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Roos, Annikki

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THE RESEARCH DATA PILOT PROJECT AT THE HELSINKI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Annikki Roos and Liisa Siipilehto
Helsinki University Library, Finland

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PILOT PROJECT

- Gather information about the current practices and problems of researchers when collecting, using and storing research data
- Learn about research data and processes related to it
- Understand the current state of the affairs at the University of Helsinki
- Find out the main actors institutionally, nationally and internationally and define their roles in the process.
- Uncover if and in which way the library could contribute to the data management process

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LIBRARY

- The needs seem to be subject specific and vary during the research process. Because of the varying needs local, national, subject specific and global actors are involved.
- Data is in some cases a very sensitive matter. Library would be seen as a neutral actor in this field.
- We suggested that the design of data support services should be continued in collaboration with the faculties, IT-department, the research administration and the library.
- Library's main focus could be in metadata expertise, teaching and producing educational material for researchers and promoting linking data to the publications.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

- One international research group with 11 researchers "Groundwater Surface water interaction at the Lake Pyhäjärvi"
- Data volume about 25 GB
- Various research material and data, 19 different data formats such as MT, SEQ, COR, MRK, RD3, JPG, BMP, TIFF, DOC, PDF, XLS
- Problems varied from best practices for file-naming to the lack of disk space, agreements of data ownership to problems in sending the data as attachment by email.



Field work at the Lake Pyhäjärvi 2011. Photo: Ilona Pietilä

DETECTED NEEDS OF THE RESEARCHERS

First Stage (Prior to the research):

- Instructions or tools for the data management plan
- Advice in the juridical issues
- Data management education to the PhD students

Second Stage (During the research):

- a safe location for the data, easy access to group members, light documentation possibilities (metadata), version control and backup systems

Third Stage (Accomplished research):

- Short term, long term or permanent storage of the data
- A possibility to share the data

ABOUT THE PROBLEMS RESEARCHERS EXPERIENCED



PLANNED ACTIVITIES IN THE LIBRARY

- Organize a Semantic MediaWiki technology-based service for handling data and metadata, mainly at the "Second Stage" of the research process
- Develop a program for enhancing library personnel's data related skills
- Implement data management support as a part of the everyday research support services