



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture

National Marine Pest Biosecurity Review

Issues Paper

Animal Biosecurity Branch



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1 Introduction

Introduced marine pests can have a significant impact on our fishing, aquaculture and shipping industries, marine infrastructure and the marine environment. The main pathways for the introduction, establishment and spread of marine pests are via vessel biofouling and ballast water.

The government has committed \$5 million over four years for a review and strategic analysis into invasive marine pest species with a view to removal or eradication of these marine pests.

This review is being undertaken by the Department of Agriculture in the 2014—15 financial year and is the first element of the department's four-year project to strengthen Australia's marine pest biosecurity arrangements. The review will investigate whether the current framework is functioning well and what elements could be improved. It will culminate in a report to the Australian Government that provides recommendations to improve national biosecurity arrangements for marine pests that are effective, simple and provide a high return on investment.

Further details on the scope of the department's review are contained in the Scope of the Review.

Subject to government agreement, recommendations in the report will be implemented in 2015—18 through the Department of Agriculture's Strengthening National Marine Pest Biosecurity project.

This review is being conducted in support of current government action being taken around ballast water and biofouling biosecurity management. In July 2014, the Australian Government announced its intention to bring forward the Biosecurity Bill 2014 to Parliament in 2014. The Biosecurity Bill provides a framework for Australia to work towards ratification of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments. For some time the department has been considering new biofouling management options for vessels arriving in Australian waters. This work will continue while the review is being conducted and will take into consideration the input on biofouling management that is received from stakeholders during the review.

2 Purpose of this issues paper

The purpose of this issues paper is to seek your input on which elements of the current national marine pest biosecurity arrangements that the Australian Government could improve.

You can make a submission at any time before 8 December 2014 directly to the Department of Agriculture (marinepests@agriculture.gov.au).

Based on the submissions, the department will develop a discussion paper with proposals to address the issues identified by stakeholders. The discussion paper will be released for consultation in early 2015.

The department will hold meetings with interested parties as part of the review consultation process.

The department will provide information about the next consultation period following receipt of submissions generated by the issues paper. This information will also be available at www.agriculture.gov.au/marinepestreview.

3 Context

Marine pests are exotic marine species that pose a threat to Australia's marine environment or industries, if they are introduced, established or translocated. They have the potential to significantly impact our marine industries and our environment.

Marine pests can attach themselves as biofouling to vessel hulls, anchor chains, fishing gear, recreational equipment, marine debris and internal vessel compartments. They can also travel in any seawater system on a vessel including inside pipes and ballast water. Marine pests can be transported through the aquarium trade and be present on any vessel big or small, from yachts to fishing boats to commercial ships to oil rigs.

Marine pest biosecurity is about mitigating the risks and impacts to the economy, the environment, social amenity and human health associated with marine pest incursions. Marine pest risks are a shared responsibility that requires coordination across governments, industries and communities.

Australia has the world's third largest marine estate spanning three million square nautical miles, supporting high biodiversity. The serious environmental and economic consequences of infestations of some marine pests are well documented. The effects on social values and human health are less immediately obvious, but potentially very serious. Impacts of marine pests on ecosystems vary and can include predation, resource competition and habitat modification. Invasive marine pests can significantly increase maintenance costs for marine infrastructure and affect the productivity of fisheries and aquaculture operations. Once established and widespread, marine pests are difficult to control and can be expensive or impractical to eradicate.

To minimise risks from invasive marine pests the Australian, state and territory governments, supported by marine industry and scientists, have developed a national approach to marine pest biosecurity known as the National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions. The National System is the current framework for marine pest biosecurity and is being implemented by the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee. This Review of National Marine Pest Biosecurity is the first time the National System has been formally reviewed.

Further information on marine pest biosecurity, marine pests and the National System can be found at www.marinepests.gov.au.

4 Scope of comments

This issues paper seeks input from all stakeholders on the effectiveness of the current national marine pest biosecurity arrangements.

Marine pest biosecurity issues are often interlinked, and concern multiple elements of biosecurity arrangements that can cut across Australian, state and territory government jurisdictions. This review is focussing on the Australian Government's responsibilities and activities in national marine pest biosecurity. However, we recognise that it will be difficult for you to limit your comment to those issues that are solely the responsibility of the Australian Government.

We are asking you to comment on any part of the national marine pest biosecurity arrangements that affect your activities, and identify whether they are working well or require improvement.

In making your submission please do not restrict your comments to the questions contained in the 'Questions for Stakeholders' section. These questions have been provided to prompt your thoughts around parts of the marine pest biosecurity system.

We also ask you to identify any other issues to the management of invasive marine pests, or any other related issues in the final 'additional comments' section.

5 Preparing and lodging a submission

Submissions must be lodged with the department by **Monday 8 December 2014**.

You are not required to answer all questions, only those that you wish to respond to.

Submissions will only be accepted when accompanied by the submission cover sheet.

There is no prescribed format and your submission may be as short or as long as you like. It may contain facts, opinions, arguments or recommendations. However, to make submissions most useful we suggest:

- the scope of the review and the questions provided can be a good guide to structuring a submission
- if your submission is more than three (3) pages in length, please include a summary of your key comments and recommendations at the front.

Email lodgement is preferred.

Submissions can be made:

By email: marinepests@agriculture.gov.au

By mail: The Marine Pests Unit
Animal Biosecurity Branch
Department of Agriculture
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Further information:

If you require further information on making a submission please contact the department's Marine Pests Unit by email to marinepests@agriculture.gov.au.

Publication of submissions:

Unless clearly marked 'IN CONFIDENCE' and attached to a statement explaining why the submission or parts thereof should not be published, submissions received will be made public through the department's website at agriculture.gov.au.

The Australian Government reserves the right to refuse to publish submissions, or parts of submissions, which contain offensive language, potentially defamatory material or copyright infringing material.

Making a confidential submission:

If you wish your whole submission to be kept in confidence, this should be clearly indicated on the submission cover sheet.

If you want only part of your submission to be confidential, please mark it clearly and put that part on a separate page(s).

We will endeavour to keep any such submissions confidential but cannot provide an absolute guarantee of confidentiality because certain confidential information may be required to be disclosed by law or to the Parliament under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth). Such requests will be determined in accordance with provisions under that Act.

Privacy notice:

'Personal information' means any information or opinion about an identified, or reasonably identifiable, individual.

'Sensitive personal information' means any information or opinion about an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinion or association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, sexual preferences or practices, trade or professional associations and memberships, union membership, criminal record, health or genetic information and biometric information or templates.

The collection of personal information by the Department of Agriculture (the department) in relation to this submission is for the purposes of considering your submission and related purposes. If all relevant personal information requested is not provided by you, the department may be unable to consider your submission.

Personal information may be disclosed to other Australian agencies, persons or organisations where necessary for these purposes, provided the disclosure is consistent with relevant laws, in particular the *Privacy Act 1988*. Your personal information will be used and stored in accordance with the Privacy Principles.

By completing and sending your submission you consent to the collection of all personal information, including sensitive personal information, contained in the submission cover sheet and submission.

The department's [Privacy Policy](#), including information about access to and correction of your personal information, is available on the department's website.

To contact the department about your personal information or to make a complaint:

Phone +61 2 6272 3933

Email privacy@agriculture.gov.au

Post Privacy Contact Officer
Department of Agriculture
GPO Box 858
Canberra ACT 2601

6 Questions for stakeholders

These questions have been provided to prompt your consideration of some elements of the marine pest biosecurity system. Ideally your submission will include responses to some of these questions.

Please answer those questions relevant to your activities / industry or areas of knowledge. You are not required to answer all questions.

Please use an additional comments section to provide any additional comments you think relevant to this review.

About the marine pest biosecurity system

1. What are the key issues for your business / organisation that you would like to see addressed in this review?
2. How do current marine pest biosecurity arrangements affect your organisation, business or recreational activities?
3. How effective are the current arrangements in preventing marine pests arriving and establishing in Australia?
4. How effective are the current arrangements for the detection, eradication and containment of invasive marine pests?
5. Does your organisation, business or activities have any difficulty implementing the current marine pest biosecurity arrangements? If 'Yes' please briefly explain what these difficulties are and how they impact you activities and / or industry.
6. Is the marine pest biosecurity regulatory approach (through legislation, nationally agreed standards, guidelines and protocols) consistent across Australia and aligned to relevant international standards?
7. Are there cost effective compliance and enforcement arrangements for industry, governments and the community?

About governance and infrastructure

8. How effective is the National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions as an overarching framework for Australia's marine pest biosecurity arrangements?
9. How effectively has the Australian Government coordinated the development and implementation of harmonised, national marine pest biosecurity arrangements?
10. How effectively does the Australian Government engage industry stakeholders and other environmental partners in the development and implementation of national marine pest biosecurity measures?
11. How effective is the Australian Government in coordinating a response to marine pest incursions?
12. How could the governance and infrastructure arrangements for marine pest biosecurity be changed to achieve better outcomes for marine pest biosecurity?

The National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (the National System) is a set of measures the Australian, state and territory governments established through an intergovernmental agreement in 2004. Further information can be found at www.marinepests.gov.au/national-system/.

The Marine Pest Sectoral Committee comprises representatives from the Australian, state and Northern Territory governments. The role of the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee is to develop and coordinate the implementation of harmonised marine pest biosecurity arrangements across Australia. Further information can be found at www.agriculture.gov.au/animal-plant-health/pests-diseases-weeds/marine-pests/mp-sect-committee.

The Consultative Committee for Introduced Marine Pest Emergencies (CCIMPE) is the national consultative forum through which Australian governments with marine responsibilities participate in the management of marine pest emergencies of national significance. Its role is to coordinate the national operational response to marine pest emergencies in an effective and efficient manner.

About prevention, eradication, containment and on-going management

13. How effective and efficient are the current national arrangements at minimising the risks posed by ballast water?
14. How do the current national arrangements for transfer of ballast water between domestic ports affect your activities and/or business?
15. How effective and efficient are the current national arrangements at minimising the risks posed by biofouling?
16. How effective and efficient are the current national arrangements at minimising the risks posed by the aquarium trade and other pathways for the introduction of marine pests?
17. How effective are the current national arrangements for determining and actioning the appropriate national response to a marine pest incursion?
18. How effective are the current national arrangements for containing and managing established marine pests in Australia?
19. Which initiatives have delivered the best improvement to addressing marine pest risks in your sector?

Information on the current national measures aimed at preventing, eradicating, containing and managing marine pests is available www.marinepests.gov.au/national-system/how-it-works/.

For some time the department has been considering new biofouling management options for vessels arriving in Australian waters. Information on these options is available at www.agriculture.gov.au/animal-plant-health/pests-diseases-weeds/marine-pests/biofouling.

The National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement (NEBRA) sets out national emergency response arrangements for responding to biosecurity incidents. The consideration of changes to the NEBRA is outside the scope of this review. However, the review will consider how the NEBRA is working and operating in the marine pest environment. Further information on the NEBRA can be found at www.coag.gov.au/node/74.

The department has engaged the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) to determine the relative cost effectiveness of actions to prevent marine pest incursions, the potential costs of eradication and containment and the costs of protecting assets from their impacts. The outcomes of the project will be used by this Review of National Marine Pest Biosecurity to recommend Australian Government spending on activities that provide effective return on investment.

About supporting arrangements: monitoring, communications, research and development, evaluation and review

20. If your organisation is currently undertaking monitoring for marine pests, what are your reasons for doing so and how do you use the information you collect?
21. How effective has the implementation of the National Monitoring Strategy been across Australia?
22. What impact has the implementation of the National Monitoring Strategy had on your business or organisation and how can this be improved?
23. Do Australia's national arrangements provide access to relevant marine pest biosecurity information and intelligence sources to improve decision making at the regional, state and national levels?
24. How could engagement and communication with your organisation or sector be improved to deliver positive outcomes for marine pest biosecurity?
25. Do the National System and current national marine pest biosecurity arrangements provide an effective platform to continuously improve biosecurity outcomes?
26. How effective and coordinated is the current national approach to research and development on invasive marine species at improving the national marine pest biosecurity system?

A comprehensive national surveillance and diagnostic system that provides for early detection and accurate and timely diagnosis of marine pests is vital to an effective marine pest biosecurity system. The department has engaged ABARES to undertake an independent detailed assessment of the existing National Monitoring Strategy for marine pests as part of this review. ABARES will consult with state and territory jurisdictions, organisations and scientific experts in marine pest surveillance. Relevant comments provided in response to this issues paper will be provided to ABARES. ABARES' report will contain recommendations for improvements, which will be incorporated into the review's report to government.

Information on the current National Monitoring Strategy is available at www.marinepests.gov.au/national-system/how-it-works/Pages/Monitoring.aspx

Information on national research and development is available at www.marinepests.gov.au/national-system/how-it-works/Pages/Research-and-development.aspx

Additional comments

Please provide comments or information on any other issues you consider relevant to the management of invasive marine pests, implementation of the current marine pest biosecurity arrangements, or your proposals to improve Australia's marine pest biosecurity system.

Thank you

Thank you for contributing to the review of the national marine pest biosecurity arrangements.

You can make a submission at any time before 8 December 2014 directly to the Department of Agriculture (marinepests@agriculture.gov.au).

The department will hold meetings with interested parties as part of the review consultation process.

The department will provide information about the next consultation period following receipt of submissions generated by the issues paper. This information will also be available at agriculture.gov.au.

7 Scope of the Review

The Department of Agriculture will conduct a review of national marine pest biosecurity arrangements and report to the Australian Government by 30 June 2015.

The review's report will provide recommendations for Australian Government investment that are effective, simple and provide a high return on investment to strengthen national marine pest biosecurity.

The department will consult with the public, other agencies of the Australian Government and key stakeholders in national marine pest biosecurity.

Scope

This review will be limited to the Australian Government's responsibilities and activities in the national marine pest biosecurity arrangements. It will:

1. Assess whether the implementation of the National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (the National System) has:
 - a. provided effective and cost efficient procedures in relation to prevention, eradication, containment and on-going management of marine pest incursions, for the purpose of protecting Australia's marine environment and industries dependent on marine resources
 - b. facilitated consistency in Australia's border and post border controls for marine pest management and their consistency with relevant international standards
 - c. provided a consistent regulatory approach across Australia through legislation and/or nationally agreed standards, guidelines and protocols
 - d. provided cost effective compliance and enforcement arrangements for industry, government and the community.
2. Recommend whether harmonised, collaborative and effective national marine pest biosecurity arrangements would be most effectively achieved by the Australian Government pursuing the implementation of the National System, or an alternative framework.
3. Identify, and prioritise elements of national marine pest biosecurity arrangements which require improvement, and recommend prioritised actions for the Australian Government to improve those elements.
4. Consider sustainable funding, Australia's international commitments, the government's support for the multilateral trade system and other relevant government initiatives in providing recommendations.

Out of Scope

The following elements are out of scope for this review:

- the content of the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement
- the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity
- the National Biosecurity Committee
- cost sharing arrangements for monitoring at National Monitoring Network locations (noting that the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee is currently investigating options around cost sharing arrangements for monitoring at NMN locations)
- draft Commonwealth legislation (the Biosecurity Bill 2014) for the management of ballast water
- the intra-jurisdictional operation of state and territory regulatory instruments concerning marine biosecurity
- review of jurisdictional responsibility for monitoring
- the content of the Australian priority marine pests list (currently being considered by the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee)
- prevention and management activities related to terrestrial and freshwater invasive species
- prevention and management activities related to native marine species (such as the crown-of-thorns starfish (*Acanthaster planci*))