



# Analysis of Federal Policy on Public Access to Scientific Research Data

## Motivation

The role of government in influencing data curation practices is widely recognized, but not thoroughly examined (Kaiser, 2006; Nikum, 2006; Peek 2009). A recent piece of federal government policy with broad impact on data curation is the Office of Science and Technology Policy's Memorandum (OSTP Memo) (Holdren, 2013; 2014). The OSTP Memo instructed all federal agencies with budgets exceeding \$100 million in annual research and development to create plans to make research data and resulting publications publicly accessible (Whitmire et al, 2015). This project examines how 19 federal agencies responded to the OSTP Memo on issues of scientific data and the extent of their compliance to this mandate.

Adam Kriesberg, Postdoctoral Fellow, Kerry Huller, Digital Curation Fellow and Ricardo Punzalan, Assistant Professor

## Research Questions

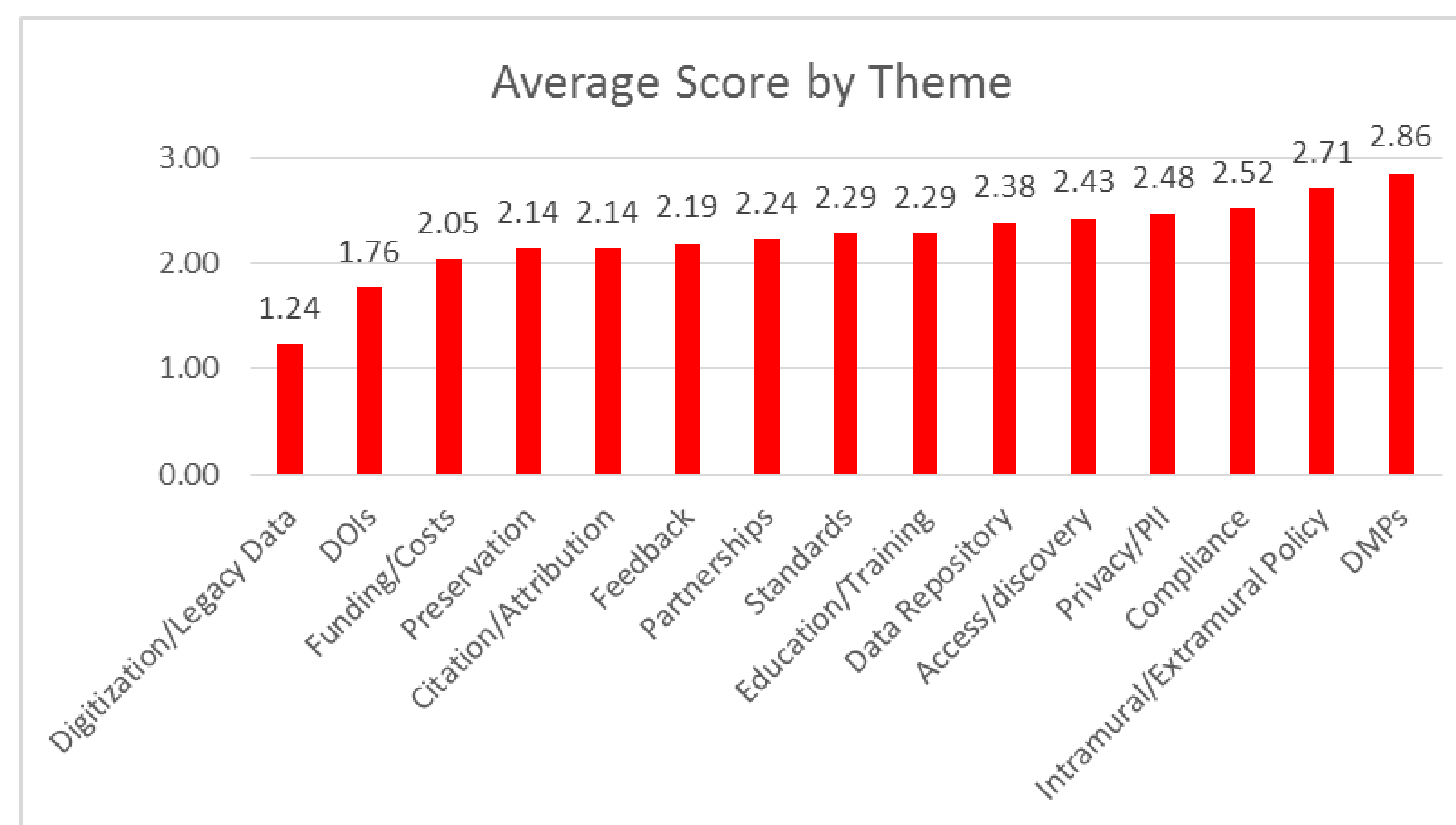
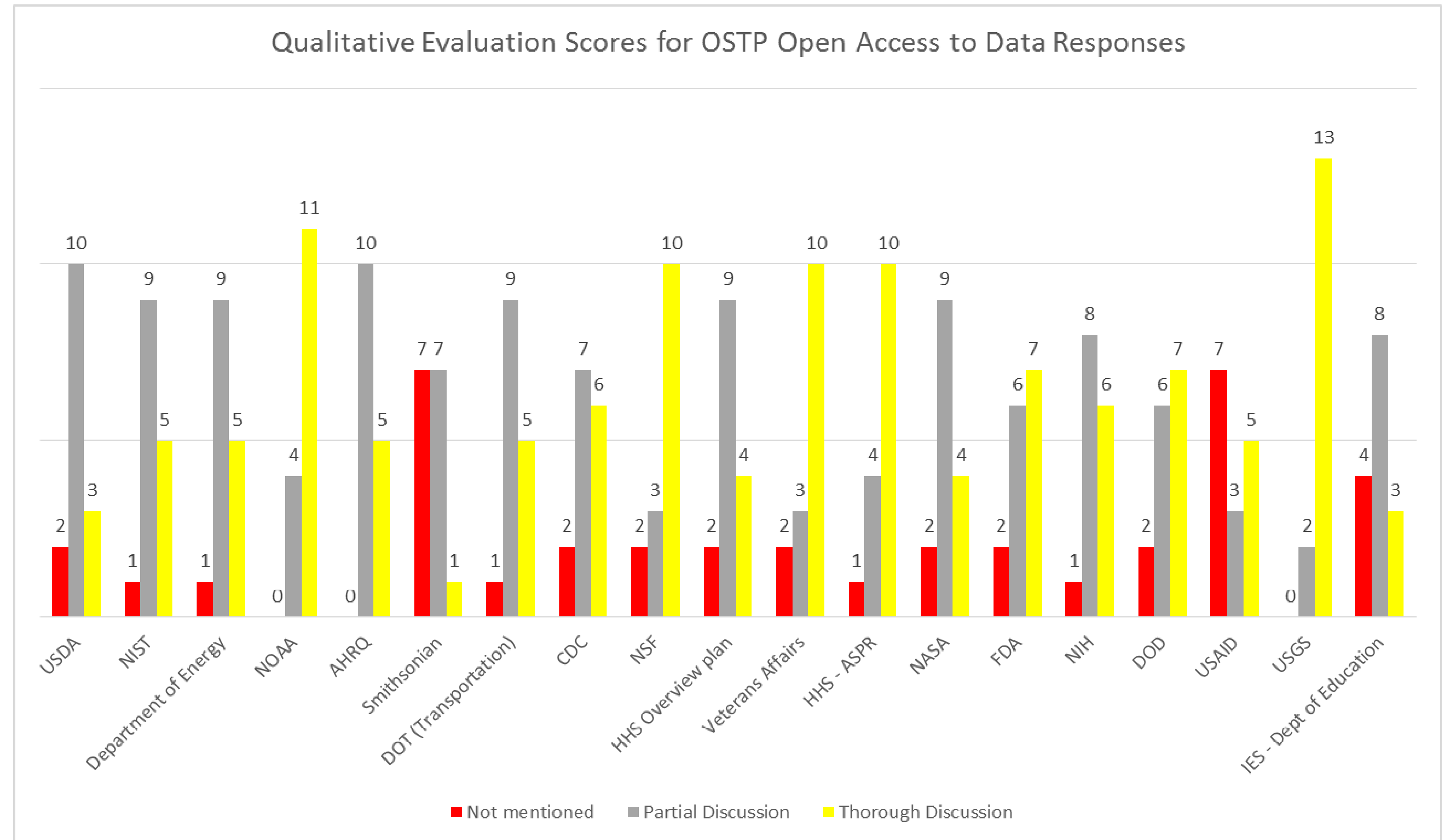
- What are the extent to which agencies responded to the OSTP Memo?
- How do these responses satisfy the requirements of the Memo?

## Methods

- We collected 19 documents that responded to the OSTP Memo (Holdren, 2013).
- We analyzed the documents using a list of 15 thematic codes based on the OSTP Memo and in consideration of the project's focus on data curation and digital preservation.
- We scored each theme following a three-point scale (theme not mentioned, theme briefly discussed, theme thoroughly discussed).

## Findings

- Agencies, like NOAA and USGS, with a long history of data curation and preservation fared better than other agencies required to comply with the OSTP memo.
- Many of the responses described plans to enact policies, with no firm procedures in place.
- The majority of agencies are not prepared to make their research data publicly available.
- The funding for making research data publicly available was largely unexplained or expressed to be a concern.



## Future Research

What is the capacity of these agencies to comply without extra funding from the Federal Government or additional legislation?



We wish to acknowledge the National Agricultural Library for sponsoring this research through a Cooperative Agreement



@archiveslab @adamkriesberg @kerryhuller