

Gamba grass weed advisory committee meeting #10

A summary of activities tabled at meeting 10, undertaken from 7th Dec 2022 to 6th March 2023 to progress implementation of the Weed Management Plan Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030

Time 9:00am – 2:30pm

Date: Monday, 6 March 2023

Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee members present		
Anna Boustead	Representing the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN)	AB
Susanne Casanova	Chair - Representing Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM)	SC
Romy Carey	Representing the pastoral industry	RC
Justin Dunning	Representing Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) – local government interests	JD
Dr Keith Ferdinands	Representing Northern Land Council (NLC)	KF
Louise Kean	Representing NTG – Parks and Wildlife	LK
Dr David Liddle	Representing Environment Centre Northern Territory (ECNT) / Gamba Grass Roots	DL
Dr Natalie Rossiter-Rachor	Charles Darwin University (CDU) / National Environmental Science Program (NESP)	NR-R

Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee apologies		
Shelley Haitana	Representing the Tourism Industry	SH
Sharon Jones	Representing NTG – Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL)	SJ

Other attendees present:		
Emma Burcher	A/Manager Planning and Science – Weed Management Branch (WMB)	EB
Sharon Hillen	Proposed new representative Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) – local government interests (to replace Anna Malgorzewicz)	SH
Roni Opden	Manager - Gamba Fire Mitigation Unit (GFMU)	RO
Nigel Weston	Director - Weed Management Branch (WMB)	NW

#To demonstrate progress against the [Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030](#), the objectives of the 2020 – 2030 gamba plan being implemented have been noted beside each outcome listed below.

Summary of committee member key outcomes against the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030:

Objective of plan	Key outcomes this quarter
2a, 2c, 2e, 4b	Gamba prevention in West Arnhem (A zone) (5th year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment - Collaborative support for Jawoyn Aboriginal Association rangers to remove gamba from 8 Ha of core infestation on Barnjarn

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	<p>ALT (Zone B) with additional Weeds Branch & TNRM staffing (& Edith Farms water tanker) – this area 30km N of Katherine, adjacent train line (cause of spread) & opposite Katherine rural college. Follow up imminent, weather pending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement - Attended Edith farms AGM to thank for assisting with Jawoyn project and advise about available gamba support. • Management advice/support tools – creating a gamba seasonal calendar poster (audience = all land managers) which matches up seasonal timing with gamba ecology & treatment options.
2a-2f	<p>Gamba Army Supporting coordinated cross tenure gamba management (3rd year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gamba Army progress including work in Darwin urbanised areas, Litchfield National Park and Holmes Jungle.
1a, 1b, 1c, 3a, 4a, 4b	<p>New federal funding – Managing gamba grass for biodiversity conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans/planning - Top End gamba prioritisation plan – mapping progress, Kakadu National Park gamba eradication program planning (Zone A) – planning meetings, budgeting, ops plan development & providing other support for Kakadu National Park to build a Gamba Eradication Plan document. • Surveys & treatment underway- Kakadu National Park gamba surveys & treatment (Zone A) - survey support & treatment at Gimbat (Mary River district ranges) 3 days – using heli survey to check old points and treat any detected plants, Mudginberri (Djurrubu rangers) 8 days – using 1ha resolution helicopter transect surveys over 30,000 Ha target area to detect patches, follow up treatment with helicopter, backpack and quads slung in to access sites. • Surveys & treatment planned - Telstra Tower heli survey for 3 areas across Top End, encompassing 130 towers - liaising with Weeds Branch regarding permits and support, Tiwi Land Council rangers, Daly River Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust. • Engagement - Attended Western Top End Fire meeting to advise about available gamba support (surveys & treatment) & encourage Fish River to remove gamba & undertake surveys to inform management programs (data deficient area).
1a, 2a – 2f	<p>Parks and Wildlife funding allocated under Strategic Pest Management Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litchfield National Park - aerial gamba grass control • Mary River National Park - aerial spray gamba of Wildman block • Darwin District - gamba grass control • Nitmiluk National Park - gamba grass monitoring project - undertake aerial surveys and ground validation. <p>Gamba control in Litchfield National Park in line with the Australian Government funding approved in 2022 through the Supporting Communities Manage Pest Animals and Weeds Program, see Supporting Communities Manage Pest Animals and Weeds Program - DAFF (agriculture.gov.au).</p> <p>Control work undertaken by Gamba Army at Charles Darwin NP, Casuarina Coastal Reserve, Holmes Jungle and Buffalo Creek Management Area.</p> <p>Gamba spraying as part of routine business - Litchfield, Mary River, Darwin.</p>
4b	<p>The new National Environmental Science Program (NESP) gamba grass “Synthesis of Research” webpage will be live in approximately 2 weeks. This webpage will summarise 20 years of gamba grass research including key messages from papers.</p> <p>National Environmental Science Program (NESP) Resilient Landscape project proposal ‘supporting the strategic management of invasive grasses’ submitted to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has</p>

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	been approved. This project will help to develop mapping and decision support tools for gamba grass. This project commences today for a four year period.
1a	<p>The 2023 North Australia Savanna Fire Forum was held on 21 – 23 February 2023. Reports and videos from the Conference will be published this week.</p> <p>The Savanna Fire Management Method will change the method of measuring carbon credits to a method based on a sequestration. The release of the new carbon method has been delayed.</p>

Summary of WMB and GFMU key outcomes against the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030:

Objective of plan	Key outcomes this quarter
1a-1c, 2a-2f	<p><i>Weeds Management Act 2001</i> updated legislation – live online as of 9th January 2023.</p> <p>The Gamba Action Program has now closed for this season for handing out herbicide. Spray units will still be handed out until the end of April.</p> <p>Gamba grass identification training delivered to ranger groups.</p> <p>Follow up with Darwin and Katherine Region, NAQS (Commonwealth Govt.), TNRM, Kakadu, Aboriginal Ranger Groups regarding gamba grass Class A zone eradication progress and commence register update for 2022/23.</p> <p>Liaison about gamba grass with Department of Defence, Department of Mines, Extractives Industry Association, Clean Energy Regulator, Australian Government – Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS) and Office of Threatened Species.</p>
5a	<p>425 gamba grass inspections undertaken under the <i>Weeds Management Act 2001</i> (as of 28/02/23). Follow up undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 encouragement letters • 67 advice letters • 87 warning letters • 151 orders to control. <p>Preparations in place, including statutory notices and contractor arrangements, to undertake enforced fuel reduction measures for high risk land under the <i>Bushfires Act 2016</i>. Work to commence on two parcels in March 2023.</p>