

The Atlas of Living Australia and the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative — a Collaborative Project

The collaboration between the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) and the Great Eastern Ranges (GER) Initiative is proving beneficial for both partners.

The GER Initiative is trialling new ALA-developed tools that will build on its existing mapping analysis capabilities and improve reporting and evaluation of biodiversity information and environmental outcomes. These tools will also fast-track the engagement of a broad cross-section of the NRM and related communities.

The Initiative is helping the ALA to improve its software, tools and services to meet the needs of regional NRM groups and projects across Australia.

The project is addressing three priority actions in Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030: 'Knowledge for all', 'Getting results' and 'Measuring success'.

In the first year of collaboration between Birds Australia and the ALA, 1,200 volunteers used the ALA's online tools to report 4,605 sightings of the endangered Carnaby's Black Cockatoo.

The Great Eastern Ranges Initiative

The GER Initiative is establishing a 2,800 km conservation corridor from the Victorian Alps to the Atherton Tablelands and beyond, along the Great Dividing Range and eastern escarpment.

The Initiative is supporting biodiversity by restoring and improving the conservation and management of vegetation across all types of land tenure, to provide the best available opportunities for species to move, adapt and survive as the environment and climate change.

The GER Initiative is an adaptive response to mitigate the impacts of habitat fragmentation and climate change across Australia's most biodiverse ecosystems, which contain the majority of our threatened plants and animals.

The GER Initiative expressly looks to leverage and strengthen the capacity of over 100 organisations working together in five Regional Partnerships situated in key focus areas. Through data analysis and conservation action planning, these targeted areas have been identified as being critical for connectivity.



The ALA is working with the GER Initiative on five priority projects for trial and implementation:

- 1 The Border Ranges Alliance (NSW & south east Queensland) is extending the Atlas Field Data Capture tools to include on ground activity planning, management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.
- 2 The Hunter Valley (NSW) partnership is trialling ways to increase the quality, reliability and frequency of monitoring and reporting on birds as indicators of landscape health.
- 3 The Southern Highlands (NSW) partnership is developing new ways to use ALA components and communicate their value to users.
- 4 The Kosciuszko to Coast (NSW & ACT) team is producing educational resources to be used when demonstrating the new ALA tools to other community groups.
- 5 The Slopes to Summit (NSW & north east Victoria) partners are working with the ALA to implement the sharing of partners' information in a web accessible space across NRM communities.

For more information about the GER Initiative, please visit Web: <http://www.greasternranges.org.au>, email: info@greasternranges.org.au, phone: 0295609144



The Atlas of Living Australia: Integrated Biodiversity Information

The Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) is a federally-funded project to improve online access to essential information about Australian plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms.

Existing information about Australian species is distributed across countless data sets, photos, stories, specimen catalogues from museums and herbaria, research papers, recordings, songs, notebooks and scattered web sites.

The ALA is working to integrate this dispersed information to provide as complete a picture as possible for each species, and to make it easier to record, manage and analyse biodiversity data.

The ALA web site features species pages, distribution records, maps and environmental data, photos, descriptions, identification tools and digital literature, and will soon include links to molecular data sets and species interaction data.

These combined capabilities are making Australia a world leader in integrated management of biodiversity information to support research and collections management, policy and education.

For more information about the ALA project, please visit Web: <http://www.ala.org.au>, email: info@ala.org.au, phone: 02 6246 4107, fax: 02 6246 4525.

Partners

The GER Initiative partners

The GER Initiative is currently led by a group of four Non Government Organisations (Greening Australia, National Parks Association NSW, Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, OzGREEN) and the NSW Government. Over 100 other organisations are involved in the Initiative as active members of the five Regional Partnerships, affiliated programs and contributors to partnership projects. These represent State and Local Governments, Catchment Management Authorities, NGOs, industry, community, Landcare and indigenous groups, universities and research organisations.

ALA Partners

CSIRO, Australian Museum, Museums and Art Galleries of Northern Territory, Museum Victoria, Queensland Museum, South Australian Museum, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Western Australian Museum, CAMD, CHAH, CHACM, CHAEC, CHAFC, Southern Cross University, The University of Adelaide, The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, The Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.