



## Communique

### Atlas of Living Australia Advisory Board

MEETING #22, November 2024

*The 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) Advisory Board was held on 18th November 2024 as a hybrid meeting. Board participants included Ron Avery, Kate Brandis, Robyn Cleland, Hayley Crawford-Weaver, Margie Jenkins, Toni Moate, and Andre Zerger. We were also pleased to be joined by Peggy Newman, Kylie Morrow, Andrew Young and Ely Wallis.*

#### Director's Update

The preceding period has been dominated by significant conference and international engagement activity for the ALA, which is normal for this time of the year. Major conferences the ALA has engaged in and sponsored have included eResearch Australasia, Australian Land Conservancy Alliance, National BioSecurity Symposium, SPNHC/TDWG Joint Conference First Nations Land and Water Forum, Australian Weeds Conference, Ecological Society of Australia Conference & Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand Conference. The portfolio of conference engagement is more significant than in any previous year, primarily owing to new partnerships established with the environmental consulting, Indigenous, and biosecurity areas. Sponsorship has allowed the ALA to engage more deeply with these sectors by hosting booths and workshops and building richer and longer-term partnerships.

The board was briefed on the release of the operational Biosecurity Alerts Service, which completes the migration from the interim product to a version operating on core ALA systems integrated with existing products, including the Spatial Portal.

All users' biosecurity lists have successfully migrated to the new service. The changes introduce significant robustness to the service, which the ALA Systems team can now support as an operational service.

#### 2024 User Satisfaction Survey Results

The board received results from the 2024 User Satisfaction Survey by the ALA's Kylie Morrow. This was the third structured user satisfaction survey conducted by the ALA, and thus, the team now has access to excellent longitudinal data. A total of 965 participants completed the survey. The survey also asked about the industry-standard Net Promoter Score, a measure of user experience that estimates the ratio of promoters vs company detractors. The ALA received a 23.6 Net Promoter Score with scores greater than 20, indicating a great user experience. The board explored the pattern of user satisfaction survey results over three surveys and our users' continued interest in data quality. The complexity of this topic may require a communication campaign, as there have been several system or data enhancements to address this issue.

## **International Biodiversity Data Engagement – GBIF Oceania Regional Meeting**

The ALA's Peggy Newman and Ely Wallis and CSIRO's Andrew Young joined the Advisory Board to reflect on some of the ALA and CSIRO's recent international engagement activities. The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) structures global participants into regional nodes. Australia is a part of the Oceania region, and the ALA is now the Oceania regional representative of the GBIF Nodes Committee.

In September, Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research hosted two consecutive meetings in Wellington, NZ, with support from the ALA. The first was an Oceania Regional Nodes meeting between GBIF Node Managers from around the Pacific, plus GBIF staff and observers. This was followed by a two-day conference on Pacific Engagement for the Biodiversity Information for Development (BID) Programme led by GBIF staff.

The board discussed the role of international engagement and its alignment with international programs and capabilities. Given Australia's biodiversity informatics capability, the board recognised the potential to partner further in the Oceania region. It was noted that Pacific nations had a strong presence at the recent Nature Positive Summit, so an appetite remains to engage with Australia.

## **ALA Strategy 2025–2030**

After five years of implementation, a new ALA Strategy is scheduled for release in late 2025. The board explored approaches to strategy development, consultation, thematic priorities and timing over the coming six months. The board agreed that the major structural elements in the current strategy remain sound and relevant, and a new strategy should respond to external strategic drivers not foreseen five years earlier.

The board discussed several of these, including AI/ML, future-proofing the ALA to accommodate new biodiversity data types, Indigenous partnerships, and cyber risk. The board endorsed a proposed approach to design, consultation and delivery, and we welcome input from our partners as the strategy refresh process proceeds.

## **In Conclusion**

I want to thank our Advisory Board and the ALA management team for contributing to Meeting #22. We also want to express our gratitude for your support over the past year and wish you, your teams and your families a safe and rewarding summer break. Our first Advisory Board meeting for 2025 will be hosted in Melbourne in early April.

**Professor David Cantrill**  
**Chair, Atlas of Living Australia**  
**Advisory Board,**  
**December 2024**