



Electronic Logbook Solutions

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Introduction of Electronic Logbooks to Fishery Management: Has it been a success?

Background

Since 2003, the EU has initiated a series of technical and legislative activities with the aim of modernising catch and effort reporting techniques and credibility. Different nations have adopted different development and deployment models for electronic logbooks. In some cases, authorities assume full responsibility for development; in others the commercial tender, winner takes all, models were implemented; whilst a few nations let the free market compete for the heart and the pocket of fishers. It seems that in most cases the free market model seems to yield the best results and more and more nations are choosing this option.

• Olrac Installations

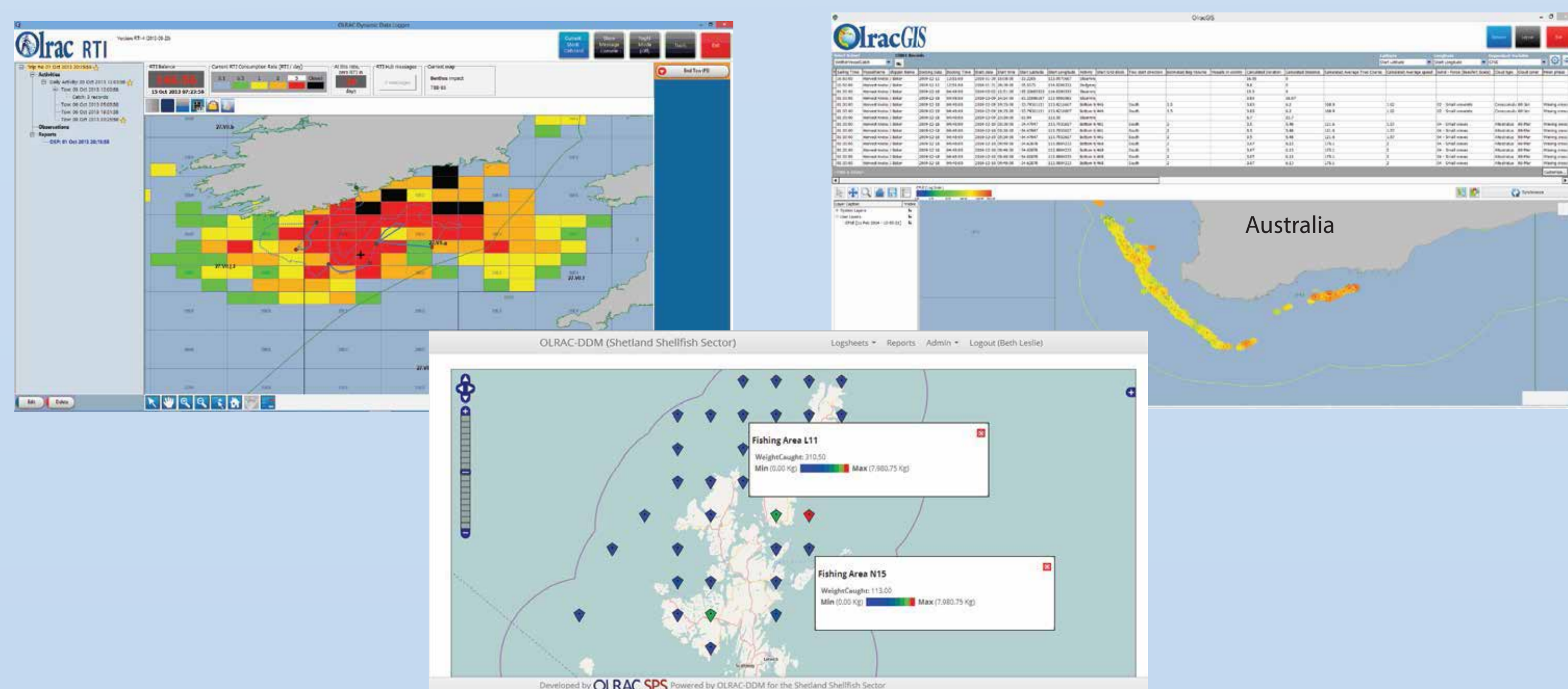


The Olrac Software

OLRAC SPS is a commercial vendor that developed a compliance fishery electronic logbook, named Olrac Electronic Logbook Solution (Olrac ELS) for the EU and the international market.

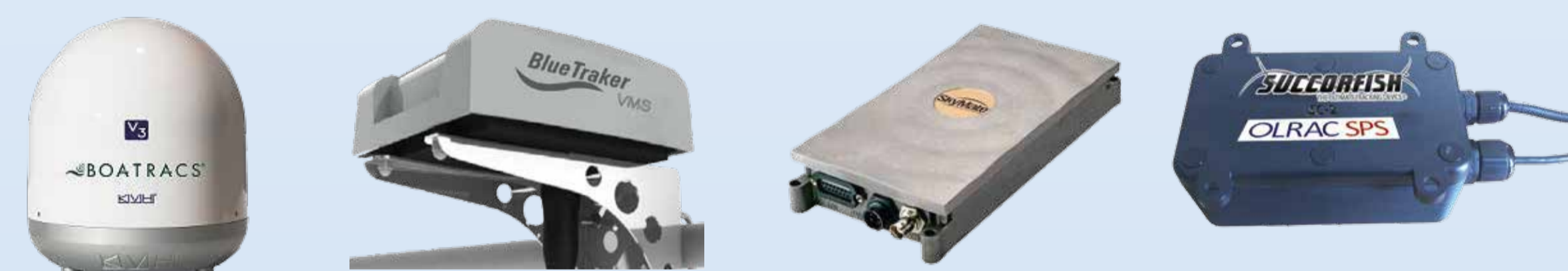
Olrac ELS is composed of two components:

- A vessel unit named Olrac Dynamic Data Logger (Olrac DDL) which provides a complete on-board data management solution. It is capable of collecting, reporting, plotting, mapping and analysing all data collected by the fisher. It also tracks vessel movements and makes use of the vessel VMS or other satellite or cellular communication systems to transmit data and reports during fishing operations
- A shore unit named Olrac Dynamic Data Manager (Olrac DDM) which is a web based, data and report management system that can be used with Olrac DDL and other third party eLog solutions.



V-elog Solution

OLRAC SPS teamed up with a number of major VMS providers in order to provide an integrated eLog-VMS solution.



Outcome

During the past 5 years the Olrac eLog solution was deployed on hundreds of vessels in Europe and elsewhere (mainly the USA, Australia and South Africa).

From our experience there are a number of reasons for the slow and limited uptake of eLog in many nations and fisheries.

These are:

1. Lack of unified data recording and reporting standards
2. Many inconsistencies and ambiguities in the published XML schemas (XSD)
3. Lack of clear guidelines regarding the financial responsibility for development, deployment and support of eLog
4. Level of hostility by many fishers which see eLog as just another compliance burden on their operation
5. Many technical issues, most associated with poor transmission facilities on-board vessels and poor computing power (cheap and/or old PCs)

The Way Forward

In most countries it seems that compliance authorities will continue to be the ultimate body responsible for the deployment of eLog in Europe (and other countries). However the development of the actual technology to be used and the financial responsibility to cover it is likely to shift more and more toward the commercial sector (vendors and fishers).