



THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Engaging community detectives in a science café:  
Deliberating biosecurity detection and risk  
in Cairns and Canberra

Jacqueline de Chazal and Anna Carr

1. Defining some terms
2. The why
3. Context of research
4. Project aims
5. Some project questions
6. The cafés: getting it together
7. Suggested answers
8. Community science
9. Implementation

# Defining some terms

- **Biosecurity:** 'impact of pests, weeds and diseases on the economy, environment and human health'
- **Volunteering:** to perform or offer to perform a service of one's own free will.
- **Community detective:** person engaged in investigative activities including research, communication & detection and reporting of biosecurity risks.

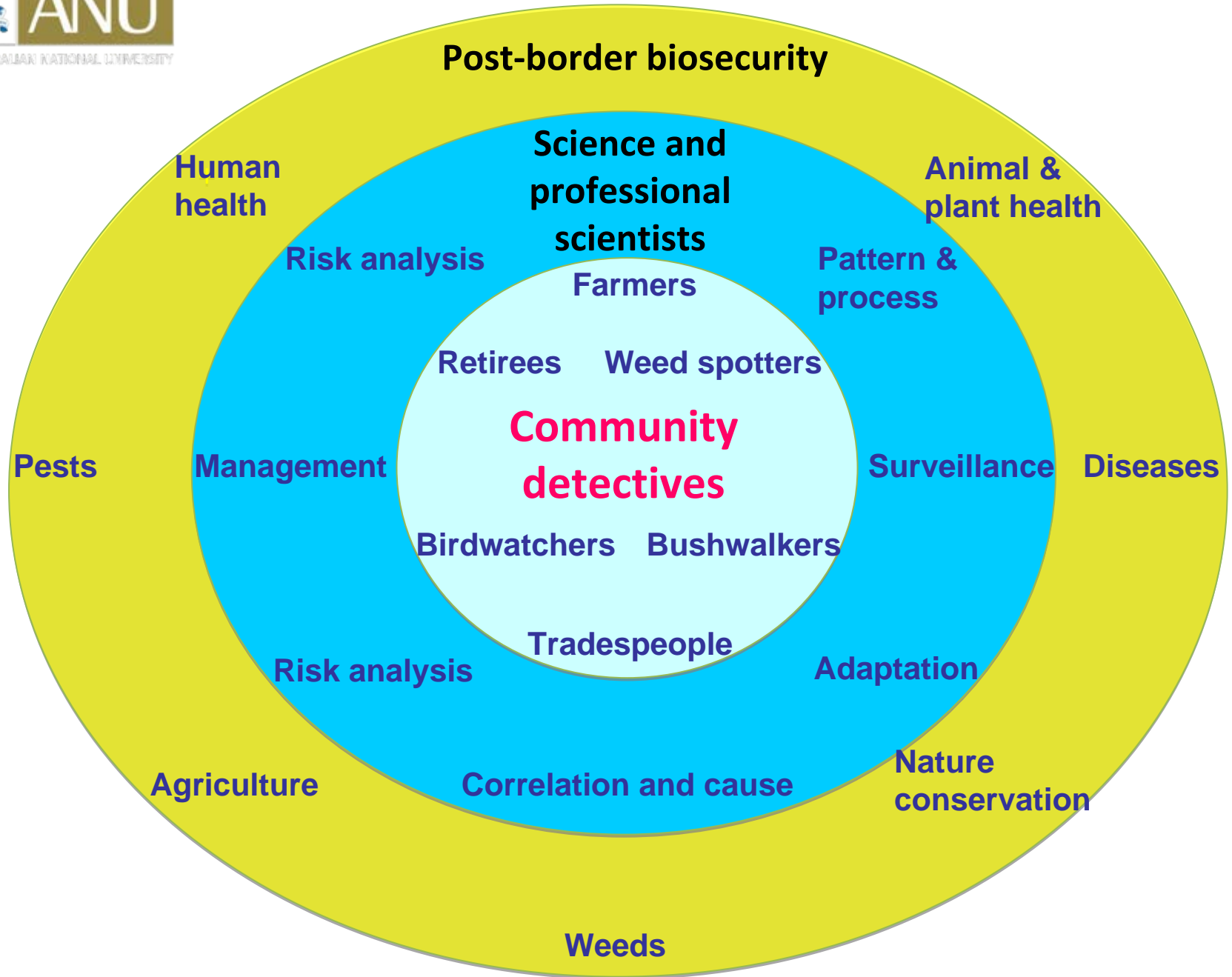
## Why biosecurity?

Managing undesired environmental change, e.g.

- protecting landscapes from the spread of weeds, pests and diseases
- Minimising spread of diseases of plants, animals & humans

## Why volunteering?

- More eyes and ears the better given active choice



## Now

1. Explore potential for science cafes to engage a wide range of expertise in biosecurity detection.

## Intermediate

2. Identify potential biosecurity volunteers (aka 'community detectives').

## Longer-term

3. Establish a community detective network.

# Some project questions

1. Are science cafes useful in engaging community expertise in biosecurity detection?
2. What are café participants' key biosecurity concerns?
3. How do they regard their capacity to detect and report these concerns?
4. Is volunteer biosecurity monitoring an appropriate community activity?
5. What are some motivations for and barriers to volunteering as a community detective?

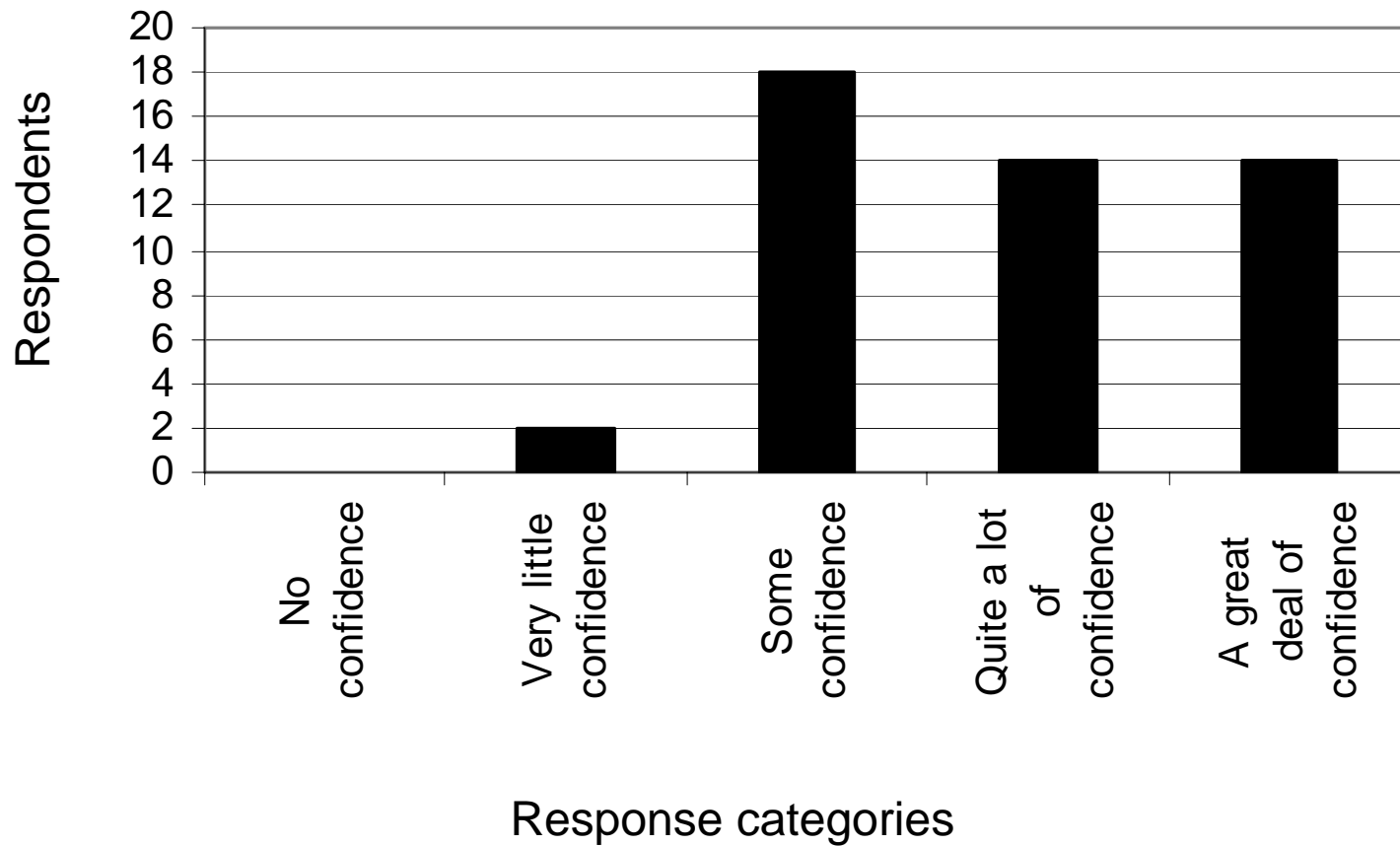
# The cafés: getting it together

- **Social science methods**
  - Pre-café survey
  - Participant observation
  - Interviews
- **Café logistics**
  - Locations and timings
- **Recruitment method**
- **Overview of proceedings**

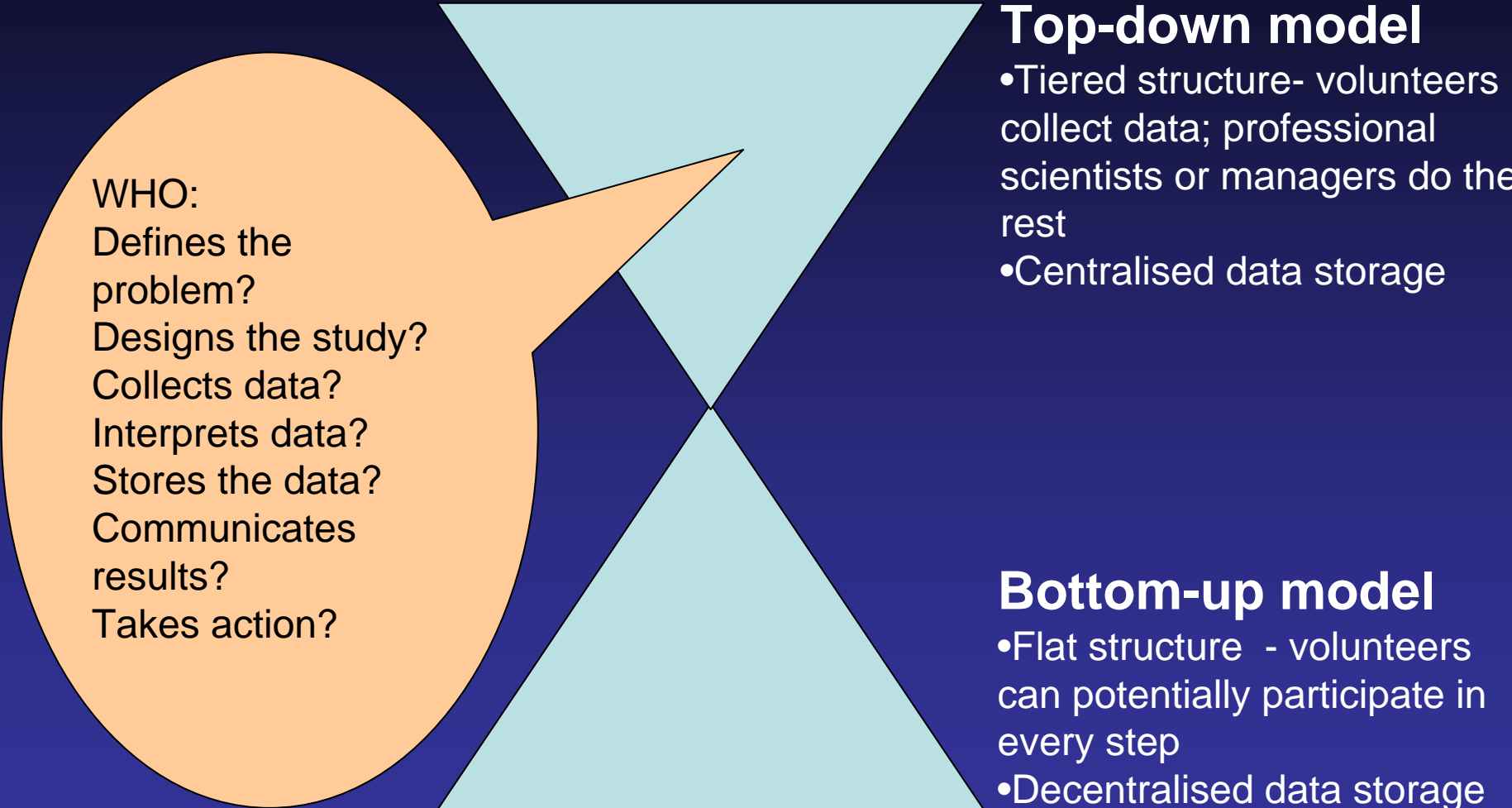
# Suggested answers

Project question	Emerging theme	Data srce	
		Crns	Can
1. Are science cafes useful in engaging community expertise in biosecurity detection?	Science cafes engage	√	√
2. What are café participants' key biosecurity concerns?	Mostly weedy concerns	√	√
3. How do they regard their capacity to detect and report these concerns?	Significant and diverse community expertise	√	√
4. Is volunteer biosecurity monitoring an appropriate community activity?	Endorsement Action not talk Volunteer monitoring can greatly complement existing biosecurity measures	√	√
5a. What are some motivations for volunteering as a community detective?	Reduce personal disadvantage Ownership	√	
5b. What are some barriers to volunteering as a community detective?	Perceived slow or poor government response to reporting	√	

## Q6 Confidence in identifying your most important weed, pests or disease concern



n = 48



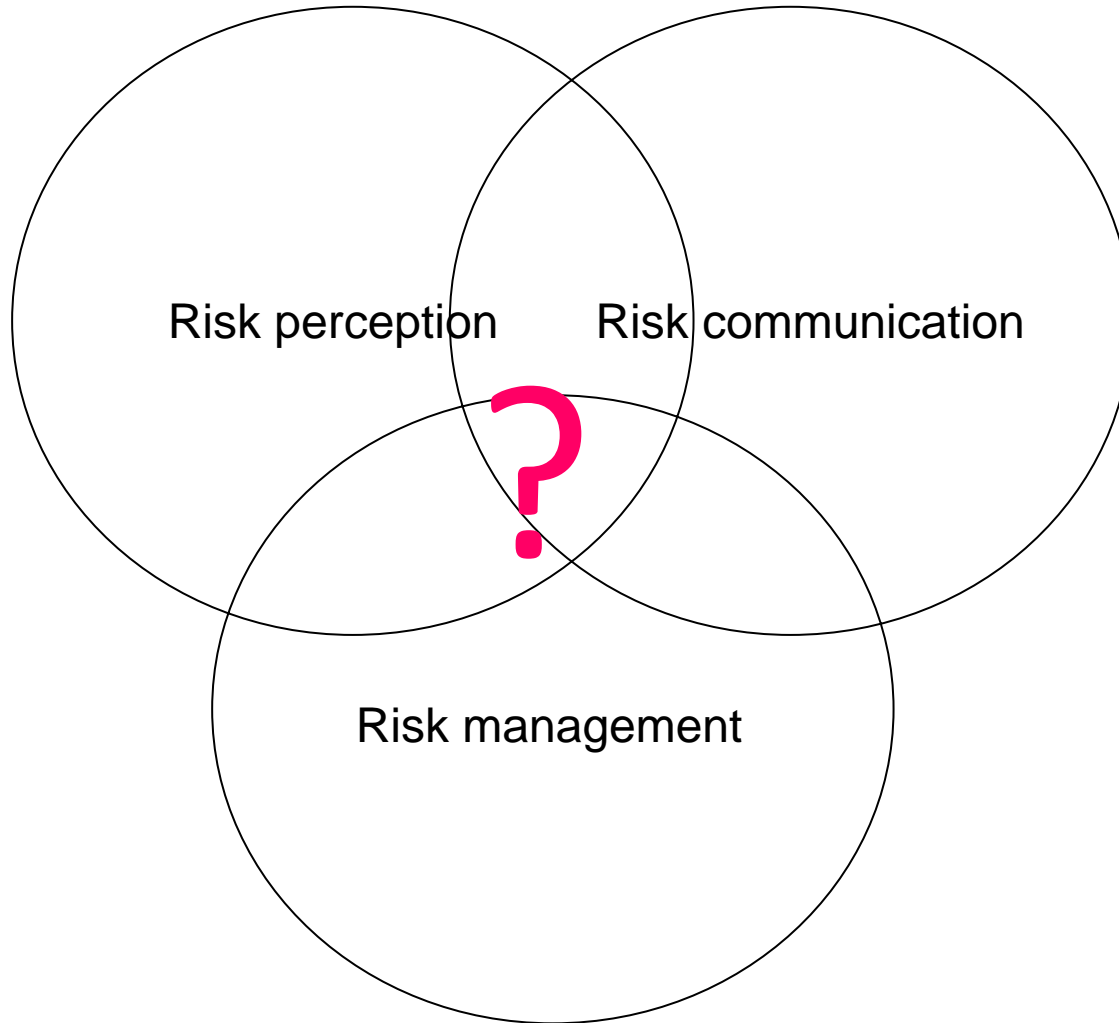
WHO:  
Defines the problem?  
Designs the study?  
Collects data?  
Interprets data?  
Stores the data?  
Communicates results?  
Takes action?

## Top-down model

- Tiered structure- volunteers collect data; professional scientists or managers do the rest
- Centralised data storage

## Bottom-up model

- Flat structure - volunteers can potentially participate in every step
- Decentralised data storage



For more information:

de Chazal J. 2008 Biosecurity: Improving detection by enlisting community detectives: The Cairns café report. *ACERA Project No. 0802 Progress Report* , University of Melbourne, Victoria Australia .

<http://www.acera.unimelb.edu.au/materials/publications/0802-progressrpt.pdf>