

## Appendix B

# Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130

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The Office of Management and Budget published OMB circular A-130 in 1985 to establish a national policy for the reproduction and distribution of information collected or paid for by the federal government. A-130 can be applied to any federally collected data and information, including those as diverse as census data and images collected from space. In particular, distribution of Landsat data and data from future Earth Observation System satellites are governed by A-130.

Information is defined by A-130 as “any communication or reception of knowledge such as facts in various forms and on any medium.” Information technology is similarly defined as any hardware or software used in connection with this information.

The circular establishes several ground rules for the collection of information, two of which are important for Landsat data. First, in an effort to “minimize the cost and maximize the usefulness” of information collected by the government, the anticipated public and private benefits that can be derived from the information, insofar as they can be calculated should “exceed the public and private **costs** of the information.” Second, “the open and efficient exchange of information. . . fosters excellence in scientific research and the effective use of Federal research and development funds. ”

A-130 also sets policies for information management. Foremost for managing information similar to that from

Landsat are two **policy statements included in the circular. Federal agencies shall:**

**Disseminate information as required by law, describing agency organization, activities, programs . . . and how the public may gain access to agency information resources.**

**Disseminate . . . products and services**

- a) in a manner that ensures that members of the public . . . have a reasonable ability to acquire the information.
- b) in a manner most cost effective for the government, including placing maximum feasible reliance on the *private sector* for the dissemination of the products or services . . . and
- c) so as to recover costs of disseminating the products or services through user charges, where appropriate . . . .

OMB Circular A-130 also stresses long-term strategic planning by agencies for acquiring data and operating information technology programs. It also encourages timely acquisition of information and information technologies, and also dictates some specific agency requirements. Any data distribution plan must conform with the requirements set forth by A-130, which will be revised in 1992.

## OTA Publications Containing Significant Analysis of Remote Sensing from Space

- . U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, *Civilian Space Policy and Applications*, **OTA-STI-41** (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, August 1982).
- . U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, *Commercial Newsgathering from Space*, **OTA-ISC-TM-40** (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, May 1987).
- . U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment *International Cooperation and Competition in Civilian Space Activities*, **OTA-ISC-239** (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 1985).
- . U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, *Remote Sensing and the Private Sector*, **OTA-ISC-TM-239** (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1984).