

**CCL-EAR COMMITTEE
REVIEW UPDATE
McGraw-Hill Access Science
April 2006**

This is an update to the review written in May 2001 by selected members of the Council of Chief Librarians, Electronic Access to Resources Committee (CCL-EAR). The 2001 review is substantially accurate, only updates and additional information are noted here. Please refer to the full review for more information.

INFORMATION DATABASE

Access Science contains the full text and illustrations of the McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, 9th Edition plus latest additions and revisions. It also includes the full text of the McGraw-Hill Yearbooks of Science & Technology back to 1998 (these are called "Research Updates" in Access Science) There are about 8,500 encyclopedia and Research Update articles. Also included is the full text of the McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms, 6th edition (more than 100,000 terms) and the full text of the Hutchinson Dictionary of Scientific Biography (2,000 biographies). There is selected content from Science News, a weekly news magazine, about 4 articles from each issue. The database also includes smaller amounts of other content: video clips, Power Point presentations, lists of essay topics, image galleries, tutorials and study guides.

COST

Reasonable.

The consortium negotiated price is based on FTE. There are no simultaneous use restrictions.

USER INTERFACE

Most of the limitations mentioned in the 2001 review are still present. The relevancy ranking of keyword search results has been improved, this reviewer could not duplicated the specific problem cited in the review with that feature.

Authentication Methods: Access Science supports IP authentication and/or a vendor-supplied username and password.

Persistent links to article content are easy to create, the URL in the browser window can be used for this purpose.

The search engine now includes a spell checker and search history tracking.

Usage statistics are available.

Two new features now offered by Access Science are RSS feeds and a JavaScript bookmarklet.

Quoting the Access Science website, “RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is an XML-based Web standard that allows you to display the latest headlines from your favorite sites using special programs call RSS readers (also news readers, news aggregators) and then directly access the articles you wish to see. The AccessScience RSS feed delivers headlines and links back to the latest Encyclopedia articles, news stories, and announcements posted on the AccessScience home page.” RSS is also supported in the Mozilla Firefox browser and the forthcoming Internet Explorer 7.

The javascript bookmarklet “allows you to look up scientific words or terms in Access Science that you find in almost any web site by simply highlighting the term and clicking on the bookmarklet you have placed in the personal toolbar of your browser.” The bookmarklet feature works with the IE, Mozilla Firefox and Safari browsers.

Problems Noted

The “e-mail this article” button sends a link to the article, not the actual full-text of the article. Also, the link that is sent expires after 48 hours. So if a user does not promptly retrieve the full-text from the link they will have to re-do their search. If the user is off-campus they will need to know the vendor-supplied username and password in order to access the link. Ideally there would be an option to send the actual full text of an article rather than a link. There should be an ability to specify an EZproxy server prefix to the links in an administrative module.

In articles retrieved after a keyword search, the search term is highlighted in yellow wherever it occurs (see Figure 2, *Sample search results screen*) Some users may find this annoying or distracting, especially when the term occurs frequently in the article. There should be an option to turn this feature off.

Items shown under the news tab don’t list dates in summary display. Because so little content is included from Science News, not all items that a user might think should be in the news coverage are included. There seems to be about a two week delay before content from Science News is loaded into the database, which is too long.

Some of the references in the news articles link to content in Science News which is not available to non-subscribers to Science News. When the user clicks on the link, they are taken to a page with an advertisement asking that they subscribe to Science News.

There is no administrative module, except for the access to usage statistics. It would be nice to be able to configure more aspects of the user interface, such as specifying an EZproxy server, and the ability to customize the labels and messages as is found in some other database administrative modules.

Additional Reviews not mentioned in the 2001 review

Choice Magazine, September 2002; Choice Magazine, September 2002; The Book Report, January/ February 2001; Library Journal, April, 2001.

Figure 1 Main search screen of the Access Science database

ACCESS Science McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science & Technology Online

About AccessScience | Newsletter | Tutorial | FAQs | Contact Us | Librarians | XML RSS Feed | Log out

Search Encyclopedia
 Go
 Search all Encyclopedia articles plus biographies and news archive.

Search Science Dictionary
 Go
Go to Advanced Search

Choose a Topic

- > Agriculture, Forestry & Soils
- > Anthropology & Archeology
- > Astronomy & Space Science
- > Biological & Biomedical Science
- > Chemistry
- > Computing & Information Technology
- > Earth Science
- > Engineering & Materials
- > Environmental Science
- > Food Science & Technology
- > General Science & Technology
- > Mathematics
- > Medicine
- > Military Science
- > Navigation
- > Paleontology
- > Physics
- > Psychiatry & Psychology
- > Veterinary Medicine

Headline News

- > Crash: Ripples of space-time debut in black hole simulations
- > Me and My Metabolism: Personalized medicine takes new direction
- > Antarctic birds are breeding later
- > Defeating Dyslexia
- > Headline News Archive

New Encyclopedia Articles



- > Invasive foreign species
- > Environmental engineering informatics
- > Global biogeochemical cycles
- > Salmon farming
- > Primate origins
- > Permian-Triassic mass extinction
- > Geochronology
- > Downscaling climate models

Resources

- > **Biographies**
2,000 biographies of scientists.
- > **Student Center**
Visit our [Essay Topics](#) section. Try the [Topical Study Guides](#). Review with [Study Guides for Advanced Placement](#). Experts answer science questions submitted to the [Q&A](#).
- > **Image Gallery**
Images and explanation of scientific phenomena.
- > **Image of the Week**

Additional Resources:

- > **New Question: Why are flamingos pink?**
- > **A New Study Guide for Advanced Placement: Environmental Science**
- > **Introducing Minimodules**

Figure 2 Sample search results screen

ACCESS Science McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science & Technology Online

Choose Encyclopedia Topic

Search Results

You searched for: **global warming**
 in: **titles and text**
 in categories: **All available categories**
 in topics: **All available topics**

Your search found **394** entries in more than **200** documents
[Refine your search?](#) Note: using AND, OR, and AND NOT will help.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >> Next

ALL CATEGORIES | **E** ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES | D DICTIONARY | R RESEARCH UPDATES | B BIOGRAPHIES | N NEWS | Q Q&A

R Global warming
 Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is a major greenhouse gas, and its level in the atmosphere has been increased by human activities. This increase should bring about **global warming**. Anthropogenically produced atmospheric carbon dioxide becomes involved in the **global** carbon cycle and may be stored in the oceans, ...
 Related Topic(s): [Meteorology and climatology](#)

E Climate modification
 Alteration of the Earth's climate by human activities; humans have the capacity to modify the Earth's climate in several important ...
 Related Topic(s): [Meteorology and climatology](#)

E Global climate change
 The periodic fluctuations in **global** temperatures and precipitation, such as the glacial (cold) and interglacial (**warm**) cycles of the Pleistocene (a geological period from 1.8 million to 10,000 years ago). Presently, the increase in **global** temperatures since 1900 is of great interest. Many ...
 Related Topic(s): [Ecology - general](#) ; [Meteorology and climatology](#)

D global warming potential
 [METEOROLOGY] The ratio of **global warming** or radiative forcing from 1 kilogram of a greenhouse gas to 1

Browse Alphabetically

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Y	Z				

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