BioNet system enhancements

Release notes 4.1

**Department of Climate Change,
Energy, the Environment and Water**

Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.
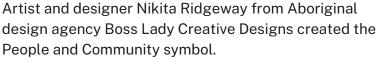
We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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Background

BioNet is the repository for biodiversity data maintained by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and contains species sightings and systematic survey, vegetation classification and threatened biodiversity data collections used by a wide range of organisations. BioNet data are held across 3 separate website applications: BioNet Atlas; BioNet Vegetation Classification; BioNet Threatened Biodiversity Profiles.

The majority of the data maintained in these applications are also available via the BioNet Web Service that is maintained in parallel with the applications.

Release 4.1 is part of broader enhancement initiatives under the BioNet Next Generation program. The program takes a comprehensive approach to addressing NSW biodiversity data management needs and infrastructure challenges.

BioNet Atlas and Web Service have migrated authentication platform from Application Security Management System (ASMS) to Azure AD B2C as part of the department's Cyber Security Uplift program. This has resulted in an update to the login process and self-registration for new users. At the same time, transparency around current access level, a simplified approach to request higher access rights and supporting guidance are visible once logged into BioNet Atlas.

As Azure B2C is progressively enabled for other departmental business applications, the full benefits of a modern cloud-based security platform that incorporates single sign-on and multi-factor authentication (MFA) will be realised.

Enhancements and fixes

BioNet Atlas app

1. New login system

Applies to: all users of BioNet Atlas application

Registration, password reset and logging in to BioNet Atlas is now via Azure AD B2C. NSW government staff with supported email domains can log in using 'Internal staff single sign-on' functionality which recognises their network credentials. Existing external users will undergo a migration process from ASMS to the new authentication platform.

2. Greater transparency of user profile details

Applies to: all users of the BioNet Atlas editor application

The BioNet Atlas application homepage has been updated with new content and changes to provide visibility to users of their profile details. A new User Profile pop-up displays the user's profile details, including their role and data access level. A further

pop-up information window explains the profile terminology. Sensitive species data is provisioned to users via BioNet Atlas and BioNet Web Service in accordance with the user's data access level.

3. Simplified process to request elevated data access level or application functionality

Applies to: all users of the BioNet Atlas editor application

Users can now request an elevated data access level for greater visibility of sensitive species data, or an elevated role by staff for data management purposes directly through the new User Profile pop-up in BioNet Atlas. A link is provided to the new Access BioNet web page, which guides users on how to request and manage access levels.

4. Application for login access to BioNet Atlas webform retired

Applies to: all users of the BioNet Atlas application

With the move to self-registration for BioNet Atlas editor app, the previous Application for login access to BioNet Atlas webform has been retired.

5. Revised BioNet Sensitive Species Data Licence information and application form

Applies to: all current and future users of the BioNet Atlas application

A new dedicated information page and webform **Application for a BioNet Sensitive Species Data Licence** has been released. This replaces the previous Application for a Sensitive Species Data Licence webform located on the bottom of the Application for login access to BioNet Atlas page. This page and webforms have been retired.

BioNet Data Warehouse app

6. Self-management of BioNet Web Service API tokens

Applies to: all users of the BioNet Atlas

An Application Programming Interface (API) token (or access token) is a unique character string that acts as a digital key to authenticate and authorise a user or application to access specific API resources or operations, based on permissions associated with the token.

All users can now generate and manage their own API tokens in the **BioNet Data Warehouse: User settings app**. To access the app, log in to BioNet Atlas, open the User Profile pop-up, then click on the **View/Edit Access Token** link.

API tokens can now be used by users with an elevated data access level to view and retrieve sensitive species data via the BioNet Web Service, in parallel with existing use of basic authentication (username and password).

These changes represent a significant enhancement on the previous API token system, which had restricted administrator access, did not allow self-management, and could only provision publicly visible data to users.

Note, basic authentication for APIs is now considered outdated and less secure, hence will be phased out by the end of 2025. Users are encouraged to switch to API tokens soon. Refer to Documentation section for instructions.

BioNet Threatened Biodiversity Profiles web app

There have been no changes.

BioNet Vegetation Classification apps

There have been no changes.

Documentation

A new Access BioNet webpage has been created to help users navigate the updated system. It brings together key content from older BioNet pages and past onboarding emails, simplifying and centralising user support materials.

For more details on this release, refer to the BioNet Web Service Release Notes (July 2025 Release 4.0.2). Detailed instructions for generation and use of API tokens in power queries are provided in the updated BioNet Power Query quick guide. The existing BioNet developer guidelines also covers API token usage. These documents are all available on the BioNet Web Service and BioNet resources web pages.

Warnings and known limitations

No warnings or known limitations specific to this release.