

Title:	The MESH Original Habitat Data Exchange Format (DEF)
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Summary:	The MESH Original Habitat Data Exchange Format (DEF) describes the format required for habitat that are supplied to the MESH partnership which have not been translated to EUNIS habitat types. Specifically it relates to fields in the attribute tables of GIS vector files.
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Related information:	MESH online metadata catalogue: www.searchmesh.net/metadata

MESH Original Habitat Data Exchange Format

The MESH webGIS shows habitat maps in their original classification scheme where it is not appropriate to translate them to the EUNIS classifications scheme. The MESH Original Habitat DEF defines the fields that must be present in the attribute table of an original habitat map before translation if it is provided to the MESH Partnership. Original habitat maps may include shapefiles containing physical descriptions of the seabed (i.e. sediment maps without any biological information). Other datasets without biological information should be supplied in the Physical DEF.

Data files must be provided as ESRI Shapefiles using geographic coordinates (lat/long) and the WGS84 datum. Use the sequence of attributes as specified below.

MESH Original Habitat DEF		
Field name	Data type (length)	Description
<i>FID</i>	Number	Feature ID. Internally generated identification number for each polygon (not visible if .dbf file is opened using MS Excel).
<i>Shape</i>	Text (8)	Internally generated text, indicating whether the feature is a polygon, point or line (not visible if .dbf file is opened using MS Excel). This will be 'POLYGON' in the Original Habitat DEF.
<i>POLYGON</i>	Long integer (Precision 8)	Identification number for each polygon which must be manually created as ascending integers 1,2,3... etc. Do not use the value 0, as this can cause errors on the MESH webGIS. This label for each polygon is necessary to identify the original polygon because the <i>FID</i> field may change during the processing of datasets.
<i>GUI</i>	Text (8)	Globally unique identifier (GUI) of the habitat map. Consists of 2 letter country code (which corresponds to ISO3166-1) plus 6 digits. For example, a dataset from the United Kingdom would be written GB000005. Each GUI must correspond to a record in the metadata catalogue . A metadata template can be downloaded from the MESH website, www.searchmesh.net .
<i>ORIG_HAB</i>	Text (255)	The information identifying the habitat type present in a polygon, either a code or text (the description of the habitat).

Example Original Habitat Data Exchange Format

The attribute table below shows some example data in its original format, **before conversion** to the MESH Original Habitat DEF.

FID	Shape	BIOTOPE	SUBSTRATUM	COMPLEX	LIFE_FORM
0	Polygon	Ldig.Ldig	Bedrock	Kelp & red seaweeds	Kelp
1	Polygon	Fser.Fser	Bedrock	Barnacle or fucoids	Fucoids
2	Polygon	BarSh	Cobbles	Shingle (pebble) & gravel	Shingle
3	Polygon	Asc.Asc	Bedrock	Dense fucoids	Fucoids
4	Polygon	Asc.Asc	Bedrock	Dense fucoids	Fucoids
5	Polygon	Pel/Fspi	Bedrock	Dense fucoids	Fucoids
6	Polygon	Asc.Asc	Bedrock	Dense fucoids	Fucoids
7	Polygon	BarSh	Cobbles	Shingle (pebble) & gravel	Shingle
8	Polygon	YG/Ver	Bedrock	Lichens or algal crusts	Lichens and algae
9	Polygon	Him	Bedrock	Robust fucoids or red seaweeds	Algal turf
10	Polygon	BPat.Fvesl	Bedrock	Mytilus (mussels) and barnacles	Barnacle & fucoid mosaics

The attribute table below shows the same data **after conversion** to the MESH Original Habitat DEF. Note that the ORIG_HAB field is equivalent to the BIOTOPE field in the original format because this field provides the most detailed habitat information in the original attribute table.

FID	Shape	POLYGON	GUI	ORIG_HAB
0	Polygon	1	GB000253	Ldig.Ldig
1	Polygon	2	GB000253	Fser.Fser
2	Polygon	3	GB000253	BarSh
3	Polygon	4	GB000253	Asc.Asc
4	Polygon	5	GB000253	Asc.Asc
5	Polygon	6	GB000253	Pel/Fspi
6	Polygon	7	GB000253	Asc.Asc
7	Polygon	8	GB000253	BarSh
8	Polygon	9	GB000253	YG/Ver
9	Polygon	10	GB000253	Him
10	Polygon	11	GB000253	BPat.Fvesl