Package	Summary
ESRI ArcGIS 10.1	Metadata in ArcGIS is created via the separate catalog tool which lists available layers and datasets. Right clicking on a dataset opens up a properties window which allows the user to enter information including a title, tags, a summary, a description of the dataset, credits and access and use limitations. Metadata can also be imported from, or exported to, standards-based XML. It is embedded within the shapefile format, which means that it persists between projects. As the metadata is embedded, it is not possible to search through multiple metadata records unless these are exported.
Geomedia Professional 6.1	Geomedia Professional offers a 'catalog' tool for metadata creation and management, along with the capability to import existing metadata and export metadata for use in other systems. Catalog records are ISO 19115 compliant. Catalogs are stored as Microsoft Access databases (.mdb), decoupled from the datasets. The catalog creation process will automatically populate information including the bounding box in the Catalog Editor tool. No functionality is provided to search all created metadata for specific keywords or themes.
Quantum GIS 1.8.0	In QGIS two alternative metadata options are offered. Users can create simple metadata directly with the properties of each dataset. The metadata is stored in the system project file (and therefore not available to other projects or users making use of the same datasets). Alternatively, a plug-in is also available - a metadata editor called Metatools, which can read and write metadata in ISO19115 format. The main purpose of this tool is to create standards-compliant metadata within QGIS, primarily for export to HTML format. This metadata editor is separate from the main workflow of a QGIS user (Lab n.d.). No functionality is provided to search all metadata.
INSPIRE Portal	The INSPIRE Geoportal (The INSPIRE GeoPortal n.d.) provides a central viewer for any available metadata created as part of the INSPIRE project. Unlike the stand-alone GIS packages, it provides a search tool for all created metadata, where searches can be spatial or text-based. Additionally, a metadata editor tool is provided to allow users to create INSPIRE compliant metadata. This can be validated using the tools provided. The metadata is held separately from the datasets referenced.