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Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

2018 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference
(Seattle, Wash.)

Apr 4th, 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Strait of Georgia Data Centre

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Curran, Terry; Pearsall, Isobel; and Skinner, Benjamin, "Strait of Georgia Data Centre" (2018). *Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference*. 595.

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Three major themes arose from the panel discussion on data collation and management:

- a federated model of data centres was key,
- feedback and client outreach requires active consideration, and
- issues in metadata and data management need addressing.

The international standards governing the design of data centres encourages data sharing so that data is not in silos or duplicated. Data centres require considerable effort to establish and maintain. Both commercial versus open source solutions that conform to the international standards exist, and the choice is not cost but consideration of the specific situation.

With regards to a data centre, it is important to have a clear and preferably quantified understanding of the clients. After the data centre is in operation, monitoring of usage is important to maintain focus upon the client needs. Outreach regarding data centre availability needs to be constantly addressed. An emerging problem is how to address discoverability of complex data. Story maps are seen as one way to place data in context. Oftentimes, “there is not an app for that” and programming will be required.

In terms of data centre content, data quality control was viewed as very important. It was noted that often data centres are held to the highest quality standard by users. To this end, version control (lineage, the documenting of all data manipulation steps) was seen as crucial to inspire user trust. Feature standardization was seen as assisting data sharing – the need for more marine Feature Catalogues. Within a data centre there will always be a resource conflict between data type breadth and data depth, and there is a need for focus and specialization. Resources need to be anticipated for the backup and management of data centre content. Cross-border and cross-discipline data sharing is sometimes an issue.