

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

7.19 The committee recommends that, once established, the Inspector-General of Biosecurity conduct a systematic review of how effectively high-risk environmental biosecurity concerns are addressed within the broader biosecurity system, with a particular focus on identifying gaps in pathway and risk analyses and on improving information gathering and sharing between jurisdictions.

Recommendation 2

7.24 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to revise the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement such that disagreement by a single party need not prevent a response under the agreement from going ahead.

Recommendation 3

7.25 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to include in the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement an explicit precautionary principle which states that a lack of full scientific or technical certainty regarding the feasibility of eradication must be weighed against potential biosecurity risks when determining whether to mount a response.

Recommendation 4

7.27 The committee recommends the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to develop a nationally consistent methodology for incorporating environmental impacts into cost-benefit analyses under the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement.

Recommendation 5

7.31 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with signatories to the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement to include in that agreement a transition to management framework to clarify the responsibilities of the parties for ongoing management activities if eradication is deemed to be no longer feasible.

Recommendation 6

7.35 The committee recommends that the Department of the Environment review targets contained in *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030* and develop measurement methodologies to ensure that Australia's progress can be meaningfully assessed.

Recommendation 7

7.36 The committee recommends that the Australian National Audit Office conduct a performance audit of the Department of the Environment's implementation of *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030* with a particular focus on how progress towards targets is measured.

Recommendation 8

7.40 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Environment review processes for allocating funding under their natural resource management programs with a view to minimising delays for time-sensitive projects.

Recommendation 9

7.43 The committee recommends that the Department of the Environment work with the Department of Agriculture to develop and publish a national priority list of pests and diseases not yet established in Australia that are of environmental biosecurity concern.

Recommendation 10

7.49 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review and update the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy by mid-2016, and that this review specifically examine the adequacy of resources available to implement the strategy and suggest changes that can be made to improve environmental biosecurity outcomes under the strategy.

Recommendation 11

7.53 The committee recommends that both the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Environment conduct reviews to assess whether their existing resources can be better targeted to address known areas of environmental biosecurity risk. In particular, the committee recommends that the Department of the Environment examine whether resources can be directed towards effective implementation of existing threat abatement plans under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

Recommendation 12

7.56 The committee recommends that the Department of Industry and Science develop a strategy to address the current, and projected, decline in the level of scientific expertise in areas relevant to biosecurity.

Recommendation 13

7.62 The committee recommends that the Department of Industry and Science, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Environment, conduct a review to prioritise Australia's biosecurity research needs, both environmental and industry-focused, and determine what long-term institutional structure will best address these needs.

7.63 The committee also recommends that this review specifically investigate whether Australia possesses sufficient research capacity to examine the effects of climate change on invasive species and, if not, how this can be addressed.

Recommendation 14

7.66 The committee recommends that, following the example of the New Zealand Marine Invasive Taxonomic Service, the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to establish a coordinated taxonomic identification service that utilises existing scientific expertise, particularly that present in natural history museums.

Recommendation 15

7.73 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture undertake enforcement activities against internet retailers and marketplaces that repeatedly breach Australia's plant and seed import requirements and work with these businesses to ensure warnings are displayed when customers attempt to purchase prohibited plants and seeds.

Recommendation 16

7.76 The committee recommends that the Department of the Environment work to ensure that the measures described in the Tramp Ant Threat Abatement Plan are fully implemented.

Recommendation 17

7.77 The committee recommends that, within the next 12 months, the Department of Agriculture review its cargo surveillance measures with the aim of achieving better detection rates of invasive species in general and of tramp ants in particular.

Recommendation 18

7.82 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments, and the horticulture industry, on establishing standardised labelling, weed identification, and sales tracking protocols across the industry.

Recommendation 19

7.86 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review and, where appropriate, strengthen current regulations governing private aviculture imports, given the high rate at which privately kept birds escape into the wild.

Recommendation 20

7.87 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture identify the pathways by which exotic birds are entering the country, including illegal pathways, and work to better regulate or close these pathways.

Recommendation 21

7.88 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture work with relevant state and territory agencies to develop a national database of seized exotic wildlife.

Recommendation 22

7.94 The committee recommends that, following the completion of the current review of national maritime pest policy by the Department of Agriculture, the Commonwealth Government amend biosecurity legislation to incorporate a national mandatory biofouling management regime.

Recommendation 23

7.95 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture conduct more regular ship inspections targeted at biofouling.

Recommendation 24

7.101 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to establish a national monitoring and data sharing regime for freshwater fish incursions.

Recommendation 25

7.102 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture improve border surveillance of freshwater fish imports, review the relevance of its risk assessments for Australian conditions and implement as soon as practicable the on-arrival fish health monitoring program.

Recommendation 26

7.106 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with state and territory governments to establish a national framework for managing biosecurity on Australia's islands.