

# Developing the NERC Data Policy

Benefits to NERC of a data  
management policy.

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# NERC Data Policy

- NERC.
- Drivers.
- Policy – history, elements, obligations & infrastructure.
- Benefits and lessons learned.

# Natural Environment Research Council



- Science budget c.£370M
- Mission – research, survey & monitoring



# Why Data Management?

- NERC **must** have data available to support its mission.
- Many environmental data irreplaceable.
- Supports science base sustainability.
- In short - NERC's data holdings are one of NERC's core assets.

# Other Drivers

- RCUK Position Statement on Access to Research Outputs.
- OECD Principles.
- Science base sustainability and exploitation.
- Good scientific practice.
- But, must reflect the scientific need.

# NERC Data Policy - Background

- Policy and guidance as a handbook.
  - Version 1, 1996; Version 2, 1999.
  - *Version 3, 2006* – in development.
- Brought together and formalised good practice already within NERC.
- Covers life-cycle of data from collection and exploitation to disposal.

# NERC Data Policy – Elements

- Plan data management before doing the science.
  - The bigger the project the more this must be demonstrated.
- Data collected under NERC funding must be offered to NERC at end of project.
- PIs allowed a reasonable time for first use.
- NERC will licence and charge for data depending on use.
- Support for *bona fide* academic and public good use.

# Obligations

- PIs expected to manage their data effectively during the life of their project to enable appropriate exploitation.
- NERC will manage the data for the long-term, post project, to enable effective, post project exploitation.



# Infrastructure to Support Policy

- Designated data centres responsible for NERC's "data assets".
- AEDC, BADC, BODC, EIC/NWA, NEODC & NGDC.
- Plus programme centres, eg. NEBC.
- Long-term commitment supported by Science Information Strategy.

# User Benefit

- Nationally consistent data sets:
  - eg. geological hazards, flood risk.
- Provision of data to the community:
  - eg: BADC access to Met Office data.
- Time series for studies of change:
  - eg: temperature & oceanographic profiles.

# Benefits to NERC

- Senior management - recognition of value of data and information.
  - Support for ‘information’ activities.
- Provides foundations to support:
  - Knowledge transfer and exploitation.
  - Support of FoI / EIR requests.
  - Linking of data to publications.

# Lessons Learned

- Writing the policy is the easy bit.
- Will require:
  - Senior management ‘buy in’;
  - Community ‘buy-in’;
  - Understanding of the ‘value’ of data;
  - Resources to implement and monitor.
- Can take time – but will deliver benefits.

# Further information

- NERC: [www.nerc.ac.uk](http://www.nerc.ac.uk)
- Data Centres & Data Policy:  
[www.nerc.ac.uk/data](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/data)
- NERC Data Grid: [ndg.badc.rl.ac.uk](http://ndg.badc.rl.ac.uk)
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