



INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

Annual Report 2015-16



President's report

These are exciting times as our organisation grows and our impact increases. A highlight of the last year has been our increased focus on communications and outreach, allowing us to alert the public to the dangers posed to nature and people by threats such as invasive ants.

We have a plan!

The board prioritised the development of a new strategic plan, which was finalised in April 2016 and will guide our important work for the next seven years. Central to the plan is our focus on prevention and early action, to stop new invasions in their tracks. Public outreach plays a crucial role in building support for our advocacy.

We have a team!

Andrew Cox continues to provide us with excellent leadership as CEO, and his relocation to Sydney offers opportunities to increase impact in NSW. John Sampson continues to ensure a high standard of communications through the Feral Herald, our website and our publications. We are also very fortunate to have the expertise of Carol Booth and Tim Low available for technical support.

We have strengthened our team with the addition of Charlie Sherwin in a project officer role, preparing quality submissions to support our advocacy. And from January to April 2016 we were fortunate to have Jaana Dielenberg as our outreach officer.

On behalf of the board, I would like to thank our staff for their excellent work.

I would also like to acknowledge the good governance provided by my colleagues on the board and thank them for working together to build a stronger Invasive Species Council.

We are talking to you!

A key feature of this year has been our focus on building community awareness about the need for prevention-focused biosecurity reform. We are finding better ways of talking to the public about the risk of invasive species and how we can avoid that risk through preventative measures.

As part of this we made two videos about yellow crazy ant invasions. They were viewed by more than 17,000 people in just one month. Our social media posts reached far more people, with several reaching more than 100,000 people. And more people are reading the Feral Herald email bulletin, with an audience of 2000.

And you are supporting us!

We are proudly a donor funded organisation and grateful that our donors are maintaining and increasing their support. This has enabled us to enhance our small but effective team. We are delighted that a number of our supporters have made a three year commitment, providing us with greater funding certainty.

We are very grateful to the foundations that provide major donations – they are the backbone of our organisational capacity. Thank you very much to Limb Family Foundation, Curlew Fund and Melliodora Fund of the Australian Communities Foundation, Garry White Foundation, Tracker Foundation, Mullum Trust, Paddy Pallin Foundation, Water Dragon Fund and the McKinnon Family Foundation.

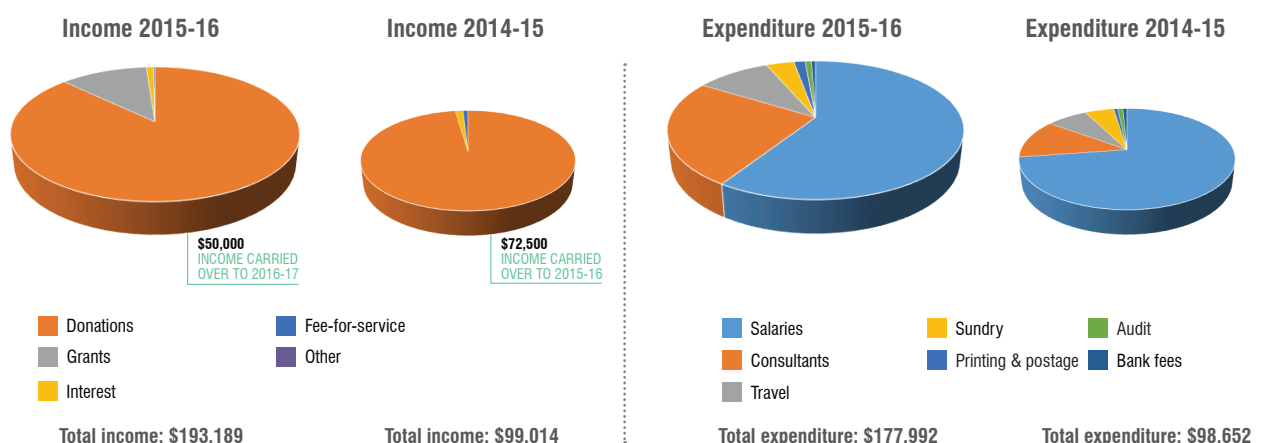
Thank you also to our many personal monthly and yearly donors for your ongoing support. These donations support our operations and, importantly, tell us our work is valued.

We are also very fortunate to receive in-kind support from Ecology Australia and the Victorian National Parks Association.

Esther Abram, President



Yearly income and expenditure





Andrew Cox in Texas, USA during his red fire ant fact finding mission, May 2016.

CEO's report



The threat of invasive ants has been the major highlight of our national efforts over the past year.

To raise awareness about red fire ants, I attended an international fire ant conference in the USA and toured three US states on a fact finding mission where I heard alarming stories about living with these dangerous ants.

We have worked hard to see the implementation of the landmark Senate inquiry into environmental biosecurity. While the government is still to formally respond, we are starting to see dividends from this inquiry. For example, the environment was a key part of the 2015 Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper.

We have been the environmental NGO voice on the national feral cat taskforce and provided detailed input to the review of the Australia intergovernmental biosecurity agreement.

Prior to the 2 July 2016 federal election we were pleased to see detailed policy commitments from Labor and the Greens in response to our party questionnaire.

We received welcome dividends from our joint work with irrigators and fishers to secure \$15 million for the 2017 release of the carp herpes virus and our work with Cairns and Kuranda communities that saw \$10.5 million committed to eradicate yellow crazy ants from the Wet Tropics rainforests.

In NSW we were well rewarded for our recent efforts. A pest management review by the independent Natural Resources Commission embraced our key suggestions including declaration of feral deer as a pest animal, while

the environment minister has proposed to reduce growing feral horse numbers in Kosciuszko National Park. The NSW government is preparing a state of biosecurity report, another of our proposals.

We have played an active role on the NSW biosecurity advisory committee by advising the implementation of the NSW Biosecurity Act and contributing to the Sydney peri-urban biosecurity pilot project.

In late 2015 the Froggatt Awards were reinstated and widely publicised. Awards were issued in four categories, including to Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce for standing up to Johnny Depp and Amber Heard and acting to protect marine ecosystems from biofouling.

We have been increasing our collaborations. Our exciting partnership with international organisation Island Conservation, launched at the 2016 Island Arks Symposium, will see a greater focus on efforts to eradicate rodents, cats and other feral animals from Australia's offshore islands. The new affiliation with the Monash University School of Biological Sciences allowed us to plan a project to systematically identify national biosecurity risk and pathway priorities.

We have strengthened ties with NSW and Queensland conservation groups, joining the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Queensland Conservation Council and several regional groups.

Andrew Cox, CEO



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