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As the EU's virtual research environment project BlueBRIDGE enters its final year, the infrastructure has already been widely used by ICES to train a number of students in a variety of scientific topics.

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Published: 29 January 2018

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Launched in 2015, the BlueBRIDGE project (<https://www.bluebridge-vres.eu/>) is funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and aims to increase our capacity to understand resources exploration, environmental degradation, and ecosystem management.

Innovative web-based platforms known as virtual research environments (VREs) are the means through which BlueBRIDGE seeks to achieve this. Such environments are being developed for data storage through which various information products such as indicators and reports can be generated.

ICES part in the project falls under the BlueSKILLS work package, which encompasses the training element. Fourteen training courses (</news-and-events/Training/Pages/default.aspx>) involving VREs have already been run by ICES over the last two years, covering a range of subjects from management strategy evaluation (MSE) to broadband/wideband technologies.

Over this time, more than 300 students have become familiar with VREs made available by BlueBRIDGE. Often these have been made available to participants prior to the courses – as in the case of the MSY proxy course (</news-and-events/Training/Pages/Methods-for-setting-proxy-MSY-reference-points-for-stocks-in-categories-3-and-4.aspx>), where method code, data format, and example output files were provided for use with length-based stock assessment methods.

VREs will continue to be a feature of training courses in 2018 (</news-and-events/Training/Pages/default.aspx>).

*The final BlueBRIDGE conference (<http://www.bluebridge-vres.eu/events/supporting-blue-growth-innovative-applications-based-eu-e-infrastructures-14-15-february-2018>) will be held 14-15 February in Brussels*



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