



SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

Project Case Study: Collaborative Oceanography and Monitoring for Protected Areas and Species (COMPASS)

Automated instrumentation allows COMPASS science to continue

THEME:

Environment: Manage Marine Protected Areas & Species

FUNDING (ERDF+MATCH:

€6,289,181.25

MATCH FUNDING:

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs & The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

LEAD PARTNER:

The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Marine Scotland Science, Marine Institute, Scottish Association for Marine Science, Inland Fisheries Ireland

Start Date: 01/01/2017

End Date: 30/09/2022



compass-oceanscience.eu/



@Compass_MPA



Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

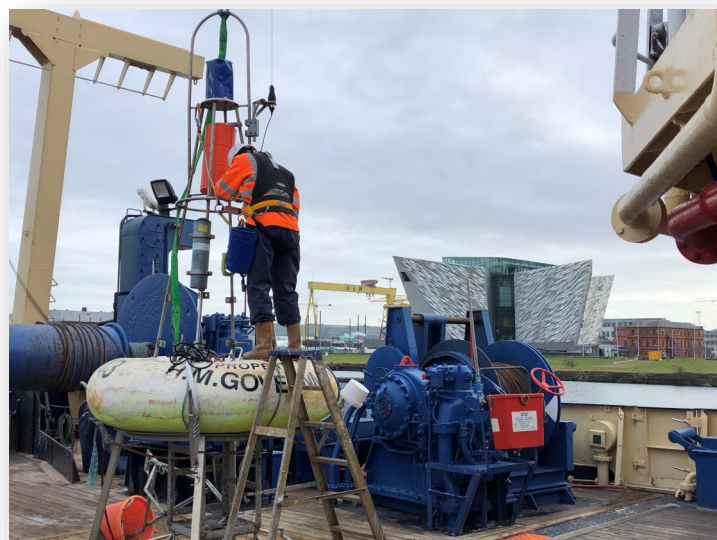


[COMPASS Marine Science Project](#)

The impact of lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic has been felt by the COMPASS project, which alongside the office and laboratory restrictions saw tagging, routine environmental sampling, and work on research vessels restricted or paused. The project has, however, shown much resilience during this challenging period by spending time on data analysis and reporting, and also on planning and preparing for COVID-safe operational activity.

Thankfully, automated instruments including the acoustic receivers to collect data on whale and dolphin activity, and estuarine and coastal receivers collecting data on salmon and trout movements continued to collect data in the rivers and coastal waters. As operations have re-started, the researchers across the partner institutes have been recovering instruments which will continue to address questions in support of our Marine Protected Areas and Species.

The oceanographic moorings have been serviced and maintained by both the AFBI and MSS research vessels (as well as other charter vessels), and the estuarine and coastal acoustic receivers are being turned around as the tagging of fish resumes. One of the outputs of COMPASS is to implement telemetered data systems so that data is sent automatically from the network of buoys, and the value of automated data flow has been highlighted by the pandemic. The Data Management teams at partner institutes have played a key role in driving and co-ordinating this automation, and this network is being supported by Scottish (SAMS/MSS), Northern Irish (AFBI) and Irish (MI & IFI) partners, who have been maintaining operations to ensure, equipment is set-up, maintenance is undertaken and data is collected, stored and shared.



Maintaining an oceanographic monitoring buoy on board the RV *Corystes* docked at Belfast harbour.