



AODN Data Policy

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Integrated Marine Observing System
Australian Ocean Data Network

Acknowledgement

This policy was developed using related data policies from other organisations, largely the Australian Antarctic Program Data Policy, 2010, and the updated version, 2015, https://www1.data.antarctica.gov.au/aadc/about/data_policy.cfm. As the Australian Ocean Data Network (AODN) is not the custodian of any data, this policy has been adopted to suit the AODN. However, as both organisations deal with scientific marine data and with a number of identical issues, many aspects of the two policies are naturally similar.

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What is the Australian Ocean Data Network (AODN)?

The vision of the AODN was articulated in 2005 by the Australian Ocean Data Centre Joint Facility (AODCJF), a joint venture between the six Commonwealth Agencies (Australian Antarctic Division, Australian Institute for Marine Sciences, Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, Geoscience Australia, Royal Australian Navy) with primary responsibility for marine data. This was

“to put in place, by June 2011, an interoperable, online network of marine and coastal data resources, including data from the six AODCJF partner agencies, supported by standards-based metadata, which will serve data to support Australia's science, education, environmental management and policy needs: Australia's digital ocean commons.”

The AODN is administered by the [Integrated Marine Observing System](#) (IMOS). IMOS is a national collaborative research infrastructure, supported by Australian Government. It is led by the University of Tasmania (www.utas.edu.au) in partnership with the Australian marine and climate science community.

The objectives of the AODN are two-fold:

- to populate the AODN with publicly funded data and to make this accessible to a wide community;
- to encourage, and develop, the culture of data sharing across the marine science community of Australia.

Preamble

The aim of the AODN is to make as much marine data as possible – publicly funded as well as data from private industry and not-for-profit organisations – accessible and freely available over the internet. This document offers data providers a guide on how data should be managed and delivered for publication in the AODN.

Policy Overview

A condition of participation in the AODN is that all data provided to the program is unencumbered – in that it is freely accessible at no charge to third parties. It is a requirement of the AODN that all data provided to the AODN is adequately documented with metadata and arrangements are made for data to be held by the custodian organisation or an alternate organisation for long term access.

The AODN encourages parties to use the ISO19115 Marine Community Profile 2.0 metadata standard or an agreed alternate standard that can be cross-walked into the required format. The AODN prefers that all original metadata is stored with the custodian organisation or an agreed alternate organisation.

The AODN aims to be a federated system where data and metadata is stored with the originating organisation and harvested by the AODN metadata store (the AODN catalog). The AODN does not normally host third party datasets or metadata records however, there may be exceptional

circumstances where the AODN could seek hosting arrangements at an appropriate repository for required data and metadata.

All data made available to the AODN will be made publicly available – to facilitate this, the AODN recommends that data is licensed through an appropriate Creative Commons license, preferably the [By Attribution \(CCBY\) license](#). NB: all metadata made available to the AODN will also be made available through the Australian National Data Service – [Research Data Australia](#).

Policy Rationale

The AODN was established to increase the discoverability, availability, access and re-use of marine data in the Australian marine region. It is widely understood and recognised that data has a great value beyond its original investment. However, it is often very difficult for parties that are not directly associated with a particular project of data collection to find particular datasets of interest – or to be aware that these data exist. The infrastructure that the AODN has established allows for third parties to discover, visualise and access the data provided to the AODN.

AODN Data Management Facilities

The AODN publishes marine data from a wide variety of organisations. AODN staff encourages agencies / organisations / individuals that have the capacity for, and interest in, making their data publicly available to publish relevant data to the AODN Portal. AODN staff can provide assistance and advice in making data and metadata available.

Helpful information –

- The [services, data and products](#) available via the AODN Portal
- The complete [metadata store](#); contains all AODN contributed collections some of which may not appear on the AODN Portal.
- Details of how to join the AODN, what data and metadata services are needed and how to construct them can be found in the [AODN Cookbook](#)

Who owns AODN data?

All data that is provided to the AODN is owned by the originator organisation. The AODN has no rights to the data and is only aiming to make others aware of the data and provide direct access to the underlying data. For this reason, the AODN prefers that data is provided under an open access license – we recommend [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0](#) license which specifies that:

You are free to:

- **Share** — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format
- **Adapt** — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:

- **Attribution** — You must give **appropriate credit**, provide a link to the license, and **indicate if changes were made**. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
- **No additional restrictions** — You may not apply legal terms or **technological measures** that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Taken from the Creative Commons website

There is a variety of other [Creative Common licenses](#) available that would allow for data to be shared but have different conditions specified.

Datasets that have some restrictions placed on them can be made available through the AODN portal. However, it is up to the data custodian to specify these restrictions in the metadata record associated with the relevant data. The AODN will not be responsible for limiting access to these data.

What data is the AODN interested in?

The AODN is interested in making all marine data electronically available through the AODN Portal.

The AODN exposes data in a wide variety of formats, as long as accompanied by the appropriate metadata. The [AODN can accept data](#) in any recognised propriety format, see Contributing Data to the AODN for further information. If you have data that you are interested in sharing, the AODN would be happy to enter into a discussion and provide assistance in making your data discoverable through the AODN Portal.

Custodianship

A data custodian is an individual that can provide information about the specific dataset to any interested party – i.e. someone who is familiar with how the data was generated and/or have a long-term interest in the data. Each metadata record relating to a particular dataset states who the custodian for each dataset is.

It is the responsibility of the custodians to ensure that all their data is appropriately documented through a metadata record and that these data are then available in an appropriate format to be accessible through the Metadata Catalogue. Custodians do **at any time** have the right to remove their data from the AODN.

The AODN specifies that data should be cited and an appropriate acknowledgement included in any publication as requested by the data originator (specified in the metadata record).

Requirements to participate in the AODN

As the AODN is focused on publishing third party data, it does not generate any original data itself. The AODN is interested in electronically accessible marine datasets that have well [documented metadata records](#) and that are curated by custodian organisations into the future. AODN staff can provide assistance and guidelines to help organisations establish the systems that are required for participation in the AODN.

Metadata

The AODN Portal harvests metadata records from external agencies, creating a metadata catalogue/store from which all contributed data can be visualised in and/or downloaded from the AODN Portal. For this reason, all data that is to be made available through the AODN Portal requires a well-documented metadata record.

Metadata is descriptive data about data and is the primary mechanism for documenting data sets. Metadata can be used to describe all sorts of different types of data. The metadata standard that the AODN uses is the ISO19115 [Marine Community Profile \(MCP 2.0\)](#).

The AODN uses the [Geonetwork catalogue](#) and can assist interested parties in establishing their own instance of this catalogue so that their data can be accessed by the AODN.

The ISO standard that is used by the marine community is supported by the broader Australian spatial data community.

Hosting data by exception

As the AODN functions by harvesting metadata from external organisations, it is not appropriate for the AODN to host data. Exceptions will be made to assist organisations short-term

while they develop their own systems or are working toward developing their own hosting arrangement. The AODN will assist individuals who are unable to store their own data and metadata but are interested in making their data publicly available. In the first instance, the AODN will seek to utilise agencies who have demonstrated their technical capability to host data and make it available to the AODN.

Roles and Responsibilities

AODN data management responsibilities

The AODN will ensure that:

- Marine data from a variety of organisations and individuals is made publicly available at no cost through the AODN Portal;
- Metadata records from all participants are available for public searching;
- It maintains best practice in relation to the systems that it uses; and
- It provides appropriate guidelines and tools and assistance for participants.

AODN participant data management responsibilities

Organisations or individuals participating in the AODN will ensure that they:

- Comply with all aspects of the AODN data policy;
- Contact the AODN staff with any issues regarding their participation in the AODN;
- Develop and store appropriate metadata records to comply with AODN requirements;
- Manage and curate their data in a way that will allow for long term public access to the data being made available to the AODN;
- Make data available under Creative Commons license conditions; and
- Adopt the norm of citing data used in their research by linking to metadata in their peer reviewed publications.

Further information and guidelines

The AODN will publish further information and guidelines that will assist the community to participate in the AODN. These will be made available via the AODN Portal User Guide – [Contributing Data Section](#).

CONTACT DETAILS:

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