



## **A Data Acquisition**

With regard to the acquisition of data, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC):

- i. regards datasets as a valuable resource in their own right;
- ii. will ensure that the maximum benefits are derived from data acquired by NERC;
- iii. requires that due consideration be given to the 'post-project' stewardship of data prior to approval being given for a 'project';
- iv. will establish, at the outset, how the data acquired as a result of such projects will be exploited (whether commercially or scientifically); who will be responsible for this exploitation; and how the benefits will be shared;
- v. requires that recipients of NERC grants offer to deposit with NERC a copy of datasets resulting from the research supported, for research or other public good purposes, but without prejudice to the intellectual property rights;
- vi. requires that processed data sets derived from NERC's data, which were provided on 'academic' terms, be offered to NERC.

## **B Data Management**

In managing its data holdings, NERC will:

- i. have defined points of contact associated with its Designated Data Centres, with which agreements must be reached as part of the planning for any new activities which generate new datasets, so that the full implications (including any commitments on the Designated Data Centres or requirements for IT infrastructure) can be established at the outset;
- ii. use these defined points of contact to publicise its data, providing a means whereby the environmental science community can find out what information it can obtain, and on what terms;
- iii. facilitate access by customers to NERC data holdings;
- iv. publicise its intention to put at risk or destroy data, before doing so, when it is considered that the cost of keeping datasets outweighs the apparent benefits;
- v. determine the costs relating to data management, once data have been collected.

## **C Access and Use**

With regard to the access and use of data, NERC will:

- i. ensure that individual scientists, principal investigator teams and participants in programmes will be permitted a reasonable period to work exclusively on, and publish the results of, the data they have collected (known as the *right of first use*);
- ii. otherwise make the data available for re-use and re-purposing. The only

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constraints on access to data held by NERC are those that are supported by the 'exceptions' on disclosure in the Environmental Information Regulations 2004;

- iii. specify any restrictions on the use of data in formal licensing agreements. For example, when a NERC data set includes third-party data, the conditions of use applied by NERC when licensing such a composite data set are in part governed by the licence conditions of the third-party.

### **D Charging for Access to NERC's Data**

- i. The licence charges that NERC can levy for the supply of data and information are governed by HM Treasury guidance and Government regulations.
- ii. The NERC charging regime recognises two classes of data:
  - a. Raw or unrefined - these are data collected (or held) by NERC, with any necessary quality assurance or post processing applied, and used to deliver NERC's public function;
  - b. Value added or refined – these are data where an extra level of intellectual input has been added, for example, by combining a number of data sets together, or producing an information product by the interpretation of a number of data sets, and crucially, is above and beyond what is required to deliver NERC's public function.
- iii. For 'raw' data, NERC will only charge the marginal cost of supply, and will put no restrictions on further use.
- iv. For 'value added' data NERC will charge on a cost recovery basis. This is the cost of maintaining and supplying the value added product and not the cost of the initial data collection.
- v. These are the maximum charges that NERC can apply. NERC will also discount charges for particular use-cases (*i.e.* charges are by usage and not the user type) or for particular data types (where we may be funded by others to make some types of data freely available).
- vi. The most common discount is for the support for teaching or research (where the results of the research are placed in the public domain). During 2010 NERC aims to move to a position where it will supply its data for free for all teaching and research activities, apart from large or complex requests where we may make a nominal handling charge.

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