



31 January 2019

Standing Committee on Environment and Energy
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Re: Inquiry into controlling the spread of cane toads

Dear Committee Secretariat,

The objectives of the Australian Museum are to propagate knowledge about the natural environment of Australia and to increase that knowledge, particularly in the natural sciences of biology, anthropology and geology. Accordingly, much of our research involves describing, classifying, documenting and explaining the faunal diversity of Australia. Furthermore, we study wildlife in a variety of habitats, and have expert knowledge of the processes affecting faunal populations and diversity. Environmental issues are emphasised in many of our public programs and we seek to contribute to the resolution of questions concerning land management. Consequently, we are in a good position to provide advice on the State's investment in biodiversity conservation. We therefore welcome the opportunity to make a submission on controlling the spread of cane toads. Our submission relates specifically to providing 'additional support for Cane Toad population control measures' as per the terms of reference.

The Cane Toad (*Rhinella marina*) poses a serious threat to the biodiversity of Australia. Due to its toxicity, it is responsible for dramatic population declines in many large-bodied predators of native frogs, including varanid lizards and native mammals, with flow-on ecosystem-level changes in the abundance of other wildlife.

In November 2018, the Australian Museum launched FrogID, a national citizen science aimed at encouraging the broader community to help understand and conserve Australia's frogs. The FrogID project collects data via a free smartphone app, allowing participants to submit recordings of calling frogs. In the first year of the project, citizen scientists have submitted over >50,000 recordings resulting in over 66,000 validated records of frog species across Australia, including the Cane Toad.

To date, FrogID has received >680 submissions of the Cane Toad from across its range in Queensland, NSW, the Northern Territory, and Western Australia, including the leading fronts of northern Western Australia and northern NSW. We believe FrogID has the capacity to support national frontline survey and mapping to ensure up-to-date information on the distribution of Cane Toads and in changes in populations of native frog species as a result of Cane Toads. The early detection of invasive species in new areas increases chances that the population can be controlled and better understanding the distribution and impact of invasive species contributes towards their more effective management.

Yours Sincerely

Cameron Slatyer
Acting Director
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