



Evidence Base software

For Regions and other NRM Groups

February 2008

Are you under pressure to demonstrate that best-available science is being used as evidence for investment decisions?

Are staff members spending time finding and filtering information but have no good way to store and share it with colleagues?

Is your office full of valuable decision making information but you don't know where to find it?

If the answer is 'yes' to any of these questions then we suggest you read on!

Evidence Base software is now available at www.nrmtoolbar.net.au. It has been specially developed for NRM groups to store and rediscover information that can be used as evidence for decision-making.



What does the software do for you?

The Evidence Base software features:

1. A simple online form that specifies the metadata required for each piece of evidence to be added
2. The ability to label each piece of evidence as public (shared with all) or private (only approved members can view)
3. Faster metadata entry by copying existing metadata from Australia's largest bibliographic databases for free
4. The option to add your own custom metadata fields to meet internal business or reporting needs
5. A place to upload a digital copy of the evidence
6. Fields that identify where any hardcopies of the evidence are available in an office location
7. A link to the NRM Search Engine on the NRM Toolbar so your evidence is automatically shared with other regions (only when public)
8. The ability to create an individual graphics 'theme' that identifies your evidence base (or use the standard one provided)
9. A built in access control system to assign an Evidence Base administrator who controls who can quality assure submissions to the database and who can view it (you are in complete control of what gets added)
10. A link to your evidence base directly from your Internet or Intranet pages

Evidence Base software advantages

So you've decided you need to improve how you manage evidence...why choose this software over others?

It makes use of existing metadata

There are a lot of existing systems that can catalogue your organisation's evidence. However, these systems make no use of the existing metadata in Australia's publicly-funded databases.

The Evidence Base software automatically searches for and uses metadata from existing databases, including the National Bibliographic Database with over 6 million records, Australian Agriculture and Natural Resources Online (AANRO), and the Australian Spatial Data Directory (ASDD), when you simply enter one or more of the following - title, ISBN or URL. This means you spend far less time entering metadata.

What is metadata?

Metadata is "structured information that describes, explains, locates and otherwise makes it easier to retrieve and use an information resource".

[OASIS E-Government Taxonomy](#)

There are no IT maintenance costs *

The Evidence Base software operates on an open source platform called Drupal. This means you don't pay licence fees and we can use software improvements paid for by other parties. Furthermore, you are not locked into using a single provider for future software development because plenty of IT companies offer Drupal development services. At present the Knowledge for Regional NRM Program at LWA pays for all server and IT support costs.

We offer free help desk support

The Knowledge for Regional NRM Program provides free support to those groups wanting to establish an evidence base. This includes help to start and configure your database. We can also arrange a quote for data migration from any existing software.

Users influence future software versions

The Knowledge for Regional NRM Program will encourage Evidence Base users to influence future software versions. We are currently establishing the means for this to occur.

Users can add search results directly from the NRM Search Engine

If you find material of interest on the NRM Search Engine at www.nrmtoolbar.net.au, one click will submit it to your Evidence Base.

What features have been discussed for the near future?

1. Selection of place names related to evidence using the Australian Place Name Gazetteer
2. Browsing evidence associated with a geographic area via Google Maps
3. Upload diagrams such as conceptual process models and link cause/effect assumptions to a list of evidence

Become an Evidence Base user to add your own ideas to this list.

Further information

For further information about how to start an Evidence Base please contact:

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For further information about the IT used by the Evidence Bases please contact:

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The Evidence Base software is part of the....



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*Ongoing payment of IT maintenance costs by the Knowledge for Regional NRM Program is conditional on the Program receiving further funds from the Australian Government post June 2008. If the Program does not receive funding alternative coordination arrangements will be set up to allow cost sharing across all Evidence Base users.

