

Technology Information Web Site Structure U.S. Comments

In 2002, the U.S. Government established the U.S. Climate Technology Cooperation (U.S.-CTC) Gateway at <http://www.usctcgateway.net/> The Gateway provides information to facilitate climate technology cooperation with developing countries and countries in transition.

At present, the U.S. is revising the U.S.-CTC Gateway. The revised Gateway will mainly consist of links to USG web sites that highlight clean technology programs, projects, and materials. In addition, other web sites and specific materials that contain climate-friendly technological information, such as case studies and tools will be linked to the web site. The direct links will continue to send users to information sources and provide the most up-to-date information. Some information may be directly placed on the web site, but this will continue to be a small percentage of the total content.

The following comments regarding the structure of technology information web sites are taken from the U.S.-CTC Gateway experiences of managing, building, and revising the web site:

- The U.S. experience, through the U.S. Climate Technology Cooperation (U.S.-CTC) Gateway, <http://www.usctcgateway.net/> has shown that simple annotated links to resources are the most effective and efficient way to deliver information to visitors.
- Mutually searchable databases require both a lot of work to align formats and oversight for needed revisions; and therefore, do not add value for users that justifies this investment.
- With limited budgets, mutually searchable database structures are too resource intensive. Limited resources might be better used to expand links or include content.
- Direct links do require routine maintenance to check for continued viability. Further, direct links take visitors away from the referring web site there by potentially limiting subsequent access. However, for a given level of resource investment, direct links can provide access to a greater amount of substantial high quality and current information to users of technology information web sites.
- Once the Gateway is revised, time and resources permitting, we are willing to provide a demonstration of the U.S.-CTC Gateway site and our approach to efficiently provide information. In the meantime, we suggest that alternative web systems of information retrieval (mutually searchable databases and direct links) be demonstrated and compared for the following factors:
 - ease of retrieval (speed, length of forms, and information needed to retrieve information),
 - current viability of the links, and
 - the appropriateness of the information supplied by the database.

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