

MEMORANDUM TO: NOAA Cooperative Institutes  
NOAA Sea Grant Programs

FROM: Christopher D. Miller, OAR Representative to the  
NOAA Environmental Data Management Committee

DATE: August 1, 2011

SUBJECT: Request for NOAA Data Sharing Policy Comments

NOAA has recently drafted a Data Sharing Policy for data collected under NOAA-funded grants, and the agency is interested in receiving your comments. NOAA intends to implement the policy during Fiscal Year 2012 and update the policy based upon lessons learned in Fiscal Year 2013. A summary of comments received will be shared with OAR leadership as well as NOAA's Observing System Council and NOAA's CIO Council prior to Fiscal Year 2012 and will be used as we plan Fiscal Year 2012 implementation activities. Please provide comments to *Christopher.D.Miller@noaa.gov* no later than August 29, 2011 in order to allow time for us to summarize and present them to the various Councils prior to the new fiscal year. The policy is attached and background information is below.

The sharing of research data is widely recognized as a good practice. The greater the availability of the data, the more quickly and effectively user communities can develop innovative practical applications for public benefit. In many cases these applications will be in areas not originally anticipated by the principal investigator. In addition, not making data available that supports scientific findings may provide reason to doubt the validity of the findings and limit their usefulness. More information about data sharing concerns are in a 2007 GAO Report, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d071172.pdf>, "Climate Change Research: Agencies Have Data-Sharing Policies but Could Do More to Enhance the Availability of Data from Federally Funded Research." The GAO report specifically recommends NOAA consider evaluating data sharing plans as part of the grant review process.

There is currently an interagency effort including NOAA, NSF, and NASA to have a consistent data sharing policy for grantees, but there is not yet an estimated completion date. NOAA leadership recommended we implement our own data sharing policy until the interagency one is available. Lessons learned will be communicated to the interagency group.

Sharing research data is not necessarily the same as archiving research data, but both are important aspects of the scientific enterprise. NOAA has a policy to determine what research data are most appropriate to archive available at [https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/wiki/images/0/0b/NOAA\\_Procedure\\_document\\_final.pdf](https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/wiki/images/0/0b/NOAA_Procedure_document_final.pdf).

ATTACHMENT