Goulburn Broken Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2010- 2015

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Goulburn Broken Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy (GB IPAS) sets the direction for invasive plants and animals investment and management in the Goulburn Broken catchment.

The Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria (Government of Victoria 2009) and the Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework (DPI 2010) provide the approach and policy behind invasive plants and animals management in Victoria, whilst the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act 1994)* provides a legislative framework and defines general duties of landholders and management of noxious weeds and pest animals.

The scope of the Goulburn Broken Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy (GB IPAS) is invasive plants and invasive animals which can be any organisms that are, or can be, declared under the *CaLP Act 1994* (that is, both declared and non declared invasive plants and animals species).

This excludes fish, invertebrates and micro-organisms. Also excluded by this definition are plants or animals that are listed under section 10(1) of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* or declared to be threatened wildlife

or notable wildlife under the *Wildlife Act 1975*. These cannot be declared under the *CaLP Act 1994*. However, the approaches set out in the GB IPAS can be applied to a range of pest species.

The GB IPAS is a high level document, guiding general direction for investment and effort. It is not an operational plan guiding day to day activities. It provides objectives and description of how to achieve objectives over a long term (five plus years).

Development of the GB IPAS was overseen by a Working Group, comprising representatives of key stakeholders, which first met in September 2009.

The Strategy

The GB IPAS is underpinned by the "biosecurity approach". Informed by the invasive plants and animals invasion curve (Figure S1), the biosecurity approach adopts a risk-based strategy to intervention featuring four key responses: prevention, eradication, containment and asset protection.

Generally, priority will be given to programs that prevent introduction or eradicate newly establishing species, over containment and programs to reduce the impact of established species on priority assets. This approach provides the greatest public benefit for government investment.

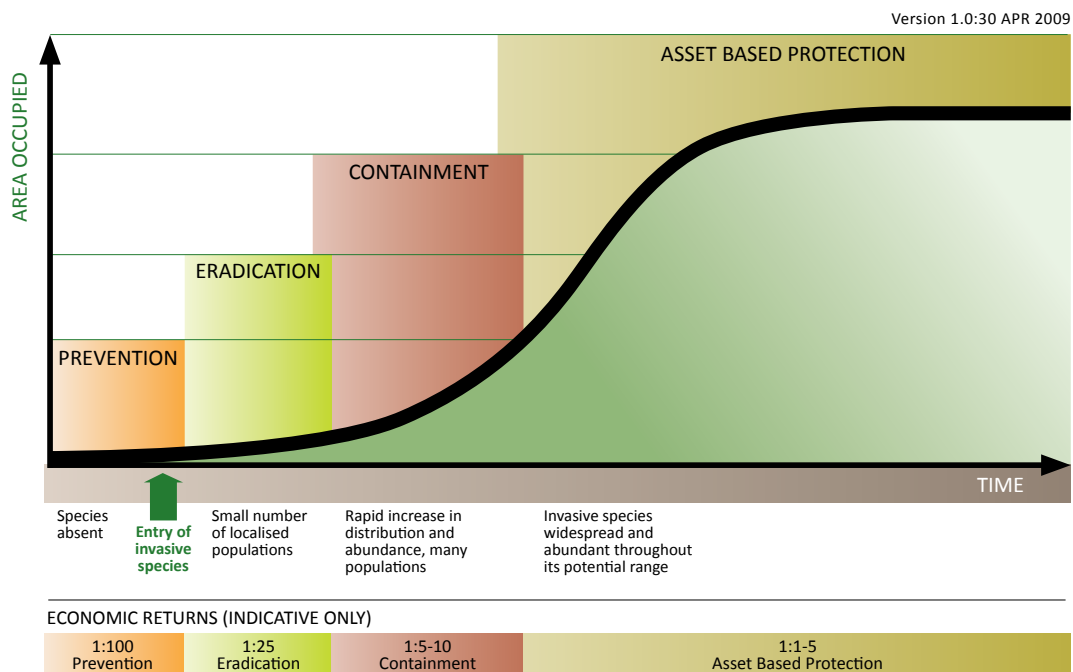### GENERALISED INVASION CURVE SHOWING ACTIONS APPROPRIATE TO EACH STAGE

Version 1.0:30 APR 2009

Figure S1: Invasion Curve (DPI 2010)

Black Willow
Jaye Caldwell

Program Goals

The Vision for the GB IPAS is "Environmental, social and economic assets in the Goulburn Broken catchment will be protected from the impact of invasive plants and animals".

The Vision will be achieved by working towards seven key goals:

Goal 1 - Preparedness and prevention

Prevent new high risk invasive plants and animals from establishing in the catchment and ultimately, Victoria.

Prevention and eradication programs form the basis of the 'species-led' approach to invasive plants and animals management, prioritising one species above another on the basis of the risk it poses to Victoria's economic, environmental and social values. The control of State Prohibited Weeds falls within this management approach.

Prevention involves minimising the movement of new invasive plants and animals into the state and catchment by understanding and managing all pathways of entry and spread.

Goal 2 - Eradication

Eradicate high risk invasive plants and animals in the early stage of establishment.

In the early stages of range expansion, eradication of an invasive plant or animal may be feasible. There are a number of conditions to be met in determining whether eradication is feasible.

State government programs for invasive plants and animals prevention and eradication are largely delivered at a statewide level.

Goal 3 - Containment

Contain high risk established invasive plants and animals.

Once established in the state beyond the possibility of eradication, an invasive plant or animal species may still be localised in small areas of one or more catchments. Containment approaches to limit the species further spread may then be appropriate to deliver the best return on public investment. From a statewide program perspective, the control of Regionally Prohibited Weeds falls within this management approach.

Goal 4 - Protecting assets and their values

Protect key biodiversity and other natural resource assets and their values from the impact of invasive plants and animals.

Once an invasive plant or animal becomes so widespread that containment or eradication is not possible, the focus of management effort should change to protecting the catchment's priority assets (often described as an "asset-based approach").

Asset-based protection programs focus upon reducing the impact of all threats, including invasive plants and animals, on high value assets in the state or catchment. Assets may provide a range of environmental, social and/or economic services. The control of widespread invasive animals, such as foxes preying upon rare and threatened species, falls into this 'asset-based' management approach.

Focusing on the protection and restoration of priority assets, rather than the invasive plants and animals per se, provides a clear focus for the land manager when dealing with established invasive plants and animals and enhances the likelihood of success. Existing invasive plants and animals programs focus on support of community action to manage widely established species. Future programs will focus on protecting high value assets.

Goal 5 - Integration

Integrate invasive plants and animals management with sustainable agriculture and other natural resource management activities.

Invasive plants and animals can impact on the effectiveness of many land management programs such as soil stabilisation, revegetation programs and the protection and rehabilitation of rare and endangered fauna. Integrating effective invasive plants and animals control into such projects will significantly improve their outcomes over time.

Goal 6 - Coordination

Coordinate and integrate invasive plants and animals management across, and within, land tenures.

Effective invasive plants and animals management depends on the development and implementation of working partnerships between government, industry and the community. Roles and responsibilities of various stakeholder are comprehensively addressed in Module 1 of the Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework (DPI 2010).

Onground invasive plants and animals management is primarily the responsibility of the land manager. The GB CMA will take a role in supporting coordination activities by convening and organising the Goulburn Broken Invasive Plants and Animals Forum with stakeholders from within the catchment and relevant neighbouring areas.

Goal 7 - Continuous improvement

Continuously improve invasive plants and animals management.

Regular reviews of the GB IPAS are scheduled so that it can be improved. The Goulburn Broken Invasive Plants and Animals Forum will support the GB CMA in this monitoring, reporting and improvement role.

Prioritisation

Because of the high number of potential species involved when managing invasive plants and animals in Victoria, government must prioritise its investment, targeting only the invasive plants and animals posing the greatest threat to the state's economic, environmental and social values. This prioritisation process involves risk assessment, knowledge of threats and potential impacts on assets and their associated values.

Threats

A large number of invasive plants and animals are found in the catchment. The GB IPAS applies to all invasive plants and animals that are, or can be, declared under the provisions of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

Assets and values

Asset-based protection programs focus on reducing the impact of all threats, including invasive plants and animals, on high value assets and associated values in the state or catchment. Assets may provide a range of environmental, social and/or economic services.

As part of the process for identifying assets in the catchment, the Working Group recognised two major types of assets:

- Biodiversity – based on biodiversity action planning undertaken in the catchment

- Agricultural land including large water storages, such as Lake Eildon and Goulburn Weir, and associated infrastructure that supports irrigation in the Goulburn Broken and downstream catchments.

Some assets can be readily mapped e.g. Barmah Forest or the Goulburn River while other assets are dispersed and difficult to explicitly map (e.g. agricultural land) as they occur over most of the catchment.

Implementation

The Goulburn Broken Invasive Plants and Animals Forum will provide oversight of GB IPAS implementation and will regularly overview progress towards achieving goals.

If you require any additional information, or would like to ontain the full report, please contact the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority on (03) 5820 1100 or visit www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

GOULBURN BROKEN
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Basket Willow
Jaye Caldwell