
Observations on the aspects of how CABI, an intergovernmental organization, manages and shares its information

Qiaoqiao Zhang & Elizabeth Dodsworth
CAB International

A. Observations on aspects of how CABI manages and shares its information and data related to agricultural research

CABI is committed to contributing to the management, preservation and access of agricultural research information. We contribute in several ways, as a generator of knowledge and as a knowledge service provider as a publisher and as a partner in global thematic database development.

CABI has focused much of its efforts in harnessing the World Wide Web as the channel for sharing the knowledge we generate and the databases and services we provide to a global audience. We work with third parties to host our commercial databases including a new e-books platform, and in some cases we also have versions that we host ourselves. We work with technology partners to develop seamless content discovery and user centred design. We have an in-house content management system and many of our websites and databases are built on this platform. These systems and services are costly in terms of technology development and editorial input, hence value for money, efficiency, robustness, scalability and technical support are key in our decision making.

Our databases are open URL compliant and generate XML outputs. We apply DOIs to CAB Abstracts records and we have developed templates and metadata standards for each of our databases to match the needs of the users. The CAB Thesaurus is a key tool in applying index terms and keywords and has more than 62,000 plant, animal and micro organism names and the relevant CAS registry numbers for chemicals and commission notation for enzymes. The content in our database is therefore discoverable from web search engines.

Our priority at the moment is looking at the interoperability issues of matching pest and disease occurrence data with diagnostic and treatment information. This will enable farmers, extension workers, and agricultural research workers to plan and anticipate pest and disease threats.

B. Case studies

Name	CAB Direct
Information type	Bibliographic records and full text
Subject scope	Agriculture and Environment Research
Amount of digital information	>9 million bibliographic records >100,000 full text (Europe 29%; South Asia 29%; Central and South America 13%; Asia 9%; Middle east 8%; North America 6%; Africa 5%, and; Australasia 2%)
Ownership and access	CABI owns copyright on the whole database and has permission from the copyright holders to host their full text. Access is by paid subscription. Global Agricultural Research Archive, a subset of CAB Direct is openly accessible.
Information management standards	Open URL compliant, DOIs (more than 1.5 million with 460,000 added to the Archive back to 1914), CAB Thesaurus, meta search compliant, API compatible

Name	Invasive Species Compendium
Information type	Datasheets/Factsheets
Subject scope	Invasive species management
Amount of digital information	~ 1500 detailed factsheets on invasive species ~ 7000 basic factsheets ~ 65,000 bibliographic references ~ 4,000 images ~750 full text reports
Ownership and access	CABI owns copyright on the whole database. Openly accessible to all
Information management standards	Open URL compliant, CAB Thesaurus, built on in-house content management system

Name	Biofuels Information Exchange
Information type	Information portal to relevant documents and discussion space
Subject scope	Biofuels crop production and impact
Amount of digital information	~35,000 bibliographic references ~ Links to related information ~ Discussion forum ~ Membership space
Ownership and access	CABI owns copyright on the site. Most of the site is openly accessible to all. Closed area for Members discussion fora.
Information management standards	Built on Ning platform

Contact:
 Qiaoqiao Zhang & Elizabeth Dodsworth
 CAB International
 Email: q.zhang@cabi.org