

**Project No.: 100001**

## **The Australian Crayfish Project**

### **Research Brief**

#### **Introduction**

Australian Aquatic Biological P/L (AABio) is an Australian private company that conducts aquatic research around Australia. One of the major projects currently being sponsored by AABio is Project No. 100001 "*The Australian Crayfish Project*". The Australian Crayfish Project (ACP) is major sponsored by AABio and Earthan Group with minor sponsorships from the general public, public companies, environmental groups and local govt, etc. The ACP was started in 2005 and will run to at least 2017. The aim of this project is to survey the whole of Australia to find and identify every species of freshwater crayfish and its habitat area. Then use the information gathered to increase the knowledge base and protect & conserve all our freshwater crayfish species and their habitat for future generations.

#### **Background**

The Australian Crayfish Project is a research project designed to find and identify every species of freshwater crayfish in Australia. Full biological surveys will be conducted over vast areas of Australia. With the help of fellow researchers and volunteers we intend to survey as much of Australia as physically possible. This is not only blatant aquatic environments but also all the maginal and terrestrial areas as well.

#### **Outline**

We aim to conduct full biological studies of Australian aquatic, semi aquatic and potential terrestrial environments to identify potential crayfish habitats. Crayfish will be captured from every potential site for identification. We intend to capture, photograph, DNA test and identify every species of crayfish in Australia. The project under the direction of the team leaders and with the assistance of a vast number of conservation volunteers, enthusiasts and researchers will do the following:

- To conduct aquatic biological surveys across Australia, sampling as many sites as possible to determine the species present.
- Search & collect specimens of new species and new distributions across Australia.
- Record each species, habitat, activities & lifecycle.
- Photograph every species to give a photographic record/description of each species.
- Identify every species via taxonomy.
- Identify every species via DNA testing & compile a complete DNA data base for all Australian freshwater crayfish species.
- Identify, name and describe all new species collected.
- Investigate and ascertain the distribution of all species and provide population estimates of our rarer species.
- Identify the threats (both current and potential) and conservation status of all species.
- Help to protect and conserve all species of freshwater crayfish and their habitats.
- Produce books on the Freshwater Crayfish of Australia
- Generally increase the knowledge base on freshwater crayfish and their habitat.

The Australian Crayfish Project is evolving - as it progresses and as more support is being offered and as more researchers become involved the scope of the project is broadening to include all freshwater crustaceans. (Mostly Crabs & Shrimps). Additionally, the Australian Aquatic Biodiversity Survey (AABS) has also been created as a unique opportunity exists to increase the knowledge base on all our other aquatic organisms.

**Research Project duration**

Seven years (initially) with 5 year extension.

**Budget Estimates**

An initial budget estimate of \$750,000.00 would be required to complete this project.

**Comments**

The ACP is a major project with immense benefits to the community and the crayfish. I hope you all share our passion for the freshwater crayfish of Australia and will help us in our endeavours to increase the knowledge base on all our species and ensure they are protected and conserved for all time.

**For Further Information**

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