

Literature Review and Research 2009-2010

A Toolkit to Make the Process Easier!

The following material provides tools to help you put together a proposal for the regional First Nations Environmental Contaminants Program. These tools will enable you to answer the following two questions:

1. How should the level of knowledge on the research topic you have chosen be presented?
2. What partners could collaborate with you?

References on environmental contaminants and the health of First Nations are also included.

Literature Review...Why and how?

A literature review means summarizing studies that have already been conducted on your research topic in order to present the status of current knowledge. It allows you to position your research in relations to previous studies.

The literature review allows you to position your research in relations to previous studies and answer questions:

- What is the purpose of your research?

The theme, objectives, approach, etc.

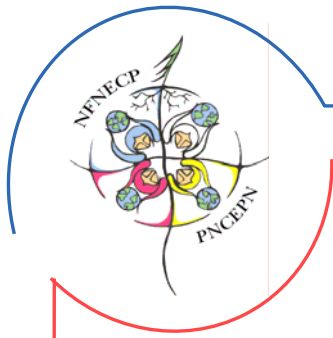
- What is the theoretical framework?

Definitions, theories, hypotheses, methodology. Etc.

- How do you position your project within the theoretical framework?

New research, repetition of existing research, complementary research, etc

- How can your research improve current knowledge?



Research – literature review:

1. Where to find the information

- Reliable information sources:
 - Plain language documents
 - Scholarly articles
 - Reference books
 - Annotated Bibliographies
 - Master and doctorate theses

It is essential to verify the origins and credibility of the authors: are they a research group, a lobby group, technology developers, etc.? The author's objectivity, their scientific rigour and dates of publication are all aspects to consider when choosing your information sources.

2. How to Search the Information

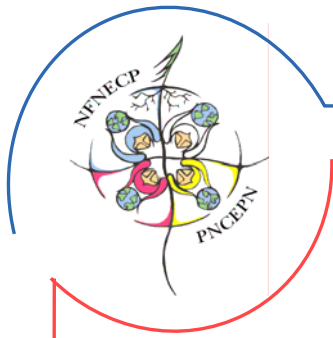
- University library catalogues,
- Databases,
- Internet (I. E. Google, Yahoo!)

Your search for information may be carried out in a variety of different ways: Consulting university library catalogues, databases, internet, etc.

Relevant search Engines are:

- Google Scholar: www.scholar.google.ca/
- Scirus: www.scirus.com
- The Northern Contaminants Program: <http://www.aina.ucalgary.ca/ncp/>

Google scholar is a research engine developed by Google specifically for scholarly research and technical documents. Scirus, is a scientific search engine with a database of 167 million documents. The Northern Contaminants Program (NCP) Publications Database is also an information source with potential since it searches from more than 1800 publications emanating from this program.



Identifying Key Words

The choice of words is vital to the effectiveness of a search. Key words are those that are most representative of the subject.

- Contaminants
- Health
- First Nations
- Contamination
- Environment
- Traditional Foods.

We could also use a combination of these words using the search engines.

3. How to summarize the information

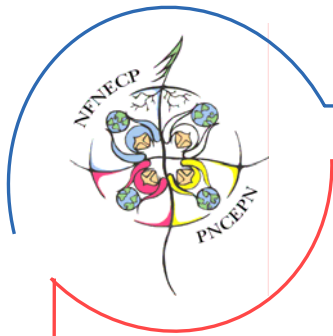
First, you must read the selected publications and identify the following information:

- The theme of the research
- The questions posed by the research
- The hypotheses put forward
- The methodology used to verify the hypotheses
- The results found and their interpretation
- The conclusions reached

Once the main research results have been summarized, it is possible to record the trends that have emerged from these studies, identifying the similarities and differences, to target existing issues to position your own research within this context.

4. How to write a bibliography

The bibliography is an important part of a literature review. It provides a list of the works consulted. Here is some important information to include:



- Author(s) name
- Date of publication
- Title of the Journal or book
- Volume and/or number of the journal, page(s) where the article is found
- Publisher of the book
- Internet website address

A sample bibliography:

1. Dewailly, E., Ayotte, P., Bruneau, S., Laliberté, C., Muir, D.C.G and Norstrom, R.J. (1993). Inuit Exposure to Organochlorines through the Aquatic Food Chain in Arctic Québec. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 101, 618-620.
2. Duhaime, G. (2001). Le dilemme alimentaire autochtone. *Le Devoir* (Montreal), August 2001, p. A-11.
3. Hansen, J.C. (2000). Environmental contaminants and human health in the Arctic. *Toxicology Letters*, 112-113, 119-125.
4. Kinloch, D., Kuhnlein, H. and Muir, D.C.G. (1992). Inuit Foods and Diet: a Preliminary Assessment of Benefits and Risks. *The Science of the Total Environment*, 122, 247-278.
5. Chan, Lurie (2005), Environmental Contaminants: What are they and do they get into the human body? www.iddpnql.ca/fichiers/contaminant_an_2006.pdf, July 11, 2008.

Since many scholarly articles are published in English language journals, bibliographies often include English titles.