

Media Release

April 29th

Local Government a Major Force in Citizen Science

www.climatewatch.org.au

Earthwatch Australia today said local government in Australia will become a major force in developing local community understanding of climate change through an increasing trend towards citizen science.

Earthwatch has begun a national program to alert Councils to the ClimateWatch Citizen Science program and the opportunity to establish their own ClimateWatch Trails to promote awareness of the local environment.

Local councils are important environmental guardians and carry out many environmental protection and education programs, Richard Gilmore, CEO of Earthwatch Australia said.



[Click on the Motor Bike Frog and see ClimateWatch Works YouTube Video 90 seconds](#)

Councils can add the ClimateWatch link to their website and promote the program's availability online for local schools, environment groups and council employees and their families. The program shows how councils can develop their own local ClimateWatch Trail and become part of a growing network of climate change monitoring sites across the country.

The local government campaign follows an announcement that Earthwatch will launch a ClimateWatch Trail for the Federal Parliament on May 25th.

ClimateWatch is part of Earthwatch's Citizens Science program aimed at encouraging people to take notice of what is happening in their local environments and record the information.

The program is supported by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, University of Melbourne and the Atlas of Living Australia. Rio Tinto and Leighton Contractors are sponsoring the program.

Mr Gilmore said ClimateWatch gives every council in Australia the opportunity to make a difference and help shape Australia's response to climate change by contributing to a national database whilst also promoting their unique local environment

ClimateWatch is based on *phenology*, the study of periodic plant and animal life cycle events and how these are influenced by seasonal and interannual variations in climate. Climate change is affecting rainfall and temperature across Australia, and is consequently triggering changes in the established flowering times, breeding cycles and migration movements and other **phenological changes**.

It's easy to get involved. Simply choose the mammal, bird, insect, reptile or plants you are interested in or would like to keep an eye on and start recording what you see online.

To register to become a Climate Change Watcher visit www.climatewatch.org.au

Info Links www.earthwatch.org.au

www.climatewatch.com.au

[Climate Watch Trail Launch at City of Melville WA](#)