

Annual report 2019-2020



For a just world that values and conserves nature



Content

	Page
Chair's Report	2
ACIUCN's Network	3
ACIUCN's Network (cont)	4
The Executive Committee in 2020	5
ACIUCN's People in 2020	5
Director's Report	6
Thank You!	7
IUCN Councillor's Report	8

About ACIUCN

The Australian Committee for IUCN was founded over 40 years ago to advance the IUCN network's global mission and programme in Australia.

ACIUCN provides a neutral forum that brings different interest groups together to pursue common conservation outcomes, develop policy advice, share knowledge, build capacity and work towards 'a just world that values and conserves nature'

ACIUCN is an incorporated association and registered charity. We are regulated by NSW Fair Trading, the ATO and the Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission (ACNC).

Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners and Country

ACIUCN acknowledges the traditional owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the 2019/20 Annual Report of the Australian Committee for IUCN Inc. We apologise if any omissions or errors have occurred. If you discover an error or omission, please contact the Director of ACIUCN, Dr Madelon Willemsen, on director@aciucn.org.au

Chair's Report

I am pleased to present the ACIUCN's 2019-2020 Annual Report, reflecting our last 12 months of efforts.

We started the financial year strong under the excellent leadership of Tandi Spencer-Smith, and I want to highlight some of our efforts of ACIUCN in 2020:

- The launch of our ACIUCN Website, which is now an inviting place for members, aspiring members and interested parties to find information about IUCN and access our publications.

- The publication of Best Practice Guidelines 'Our Knowledge, Our Way, in Caring for Country' for which ACIUCN supported NAILSMA and CSIRO with the compilation of Indigenous experiences to develop Indigenous-led approaches to strengthening and sharing knowledge for land and sea management. The publication seeks to inspire and facilitate a whole-of-community approach to developing and implementing policy and action which achieves positive human and environmental health outcomes across Australia.

- ACIUCN convened an online Discussion Forum on the Bushfire response in March 2020, which reinforced the important role of ACIUCN as a neutral platform to share knowledge and align collective interventions to reduce the threats to Australia's biodiversity, such as bush fires.

Unfortunately, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty regarding our ability to meet face-to-face in the near future, many scheduled meetings had to be postponed, including the IUCN World Conservation Congress.



Even though it is likely that we won't be able to meet at large events for a while to come, it is great to see that we have been able to embrace technology and that virtual meetings and workshop sessions have now become the norm.

In June, Tandi left ACIUCN and we began recruitment for a new Director, with Dr Madelon Willemsen starting in the role in early September 2020.

I want to formally thank Tandi for her excellent work as ACIUCN's director, for delivering productive events which highlighted ACIUCN's strengths in facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing, and for all her other efforts furthering ACIUCN as a professional organisation.

I also want to thank the current Executive Committee for their outstanding commitment in managing the organisation through these changing and uncertain times. We will be working hard to ensure that ACIUCN will continue to deliver value for all its members and associates working towards creating positive conservation outcomes.

Emma Campbell

Chair ACIUCN

ACIUCN's Network

In 2020, ACIUCN membership comprises a total of 37 organisations and individuals, with 21 Full Members, 14 Associates and three life-long Members (individuals). You can find the list of all organisations and individuals as part of the ACIUCN network on the next page. Please visit our website for more information on the membership categories.

In 2020, we welcomed the following four organisations to our ACIUCN network:

Member:



Joined November 2020

Associate:



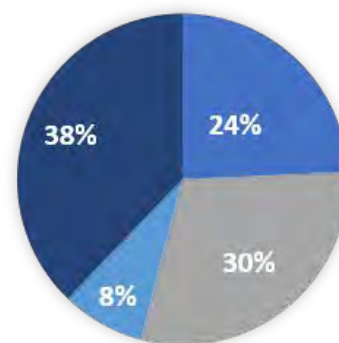
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Environment

Joined >1 bY 2020



Joined >1 bY 2020

Categories and the diversity of the ACIUCN Network



■ Full member Government ■ Full member NGOs
■ Life-long Members (Individuals) ■ Associate



Joined November 2020

ACIUCN's Network

Members (in alphabetical order)

- Australian Conservation Foundation
- Australian Marine Conservation Society
- Australian Rainforest Conservation Society
- Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute
- Colong Foundation for Wilderness
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Australian Government
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, WA
- Department of Environment and Science, QLD
- Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, VIC
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, SA
- Earthwatch Institute (Australia)
- Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand
- Environmental Defenders Office LTD
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, QLD
- North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Limited (NAILSMA)
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Parks Victoria
- The Wilderness Society
- WWF-Australia
- Zoos Victoria

Life-long Members

- Brendan Mackey
- Di Tarte
- Penelope Figgis

Associates (in alphabetical order)

- Biodiversity Conservation Trust of NSW
- Bush Heritage Australia
- Great Eastern Ranges Initiative
- Humane Society International
- Live & Learn Pacific Network
- Major Projects Foundation
- Pew Charitable Trusts
- Richard Jakob-Hoff
- Richard Mackay
- University of Queensland
- Taronga Conservation Society Australia
- Tasmanian Land Conservancy
- Trust for Nature, Victoria

IUCN Commissions

If you have any queries about work of the six IUCN Commissions and their experts or want to contribute your expertise, please visit this page: <https://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions>. Don't hesitate to contact us via director@aciucn.org.au if you have any further questions about the Australian specific efforts of the IUCN Commissions and their working groups.



The Executive Committee in 2020

The Executive Committee member's terms run per calendar year and the new committee starts their work after the AGM.

Rachel Walmsley was the ACIUCN's Public Officer for 2019 and 2020.

Name	Role
Emma Campbell	Chair – government representative
Jo Hopkins	Government representative
Rosalie Chapple	NGO representative
James Trezise	NGO representative
Peter Cochrane	IUCN regional representative
Blathnaid Byrne	Treasurer

ACIUCN's People in 2020

To put a face by the name:



Tandi Spencer-Smith
Outgoing Director



Dr Madelon Willemsen
Director (from Sept 2020)



Emma Campbell
*Chair,
Department of
Agriculture, Water and
the Environment,
Australian Government*



Dr Rosalie Chapple
*Blue Mountains World
Heritage Institute*



Jo Hopkins
Parks Victoria



James Trezise
*Australian
Conservation
Foundation*



Bláthnaid Byrne
*Treasurer,
AGL*



Dr Peter Cochrane,
IUCN Councillor

Director's Report

This report has been compiled by Madelon Willemsen, who took over from Tandi Spencer-Smith in September 2020. Tandi left ACIUCN to work with Great Eastern Ranges in June, and she continues to be part of the ACIUCN and IUCN network in this role. The report reflects the calendar year 2020 period.

The Organisation

Financially, ACIUCN ended in a comfortable position at the end of the FY. Please see the financial report for more details.

Moving forward into FY21, the Executive Committee are discussing an operational reserve and options to continue to deliver for our members. Given the uncertainty of COVID and its ongoing impacts, ACIUCN is in a strong position to weather any future challenges.

The new website has proven to be a great tool for the organisation to broadcast events and is often the first point of contact for many of our members and associates, and others. It has also become the place for publications, ensuring that these are freely accessible for anyone.

In respect to our governance, our Constitution is being reviewed pro-bono by the legal team of Hunt and Hunt Lawyers. One of the main changes proposed, which will be put to the membership as a special resolution early next year, is that we change the term for Executive Committee Members from one to up two years. The revisions are aimed to ensure there is continuity in ACIUCN's leadership and we can ensure to work efficiently going forward with its Members, Associates and the IUCN network.

The ACIUCN Strategy expires this year (2020). The Executive Committee has started the development of the next ACIUCN Strategy for 2021-2025 and hopes, in consultation with members, to finalise the strategy in the first half of 2021.



Summary of ACIUCN's Efforts

ACIUCN held a two-day symposium at the Queensland Museum in Brisbane from 17-18 September 2019. 'Healthy People in a Healthy Environment'. This was the seventh in ACIUCN's Science informing Policy Symposium Series, bringing together 100 leading experts from the health and wellbeing, Indigenous, environmental, academic and private sectors. This meeting resulted in the publication of **'The Healthy People in a Healthy Environment: Key Direction Statement'**.

On 16 March 2020, the **Bushfire Response Discussion Forum** was held 'virtually', attended by IUCN Commissions Experts, Government and NGO representatives on the Bushfire response. During this meeting, the need for efficient and collaborative conservation action and the need for assessment of the bushfire impact on species were both highlighted as requiring urgent attention.

Invited by CSIRO and NAILSMA, ACIUCN assisted in the development and publication of the **Our Knowledge, Our Way, in caring for Country**, Best Practice Guidelines for Indigenous led approaches to strengthening and sharing our knowledge for land and sea management.

ACIUCN continues to play a role to convene collective action in working groups and collaborations. For example, the Director sits on the **Key Biodiversity Areas National Coordination Group** and supports the Australian Government in their role on the **UN World Heritage** in partnership with ICOMOS. Di Tarte continues to represent ACIUCN on the **Reef 2050 Plan Advisory Committee** (her report is available upon request).

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Director's Report *(cont.)*

On IUCN Matters

We continue to work closely and liaise regularly with the **Oceania Regional Office**. The Director represents the region on the **IUCN Global group for National and Regional Committees Development**.

Awaiting the new date of the **World Conservation Congress**, a webinar was held at the end of October to inform members of the WCC and its Motions. So far, voting on the Motions took place electronically and results can be found here. Electronic voting on Motions which propose changes to the IUCN Statutes will take place from 27 January 2021 to 10 February 2021. IUCN Council is in deliberation on the timing and format of the Elections of the President and other IUCN office-bearing positions.

We also engaged as partners of the **#NatureforAll** (by the Conservation Education Commission) and **#ReverseTheRed** (by the Species Survival Commission) Campaigns. We continue to work closely with the **Oceania IUCN Commission Leads** in realising the huge potential for the sharing of knowledge and input of expertise by the 1000+ Commission members based in Australia. The Director also sits on the **IUCN Health and Wellbeing Specialist Group**.

In conclusion, 2020 was a productive year for ACIUCN despite the challenge of the COVID-19 Pandemic and we hope we have been able to realise value for all our members and associates. Going forward, in 2021 ACIUCN will develop its next strategy ensuring to further capitalise on the fantastic IUCN network in Australia and continue to be a platform for influence and collaborative action for conservation outcomes. *(end)*

Thank You!

As I have only been in the role for just a few months at the time of publication of this Annual Report, I wanted to firstly acknowledge her work as your former Director **Tandi Spencer-Smith**. It has been great to step into an organisation, which is well organised and under the leadership of Tandi has been performing above its weight.

With the changes of this year, Covid and the change of Directors, the second part of 2020 has been quieter for ACIUCN than usually. I can assure you, however, that we are in the process of planning events. Please contact me if you have any thoughts on key priority issues for ACIUCN to work on in 2021.

I want to thank our members of the **Executive Committee** for their support and guidance, but also for their excellent governance of the organisation. I also want to thank **Rachel Walmsley** as ACIUCN's Public Officer and her preparedness to continue in this role in 2021.

We want to also extend a thank you to **WWF-Australia** for hosting ACIUCN in their Ultimo office. We are grateful to **Rod Griffiths** who has completed our financial audit pro-bono and thank Nicole Butler and the team from **Hunt and Hunt law firm** for the pro-bono legal review of the ACIUCN Constitution which is in full progress at the time of publication of this annual report. I also want thank **Joe Wood** who is kindly volunteering a day a week to support ACIUCN's communication efforts.

Last but not least, a massive thank you to all our **Members and Associates**, particularly the Australian Government Department of Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, and all IUCN Commission experts and others, for contributing to achieve ACIUCN's strategic outcomes.

Madelon Willemsen

Director, ACIUCN



IUCN Councillor's Report

Throughout 2019 there was extensive planning and negotiating for more ambitious global targets for nature – as 2020 was to be a pivotal year for biodiversity, with the Aichi 2020 targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Decade of Biodiversity 2011-2020 coming to a close. A major focus was on the post-2020 Biodiversity framework for the decade ahead, the IUCN World Conservation Congress scheduled for Marseilles in June, and the CBD Conference of Parties (COP15) in October. Then Covid19 upended the world.

IUCN, like all other organisations, adjusted to a new way of working, its mission of a Just world that values and conserves nature ever more vital as awareness and understanding grew about a key enabler of the pandemic – the destruction and degradation of wildlife populations and their habitats.

IUCN Council, normally meeting twice a year, met six times - five online – to discuss how IUCN adapted. Significant elements of the World Conservation Congress – much of its governance, policy, administrative and programmatic components were moved to online discussion and decision-making. IUCN Commissions generated major new work on pandemic causes, impacts and responses. The Secretariat adjusted and continued to deliver IUCN programmes and projects, fund-raise, and build new collaborations and initiatives.

A new IUCN Director-General was appointed in July 2020 – Dr Bruno Oberle, a former Swiss Secretary of State for the Environment. Dr Grethel Aguilar, Director of the meso America office of IUCN, very ably acted as D-G for the period 2019-2020, following the resignation of Inger Anderson in early 2019 to head the UN Environment Programme.

Appreciation of the impact of humans on the natural world, and its social and economic consequences has increased, with the UN and other international organisations, including those in social and economic sectors, paying much greater attention to biodiversity loss and the risks of ecosystem collapse.

The year ahead remains challenging as Covid19 continues its disruption of economic and social functioning. A green, or greener, recovery with accelerated efforts on climate change, and nature conservation is in prospect in many parts of the world, but it will take a sustained global effort to ensure this is effective and enduring.

Peter Cochrane

IUCN Councillor





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