

An Introduction from Kerry Arabena, the New IAEH President

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Running Head: A Re-visioned Manifesto: Rising to our Phoenix Moment

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A Re-visioned Manifesto: Rising to our Phoenix Moment

I acknowledge the traditional owners, leaders and lands of Indigenous peoples around the world, and acknowledge all those who have a continued connection to country. I celebrate your resilience and contributions to our world. To all our 'Exquisite Elders' from different knowledge traditions who pioneered EcoHealth and created for us all a path that we may now follow; we are proud of our achievements and humbled by the opportunity to follow you. We thank you for your thought leadership and generosity in sharing your insights. These gifts set us in

good stead for the civilizational transition that is our generation's to make, and we look forward to respectfully engaging you over the coming year.

On behalf of the Board of Directors for the International Association for Ecology and Health, it is my pleasure to acknowledge the tremendous effort and legacy of past Presidents and retired Directors of the Board and offer them a vote of thanks. We honour our retiring President, Professor Jacob Zinsstag, and retiring members of the Board, Associate Professor Edouard Kouassi, Professor Nitish Debnath and Adjunct Professor Karen Morrison. These Board members made significant contributions to the progression of EcoHealth ideals through their commitments to membership, regional chapter development and student engagement and Board functioning. We also acknowledge and offer a vote of thanks to Lisa Crump, EcoHealth Journal staff and office holders for their active participation in the business of the Association; their provision of secretariat, administrative and communication supports during the past term. We also extend a warm welcome to incoming Board members include Dr. Hung Nguyen, Dr. Neville Ellis, Dr. Hume Field and Arron Jenkins. We are delighted to have conferred 2016 EcoHealth Awards to worthy winners in a ceremony held at the inaugural OneHealth EcoHealth Congress. From a competitive field, Emeritus Professor Valerie Brown received the Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her years of contribution, achievement, student engagement and support. Professor Brown was joined by Dr. Jonathan Kingsley and Dr. Hung Nguyen as Exceptional Early Career Award Winners and Kouassi Richard M'Bra, Melanie Bannister-Tyrrell and Melanie Voevodin took out the Student Awards.

The Organising Committee of the Congress committed to a process that facilitated the involvement of over one thousand delegates from over eighty-six countries and over 170 scholarship holders. Front and centre of the joint Congress was the strong student and early career delegations who together developed the Aspirational Statement from the Conference, a living document that the Board are committed to incorporating in our future work. The Aspirational Statement will form part of the re-visioning efforts of the Board, who will engage members and affiliates in a strategic planning process to consider governance and constitutional enhancements; embedding the work of the Association through regional chapters and how to support these initiatives around the world as well as increase and improve our communications with members and support the 2018 EcoHealth Biennial Conference in Cali, South America. In addition to these specific pieces of work, the Association will be negotiating our current and future business and governance relationships, build mechanisms for building local and regional capacity and creating strong partnerships with scholars, students and organisations. Our starting position is clear: we have a unique position with untapped potential, a growing number of individual and organisational members, a 'new look' website and an Aspirational Statement from students. There is a strong commitment to a European chapter and Board members with a track record of transformational change. Part of our re-visioning exercise will be to explore the interface between the many emergent Associations and to define our role as distinct from but committed to joint programs of action to facilitate our way forward in the world; and consider

future global megatrends that will change the way we live. Another part of that re-visioning is to acknowledge what we have failed to deliver, find our peace with that; then strip away those things that are inessential; and work only on those things that matter the most. Oftentimes, it is during these reflective moments we find the determination to succeed. What we need to succeed in is simple sounding - we need to heal relationships between all peoples and the places where we live through sustainable programs of activity, then scale these over time. We need to be cognisant of future global trends, and co-create knowledge transfer, capacity building and sustainability of these initiatives with people who will be impacted by our approach. This is our Phoenix moment. This is what lies ahead of the Association and its members, partners and of emergent entities in ecology and health. It sounds simple, but simplicity has been difficult to implement in modern life because it goes against the spirit of a certain brand sophistication used to justify professions, positions and revenue sources. Less is more, and usually more effective. In this context, 'simple' doesn't mean 'less volatile'. In fact, what we require of ourselves is to joyously embrace uncertainty; variability; imperfect, incomplete knowledge; chance; chaos; disorder and errors to positively, genuinely impact on the health and wellbeing of living systems and all who reside within them. Together, we need to decide what we can do, in our little piece of the world, in the eighty or so years that we have to live. Some of this will be through social media, webinars and presentations. Some will do projects, care for country initiatives, build workforces, write publications and shift our language from deficit to strength. Others will bring sectors together, challenge the outer bounds of their own knowledge traditions, develop new methodologies founded in diversity, coherence and equality. All of us, moving into the 21st century, will need to hone our skills redefine our roles as individuals, in organisations and invest in meaningful relationships that facilitate compassionate responses to the issues before us, drawing on the source of strength behind us. We, the members of the Board, seek to engage with you on re-visioning our Manifesto by describing our niche, values, focus and the opportunities before us. This might facilitate a transition from a global EcoHealth framework to regionally embedded eco-socio-cultural-health frameworks that link together to form a global presence. In this task, we will join with our multiple generations of EcoHealth scholars and practitioners, and activists, artists, and members of other associations to realise the aspirations of our emerging scholars and practitioners: to negotiate a shared identity, leverage shared values, strengthen collaborations and integrate knowledges in the places where we live, play and love.

In Unity,
Kerry Arabena



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