Quick Data Entry Guide:

1. Introduction

This page guides SESMAD users in the process of entering data into the database. It does so without explicit reference to the database structure itself, which is covered in depth in the "Database Guide" page, also contained within the manual.

Before we begin, there are two important things to know:

1. Before you can link up separate elements to each other (say a study to a case) you must have created each of these elements independently in their own data entry forms. You cannot generally access the data entry form for one element from within the form for another element.

2. You must "approve" data that you enter before it can be used. If you are trying to link a component to a case, for example, and you don't see the component available, it's probably because you didn't hit the "approve" button at the bottom of the component data entry form.

2. The management tab

The management tab is located to the far right of the panel of tabs on the main SESMAD page. It is used to access, and edit all of the SESMAD data that isn't directly describing a case or its components. Several essential types of data are entered and edited in the subsections of the management tab. If you want to begin immediately to enter actual case data, skip this section and proceed to section 3.

2.1. Users

This section lists data on SESMAD users. In general you shouldn't need to access this page very often. The one function it does provide is access to the data that describes you on your page. So if you want to change how you are presented in the members section, go here to edit your data.

2.2. Teams

SESMAD cases are added and edited by teams (although a team may consist of just one individual). Before they begin coding, the members who are collaborating on a case need to create a team and add themselves as members. This is all done under the Teams section. First create a team, and once it is listed along with the others, click "members" to add members to the team. These members must be registered users of the database.

2.3. Sectors

An environmental sector is a nexus between a set of human actors, their activities and a particular portion of the natural environment. Examples include fisheries and forest management. The SESMAD database did not start pre-populated with a list of sectors. Instead, users need to add sectors before they apply them to cases or variables. This is done in the Sector section of the management tab. The button "Create New Sector" is located to the upper left of the Sector page. Click on this to add a new sector and fill out a description of it.

2.4. Studies

A study is an article or book or other written work that is relevant to a case. Studies should be linked to cases if they describe that case in some way or another. A study might be used to help code a case, or it could be present the users' own published analysis of that case.

SESMAD does not store unique fields for all of the bibliographic information needed to describe a study. Instead, it stores (1) the authors of a study, and (2) the full citation, which the users should enter in the most recently published Chicago Style. For authors that are not already added to the list, the user should create a new author via the "Create New Author" button.

2.5. Surveys

A survey is a data collection instrument that is used to measure important variables for a case. In situations where the members of a team in fact conducted fieldwork and used surveys to collect data for the case, they can upload and store such surveys here. Studies can then be associated with cases or studies describing these cases, if the studies discuss the results of the analysis of the data collected via the survey.

2.6. Variables

The collaborative process that created SESMAD also populated the database with some 150 variables that the team considered to be important in understanding human-environment interactions. Users cannot delete variables that (1) they did not create, or (2) are used by a particular case. If users want to create new variables, they can do so fairly easily from the Variables section. Importantly, they cannot do so under the "Browse variables"

2.7. Theories

Theories relate two or more variables together and describe how they relate to one another. As always, the variables need to already have been created before a user can create a theory that relates them together. Currently SESMAD does not keep a list of relationship types to describe how variables relate to each other, but this is possible. Use the relationship field to essentially describe your theory: how and why to these variables relate to each other?

Towards the bottom, you are asked to enter a value for each variable that you have added. SESMAD does not currently check this to ensure that you enter an allowable value for each variable, so please double-check that any values you enter are in fact part of each variable's range.

3. Entering case data

3.1. Cases

To enter a case in the database, click on the *Case"* tab. From here you can click on the "Create a New Case" button to the upper left. This will take you to a data entry form. For the majority of the fields in this form, you simply type in your responses to the prompts. For several of the fields, you will need to have entered data in another part of the website. These fields are: (1) Team, (2) Sector, (3) Studies, and (4) Surveys. Here we see a principle of the SESMAD database that is critically important to understand: as a relational database, it links together distinct objects stored in separate tables, and as such, **before such links are made (say between a case and any studies), all of these objects must be created.**

The table in the Case page lists all of the cases that currently exist in the database. Once you have created a case it will be listed here, and you have two options for editing it: (1) through the "edit case table" data button, and (2) through the "manage case components" button. The first option brings you back to the same form you just used to create the case. The second brings you to a page that (1) lists the main case data, and (2) below this allows you to add components to your case and link these components via interactions. Following the principle just introduced, before you can add components to a case you need to have created these components in the Components tab from the main page.

3.2. Components and interactions

Components are created in the Components page which is accessed via the Components tab. This page works very similarly to the Cases page. Users create new components by clicking one of the three buttons at the top of the page, based on what type of component they wish to create. The table on the page displays all of the components previously added and allows for (nested) sorting and filtering of these cases. Once they have found their case they can edit it by clicking the "edit details" button.

The main purpose of adding components is to then link them interactions and cases. This is done in the Cases page, not in the Component page (which is just for creating and editing components). Once you have created the components that belong to your case, navigate back to the Cases page. Click on the "manage case components" button for your case. This will bring you to a page that allows you to attach the components you just created to your case, and then to relate these components to each other by creating interactions at the bottom of the page. When you add a component to an interaction, you will be presented with a new data entry form that asks you a series of questions about the ways in which this component participates in this interaction.