



By email: Submissions.BiosecurityLegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au

RE: Proposed Framework for a NSW Biosecurity Act

Thank you for considering this submission on the proposed framework for a NSW Biosecurity Act.

The primary submission from the Greens NSW will be provided by my colleague Dr Mehreen Faruqi, our Environment Spokesperson. I endorse the comments provided in her submission.

I largely endorse the moves to minimise inconsistencies in existing legislation and adopt a single, comprehensive Biosecurity Act.

I do however note a number of concerns with the proposal, and in particular the failure to provide measures that will address the ongoing problems of invasive species in State Forests.

State forests are spending far too little on the control of wild introduced animals and weeds.

When combined with poor logging practices that facilitate the entry of pest species like lantana, tobacco bush weed (*solanum mauritianum*) and blackberries the overall result is that the conservation values of State Forests are degraded, and surrounding landowners and conservation areas placed at greater risk of invasive species.

Last year's annual report for the Forestry Corporation has revealed it spent less than 83 cents on weed and pest control for each of the 1.8 million hectares of native forests. This figure is based on the \$1.5 million the NSW Forestry Corporation collectively spent on feral animal and weed control.

There are more than 500 weed species around Australia which cost an estimated \$4 billion per year to manage. This estimated cost does not account for environmental impacts, including the 419 native plant species, populations and communities in NSW.

When compared with the spending of Local Councils it is apparent that the NSW Forestry Corporation allocation is grossly inadequate, and means public lands can pose a substantial risk to surrounding areas.



Forestry Corporation 2012-2013¹

- \$1.5 million on feral animal and weed control
- 1.8 million hectares of native forests and 35 000 hectares of hardwood plantations, producing a range of log products that are supplied to the domestic hardwood processing industry.
- \$0.83 per hectare

It is apparent from even the most rudimentary comparison between spending on pest and weed control in State Forests and that spent by local government that there is a systemic underspend by the Forestry Corporation. Taking just a single local government area (Blue Mountains) as an example, the comparison is stark.

Local council spending:

Blue Mountains City Council

[Weed Management Strategy](#)

The entire Blue Mountains Local Government Area (LGA) is 143,200 ha. The Blue Mountains National Park covers 106,100 ha. The remaining 37,160 ha is in the Council area, which includes 342 km of interface with the National Park.

Within the LGA, Council manages:

- 6,000 ha as a direct land manager, including 4,000 ha of bushland reserves;
- 4,435 ha of Crown land in a monitoring, planning and implementation support role; and
- 22,000 ha of private land in a monitoring, planning, assistance and regulatory role

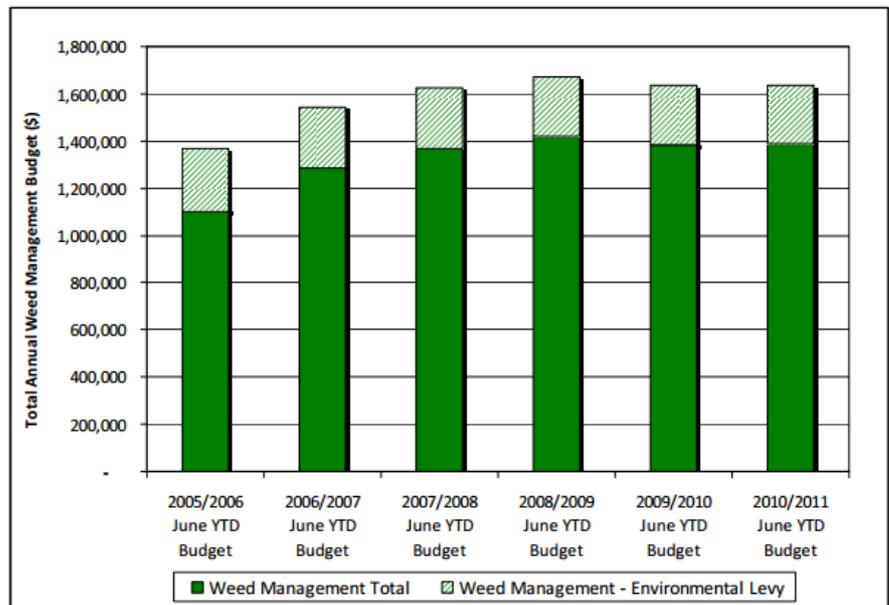


Figure 10: BMCC weed management budgets

These expenditure budgets support a number of weed control focused programs within council such as:

- Bush Regeneration;
- Noxious Weed Inspection and Control;
- Bushcare and Landcare;
- Bushland Management Operations; and
- Private land extension.

¹ Source: Forestry Corporation 2012/13 Annual Report



David Shoebridge MLC
Member of the NSW Legislative Council

David Shoebridge MLC
Submission
27 June 2014

Rate of spending:

- 37, 160 ha in whole LGA= \$43 per hectare
- 10, 435 ha Crown Land and direct land managed = \$153.33 per hectare
- 6,000 ha of land directly managed = \$266.66 per hectare

That a single council is outspending the Forestry Corporation on weed and pest control is significant and alarming. It shows the level of investment in invasive species control from Forestry Corporation is well below the level we should expect from a public authority.

This underspend is exacerbated by the fact that one of the core activities of the Forestry Corporation – the logging and clearing of forests – is a major cause of weed infestation in the land under its control.

Any serious attempt to ensure a proper biosecurity regime needs to include an overhaul of funding for animal and weed control by the Forestry Corporation in conjunction with legislative changes.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office at david.shoebridge@parliament.nsw.gov.au or (02) 9230 3030 if you have any questions regarding this submission or require further information.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Shoebridge', written in a cursive style.

David Shoebridge
Greens NSW MP