

Editorial

Welcome to the EcoHealth One Health Congress 2016

This special edition of *EcoHealth* features abstracts of most of the presentations that will be given at the joint meeting comprising the 4th International One Health Congress and 6th Biennial Congress of the International Association for Ecology and Health (One Health & EcoHealth 2016) which is being held at the Melbourne Convention Centre from the 3rd to the 7th of December 2016.

It has been recognized for some time that the health of our planet is intrinsically linked to the health of the humans and the animal that reside here. EcoHealth and One Health are both scientific groups that identify with that concept and strive to foster research and research outcomes that help us to better understand and manage a healthy planet. In the past three years, much has been written about the origins of both EcoHealth and One Health: how they are currently operating and indeed how they might better work together.

Appreciating the close links between the two groups and the need to maximize the learning from their research, we proposed this joint Congress meeting some 2 years ago. We realized from the outset that differences in culture, emphasis, and indeed process will occur in putting together a joint program but we also recognized that the gains should significantly outweigh this.

We think that you will quickly identify the enormous value that this joint Congress is bringing in terms of covering the breath of issues facing the effective management of global health, whether it be the health of our environment, the wildlife and livestock we nurture, or our own fragile health situation. The abstracts themselves cover a wide tapestry of research, policy development, and operational activities that strive to understand and improve global health. We believe the presentations at the Congress linked to the many posters and the wide range of networking opportunities will broaden further knowledge and understanding in this area and provide considerable

opportunity for further collaboration and progress in managing the risk to global health.

Over the past 5 years since we held the 1st International One Health Congress in Melbourne, enormous strides have been made in recognizing the importance of One Health and EcoHealth approaches to understanding and responding to issues affecting the health of our environment, our livestock and wildlife, and ourselves, and new One Health Associations and Networks have been established in nearly all countries as well as increasing numbers of educational opportunities. We need to ensure this momentum is continued and expanded, particularly the educational aspects. We cannot afford the old silos which have precluded collaboration across the human–animal interface, nor can we allow the continued misuse of our environment on which we all so depend. Thus, the single greatest aim of this congress is the urgent need for transboundary, multidisciplinary, and collaborative approaches. We cannot wait; we have to be cooperative and collaborative now!

We hope that the final day of the Congress, which specifically looks at how science has been and can be translated into policy and action, will be rewarding and illuminating for a broad audience including Government and Industry—and we particularly hope that there will be a number of critical actions identified that can take us forward rapidly and effectively.

There is no doubt that the way forward for tackling complex issues facing the planet and its biomass now requires a more unified and collaborative approach both to understanding the problems but equally to addressing and managing them. Bringing together those in EcoHealth and One Health to jointly share their experiences just makes sense. The challenges facing health at all levels will continue to grow and can only be truly managed if we work together. This congress offers an opportunity to do so!



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