

# The Natural Resource Management Virtual Knowledge Arcade

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There is a wealth of natural resource management information available to land managers, farmers, researchers and the public via a plethora of Internet sites and portal. However, how engaging and user-friendly is such information? This paper explores the development of an online virtual world for presenting natural resource information to diverse audiences.

The natural resource management virtual knowledge arcade has been created using the Virtual Reality Modelling Language (VRML). Visitors to this virtual world can explore the Bet Bet sub-catchment in North Central Victoria and learn about such natural phenomena as biodiversity, climate and soil. Visitors can explore simulated landscape processes such as flooding, erosion, and salinisation. Point and click functionality enables the visitor to download objects from a 3D object library which includes a number of built structures, trees, shrubs and grass species. By navigating further into the virtual world the visitor can enter a natural resource management virtual shop front and access a range of information products pertaining to landscape models, tools, frameworks, workbooks and reports. The next step in this research is to evaluate the pedagogical value of such virtual worlds for enhancing the understanding of natural resource phenomena across a diverse range of user groups from policy-makers to school students.