

**Rob McCormack - Aust Aquatic Biological P/L**

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**From:** "Rob McCormack - Aust Aquatic Biological P/L"  
**Date:** Tuesday, 18 October 2016 1:32 PM  
**To:** "Barnaby Joyce"  
**Cc:**

**Attach:** 8198.PDF  
**Subject:** Fw: Correspondence from the Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear Minister,

I acknowledge receipt today of your response to my requests for action on the subject of exotic Mexican crayfish being sold in Australia by unscrupulous environmental vandals, seeking a quick financial profit with total disregard for the ecology of Australia.

I found your response unpalatable. If this exotic Mexican crayfish species was legally imported into Australia as per your letter attached, then please advise who is responsible for this travesty. Who has authorised and approved this importation?

Those selling these exotic crayfish are now claiming that they are approved by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to do so. This is unacceptable! Dwarf Mexican crayfish (genus *Cambarellus*) are known carriers of CRAYFISH PLAGUE *Aphanomyces astaci* which has the potential to destroy the Australian crayfish aquaculture industry and destroy our native crayfish in the streams and rivers of Australia. These keystone species are the food source for our native animals and fish, their loss will dramatically alter the ecology of Australia.

Currently, the exotic Mexican crayfish are being sold for \$30-\$100 each with your approval. How does your Department distinguish between a crayfish illegally imported or one supposedly bred in Australia? I can breed a dozen, import a thousand, sell them all and just tell your Department they are home grown and have the Departments approval.

I do not believe that anyone from your Department was incompetent enough to authorise the importation of exotic Mexican crayfish into Australia. If, as I suspect that the original crayfish were illegally imported, then that was a crime. Offspring from illegally imported species should also be illegal, it is unacceptable that the Australian Government considers them legal.

There are many other varieties/species of Mexican Dwarf Crayfish. For example the orange dwarf Mexican crayfish (*Cambarellus patzcuarensis*) may sell for over \$2000/crayfish when it is illegally imported into Australia.

Worldwide, the clandestine pet trade is the most common introduction pathway for invasive aquatic species into countries waterways. The threat to local fauna from competition by these exotic species is another major consideration that your Department is ignoring.

1. Please confirm in writing a.s.a.p., who has authorised the legal importation of exotic Mexican crayfish into Australia.
2. Please confirm in writing a.s.a.p., that the progeny of illegally imported species are not illegal.
3. Please confirm in writing a.s.a.p., that the illegal importation of species into Australia is not a crime.
4. Please confirm in writing a.s.a.p., that profiting financially from the progeny of illegally imported species is not a crime.
5. Please confirm in writing a.s.a.p., that the Minister and Department of Water Resources condones the sale of progeny of illegally imported species and the profiteering by unscrupulous persons from the illegal importation.

Yours sincerely  
Robert B McCormack



**Robert B McCormack**  
Research & Aquaculture Director  
Australian Aquatic Biological P/L  
[www.aabio.com.au](http://www.aabio.com.au)

Team Leader  
The Australian Crayfish Project  
[www.austcray.com](http://www.austcray.com)

Manager  
Mid West Yabby & Fish Traders  
RBM Aquaculture  
[www.rbmaqua.com.au](http://www.rbmaqua.com.au)

Secretary/Treasurer  
NSW Aquaculture Assoc Inc  
[www.nswaqua.com.au](http://www.nswaqua.com.au)

Research Associate  
Carnegie Museum of Natural History  
[www.carnegiemnh.org](http://www.carnegiemnh.org)

Farm Manager  
◆◆◆Yabby Dabba Doo◆◆◆ Yabby Farm  
<http://www.yabbydabbadoo.com>