

# Freshwater fish database—inventory and database enhancement

## Introduction

Adequate information on freshwater fish species distribution and abundance in Queensland's freshwater wetlands assists landholders, natural resource management groups, wetland managers, scientists and policy makers in making more accurate decisions related to protection, use and development of freshwater resources. While a significant amount of freshwater fish data has been collated by various state agencies and non-government organisations, it isn't consolidated and delivered from a central point. This project will, for the first time, consolidate fish data from Queensland Government agencies within a central repository. It will be made available on *WetlandInfo*, offering easy and streamlined access on the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) Internet site.

## Background

The Queensland Wetlands Program (QWP) supports projects that will result in long-term benefits to the sustainable use, management, conservation and protection of Queensland's wetlands. Investigations by Fisheries Queensland within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and the QWP indicated that there is a clear lack of consolidated freshwater fish data. Limited information about fish locations and numbers adds a degree of risk in decision-making on the sustainable use, management and conservation of Queensland's wetlands.

Fisheries Queensland manages Queensland's fish habitats and fisheries resources to ensure their sustainable economic use. In the past, staff regularly collected significant amounts of fish-related data from both marine and freshwater habitats. In addition, officers from EHP, the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts (DSITIA), natural resource management groups and consultants have been collecting freshwater fish data for a variety of purposes. Although there are vast holdings of freshwater, it's a challenge to consolidate these holdings for specific freshwater wetland management purposes given the different sources and places of storage and the wide range of mediums and formats of the data.

The Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts (DSITIA) will use existing wildlife database systems to store the fish survey data so that it can be accessed and delivered to various existing websites on the Internet.

## Methods

This project will bring together the freshwater fish data owned by DAFF, EHP, DSITIA and other partners and convert it into a format which is compatible with existing DSITIA and QWP databases that store and deliver other wetland data, specifically WildNet and the Wetland Information Capture System (WIC). The public will then be able to better access this information via *WetlandInfo* tools ([WetlandSummary](#) and [WetlandMaps](#)) and also the [Wildlife Online](#) and the [Recovery Actions Database](#) applications.

## Objectives of the project

- Locate, collate, and sort the freshwater fish data currently stored at a variety of locations in a wide range of mediums.
- Store the data within WildNet and WIC.
- Make the data available to relevant users.

## Outcomes

- More comprehensive freshwater fish data.
- Better ability to make decisions on wetland management.
- Improved management of fish data for the Queensland community.



## Project stages

Stage 1: Identify data suppliers and document available datasets.

Stage 2: Collect and sort appropriate data.

Stage 3: Upload the data into the WIC.

Stage 4: Improve data delivery and establish better linkages between the data suppliers and the WIC for future data update.

The Queensland Wetlands Program supports projects and activities that result in long-term benefits to the sustainable management, wise use and protection of wetlands in Queensland. The tools developed by the Program help wetland landholders, managers and decision makers in government and industry. The Program is a joint initiative of the Australian and Queensland governments.

Contact [wetlands@ehp.qld.gov.au](mailto:wetlands@ehp.qld.gov.au)  
or visit [www.wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au](http://www.wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au)

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