

The Geological and Bioregional Assessment (GBA) Program held the fourth Beetaloo GBA region user panel meeting on 10 December 2020. This meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The GBA team thanked the user panel for their ongoing support and engagement while the program carries out engagements virtually.

CSIRO presented the hydraulic fracturing risk assessment and contaminant model, and thanked Santos and Origin for the opportunity to sample flowback water at the Tanumbirini and Kyalla sites. Included in CSIRO's presentation was a summary of the risk assessment and contaminant screening modelling of hydraulic fracturing chemicals. Initial modelling results predict that chemical spills can be contained and would be unlikely to spread to groundwater. The study is not yet complete, however all information related to the modelling will be made publicly available at the end of the GBA Program.

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

- The panel was keen to understand more about which chemicals are being assessed and which are the highest risk. Further information on the assessment of these chemicals can be found in the Stage 2 reports published on the Bioregional Assessments website: <https://www.bioregionalassessments.gov.au/assessments/geological-and-bioregional-assessment-program/beetaloo-sub-basin/beetaloo-gba-region-stage-two-report>.
- Questions were asked about the potential process of continual improvements for the causal networks and the web interface. The web interface is designed to be flexible and can be self-maintained to run after the program ends.
- The legacy of the program was considered important to panellists. After June 2021 all the results and program products will be made available (including user manuals and datasets) on the GBA website and will be accessible to the public. The program is working closely with key stakeholders to ensure the work informs their decision-making processes.
- The panel was interested to know how the causal network addresses repeated low risk activities and whether this changes the assessment of potential impacts. The program is confident that the methodology adequately addresses this matter, however, CSIRO will consider it in more detail to specifically manage the panel's concern.
- The GBA Program suggested the next user panel meeting be held in March 2021. The GBA Program, following user panel members feedback is keen to provide the opportunity for detailed updates from panellists at future meetings. It is envisaged that the next user panel meeting will be held in the region, however, this will be dependent on departmental travel restrictions.

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.