Anita Smyth - Curriculum Vitae

Contact details
Dr Anita Kay Smyth

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Academic Qualifications
• Doctor of Philosophy, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia 1997. Thesis topic: "The significance of ecological tolerance to forest fragmentation: foraging and nesting by birds in rainforest". (Supervisors: Assoc. Prof Hamish McCallum and Prof Greg Hill).

Professional Development
• Maximising Stakeholder Relationships, 2012 - The University of Adelaide
• Working in Teams, 2002 – CSIRO
• Managing Projects and People, 2003, CSIRO
• Facilitating for Successful Decision Making, 2006 - CSIRO

Employment History (PhD to present)
2011 - present: Data Facilitator (HEO8), TERN Eco-informatics, The University of Adelaide
2001 - 2011: Senior Scientist (CSOF6), CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences, Alice Springs, Adelaide.
1998 - 2001: ARC Linkage Research Fellow, The University of Queensland
1997 - 1998: Forest Zoologist, DSITIA government agency, Brisbane.
1993 - 1996: Doctoral studies and casual Lecturer A, The University of Queensland, Australian Catholic University, Brisbane, William and Hobart Smith College, New York.

Expertise
• *Data engagement*. Manage user services (information sessions, feedback and support) for TERN Eco-informatics data publishing products (ÆKOS, SHaRED, Soils-to-Satellites), manage data and user reference group activities and provide effective and productive interaction with the international and national ecosystem science community seeking to engage with our products.
• *Data partnership management*. Plan, coordinate and sustain custodian relationships with government agencies, researchers and industry groups to sustain updates of published datasets, expand coverage of published datasets in ÆKOS and established 'condition of use' arrangements.
• **Delivery & impact management**. Plan and coordinate user satisfaction of Eco-informatics products and services to identify uptake and improvements in addition to informing better user support and engagement materials.
• **Ecological knowledge, research, education and community service**. Applied field animal ecology, applied statistics, predictive ecological modelling, animal ecophysiology, animal landscape genetic and telemetry research methodologies to explain and predict the impacts of threats and pressures (climate change, grazing, forestry) on plants, animal and habitats at the population, community and biome levels. Developed conceptual models (frameworks) for biodiversity policy and management. Supervised 4 postgraduate students and have done ecosystem community service via 10 years editorial assistance on Australia ecology, am a member of 2015 ESA Conference Planning Committee, was a member of the Terms of Reference Working Committee for Ecosystem Science Council, a past president of Birds Queensland and foundation member of the defunct Queensland conservation lobby group, Wildlife Research Group.

Achievements & Impacts (past 10 years)
• Data Engagement, partnerships, impact (past 4 years) - 19 Australian data user organisations, 9 Australian data infrastructure collaborations, 18 data agreements/licenses (over 3 years), 617 Australian user interactions including ecology labs , run at least 10 feedback surveys throughout Australia with satisfaction ratings – 4.2/4.5 out of 5, published created website and promotional materials.
• Created substantial new research business (~ $2M at $378K p.a. ~>50% funded externally)
• Lead, contributed and completed on time on budget eight 3-year research projects
• Over 42 peer-reviewed journal articles, chapters in books and technical reports.
• Invited to about 3 international/national workshops per year to provide joint data publishing and ecological research expertise.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVATION

A science career in ecology has been the making of me personally, professionally and socially. By birthright, I have a strong connection with Australia's nature and outback landscapes as my heritage is steeped in outback pioneering, living in unpredictable environments and witnessing people working in teams to get things done under difficult circumstance. As a 10year old, I faked running away from home one day and serendipitously spent the day playing with a spotted bowerbird and its ornaments at the bower. Its behaviour utterly captivated me, not only because it was so protective of the placement of its ornaments but because I was curious to find out whether my new 'friend' lived with the same challenges as my family did in the bush. I never saw it again but I did develop a passion for birdwatching. It is this influencers and, having the responsibility of counting sheep in lots 2s, 4s with my Dad as a child and stubborn persistence that help me achieve a satisfying career as a field ecologist who embraced mathematical techniques to investigate the impacts of forest, grazing and farming practices on plants, animals and their habitats in three different climate zones.

Now in the twilight of my research career, I'm driven to apply my management, interpersonal and communication skills that I evolved over 16 years to push for a revolution in the open publication and reuse of research data to the standards expected for robust science. If data is discoverable, accessible and easily reusable to the extent where it becomes normal scientific practice, it must open up opportunities for scientific innovation, new management solutions and education resources for future generations. It also has the potential to strengthen the case for long-term ecosystem research and surveillance, after all data are the currency of innovation and measures of productivity and success. The Ecosystem Science Council (ESC) is poised to influence the future directions of ecosystem science in Australia and will be guided by principles of high achievement, integrity, reliability, accountability and responsible community networking. I propose my experience in engagement, partnership and impact management with academics, researchers, government managers and planners of the ecosystem science community at the operational level will make me a valuable member of the Council. My knowledge, experience and skills align with the aspirations of the Terms of Reference and would complement others qualities on Council to help implement the activities outlined in *Foundations for the Future*.

At CSIRO, I formed research partnerships and lead small research teams within the biodiversity sector of the ecosystem science community, perhaps the largest group of the community. I engaged regularly to sustain partnerships by coordinating face to face meetings, accepting meeting invitations, attending conferences, listening to feedback being respectfully 'fair an honest' and maintaining integrity. I also produced engagement materials (brochures, posters, papers, reports, newsletter articles) and encouraged uptake of our science via media appearances and presentations to industry partners. I've expanded my engagements, partnerships and delivery with the community at TERN Eco-informatics. Having a data-centric role, it is clear data spans all areas of ecosystem science. Forming new relations with data custodians in the different community sectors is highly energising and the challenge of negotiating and then delivering new data partnerships is a sublime feeling. ÆKOS now has published almost 100,000 sites of vegetation plot data from across the nation thanks to successful engagement and data partnerships. Note, my visits to ecology research labs in universities which I coordinate have researchers publishing their datasets with the SHaRED submission tool more than ever and now animal datasets are accessible from ÆKOS too. Also, we make improvements to ÆKOS in response to researcher and reference group feedback. I account for user-related enhancements and publication of new data by announcing them online at What's New. I organise relations with a CRM tool and am a reliable and timely

communicator. Rare conflicts are resolved after a cooling off period with conversation and lots of grace and humility.

The pace at which human-related threats and pressures affect Australian ecosystems is alarming and noticeable even in my lifetime. It concerns me deeply that the speed of loss and degradation of ecosystems may out run the speed with which we researchers, policy makers and managers can apply new interventions. With my knowledge, skills and experience I strongly believe I have a responsibility to advocate for interventions sooner than later. With society's support for long-term research, surveillance and judicious reuse of legacy and new data, the ecosystem community will be able to form a consensus of evidence to influence the clashes among influential groups. As Jared Diamond said:

> "*The [Easter Island] islanders did inadvertently destroy the environmental underpinnings of their society. They did so, not because they were especially evil or deprived of foresight, but because they were ordinary people, living in a fragile environment, and subject to the usual human problems of clashes between group interests, clashes between individual and group interests, selfishness, and limited ability to predict the future.*"

I welcome the opportunity to become a member of the ESC so I may in a team setting effectively interact, influence and advocate the activities outlined in the *Foundations for the Future* using the principles outlined in the *Terms of Reference* which I had the good fortune to contribute to as a working party member.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I, Anita Smyth,

hereby subscribe to the principles and ideals outlined for the Ecosystem Science Council, and am willing to commit the required time and energy to undertake the Council's work as needed for the duration of my term should I become a member.

Signature

Date: 30 January 2015