



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources

Ref: EC16-000233

Dr John Keniry AM
Commissioner
NSW Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 5341
Sydney NSW 2001
Via email: nrc@nrc.nsw.gov.au

Dear Dr Keniry

Thank you for your letter of 29 March 2016 to Mr Daryl Quinlivan, Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, inviting feedback on the draft recommendations of the New South Wales (NSW) state-wide review of pest animal management 'Shared Problems, Shared Solutions'. Mr Quinlivan has asked me to reply on his behalf.

We have reviewed the draft report and are pleased to see the progress made by the Commission in developing the report and the recommendations to support pest animal management in NSW including reducing the impact of pest animals.

As you are aware, while pest animal management is primarily the responsibility of state and territory governments and land managers, the Australian Government does make strategic investments in pest animal management where it is in the national interest.

The department notes the importance of a cooperative and coordinated approach to pest animal management for all governments across a range of areas such as resourcing, compliance, research and data management. However, the extent of the Australian Government's role is not captured accurately in the draft report (refer pp. 17-18) and we suggest the following clarification for the final report, as outlined below.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources facilitates coordinated management of invasive species at a national level, but does not necessarily lead all management activities for all invasive species including vertebrate pests, weeds, and diseases of plants, and terrestrial and freshwater animals. The department seeks to strengthen Commonwealth, state and territory government partnerships in order to improve the national biosecurity system and minimise the impact of pests and diseases on Australia's economy, environment and the community through the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB). The implementation of the IGAB is the responsibility of the National Biosecurity Committee, and sub-committees such as the Invasive Plants and Animals Committee, which are attended by both state, territory and Australian government representatives.



The roles and responsibilities of governments (p. 18) are outlined in the relevant agreements and frameworks including the:

- Australian Pest Animal Strategy (currently under review)
- Established Pests and Diseases of National Significance framework
- National Surveillance and Diagnostics framework
- National emergency response arrangements (e.g. National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement, Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed, Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement).

In reference to the role of the department under the Commonwealth *Biosecurity Act 2015* (p. 17), the activities of the department extend beyond pre-border control. The department manages biosecurity risks and emergencies pre-border, at-the-border and post-border, where they relate to Commonwealth jurisdiction and our legislative powers. The *Biosecurity Act 2015* comes into force in June 2016.

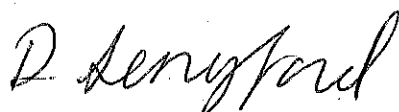
Noting that most of the recommendations in the draft report relate to state-based matters, the department is broadly supportive of the recommendations. This particularly includes those relating to clear lines of state-, regional- and local-level accountability in leadership and governance; capacity and awareness building spanning government, industry and community groups; cost-effective biosecurity management and compliance arrangements; and integrated and efficient data management and research. This position applies for pest animal management arrangement across all states and territories. Specific comments on recommendations relating to agriculture at a national or Commonwealth level have been provided in Attachment A.

In relation to statements in the draft report on “recent reductions in Commonwealth funding” (p. 101) and “little ongoing certainty for pest management given funding is not ongoing” (p. 114) in relation to recommendation 26 and 30 respectively, the department supports effective state resourcing for pest animal management, particularly where it compliments Australian Government initiatives such as the \$50 million for pest animal and weed management under the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, and the \$3 million to combat pest animals and weeds in drought affected areas of NSW.

We also suggest recommendations 1, 18, 21 and 24 are clarified in the final report, to provide a better understanding of the context and subject of the recommendation, which on initial reading is unclear. For example, recommendation 21 ‘Adopt and resource a strategic risk based approach to managing urban and peri-urban pest animals’ (p. 91) is specific to introduced pest bird species such as the Indian (Common) myna, and does not address other recognised urban and peri-urban pest animals such as foxes, rabbits and wild dogs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft review report and its recommendations. I look forward to the report being finalised, and its recommendations on effective pest animal management being progressed in the future. If you would like to discuss our comments further, please contact Shalan Bray, A/g Director, established pest animals and weeds section [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Deb Langford
Assistant Secretary
Biosecurity Policy and Response Branch
25 May 2016

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND WATER RESOURCES COMMENTS ON NSW DRAFT REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO AGRICULTURE AT A NATIONAL LEVEL

Recommendation 2 (pp. 34–36)

Provide transparent state level leadership and accountability

The department supports clear lines of state-level accountability in leadership and governance for managing pest animal species. However, notes that in relation to Recommendation 2.c. 'Specify that the Biosecurity Advisory Committee is responsible for deciding when a pest animal transitions from being a new incursion to an established pest animal', for species not previously found in Australia, this would be a decision for the National Management Group (NMG), if considered under the national emergency response arrangements.

Recommendation 5 (pp. 46–52)

That the regulation of non-indigenous species is commensurate with the risks that they pose.

The department supports consistency between pest animal risk assessments conducted by the Invasive Pest Animal Committee (IPAC) and state-level pest animal risk assessments.

Recommendation 10 (pp. 57–60)

Expedite action on critical freshwater pest animal issues.

The department continues to work with NSW and other state jurisdictions through the Freshwater Fish Expert Group (FFEG) under the IPAC to coordinate and promote planning, collaboration and communication among state governments and relevant stakeholders on ornamental fish, pest fish management and research options and programs. In relation to Recommendation 10(a.) 'Seek to work with other jurisdictions, including the Australian Government, to finalise the National Ornamental Fish Strategy 2006 by focusing resources on assessing the risks of pathways, rather than species', the department understands that the strategy document is titled '*A Strategic Approach to the Management of Ornamental Fish in Australia*'.

Recommendation 11 (pp. 61–63)

Support and coordinate local on-ground action.

The department supports comprehensive cross-tenure approaches and community-level action to ensure long term and effective pest animal management, and is providing state and territory governments with \$22.5 million in funding under the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, Pest Animal and Weed Management National Partnership Agreement for this purpose.

Recommendation 18 (pp. 83-84)

Maintain the outcomes delivered through Schedule 2 lands.

The department is supportive of this recommendation in line with the National Wild Dog Action Plan and the status of dingoes under state environmental legislation.

Recommendation 19 (pp. 85-86)

Prioritise the implementation of biocontrol options for carp.

On 1 May 2016 the Australian Government committed \$15 million over two and a half years to a National Carp Control Program. The National Carp Control Plan will further research, approvals, and consultation to develop a comprehensive plan for a potential release of *Cyprinid herpesvirus* (carp herpesvirus) by the end of 2018, subject to legislative and regulatory approval processes.

Recommendation 24 (pp. 97-98)

Maintain access to markets for pest animals.

In relation to Recommendation 24(i), which states the NSW should 'work with the Australian Government to allow the development of markets, both export and domestic, for pest animals while minimising regulatory impediments', the department supports increased market access for Australian commodities in line with associated legislative requirements (e.g. State and National food safety and health standards). Note that other pest animals such as kangaroo already have established commercial markets, and that this recommendation focusses on potential market access for wild boar and deer.