**Alpheius Global Enterprises**

*Caring, Responsible and Attentive to Frogs for Today and Yesterday*

*Summary Report into Frog Populations*

**Introduction**

The current status of the world’s health is a largely unknown factor and the collection of useful, comparative data is only in infancy. It is not yet possible to determine meaningful trends, due to this lack of data. One element of data collection involves monitoring frog populations.

Analysing snapshots of frog populations enables a clearer picture of environmental health to be ascertained for, as we know, frogs are sensitive creatures and populations of the amphibians rapidly decline in poor environmental conditions. However, when the environment is in good health, populations generally flourish. In this way, the frog populations can be used as indicators of environmental (and more specifically, water) health.

Alpheius Global Enterprises has been directly involved with a research project conducted by environmental monitoring group Environmental Equilibrium for Earth, (EEE) investigating the frog populations of the South East region over the last five years.

The research is conducted annually, over a two week period, and relies on local community involvement to assist in frog-spotting and recording. Members of EEE and volunteers record frog species in the many reservoirs of water (both natural and man‑made) and the data is later analysed and compared to previous years.

It is hoped that with this research and the data that is generated, EEE can increase awareness of the state of our environment and lobby local government agencies for their support in programmes to maintain or achieve good health in local waterways and reservoirs.

**AGE Commitment**

Alpheius Global Enterprises has, for the last five years, committed financially to the research project and also awards each member of staff a day off to volunteer their time for the collection of data. One hundred and twenty six employees were able to take advantage of this magnificent opportunity this year and the prospect of making this an ongoing arrangement is under consideration.

At AGE, we believe whole-heartedly in sensible, forward-thinking and environmentally friendly approaches to business, so the concept of continuing involvement in the research of frog populations is taken very seriously.

**Results for 2007**

In 2007, 1490 people were involved in the collection of frog data. These volunteers were divided into groups and the frog populations of 1200 different water sources were able to be collected. This data was returned to EEE for comparisons to previous years and the results were as follows:

***Species recorded:***

Common Froglet (*Crinia signifera*)

Spotted Grass Frog (*L. tasmaniensis*)

Brown Tree Frog (*Litoria ewingi*)

Southern Bell Frog (*Litoria raniformis*)

Green Tree Frog (*Litoria caerulea*)

Peron’s Tree Frog (*Litoria peroni*)

Long Thumbed Frog (*L. fletcheri*)

Painted Frog (*Neobatrachus pictus*)

Marsh Frog (*Limnodynastes peroni*)

Trilling Frog (*Neobatrachus centralis*)

Smooth Frog (*Geocrinia laevis*)

Spencer’s Frog (*L. spenceri*)

Shoemaker Frog (*Neobatrachus sutor*)

Water Holding Frog (*Cyclorana platycephala*)

Desert Tree Frog (*Litoria rubella*)

***Numbers Recorded:***

286 ‑ Common Froglet (*Crinia signifera*)

123 ‑ Spotted Grass Frog (*L. tasmaniensis*)

23 ‑ Brown Tree Frog (*Litoria ewingi*)

12 ‑ Southern Bell Frog (*Litoria raniformis*)

145 ‑ Green Tree Frog (*Litoria caerulea*)

35 ‑ Peron’s Tree Frog (*Litoria peroni*)

74 ‑ Long Thumbed Frog (*L. fletcheri*)

90 ‑ Painted Frog (*Neobatrachus pictus*)

22 ‑ Marsh Frog (*Limnodynastes peroni*)

8 ‑ Trilling Frog (*N.centralis*)

55 ‑ Smooth Frog (*Geocrinia laevis*)

3 ‑ Spencer’s Frog (*L. spenceri*)

17 ‑ Shoemaker Frog (*N. sutor*)

38 ‑ Water Holding Frog (*Cyclorana platycephala*)

31 ‑ Desert Tree Frog (*Litoria rubella*)

***Comparison to Previous Years:***

Down 12.5% ‑ Common Froglet (*Crinia signifera*)

Up 5% ‑ Spotted Grass Frog (*L. tasmaniensis*)

Up 3.5% ‑ Brown Tree Frog (*Litoria ewingi*)

Down 2% ‑ Southern Bell Frog (*Litoria raniformis*)

Up 5.25% ‑ Green Tree Frog (*Litoria caerulea*)

Down 3% ‑ Peron’s Tree Frog (*Litoria peroni*)

Down 4.1% ‑ Long Thumbed Frog (*L. fletcheri*)

Up 2.25% ‑ Painted Frog (*N.s pictus*)

Down 3.25% ‑ Marsh Frog (*L. peroni*)

Down 7% ‑ Trilling Frog (*N. centralis*)

Down 4.5% ‑ Smooth Frog (*Geocrinia laevis*)

Down 6.7% ‑ Spencer’s Frog (*L. spenceri*)

Up 3.4% ‑ Shoemaker Frog (*N. sutor*)

Up 5% ‑ Water Holding Frog (*C. platycephala*)

Down 15% ‑ Desert Tree Frog (*Litoria rubella*)

**What Does This Mean**

The numbers varied considerably depending on the location of the water source. For instance, the different sources assessed included sheep dips, creeks, flooded plains, toilets, swimming pools and billabongs. Obviously the population levels in toilets and swimming pools were somewhat lower than those of the billabongs and flooded plains.

Sadly, it was found that many of the habitats have suffered degradation due to continued human activity including poor storm water diversion, excessive clearance of vegetation, excessive grazing of livestock, agricultural spraying and the introduction of exotic species.

A welcoming increase in population was recorded for both the Green Tree Frog (*Litoria caerulea*) and Water Holding Frog (*Cyclorana platycephala*). The Green Tree Frog is a species that easily adapts to the increasing expansion of human populations and is thereby not as strong an indicator for the environmental health of its region as the Water Holding Frog. This species is extremely sensitive to human interventions and would therefore tend to represent an improvement in the habitats in which it was recorded.

A significant reduction in the numbers of the Common Froglet (*Crinia signifera*), Desert Tree Frog (*Litoria rubella*) and Spencer’s Frog (*L. spenceri*) is a worrying indicator of the state of the environmental health of these regions. The Common Froglet is typically a species uncommonly resilient to changes within its environment so it, in particular, is of concern. It is a widely spread species that easily travels overland to populate new bodies of water. The overall reduction in the recordings of the Common Froglet is a clear indicator that further analyses of these habitats should be undertaken.

Uncommonly low levels of rainfall in arid regions would tend to account for the reduced levels of the Desert Tree Frog, renowned for adopting a state of hibernation when conditions are less than ideal.

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