

AfricaRice Open Access and Data Management Policy

1. Preamble

AfricaRice's research and development results are international public goods. AfricaRice is committed to their widespread diffusion and use to ultimately achieve a positive, equitable and lasting impact on the livelihoods of Africa's rice farmers and consumers. AfricaRice acknowledges the value of its information products, including research data, as an institutional resource and considers that widespread sharing of these products will produce scientific, economic and social benefits.

In November 2013, the Consortium Board adopted the CGIAR Open Access and Data Management Policy stating that "CGIAR regards the results of its research and development activities as international public goods and is committed to their widespread dissemination and use to achieve the maximum impact to advantage the poor, especially smallholder farmers in developing countries".

Accordingly, AfricaRice adopts this 'Open Access and Data Management Policy' (the Policy) related to the management of information products generated at AfricaRice (often in partnership). This Policy shall be read in conjunction with, and is complementary to and does not contain anything that contradicts, the CGIAR Open Access and Data Management Policy¹.

This Policy complies with the AfricaRice Policy on the 'Management of Intellectual Assets' (IA), which is effective since March 20, 2013. In particular, this Policy expands on Article 4.1 of AfricaRice's IA Policy which provides that "AfricaRice is committed to make the IA that it develops accessible and as widely disseminated, adopted and utilized as possible in accordance with its Mission and that they lead to the broadest possible impact on target beneficiaries in further of its Mission."

2. Definitions

Aggregated data: Data that have already been processed and combined across specific categories.

Central repository: One or several places to maintain and archive all AfricaRice information products, embedded on AfricaRice servers.

Data: Recorded information in any form.

Data management: The procedures for collection, storage, retrieval, and sharing of data.

Data Management Specialist: The Biometrician (Head of the Data Integration and Biometrics Unit).

Data user: Any individual who accesses and uses the data.

Information products: Peer-reviewed journal articles; reports and other papers; books and book chapters; data and databases; data collection and analysis tools (e.g. models and survey tools); video, audio and images; computer software; web services and metadata associated with the information products above.

Metadata: Structured data about data. The details needed to make the data meaningful include: objective, location and year of the study, variable/trait descriptions, units of measurement or category descriptions and reference to documented methods used to generate the data, as well as the researchers who gathered and processed the data.

¹ The CGIAR Open Access and Data Management Policy is available at <http://www.cgiar.org/resources/open/>

Partners: Any organization working in the rice sector and partnering with AfricaRice.

Personal data: Data which relate to a living individual who can be identified from those data.

Raw data: Units of recorded data that have been collected, prior to processing or analysis.

Open Access: Practice of providing access to data to the data user and that is re-usable.

3. Scope

The Policy applies to information products generated by AfricaRice and by AfricaRice and partners through its programs, projects and collaborative activities.

4. Policy Statement

4.1. Ownership

4.1.1. As per the AfricaRice Policy on the management of IA defined in clause 4.4, AfricaRice shall ensure that, to the extent permitted by applicable law, the IA generated by its staff, visiting scientists, consultants, students, and any other person operating on its behalf, shall be vested in AfricaRice. Hence, AfricaRice has both ownership and stewardship responsibilities with regard to information products generated by AfricaRice (often in partnership).

4.1.2. AfricaRice claims co-ownership of information products generated in collaboration with partners through explicit statements in signed letters of agreement or contracts with partners on co-ownership of information products developed as a results of the collaboration. Such agreements or contracts will specify how partners are to apply the provisions in section 4.2.

4.1.3. AfricaRice scientists will archive their data and other information products on a regular basis (at least once a year) in a central repository managed by the data management specialist and will complete these datasets in the central repository upon leaving AfricaRice. Further usage of data by the departing scientist shall be subject to authorization by AfricaRice.

4.2. Openness

4.2.1. Best efforts shall be used to make all information products open access, subjected to the legal right and legitimate interest of stakeholders and third parties, including intellectual property rights, confidentiality, sensitivity, farmers' right and privacy in particular with respect to personal data. The decision to provide open access will be based on a judgment of the value and relevance of the information product to a wider public and considering the quality and general characteristics of the product and level of processing in the case of data.

4.2.2. Full and open access of raw data, aggregated data and metadata will be given to partners as per signed letters of agreements and contracts.

4.2.3. Full and open access of aggregated data and metadata will be given to any data user, with a disclaimer as per article 4.2.6. below.

4.2.4. Full and open access to raw data will be given to any data user once the first publication on the data is published or in the case no publication is planned, once data processing is completed and depending on characteristics and quality.

4.2.5. Access to data and metadata by any data user is in principle free of charge but may entail some costs related to the effort involved in data processing and transfer.

4.2.6. Data users will be informed that they are not allowed to alter the data, or claim ownership or intellectual property rights over data provided by AfricaRice.

4.2.7. Data users will be informed that AfricaRice makes no warranty, guarantee, or promise, whether expressed or implied, concerning accuracy or fitness for purpose of the data provided (disclaimer).

4.3. Repositories

4.3.1. AfricaRice shall use stable, permanent, open access repositories, to enable users and other sites and search engines to access or locate information products. AfricaRice information products, including that of outstations, will be maintained in central repositories on AfricaRice servers.

4.3.2. AfricaRice is committed to making all possible arrangements to ensure the protection of information products against intentional or unintentional loss or destruction. Servers will be protected from environmental hazards such as heat, dust, electrical surges, magnetism, and electrostatic discharges. The AfricaRice head of Information, Communication and Technology will play a central role in providing safe data storage and back-up services.

4.4. Ethics and consent

4.4.1. AfricaRice activities are conducted in accordance with the highest ethical standards. AfricaRice is committed to protecting the rights, dignity, health, safety and privacy of research subjects, and the integrity of the environment when collecting data.

4.4.2. Informed consent from study participants shall be obtained at the outset of any survey or interview. Personal data collected with respect to farmers or other stakeholders shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be made public.

5. Effective date

This Policy is effective from May 1, 2014 and will remain in force until revised, superseded, cancelled or suspended in writing by the authority of the Board of Trustees of AfricaRice.