

# NBII Resource Types: Definitions

(Developed: 2003-06; Revised 2005-04; Revised 2006-05)

**For purposes of cataloguing Web resources according to the NBII Web Resources Cataloguing Standard, Resource Types are defined as follows:**

## **Announcements and News Articles**

Online versions of popular media articles or news releases in, newspapers or newsletters, popular trade magazines, or from agencies and organizations.

Note: For all academic and professional journal articles, use the Resource Type “Journal Articles.”

## **Bibliographies and Web Indexes**

Bibliographies: Lists of works consulted, with accompanying publication information, in the composition or development of a book, article, product, service, or assignment. The product may be in hardcopy or electronic format.

Web Indexes: Lists of Web links/URLs on a particular topic. The links may or may not be accompanied by additional bibliographic or descriptive metadata.

## **Case Studies**

An intensive, detailed description and analysis of a single project, program, situation, or subject in the context of its environment. Case studies provide a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data, analyzing information, and reporting the results.

## **Checklists and Identification Guides**

Checklist: A text-based listing of species known to occur in a given area.

Identification Guide: A text-based or multi-media resource that describes physical and social characteristics of an organism to assist in their identification. ID guides may only describe an organism, or they may use a combination of text, photos, drawings, and maps to assist in identification, or to compare and distinguish one organism from another.

## **Consortia**

A group of partner agencies that represent multiple sectors, including federal, state, local, international, non-profit, academic, and/or private sector entities.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of consortia. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

## **Contracts**

A legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States Government and a State, a local government, or other recipient; the principal purpose of the instrument is to acquire (by purchase, lease, or barter) property or services for the direct benefit or use of the United States Government.

## Cooperative Agreements

An award instrument of financial assistance where "substantial involvement" is anticipated between the Federal Government and the recipient during performance of the contemplated project or activity. "Substantial involvement" means that the recipient can expect Federal programmatic collaboration or participation in managing the award.

## Databases and Information Systems

A collection of related information [a relational database], organized and presented to serve a specific purpose, and which allows for rapid query and retrieval.

*Note: A Web page with a "search" feature is not necessarily a database!*

A database allows a user to search records that are stored on a server. These records are created by some type of back-end software solution (examples are Access, SQL, and Oracle). Users can query against one or more record elements. Results are usually displayed as dynamic output.

By comparison, a search engine is searching Web pages (not database records) that match your query.

Database=searchable records via a query interface

Web site=searchable text of Web pages via a simple search box

For the purpose of cataloguing biological databases, we are making the following critical distinction:

Dataset=raw data elements that lack any human, value-added interpretation or processing (just the data itself)

Database=collection of related information with human processing and value-added elements (data can be included, but the collective whole has been organized and analyzed to serve a particular purpose)

## Datasets

Any resource that is a collection of pieces of data (raw or statistically analyzed). Also, a multi-dimensional array of data elements that is logically related, and arranged in a prescribed format. Datasets may be spatial (a collection of logically related features arranged in a prescribed manner, such as water features), or tabular/relational (a file, a spreadsheet, data in a table or relational database).

Elements in a dataset may include values, measures, points, coordinates, conditions, qualities, frequencies or attributes that are a result of an observational study.

Note: Databases are NOT the same thing as datasets!

## Digital Photographs

Photographs produced by means of a digital camera.

Note: Do NOT use this Resource Type to indicate the presence of images on a Web site. "Digital Photographs" should be used ONLY when the object being catalogued is a photograph. If a site offers an organized collection of images for viewing, use the Resource Type "Image Galleries."

## **Directories**

A systematically organized list of persons, businesses, organizations, or associations that provides addresses, affiliations, telephone numbers, and similar information.

## **Fact Sheets**

A concise summary, usually one page, on a specific issue, object, or subject, usually intended and formatted for physical distribution. Most fact sheets are “printer-ready” for distribution.

## **FAQs**

A list of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers.

## **Federal Government Agencies (U.S.)**

Any organization within the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the United States government, including any wholly-owned government corporation.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of a federal agency. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

## **Foreign Government Agencies**

Any unit of non-U.S. government, including any national, State, local, and municipal government and their foreign equivalents.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of a foreign government agency. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

## **Forms**

A set of data entry fields on a page. Forms can be in both print and electronic formats.

## **Illustrations (Biological)**

A visual representation (a picture or diagram) that is used describe or explain a biological process or a specimen.

## **Image Galleries**

An electronic library of images, hosted by an entity, that provides end-user access by means of Web browsing or searching.

## **Internet Map Services**

Three major types:

### Map Service

A Map Service is defined as a Internet application running through a browser which

produces maps of georeferenced data. The resource can only be called a map service if users can *interact with* the data and/or maps. Static maps such as bitmap file are not considered a map service.

#### WMS Map Service

An Open GIS Compliant Web Map Service is a Map Service that follows the WMS 1.0 or above specification which allows for any Internet application to request maps and capabilities from the Map Service which are returned as image files.

#### WFS Map Service

An Open GIS compliant Web Feature Service is a Map Service that follows the WFS 1.0 or above specification which allows for any Internet application to request maps and capabilities from the Map Service which are returned as feature files which can be used for analytic or geospatial processing

Note: Please DO NOT use this Resource Type to catalogue a static map.

### **Issue Overviews**

A narrative introduction, study or review of a particular biological factor, event, issue, or condition.

### **Journal Articles**

A piece of writing on a specific topic, by one or more authors, that forms an independent part of a professional or academic periodical publication.

Note: for articles from newspapers and popular, mainstream magazines, use “Announcements and News Articles.”

### **K-12 Curriculum and Lesson Plans**

Comprehensive, scientifically credible lesson plans for K-12 teachers. Good curricula should include such features as: objectives, concept overview, materials, instructions, and anticipated outcomes. Curricula may be stand-alone projects, or entire units designed around a scientific theme.

Look carefully at the origin of the curriculum (e.g. the Creator or Publisher). Preference in selecting curricula to catalogue should be given to sites developed by universities, school districts, educational publishers, scientific organizations, teachers’ associations, and museums.

### **Laws and Regulations**

Text of international, federal, state, or local treaties, laws, policies, or regulations governing the management or use of, or interaction with, natural resources.

### **Life Histories and Species Profiles**

These terms often are used interchangeably. Both are narrative descriptions which focus on comprehensive information about a specific species, including such details as its evolutionary

history; taxonomic treatment and phylogeny; breeding and reproduction; life cycle; diet; habitat needs and preferences; phylogeny; distribution; and population status.

### **Management Plans and Reports**

A plan guiding overall management of an area or a species, administered by a federal or state agency, non-profit, or private landowner. A management plan usually includes objectives, goals, standards and guidelines, management actions, inventory data, and monitoring plans. It outlines prescribed activities designed to meet ownership/stakeholder objectives.

### **Manuals**

A book of instructions for use as a guide or reference; a reference source giving instructions, rules, and procedures for performing certain tasks.

### **Monitoring Protocols**

The formal design or plan for observing, collecting, recording, and analyzing data that results from the routine counting, testing or measuring of environmental factors or biota to determine their status or condition. The protocol includes a description of the research design or methodology to be employed, the eligibility requirements for prospective subjects and controls, the treatment regimen(s), and the proposed methods of analysis that will be performed on the collected data.

### **Museum Collections**

An electronically accessible collection of museum specimens.

### **Non-profit Agencies**

An agency or organization whose business is not conducted or maintained for the purpose of making a profit, but instead operates to serve a public good. Any net earnings by a non-profit organization are used by the organization for the purposes of which it was established.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of a non-profit agency. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

### **Photographs from Print**

A digital photograph rendered from a print original.

### **Photographs from Slides**

A digital photograph rendered from a slide original.

### **Presentations**

Web-based renderings of professionally delivered presentations at conferences and meetings. Examples include Powerpoint presentations and transcripts of keynote speeches.

## **Private Agencies**

Any business, agency, or organization whose activities are conducted or maintained for the purpose of making a profit.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of a private agency. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

## **Proceedings**

Official publication by a professional agency or organization of keynotes, formal papers, or abstracts delivered at a formal meeting or conference.

## **Recommended Practices**

Resources devoted to scientifically credible “best practices” or “recommended methods” regarding management, use, or conservation of natural resources.

## **Site Conservation Plans**

A plan that provides a specific, place-based blueprint for preserving and protecting the outstanding universal value and qualities of the natural resources assets of a particular area.

## **Standards and Guidelines**

A specified set of mandatory or discretionary rules, requirements, or conditions concerned with performance, design, operation, or measurements of quality to accomplish a specific task.

## **State Government Agencies (U.S.)**

The governments of any of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, or any agency or instrumentality of a State exclusive of local governments.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of a state agency. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

## **Table or Spreadsheet**

Table: An organized external representation of information, typically in rows and columns.

Spreadsheet: Table of numerical data in which columns and rows are related by formulae.

## **Taxonomies**

A resource focused on the identification and unique naming of organisms based on the shared possession of characteristics.

## **Textbooks (Digital)**

A digitally-rendered book that strives to teach a student about a particular discipline, usually academic, and they are usually divided into chapters based on subject area.

### **Thesauri, Glossaries, and Dictionaries**

Electronic versions of key reference works for biological and natural resources.

Thesaurus: An alphabetical list of terms and concepts representing the specialized vocabulary of a particular field, showing relationships among terms, such as broader, narrower, and related terms, as well as preferred and non-preferred terms. It is the most complex type of controlled vocabulary, and is sometimes used to standardize an organization's terminology and subsequently inform both navigation and search systems.

Glossary: An alphabetical list of words, limited to a special area of knowledge, with their definitions.

Dictionary: A collection of words arranged alphabetically with information about their form, pronunciation, functions, etymologies and meanings.

### **Theses and Dissertations**

Electronic versions of academic theses and dissertations from accredited colleges and universities.

### **Tools and Software**

Software: Downloadable software for the management and/or sharing of data.

Tools: Downloadable or Web-based tools that allow users to manipulate or interact with data, or to collaborate. Examples include modeling, analysis, and visualization tools.

Note: search engines, searchable directories, and electronic reference products are not tools.

### **Treaties and Conventions**

A formal and binding agreement under international law concluded by subjects of international law, namely states and international organizations, with a view to producing legal effects in their mutual relations and which must be executed in good faith. It usually consists of a title, a preamble, recitals, a series of numbered articles and a conclusion, which is immediately followed by the signatures.

### **Universities**

An institution of higher education and of research, which grants academic degrees.

Note: This Resource Type should be used only when cataloguing the home page of a university. Please catalogue online products of an agency as separate and unique content items.

### **Zoos, Aquaria and Botanical Gardens**

Zoo: A place where wild animals are encaged in an artificial environment and exhibited to the public.

Aquarium: An establishment where aquatic collections of living organisms are kept in an artificial environment and exhibited to the public.

Botanical Garden: A place where a wide variety of plants are grown both for scientific purposes and for the enjoyment and education of visitors.

If you have questions regarding any of these Resource Type definitions, please contact Lisa Zolly in the NBII Program Office < [lisa\\_zolly@usgs.gov](mailto:lisa_zolly@usgs.gov) >.