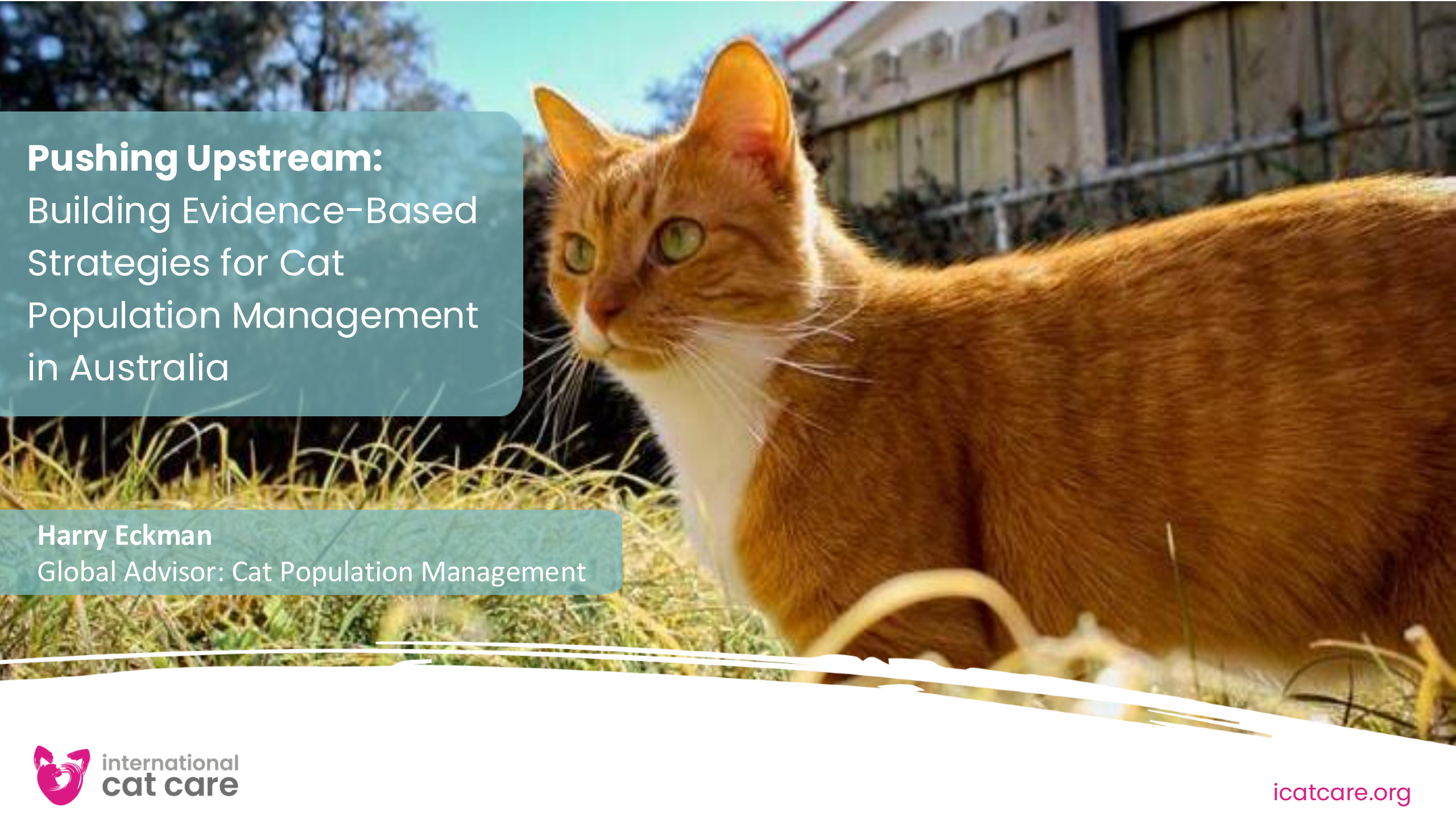


A ginger and white cat is the central focus, standing in a field of tall, dry grass. The cat has bright green eyes and is looking slightly to the left. In the background, a multi-story building with a balcony is visible under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

Pushing Upstream:

Building Evidence-Based
Strategies for Cat
Population Management
in Australia

Harry Eckman

Global Advisor: Cat Population Management





AI generated image



AI generated image



The Project



Australia



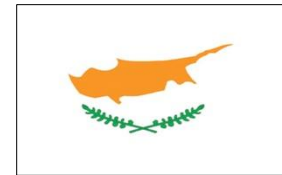
Portugal



Greece



Cyprus



What we did



Desk based research

What we did



22



24



30



52

128 stakeholder interviews

- NGOs
- Shelters
- Veterinarians
- Conservationists
- Governmental
- Enforcement

What we did



1,006



2,025



2,067



2,060

National public opinion surveys

- Age group
- Gender
- Location
- Cat ownership

Resources produced

- Individual country reports
- Individual country public opinion survey reports
- Cross–national public opinion survey report
- Cross–national demographic breakdown public opinion survey report
- 18-month foundational country strategies
- 10-year country strategic frameworks
- Academic papers

Country report structure



1. Introduction
2. Country Overview / Context
3. Summary of Key Findings from Insight Gathering
4. Public Attitudes and Beliefs
5. Municipalities, Governance and Legislation
6. Veterinary Sector
7. NGOs, Rescuers and Informal Groups
8. Data and Monitoring
9. Wildlife and Conservation Concerns
10. What Divides the Cat Welfare System
11. What Unites the Cat Welfare System

What we found – key findings

System Fragmentation

Lack of national framework leads to inconsistent rules and unclear roles.

Sector Divisions

Conflicts between conservation and welfare stakeholders hinder collaboration.

Informal Labour Reliance

Over-dependence on volunteers without adequate support.

Data Deficiencies

Lack of standardized data hinders effective decision-making.

Unity Opportunities

Shared commitment and potential for collaboration.



Legal Grey Areas

Outdated laws and ambiguous definitions create confusion and risk.

Urban-Rural Disparities

Differences in resources and attitudes between urban and rural areas.

Desexing and Containment

Strong consensus on neutering and containment as solutions.

Legal Reform Needs

Calls for updated laws and strategic coordination.

The Big Picture

- **Two goals:** protect wildlife AND improve cat welfare.
- **No national framework:** fragmented rules across states and councils.
- **Result:** confusion, inefficiency, mistrust.



Public Attitudes

- **Views shaped by headlines**, not daily life.
- **Contradictions:** feed cats but oppose neutering.
- **Signs of change:** empathy rising, more adoptions, support for containment.



What Divides the System

- Conservation vs. welfare priorities.
- TNR: illegal but practiced.
- Urban vs. rural vs. Indigenous differences.



What Unites the System

- Agreement on desexing.
- Containment supported if helpful not punitive.
- Shared frustration with fragmentation.
- Sense that 'we can do better.'



Pressures on the System

- Volunteers and carers overstretched.
- Veterinary services limited.
- Patchy, inconsistent data.



Pathways Forward

- **Track A:** prevention, containment, adoption, managed transitional programmes.
- **Track B:** biodiversity-sensitive areas, fit-for-place tools, visible safeguards.
- **Equity matters:** co-designed services, renter-friendly support, visiting-vet models.



Moving Forward

- **Language matters:** avoid 'war on cats'.
- **Monitoring:** milestones (did we do it?) and indicators (is it working?).
- **Shared commitment** to humane, evidence-based, coordinated solutions.



Where it leads

18-month foundational strategy

1. Support stakeholders to use insight and survey data
2. Facilitate constructive dialogue across stakeholders
3. Facilitate humane, pragmatic, and inclusive population management solutions
4. Build skills and knowledge across the veterinary and welfare sectors
5. Promote, support, and help scale effective TNR models

Where it leads

10-year strategic framework

1. Introduction and Strategic Framing
2. Vision and 10-Year Goals
3. Guiding Principles
4. The Cost of Inaction
5. Strategic Phases – the Path to Long-Term Change
6. Strategic Focus Areas
7. Monitoring and Evaluation
8. Risks and Contingencies
9. Milestones and Success Indicators
10. Strategic Pathways – Benefits and Trade-Offs
11. Quick Wins in the First 12–18 Months
12. Costing Framework and Financial Considerations
13. Strategy Stewardship and Long-Term Ownership
14. What This Framework Can Do

Go Upstream

Pushing upstream is how we change the system.

Change the system and we change the world

