which is unpublished:

"A Data Management Plan for the Second Year Benchmark Studies for the Middle Atlantic Region", Contract AA550-CT6-62 Between the Bureau of Land Management United States Department of Interior.

The second source are forms used to transfer data files to BLM during the course of the project and were found in the archived papers of Dr. Gerald L. Engel, the data manager for the project and Director of VIMS Computer Center at the time.

It was found that the Engel papers were more accurate with respect to the actual field names and formats, so these were used for writing scripts to read the data files that are provided as examples for data processing.

File Descriptions:

File Name	Description
Readme.txt	Data processing and dataset descriptions
Folder names:	**Folders are organized by File Format:**
1. Physics and Chemistry	Physics and Chemistry file folder
2. Benthic fauna	Benthic file folder
3. Sediment properties	Sediment file folder
4. Hydrocarbon	Hydrocarbon file folder
5. Trace Metals	Trace Metals file folder
6. Bacteriology	Bacteriology file folder
7. Zooplankton	Zooplankton file folder
8. Tar Balls	Tar Balls file folder (no files, just data dictionary)

9. Histopathology	Histopathology file folder
10. Original BLM tape files	Original files as read from tape folders and unprocessed.
Useful SAS programs and scripts included:	**Description**
Export_BLM05B_P&C.sas	SAS script to export Physics & Chemistry data records to a .csv file
Export_BLM05B_BEN.sas	SAS script to export Benthic fauna data records to a .csv file
Export_BLM05B_|SED.sas	SAS script to export Sediment analysis data records to a .csv file
Export_BLM05B_TRM.sas	SAS script to export Trace Metal data records to a .csv file
taxonomic_codes_wass_partial.csv	A partial list of taxonomic codes used to identify biota in the BLM data files.

Abstract:
During the oil embargo in the mid-1970's, the U.S. Government proposed exploring the mid-Atlantic continental shelf for oil leasing to increase production. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science was contracted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to conduct baseline surveys of the biological, geological, chemical, and physical nature of the environment being considered for lease, and its sensitivity to prolonged exposure to contaminants derived from development activities. Surveys were conducted off the coast, from Virginia to New Jersey, four times a year (summer, fall, spring, winter) for two years beginning summer of 1975 through spring of 1977, resulting in eight quarterly surveys in total. Digital files containing the data of the various studies for each cruise are contained herein.

Data Access:
https://doi.org/10.25773/8PR0-PP32

Funding:
Chemical and Biological Benchmark Studies conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science Under Contract No.AA550-CT6-62 With the Bureau of Land Management United States Department of Interior.

Keywords: Continental shelf, Atlantic Coast (U.S.), Marine biology -- Atlantic Coast (U.S.); Geology -- Atlantic Coast (U.S.); Benchmark Studies, Benthic Studies, Hydrocarbons, Sediments, Trace Metals,

Associated Publications:

Final Report:

Burreson, E. M., & Knebel, H. J. (1979) Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies Volume 1: Executive Summary. Special Reports in Applied Marine Science and Ocean Engineering (SRAMSOE) No. 204. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.21220/V59743

Burreson, E. M., Boesch, D. F., & Laird, B. L. (1979) Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies Volume II-A. Chemical and Biological Benchmark Studies. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/m2-sabh-s746

Burreson, E. M., Boesch, D. F., & Laird, B. L. (1979) Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies Volume II-B: Chemical and Biological Benchmark Studies. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.25773/fasq-3a30

Burreson, E. M., Boesch, D. F., & Laird, B. L. (1979) Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies Volume II-C: Chemical and Biological Benchmark Studies. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.25773/w714-wy66

Burreson, E. M., Boesch, D. F., & Laird, B. L. (1979) Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies Volume II-D: Chemical and Biological Benchmark Studies. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.21220/m2-kgat-xa34

Knebel, H. J., & et al. (1979) Middle Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Studies Volume III: Geologic Studies. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://scholarworks.wm.edu/reports/2472

Data Management Report and Data File Formats:

A Data Management Plan for the Second Year Benchmark Studies for the Middle Atlantic Region, Contract AA550-CT6-62 Between the Bureau of Land Management United States Department of Interior.

Taxonomic Species codes:

Schwarz, R. C., Wass, M. L., & Boesch, D. F. (1972) A taxonomic code for the biota of the Chesapeake Bay. Special scientific report (Virginia Institute of Marine Science) ; no. 62. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.21220/V57F1D

Wass, M. L., & Boesch, D. F. (1974) Addendum Number 1 to Special Scientific Report No. 62 of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.21220/V57F1D [supplemental file]

Other Related Species Taxonomy and Taxonomic Codes:

Wass, M. L. (1972) A check list of the biota of lower Chesapeake Bay : with inclusions from the upper bay and the Virginian Sea. Special scientific report (Virginia Institute of Marine Science) ; no. 65. Virginia Institute of Marine Science, William & Mary. https://doi.org/10.21220/V53N0V

Benthos:
Gerlach, S. A. and F. Riemann. 1973. The Bremerhaven checklist of aquatic nematodes. excluding the Dorylaimida. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Meeresforschung in Bremerhaven Supplementband, 4, pp. 1-736
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