Working with metadata catalog services in context

“QGIS functionality allows users to interact with metadata catalog services, supporting the OGC Catalog Service for the Web (CSW) standard”

Catalog services support the ability to publish and search collections of descriptive information (metadata) for data, services, and related information objects. Metadata in catalogs represent resource characteristics that can be queried and presented for evaluation and further processing by both humans and software. Catalog services are required to support the discovery and binding of registered information resources within an information community.

OGC Catalogue interface standards specify the interfaces, bindings, and a framework for defining application profiles required to publish and access digital catalogs of metadata for geospatial data, services, and related resource information. Metadata act as generalized properties that can be queried and returned through catalog services for resource evaluation and, in many cases, invocation or retrieval of the referenced resource. Catalog services support the use of one of several identified query languages to find and return results using well-known content models (metadata schemas) and encodings.

You try:

Goal: Explore ways in which QGIS can interact with metadata catalog services

• Activate the metasearch plugin in QGIS
• Click on the Metasearch connection in the Web Menu
• Add default services
• Select a single service from the drop-down menu.
• Click on service info to view the metadata about that service you have chosen.
• Use the search menu to view available services.
• Load the layers into QGIS as either WMS or WFS depending on what you need to use the layers for.
More about metadata catalog services

Geographic Metadata, defined as data about geographical data, represents structured documentation about the available spatial datasets and services. It helps data owners to manage their spatial information efficiently (inventory & advertising role) and enables users to find and assess to what extent the discovered datasets match their requirements (fitness of use). In order to inform users about available spatial information, we need to publish references to existing datasets and services (metadata) in a catalog. The catalog is a central component of the process of information sharing, information dissemination or information awareness (like a library catalog). It assists users to discover information in a systematic and efficient way. The mechanism to search and discover available geographic datasets and services constitutes a “catalog service” in the geospatial community.

Further reading: