

The Geological and Bioregional Assessment (GBA) Program held its fifth Cooper GBA region user panel meeting on 8 December 2020. This meeting was delivered through an hour-long agenda and was held virtually because of COVID-19 travel restrictions.

The GBA Program provided an update on progress towards delivery of Stage 3 of the GBA Program since the previous user panel meeting on 8 July 2020. CSIRO presented the impact and risk assessment method including the development and implementation of a region scale causal network. The causal network is a visual way of presenting the cause-and-effect pathways of potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on matters of importance in the region. The presentation included an update on the hydrodynamic flood inundation model, and how the program is using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) to gather a better understanding of the Cooper Creek floodplain and landscape. The entire LiDAR dataset that supports the flood modelling is available for download on data.gov.au: <https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/d581de1d-964f-4141-ad9a-eaf500608bb9>. Smaller components of the data can be downloaded from Geoscience Australia's ELVIS Portal: <https://elevation.fsdf.org.au/>.

This communique outlines the key topics discussed by user panel members during the meeting.

- Panellists were interested to understand how, and to who, the causal networks would be available. The causal networks will be available as a public web-based tool, similar to the Bioregional Assessments explorer tool currently available through <https://www.bioregionalassessments.gov.au/ba-explorer>. The web tool will allow individual nodes or pathways to be selected and interrogated depending on a user's interests.
- Industry were interested to understand if the Cooper Creek flood model would be available to users. The underlying model parameters, data and method will be made publicly available through data.gov.au as will all the GBA Program's legacy products. The GBA Program will continue to advise of product releases as they become available.
- The panel was keen to understand how the GBA Program's products will be presented at the end of the program, and how the results will align with State policies and legislation beyond June 2021. The program emphasised its commitment to continued strong engagement with all stakeholders to ensure the use and ongoing legacy of the program's products for industry, states, and the Commonwealth.
- The GBA Program suggested holding the next user panel in March 2021. Based on user feedback, the program is keen to provide more opportunities for detailed updates from panellists at future meetings. The GBA Program will look to hold the next user panel meetings in the region, depending on departmental travel restrictions. The GBA Program will monitor COVID-19 travel restrictions and will work closely with the panel to plan the next meeting.

User panellists are encouraged to visit the GBA website at: <https://www.bioregionalassessments.gov.au/geological-and-bioregional-assessment-program> and contact us with any further questions or feedback.