

Greater Sydney RWC Meeting 19: BUSINESS PAPER

Agenda Item 6	Regional & Local Priority Weeds Consistency
ATTACHMENTS	
BACKGROUND	<p>Several RWC members have raised concerns about the consistency in approach to compliance of priority weeds across the region. The concerns relate to State and regional priority weeds, as identified in the RSWMP, as well as local priority weeds.</p> <p>State priority weeds are subject to regulatory arrangements that prescribe minimum requirements to manage the risks associated with these plants. For example, declared “prohibited matter”, control orders, biosecurity zones and mandatory measure regulation. All other plants are subject to the general biosecurity duty (GBD). However, before the GBD can apply, the plant must have had a weed risk assessment (WRA) completed using the approved WRA framework.</p> <p>WRAs have been completed for all regional priority weeds at a regional scale and subject to a quality review by the State Weed Committee. The RSWMP has been subject to a public consultation process and articulates minimum expectations for managing each regional priority weed.</p> <p>There may be situations where a higher standard of management is required. In these cases, before the GBD can apply a WRA must be completed for the specific situation (ie at the LGA or property scale). The WRA should also be subjected to a quality review and public consultation process.</p> <p>Likewise, before the GBD applies, any plant that is identified as a local priority weed must have a WRA completed using the approved framework. The WRA should also be subject to a quality review (eg by NSW DPI) and the expectations for managing the plant articulated in a document (eg local priority weed plan) that has been subject to a public consultation process.</p> <p>The inconsistency across LGAs can be attributed to several reasons including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. a backlog of WRAs waiting for quality review.2. quality reviews of State and regional priority weeds are prioritised over local priority weeds3. some councils have already published a Local Weed Plan, whereas other councils have not commenced developing one4. variation in individual’s interpretation or application of the expectations for managing priority weeds. <p>Greater Sydney LLS is funding a project that will see WRAs prepared or reviewed for around 130 local priority weeds. One of the aims of the project is to ensure accuracy and consistency across local areas.</p> <p>A moratorium on enforcement of the GBD for local priority weeds has also been suggested for consideration.</p>
FOR ACTION/DECISION/NOTING	DISCUSSION
ACTIONS REQUIRED BY RWC MEMBERS	