



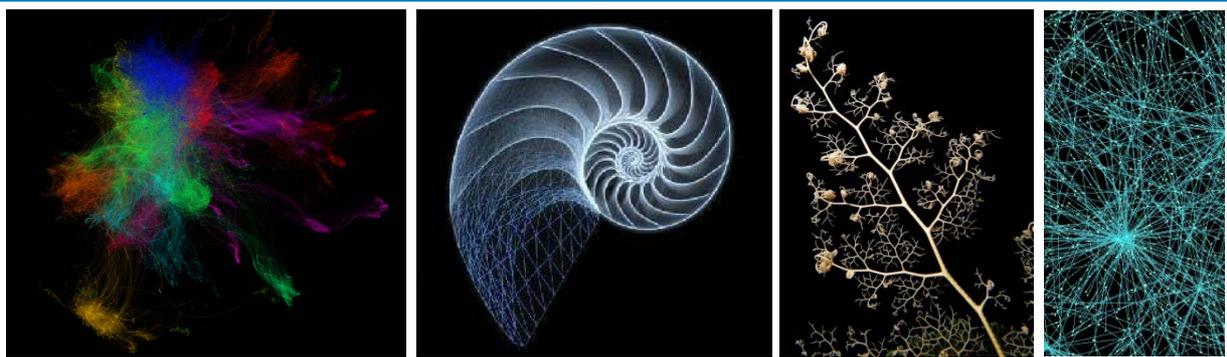
**Marine  
Biodiversity  
Hub**

National **Environmental Science** Programme

**Project B3 -  
Enhancing access to relevant marine information:  
developing a service for searching, aggregating and  
filtering collections of linked open marine data  
– Scoping study**

Johnathan Kool, Geoscience Australia

Milestone report  
25 November 2015



[www.nespmarine.edu.au](http://www.nespmarine.edu.au)

Enquiries should be addressed to:  
Johnathan Kool  
Geoscience Australia  
Cnr Jerrabomberra Ave and Hindmarsh Drive  
Symonston, ACT 2609

Tel: 02 6249 5842  
e-mail: johnathan.kool@ga.gov.au

## Copyright

This report is licensed by the University of Tasmania for use under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Australia Licence. For licence conditions, see <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

## Acknowledgement

This work was undertaken for the Marine Biodiversity Hub, a collaborative partnership supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Environmental Research Program (NESP). NESP Marine Biodiversity Hub partners include the University of Tasmania; CSIRO, Geoscience Australia, Australian Institute of Marine Science, Museum Victoria, Charles Darwin University, the University of Western Australia, Integrated Marine Observing System, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Department of Primary Industries.

## Important Disclaimer

The NESP Marine Biodiversity Hub advises that the information contained in this publication comprises general statements based on scientific research. The reader is advised and needs to be aware that such information may be incomplete or unable to be used in any specific situation. No reliance or actions must therefore be made on that information without seeking prior expert professional, scientific and technical advice. To the extent permitted by law, the NESP Marine Biodiversity Hub (including its host organisation, employees, partners and consultants) excludes all liability to any person for any consequences, including but not limited to all losses, damages, costs, expenses and any other compensation, arising directly or indirectly from using this publication (in part or in whole) and any information or material contained in it.

# Contents

- Executive Summary ..... 2**
- 1. Introduction ..... 2**
- 2. Reviewing existing linked open data capability ..... 3**
- 3. Conceptual development..... 4**
- 4. Back-end Application Programming Interface (API)..... 4**
  - 4.1 Sources of information ..... 4
  - 4.2 Document enhancement with semantic tagging ..... 4
  - 4.3 Automating the enhancement process ..... 5
  - 4.4 Linking data..... 7
  - 4.5 Information delivery as a web service..... 7
- 5. Software architecture options ..... 8**
- 6. Proof of concept – a working example ..... 11**
- 7. Front-end user interface design & features..... 15**
- 8. What capabilities will the system deliver (what is in scope)?..... 16**
- 9. What capabilities won't the system deliver (what is out of scope)?..... 16**
- 10. Personnel..... 16**
- 11. Project timeline ..... 17**

# List of Figures

- Figure 1 – Examples of dynamic faceting from Amazon.com ..... 5
- Figure 2 – Example rdf for 'Geoscience Australia' from DBPedia..... 9
- Figure 3 - Example of linked RDF documents..... 10
- Figure 4 – Document enhancement Stanbol via the interactive user interface..... 12
- Figure 5 - Examples of terms extracted from the NERP Oceanic Shoals Survey Report ..... 13
- Figure 6 – Example search on tagged data (example term: Sponge) ..... 14
- Figure 7 – Example of stored RDF information (formatted as RDF/XML). ..... 14
- Figure 8 – Mock-up of the front-end graphic user interface design ..... 15
- Figure 9 – Proposed project timeline..... 17

# List of Tables

- Table 1 – Cross-comparison of linked open data engine features ..... 8

---

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project seeks to improve the searchability, discoverability and delivery of marine information through the development of an online service capable of searching, filtering and organizing linked open marine data. The service would also provide the capability of forwarding the collections of discovered data to web services for subsequent processing into products of higher utility. This work will improve access to existing data collections, and will facilitate the development of new applications by acting as an aggregator of links to sources of marine information. The work will benefit managers (i.e. Department of the Environment staff) by providing fast and simple access to a wide range of relevant marine information products, and offering a means of quickly synthesizing and aggregating information from multiple sources.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An emerging priority in information management is building smarter information search engines that are tailored to specific types of end users. These end-user-focused systems can provide highly targeted and relevant results immediately, in contrast to the common experience of sifting through extensive collections of potentially irrelevant items.

Currently, Australia has a broad array of scientific information products related to the marine environment. Examples not only include geospatial (GIS) information, but also products such as documents, websites, tables, images and video. Furthermore, different user groups will have different approaches when looking for information. For example, one user group may have a geographic focus (e.g. Western Australia, Great Barrier Reef), another may have a policy focus (water quality management, conservation planning), or alternatively, there may be particular species of interest (e.g. sharks, crown-of-thorns starfish). It is also possible that users may wish to identify materials that combine the different factors (e.g. find information pertaining to sharks and conservation planning, but do not include whale sharks, items related to the Great Barrier Reef, or video). Traditional methods of information delivery (e.g. portal data lists) present limited options for sifting through large data collections in a manner flexible enough to accommodate a variety of search strategies and entry points.

To advance our ability to utilise marine information, this report sets out a plan of work to establish an online service that can:

- Search arbitrary collections of linked data using a search string (a 'Google' search)
- Bin/Classify the returned items into categories of interest (faceting)
- Return items in order of relevance with respect to the search string
- Filter/subset the collection of returned items
- Provide the ability to forward the information subset on to other services for further processing

We intend to develop a flexible interface focused on the information requirements of the Department of the Environment to search, filter and deliver connections to linked open marine data (this tool could also be applied to data within the Department). This will help provide efficient access to a wide range of information sources using a Google-type search interface that will have an intuitive feel for non-specialist users. The user experience should be simple, familiar, and straightforward – no more complicated than interacting with shopping interfaces such as Amazon or eBay, yet capable of letting users quickly and easily find and access collections of information that are relevant to their needs. The interface will accept a single

search string, and will return an ordered/sorted list of results. The resulting collections of data resources can then be forwarded to other web services for plotting, ingestion into modelling tools and virtual laboratories, or saving as a report. This contrasts with previous efforts to generate map ‘portals’ by providing a targeted subset of information tailored to individual needs that can be updated dynamically (akin to an Amazon search for marine information as opposed to books and household goods).

By enhancing the accessibility and utility of a raft of marine information the proposed project aligns with Marine Biodiversity Research Priorities to:

- Develop and trial decision making tools that will support managers to define and prioritise activities.
- Provide meaningful and accessible information on the status and trends of key social and economic values associated with the marine environment.
- Improve our knowledge of key marine species and ecosystems to underpin their better management and protection
- Enhance the role of citizen science in the management of marine biodiversity.

The enhanced search capability of the system will be enabled through the development and use of semantically-enabled data. Semantically-enabled data is information that is structured in such a way that it is possible for machines to understand its meaning without human intervention. Using semantically-enabled data, new opportunities emerge for analysing and delivering information resources stemming from the ability for computer systems to aggregate and filter items in an automated manner, and to identify connections across a network of linked concepts. For example, linking projects, organizations, research subjects, spatial and temporal information and information delivery capabilities as a network of relationships. The better-described the information, the greater the improvement in terms of its capabilities for application to specific information needs.

## 2. REVIEWING EXISTING LINKED OPEN DATA CAPABILITY

Although there are some ongoing linked open data initiatives within the Australian Government, the present use of linked open data is not widespread. The W3C, the principal international standards organization for the World Wide Web, has developed the following assessment criteria for linked data:

- ★ On the web – available on the Web, whatever format, under an open license
- ★★ Machine-readable – structured data, e.g. Excel instead of image scan of a table
- ★★★ Non-proprietary formats – e.g., CSV instead of Excel
- ★★★★ RDF standards – RDF & SPARQL using HTTP URIs
- ★★★★★ Linked RDF – RDF linked to other data to provide context

Data.gov.au maintains catalogue metadata in RDF form (e.g. [Water Quality Zones](#)), however this information is metadata only, and is not linked to other data objects, meaning that presently, the collection only conforms to the four-star standard. Geofabric, a BOM project for representing key inland hydrological features has fully linked RDF, as do the [People](#), [Datasets](#) and [Licenses](#) collections of the [Bioregional Assessments](#) program (a collaboration among the

Department of the Environment, CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology and Geoscience Australia). Note that these projects have no direct relation with the marine environment, however they do demonstrate that there is both interest and uptake of the linked open data concept by Australian Government agencies for the purpose of better managing and utilising environmental information. While some work has been done to incorporate linked open data as part of the [eReefs](#) program ([Car, 2013](#)), within the various agencies and organizations responsible for collecting and curating marine data the move towards taking advantage of linked open data is still in its early stages. However, already in this project we are able to demonstrate a workflow that is capable of taking existing metadata and documents, and enhancing them in an automated manner, and have executed this workflow on existing Marine Biodiversity Hub resources.

### 3. CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

The linked open data delivery system will be split into two components: (i) back-end software accessed through an [application programming interface](#) (API), and; (ii) a front-end web-based graphic user interface (GUI). The term 'API' refers to the interface between different software programs, facilitating their interaction, similar to the way the user interface facilitates interaction between humans and computers. The API provides a mechanism for communicating and interacting with software through a prescribed set of programming commands. The web-based GUI is designed to take human input, and translate it into those same programming commands. This way, the capabilities of the system can be leveraged by humans in an interactive manner, or by machines in an automated manner.

## 4. BACK-END APPLICATION PROGRAMMING INTERFACE (API)

### 4.1 Sources of information

The fundamental operating unit of the linked open data delivery system is the *document*. Documents can consist of full text (e.g. a traditional text document), or tagged information (e.g. web page content, or metadata), and the format of the document may vary (e.g. Text, [XML](#), [JSON](#), [JSON-LD](#) etc.). The distinguishing feature of a document is that it contains information that can be represented as text, as opposed to binary or encoded data. The text-based nature of documents ensures that irrespective of their internal structure, their content can be searched and parsed in a consistent manner; documents, regardless of their internal structure, will always be composed of strings of characters.

### 4.2 Document enhancement with semantic tagging

Although documents (whether they contain metadata or text) do contain a great deal of information, the information that they contain is typically not structured in such a way that makes it possible to dynamically organize collections of documents based on their content. By 'dynamic organization' we mean that the resources can be partitioned and grouped in a permutable manner. That is, it is possible to organize a collection of resources on the basis of geography (e.g. state), sample gear type and taxa sampled (in that order) or on the basis of sampling organization, taxa sampled, measurement type and geography (in that order). By way of example, Amazon.com returns dynamic groups (also referred to as *dynamic facets*)

when searching its product catalogue (Figure 1). Thus, searching Amazon’s book list for the topic ‘marine science’ generates subcategories such as: *Marine Biology*, *Oceanography*, *Ecology* and *Science & Math*. A search on ‘Great Barrier Reef’ splits into *Great Barrier Reef Travel Guides*, *Oceans and Seas*, *Oceania History*, *Marine Biology* and *Science & Math* (among others). In contrast, a search on ‘car repair’ returns classes such as *Automotive Repair*, *Trucks & Vans* and *Engineering*. The key point here is that a fixed classification system that would be meaningful when searching for books on car repair would be neither useful nor appropriate for classifying and grouping information resources related to the Great Barrier Reef. A way of categorizing the information dynamically at search time is needed. Through the searches on ‘marine science’ and ‘Great Barrier Reef’, it also becomes clear that there are multiple avenues of connecting to the same topic – for instance, the concept of ‘Marine Biology’, accessed via a subject-based search and a location-based search respectively.

**Figure 1 – Examples of dynamic faceting from Amazon.com. The first search uses the search term ‘marine’, the second uses ‘Great Barrier Reef’, and the third uses ‘car repair’**

<u>Search on ‘marine science’</u>	<u>Search on ‘Great Barrier Reef’</u>	<u>Search on ‘car repair’</u>
Marine Biology (3,716)	Great Barrier Reef Travel Guides (78)	Automotive Repair (4,979)
Oceanography (1,898)	General Australia & South Pacific Travel (400)	Automotive (5,851)
Ecology (3,478)	Oceans & Seas (892)	Owner’s Manuals & Maintenance Guides (3,319)
Biology (5,910)	Australia & New Zealand History (237)	Transportation (7,105)
Reference (4,997)	General Australia Travel Guides (260)	Customize (974)
Science & Technology for Teens (55)	Scuba (110)	Trucks & Vans (669)
Science & Math (19,964)	Scuba Travel Guides (56)	Reference (4,839)
Children’s Science & Nature Books (2,142)	History (1,295)	Automotive Fuel Systems (106)
Education & Reference (95)	Oceania History (56)	Engineering (2,680)
+ See more	Marine Biology (471)	Mechanical Engineering (178)
	+ See more	Engineering & Transportation (7,654)
		Children’s Books (405)
		+ See more

This capacity for dynamic and flexible sub-setting is important, because it gives users the ability to find, group and filter collections of information via searching in an unstructured manner, and letting the computer system perform the tedious, but helpful work of sorting the collection of information into natural subgroups within the context of the search chain.

Dynamic faceting is possible if terms within documents have been marked up with tags that distinguish the different forms of content within the document. Examples can include common tags such as ‘Title’, ‘Abstract’ and ‘Authors’, but any word or phrase can be categorised using an arbitrary number of classifier tags.

### 4.3 Automating the enhancement process

In order to take full advantage of document enhancement and semantic tagging, it is essential to have a means of automatically marking up documents and metadata. Manually tagging

documents would require prohibitive amounts of (unnecessary) effort on the part of data providers, and would certainly be unsustainable in the long term as new data sets continually arise. A more practical approach is to take advantage of existing software packages that are capable of automatically extracting key terms from structured documents ([Named Entity Recognition](#) – NER), and then linking those terms with established term lists (vocabularies). Existing software with this capability include [OpenNLP](#) (Java) and the [Natural Language Toolkit](#) (Python).

Vocabularies are used to provide a controlled list of terms that are able to unambiguously identify different objects, concepts or actions in a form that lends itself to automation and interpretation using computer systems. The controlled nature of vocabularies ensures that there is a defined structure that machines can use to organize the information, while the modular nature of vocabularies also ensures that they can be modified, updated and replaced as necessary, allowing the system to evolve over time.

The following are examples of existing vocabulary services that could be used as part of this project:

<a href="#">Dbpedia</a>	A translation of Wikipedia entries into linked open data form
<a href="#">Geonames</a>	Over 8 million placenames as linked open data
<a href="#">CSIRO Linked Data Registry</a>	Australian scientific vocabulary registry
<a href="#">NERC Vocabulary Server</a>	Lists of standardised terms that cover a broad spectrum of disciplines of relevance to the oceanographic and wider community.
<a href="#">CF Standard Names</a>	Standard names when working with NetCDF and climate data
<a href="#">IGSN</a>	A 9-digit alphanumeric code that uniquely identifies samples from the natural environment and related sampling features
<a href="#">ORCID</a>	Provides a persistent digital identifier for researchers
<a href="#">QUDT</a>	Quantities, units, dimensions and data types ontology.
<a href="#">Dublin Core</a>	Terms used to describe web resources, physical resources and objects.
<a href="#">SKOS</a>	A common data model for sharing and linking knowledge organization systems
<a href="#">OWL</a>	Provides a formal way of describing taxonomies and classification networks.
<a href="#">FOAF</a>	A machine-readable ontology describing persons, their activities and their relations to other people and objects
<a href="#">Vcard/Organization Ontology</a>	Specifications for describing people and organisations

It is also possible to generate new vocabularies to specify terms and concepts that have not been captured elsewhere, but it is usually best to take advantage of previous work whenever possible to avoid duplicating effort, and to build user consensus around the term lists. Additional formal vocabularies that could be developed and incorporated into this work could include Australian government entities (agencies, organizations and units); key policies, laws and regulations (e.g. linking to [ComLaw](#)), and defining key marine biophysical features of interest.

## 4.4 Linking data

A critical aspect of vocabularies is that they are not simply word lists and classifiers, but can also link to documents that provide a formal description of their subject, with their own links to related resources (identified using Uniform Resource Indicators – URIs – e.g. <http://xxx.yyy>). Presently, the commonly used format for these objects is RDF ([Resource Description Framework](#)). RDF provides a specification for structuring documents, based on the idea of making statements about resources in the form of subject-predicate-object expressions known as *triples* (e.g. Fig 2). A *subject* is the resource being described, and a *predicate* defines the nature of the relationship between the *subject* and the *object*. For example, a document on Geoscience Australia’s Oceanic Shoals Survey might represent the concept that “the National Environmental Science Program is a program under the Department of the Environment” as *subject*: “National Environmental Science Program”; *predicate*: “is a program of”; and *object*: “Department of the Environment”. Note that the terms “National Environmental Science Program” and “Department of the Environment” may contain links to other vocabulary terms which in turn refer to RDF documents describing these two entities. The result is a network of linked documents that are machine readable, and the connections among them are machine-traversable (Fig. 3). This is the fundamental concept underpinning the notion of linked open data and the ‘[semantic web](#)’. Note that triple elements can also be prefaced with a vocabulary reference, meaning that it is possible to mix, match and swap the vocabularies being used for term referencing.

## 4.5 Information delivery as a web service

Although the idea of being able to search, organize, filter and traverse a collection of linked information products is a powerful one, it is essential that these capabilities be accessible in a manner that lends itself to interoperability, scalability, and ease of use. As previously indicated, the interface should be no more complicated than navigating a commercial website such as Amazon.com, and by the same token, should be able to easily plug into and interact with standard web components and services – RESTful APIs offer a means of accomplishing this. REST ([Representational State Transfer](#)) is a style of software architecture that operates on the basis of constraining the manner in which different components, connectors, and data elements interact. This is a consistent, whole-of-software industry-recognised framework by which web services operate and communicate with one another – effectively conforming to an operational standard. This approach ensures that developing interfaces that interact with the web service are simple, that individual components can be easily changed and replaced, that individual components are portable, and that the manner in which various components communicate can be clearly interpreted. Reducing the complexity of communication also offers benefits in terms of system-level performance and scalability. RDF output formats include JSON-LD, RDF/XML, RDF/JSON, [Turtle](#) format and [N-Triples](#). In particular, XML and JSON are widely recognised and used, and a broad array of tools and software packages exist to work with these formats. For example, XML can be easily filtered and rearranged (e.g. using [XSLT](#)), and visualised in a flexible manner through the use of stylesheets (e.g. [cascading style sheets](#) - CSS).

## 5. SOFTWARE ARCHITECTURE OPTIONS

Despite the complexities in delivering the features described above, several software packages have been developed that are capable of delivering these capabilities, including: PoolParty, Topquadrant, CKAN and Apache Stanbol (Table 1).

**Table 1 – Cross-comparison of linked open data engine features**

	<a href="#">PoolParty</a>	<a href="#">Topquadrant</a>	<a href="#">CKAN</a>	<a href="#">Apache Stanbol</a>
<b>Privately owned?</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<b>Open source?</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Purchase cost</b>	US\$6588/y	\$3450+/license/y	Free	Free
<b>Language</b>	Java	Flex	Python	Java
<b>Linked Data</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Tag Vocabularies</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Web management interface</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Natural Language Processing module</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Stanbol was selected as our test development environment of choice owing to the free, open source nature of the software, its use of Java as a development language, and its natural language processing capabilities.

Figure 2 – [Example rdf for 'Geoscience Australia'](#) from DBpedia. DBpedia is a project that is automatically translating Wikipedia entries into linked RDF data.

dbpedia.org/page/Geoscience\_Australia

metametadata

Most Visited Getting Started Web Slice Gallery Suggested Sites

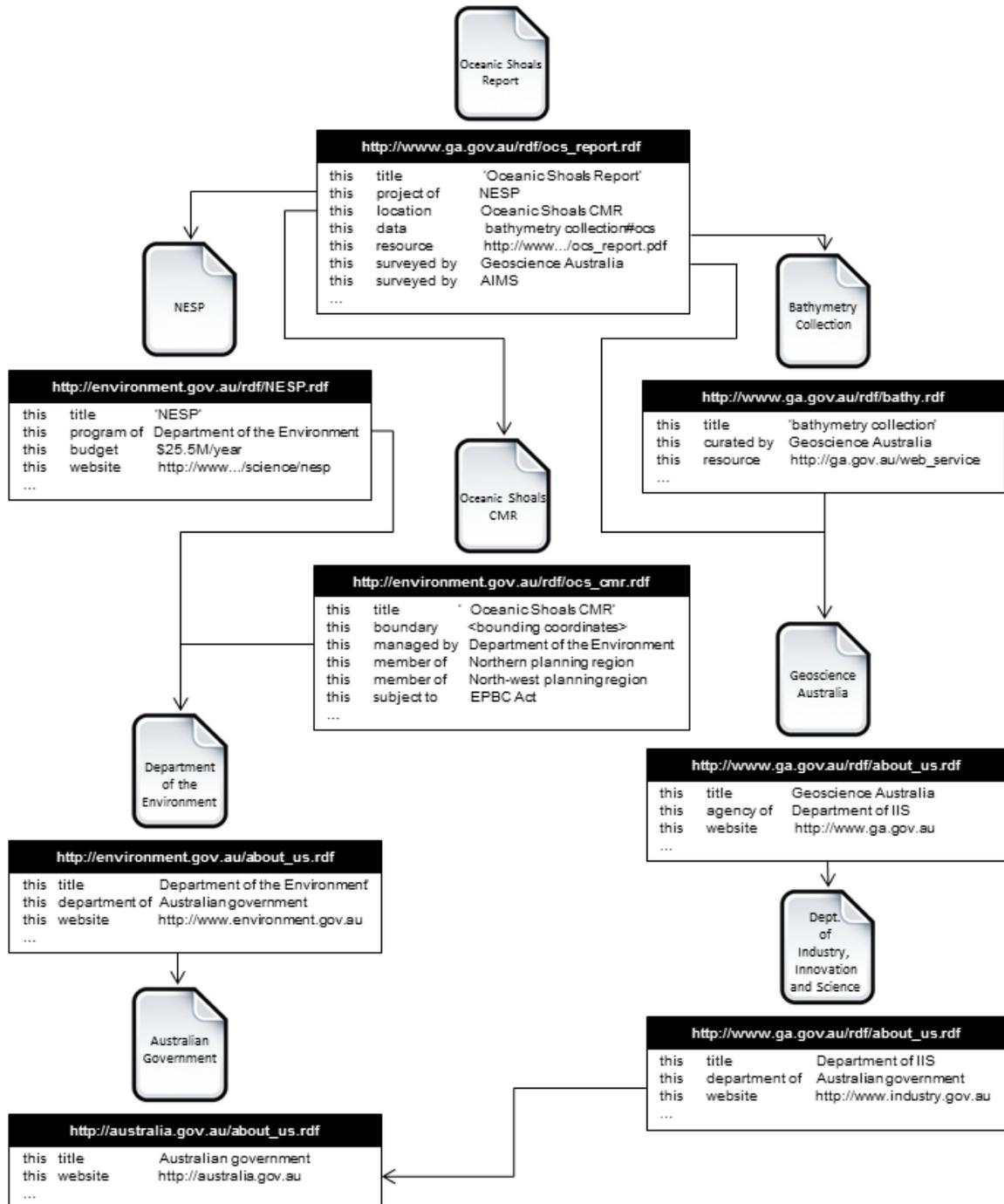
About: **Geoscience Australia**

An Entity of Type : [Company](#), from Named Graph : <http://dbpedia.org>, within Data Space : [dbpedia.org](#)

Geoscience Australia is an agency of the Australian federal government. It carries out geoscientific research. On a user pays basis it produces geospatial products such as topographic maps and satellite imagery.

Property	Value
dbo:abstract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geoscience Australia is an agency of the Australian federal government. It carries out geoscientific research. On a user pays basis it produces geospatial products such as topographic maps and satellite imagery.</li> </ul>
dbo:thumbnail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Special:FilePath/Geoscience_Australia.jpg?width=300">http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Special:FilePath/Geoscience_Australia.jpg?width=300</a></li> </ul>
dbo:wikiPageExternalLink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://www.ga.gov.au/">http://www.ga.gov.au/</a></li> <li><a href="http://www.ga.gov.au/earthquakes/">http://www.ga.gov.au/earthquakes/</a></li> <li><a href="http://www.ga.gov.au/map/names/distance.jsp">http://www.ga.gov.au/map/names/distance.jsp</a></li> <li><a href="http://nia.gov.au/nia.party-363822">http://nia.gov.au/nia.party-363822</a></li> <li><a href="http://nia.gov.au/nia.party-609061">http://nia.gov.au/nia.party-609061</a></li> <li><a href="http://nia.gov.au/nia.party-763119">http://nia.gov.au/nia.party-763119</a></li> </ul>
dbo:wikiPageID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2663763 (xsd:integer)</li> </ul>
dbo:wikiPageRevisionID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>613082371 (xsd:integer)</li> </ul>
dbp:hasPhotoCollection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://wifo5-03.informatik.uni-mannheim.de/flickrwrapp/photos/Geoscience_Australia">http://wifo5-03.informatik.uni-mannheim.de/flickrwrapp/photos/Geoscience_Australia</a></li> </ul>
dct:subject	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dbc:Geography_of_Australia</li> <li>dbc:Government_of_Australia</li> <li>dbc:National_geological_agencies</li> <li>dbc:Geological_surveys</li> </ul>
rdfs:type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>owl:Thing</li> <li>dbo:Company</li> <li>dul:Agent</li> <li>dul:SocialPerson</li> <li>wikidata:Q43229</li> <li>dbo:Agent</li> <li>dbo:Organisation</li> <li><a href="http://schema.org/Organization">http://schema.org/Organization</a></li> <li>yago:Abstraction100002137</li> <li>yago:AdministrativeUnit108077292</li> <li>yago:Agency108337324</li> <li>yago:Group100031264</li> <li>yago:Organization108008335</li> <li>yago:SocialGroup107950920</li> <li>yago:Unit108189659</li> <li>yago:YagoLegalActorGeo</li> <li>yago:YagoPermanentlyLocatedEntity</li> <li>yago:NationalGeologicalAgencies</li> <li>yago:YagoLegalActor</li> </ul>
rdfs:comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geoscience Australia is an agency of the Australian federal government. It carries out geoscientific research. On a user pays basis it produces geospatial products such as topographic maps and satellite imagery.</li> </ul>
rdfs:label	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geoscience Australia</li> </ul>
owl:sameAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://de.dbpedia.org/resource/Geoscience_Australia">http://de.dbpedia.org/resource/Geoscience_Australia</a></li> <li><a href="http://nl.dbpedia.org/resource/Geoscience_Australia">http://nl.dbpedia.org/resource/Geoscience_Australia</a></li> <li><a href="http://pt.dbpedia.org/resource/Geoscience_Australia">http://pt.dbpedia.org/resource/Geoscience_Australia</a></li> <li><a href="http://wikidata.dbpedia.org/resource/Q1325925">http://wikidata.dbpedia.org/resource/Q1325925</a></li> <li><a href="http://wikidata.org/entity/Q1325925">http://wikidata.org/entity/Q1325925</a></li> <li>freebase.Geoscience Australia</li> </ul>

Figure 3 - Example of linked RDF documents. Content within the oceanic shoals report RDF links to items like NERP and the Oceanic Shoals CMR, which in turn link to additional documents.



## 6. PROOF OF CONCEPT – A WORKING EXAMPLE

Using Stanbol as a test environment, we demonstrate the dramatic increase in depth and range of information that can be obtained from a typical marine science product through the process of semantically-marking up a document. In this example, we use the metadata record for the *Oceanic Shoals post-survey report* (available at [http://www.ga.gov.au/metadata-gateway/metadata/record/qcat\\_e091142b-a617-0d43-e044-00144fdd4fa6/xml](http://www.ga.gov.au/metadata-gateway/metadata/record/qcat_e091142b-a617-0d43-e044-00144fdd4fa6/xml)).

Within Stanbol, identifying the document type is first handled by [Apache Tika](#). Tika is a toolkit that is capable of detecting and extracting metadata and text from over a thousand different file types, including Microsoft Office files (.doc, .docx, .xls, .ppt), PDF files, and XML, among others. Next, the document object is passed to [OpenNLP](#) so that the content can be parsed into logical units – for example: identifying organizations, proper names, times and dates, places or concepts. This parsing is highly customisable – using anything from simple word list matching to more sophisticated language modelling. Stanbol has been designed to be able to incorporate language models trained using the OpenNLP package.

Once the generic word types have been identified within the document, the terms need to be associated with specific terms in the vocabularies. Within Stanbol, vocabularies can be hosted locally (as a 'Managed Site'), or copied from a remote source (a 'Referenced Site' - a remote Linked Data server). Examples of enhancement using Stanbol's interactive web interface are shown in Fig. 4, with a complete list of extracted terms and associated vocabularies in Fig. 5. Metrics generated as part of the process of identifying and linking terms can also be used to filter the results. For example, metrics on the frequency of word occurrence or confidence in identifying terms can be used to prevent terms with low relevance from being captured in the enhanced document.

In our example, this process is used to enhance/mark up a single document, however, the enhancement process can be repeated on any number of documents to build up a collection. The collection can then be searched using the typical means of keyword searching, or also on the basis of markup type/vocabulary of interest (Fig. 7) Stanbol stores enhanced document information as RDF (Fig .8) within an instance of [Solr/Lucene](#) (Solr layers additional functionality on top of Lucene's core document search capabilities. In terms of function, Lucene can be considered as an open-source Google-style search engine).

Figure 4 – Document enhancement by Stanbol via the interactive user interface. The first example is an enhancement of the Oceanic Shoals Survey Report, and the second is an enhancement of the Flinders Survey abstract.

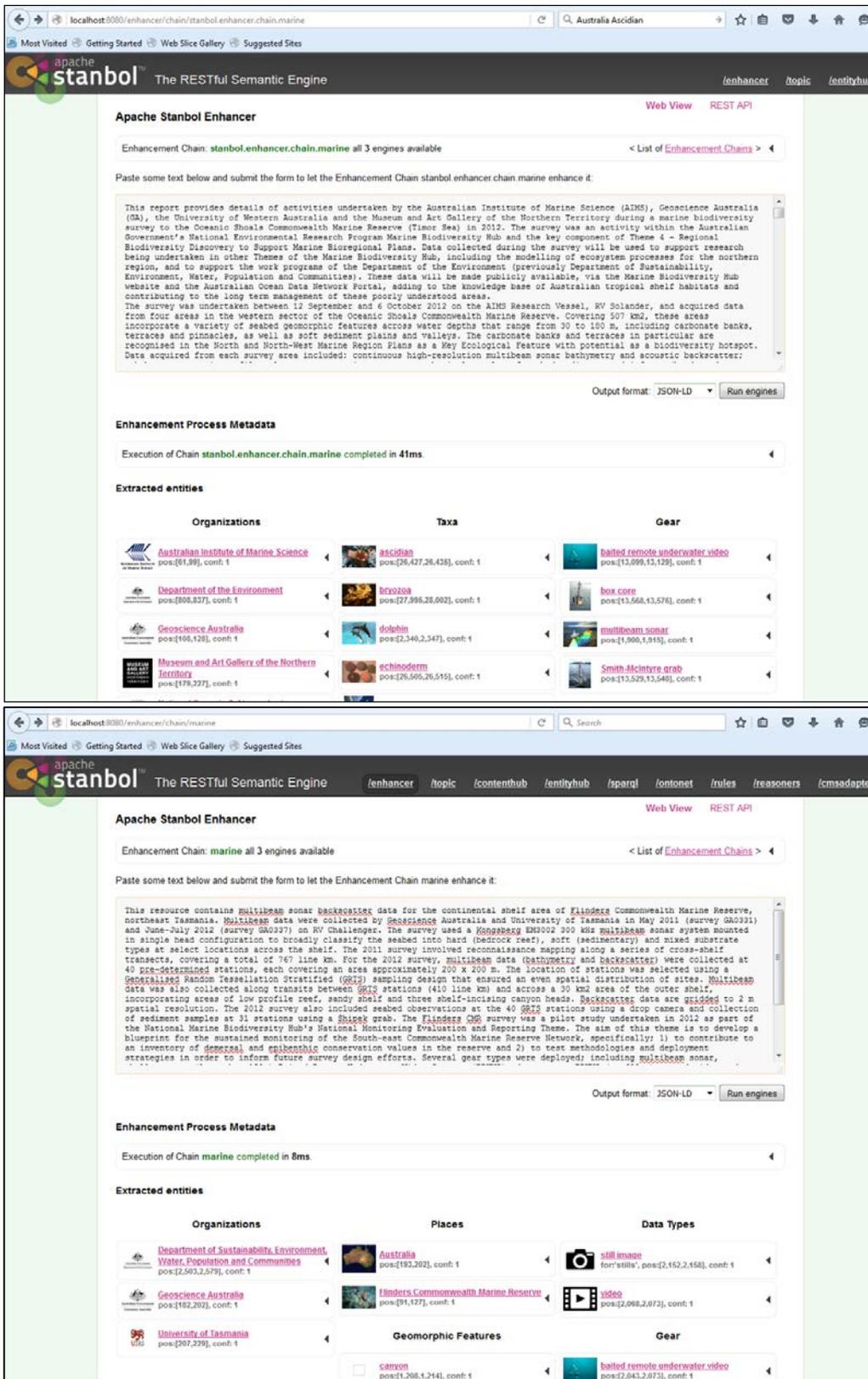


Figure 5 - Examples of terms extracted from the NERP Oceanic Shoals Survey Report (categorised by reference vocabulary). The extracted terms are also linked with online URLs, which can be other RDF nodes, websites or literal values. Photos and logos are retrieved as part of this process. This is representative of the markup process for a single document.

<p><b>Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">Australian Institute of Marine Science</a> pos:[61,99], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Department of the Environment</a> pos:[816,845], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Geoscience Australia</a> pos:[108,128], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory</a> pos:[179,227], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">National Oceanic &amp; Atmospheric Administration</a> pos:[18,784,18,829], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">National Tidal Centre</a> pos:[15,439,15,460], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">University of Western Australia</a> pos:[139,170], conf: 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Taxa</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">ascidian</a> pos:[26,427,26,435], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">bryozoa</a> pos:[27,995,28,002], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">dolphin</a> pos:[2,340,2,347], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">echinoderm</a> pos:[26,505,26,515], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">octocoral</a> pos:[22,404,22,413], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">polychaete</a> pos:[25,234,25,244], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">sponge</a> pos:[2,136,2,142], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">whale</a> pos:[2,332,2,337], conf: 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gear</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">baited remote underwater video</a> pos:[13,119,13,149], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">box core</a> pos:[13,588,13,596], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">multibeam sonar</a> pos:[1,916,1,931], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Smith-McIntyre grab</a> pos:[13,549,13,568], conf: 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>Measurement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">backscatter</a> pos:[1,940,1,951], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">bathymetry</a> pos:[1,916,1,926], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">chlorin</a> pos:[20,729,20,736], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">conductivity</a> pos:[2,413,2,425], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">depth</a> pos:[1,515,1,520], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">fluorescence</a> pos:[17,595,17,607], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">irradiance</a> pos:[17,568,17,578], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">salinity</a> pos:[9,396,9,404], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">temperature</a> pos:[2,427,2,438], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">total nitrogen</a> pos:[21,518,21,532], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">total organic carbon</a> pos:[21,490,21,510], conf: 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Geomorphic Feature</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">bank</a> pos:[1,571,1,575], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">pinnacle</a> pos:[1,591,1,599], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">plain</a> pos:[1,627,1,632], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">scarp</a> pos:[33,270,33,275], conf: 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">terrace</a> pos:[1,578,1,585], conf: 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Vessel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">RV Solander</a> pos:[1,316,1,327], conf: 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">Global Ocean Drifter Program</a> pos:[18,738,18,766], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Marine Biodiversity Hub</a> pos:[437,460], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">National Environmental Research Program</a> pos:[397,436], conf: 1</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Data Type</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">raster</a> pos:[68,916,68,922], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">still image</a> pos:[36,172,36,183], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">video</a> pos:[2,171,2,176], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">waypoint</a> pos:[79,047,79,055], conf: 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Places</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <a href="#">Australia</a> pos:[61,70], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">East Timor</a> pos:[58,749,58,759], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Indonesia</a> pos:[9,329,9,338], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Joseph Bonaparte Gulf</a> pos:[58,518,58,539], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Northern Territory</a> pos:[209,227], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Oceanic Shoals Commonwealth Marine Reserve</a> pos:[271,313], conf: 1</li> <li> <a href="#">Timor Sea</a> pos:[315,324], conf: 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>@ en conf: 1</li> </ul>

Figure 6 – Example search on tagged data (example term: Sponge) using Stanbol’s built-in search capabilities.

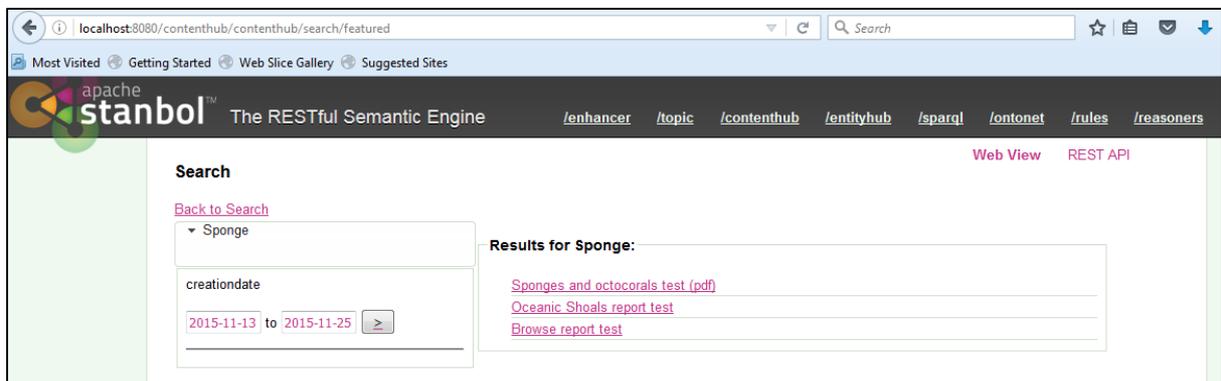
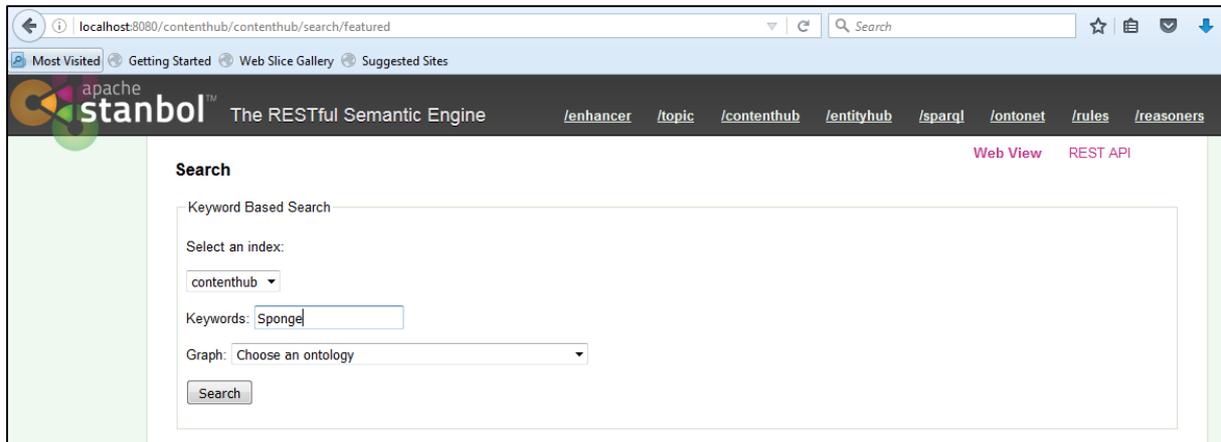


Figure 7 – Example of stored RDF information (formatted as RDF/XML). Note: full file content is much longer than the sample shown here.

```

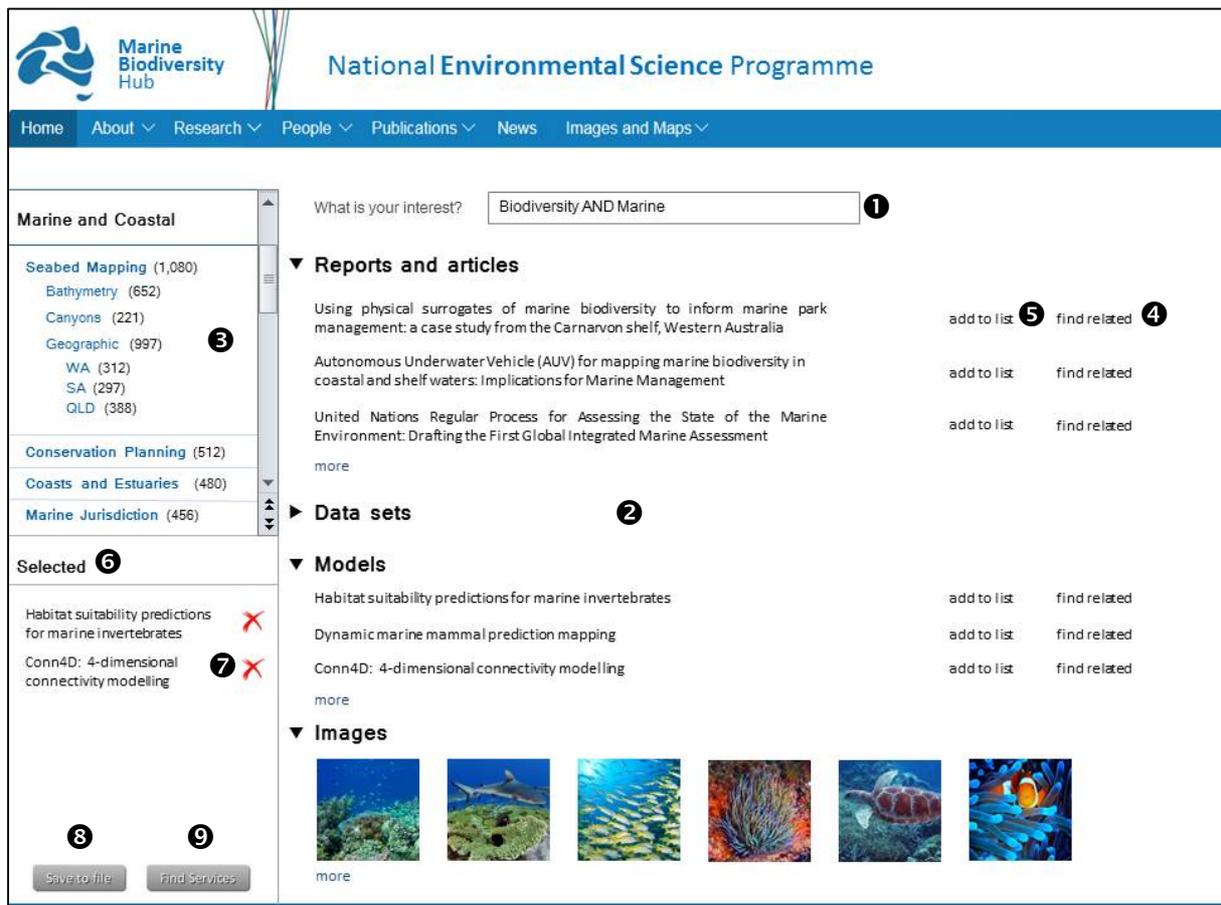
- <rdf:Description rdf:about="urn:enhancement-8b733da8-9d24-19b9-cf3f-9a6da6595834">
  <j.1:end rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#int">313</j.1:end>
  <j.1:extracted-from rdf:resource="urn:content-item-sha1-d06b17d6853dc6e69a768b9511214f1f3223b30e"/>
  <j.1:selected-text rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#string">Oceanic Shoals Commonwealth Marine Reserve</j.1:selected-text>
  <j.1:start rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#int">271</j.1:start>
  <j.0:created rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#dateTime">2015-11-12T22:35:12.973Z</j.0:created>
  <j.0:creator rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#string">au.gov.ga.marineenhancer.ExampleEnhancer</j.0:creator>
  <j.0:type rdf:resource="http://dbpedia.org/ontology/Place"/>
  <rdf:type rdf:resource="http://fise.iks-project.eu/ontology/Enhancement"/>
  <rdf:type rdf:resource="http://fise.iks-project.eu/ontology/TextAnnotation"/>
</rdf:Description>
- <rdf:Description rdf:about="urn:enhancement-b4f5b711-365e-7564-aab7-0822b5f25d07">
  <j.1:end rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#int">20774</j.1:end>
  <j.1:extracted-from rdf:resource="urn:content-item-sha1-d06b17d6853dc6e69a768b9511214f1f3223b30e"/>
  <j.1:selected-text rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#string">chlorin</j.1:selected-text>
  <j.1:start rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#int">20767</j.1:start>
  <j.0:created rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#dateTime">2015-11-12T22:35:12.973Z</j.0:created>
  <j.0:creator rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#string">au.gov.ga.marineenhancer.ExampleEnhancer</j.0:creator>
  <j.0:type rdf:resource="Measurement"/>
  <rdf:type rdf:resource="http://fise.iks-project.eu/ontology/Enhancement"/>
  <rdf:type rdf:resource="http://fise.iks-project.eu/ontology/TextAnnotation"/>
</rdf:Description>
- <rdf:Description rdf:about="http://sws.geonames.org/2064513/about.rdf">
  <j.2:deprecation rdf:resource="http://www.ga.gov.au/_data/assets/image/0015/12552/GA19780.jpg"/>
</rdf:Description>
- <rdf:Description rdf:about="urn:enhancement-c451f71f-4fd5-d66a-600c-c678829f8227">
  <j.1:confidence rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#double">1.0</j.1:confidence>
  <j.1:entity-label xml:lang="en">octocoral</j.1:entity-label>
  <j.1:entity-reference rdf:resource="http://tolweb.org/zoantharia"/>
  <j.1:extracted-from rdf:resource="urn:content-item-sha1-d06b17d6853dc6e69a768b9511214f1f3223b30e"/>
  <j.0:created rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#dateTime">2015-11-12T22:35:12.974Z</j.0:created>
  <j.0:creator rdf:datatype="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#string">au.gov.ga.marineenhancer.ExampleEnhancer</j.0:creator>
  <j.0:relation rdf:resource="urn:enhancement-e7e6dba4-2201-ea19-b148-77570fe3143c"/>
  <rdf:type rdf:resource="http://fise.iks-project.eu/ontology/Enhancement"/>
  <rdf:type rdf:resource="http://fise.iks-project.eu/ontology/EntityAnnotation"/>
</rdf:Description>

```

## 7. FRONT-END USER INTERFACE DESIGN & FEATURES

Although Stanbol provides an ‘out-of-the-box’ web interface for displaying and interacting with enhanced data, and for performing searches on the data collection, the interface should be customised to streamline and simplify the process of searching for and retrieving results. As previously discussed, the user interaction should be no more complicated than browsing products on any number of commercial websites (e.g. Amazon, eBay). Although the final design of the user interface will evolve depending on the features that are included, design requirements, and the results of user feedback, the user interface might look something like the following:

Figure 8 – Mock-up of the front-end graphic user interface design.



The interface should be able to be embedded within web page designs (for example, here within the page design for the Marine Biodiversity Hub). Users will initially search using a Google-style search box (1), which will return a collection of information resources organised by product type (2). On the left is the faceting menu which will be used to dynamically partition the results by vocabulary terms. Clicking on individual items (3) should link to the actual associated resource, and related items should be discoverable by clicking on the ‘find related’ buttons (4). Clicking on ‘add to list’ (5) will save the corresponding item to the ‘Selected’ area (6), similar to saving selections to a shopping cart on a commercial website. Items can be removed from the selected box by clicking on ‘remove’ icons (7). With the selected list, the results can be saved to a document file (e.g. RDF/XML, JSON-LD, Turtle, N-Triples, YAML) (8), or the search service can be re-invoked to look for services that would complement/enhance the list of selected items (e.g. downloading, mapping etc.) (9). Note that this interface is designed for human interaction, and the number of selected items is expected to be limited. Working with large selection lists would be better handled using the API.

## 8. WHAT CAPABILITIES WILL THE SYSTEM DELIVER (WHAT IS IN SCOPE)?

We have been successful in developing a prototype workflow using Stanbol capable of enhancing documents with semantic markup, and storing the information for a search. Continued implementation of the project (to be carried out during calendar year 2016) will include the development of a functional linked open data delivery service, including the enhancement of existing CERF and NERP information. With respect to the capabilities of the service, it will deliver:

- Automated tagging of documents using vocabularies and associated terms
- Querying of information resources via a RESTful API
- Development of a user-friendly GUI, similar to a commercial online shopping interface, including the ability to hyperlink to retrieved information resources
- The ability to save a retrieved list of resources as a file which could then be forwarded on to other services (e.g. for customised views, automated downloading, mapping etc.)

We will also engage with stakeholders and partner organizations, to align the development of the tool to complement their needs through user testing and acceptance.

## 9. WHAT CAPABILITIES WON'T THE SYSTEM DELIVER (WHAT IS OUT OF SCOPE)?

The tool is also intended as a means of accessing sources of information, and forwarding metadata on to other services. However, developing a range of processing services will take place as a separate project, once the initial capabilities of the discovery system have been proven.

Although we will design the system such that it can be upgraded and enhanced, a software system that incorporates any and all sources of marine information from both inside and outside of the Marine Biodiversity Hub is clearly outside the scope and budget of the project. Additionally, while we anticipate that the tool will harvest documents and metadata, it will not be designed to ingest raw data or data streams.

The use of controlled vocabularies and RDF creates new opportunities to enable search and access of information products in other languages. For example, RDF documents may contain links to corresponding terms in other languages, opening up new search options for discovering related information (which could then potentially be automatically translated). The significance of this is that it would significantly broaden the audience for Australian data resources, and would facilitate the exchange of information in international collaborations. Developing this functionality will be deferred to future projects.

## 10. PERSONNEL

### **Project lead or project manager**

Johnathan Kool, Geoscience Australia,  
Tel: 02 5842 6249 E-mail: [johnathan.kool@gmail.com](mailto:johnathan.kool@gmail.com)

### **Senior scientific advisor**

Brendan Brooke, Geoscience Australia

### **Development team**

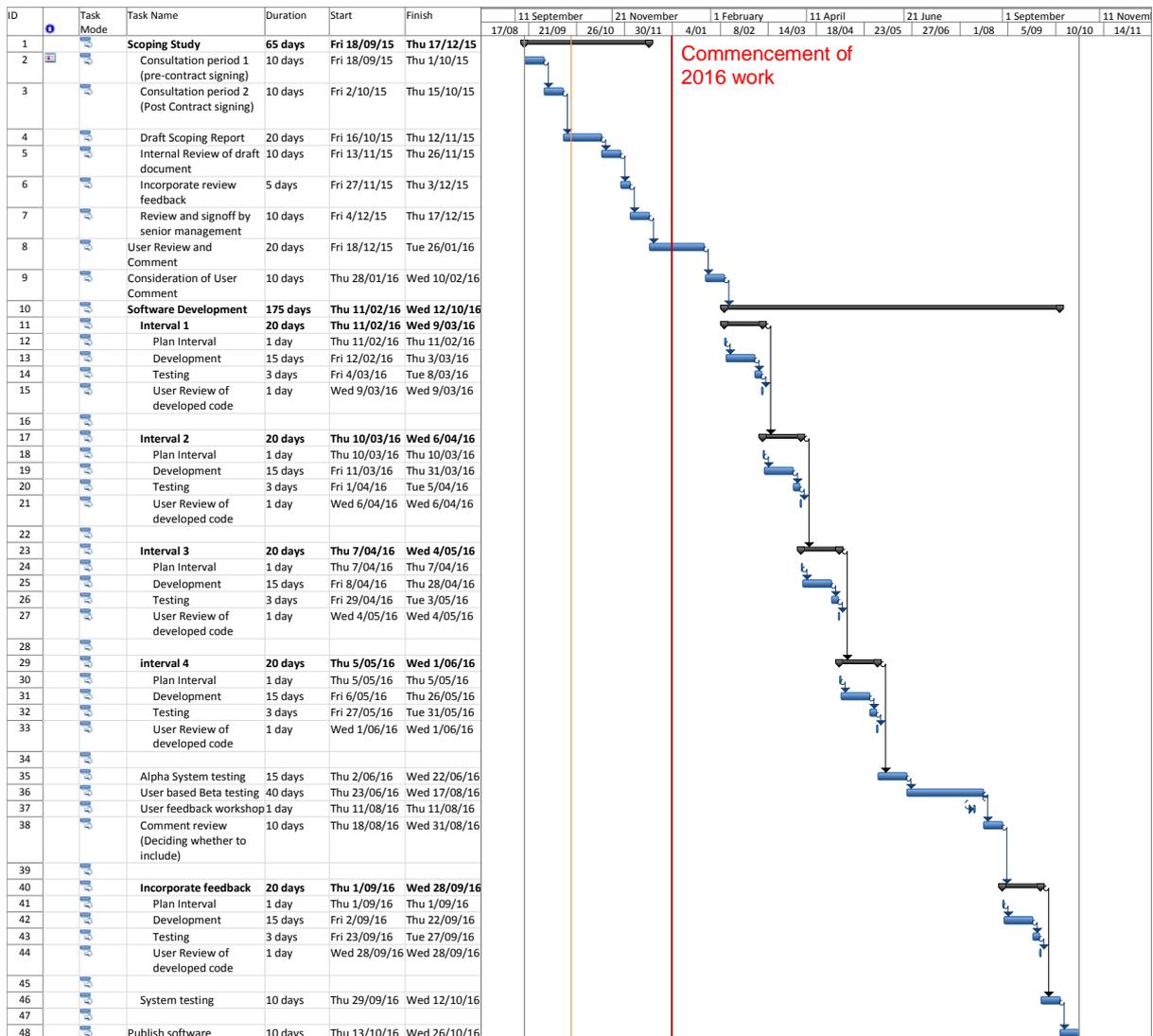
Liam O'Brien – Solution Architect, Geoscience Australia  
Erin Zimmer – Java Team Lead, Geoscience Australia  
Nicholas Car – Data Architect, Geoscience Australia

Darren Reid – Developer, Geoscience Australia  
**Stakeholder organisations**

Parks Australia  
 Department of the Environment  
 ERIN  
 IMOS/AODN  
 AIMS  
 CSIRO  
 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
 Bureau of Meteorology

## 11. PROJECT TIMELINE

Figure 9 – Proposed project timeline. A user testing workshop is scheduled for August 2016.



Note: timelines are indicative, and represent duration intervals, not effort (i.e. 7 days to work on a task, not 7 days of work on a task)



[www.nespmarine.edu.au](http://www.nespmarine.edu.au)

Contact:

Johnathan Kool  
Geoscience Australia

Cnr Jerrabomberra Ave and Hindmarsh Drive, Symonston, ACT, 2609  
[johnathan.kool@ga.gov.au](mailto:johnathan.kool@ga.gov.au) | tel +61 2 6249 5842