SCOR Panel on Ocean Data Publication and Incentives

In December 2006, the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) brought together representatives of virtually all of the large-scale international ocean research projects, to discuss common problems and opportunities. This was the second such meeting of the projects, both funded by the Sloan Foundation. One of the major topics at each meeting has been project data management, so that the newer projects can learn from the more established projects and not “reinvent the wheel.” The projects have come to realize that effective data management needs both incentives and requirements for data submission. In the category of incentives, the group focused on the idea of data generators getting credit for their data, through data publications, the ability to cite data sets in publications and on CVs, persistent identifiers to track data (e.g., digital object identifiers), etc. Rather than making recommendations on these topics based on a rather short discussion, the group recommended that SCOR put together a panel to study the issues in an in-depth way. We have decided to convene a meeting, with the help of IODE, to explore the issues. Some potential questions that might be addressed in the terms of reference include the following:

- What is the appropriate “persistent identifier” for which kinds of data (e.g., digital object identifier or other)?
- What are the implications of persistent identifiers for national and world data centers?
- How should the “least publishable unit” for DOIs be determined? If they are going to be cited, they have to delineate a reasonable set of data so that they are meaningful on CVs and don’t take up too much extra space in scientific publications.
- How can ocean science journals be encouraged to require that data on which publications are based are deposited in appropriate databases and assigned DOIs?
- Should an electronic oceanography data journal be created?
- What should be the review process for data publications and/or data assigned persistent identifiers?
- What lessons can be learned from GenBank for use with ocean data?
- Roles and responsibilities of oceanographic data centers and certification of data centers