



## 3. Use and future development of the Directory

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### Using the Directory

THE DIRECTORY IS NOW ESSENTIALLY AN ONLINE TOOL, AND UNLIKELY TO APPEAR AGAIN IN PRINT AS IN THE FIRST TWO EDITIONS (ANCA 1993, 1996). The site information within these two publications has been transferred to an Oracle database that is now accessible via the Internet.

This is an important advance for the Directory and fulfils a commitment made in the second edition to make the information available electronically. In practical terms it means that the latest information on existing and new nationally important wetlands can be made available as soon as it is entered into the Directory database. Inventory work currently in progress, funded through the National Wetlands Program, can be immediately uploaded when it is completed.

The Directory Internet site includes a map of the listed wetland where available. The present coverage used to illustrate Directory sites has been derived largely from a 1:250,000 coverage of waterbodies produced by the Australian Surveying and Land Information Group (1994). Environment Australia is negotiating with the States and Territories, and Commonwealth land managers, for the supply of more accurate spatial data where these are available.

The Directory interface is being set up to provide users with as much functionality as possible. Site data can be sought through a search form that allows users to query the data on a number of fields, such as State, Bioregion, Wetland type and Criteria for inclusion from a menu, and user-defined text in other fields. Users can also use a spatial data engine to select an area on the map to search for listed wetlands. A Help facility for the online Directory is included.

Access to Directory data is via the Wetlands Section—Environment Australia homepage:  
<http://www.environment.gov.au/water/wetlands>

### Future development of the Directory

Now that the wetland data are in electronic format it is possible to perform the types of analyses illustrated in this publication. These provide a useful snapshot of the current representation of wetland types and criteria for inclusion across jurisdictions and, perhaps more importantly, across biogeographic regions.

The summary statistics presented in this publication utilise the data most readily accessible in the database. Information on wetland types and criteria has been stored according to the appropriate codes, making it much easier to extract and manipulate. Most of the information is text based and hence analyses are not so straight forward, for example, analyses on land tenure and management arrangements for wetlands listed in the Directory is currently quite difficult. Environment Australia will be investigating how best to make text based data more easily accessible for analytical purposes.

The Directory entries also contain useful information about wetland taxa, but these data have also been entered in text fields. Of particular interest from a conservation point of view, and in meeting legislative obligations, is information about threatened and migratory species. The database has been set up with taxon tables to allow for entry, and hence searching and reporting, of taxon specific information for wetland sites. Extracting data in the existing site descriptions and seeking additional survey data not previously included to populate these tables is a large undertaking, but it is anticipated that this will be done progressively to increase the usefulness of the Directory as a resource.

The fact that the data are now in electronic format and can be displayed in a GIS has allowed some analysis of the distribution of sites in relation to Drainage Divisions and Basins. It is intended to add these data to the Directory information for future reference.

Feedback on the Directory from all users is welcome. If your comments relate to site information contained in the Directory, or information relating to possible new sites, these would be best directed to the ANZECC Taskforce member in your State or Territory. If you have comments relating to the online Directory and how this may be improved, please direct your comments to Geoff Larmour in the Environment Australia Wetlands Section. Contact details are provided at the end of the publication.