



## Submission

# PEST ANIMAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW – DRAFT REPORT MARCH 2016

**Submitted by:**

CWA of NSW State Agricultural and Environmental Committee

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The Country Women's Association is the largest women's organisation in Australia. It aims to improve conditions for country women and children. The CWA does this by advocating for its thousands of members, helping local communities, creating a network of support and meeting together in towns and cities. The Agricultural and Environmental Committee of the CWA of NSW ("CWA") has a vital interest in agricultural production, its effects on communities, families and the profitability of Australian farms and as such, holds a strong interest in the topic of pest animal control. We are pleased to be given the opportunity to provide our feedback on this matter.

#### What are your reasons for support of the recommendations?

Overall, CWA supports the recommendations made by the NSW Natural Resources Commission ("NRC") in their March 2016 draft report "Shared Problem, Shared Solutions" document ("the report"). It is clear that the NRC has consulted widely, and researched thoroughly, the impacts of pest animals across the state. It is disappointing that the impact of kangaroos could not be considered by the NRC within their terms of reference. We understand that this would have increased the complexity of the review, but our members are seeing increased kangaroo numbers across the state and their effective control should be considered as part of a wider pest control regime.

The point that the NRC makes in relation to rapid access to fund to enable future rapid response to incursions is especially supported by the CWA, as is the focus on public and private tenure cooperation. The CWA also strongly support recommendation 16 in relation to deer. These pests have been noticed to be increasing in numbers across the state and our members cannot see the utility in having a separate system of regulation applying to feral deer versus other pest animals.

There are a number of areas of suggested improvement (see below) and one recommendation that is not agreed with my our members, however overall, the CWA supports the recommendations made by the NRC and congratulates them on conducting an thorough review so far.

#### If any, what are your reasons for non-support of the recommendations?

The CWA does not agree with Recommendation 26 in its current form. Research is recognised as vital, indeed critical, to the success of pest animal management across the state; however the creation of more bureaucracy and any further associated expense should not be viewed as the answer. That being said, we do recognize the need to have some succession plan in place for the Invasive Animals CRC. However, if the strong theme of collaboration of effort that running through the report is applied in relation to research, it would be recognised that what is needed are more partnerships, better



involvement of private landholders in research initiatives and extension/education work to make the most of the research work that is already done.

Research and development must be at the cutting edge with a strong focus on innovation, with the agenda being driven by farmers and industry, the end users, to ensure productivity gains. Returns from investment in agricultural research and development need to be maximised. With many pest animal research areas being industry specific, the resulting research often focuses on individual industry productivity, rather than considering the interactions between enterprises on farm to manage long-term profit and risk within the business. However, to achieve maximum returns on investment and efficient, sustainable and productive gains for farmers and Australian agriculture as a whole, research must look at the bigger picture of farm profitability across regions, states and industry boundaries.

Better collaboration between research agencies and individuals has also been recognized as a priority at a federal level, with the Productivity Commission and industry over recent years have developed the National Primary Industries Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) Framework, as well as National RD&E strategies for many of the agricultural industries.

The Country Women's Association of New South Wales requests that opportunities for further strengthening partnerships are sought and that researchers be encouraged to look outside their 'silos' and work together researching ways to improve pest control across the state, *prior* to any new research agencies being formed. This may indeed be the intended effect of Recommendation 26, however in its current form that is not made clear. We would respectfully suggest that this issue needs to be made much more a focus in any updated Recommendations.

## What are your suggestions for improvement in pest animal management?

We have some specific suggestions and comments in relation to a number of the recommendations. We have listed those comments below:

**Recommendation 1:** although it is mentioned at subsection (ii), we feel that much more emphasis should be placed on the importance of a cross tenure approach to pest animal management. Any new regime should have the some obligations and responsibilities placed on public landholders as private ones.

**Recommendation 2:** CWA agree with this recommendation, although we have concerns about the capacity of Local Land Services ("LLS") to be able to be the lead agency for managing established terrestrial pest animals. The current experience of our members is that LLS persistently attempts to



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hold the role of an “enabling” position rather than as an agency that is responsible for the delivery of tangible outcomes on pest control. We agree with the NRC is that LLS should have this responsibility, however there may be some culture change that is required in order for this recommendation to be successful, along with possibly more resources to allow them to do the job properly.

**Recommendation 3:** the CWA feels that much more emphasis needs to be places on the importance of managing pests and weeds in conjunction with each other, rather than in isolation.

**Recommendation 18(i):** the legislative and regulatory framework around Schedule 2 lands is not well understood and needs to be further explained. The question of whether it is appropriate for wild dogs to be exempt from the general destruction order on Schedule 2 lands needs to be considered if we are to be serious about a true nil-tenure approach to pest animal management.

**Recommendation 20:** The CWA supports the control of feral horses down to a sustainable level via humane methods only. We do not support culling with an aim of eradication, the wild horse has significant cultural value in the Australian context and therefore management efforts should be focus on what appropriate numbers should be, not eradication. We do not support aerial culling of wild horse under any circumstances. This management technique should be excised from any best management techniques and associated management programs that may be developed.