

R-CM 5: Future Focused Invasive Species Prioritisation

Review and refine collaborative, cross-tenure, cross-sector prioritisation and decision making frameworks for invasive species to factor in projected future climate change impacts.

This strategy delivers on these Regional Themes	Biodiversity	Biosecurity	Coastal Systems	Sustainable Industries	Water
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
This strategy delivers on these Strategic Outcomes	Supportive, policies, plans and regulations	Collaborative, adaptive planning and action	Traditional Owner Benefits	Sustained and diverse resourcing	Community stewardship, values and action
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Outcome	<p>A review and refinement of invasive species decision making frameworks focusing on asset and ecosystem function/services protection, and building in future climate scenarios will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decision making and prioritisation processes which are future thinking, and result in priorities that are realistic and match the resources available, are applied and evaluated. ▪ A common understanding of the extent to which we must ‘learn to live with’ invasive species and embrace new novel ecosystems within which weeds play a useful function. ▪ An effective balance of effort between managing the invasive species that we currently have in the region and prevention of future incursions.
Justification	<p>Existing prioritisation and decision making frameworks are already exceptionally good. Building on these to take into account climate change will be critical to building ecosystem resilience in the face of future threats. This may require redefining ‘purpose’ to focus on preparing as best we can for a different future and intervening in the most strategic way possible to ensure that the ecosystems of our future are as functional as possible. Transparency about the process will be essential, to ensure everyone is working on the same, agreed set of priorities, based on a clear understanding of how those priorities were arrived at. Being realistic about what can be achieved within resource constraints is essential to avoid trying to do a little bit about everything, and then not achieving real progress with anything.</p>
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review and bring together all the current information about invasive species and the impacts of climate change – packaged in a way that makes it readily available to people for planning. 2) Bring together key partners and experts in the field to review the current and potential future approaches to prioritisation for invasive species. 3) Prepare a master prioritisation/decision making framework that draws on up to date science and can be applied over time at different scales for prioritisation processes, building on the excellent frameworks that already exist. 4) Identify the mechanisms for strengthening future risk assessment procedures, infrastructure and resources at hand to tackle new threats, and respond VERY quickly if they enter the region.

Feasibility considerations

- ✓ Technical resources are available in the region, including experienced practitioners and scientists.
- ✓ There are existing institutional arrangements to work through and build on.
- ✓ We have good news stories to tell about successes and so we should be telling them.
- ✓ There is already widespread recognition of the need to focus on preventative actions and early detection of weeds.
- ✗ Changing the planning/prioritisation paradigm may meet resistance from people who have been operating in a particular way for most of their professional career. Change is not easy.
- ✗ There are existing gaps in the prioritisation process (e.g. freshwater systems).
- ✗ Technical expertise is lacking for some species (e.g. freshwater invasives) and this challenge will be exacerbated with the 'arrival' or 'awakening' of new pest and weed threats due to a changing climate.
- ✗ The sheer scale of the issue can be overwhelming and this is likely to increase with new species.
- ✗ Operations are currently fragmented, with general underutilisation of existing resources.