



Australian Government



Tasmania

TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT RESEARCH INTO ALTERNATIVES TO 1080

NEWSLETTER 2

SEPTEMBER 2006

What's been happening

August saw several major milestones occur for the program.

Firstly the Independent Reviewer's report was released at the beginning of the month and is now available on the DAFF website.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group met on the 16th of August to discuss this report.

The advisory group worked through each of the alternatives providing comment and a ranking as to how the program money should be spent. Each member was able to rate funding priorities for the alternatives between -5 (very low funding priority) to +5 (very high funding priority).

The Technical Panel then met on the 22nd of August, and also went through and provided comment on each of the alternatives for the Implementation Committee to consider.

The Implementation Committee is now drafting the strategic plan outlining the direction of the program and will be working with the Stakeholder Advisory Group and Technical Panel through September to refine this plan.

Broader Consultation

Other interested groups and individuals have also been inputting into the process to date, and can continue to do so through September by contacting the Project Manager.

Consultations so far have included:

- Four days on King Island visiting farmers. This visit included a public forum organised in conjunction TFGA and NRM.

- Two days with Timber Community Australia to visit their Bruny Island and Meander Primary Industry Groups.
- A visit with the Tasman Peninsula Landcare Group.
- Two days in the North East and Central regions visiting farmers.

Further planned visits include:

- Farmer forums organised by TFGA in the North West (18th Sept.) and North East (19th Sept.) of the State
- NRM – Cradle Coast meetings are being planned in the North
- A field day on Saturday 23rd Sept with a larger group from the Tasman Peninsula area.

Wildlife Research

A number of people have called for further research into browsing animal behaviour while others have suggested that we already know enough about these animals.

In considering this question it is interesting to look at *Technical Report 95* by the CRC for Sustainable Production Forestry published in 2002. This report found, among other conclusions, that:

- High herbivore abundance may not be indicative of high browsing damage and should not be seen as a trigger for population control.
- A shift in the population ratio between pademelons and Bennetts wallabies may affect the extent, severity and spatial distribution of damage to seedlings.
- 1080 Poisoning appeared to be biased against female pademelons.

This could bring about an overall increase in local herbivore density by inducing a breeding response to the sudden increase in the availability of local resources. That is it could achieve a perverse response.

- It is unclear whether the change in population size following 1080 poisoning operations reflects (1) transient animals moving into the area, or (2) resident animals extending their already established home-range. Such information is important to establish, as the first case (1) indicates unstable populations, which may result in an increase in browsing damage to seedlings, while the latter situation, (2) representing stable populations, could reduce browsing damage to seedlings.

These findings are specific to the plantation areas studied, and should not be extrapolated beyond this. However, what these findings show is that without understanding the flow on effects of browsing damage controls whether that be fencing, repellents, shooting or 1080 poisoning we cannot be certain that controls are actually having the desired effect.

Targeted wildlife research of this nature will likely increase the likelihood of finding effective and commercially viable alternatives to 1080.

Browsing Damage?

Do native animals actually remove a significant amount of pasture?

The two pictures in the next column illustrate the potential impact of native animal browsing on agricultural productivity.

To find out more on the impact of native animal browsing, suggested readings include:

Donaghy, DJ, Tegg, RS 2001: *Report on effects of wildlife on pasture growth at Elliott Research and Demonstration Station, 2000-*

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

2001, Dairy Research & Development Corporation

Statham, M 1995: Loss of pasture and crop to native animals in Tasmania. In *Proceedings of the Australian Vertebrate pest Control Conference*, Vol 10, pp171-176, Hobart.



Figure 1 Wallaby Management Fence, King Island. Source: Guy Robertson



Figure 2 Wildlife Exclusion Trial, Deddington. Source: Mick Statham

Key Dates

Date	Milestone
Mid Sep	Release of Internal Draft of Strategic Plan to SAG and TP.
18/19- Sep	TFGA forums
23-Sep	Tasman Landcare Field Day