

In relation to the discussion paper 'Managing established pests and diseases of national significance in a new way', Local Land Services NSW provides the following response to the consultation questions;

Are the proposed Policy Principles appropriate and practical?

The principles reflect well what is captured in the NSW Biosecurity Strategy and largely deal with disease management well however they need to be fully met to have impact for established pests. Shared responsibility as a principle is ideal in disease management however our experience is that land managers, particularly in pest animal issues, expect that government will inevitably 'kick the can' rather than contributing from their own funds. Achieving a shift from the dependence of only having community based leadership if it is funded, is an ideal goal.

The increased emphasis on innovation is welcomed however it requires a commitment of where resources will come from. These innovations should be developed with a goal of reaching on ground outcomes for pest programs. Innovation that is out of touch with day to day implementation should not be prioritised over more simplistic broad scale solutions as they only set up expectations that government will intervene and land managers may take a more relaxed approach to their management of the pest or disease.

Are the proposed Policy Principles sufficient?

The policy principles are adequate and reflect what combined action should be striving to achieve. Definitions for national significance and the need for government to only be involved if our investment is critical in making a difference are welcomed.

Should listing of established pests and diseases of national significance be for a defined period, or open-ended?

A defined period is preferred so that measurement has a benchmark period from which to establish progress or improvement

In determining listing criteria and a framework for measuring this, the adoption of a common reporting system by governments to enable an accurate cross jurisdictional assessment of effort and corresponding reduction of impact on pest species would be beneficial.

What form of review should be required to maintain the listing of a pest or disease as an established pest or disease of national significance?

It would be logical and reasonable to review the species or disease listed, against the criteria that resulted in it being listed initially. Having a consistent cross jurisdictional reporting system would enhance this.

Production impacts from pests and diseases heavily influences the extent to which asset based protection and any resulting community based leadership are taken up so criteria reflecting these issues are critical.

What is an appropriate time period for such a review?

Five (5) years is a sufficient time to implement and then measure practice change based programs

Are the proposed roles and responsibilities clear, particularly in relation to your role?

Yes primarily however these would be enhanced with some clearer expectations around community based leadership models.

Are the proposed roles and responsibilities appropriate and practical?

Yes but only if adoption is achieved by all. The extent to which government facilitates or coordinates programs in the community where sufficient collective action exists and the way in which the funding of community leadership influences the motivation of community members' engagement in control programs is in our experiences highly connected. Therefore assumptions about static engagement of the community may need to be considered further.

What are the issues with establishing and maintaining effective collective action?

Funding and reliance on funding and how this impacts on successfully engaging community participation in the long term. Having land managers adopt pest and disease management as an integral part of their business management practices is desirable because management occurs regardless of funding. Any additional support should be seen as a bonus not an incentive to collective action.

Funding for collective action grants should also consider what existing strategies are in place and what could be supported within those strategies. In thinking about the wild dog management strategy or wild dog action plan as 'agreements' there are often specific goals which could be resourced collectively as part of that agreement rather than funding the communities to deal with pest management in general. Having a dedicated collective approach to meeting each of the goals is the ideal.

How can the coordinated approach be best implemented across the various stakeholder groups?

Total industry support and industry representative group support is useful as are credible mechanisms for ongoing dialogue between stakeholders.

In terms of on ground programs a better process by which agencies may implement activity across their respective and often different regional boundaries so that larger scale programs may be more effectively managed would assist.

Support funding from government to leadership and coordination should be consistent and maintain common long term goals for on ground programs. The risk with the funded community based leadership model if not monitored and resourced effectively is that the group shifts to whatever project funding is current at the moment in order to be financially sustainable. A lack of momentum in many pest programs is generally caused by disruption to leadership/coordination.

How do you see yourself (or your interest/industry/organisation) contributing?

The coordination of group activities and provision of technical advice from 'specialist' staff and providing access to training and/or up skilling of groups with the end goal of building capacity of land managers.

Being an active partner to agreements and broader strategic goals and participant in developing monitoring of progress to outcomes as well as providing data collected through on ground programs.

Undertake a regulatory role in cases of last resort or to the minimum extent necessary so as to facilitate greater participation and support for land managers where absences and or gaps are impacting on successful outcomes.

Collated responses gathered from Local Land Services Biosecurity teams across NSW.