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TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT RESEARCH INTO ALTERNATIVES TO 1080

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October in Review

After a final round of consultation with members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group and Technical Panel, Senator Abetz and Minister Llewellyn jointly released the Strategic Plan for the Alternatives to 1080 Program on Monday 30th October.

The plan identifies five key research areas that the \$4 million will be invested in over the next few years.

The diversity of research in the plan reflects the message from experts and stakeholders alike that a variety of alternatives are needed to manage native animal browsing losses. The priority areas are:

1. The development of best practice guidelines and information products for fencing and barriers.
2. Investigation and demonstration of the effectiveness of shooting and trapping as a control mechanism for land managers including behavioural research on key browsing animals.
3. Practical extension and research into increasing the effectiveness of bioacoustic, chemical, nursery and genetic browsing deterrents.
4. Research into species specific delivery mechanisms for fertility control and existing alternative toxins to manage browsing damage.
5. Integration of alternative control mechanisms within existing land management tools including the development of improved techniques to more accurately monitor and measure browsing damage impacts.

A copy of the strategic plan is available at the [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website](#) along with a link to the associated press release.

The strategic plan contains a detailed overview of the focus areas that will now be the subject of research and demonstration projects under this program.

What Next?

The Implementation Committee is currently considering the rollout of strategic plan. The proposal being considered involves three streams:

1. Establishing a team, within the Game Management Services Unit, to focus on extension and demonstration areas within the plan;
2. Establishing a grants program to fund research focussed areas;
3. Development of an overall communication strategy, economic toolkit, the wildlife management plan and research, analysis and improvements in browsing damage management tools using internal and external resources as necessary.

1. The extension and demonstration team will work with landowners to trial and demonstrate alternative browsing management tools such as trapping, shooting, fencing and chemical repellents.

These officers will be the frontline for the project, focussing on properties where 1080 would usually be considered.

Their role will be to demonstrate the on ground issues, costs, and effectiveness of the different alternatives and to get this information to landowners.

Examples of the type of work they will be involved in include:

- The development of a knowledge base as part of the Game Management Planning framework to allow farmers to identify the costs and benefits of wallaby fencing, including quantifying the cost effectiveness of fencing in different environments.
- Demonstrating and assessing the relative cost effectiveness of trapping for pademelons and wallabies in different situations.
- Trials of larger animal traps on those islands that do not have devil or predator populations (eg. King, Flinders and Bruny Islands).
- Determining the increased effectiveness of using tools such as night scopes, red-filtered spotlighting and baiting sites over standard shooting practices.
- Evaluating repellents in combination with techniques such as initial culling or maintenance of protective vegetation cover in plantations.

2. The Grants program is intended to fund individuals and organisations to undertake research projects in line with the Strategic Plan.

Projects will be rated and funds granted based on an assessment of the projects likelihood of delivering outputs that will usefully contribute to browsing control management as specified under the Strategic Plan.

3. Finally a number of key projects such as the development of commercial and economic tools, wildlife management

plans, a review of how landowners currently manage native animal browsing damage and improvements in survey techniques will enable us to more effectively manage the browsing impacts of these animal. These projects will be administered by the Project Manager.

Implementation details are still being refined and final updates will be published through the distribution list for the Alternatives to 1080 Project to which this newsletter is sent.

Chemical Repellents

Chemical Repellents may offer an alternative to 1080, but research to date has failed to transfer into effective field based tools.

Dr Michael Parsons, from Curtin University was in Tasmania recently and took the time to meet and discuss his research into [Dingo Urine repellents](#) with some members of the Technical Panel.

His research has shown some very promising results with Kangaroos in Western Australia and an informal trial run by Alan Davey in Tasmania indicates that wallabies and pademelons do have a response to the odour.

Dr Parson's research is one of a number of research projects going on around the country looking at predator odours as animal repellents. A separate group at the University of Queensland is looking into using [Tiger based odour repellents](#) and have shown some positive results from their research.

In Tasmania, Andrew Walsh from Forestry Tasmania and Julianne O'Reilly-Wapstra from the Sustainable Forestry CRC are about to do enclosure trials of three chemical repellents to try and better understand how effective they are for two different species (brushtail possum and rufous wallaby).

Any questions or comments about the program should be directed to John Dawson, Project Manager 1080 Alternatives on 03 6233 6728 or john.dawson@dpiw.tas.gov.au. Any media enquires about the 1080 Alternatives Program should initially be directed to Shaun Rigby on 03 6233 2451 or shaun.rigby@dpac.tas.gov.au