

FINAL ACTIVITY REPORT

CESP2017-0009 : **International Living Atlases Workshop**

Guidelines on how to complete the activity report are included in italics. Please include sources of verification as links or annexes.

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1. Executive summary

Provide a brief explanation of the project and its implementation, the main capacity enhancement objectives achieved, lessons learned and conclusions.

As a GBIF node, one of our goals is to highlight our data publishers and their data. To achieve this, the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) has developed a large all-encompassing open source platform with several modules re-usable by other organizations. Since 2013, the community around this platform has organized technical workshops to present ALA modules to other GBIF nodes wishing to implement the ALA model, in order to improve already existing national data portals, and to learn from each other's achievements.

To help new users and to continue assisting experienced users, we aim to organize one workshop per year, each focused on specific modules of the platform (e.g. spatial module, ALA4R, etc.). This year, we experienced a new style of workshop by creating subgroups composed of an advanced member with new participants. This schema helps to create working relationships between members, but also allows to share doubts and ideas between them from a advanced point of view and from a new one. This is one of the strengths of this workshop.

The official event of this project was the workshop in Madrid in February 2018, but we decided to ask for a workshop during the 2017 TDWG conference in Ottawa to communicate about the community and about the event planned in February.

Following these two workshops (Ottawa 2017 and Madrid 2018), more than the three initially planned data portals were launched or will be launched in production:

- [Canadensys](#) (October 2017)
- [Andorra](#) (February 2018 - [News about the launch of this data portal](#))
- Benin (initially May 2018 but postponed to July 2018 due to a hosting issue)
- [Estonia](#) (May 2018)

This last event in Madrid gathered 23 participants from 19 countries from 6 regions. New participants interested included TaiBif, the Field Museum of Chicago, Russia...

Participants pages on the wiki have been improved (example with Canadensys <https://github.com/AtlasOfLivingAustralia/documentation/wiki/Canadensys-production-environment>) and a website for the community has been created (<https://living-atlases.gbif.org>). Overall, the workshop was a success and we are in the process to give access to the exercises made for the workshop on the ALA documentation wiki.

This workshop also gave us an opportunity to learn some lessons:

- The workshop need to be held when the project leader's budget is open. We also need to assure that the institution that receives the money is able to make easily international wire transfers.
- since the beginning of the community, we focused on the technical aspect, but we need to open this to the end-users.
- we need to improve the translation of the documentation (technical and end-user) in several languages.
- we need to be more collaborative (e.g. all the code need to be in GitHub).

2. Contact information

Provide the name, institutional affiliation, role in the project and contact details of the author(s) of the report.

Name of the representative	GBIF Participant represented	Role(s) in the project	Contact
Anne-Sophie Archambeau	France	Coordinator	archambeau@gbif.fr
Marie-Elise Lecoq	France	Co-organizer	melecoq@gbif.fr
David Martin	Atlas of Living Australia NBN	Co-organizer	David.Martin@csiro.au
Cristina Villaverde	GBIF Spain	Co-organizer	villaverde@gbif.es

3. Project summary



This section should provide readers with a good understanding of the project, from the original plans to the final implementation, highlighting:

- *The capacity needs that instigated the project and how these have changed as a result of the project activities.*
- *The activities that have been completed at the time of writing the report, and those that are ongoing or pending (e.g. longer-term evaluation, follow-up projects/meetings/training events) and your plans for their completion.*
- *How the different partners in the project have contributed to its implementation.*

3.1. Activities completed

Highlight the activities that have been completed at the time of writing the report. Explain how the different partners in the project have contributed to its implementation.

The activities completed at the time of writing the report are:

1. The workshop during the TDWG 2017 conference in Ottawa.

The presentations were done by participants from GBIF Spain, Atlas of Living Atlases, GBIF Sweden, Canadensys and GBIF France. The workshop was composed of 4 sessions. The first one was an introduction to the community and the ALA platform. It was followed by more than 25 persons. The three last sessions were more practical with exercises, and we had around 10 peoples following them. The workshop was composed of the following presentations:

Session 1:

- 1) Introduction of the Living Atlases workshop presented by Marie-Elise Lecoq from GBIF France: <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.20253>
- 2) Living Atlases Architecture presented by David Martin from Atlas of Living Australia: <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.19826>
- 3) Documentation about Atlas of Living Australia tools presented: how to find information by Fabien Caviere from GBIF France: <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.19941>

Session 2, 3 and 4:

- 1) The Registry component of Atlas of Living Australia by Santiago Martínez de la Riva from GBIF Spain: <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.19802>
- 2) Biocache-store: Command-Line Interface tool for managing occurrence records presented by Manash Shah from GBIF Sweden : <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.15071>
- 3) Occurrences : Data resources and Biocache-hub presented by Jeremy Goimard from Canadensys: <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.20321>
- 4) Living Atlases : tips and advices presented by Marie-Elise Lecoq: <https://doi.org/10.3897/tdwgproceedings.1.20252>

The last session was also composed of discussions to help understand problematics that the participants had and to find how ALA can help them.

2. The main event of this CESP Project: the workshop in Madrid.

The workshop was held in Madrid during the third week of February (Feb 19 to Feb 23). During the initial plan, we were 15 participants from 12 countries. As we had a lot of requests to participate to this workshop, we decided, with the agreement of GBIF Secretariat, to open it to more participants. At the end, we were 25 participants from 19 countries from the 6 continents (see participant list on <https://www.gbif.es/en/talleres/taller-internacional-living-atlases/>). The focus was on the collectory and the data hub modules. You will find the

agenda and the participant list by following this link
(<https://www.gbif.es/en/talleres/taller-internacional-living-atlases/>).



List of organizers :

- David Martin (coordinator/talker) and Nick dos Remedios (talker) from Atlas of Living Australia
- Cristina Villaverde (coordinator) and Santiago Martínez de la Riva (coordinator) from GBIF Spain
- Marie-Elise Lecoq (coordinator/talker) and Fabien Cavière (talker) from GBIF France
- Manash Shah (talker) from GBIF Sweden

List of mentors:

- Manuel Vargas from INBio Costa Rica
- Jérémy Goimard from Canadensys
- Santiago De La Riva from GBIF Spain
- Fabien Cavière from GBIF France
- Manash Shah from GBIF Sweden
- Rui Figueira from GBIF Portugal

3.2. Post-project activities

Highlight post-project activities if any (e.g. longer-term evaluation, follow-up projects/meetings/training events) and your plans for their completion.

1. Improving the documentation by putting online the exercises made during the workshop. We are currently working with INBio, GBIF, the Field Museum from Chicago, GBIF France and GBIF Argentina to redo the exercises and create an online documentation based on the notes taken by the participants and our tests.
2. [Workshop in Dunedin during the TDWG 2018](#) with a focus on users. This workshop will be mainly data portal demonstrations from INBio, GBIF Benin, GBIF Sweden and the Meise Museum. The main goal is to show that we can successfully install and configure data portals.
3. CESP 2018-0004: focus on end-users (user-focused documentation, videos, etc.)
4. Participation to conferences outside our network to increase our visibility in the biodiversity and informatics domain, for example:
 - a. Latin American GBIF Nodes Meeting in Chile in April 2018
(<https://www.gbif.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Living-Atlases-Latinamerican-Nodes-Meeting-2018.pdf>)
 - b. Information Technologies in the Research of Biodiversity, Irkutsk, Russia in September 2018.

4. Project objectives

A list of the objectives included in your original project proposal, and a description of how your project activities contributed to meeting them. . Also include any additional objectives that were defined during the implementation of the project.

1. **The organization of a 5-day workshop around Atlas of Living Australia platform:** the workshop has been hosted by the Botanical Garden in Madrid. 23 participants from 19 different countries took part of this event. We made a slight modification on the scope of this workshop. Instead of an advanced one, we proposed a workshop for every level and we divided the participants into subgroups with a mentor (an advanced participant) for 2 or 3 new participants.
2. **The organization of a workshop during TDWG 2017 for new participants.** The goal of the workshop *Reusing an open source platform in order to create a*

community: example of the Living Atlases community was to present the community of Living Atlases by showing examples already in production, and past & future projects involving the community. We trained participants on the basic ALA modules (Collectory and Biocache-hub) that focus on occurrence research tools, data visualization and metadata portal. The workshop was very successful. It gathered 25 participants during the first session (more theoretical) and between 8 and 12 students from around the world (Canada, Suriname, Sweden, Finland, etc.) during the technical sessions attended the course. Materials are available in the Living Atlases community website.



3. **Strengthen the Living Atlases community in the long term** (governance, funding, etc.): we are talking with others institution or organizations in order to make partnerships such as VertNet, the Field Museum, etc. We are working on developing a landscape analysis about research infrastructures in each region and explore the applications of ALA in these areas (e.g. European Science Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) Roadmap 2018)
4. **Improvement of the documentation and communication around the community**: we restructured and translated the wiki documentation and we created a [website](#) to increase the web visibility of the Living Atlases community. Each month, we send an email to the mailing list to highlight a part of the documentation that need to be improve. To improve the communication around the community, we thought it was a good idea to help participants to know each other, so we used the same system as the BID projects with mentors and mentees during the workshop in Madrid.

Additional objectives defined during the workshop in Madrid (some of them are still in progress :

1. Each live data portal based on ALA modules needs to put its code in a GitHub organization account to help facilitate reuse and show the community what they have done. Users need to keep their repositories updated with their latest changes [in progress]

5. Project deliverables

The original list of deliverables from your project proposal, including a description of the final deliverables produced. Make sure to include sources of verification for each of the deliverables, such as details of data mobilized through the project including DOIs to published datasets, and/or links to re-usable information resources or tools. Alternatively, the deliverables can be attached to the report as an annex.

1. Creation of the countries page on the ALA documentation wiki (See <https://github.com/AtlasOfLivingAustralia/documentation/wiki>)
2. In the project objectives, we had planned that at least 3 data portals would be launched in production. We now have 6 data portals in production:
 - 1) Canadensys: <http://data2.canadensys.net/>
 - 2) GBIF Andorra: <http://www.gbif.ad/>
 - 3) GBIF Estonia: <https://elurikkus.ee/>
 - 4) GBIF Benin: <http://portail.gbifbenin.org> (will be available at the end of July)
 - 5) Isles of Man: <https://isleofman.nbnatlas.org/>

3. Creation of the Living Atlases website: <https://living-atlases.gbif.org>
4. Improvement of current running data portals by upgrading tools: GBIF France upgraded its tools to the latest version of the collectory and the biocache.
5. Launch of spatial portals, region modules and/or species modules on the ALA running portals: [GBIF Spain launched its region modules](#).
6. Creation of a new technical documentation related with spatial, regions and species modules. As we changed the focus of the workshop, we decide to postpone this deliverable to the next CESP 2018 (0004 ?).
7. Improvements to the ALA documentation that is already on GitHub. [The documentation has been restructured](#) and we focused our work on helping the community to improve it.
8. Creation of an [official web page for the Living Atlases community](#) as well as a specific mailing list for members to help for the internal communication. We decided to fully used the existing tools instead of creating another ones. We recommend people to send their questions through the [mailing list](#) even if there are technical. Moreover, because of the different time zone of the participant, we think that having email threads will be more efficient in term of history and answers.
9. Presentations made during the workshop available at <https://www.gbif.es/en/talleres/taller-internacional-living-atlases/>
10. Document with action points <https://www.gbif.es/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Action-points.pdf>
11. Evaluation survey with feedback from the workshop participants <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FfB0Z7O7jaxCrA7xFadCSrCxlCNb9pcievCiW81jtM/edit?usp=sharing>



6. Project communications

Report on the way the results of your project have been communicated and shared with the project stakeholders and broader GBIF community . Please also review the page describing your project available from <https://www.gbif.org/programme/82219/capacity-enhancement-support-programme#projects>. Highlight any additional documents, events, news items or links that you would like to add to your page.

Before the workshops, we organized regular Skype calls between organizers to prepare them but also with the participants in order to be sure to understand what they expected from the workshop, and which topics they wanted to focus on. Because of the number of participants and the worldwide aspect of the project, we were able to schedule around 1 Skype call each 2 months during the entire project.

To help participants but also to communicate to the entire community, GBIF Spain put in place [the official web page of the workshop in Madrid](#) with all the information needed (main topics, agenda, places to see, participant list, etc.).

Most of the presentation made during the TDWG workshop in Ottawa had abstract and can be find on BISS (see more detail in the part about the activities). Because it was a workshop and not a symposium, it was not required to write these abstracts but we decided that it would be more interesting for the people interested in our work to know what they can expect during the sessions.

One of the deliverables of this project is the official website of the community (<https://living-atlases.gbif.fr>). In addition to the [new page on the GBIF.org](#) dedicated to the project, we thought it was a good idea to have a page as the main entrance to the community. Indeed, users will be able to find information regarding the different data portals already in production or in development, but also the link to the documentation and presentations made during workshops or conferences.

During the workshop in Madrid, we used Twitter to show our progress in live. You can follow what we did using this link (<https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&q=%23ALAWorkshopMadrid%20>).



In order to communicate about the community, Kyle Copas interviewed some participants and organizers in order to have some feedback regarding the workshop and the entire community. The videos will be available soon.

7. Evaluation: lessons learned and best practices

An assesement of the overall outcomes and impacts of your project, including strengths and weaknesses in its implementation and results. If any changes have been made to the project plans please clearly indicate this and the reasons for this. Try to identify your experiences that could help others to design and implement projects more effectively, including the best practices to adopt and the pitfalls to avoid.

There is a big difference between the project proposal and what we have done at the end in term of workshop level and number of participants. Due to several meetings (BID workshop, TDWG 2017, etc.), we acknowledged the interest of people outside the initial scope to this event. With the agreement of the GBIF, we decided to open the event to none GBIF members such as the Institute of Mathematical Problems of Biology in Russia or the Field Museum of Chicago. The idea is to create a technical community around ALA tools and GBIF standards.

Our main weakness came from the administrative aspects of the workshop. As we mentioned above the workshop needs to be held when the project leader's budget is open. We also need to assure that the institution that receives the money is able to make international wire transfers easily. By the time we are writing this report, some invoices have not been paid yet.

But the way we scheduled the course worked better. Indeed, the division of the time between presentations and exercises are more efficient and the creation of subgroups helps participants to fully understand the project and communicate with more advanced members. We used the BID workshop experience that some participant have as mentors or trainers.

We also gave some time to the participants to talk about their own projects. It helps to understand their problematics and gave to the workshop an aspect more practical based on real expectation and not only theoretical.

8. Future plans and sustainability

A description of how the partners involved will build on the results of this project in their future work. This could include future collaborative activities, such as plans to complete any unfinished project activities and how the future impact of the project could be monitored or measured.

Because we added some action points during the workshop, the participants will collaborate together to fulfill them. Action points include the completion of the exercises made during the event and putting the exercises and the tips online to be used by future developers and community members.

We have begun to organize the future event that will be held during the CESP 2018; it will be focused on the spatial aspect of the ALA modules and they will be a huge part of the documentation for end-users. Indeed, since the creation of the community, we have worked on the technical documentations and through several experiences, we discovered that the end-users need some tutorials to fully use the national data portals. Canadensys has begun to work on this.

Some new cooperations have been established between GBIF nodes through this CESP project, such as the cooperation between GBIF France and GBIF Togo to create GBIF Togo

official website and to install the GBIF Togo data portal. Canadensys will make three workshops for their data publishers with the help of several other organizations (iDigBio, VerNet, GBIF Spain, etc.) to train their data publishers on the new GBIF.org but also on the new Canadensys data portal based on ALA platform.



We will still work on improving the technical documentation. To do this, GBIF France has sent monthly emails on the official ALA mailing list to highlight some parts of the wiki and to encourage members to improve these parts.

In parallel of all the events that we organized, including the one from this project, the community helps new developers to install and configure their own data portals.

In the following months, we expect new data portals in the Asian, Caribbean and African areas. This will increase the visibility of the community in new parts of the world. Moreover, some of these new data portals have been installed by non-GBIF members which are now part of the extended GBIF-ALA community. Because the platform uses the GBIF standards and tools such as Darwin Core Archive or IPT, it will be easier for these institutions to publish their data, if it is not already the case, to GBIF.

As the technical architecture is not static, there will always be improvement to make from small updates to shared indexation.

9. Signature of the project main contact point

Signed on behalf of the project partners

Date

6/07/2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Archanber", written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'A' and a long horizontal stroke.