

PB-25.07: Data Licensing Guidance

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Background

- Describing data as “Full and Open” or “Open Data by Default” provides insufficient legal certainty for many data users.
- Custom “end user license agreements” or data “terms and conditions” often include legally problematic terms and require close legal review to understand.
- The uncertainty and lack of consistency creates barriers to data use. The international community is moving towards the solution of standard open data licenses.
- The Programme Board directed the Data Working Group (DWG) to prepare guidelines regarding open data licensing (Action PB-24.05).

Prior GEO Analysis

- The Legal Interoperability Sub-Group of the GEO Data Sharing Working Group presented its “Legal Mechanisms to Share Data as Part of GEOSS Data-CORE” to GEO-XI Plenary, recommending the use of standard open data licenses.
- However, there appeared to have been minimal implementation of the recommendations.
- Since this time, the need for the use of standard open data licenses has continued to grow.

Data Licensing Guidance

- The following data licenses are consistent with the GEO Data Sharing Principles:
 - Creative Commons Zero 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication (CC0) (<https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/>)
 - Open Data Commons Public Domain Dedication and License (PDDL) v1.0 (<https://opendatacommons.org/licenses/pddl/1-0/>)
 - Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)
- GEO Members, Participating Organizations, and other entities that share open, unrestricted data should clearly license such data using only one of these licenses. Custom license agreements should not be used, and these standard licenses should not be modified or augmented with additional text.

Reference Documents

- **GEO Data Sharing Principles**

- [D]ata, metadata and products will be shared as Open Data by default, by making them available as part of the GEOSS Data Collection of Open Resources for Everyone (Data-CORE) without charge or restrictions on reuse, subject to the conditions of registration and attribution when the data are reused

- **GEO Statement on Open Knowledge**

- Data: The data needed to reproduce scientific results or support public decision making, including data stemming from publicly funded endeavors, should be released publicly under an open license . . .

- **GEO Data Sharing and Data Management Principles**

- All data should specify a license, including the data that conforms to open data licenses.