

CMECS Change Proposal Submission Field Definitions and Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in improving the Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard (CMECS). The CMECS Implementation Group (IG) values suggestions from the user community to revise, update and improve the Standard.

If you would like to suggest improvements to CMECS, please email a proposal to the CMECS IG at ocm.cmec-update@noaa.gov, and include the information requested below.

Any supporting documents, files, or maps can be submitted as attachments to your email.

Contact and Background Information

- The proposer's name and preferred email address, so that the IG can communicate with the proposer about the submission if necessary.
- The name of the organization, if any, that the proposer is affiliated with.
- If the proposal includes multiple authors, please provide their names and affiliations. Their contact information is not necessary, as the primary proposer will receive communications about the proposals.

Proposal Details: **Provide a complete description of the change to be made.** Please include:

- The name of the primary setting or component:
 - Aquatic Setting or Biogeographic Setting (if applicable)
 - Water Column, Geoform, Substrate, or Biotic Component. Changes that involve more than one component should be extremely rare. Consider first whether you should be entering two separate proposals for the change you are suggesting.
 - The unit or units involved in the change
- The type of change being proposed, which should fit into one of the following categories:
 - *Units and Definitions*, for changes to specific units in the Standard. This might include changes to names, circumscriptions, definitions, thresholds, hierarchical placement/structure, etc.
 - *CMECS Document Supporting Text*, for changes to any of the text in the CMECS document that is **not** part of a unit definition. This may include suggestions to changes to introductory chapter text, notes on application of the standard, tables and figures that are not part of unit definitions, etc.
 - *Complex changes*, for those that involve multiple units or major changes to hierarchy approach.
- If you are proposing a "CMECS Document Supporting Text" change, please provide the following information by referring to the Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard (FGDC-STD-018-2012, Federal Geographic Data Committee. 2012.) document
(https://www.fgdc.gov/standards/projects/cmecs-folder/CMECS_Version_06-2012_FINAL.pdf)

- the Section Number from the Table of Contents of the CMECS document that identifies the location of the text that you are suggesting be revised.
- the page, paragraph, line, or figure/table number from the Table of Contents that identifies the location of the text/figure/table that you are suggesting be revised.
- the current text in the Standard that will be deleted or replaced and provide exact revised text, images, and other graphics to be inserted into the Standard document if the proposed revision is accepted. Include new scales and cutoffs, as appropriate; follow format and style of existing CMECS text and unit definitions.

Justification of Proposed Change. Provide an explanation of why the Standard needs to be changed.

- Justifications for editorial changes may be brief and straightforward. Errors in spelling or grammar may not need justification beyond “erroneous.” Corrections of technical inaccuracies or omissions require explanation. Include relevant literature citations as appropriate.
- Justifications for changes to unit definitions and hierarchy must meet a higher standard and explain why CMECS does not meet existing classification needs and how the proposed change resolves these needs, using field-based or other evidence, as appropriate.
- The justification should document how new concepts or units differ from similar existing CMECS concepts or units and may also address why the proposed approach to change is preferable to other solutions that may exist.
- New or redefined units need to be repeatable over time and space and must be mutually exclusive of other units.
- Proposers should explain how a new unit fits into existing CMECS hierarchies.
- Justifications for changes to units also should include descriptions and/or metrics that distinguish the new or changed unit from other similar units. All units must be unique.
- The justification should review anticipated effects (positive and negative) of adopting the proposed revision.

Geographic Range of Proposed Change. Describe the geographic range of the new concept or unit and how extensively the change would apply.

- Indicate whether the proposed change is being suggested for the unit across its entire distribution or for a subset based on local or regional variation.
- Use specific geographic range descriptors to the extent possible. Example: “This change would split the range of this type resulting in one type that occurs in the North Atlantic and another that is primarily South Atlantic.”
- Supporting maps may be submitted along with your proposal.