

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Data Policy Statements for the EMAP Western Pilot Study

The fundamental objectives of the EMAP Western Pilot Study are dependent upon the cooperation of scientists from several disciplines. Our objectives require quantitative analysis of interdisciplinary data sets and therefore participants must exchange data on a timely basis. Precedent and perception have resulted in a disparity of data collection, storage, and archival methods. This makes the exchange of data difficult and may suppress dissemination of data. The EMAP Western Pilot Study Steering Committee seeks to enhance the value of data collected within the Study by providing a set of guidelines for the collection, storage, exchange, and archival of these data sets.

The overall purpose of these policy statements is to facilitate full and open access and use with confidence, both now and in the future, of the data and information that is used in and results from Western Pilot Study activities. These policies reflect the goals and policies of EMAP and incorporate federal laws, directives, and regulations regarding the maintenance and dissemination of data and information in the Federal Government. They apply to all participants in the Western Pilot Study, including federal, state, local, tribal, foreign, educational, non-government organizations and their private partners, and will be incorporated into the provisions of any acquisition or assistance agreements funded by the Western Pilot Study.

These policy statements represent a commitment of the Western Pilot Study Steering Committee. All participants are expected to comply unless there is a good reason otherwise reported to the Committee.

- The Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program requires a continuing commitment to the establishment, maintenance, description, accessibility, and long-term availability of high-quality data and information.
- Full and open sharing of the full suite of data and published information produced by the Study is a fundamental objective. Data and information will be available without restriction for no more than the cost of reproduction and distribution. Where possible, the access to the data will be via the World Wide Web to keep the cost of delivery to a minimum and to allow distribution to be as wide as possible. All data collected by this Study will be publicly available following verification and validation of the datasets.
- Organizations and individuals participating in the Study should make measurements that do not involve manual analysis available to other Study participants within 6 months after collection. All other measurements should be made available to Study participants within 15 months after collection. Data and metadata should be publicly available on the EMAP web site within 24 months after field collection. Advise the Chair of the Western Pilot Study Steering Committee if these schedules cannot be met.
- All data sets and published information used in the Study will be identified with a citation; for data sets an indication of how the data may be accessed will be provided.
- All data sets generated as part of the Study will be made available on the EMAP public web site. These data sets must be described and a quality assessment provided. All such data set

April 21, 1999

descriptions will be made available for inclusion in the EMAP Data Directory/Data Catalog, accessible on the EMAP web site. In addition, steps will be taken to assure their continuing availability.

- Participants will adhere to the 'Core Information Management Standards for the EMAP Western Pilot Study'. National and international standards will be used to the greatest extent possible.
- Citation information for all the Study's published reports will be provided to the EMAP Bibliography, accessible on the EMAP web site.
- Organizations and individuals participating in the Study should actively participate in the EMAP Western Pilot Study web site to share information and coordinate the Study's disparate activities.
- To the extent feasible, data from the Streams and the Coastal groups will be copied to STORET for long-term archival and use.
- Suggested Data Product Requirement for Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts:
Describe the plan to make available the data products produced, whether from observations or analyses, that contribute significantly to the <grant's> results. The data products will be made available to the <grant official/contracting officer> without restriction and be accompanied by comprehensive metadata documentation adequate for specialists and non-specialists alike to be able to not only understand both how and where the data products were obtained but adequate for them to be used with confidence for generations. The data products and their metadata will be provided in a <standard> exchange format no later than the <grant's> final report or the publication of the data product's associated results, whichever comes first.

Acknowledgment: This Data Policy Statement was modified, with permission, from two sources:

Data Management for Global Change Research. Policy Statements for the National Assessment Program. July 1998. U.S. Global Change Research Program. National Science Foundation, Washington, DC.

U. S. GLOBEC. 1994. U. S. GLOBEC Data Policy. U. S. Global Ocean Ecosystems Dynamics. Report No. 10. Woods Hole, MA. (<http://globec.who.edu>).

AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES. As reflected in the following authorities and references, the Executive and Legislative branches of the U.S. Government both recognize the need for federal agencies to assume an active role in providing information to the public.

- a. *Privacy Act of 1974* restricts the government's ability to disseminate information that could invade the personal privacy of an individual. Privacy Act data cannot be released without appropriate review.
- b. *The Freedom of Information Reform Act (FOIA) of 1986* establishes what agencies must make available to the public in terms of public information, agency rules, opinions, orders, records and proceedings.
- c. *OMB Circular No. A-16, Coordination of Surveying and Mapping Activities*, October 19, 1990, establishes coordination procedures for federal agencies and describes the responsibilities with respect to coordination of those federal surveying and mapping activities .
- d. *Executive Office of the President, Data Management for Global Change Research Policy Statements* issued in July 1991 provided a set of policy statements to facilitate full and open access to quality data for global change research.
- e. *Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992*, requires that unenhanced data from Landsat 7 and other government-funded and -owned land remote sensing systems be made available to users at the cost of fulfilling user requests and on a non-discriminatory basis.
- f. *The White House Memorandum on the Administration of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)* issued October 4, 1993, states that a commitment to openness requires more than merely responding to requests from the public. Each agency has a responsibility to distribute information on its own initiative, and to enhance public access through the use of electronic information systems.
- g. *Executive Order 12862, Setting Customer Service Standards*, September 11, 1993, mandates easy accessibility of federal government information and services.
- h. *OMB Circular No. A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources*, June 25, 1993, states that every agency has a responsibility to inform the public within the context of its mission. This responsibility requires that agencies distribute information at the agency's initiative, rather than merely responding when the public requests information.
- i. *Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) of 1993* requirements are intended to improve federal program effectiveness and public accountability by promoting a focus on results, service quality and customer satisfaction.
- j. *44 United States Code Chapter 31 - Records Management by Federal Agencies* requires agencies to create and maintain documents and provides the basis for public records and information.

April 21, 1999

- k. *44 United States Code Chapters 17 and 19* define the legal requirements for providing information to the public through the Federal Depository Library Program.
- l. *Executive Order 12906, Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access; The National Spatial Data Infrastructure*, April 11, 1994, requires each agency to document all new geospatial data it collects or produces, either directly or indirectly, using the developing FGDC standard, and to make that documentation electronically accessible.
- m. *U.S. Environment and Natural Resource Data Access System Guideline*, July 6, 1995, requires all federal agencies participating in environment and natural resources research to develop their data and information search and access systems to have at least Internet connectivity and be ANSI Z39.50 compliant.
- n. *Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1980, as amended 1995*, requires agencies to provide for the dissemination of public information on a timely basis, on equitable terms, and in a manner that promotes the utility of the information to the public and makes effective use of information technology.
- o. *Electronic Freedom of Information Act (EFOIA) of 1996* mandates that agencies make all reasonable efforts to provide information available to requesters in the medium of their choice.
- p. *OMB Bulletin 98-5, Establishment of Government Information Locator Service (GILS)*, February 6, 1998, is designed to help the public and agencies locate and access information electronically throughout the U.S. government.