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Question 1
The revised strategy sets out the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in weed management and prevention. Are these clear?

Question 2
Are the goals and priorities of the strategy focused in the necessary areas? Why / why not?
Question 3

The strategy is intended to describe how weed management fits into Australia’s biosecurity system. Is the link between Australia’s biosecurity system and weed management made clear in the strategy? why / why not?

Comments / Feedback

Any other comments or feedback?

Goals excellent - name Weed be considered for a change 'Pest plants'

Attach a document

File formats allowable are .doc, .docx or .pdf with a maximum file size of 5 MB.

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File: 16 Australian Weed Strategy 2017 to 2027.docx

Submission

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☐ Yes  ☐ No
For many years I have commended the Australian Weed Strategy (AWS) for its conciseness, clarity and outcome focus, and it is with pleasure that I comment on the draft 2027 AWS. We live in a changing & global environment and the next 10 year Strategy must be able to meet the challenges.

Note in the Discussion Paper that it takes to page 17 to see the Strategy!

- Overview.
  - Very clear summary, short with broad coverage.
  - Independent review in 2013 & note comment from the Review on "Managing establish weeds"
- Purpose of the Strategy.
  - VG highlighting the importance of ‘national, coordination, communities, best practice and knowledge.
- Scope of the Strategy.
  - VG covering national and current principles
  - Consider the need for stronger links to international and border security issues.
- Principles of effective weed management.
  - 7 principles. (support)
  - Note. No 2 – consider stronger reference to research & data.
  - Note. No7 – refers to border issues!
- Impact of weeds in Australia.
  - Economy- note 2004 economic work now out of date.
  - GRDC 2016 weed cost to grain industry $3.27 billion annually.
  - Need a comprehensive economic study on cost of weeds.
  - Note costs and impacts cover environment and health.
  - Weed- spread pathways – do need VG data as many weed species are imported as garden ornamentals. Note CSIRO 2005 – estimate that 10 garden plants become naturalised (grow wild) in Australia each year!!
- National Approach to biosecurity and weeds.
  - Note the strength of growing and value adding Australia’s Food and agribusiness sector is dependent on our ‘clean green’ image and effective border security is paramount.
  - Note the national biosecurity system and IGAB in place – are outcomes measured from these institutions?
  - Note that IGAB has 8 principles. 3 – Cover border issues and as a Chair of the NBT (National Blackberry TF) the importance of keeping out tropical Rubus species that could be as damaging to our northern rainforests as the European species have been to our southern national parklands.
- Note principle 8 – covers international obligations.
- Note and support the EPDNS Framework.
- National surveillance - The use of modern technologies including satellite could revolutionise weed identification and management. **This must be a national priority!**
- Welcome the report in 2017 on national emergency arrangements relating to exotic weeds.

- **Stages of weed management.**
  - In general the 4 phases are still appropriate but not sure whether the wording “Asset- based’ is still appropriate for the next decade.

- **Roles & responsibilities**
  - VG detail on responsibilities and roles.
  - Australian Govt. 1st dot – ensure that leadership covers ‘ innovation’
  - Industry & community groups – separate Community and Industry - should be standalone sections!
  - Within industry – role of carbon sequestration within plantations and forests needs consideration in a 10 year Strategy

**National Weed Strategy** (at last page 17)

**Question** – is the word ‘Weed’ appropriate for 2027? I am aware that the public understand ‘weed’ but the public do not read this document! Is ‘Pest Plants’ more descriptive for the next decade?

**Vision** – excellent – concise and surely applicable for the next decade and the 3 Goals also are relevant even though we are moving into a changing world!

**Goal 1. Prevention, detection and early intervention.**

Minimising the entry of potential weeds is a very cost effective action. And must ensure that funding is adequate.

**3 Priorities.**

- **1.1 – effective risk- based approaches to pre- border and border activities.**
  - Introduction and use of new technologies (incl. satellite) will be a key action.
  - Reviewing national institutional arrangements , formal agreements etc
  - Proactive plans with stakeholders on high- risk pathways ( VG)

- **1.2 - Adopt risk assessment and prioritisation approaches.**
  - Need VG national processes using evidence- based approaches (as outlined) – need to assess ‘climate change’ risks and changes!
  - Impacts from GM and other gene technologies.

- **1.3 early detection and monitory**
  - Adoption and effective use of new technologies will be a key.
  - Trialling and using effective measuring systems an essential activity.
  - All systems must be ‘owned’ nationally to ensure consistency. And VG investment for the Federal Govt. ( knowledge is a VG asset)
  - Excellent –case study – Mouse-ear hawkweed.
Goal 2. Minimising the impact of weeds.

Addresses containment & asset protection.

4 priorities.

- 2.1 Develop national approaches to coordinate, invest & manage impacts of weeds.
  - Note national approaches very important but recognise appropriateness roles for industry and community that may be more effective (support)
  - Continued role for WONS (now 32). The role of a National Taskforce is important and the need to develop a process for reviewing WONS Weeds Manual outcomes – reprinting and updating – note Blackberry Manual is in constant demand and reprints required!
- 2.2 Coordinated management across all land tenures.
  - The development of ‘management processes at State, regional or local ‘need recognition.
  - Landcare and the Victorian Blackberry Community Weed Program is an excellent model. Note Case study 2. The establishment of the Vic. BB. Taskforce plays an effective leadership role for this weed. (even on national issues)
- 2.3 Improve national approach, capacity & weed containment.
  - Improved data information will assist.
  - Improved availability of tools - species and variety identification (egg blackberry – 26 varieties). BMP with industry. And note the VBT approach.
- 2.4 Weed control techniques & integrated management.
  Linked to 2.3 but need increased focus on research (RD&E) and especially into control options.
  - Biological control agents & systems need support as often benefits are very long term but results can be very effective (rusts in BB, Paterson’s Curse & rabbit control)
  - Support continued development of landscape management plans.

Goal 3. Enhance Australia’s capacity and commitment to weed management.

The Federal Government renewed focus on Food exports and building on the ‘clean green’ image highlights the importance of pest management.

4 priorities

- 3.1 Knowledge capacity & commitment.
  - Building capacity & local knowledge – an essential outcome! – Training needed and using digital communication.
  - Support for empowering stakeholders & community (VG)
- 3.2 Long-term research
  - Very important – coordinate Govt. CSIRO. Industry and international (blue sky, gene etc)
  - Note – Case study 3 – Paterson’s curse – positive outcome & economic evaluation & ROI
3.3 Develop national data, information and knowledge infrastructure
- National surveillance - The use of modern technologies including satellite could revolutionise weed identification and management.
- The collection of data is essential in measuring outcomes and auditing systems
- A national system will mean uniformity of data

3.4 Improve institutional arrangements
- The Strategy must include an approved plan for measuring and reporting on outcomes.
- The Strategy should consider the development of a communication plan to all Stakeholders.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. I believe our greatest challenge is to project our thinking into a new world!!

Data, information and communication issues key

Alex Arbuthnot AM