

# #137

**COMPLETE**

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**Q1**

First name

[REDACTED]

**Q2**

Last name

[REDACTED]

**Q3**

Organisation name (if relevant)

[REDACTED]

**Q4**

Email address

[REDACTED]

**Q5**

Phone number

[REDACTED]

**Q6**

Yes

Can we contact you about your submission (if required)?

**Q7**

I am a researcher/academic

What best describes you?

Q8

Central Tablelands

Which of the following regions best describes your location/area of interest?

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Q9

The Commission publishes submissions on its website for transparency. If you do not want your personal details or responses published, please tell us below.

**I agree to have my submission published anonymously – please remove my name and company/organisation before publishing**

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Q10

To what extent are the NSW environment, industries and communities currently impacted by invasive species?

Invasive species are key threat to a number of animal and plant species across NSW and have an extensive impact on agricultural production. Significant amounts of money are spent each year by industry, organisations and individuals in managing the impact of established pest animals each year.

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Q11

To what extent do you think existing programs in NSW are effectively managing invasive species?

While there may be plenty of programs running that focus on invasive species management, I do not think many of them are "effective". They are usually too small in scale, too short in timeline, and for many, focus on removing arbitrary numbers of individuals rather than remove enough individuals to reduce impacts of that species.

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Q12

What, if any, are the key barriers to effective management of invasive species?

Funding availability and funding cycles are the key barriers to effective invasive species management and research, particularly for established pests. Short-term funding cycles (e.g. expenditure within a financial year) are ineffective and a considerable waste of money. The 2022 FMD preparedness funding and the 2023 feral pig funding for LLS are cases in point. Both of these funding rounds aim to expend an enormous amount of money within a very short time frame (usually less than 9 months by the time the funding is announced and available). These rounds, which need to be spent by the end of their respective financial years result in rushed projects that are incapable of properly addressing the issue, or of assessing appropriate methods to deal with these types of pests or incursions. There is little time to develop an appropriate experimental protocol (so that we can evaluate the program). The FMD preparedness program in particular, was a lost opportunity to properly investigate how we would go about achieving a local eradication in the event of an FMD outbreak. Simply throwing money at the problem doesn't solve it, if there isn't the appropriate timeframe to go with it. Also, these types of funding rounds are out of sync with biological cycles, meaning that they don't take the opportunity that natural animal reproductive and dispersal cycles give us in effectively managing established vertebrate pests. Funded projects require appropriate design and implementation, all of which takes longer than the less-than-12-month timeframe imposed upon the FMD and pig programs. These funding rounds have been an opportunity lost, and potentially a waste of money and effort by all of those involved (and who scrambled to try and achieve something useful).

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**Q13**

How has invasive species management changed since the introduction of the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015 legislation and associated programs and plans?

From my perspective I haven't seen that much change since its introduction. Perhaps it is a contributing factor to the decline in available funding, with a strong focus on new incursions rather than the effective management of established pest animals...?

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**Q14**

What are the future risks posed by invasive species to the NSW environment, industries and communities?

If we continue on our current path of short-term and/or inadequate funding rounds that do not allow us to take advantage of biological timelines, then we will get no further than we currently are in established vertebrate pest management. As the climate changes and animals move beyond what was once considered their "normal" home range, these issues will only increase. Funding should be supplied to strategic, informed and appropriately staffed projects that run across agencies and stakeholders (linking the science to the land manager), that are long-term (to allow for appropriate iteration and adaptation to the changing climate and environment, as well as the biological cycles of the target animals).

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**Q15**

What opportunities do you see to improve the outcomes of invasive species management in the future?

I see opportunities in how funding for responding to pest animals occurs. Removing the requirement to "spend everything by the end of the financial year" and allowing projects to run over a biologically relevant timeframe would be a good first step. Allowing projects to be adequately staffed, planned, implemented and evaluated, so that we can learn and adapt from project outcomes, would allow for more meaningful and useful work to be done. Rather than just ticking a box that money was spent on something.

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**Q16**

Respondent skipped this question

Any other comments?

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