

October 25, 2013

Ray Ban
NOAA SAB, Chair
Ban and Associates Consulting LLC
3525 Billingsley Drive
Marietta, Ga. 30062

Dear Dr. Ban:

On behalf of NOAA's Data Archiving and Access Requirements Working Group (DAARWG), I am pleased to submit this summary from its May 2013 meeting.

DAARWG held an abbreviated virtual meeting on 14 – 15 May 2013. The meeting was conducted via web conferencing and teleconferencing capabilities due to sequestration-imposed budgetary constraints that precluded travel for a face-to-face meeting as originally planned. The meeting consisted of two, three-hour sessions each afternoon. The afternoon sessions were further divided into specific topics for consideration by DAARWG. Please see attached agenda.

The main items on the agenda included updates on various environmental data management-related activities across NOAA, as represented by the Environmental Data Management Committee (EDMC) and presented by Dr. Jeff de La Beaujardière. The other sessions included a presentation and discussion on the Plan for long-term stewardship and preservation of GOES-R Level 0 data, and an update on the CLASS Program and associated Level 1 Archive Requirements.

The meeting concluded with discussion of next steps, membership, and topics for future meetings.

The DAARWG continues to welcome the support and responsiveness of NOAA management and staff to its requests as well as the comprehensiveness of the briefings presented.

DAARWG received favorably the update on environmental data management (EDM) activities and continues to support the efforts of the various groups within NOAA responsible for EDM. In particular, the DAARWG recognizes the ongoing effort to develop the full suite of requisite procedural directives related to NOAA enterprise-wide data management. DAARWG wholeheartedly supports the assignment of permanent Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) to archival datasets and the associated Data Citation Procedural Directive now under development. DAARWG noted that the challenges associated with implementing a DOI requirement are likely to be more social than technical. That is, changing the culture to ensure that data citation standards and infrastructure are used consistently may be more of an issue than the technical implementation. However, the benefits in terms of supporting access to and use of NOAA data should be well worth the effort. Also in the update Dr. de La Beaujardière noted the potential impacts of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) memo on "Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research", the Executive Order "Making Open and Machine Readable the New Default for Government Information", as well as the proposed OSTP Big Earth Data Initiative (BEDI). DAARWG would appreciate continued

updates on these various initiatives and expressed some concern that responding to these mandates might be constrained by budgetary realities.

The GOES-R Level 0 (L0) briefing provided by Charlie Baker, NESDIS DAA, and Steve Thibault, NESDIS SE, outlined the planned dramatic increase in data to be archived by NESDIS when GOES-R comes online in the 2014 and 2015 timeframe. The DAARWG had a fairly lengthy discussion related to the Level 0 data and the policy to retain these data for two years prior to deletion. DAARWG recognizes the importance of L0 data for, among other things, sensor calibration and validation. DAARWG is sensitive to existing policy decisions and prior history that mitigate against retaining these data after the two-year window. However, DAARWG suggests that there may be valid scientific and other potential reasons to retain the GOES-R L0 data. During the discussion it was also noted that retaining L0 data after two years is not part of the current CLASS mission.

RECOMMENDATION

In this context, DAARWG requests that the Science Advisory Board consider a recommendation to study the issue further. More specifically, the DAARWG would at the direction of the SAB convene a small sub-committee, or ‘tiger team’, to address this topic. The goals would be to facilitate a concise review of the arguments for and against retention of the L0 data past the two-year window, to look at other Earth science agency approaches to archiving L0 data, and to survey potential alternative technological approaches if warranted. The tiger team would be charged with generating a short report of the findings with recommendations for consideration by SAB within 6 – 9 months.

In the wake of its November 2012 meeting, the DAARWG requested further briefings updating DAARWG on the status of the Level 1 Archive Requirements for CLASS. Updates on this topic were provided at the May 2013 meeting by Nancy Ritchey, Archive Requirements Lead, and by Kern Witcher, CLASS Program Manager. Both presentations served to clarify the status of the development of archive requirements and linking them to the implementation of NOAA enterprise data management on the CLASS system. DAARWG is pleased to note the progress on this front. We look forward to hearing an update on these requirements as they are finalized and implemented.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of future meetings, potential members, and other potential topics of interest. In this context, DAARWG would like to express its preference for face-to-face meetings. DAARWG recognizes the challenges faced by NOAA in this regard. However, the effectiveness of DAARWG is undermined by the uncertainty associated with planning these meetings.

We look forward to continuing to serve SAB and NOAA in the future.

Sincerely,



W. Christopher Lenhardt

Chair, DAARWG
Domain Scientist, Environmental Data Sciences and Systems