JNCC

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

ENCOURAGING DATA SHARING

Some examples from the UK

Benefits of sharing

- Better understanding and decisions
- Transparency around decisions
- Greater confidence / trust
- More efficient

The problems....

- No resources (time and money)
- Lack the skills
- Confidential / sensitive data (how open to be?)
- Can undermine business models
- Concerns around misuse of data
- Worries around challenge / embarrassment
- Loss of profile / credit

How not to do it!

- SPIRE – initiative to share spatial data across England
- On-line access to spatial data, include confidential data, version control, direct access from GIS (store once), all data etc.
- Cost millions and hundreds of thousands per year to run!

Keep it simple

- Who needs to access what?
  - Metadata catalogue - what
  - Needs assessment – why
- Clarify any problems
- Get understanding and buy in at the right level
- Aim (initially) for a simple file sharing mechanism (e.g. Shared area of network as open as it needs to be)
- Data quality / standards important

Investment

- Tackles where the issue is resources (money, time or capacity)
- Risk is that it sets a precedent (have to keep paying) – need to be careful
- But if you have (or can get) the resources can work well

Technological solutions

- May not be so relevant here
- Idea is to create a technical solution that is sufficiently attractive that providers want to put data in
- May be reusing systems from elsewhere

Policy

- Now both European and UK legislation increasing openness (e.g. INSPIRE)
- Research community particularly have been more forceful
- Still only Government data – e.g. Not industry
- **Policy is a very strong lever if you can get it**

Emphasise benefit

- Chalara arrived in UK – affecting Ash trees
- Needed very rapid assessment of potential impact
- Looked at species reliant on Ash
- Even (the majority) of those being restrictive were happy to share here
- Similar push now around non-native species more generally
- **Emphasising benefit can open access**

Efficiency

- Everyone’s resources are getting tight so strong efficiency arguments now
- Has been a big push in the UK (avoiding Government departments charging each other)

Embarrassment

- Doesn’t work with long term partnerships
- Effectively publicising the issue
- For example, a consultant unwilling to share data
- **Last option – but can work**