**42nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMITTEE FOR IUCN**

**VIRTUAL VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021, 3-5PM (AEDT)**

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

##### Participants Present (on Microsoft Teams)

Alison Schumacher, Basha Stasak (ACF), Bob Debus, Brendan Mackey, Brian Leahy, Cassandra Kennedy (Chair – DAWE), David Wachenfeld (GBRMPA), Di Tarte, Kate Davey (ACIUCN Director), Fleur Downard (DAWE), Eleena Wykes (DAWE), Evia Tavanavanua (ORO), Jo Kopkins (Parks Victoria), Joanne Wilson (NSW NPWS), Kelly Raymond, Kerrie Fraser (QLD DES), Mason Smith (Regional Director, ORO), Melissa Jaques-Brown (DAWE), Michael Sams, Peter Cochrane (IUCN Regional Councillor), Rachel Walmsley (EDO), Rosalie Chapple (BMWHI), Semisi Seruitanoa (ORO), Ted Plummer (Coolong Foundation), Tess Hoinville, Fipe Tuitubou (ORO), Ian Walker; Di Tarte (Honorary life-member)

**1. Acknowledgement of Country & Welcome by ACIUCN Chair**

* ACIUCN Chair, Cassandra Kennedy, opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of county and welcomed ACIUCN Members, associates, Honorary Lifetime Members and guest speakers.

##### Proxies

* Jo Hopkins (Parks Victoria) held proxy for the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.
* Basha Stasak (ACF) held proxy for the Wilderness Society and Australian Marine Conservation Society.

##### Quorum

* Quorum requirement for 5 NGO and 5 Govt members was fulfilled with the attendees at the meeting.

Apologies

* The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
* Australian Marine Conservation Society (proxy provided)
* The Wilderness Society (proxy provided)

##### Agenda

* The agenda was accepted with no amendments.

**2. Minutes from 2020**

* The Chair advised that the draft minutes for the 41st AGM in 2020 had been circulated for comment.
* A motion to accept the minutes was out forward by Jo Hopkins, seconded by Peter Cochrane.
* The minutes were accepted without amendment.

**MOTION PASSED: that the Minutes of the 41st AGM of ACIUCN be accepted.**

**Moved: Jo Hopkins, Seconded: Peter Cochrane**

**3. Presentation of annual report**

* The Chair acknowledged that 2021 was a difficult year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and thanked ACIUCN members for their continued involvement.
* The Chair acknowledged the strength of the national committee in promoting the IUCN’s work in Australia and its value as a forum for information exchange and collaboration on conservation issues.
* The Chair acknowledged the national committee is one of the few around the world with a paid staff member and an Executive Board to oversee its governance and operation.
* The Chair acknowledged and thanked the new Director, Kate Davey, who took over from Madelon Willemsen in July this year and commended her efforts in convening a very successful ACIUCN Workshop on ‘Australia's priorities for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework’.
* The Chair introduced the Annual Report and highlighted the following achievements:
	+ Updates to two core governance documents –
		- A new Strategic Plan for ACIUCN to 2025 which outlines 4 strategic goals for the organisation and aims to strengthen the ACIUCN as a platform to build capacity, share knowledge and enhance cooperation across sectors.
		- New ACIUCN Constitution to bring it in line with state and federal laws and regulations that govern associations and charities.
	+ Preparations for the IUCN World Conservation Congress which took place in Marseille, France in September for which the ACIUCN facilitated meetings with the IUCN Director General, Dr Bruno Obele, as well as 2 of the 3 IUCN Presidential candidates to discuss their strategic vision for the organisation.
	+ The addition of three new associate members -
		- Queensland Conservation Council
		- National Parks Association of NSW
		- People and Parks.
	+ The Chair thanked our Regional Councillor for Oceania, Peter Cochrane, and commended him on his success in securing another 4-year term.
	+ The Chair also thanked members of the Executive Committee for their dedication and support throughout the year.
* The ACIUCN Director, Kate Davey, delivered the financial report. Key points mentioned:
	+ Thanked Rod Griffiths for his pro bono work in auditing the financial accounts and report.
	+ Total account balance at 30 June 2021 is $162,582.
	+ ACIUCN Expenditure was $69,147 in the FY21 (down from previous years due to no event costs or travel as well as less funds spent on wages).
	+ ACIUCN’s income for FY21 was $88,020.
	+ ACIUCN had a surplus of $18,873.01 for the financial year.
	+ ACIUCN Expenditure for 2022 is expected to be $58,800. Income for 2022 is projected to be $91,100 (based on membership dues).
	+ Thanked treasurer Blathnaid Byrne for her work as Treasurer.
	+ Noted the ACIUCN may need a new treasurer in 2022.
* The Chair thanked Kate for the report and opened the floor to the other ACIUCN Executive Committee members for comment.
* Peter Cochrane took the floor and commended the efforts of the ACIUCN for conducting webinars and online meetings despite the challenges of COVID-19. He looks forward to a time when the ACIUCN can reconvene in person. Peter thanked the Australian Government for their ongoing financial support, noting that the ACIUCN would not be able to employ a Director without this support. He thanked the Executive Committee for their work throughout the years and extended thanks to the previous Director, Madelon Willemsen, for her work. He also commended the new Director, Kate Davey, for her efforts to date, particularly in convening the recent workshop on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
* Jo Hopkins took the floor and encouraged members to read and consider the new ACIUCN strategic plan as a way forward for the future operation of the organisation. She recognised the value in having online meetings as a tool to advance productive partnerships in the future both across Australia and Oceania.
* Rosalie Chapple took the floor to advise she was stepping down after 2 years involvement. She noted however that she would still be linked in with the ACIUCN due to her work on a conference on protected areas.
* The Chair called for a motion to be put forward to endorse the annual and financial report. The motion was moved by Jo Hopkins and seconded by Rosalie Chapple.

**MOTION PASSED: that the Annual and Financial Reports are accepted.**

**Moved: Jo Hopkins, Seconded: Rosalie Chapple**

**4. Presentation: Mason Smith, Regional Director, Oceania Regional Office**

* Mason presented on key achievements from the Oceania Regional Office (ORO). ORO has 40 staff based in Suva, Fiji. He noted that in Fiji that were locked down for over 6 months in 2021 which impacted on their operations as staff adjusted to working from home. ORO only managed to implement 40 per cent of what they had planned this year, when usually that are at 80 per cent by this stage in the year. He noted a significant growth in their current portfolio, which in turn means ORO needs to build additional capacity (both space and staff) to accommodate new projects that are coming online. ORO is hoping for a surplus in 2021.
* Mason outlined some key achievements in 2021 including –
	+ Major focus was briefing members pre, during and post the World Conservation Congress
	+ Supporting understanding of Nature-based Solutions to ensure conservation practioners understand the term and the IUCN standard
		- He advised that ORO was going to become a NbS hub, joint with New Zealand, and support NbS implementation across the region.
	+ Launched Kiwa initiative – 174 applicants with a total value of proposals at 10 million EUR
	+ Signed agreement with Solomon Islands and Vanuatu for a GEF 6 project and building up their GEF 6 capacity and have employed a GEF Regional Project Officer
	+ Hosted successful IUCN Oceania Environmental Law Conference in July 2021 from which they will now coordinate an environmental law regional partnership program
	+ Follow up from the IUCN World Conservation Congress including looking through the resolutions and how they relate to the region and link to the Marseille Manifesto.
* Mason welcomed the new IUCN Regional Councilors for Oceania
	+ Peter Cochrane (Australia);
	+ Catherine Iorns (New Zealand) and
	+ Lolita Gibbons-Decherong (Palau)
* Welcomed the National Committee Chairs for IUCN
	+ Australia (Kate Davey)
	+ New Zealand (Dr Mick Abbot).
* He provided an overview of the IUCN membership across the region - there are currently 52 members in Oceania. He also mentioned some discussions that he was having regarding membership fee changes that was impacting some members.
* Mason advised that ORO continues to work closely with the Commission on Ecosystem Management and is hoping to commence some work with the Species Survival Commission in the future.
* Future plans included attending major international meetings on oceans (both the One Ocean Summit and Our Oceans Conference) as well as the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
* The priority areas for ORO are marine; protected areas; climate change; ecosystems and species; environmental governance.
* ORO will also be reaching out to our committee to follow up regarding outcomes from the World Conservation Congress and on their new 2021-2024 Work Plan.
* Mason introduced his staff that also attended the meeting - Semisi Seruitanoa who is in charge of membership across the region; Fipe who is the project support officer; Ken is the strategic partnership officer in charge of donor relations and finance; Evia is the personal assistant to Mason.
* The Chair thanked Mason for his presentation and opened the floor for questions.
* Brendan Mackey advised that he has been asked by the IUCN President to be on the working group to establish the new Climate Crisis Commission. He advised that this would be an issue for consideration by the ACIUCN going forward. He also commended ORO for their progress with the GEF.

**5. Amendments to the Constitution**

* Peter Cochrane presented the amendments to the constitution. He advised that these amendments were required to bring the old constitution up to current requirements. He highlighted four key amendments that he wished to draw attention to –
	+ A change in terminology – the Executive Committee will now be known as the Board.
	+ An extension in the term of membership to the Board from 1 year to 2 years to improve continuity of membership.
	+ New provision to appoint an interim/Acting Chair from the Board in the absence of another willing Chair (and if it is agreed that there is a need for continuation of corporate knowledge) – to be appointed only by unanimous agreement by the Board.
	+ Strengthening the definition, role and standing of associate members.
* Jo Hopkins moved motion to accept constitution; Jo Wilson seconded.
* The Chair advise that 75 per cent of the membership needs to approve the amended constitution for it to pass. No objections were put forward and the constitution was taken as endorsed.
* A note for the record is that QLD DES abstained from the vote as the attendee was filling in on behalf of their IUCN representative.

**MOTION PASSED: the amended constitution was accepted.**

**Moved: Jo Hopkins, Seconded: Jo Wilson**

**6. Election of new Executive Committee/Board**

* The Chair outlined the required composition of the new Board - 2 non-government representatives, 2 government representatives, the Regional Councilor, Secretary, Public Officer and Treasurer
* Two nominees put forward for the government house were (1) Fleur Downard (Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment) and (2) Joanne Wilson (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service).
* Two nominees put forward for the non-government house were (1) Basha Stasak (ACF) and (2) Ted Plummer, Colong Foundation.

**MOTION PASSED: the proposed nominees to the Board were accepted.**

**Moved: Jo Hopkins, Seconded: Rosalie**

**7. Appointment of a public officer**

* The Chair noted outgoing public officer Rachel Walmsley (EDO) and thanked her for her involvement.
* The Chair advised that Jo Hopkins had nominated for the role of public officer and that as per the constitution, this would be an urgent matter for the new Board to fill this position.

**8. Guest Speaker - Dr David Wachenfeld – Chief Scientist, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)**

* The Chair gave the floor to Dr Wachenfeld to speak about the Great Barrier Reef.
* Dr Wachenfeld gave a summary of the state of the Great Barrier Reef and impacts on it from key threats including climate change, land-based activities, and crown of thorns starfish. He advised that the GBR is a patchwork of areas that vary between being severely degraded to healthy with a range of variability in between. Some areas of the reef are showing signs of recovery (10-20 years on) from previous impacts. He advised that the rate and magnitude of climate change is the largest determinant of health and viability of the reef – to ensure its longevity we need to reduce rate and magnitude of change and increase its resilience (biodiversity, water quality, coastal development; fishing; and address crown of thorns starfish).
* He noted that two key mechanisms that will support the future of the reef are the Paris Agreement and Reef 2050 Plan. Keeping global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming will mean that there is a good chance the GBR could remain intact with some areas of significant impact. Warming closer to 2 degrees Celsius will likely result in larger scale degradation and could impact significantly on the reef’s ability to bounce back.
* He mentioned the Reef Blueprint which includes Marine Park zoning (designed late 1990s/early 2000s) that is still the best practice example of marine park zoning.
* He concluded by stating that partnerships, including global partnerships, are integral to support the long-term viability of the reef.
* A recording of the presentation was taken by the ACIUCN Director.
* The Chair facilitated a question-and-answer session between Dr Wachenfeld and the ACIUCN members.

**8. General business**

* The Chair called for any additional business.
* Peter Cochrane requested a motion to thank the outgoing Committee including Cass for her excellent chairing for the past year. Jo Wilson moved this motion.
* No additional business was put forward.

**9. Close**

* The Chair thanked the ACIUCN Executive Committee for their support and commended the role of the IUCN as a neutral platform for collaboration across NGOs and government.
* The Chair thanked Kate and moved a motion of thanks to her for organising the AGM.
* The Chair thanked the presenters – Mason and David.
* The Chair congratulated the new Board and thanked outgoing Treasurer, Blathnaid Byrne.

**AGM CLOSED AT 4.55pm**

##### Appendix 1: 2021 ACIUCN AGM Attendees and Apologies

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| **Name** | **Representative Name** |
| DAWE | Cassandra KennedyFleur Downard Melissa Jaques-BrownEleena Wykes |
| Parks Victoria | Jo HopkinsMichael SamsKelly RaymondTess Hoinville |
| QLD Department of Environment and Science  | Kerrie Fraser |
| Environmental Defenders Office | Rachel Walmsley |
| NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service | Joanne Wilson Alison SchumacherBrian Leahy |
| Individual member (Honorary) | Brendan Mackey |
| Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute  | Rosalie Chapple |
| Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority | David Wachenfeld |
| Colong Foundation  | Ted PlummerBob Debus |
| Individual member (Honorary) | Di Tarte |
| IUCN Oceania regional Office | Mason SmithSemisi SeruitanoaEvia Tavanavanua Fipe Tuitubou |
| IUCN Regional Councillor | Peter Cochrane  |
|  | Tess Hoinville  |
| Australian Conservation Foundation  | Basha Stasak |
| Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government | Ian Walker |
| ACIUCN Director  | Kate Davey  |
| **Meeting Apologies**  |  |
| The Wilderness Society |  |
| The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) | Ben Ansell |
| Australian Marine Conservation Society  | Darren Kindleysides |
| ACIUCN Treasurer | Bláthnaid Byrne |