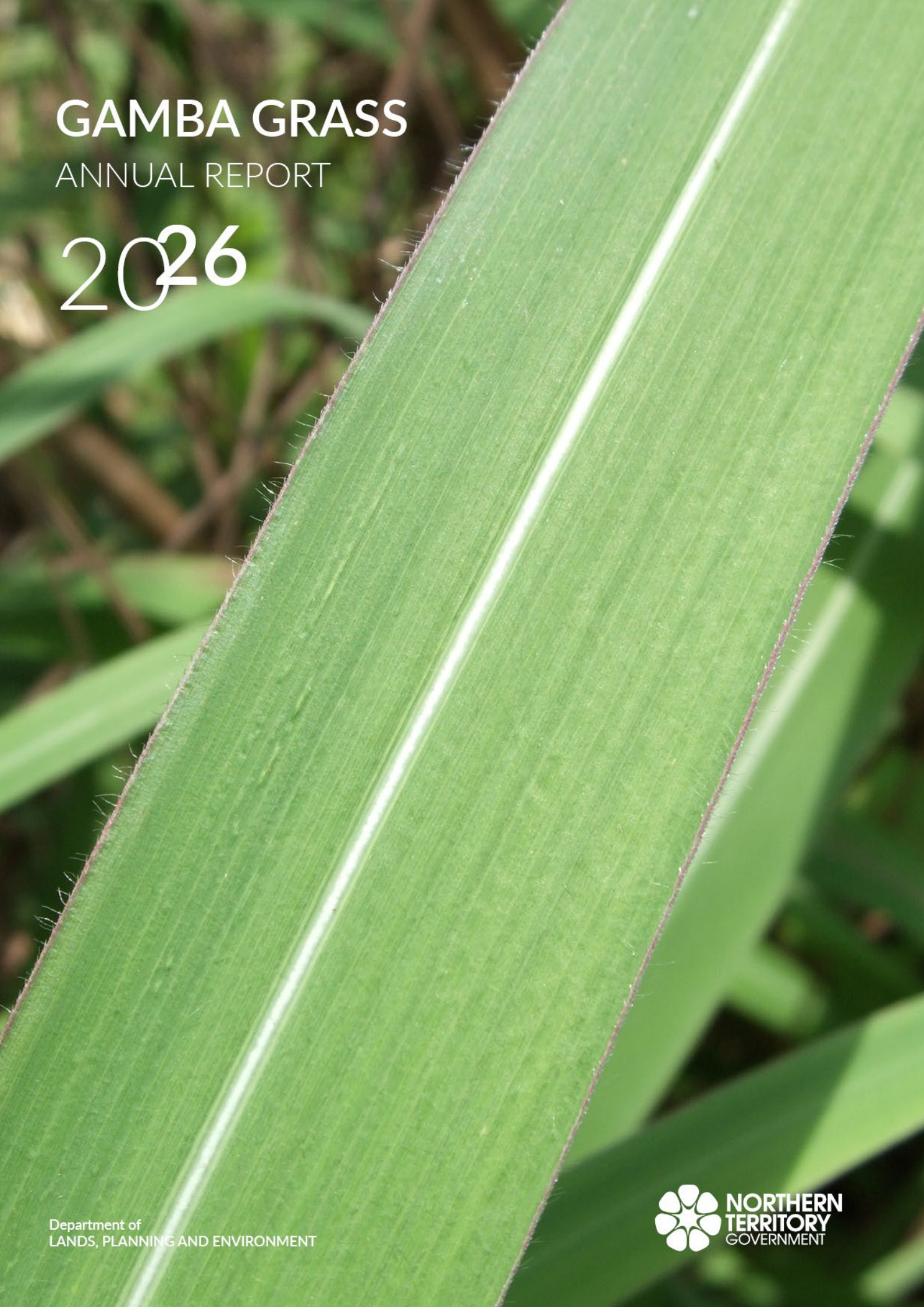


GAMBA GRASS
ANNUAL REPORT
2026

Department of
LANDS, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

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Acronyms	Full form
ASRAC	Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DLI	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure
DLPE	Department of Lands, Planning and Environment
DTH	Department of Tourism and Hospitality
GAP	Gamba Action Program
GEBC	Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation
GGMU	Gamba Grass Management Unit
GLNP	Gamba Litchfield Neighbours Project
IES	Indigenous Essential Services
MLA	Members of the Legislative Assembly
NESP	National Environmental Science Program
NLC	Northern Land Council
NT	Northern Territory
NTFES	NT Fire and Emergency Services
NTG	Northern Territory Government
TNRM	Territory Natural Resource Management
VCL	Vacant Crown Land
WAC	Weed Advisory Committee
WMB	Weed Management Branch

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1. Executive summary

The Weed Management Plan Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 (the gamba plan) was developed in 2020 as a statutory plan for managing gamba grass in the Northern Territory (NT). The gamba plan outlines strategic goals, objectives and actions to improve gamba grass management outcomes across the NT. In 2024, a review of the gamba plan was completed and the gamba plan amended to improve operability. Refer: Weed Management Plan Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 (2024 Revision). This included updates after amendments were made to the *Weeds Management Act 2001* (the Act) in January 2023. This Gamba Grass Annual Report 2026 (this report) demonstrates progress against implementation of the gamba plan and its revision, from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

The strategic goals, actions and objectives of the gamba plan are typically on track to be met. This is demonstrated throughout this report and using a colour-coded table in Appendix 1.

There continue to be three key performance indicators under Goal 1 that have made progress but with some concerns. These are:

- By July 2023, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as b) active management.
- By July 2025, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as c) monitoring phase.
- By July 2026, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as d) eradicated[1].

The Weed Management Branch (WMB) are continuing to assess and track the eradication of gamba grass across the Class A (eradication) zone. In the 2026 assessment year, a total of 3034 Gamba Grass Management Units (GGMUs) (1 ha grids) were assessed in the reporting period, comprising 1463 active GGMUs (gamba grass present), 380 GGMUs under monitoring and 1191 GGMUs locally eradicated. Australian Government funding announced in 2022 towards gamba grass management in the Class A zone, which was due to end in 2026, has now been extended into 2027. This will allow an extra year of follow-up survey and treatment effort across this zone.

There is one key performance indicator under Goal 2 with significant concerns regarding progress towards a reduction in area affected by gamba grass in target areas within the Class B zone. Key target areas have now been documented under Goal 2 of the gamba grass annual report since 2025 and gamba grass management and regulation across these target areas has been summarised. However, a robust process for measuring a reduction in gamba grass across these areas does not exist.

Key issues as well as knowledge gaps that may hinder achieving goals of the gamba plan are also documented in this report.

A key achievement in the reporting period is the work of CSIRO that has now established partnerships with collaborators across Africa and are currently undertaking native-range exploration to identify potential biocontrol agents for gamba grass. This commences an important investment towards long-term gamba grass management utilising a potential biocontrol agent. The Department of Lands, Planning and Environment (DLPE) are continuing to contribute $150,000 per year across five years towards this important research, along with other investors.

In addition, many co-ordinated gamba grass projects continue in the NT that strive to improve gamba grass management outcomes. The Gamba Action Program (GAP) is a key program. To fulfil the gamba plan requirements for an annual survey to inform implementation against the plan, a stakeholder survey was undertaken for a 14-week period in 2026 directed towards GAP participants. Results are included in this report and will be used to strengthen the GAP program.

The Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee (WAC) continues to oversee implementation of the gamba plan through regular meetings. A summary of meetings held, key items tabled at meetings and representatives forming the WAC can be found online at:
Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee | Department of Lands, Planning and Environment

[1] For more information on active management, monitoring phase, and eradication status, see glossary of Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 (2024 Revision).

2. Purpose of this report

This report has been prepared to fulfil the requirements of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 and its 2024 Revision. The gamba plan requires all performance indicators and measures to be reported annually to assess performance and to determine whether the stipulated actions are contributing towards the identified outcomes at a NT-wide level. Where issues with progress are identified, the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment will be advised.

The gamba plan requires that the WMB seek community feedback on implementation of the gamba plan. This requirement has been fulfilled for this report through:

- A Gamba Action Program (GAP) survey conducted in 2026
- WAC members and their represented stakeholders being invited to provide submissions for this report
- A range of other stakeholders being invited to provide a submission for this report.

This is the sixth annual report to be published since the gamba plan was first developed in December 2020. The reporting period for this report is from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

How to interpret this report

This report documents progress against each performance indicator in the gamba plan. An extract from the gamba plan is presented in Appendix 1 showing all goals, objectives, strategic actions, performance indicators and performance measures and how they are related.

Each performance indicator in Appendix 1 has been colour-coded representing progress against the gamba plan. Colours in Appendix 1 indicate progress made as follows:

Performance Indicators
On track
Progress but some concerns
Significant concerns with progress

3. About the gamba plan

The Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 was finalised and approved by the previous Minister for Environment in December 2020. The gamba plan was developed in accordance with the *Weeds Management Act 2001* (the Act) and sets out the legal requirements for managing gamba grass by land owners and occupiers in the NT. The gamba plan outlines strategic goals, objectives and actions to improve gamba grass management outcomes across the NT.

The gamba plan was drafted by Snappy Gum Consulting and the WMB in collaboration with the WAC, which was appointed by the former Minister for Environment in April 2020. In 2024, a three year review was completed by the WMB in conjunction with the WAC, and the gamba plan was amended to improve operability and undertake updates after legislative amendments were made to the Act in January 2023. The WAC continues to oversee implementation of the gamba plan by all stakeholders involved in its implementation.

Gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*) is a declared weed under section 7 of the Act and has a split classification as a Class A and B weed for different areas of the NT (see Figure 1).

- The gamba grass Class A zone means gamba grass is to be eradicated in all areas of this zone.
- The gamba grass Class B zone means gamba grass growth and spread is to be controlled.

These areas are based on the known distribution and density of gamba grass. As such, different goals and objectives apply to these zones to limit the impacts of gamba grass on the natural environment, life, property and infrastructure.

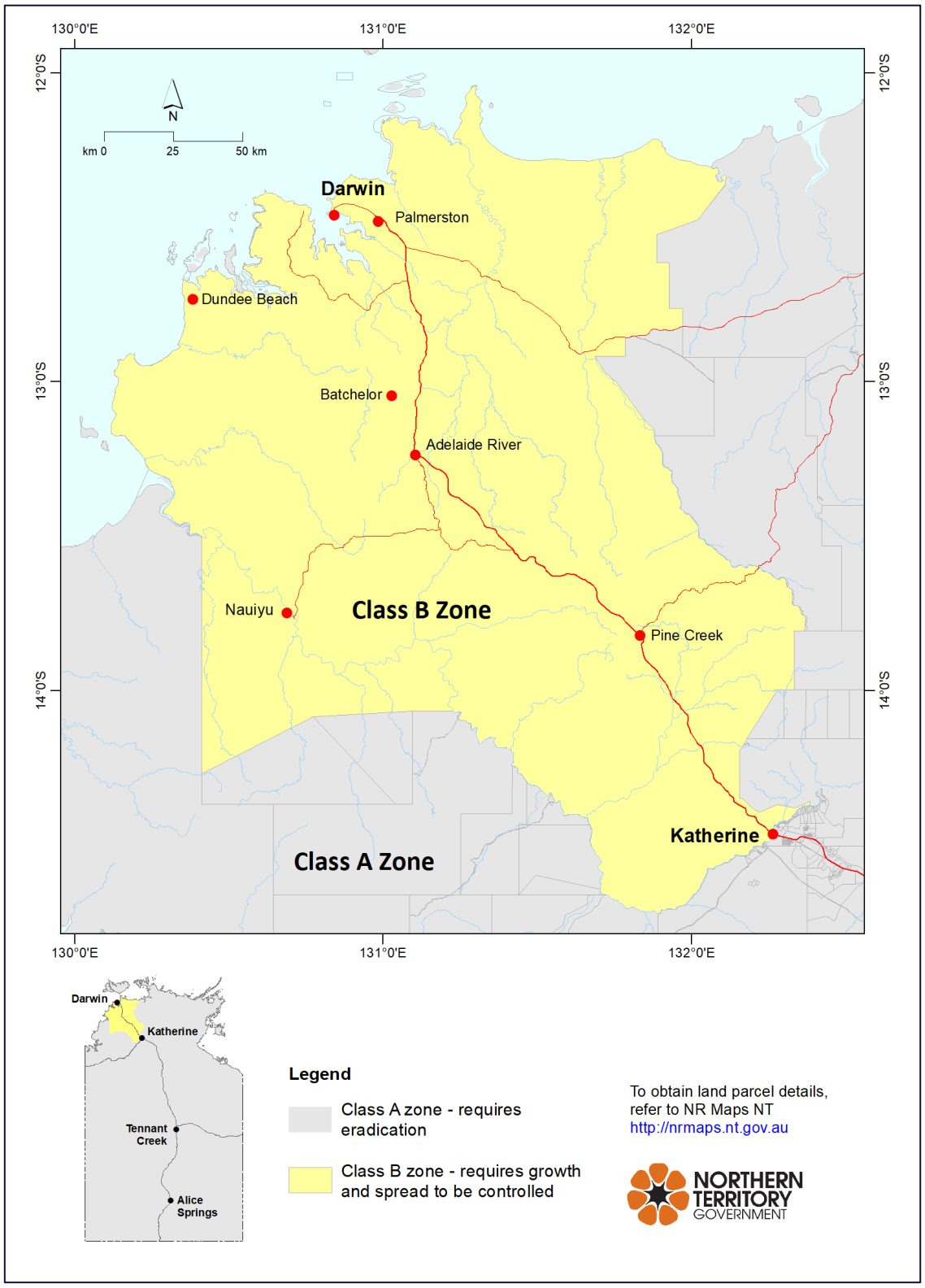


Figure 1: Gamba grass management zones: Class A (Eradication) and Class B (Growth and spread to be controlled).

4. Plan progress

4.1. Community survey on the Gamba Action Program (Class B zone)

The GAP is a herbicide assistance program delivered by the WMB annually during the gamba growing season. During the 2025/26 season, the WMB conducted a survey for 14 weeks during January to April 2026. A total of 212 submissions were received. This year's survey sought feedback on the utilisation and effectiveness of the GAP in assisting landholders to manage gamba grass on their properties in the Class B zone. Key findings are below:

- 75% of participants collected herbicide for blocks under 3 ha, with 23% of collections for blocks over 3 ha. (2% of participants selected 'other' and did not select a block size that they manage).
- 6% of participants reported having just single plants on their property, 73% reported having only scattered and isolated plants, 17% of participants stated they had a lot of gamba grass covering up to half of their block and 5% of participants reported that more than half of their block as being covered in gamba grass.
- 14% of participants have not been managing gamba grass for long, as they are new to their property. 49% of properties have been managing gamba grass for 2 to 5 years, 21% of properties for 5 to 10 years and 17% of properties for more than 10 years.
- 88% of participants reported they are aware of their legal requirements for managing gamba grass.
- 22% of participants reported they were collecting the GAP herbicide for their first year. 55% of participants reported they have been collecting GAP herbicide for 2 to 5 years, 18% of participants for 5 to 10 years and 5% for 10 years.
- 91% of participants find the GAP helpful in managing gamba grass on their property with 48% treating every plant every year, 37% getting to most of the gamba for treatment, 10% managing to their legal requirements and 5% not able to get on top of gamba grass management at their property.
- 93% of participants reported that they feel confident managing gamba grass on their property.

4.2. Key issues

The WAC discussed and submitted to the 2025 Gamba Grass Annual Report the following key issues that may hinder achieving goals of the gamba plan. The WAC state that these key issues remain relevant.

<u>Resourcing and capacity</u>

- Gamba grass is being found in new areas and the WMB are not resourced to respond and regulate gamba grass in all areas.
- Operational and commercial capacity for weed management in the NT fluctuates.
- Bigger and more pressing weed threats require WMB resourcing / landholder resourcing.

<u>Class A zone compliance</u>

- The current gamba grass compliance framework is for the Class B zone, not the Class A zone.
- Timeframes for building relationships with new stakeholders is impacting compliance outcomes.
- Whether there is political appetite for compliance in the Class A zone, including the gamba grass permits.

<u>Gamba spread</u>

- Increase in roadside gamba grass spread.
- Potential spread of gamba from the Class B zone to the Class A zone.
- Challenges with contractor management as a factor in gamba grass spread, particularly along rail and road corridors.
- Human activities, such as 4WD use, hunting, and construction material movement, contributing to spread.

Program agility and responsiveness

- The Gamba Army is no longer resourced and the program has finished.
- An ongoing program that has the agility of the Gamba Army is required so that work across multiple tenures can occur quickly.
- Risks of 60-month contractor agreements compared to previous shorter-term contracts for roads and vacant Crown land (VCL), which may not allow incorporation of new areas for long periods.

Research

- The potential for gamba grass to develop glyphosate tolerance over time, limiting control options.

Economic impacts

- Fire impacts on the economy caused by gamba grass fires are not being considered a significant risk.

Community Advocacy

- The fall away of community interest and advocacy for gamba grass management.



Photo 1 Bushfires NT responding to a gamba grass fire. Photo showing the severity of the fire. (Photo provided by Bushfires NT)

5. Progress against goals in the gamba plan

Goal 1 - Eradicate gamba grass from the Class A zone

Objective:

1a: Understand the distribution of gamba grass in the Class A zone.

Strategic Action "By July 2021, design a mapping and monitoring program for the Class A zone. By July 2021, commence the mapping program in the Class A zone. By July 2022, complete the mapping program and continue monitoring in the Class A zone."

Performance indicator: "By July 2022, the extent of gamba grass has been assessed for land parcels identified in the monitoring and mapping program."

A Gamba grass mapping and monitoring program for Class A (eradication zone) has been developed.

The objectives of this program aims to determine the extent of gamba grass across the Class A zone on properties already known to have gamba grass and to track the progress towards eradication in this zone.

Progress towards eradication is measured by the WMB through a yearly assessment. The assessment of gamba grass in the Class A zone in this report was undertaken between 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026 (the assessment year). Any gamba grass data collected after 31 May 2026 will be included in next year's assessment.

Progress towards eradication is tracked through Gamba Grass Management Units (GGMUs) that are assigned a status of 'active', 'monitoring' or 'locally eradicated'. The area of a GGMU is approximately 1 ha (100 m x 100 m) and may span across individual properties and roads and must include at least one gamba grass plant. During the 2026 assessment, a status has been assigned to GGMUs as follows:

- 'Active' status has been assigned:
  - For any GGMU which was previously 'active' and has not met the requirements to change to 'monitoring', or
  - For any GGMU containing new gamba grass records in the 2026 assessment year.
- 'Monitoring' status has been assigned:
  - For any GGMU which was previously 'monitoring', has not had any gamba grass recorded in the 2026 assessment year and has not met the requirements to change status to 'locally eradicated'.
  - For any GGMU 'active' in the 2025 assessment where:
    - The GGMU has been surveyed for gamba grass in the 2026 assessment year (1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026), and
    - No gamba grass was found, and
    - At least 12 months have passed between the last gamba grass detection (in a previous assessment year) and the most recent gamba grass survey.
- 'Locally eradicated' status has been assigned:
  - For any GGMU which was previously 'locally eradicated' that has not had any gamba grass recorded in the 2026 assessment year.
  - For any GGMU that was assigned a 'monitoring' status in the 2025 assessment where:
    - The GGMU has been surveyed during the 2026 assessment year (1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026), and
    - No gamba grass was found, and
    - At least 12 months have passed since the survey that changed the status of the GGMU to 'monitoring.'

Circumstances that trigger changes between phases that are an exception to the above rules are included in detail in the Gamba grass mapping and monitoring program for Class A (eradication zone).

All land in the Class A zone with gamba grass records will continue to be evaluated to determine the current presence or absence of gamba grass. Evaluation is being conducted through a number of methods, including:

- Field surveys conducted through Australian Government funding of $9.8 million directed towards gamba grass in the Class A zone.
- Field surveys conducted by the affected landholder and/or WMB.
- Letters / survey forms sent to landholders asking to report on gamba grass presence / absence.

The assessment of the eradication of gamba grass excludes the GGMUs within the one remaining permit area. This is because gamba grass is permitted to grow in the permit area and is not included in the eradication program. This permit area is closely monitored and audited by the WMB in conjunction with the landholders.

Assessment of Gamba Grass Management Units

The WMB has completed the assessment of GGMUs for the 2026 assessment year for the gamba grass Class A zone. There was a total of 3034 GGMUs assessed for the 2026 assessment year. Of these, 1463 (48%) were assessed as 'active', 380 (13%) were assessed as 'monitoring', and 1191 (39%) were assessed as 'locally eradicated'. A comparison of the total GGMUs assessed as 'active', 'monitoring' and 'locally eradicated' from 2022 to 2026 is presented in Figure 2. The total GGMUs for each year between 2008 and 2026 is presented in Figure 3. The increase in GGMUs from the 2025 to the 2026 assessment year is 707 units. This is demonstrated in Figure 4, which also demonstrates a comparison of the total GGMUs assessed from 2022 to 2026 against the proportion of 'active' units for each year. An increase in GGMUs may be attributed to the significant survey effort being undertaken over the reporting year made available through the Australian Government funded gamba grass projects.

Any data discrepancies in total GGMU counts in this report to previous years can be attributed to the reassessment of previous year's GGMU data when undertaking the 2026 assessment. For example, where new data has been obtained for previous years, this may trigger a change to a GGMU status for previous years.

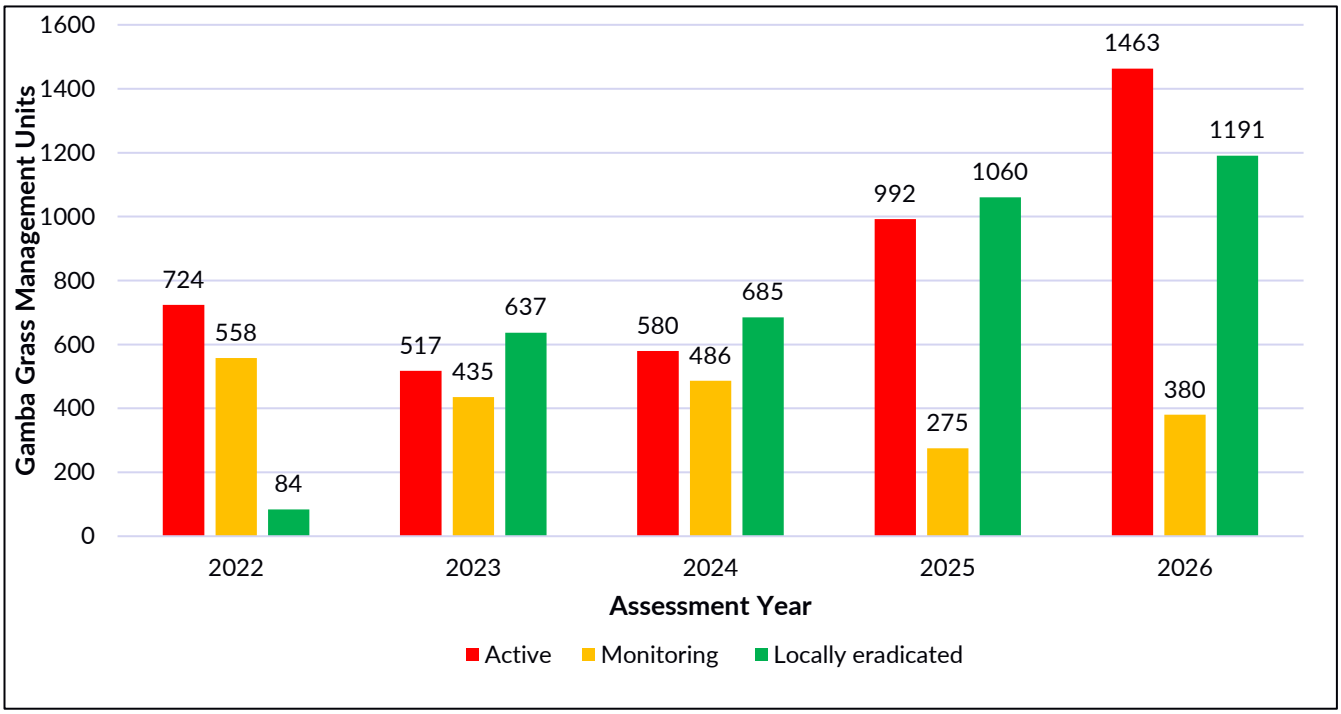


Figure 2: Assessment of GGMUs across the Class A zone from 2022 - 2026.

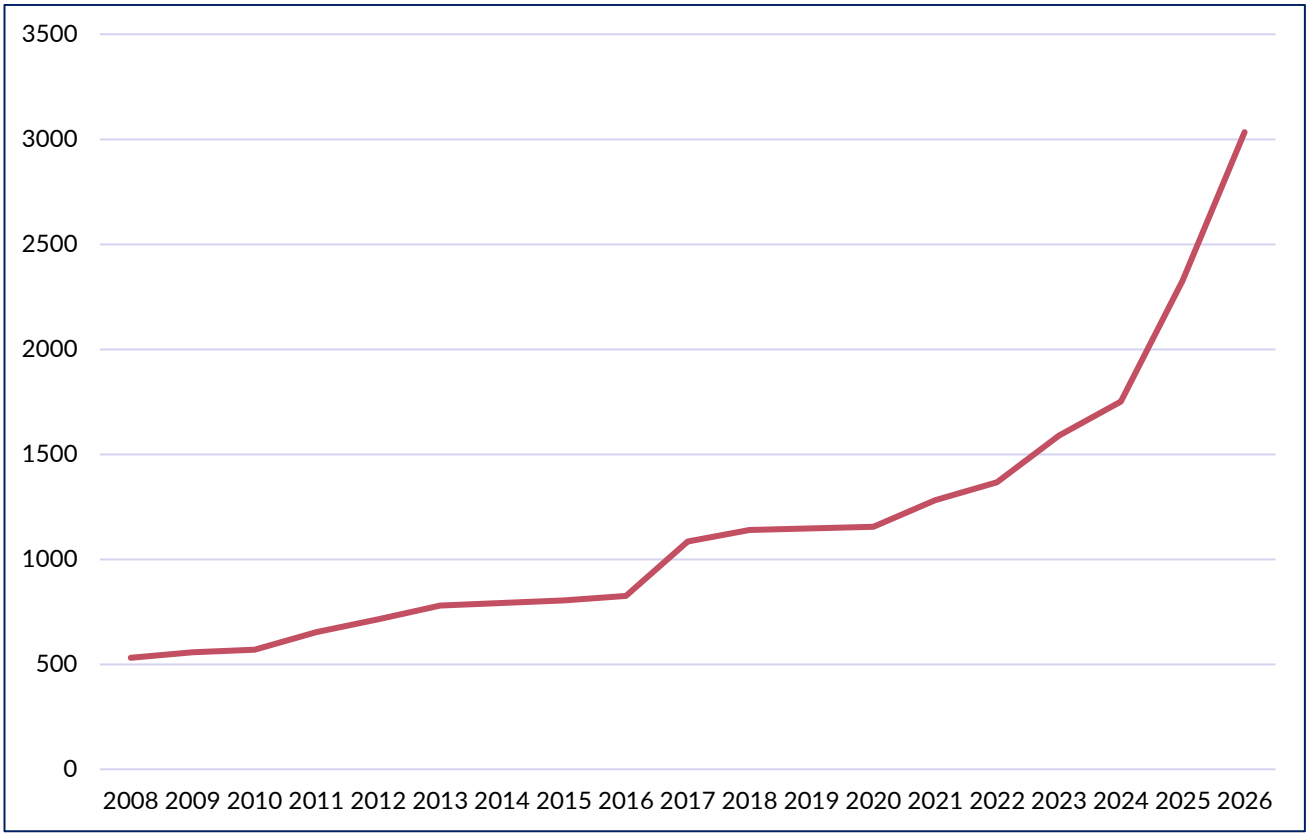


Figure 3: Total GGMUs in the Class A zone since 2008. All records (noting that a record could be a single plant, or a patch) prior to 2008 are included in the 2008 value. This reflects a significant increase in survey effort.

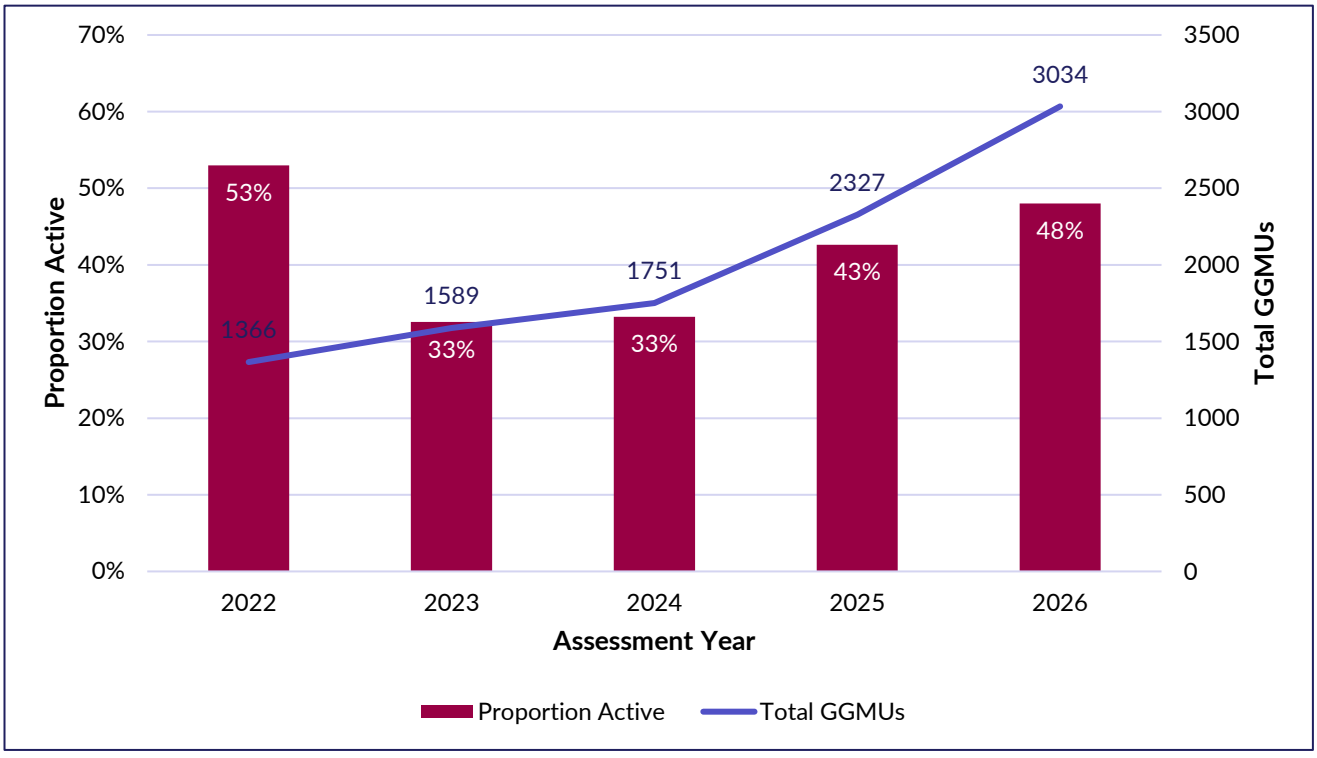


Figure 4: Comparison of the total number of GGMUs assessed against the proportion of 'active' units for 2022 – 2026.

Assessment of gamba grass management units across different regions of the Class A zone

The WMB has also assessed the GGMUs in the Class A zone across eight different regions to demonstrate progress towards eradication of gamba grass at a finer scale. The eight regions are shown in Figure 5 along with the eradication status of gamba grass at a 10 km scale. In addition, Figure 6 presents the 2026 assessment of GGMUs across each of the eight regions that are classed as 'active', 'monitoring' and 'locally eradicated'.

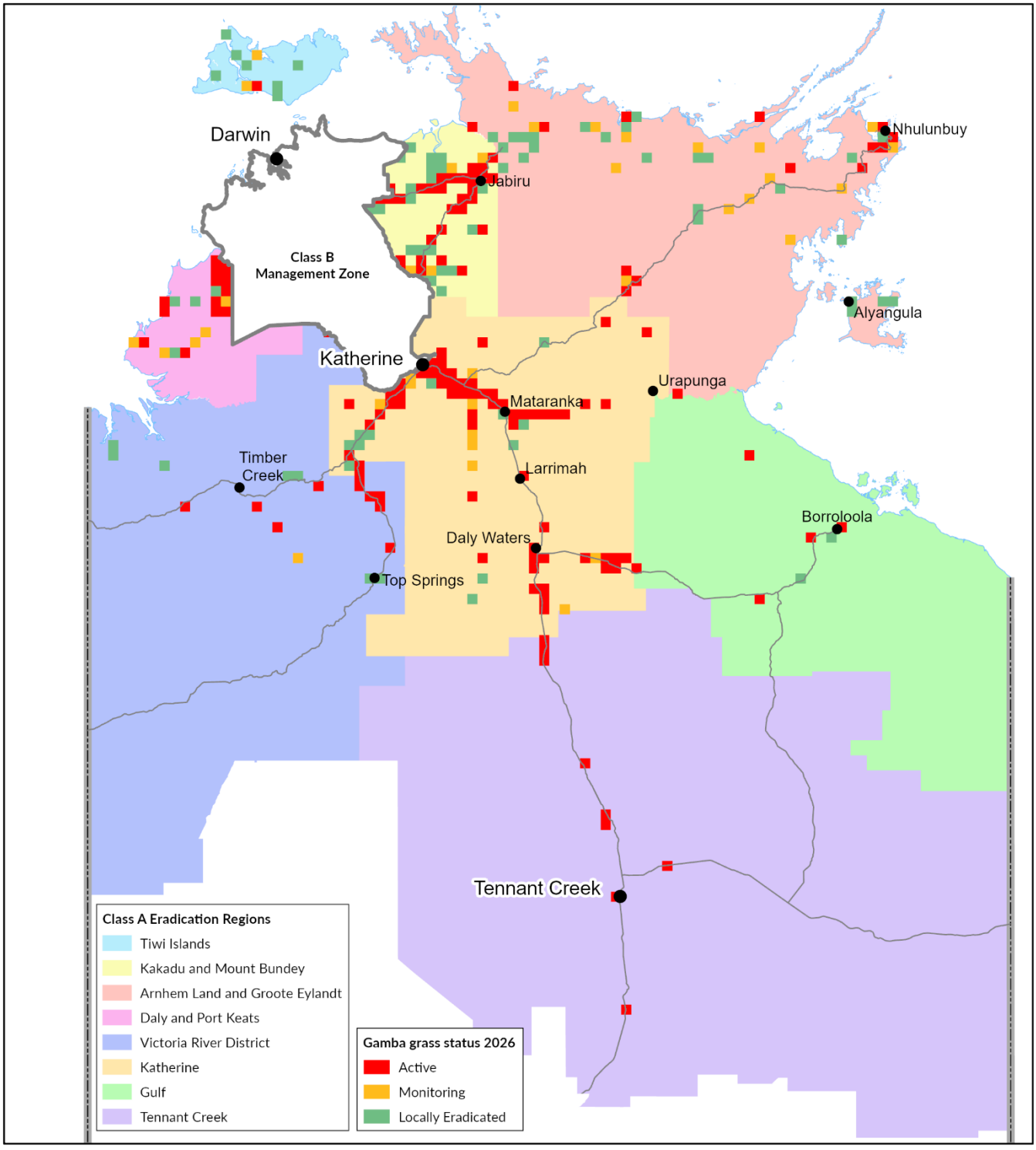


Figure 5: NT Gamba Grass Eradication Regions and the distribution of 2026 gamba grass records using 0.1 degree squared grids (~ 10 x 10 km). The 10 km grid status is based on the most conservative value (i.e. active is more conservative than monitoring) of all the 1 ha GGMUs within each 10 km grid.

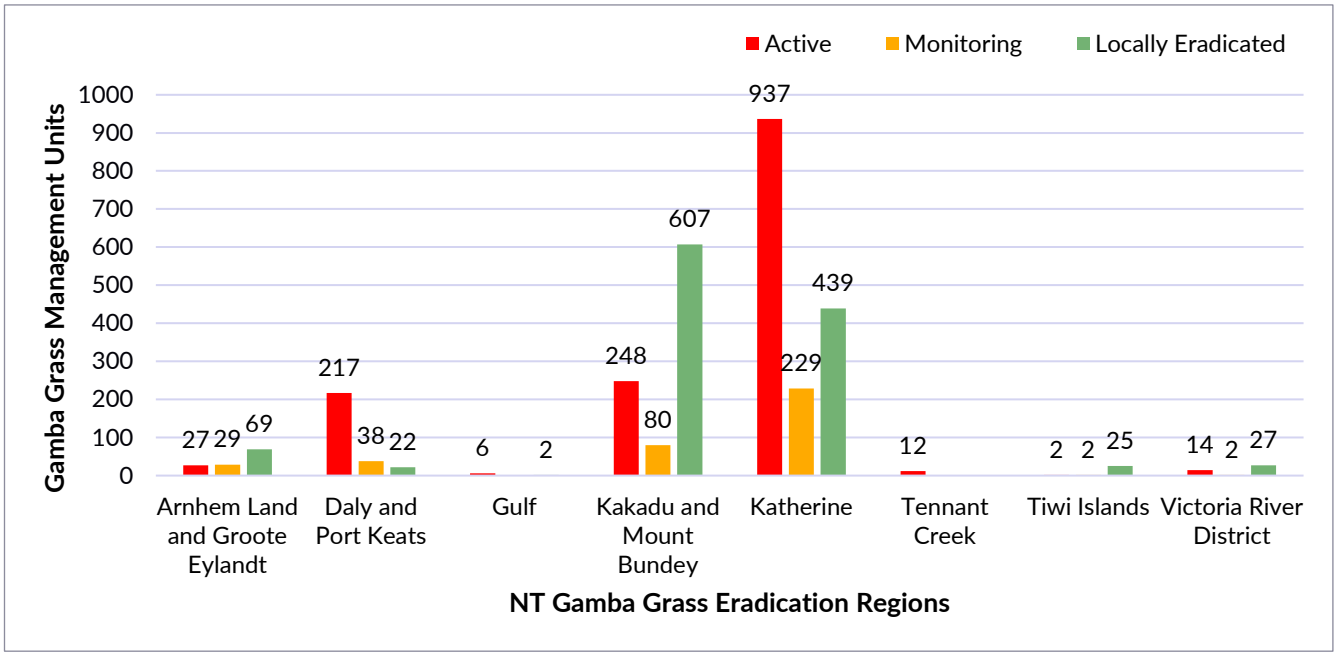


Figure 6: Total GGMUs assessed as 'Active', 'Monitoring' and 'Locally Eradicated' for each of the NT Gamba Grass Eradication Regions in 2026.

Assessment of gamba grass across roads and highways in the Class A zone

A total of 22 different roads and highways in the Class A zone have recorded gamba grass points based on all weed records in the WMB Corporate Weeds Dataset. The GGMUs containing these points have been assessed in 2026 as either 'active', 'monitoring' or 'locally eradicated'. This data is included in the regional assessment shown above in Figure 6 and also presented separately for roads and highways as shown below in Figure 7.

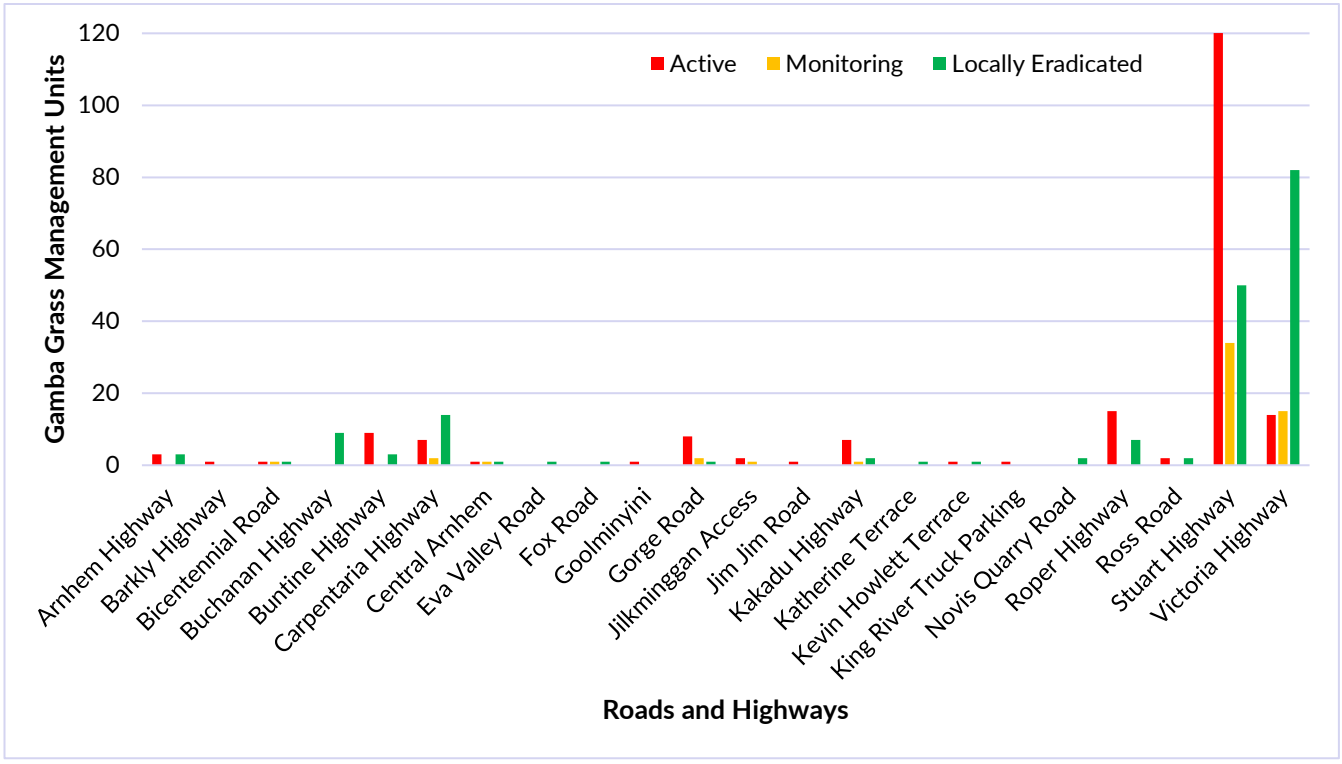


Figure 7: Total GGMUs for Highways and Roads in the Class A zone (2026 assessment).

Objectives:

1b: By July 2023, all gamba grass in the Class A zone is under an active eradication program and all gamba grass plants have been destroyed (unless under permit).

1c: By July 2026, all gamba grass in the Class A zone is eradicated (unless under permit).

Strategic action: "Individuals, land owners and occupiers implement required actions as per Section 4. Assess eradication status for land parcels."

Performance indicators:

"By July 2023, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as b) active management."

"By July 2025, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as c) monitoring phase."

"By July 2026, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as d) eradicated."

As can be seen from the results presented in this report, these performance indicators have not been met. However, a mapping and monitoring program and eradication register for the gamba grass Class A zone was established in 2021 to track progress towards eradication. Annual assessment results have been presented in gamba grass annual reports since 2023 and an up to date assessment of GGMUs and individual roads for the reporting period has been provided in this report. An individual assessment against each property has not been included in this year's report as it is considered Figure 2 through to 6 are more useful in demonstrating the active, monitoring or locally eradicated status across the Class A zone.

Significant Australian Government funding has gone into gamba grass survey and control across the Class A zone since 2022. This funding has led to substantial gains in follow-up control of gamba grass across this zone, but has also resulted in new detections, setting back timeframes towards eradication. The distribution of gamba grass in the landscape and the job of eradication is now known to be larger than expected in 2020, with gamba grass detections ongoing through significant survey effort. Progress towards eradication continues to be tracked.

Objective:

1d: By July 2026, a review of the permit system pertaining to gamba grass is completed.

Strategic action: "Existing permits that allow grazing of gamba grass in the Class A zone are reassessed to ensure they are appropriate."

Performance indicator: "Review of permit system is completed as it pertains to gamba grass."

During 2025/26, the Weed Management Branch (WMB) completed a review of the gamba grass permit system, as required by objective 1d of the gamba plan. The review was undertaken of existing permits that allow pre-existing gamba grass to be retained for grazing in the gamba grass Class A (eradication) zone. Noting, there is no requirement in the Class B zone to hold a permit to use gamba grass for grazing. At the start of this review, there were two remaining permits allowing gamba grass to be retained for grazing in the Class A zone. One of these was relinquished during the review.

The review included consultation with the WAC, WMB staff, the remaining gamba grass permit holder, Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association, Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project, the Katherine Regional Weed Working Group and the broader community through a Have Your Say survey.

The review considered stakeholder submissions, permit holder interest in relinquishing their permits with GEBC Project support, the use of a bond or prescribed fee to use a declared weed, transparency of permits, regulation of annual permit audits, compliance across the rest of the gamba grass Class A zone, as well as alternative tools to support gamba grass regulation across the rest of the Class A zone (non-permit holders).

As a result of GEBC Project liaison during the review, one permit holder agreed to relinquish their permit based on GEBC assistance being provided to eradicate any remaining gamba from their permit area during the term of their project.

The review also had to consider new gamba grass infestations found as a result of GEBC Project survey effort, that now requires some form of regulation by the WMB, which could include a number of mechanisms under the Act, including the use of a permit. There was a view that permit holders should represent a comparatively lower regulatory priority than the rest of the gamba grass Class A zone, as they are subject to conditions and routine oversight compared with the rest of this zone. However, the WAC were generally not supportive of any further permits being issued in the Class A zone, stating for example, there are other regulatory alternatives and that granting further permits may create a perception that gamba grass is endorsed which could undermine broader compliance and control efforts in other areas.

The review also found that the introduction of a bond or prescribed fee is not supported by the DLPE at this time, annual permit audits could take on a more consistent and rigorous approach and the phase out of permits is not recommended by the WMB at this time.

As a result of this review, the remaining permit holder is permitted to continue to operate under the existing permit for cattle grazing purposes, pending compliance with permit conditions and ongoing regulatory oversight by the WMB. Other recommendations of the review include:

- Permit conditions for gamba grass will be documented in annual gamba grass reports for transparency (refer Table 1), noting no identifying information will be included.
- Non-compliance with permit conditions needs to be clearly documented after audit inspections and the nature of the non-compliance (low or high risk).
- The WMB compliance focus for the Class A zone prioritises efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of gamba grass within and into this zone.
- Where there is substantive reason for non-renewal of a permit, such as repeated high-risk non-compliance, the WMB may recommend non-renewal to the Minister.
- If considering the use of a permit in the Class A zone for any new infestations, the WMB will need to consider factors including concerns raised by the WAC, site specific landholder details and gamba grass use, available gamba grass data and risks to the surrounding Class A zone and how to address these risks. It is also proposed that any such applications be referred to the Minister for final approval, rather than the WMB Director who has delegation for such decisions.

Table 1: Gamba grass permit conditions for permit holders in the Class A zone.

Conditions
The Permit Holder shall obtain all (if any) other approvals and permissions that might be required under a law in force in the Northern Territory in respect of conducting the permitted activity or complying with a requirement of this permit.
The Permit Holder shall not transfer the permit (and no transfer shall be effective) without the prior written approval of the Director.
The Permit Holder shall ensure a copy of the permit is available for inspection, upon request by a Weed Management Officer at all times.
Notwithstanding the permit expiry date above, the permit may at any time be revoked or amended by the Minister or his delegate.
Reports and annual returns required under this permit are to be submitted to the Director, Weed Management Branch, email: weedinfo@nt.gov.au.
The Permit Holder shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that any employee, agent or contractor of the Permit Holder involved in the conduct of the permitted activity: • is suitably qualified to do so; and • is aware of, and complies with, the conditions of this permit.
The Permit Holder shall ensure that appropriate vehicle and equipment hygiene practices are implemented in respect of any vehicle or equipment used in connection with the permitted activity or in complying with a condition of this permit.
Special Conditions
All gamba grass plants outside the permitted area must be reported and destroyed within 14 days.
Gamba grass must not be baled or removed from the permitted area.
The boundary of the permit area is to be maintained to enable vehicle access.
By 31 May 2026 (date updated annually), the permit holder must provide the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment with a report detailing all survey and control activities conducted to comply with the requirements of this permit during the preceding wet season (October-April inclusive). The report must include: • A completed surveillance record sheet – Attachment B (of the permit reporting form) • Gamba grass control and survey activities completed using the NT WeedMate app. • Survey of historical gamba grass locations outside of the permitted area completed. Absent data to be recorded where gamba grass is no longer present. • Any other matter specified by the Director Weed Management or a Weed Management Officer.

An audit of the one remaining permit in the Class A zone was conducted during the reporting period in May 2026. The permit holder was found to be non-compliant with two permit conditions. The permit holder was given the opportunity to provide a response to the non-compliant status and stated that works were 'significantly affected by the exceptionally large wet season' and 'access to the area was extremely limited for an extended period'. The permit holder submitted their required annual report by 31 May 2026 and the non-compliance is considered low risk.

Objective:

1e: "Review the Class A and B zone boundaries to improve the protection of areas in the Class B management zone that are free of gamba grass."

Strategic action: "By July 2026, review the Class A and Class B zones to ensure the Class A zone captures areas that are free of gamba grass and where eradication is considered feasible."

Performance indicator: "By July 2026, revised Class A and B zones are declared if recommended by the review process"

During 2025/26, the WMB completed a review of the gamba grass Class A and Class B zone boundary, as required by objective 1e of the gamba plan. The review included consultation with key stakeholders including the WAC, government agencies, industry groups, Aboriginal organisations, local government, Australian Government gamba grass funded projects, landholders along the boundary and the broader community through a Have Your Say survey.

The review considered boundary alignment issues, stakeholder submissions, regulatory and operational implications, available gamba grass distribution data and the objectives of the review. It also considered the ongoing Australian Government funded GEBC Project and Kakadu Gamba Eradication Project data, which continues to improve understanding of gamba grass distribution within the Class A zone and has provided new data not available when this objective was developed in 2020.

The review found that, while several areas were suggested for inclusion in the Class A zone, there was insufficient evidence and WMB resourcing to support boundary changes at this time. Key considerations included:

- Limited gamba grass distribution data across the Class B zone.
- Limited WMB regulatory and operational capacity to regulate boundary changes.
- Proposals that did not align with the current zoning framework, which is based on the feasibility of eradication (for example, community feedback to include the entire NT in the Class A zone).
- Proposals that would create regulatory challenges, such as the inclusion of national parks within the Class A zone, resulting in fragmented Class A zone areas.
- The implications of a changed zone would also alter the location of the 500m gamba grass free buffer zone required adjacent the Class A zone, and would need to be carefully considered in any boundary changes, which is to ensure the feasibility of buffer requirements could be met.

As a result, the review recommends that no changes be made to the existing Class A and Class B zone boundary, aside from minor alignment corrections to remove mapping gaps and ensure all land is assigned to a designated zone. The review also recommends:

- That findings from the GEBC and Kakadu Gamba Eradication projects be considered during development of the next gamba plan.
- Selected areas are surveyed by the GEBC Project team, pending available resources, while funding remains available.
- That further survey work be undertaken by landholders adjoining the Class A zone and evidence gathered showing the land is gamba free, or relatively gamba grass free, to support any future boundary reviews.
- That stakeholders, such as smaller local government areas, be encouraged to voluntarily promote their own gamba grass eradication areas, noting that these are not bound by the gamba plan.
- The WMB consider how classifications are applied in relation to containment and eradication areas, and how these areas are regulated through statutory weed management plans.

Goal 2 – Contain and control gamba grass by actively managing infestations across the Class B zone and preventing spread into new areas

Objectives:

2a: Reduce seed production, 2b: Implement weed hygiene measures to reduce gamba grass seed spread, 2c: Reduce gamba grass outliers at a land parcel and landscape scale, 2d: Prevent gamba grass spreading into clean areas, 2e: Reduce gamba grass abundance and density in the Class B zone, 2f: Reduce gamba grass presence around landholder infrastructure, 2g: Understand the distribution of gamba grass in the Class B zone.

Strategic action: "Land owners, occupiers and all users of land implement required actions as per Section 3 and 4."

Performance indicator: "An annual compliance program is developed and implemented to assess compliance with this plan and compliance action is taken against properties not complying."

In the Class B (control) zone, there is the potential for gamba grass to be present on many thousands of land parcels. As such, a WMB gamba grass compliance program was developed consisting of a widespread property inspection regime that was developed following aerial survey mapping undertaken in 2016. This compliance program originated with the key purpose of protecting lives and infrastructure assets from wildfires, working collaboratively with Bushfires NT and the NT Fire and Rescue Service, and focusing on the most populated areas of the Class B zone. For each of the past 5 years, the WMB has committed to inspecting 1,100 properties per annum through the gamba grass compliance program in the Darwin rural area.

The compliance program has continued to evolve each year. The compliance focus has been re-evaluated over the reporting period to focus on four themes outlined below. Focus areas will continue to be re-evaluated annually.

1. Weed spread prevention:

- Developing closer partnerships with roads and rail corridor managers.
- Targeted site inspections in Darwin and Palmerston industrial areas, prioritising parcels where there is a key risk of gamba-contaminated goods or machinery leaving the area.

2. Keeping clean areas clean:

- Compliance inspections across Wagait Community Council Area and assessment around the Pine Creek area to determine gamba grass-free locations, and threats to those clean areas.

3. Containment and density reduction:

- Targeted compliance inspections across the Darwin rural area (largely the NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services Emergency Response Area) which are generally less than 3 ha blocks.
- Targeted compliance inspections across Darwin and Palmerston blocks under 3 ha that are required to remove all gamba grass.

4. Reducing the impacts of gamba grass:

- Targeted compliance inspections in the Bushfires NT Northern Fire Protection Zone (larger blocks) including Darwin River, Southport and Coomalie Community Council Area.
- Collaborate with Bushfires NT to complement firebreaks and fuel reduction programs on properties over 3 ha in the Northern Fire Protection Zone.
- Engaging with the public through the Gamba Litchfield Neighbours Project (GLNP), field days, markets, communications and responding to complaints.

WMB compliance results (Class B zone)

During the 2025/26 wet season, a total of 1617 compliance inspections were undertaken by the WMB for the Class B zone. Inspections were undertaken in the areas outlined above with summary results shown in Table 2. Table 2 also outlines a summary of inspections that have progressed to compliance orders and penalty infringement notices being issued. It should be noted that a large component of the compliance program is education and support. Progression to a penalty infringement notice only occurs after education and assistance has been fully explored. Education is delivered to landholders on gamba grass identification, control methods and legal requirements through various methods, and free assistance is offered through the GAP program.

Table 2: Class B zone compliance property inspection results and issued penalty infringement notices

Percentage	Compliance result
23%	Properties previously non-compliant that were inspected and have been removed from this year's high priority list due to being compliant upon inspection.
44%	Properties inspected appeared to have attempted to manage gamba grass, with limited success or properties new to the compliance program. These landholders received a letter of advice with information on best practice gamba grass control and support available through the GAP.
33%	Properties inspected scored highly enough to result in authorised officer orders being issued, requiring the landholder to rectify non-compliance. Of these orders: • 78% - met their management requirements after being informed of non-compliance or showed significant progress towards compliance. • 18% - received a warning after some work had been done but not to the legislative standard • 4% - of landholders failed to make a reasonable effort to meet management requirements and were notified of an intended infringement.

Katherine

The town of Katherine is located across both the Class A and B zones.

The focus for compliance in this area during the reporting period has been on the Class A zone, the results of which are documented above under Goal 1.

Strategic action: "Land owners, occupiers and all users of land implement required actions as per Section 3 and 4."

Performance indicator: "By July 2024 and annually afterwards there is an improvement in gamba grass management as evidenced by an improvement in parcel compliance score."

Parcel-based risk scores have continued to be collected for the Class B zone compliance properties during 2025/26. Results are presented in Tables 3 and 4. These scores inform targeted enforcement and are used to measure the broader change in parcel risk scores over time, which may indicate the effectiveness of awareness and enforcement approaches on influencing landholder behaviours. During the 2025/26 season, the overall compliance risk scores for the Darwin rural Emergency Response Area improved. The trends in Table 3 and 4 have been measured as a result of enforcement action.

Table 3: Overall compliance risk scores for rural properties

Total Percentage	Compliance result
68%	Land showed an improved parcel compliance score, indicating improved gamba grass management.
29%	Parcel compliance scores remained unchanged.
3%	Compliance scores worsened, indicating an increase in gamba grass hazard.

Table 4: Overall compliance risk scores for Darwin and Palmerston

Total Percentage	Compliance result
48%	Land showed an improved parcel compliance score, indicating improved gamba grass management.
40%	Parcel compliance scores remained unchanged.
12%	Compliance scores worsened, indicating an increase in gamba grass hazard.



Photo 2: Gamba grass observed during WMB compliance inspections



Photo 3: WMB compliance officer standing beside gamba grass

Strategic action: "Land owners, occupiers and all users of land implement required actions as per Section 3 and 4."

Performance indicator: "Reduction in area affected by gamba grass in target areas."

A list of target areas has been defined by the WAC in 2025 to assess this performance indicator. Vacant Crown land has also been added as a target area in this year's report.

Target areas have been defined as:

1. Transport corridors - roads and rail
2. Vacant Crown land (excluding areas under lease or licence to other entities)
3. Residential and business areas – e.g. in Darwin and Palmerston (as the whole area is at threat from gamba grass)
4. Areas with conservation values – e.g. NTG parks and reserves, Sites of Conservation Significance, places with threatened species
5. <3 ha blocks
6. Darwin rural area.

Land manager submissions are included below to demonstrate containment and reduction efforts across target areas. This information is provided, in the absence of a methodology to measure 'reductions' of gamba grass across target areas.

Target Area 1: Transport Corridors – Roads and Rail

Department of Logistics and Infrastructure (DLI) - Darwin

Gamba Grass Control within Road Corridors

On 23 January 2024, Sterling NT were awarded a contract for T23-1696 - Darwin Region - Road Reserves - Weed Control for a period of 36-months valued $4.19 million (including GST).

This contract was split into four separate parts:

- Part 1: Darwin and Arnhem
- Part 2: Kakadu and Daly River
- Part 3: Batchelor and Douglas Daly
- Part 4: Cox Peninsula and Port Keats.

Annual weed management and vegetation control around roadside furniture is carried out during the wet season. The program targets declared weed species within a 0–15 m zone from the road edge. Vegetation control around roadside furniture is performed in accordance with the DLI Standard Specification for Civil Maintenance.

The primary method of control is direct herbicide application to the target vegetation. Vegetation control is restricted to periods when plants are actively growing, typically after the onset of the wet season.

In the 2025/26 weed treatment season, all Northern Territory Government (NTG) managed roads received two treatment rounds between December and May, where access was available, covering approximately 2450 kilometres of road reserve, and an area of more than 7300 hectares.

Up to 9 spray teams operated across the road network during this period. Over 3,400 individual infestation sites were treated at least twice, including more than 3000 sites specifically targeting gamba grass. All treatment activities were documented using GPS logs, geo-tagged and time-stamped photos, and electronic logbook entries for each spray unit refill.

Records from DLI's GIS software indicate over 30,000 litres of mixed herbicide was applied throughout the season. This is less than half the volume applied the previous year and highlights the smaller plants being targeted in the slashed area between the road edge and tree line in our efforts to comply with the management plan for gamba grass. Contractor's staff were observed in most situations as being out of their vehicle with a full extension of hose from their spray unit, actively targeting individual plants in the slashed area of roadsides.

Weed mapping was updated in June 2026 to record progress and facilitate forward planning. The mapping conducted post season reported that Litchfield Park Road was a standout with no gamba recorded and minimal gamba recorded in Kakadu National Park as well. This highlights that where adjacent landholders are actively engaged with weed control, the road reserve program is significantly effective in reducing gamba grass spread.

Further spraying undertaken in conjunction with Bushfires NT on the Arnhem Highway has reduced the fire risk in treated locations when associated with weed and fire management.

DLI - Katherine

No submission has been provided.

Railway

No submission has been provided.

Bushfires NT

The Vernon Arafura Road Verge Fuel Mitigation Program supports weed management along key roads through strategic burning, firebreak preparation, targeted spraying and ongoing maintenance. Delivered by Bushfires NT with DLI funding and support from volunteer brigades and contractors, the program reduces heavy fuel loads associated with invasive grasses, including gamba grass, and improves access for follow-up weed treatment. This coordinated approach links fuel reduction with weed control, helping manage regrowth and reduce the risk of roadside fires spreading into adjoining properties. Continued annual maintenance is essential to protect the work already completed and prevent weeds and grass fuels from rebuilding each wet season.

Target Area 2: Vacant Crown Land (excluding areas under lease, licence or other entities)

Crown Land Estate – Darwin

Procurement for the five-year Crown Land Weed Management Program is progressing. The new five-year program will deliver priority weed management across approximately 600 Crown land parcels throughout the Darwin, Palmerston, rural, Wagait, Daly, Dundee and Lake Bennett regions. This represents an increase of approximately 400 sites compared to the previous Weed Management Program, significantly expanding Crown Land Estate's managed area to meet legislative requirements under the *Weeds Management Act 2001* and relevant statutory weed management plans.

During the reporting period, Crown Land Estate received 34 gamba grass compliance orders from the WMB with all sites treated within one month of receipt. Ongoing collaboration between Crown Land Estate and the WMB has strengthened compliance, treatment planning and site assessments. All compliance sites not currently included in the weed management program will be incorporated into ongoing maintenance contracts.

Crown Land Estate – Katherine

The Katherine Weed Management Program commenced in November 2025 and concluded in May 2026. The program delivers weed management across Crown Land within the Pine Creek, Katherine, Mataranka, Larrimah and Daly Waters townships. Crown Land Estate will continue working with the GEBC Project to coordinate the management of outlying gamba grass infestations within the Class A zone and the 500 m buffer surrounding the Class B zone, consistent with the gamba plan.

Crown Land Estate - Gamba Litchfield Neighbours Project

Through the GLNP, Crown Land Estate received funding to enhance gamba grass management across Crown Land in Batchelor, Adelaide River and surrounding areas. The project supports treatment beyond minimum compliance requirements, reducing fuel loads, limiting seed spread and improving long-term management outcomes. As part of the project, Crown Land Estate engaged a contractor to establish and maintain 30 metre weed-free buffers along Crown Land boundaries in the Batchelor and Adelaide River regions. Limited prescribed burning was undertaken in May 2026 to encourage regrowth; however, below-average regrowth reduced the opportunity to complete follow-up herbicide treatments. Planning is currently underway for the upcoming weed management season, including the identification of priority treatment areas and the establishment of photo monitoring points across selected Crown Land sites. These monitoring locations will assist in measuring treatment effectiveness, tracking vegetation response and informing future management decisions.

Crown Land Estate - Landcare Partnerships

Crown Land Estate is progressing Crown Land Licence applications for Landcare groups across Ludmilla Creek, Holtze, Mitchell Creek, Rapid Creek, Nightcliff, Palmerston, and Bees Creek. Licence conditions will require weed management activities within approved areas, complementing Crown Land Estate's broader weed management program by targeting both declared and non-declared weed species.

Bushfires NT

Bushfires NT supports gamba grass mitigation across Crown Land within the Bushfires NT Vernon Arafura Fire Management Zone through a combination of strategic fuel reduction burns, installation of firebreaks, and monitoring to collaborate with DLPE for weed reduction land management practices. Annual risk assessments and spatial monitoring are used to identify high-risk gamba grass infestations and prioritise treatments, while early dry season prescribed burning, aerial burning, mineral earth firebreak construction, and coordination with weed control programs help reduce fuel loads and limit the spread of invasive grasses. These activities contribute to lower wildfire risk, improved community protection, and enhanced ecosystem resilience across the region.

Target Area 3: Residential and business areas – e.g. in Darwin and Palmerston

WMB Compliance Program

The WMB target compliance within the City of Darwin and City of Palmerston areas, with results incorporated into Table 2 and 4 above.

City of Darwin

City of Darwin managed land where gamba grass occurs is largely restricted to urban bushland areas and the Shoal Bay Waste Management Facility. Weed control activities (including gamba grass control) over the 2025/26 wet season faced several challenges. This included reduced staff availability due to the Cyclone Fina clean-up, and an above average wet season, which restricted site access and the number of rain-free periods where weed spraying could occur. Despite these challenges, City of Darwin's annual gamba grass control actions were still achieved with much work undertaken later in the season.

Gamba grass control activities undertaken in each urban bushland area and the Shoal Bay Waste Management Facility are outlined below.

East Point Reserve

- East Point Reserve remains largely free of gamba grass and all isolated occurrences were quickly identified and treated during the period.

Muirhead Urban Bushland

- All areas with gamba grass were sprayed.
- Large areas were also slashed to prevent seeding.
- All firebreaks were graded to 6 m including the removal of grasses.

Rapid Creek Urban Bushland

- All areas with gamba grass were sprayed during the wet season, with a follow-up treatment at the end of the season.
- Large areas were also slashed to prevent seeding.
- All firebreaks were graded to 6 m including the removal of grasses.

Shoal Bay Waste Management Facility

- All areas around the site boundary and within the site were sprayed for gamba grass twice during the wet season.
- All firebreaks were graded to 6m including the removal of grasses.
- Controlled burns undertaken in the early dry season.

Target Area 4: Areas with conservation values

NTG Parks and Reserves

Parks and Wildlife, Department of Tourism and Hospitality (DTH) have been tackling gamba grass via survey (on ground and aerial), direct control and spread prevention across the Darwin (North Australian Parks) region.

Rangers have contributed over 804 hours of time directly controlling gamba grass during the reporting period, where infestations are known to occur. Contractors have assisted to supplement the ranger efforts by contributing to a further 1298 hours. Volunteers, including (a) individuals helping rangers out with their programmed weed control efforts, as well as (b) volunteer groups (Adopt a Spot and Weedwalkers), contributed to 1056 hours directly controlling gamba grass.

Rangers, contractors and volunteers controlled gamba grass via hand removal or grubbing plants out with mattocks in some instances. However, the majority of gamba grass was treated with glyphosate herbicide (over 1850 L concentrate prior to dilution) as foliar spray applications.

Rangers, contractors and volunteers also contributed over 288 additional hours towards gamba grass spread prevention. This work involved, investigative surveys, responding to reports of gamba grass occurring in clean areas and inspecting and cleaning down vehicles, plant and equipment through weed hygiene practices.

A summary of each management area is provided below:

Adelaide River Parks:

- Fogg Dam Conservation Reserve, Black Jungle Conservation Reserve, Lambells Lagoon Conservation Reserve, Harrison Dam Conservation Area, Leaning Tree Lagoon, Windows on the Wetlands - had significant gamba grass control achieved by rangers.
- Rangers invested over 660 hours of effort (including 220 hours by volunteers) controlling gamba grass with 101,600 L of mixed herbicide (1016 L concentrate).

Darwin Urban Parks:

- Berry Springs Nature Park, Blackmore River Conservation Reserve, Howard Springs Nature Park, Shoal Bay Coastal Reserve and Tree Point Conservation Area, Manton Dam Recreation Area – Gamba grass treatment undertaken by rangers.
- Casuarina Coastal Reserve and Buffalo Creek Management Area – Gamba grass treatment undertaken by rangers, contractors, Adopt a Spot and WeedWalker volunteers.
- Charles Darwin National Park, Holmes Jungle Nature Park, Knuckey Lagoons Conservation Reserve – Gamba grass treatment undertaken by rangers and contractors.
- Garig Gunak Barlu – ongoing surveillance for gamba grass is occurring with no current infestations or new detections recorded.
- In Darwin Urban Parks District - 114 hours of contractor assistance was undertaken that was additional to ranger efforts. Volunteer groups also contributed to 167 hours of work (mostly Adopt a Spot with some assistance from Weedwalkers). This work followed on from previous years' work to reduce gamba grass density in priority areas.

Mary River National Park:

- The majority of effort was undertaken on the Mary River floodplains, along the Arnhem Hwy, Leichardt Point in the North Wildman Block along with gamba grass occurrences along firebreaks and roads.
- Rangers invested 317 hours of effort treating gamba grass with foliar spray application of herbicide.
- This work targeted previously managed areas and buffer zones to follow on from work on previous years.

Litchfield National Park:

Significant gamba grass control work was undertaken in Litchfield National Park over the reporting period, through a co-ordinated approach combining aerial spraying (helicopter) and on-ground control by contractors and rangers. This work focussed on gamba grass infestations on or encroaching the Tabletop Range. This work has largely been the result of funding received through:

- $250,000 in NTG funding made available for the creation of the Parks Gamba Coordinator position (6 months), along with the purchase of supplies and services to manage gamba grass. This allowed the continuation of work commenced through the previous Australian Government funded gamba project.
- The Office of Climate Change commenced funding gamba grass management in 2025 with $150,000 annually for three years. This funding has continued and is driving the GLNP, boosting the capacity of land managers around Litchfield National Park to take sustained action and complement control efforts within the national park.
- Contractor work in the Tabletop Eradication Zone focussed on known problem areas and new infestations identified by the Charles Darwin University / National Environmental Science Program (NESP) 2025 survey. As density of gamba grass was significantly reduced from the previous year (2024/25 wet season), aerial spraying was limited to the buffer zone and beyond. Contractors achieved more than 1184 hours of field work controlling gamba grass in the park.

Other work included:

- Gamba grass survey and control undertaken by Weedwalkers. Weedwalkers targeted isolated infestations of gamba grass in areas that can only be accessed on foot with backpack sprayers and physical removal techniques. Weedwalkers contributed over 700 hours of volunteer time assisting with gamba grass management in the Litchfield National Park.
- Rangers treated visitor node sites, walking tracks, roadsides, firebreaks and campground areas. This included the Sandy Creek and Surprise Creek campgrounds on the floodplains via the Reynolds 4wd track.

Katherine Region Parks

Rangers within the Katherine region (Savanna Gulf Parks) continue to monitor for incursions of gamba grass on parks and reserves. Rangers continue to put in place measures to prevent gamba grass spreading into Katherine region parks and reserves which currently do not contain any known infestations.

Rangers are conducting ongoing gamba grass surveillance in conjunction with regular park operations, who are ready to respond if gamba grass incursions occur.

Target Area 5 and 6: Blocks (less than 3 ha) and the Darwin rural area

WMB Compliance Program

Blocks (less than 3 ha) and the Darwin rural area are both key targets in the WMB compliance program. Results are outlined above (see Tables 4 and 5).

Bushfires NT

Bushfires NT targets parts of the Darwin rural areas transport corridors and vacant Crown land (as documented under Target Areas 1 and 2 above).

Bushfires NT also undertakes fire break compliance inspections across high-risk areas of the Darwin rural area. Gamba grass compliance issues are documented for properties as a part of fire break inspections, with 59% of the non-compliant fire break properties identified as having a gamba grass compliance issue across the reporting period. This demonstrates how heavily firebreak compliance outcomes are influenced by gamba grass.

Inspections also identified many properties that had well maintained firebreaks. However, it was identified these properties may still be impacted by a fire. For example, in instances where surrounding blocks contain dense gamba grass monocultures. Bushfires NT will be liaising further with the WMB about these properties.

Bushfires NT also manage the Fire Ready Program that provides assistance to those willing, but unable, to manage gamba grass on their properties in the Darwin rural area. A total of 28 landholders were assisted through the Fire Ready Program over the reporting period.

Power and Water Corporation submission (spans multiple target areas)

Power and Water Corporation's weed management is delineated into four distinct business areas:

- Water Services - responsible for areas such as Darwin River Reservoir, Howard Springs Bore Field and other water and wastewater related infrastructure.
- Power Services - responsible for areas such as Hudson Creek System Control, Zone Sub-stations and other power related infrastructure.
- Gas Services - gas pipeline right-of-way.
- Facilities Management - corporate sites.

Power and Water also engage utility support contractors to undertake works in remote communities as part of the Indigenous Essential Services (IES) program. The utilities support contracts provide the maintenance of IES utilities services assets across 72 remote Indigenous communities and 66 outstations across the whole of the NT.

Water Services

Water Services spends in excess of $1 million annually on vegetation management across sites, including Darwin River Dam, Howard Springs bore field and numerous service easements and water/wastewater facilities.

Significant efforts are taken annually to ensure the on-going health of Darwin's drinking water catchments, which include targeted weed spraying in the Darwin River Reservoir. In April of this year, an intensive 15 day weed management program was delivered at Darwin River Dam that targeted both gamba grass and mission grass. As a part of this program, 22,500 litres of spray mix was applied. This program has resulted in a reduced density of the target species.

Water Services also ensure weed management is carried out under the utility support contracts at their bore and sewer compounds at IES funded communities and minor centres.

Power Services

A weed management plan covers Power Services properties in the Top End region. Management actions under this plan have been successfully completed including gamba grass management, involving spraying, slashing and grading. These activities were undertaken around critical power network infrastructure, including system control, powerline easements and zone substations, to ensure that weed infestation and associated fire risks do not impact on Power and Waters' electricity network.

Power Services also ensure weed management is carried out under the utility support contracts at their power station compounds at IES funded communities and minor centres.

Gas Services

Gas Services operate under an internal environmental management plan that incorporates management measures and corrective actions specific to weeds. Budget is also set aside for weed management under asset management plans.

- Gamba grass has been identified along the Wickham Point Pipeline Inpex Lateral right-of-way.
- No gamba grass has been identified along the McArthur River Gas pipeline.

Facilities Management

No gamba grass has been identified at sites managed by Facilities Management. Facilities operate under an internal environmental management plan that incorporates management measures and corrective actions specific to weeds.

Objective:

2g. Understand the distribution of gamba grass in the Class B zone.

Strategic action: "The WMB are to undertake an annual assessment of land impacted by gamba grass. A mapping and monitoring program is developed for the Class B zone."

Performance indicator: "Increased understanding of priority areas for future mapping in the Class B zone."

The overall area affected by gamba grass within the Class B zone is approximately 5499 km^2, as shown in Figure 8. This represents a 15.96% area of the Class B zone being affected by gamba grass.

This affected area has been calculated based on 1 km^2 grids intersecting the Class B zone that includes a gamba grass point. If a 1 km^2 grid includes any gamba grass, the unit is considered 'affected.' This method is based on all gamba grass records in the WMB spatial database, which dates back to 1960, noting records are continually added to the weed records database and not removed. Therefore, a single gamba grass plant in a 1 km^2 grid would be reported as 1 km^2 affected.

Based on the target areas for a 'reduction' in gamba grass and the known distribution of gamba grass across the Class B zone, the following areas remain a priority for future mapping within the Class B zone:

- Government and council land under gamba grass management programs to determine the effectiveness of these programs and further work required.
- Areas of environmental and cultural significance, such as national parks. These areas should include a focus on mapping gamba grass presence, absence (for previously present gamba points) and treatment in order to produce accurate maps of these areas in future annual reports.
- Litchfield National Park to determine progress in gamba grass management following increased funding towards managing gamba grass over recent years.
- Continued mapping of the 500m Class B buffer zone that adjoins the gamba grass Class A zone to determine any ongoing threat from this buffer area to the gamba grass Class A zone.
- Areas that align with or inform the gamba grass compliance program (individual blocks to vectors of spread blocks) that are unmapped or require updated mapping.

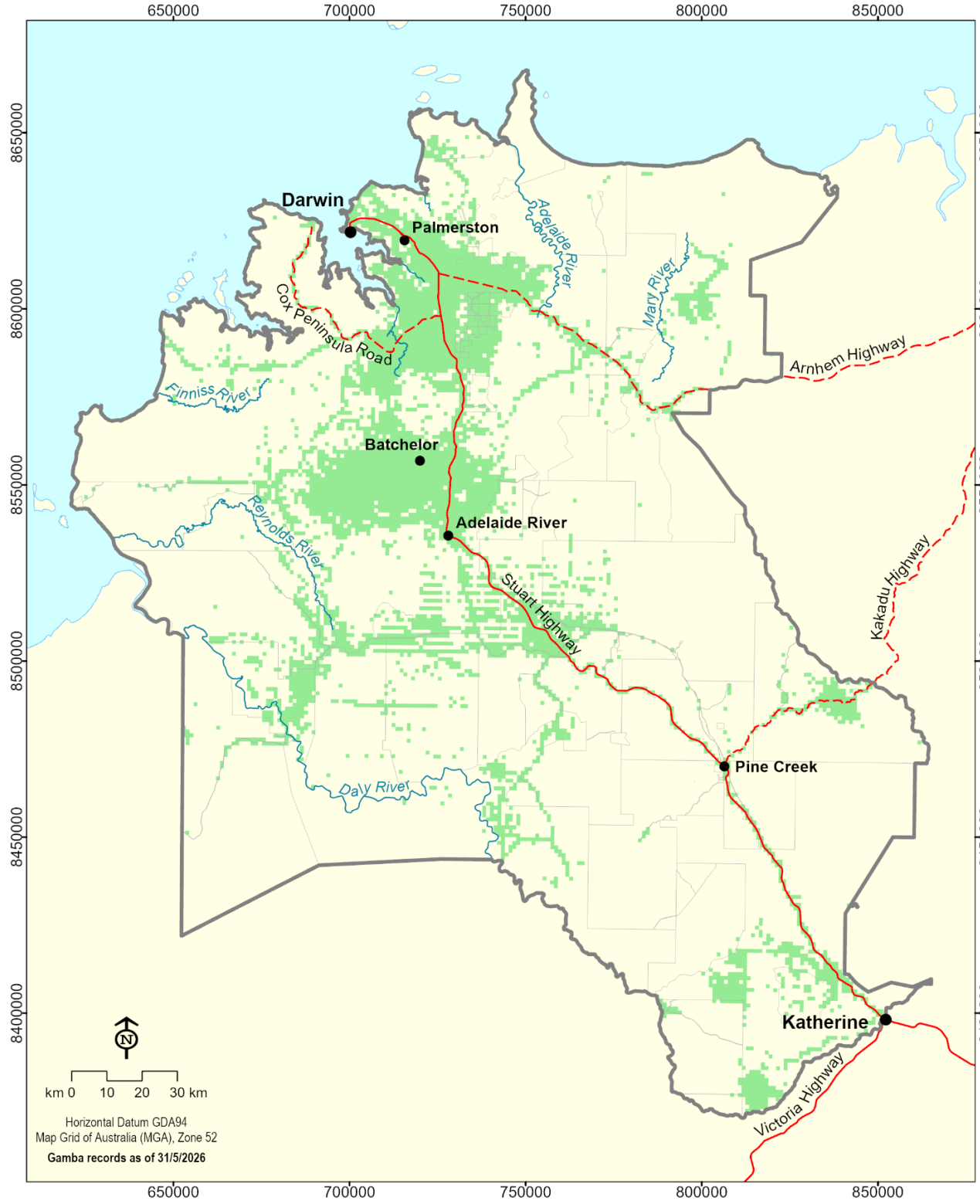


Figure 8: Estimated area affected by gamba grass in the Class B zone as of 2026 (based on data ranging from 1960 to 2026 reported to the WMB).

Goal 3 – Protect priority environmental and cultural assets from the impacts of gamba grass

Objective:

3a: Identify key environmental and cultural assets at risk of being impacted by gamba grass and incorporate into relevant Weed Management Branch, stakeholder and land manager regional plans, strategies and compliance programs.

Strategic Action "By December 2022, key environmental and cultural assets at risk of being impacted by gamba grass have been identified with stakeholder input".

Performance indicator: "By December 2022 a list has been developed of key environmental and cultural assets."

Key environmental and cultural assets are included in the Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs Weed management plans and regional strategies | NT.GOV.AU that form the NT Weeds Strategy 2021 – 2026. Key environmental and cultural assets at threat from gamba grass include important biodiversity conservation sites (see Sites of conservation significance list | NT.GOV.AU, parks and reserves, watercourses and key sites of community value, such as Arnhem Land and the Darwin rural area.

Key environmental and cultural assets were also considered and reported on in the Gamba Grass Annual Report 2022.

Strategic Action "Identified key environmental and cultural assets have been prioritised in WMB and stakeholder planning processes."

Performance indicator: "Key environmental and cultural assets are prioritised in landholder management programs including regional plans."

Key programs managing gamba grass across these priority landscape areas include the:

- Kakadu Gamba Eradication Project and GEBC Project, funded through the Australian Government – refer below.
- NT Parks and Reserves management program – as evidenced by management effort outlined under goal 2.
- Gamba grass compliance program – as evidenced by the compliance statistics outlined under goal 2.

Australian Government funding allocated to gamba grass in line with Threatened Species Action Plan 2022 – 2032

In late 2022, the Australian Government made an announcement to commit $9.8 million towards gamba grass management, in line with the Australian Government's ***Threatened species action plan 2022–2032***. This funding is being directed towards managing gamba grass to protect matters of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Target areas for this project are focussed on the legislated eradication zone for gamba grass (Class A zone) with funding directed to Parks Australia and the Northern Land Council (NLC) for management. Parks Australia have provided a submission below on the progress of their project. A summary is also provided for the GEBC Project.

Parks Australia – Kakadu Gamba Eradication Project

Between December 2025 and June 2026, substantial progress was made towards eradicating gamba grass from Kakadu National Park. All known gamba grass infestations continued to be managed through ground herbicide treatment, aerial surveillance, follow-up inspections and targeted control works. Although all known sites were treated, complete eradication was not achieved due to regrowth at some locations and the detection of new infestations through ongoing surveys. These detections demonstrate the effectiveness of the surveillance program in identifying infestations before they become established. Management activities have reduced gamba grass density, infestation size and seed production across much of the park. Many previously infested sites now require follow-up treatment rather than intensive initial control, demonstrating sustained progress towards long-term eradication.

Extensive aerial and ground surveys focused on roads, drainage lines, floodplains, disturbed sites, boundary areas and known high-risk habitats. Helicopter surveys enabled rapid coverage of remote areas, while ground crews inspected and treated infestations as they were found. New detections were mapped using spatial recording systems and treated promptly to reduce seed production and limit further spread. Survey results improved understanding of gamba grass distribution and confirmed that many previously treated sites continue to respond well to management. This objective was achieved, with extensive areas surveyed and new infestations incorporated into the ongoing treatment program.

Heightened community awareness of gamba grass threats has been achieved throughout routine sharing of information with key stakeholders, neighbouring landholders, contractors and partner agencies during operations. A coordinated multi-year awareness campaign has not yet been implemented.

During the last 6 months, rapid detection, response and treatment remained a priority along the western boundary of Kakadu National Park. Regular aerial and ground surveys enabled early detection of new infestations, allowing timely treatment to reduce further spread. Weed hygiene was promoted through operational practices and engagement with staff, contractors and neighbouring land managers. As a result, reduction of new infestations was partially achieved, with strong progress in surveillance and treatment but only limited improvements to weed hygiene infrastructure. The western boundary fencing contract was awarded during the reporting period; however, construction was delayed while required regulatory approvals were obtained, including the completion of an Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Certificate. Seasonal access constraints also affected project timing. The works are expected to proceed once approvals are finalised and the site is accessible.

A recently agreed 12 month extension to the current Parks Australia gamba grass project provides an opportunity to deliver ongoing control and surveillance while developing an updated Kakadu Eradication Plan and seeking further funding.

Northern Land Council – Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project

The NLC has successfully completed the third control season of the GEBC Project, targeting gamba grass management across the Class A (eradication zone). Progress was made in 2025/26; however, the operational survey and control season was heavily impacted due to the significant wet season and flooding over the 2025/26 wet season. Project priorities have again focused on stakeholder collaboration, expanded surveillance, delivering training and on-ground control. A significant project win over the reporting period was the Australian Government agreeing to extend the project by one year, enabling an extra year of gamba grass surveillance and control across the Class A zone.

GEBC Project staff continued to engage with over 30 Indigenous ranger groups, Traditional Owners, pastoralists, contractors, and government agencies, helping to build operational capacity to manage gamba across the NT and support the goals of the gamba plan.

Activities continue to span Arnhem Land, Katherine, Daly River Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust and Victoria River regions. Field training and workshops were delivered to ranger groups in the Borroloola region, Thamarrurr Development Corporation in Wadeye, West Arnhem, East Arnhem Regional Council workers and Marthakal Rangers and others.

Cross-tenure control efforts continued, with works undertaken on a number of pastoral stations in the Katherine and Mataranka regions. Other focus areas for survey and treatment have been the Daly River Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust and the adjoining Elizabeth Downs boundary area and Elcho Island.

A key collaboration over the reporting period was undertaken with the WMB to inspect contractor equipment prior to travel to the Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) Indigenous Protection Area. The inspections provided an opportunity to discuss the GEBC Project with the contractors and provide context to the inspections and their importance, particularly for the ASRAC group.

GEBC Project staff continue to build strategic partnerships across government, industry, and research sectors, aligning actions with NT and Federal agencies into biological control agent research and working with mining, remote housing and civil construction operators to reduce spread and improve hygiene practices.

Figure 9 presents key environmental and cultural assets across the gamba grass Class A zone, where the eradication of gamba grass is being tracked year-on-year by the WMB. Refer to Goal 1 for further information.

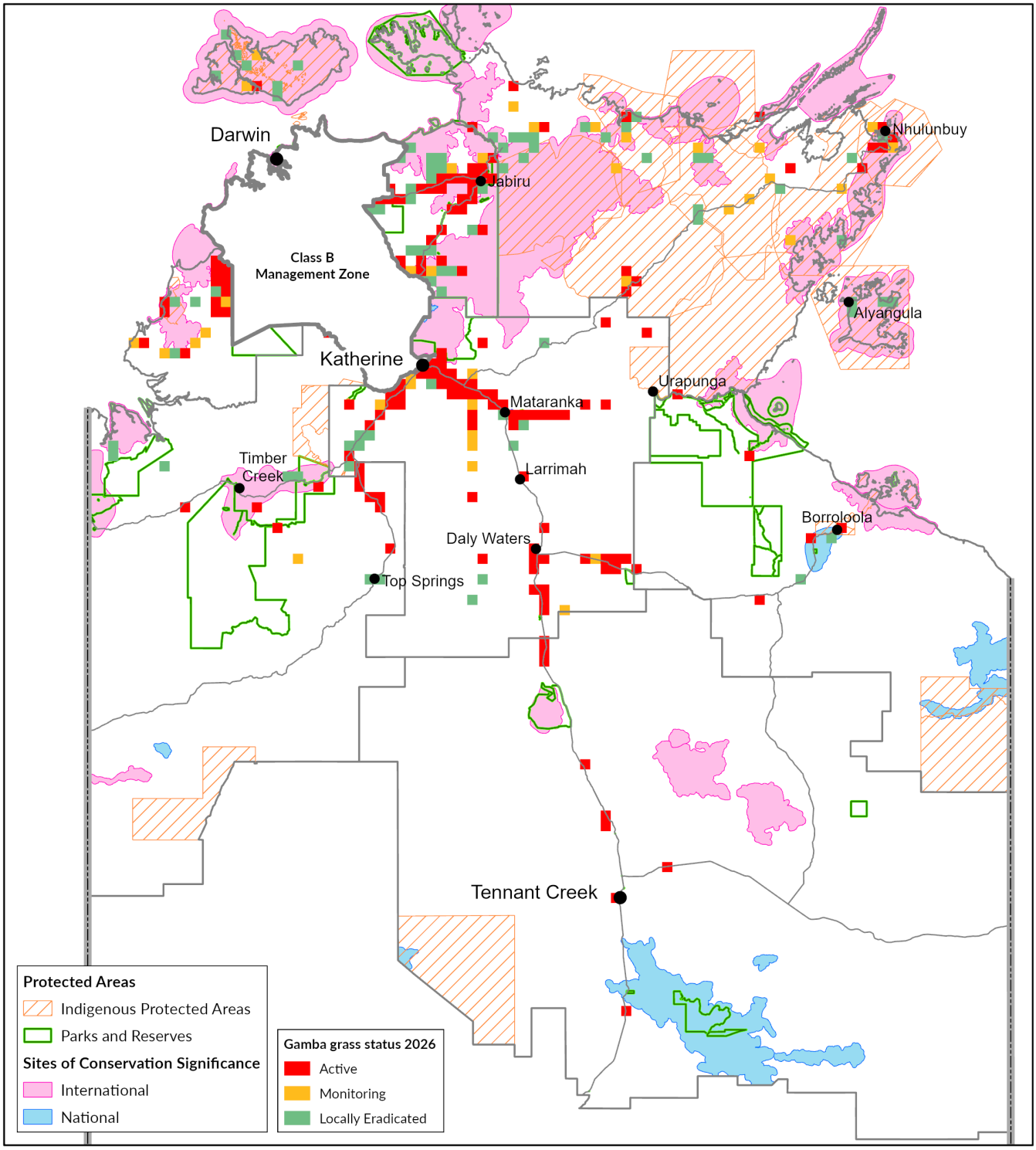


Figure 9: NT Gamba Grass Eradication Grids overlaying key environmental and cultural assets across the Class A zone.

Goal 4 – Increase community capacity and willingness to participate in gamba grass management

Objective:

4a: Engage with the community and obtain a high level of public support for gamba grass management action resulting in an increase in voluntary compliance with gamba grass management requirements."

Strategic Action: "By July 2021, develop a communications plan to raise awareness of gamba grass management requirements and available support. Engage with the community. Education and awareness activities are implemented to encourage compliant behaviour".

Performance indicator: "Public knowledge of gamba grass impacts and management requirements has increased."

A Gamba Grass Communications Plan 2025 – 2026 was developed to raise awareness of gamba grass management requirements and available support. This communications plan, prepared in consultation with the WAC, guides communications in relation to gamba grass and is updated annually.

Gamba grass communications tools used over the reporting period are listed below:

- Implementation of the GAP communications program.
- A gamba grass requirements leaflet was distributed to:
    - rates payers in the Litchfield Council and Coomalie Community Government Council with rates notices issued in August 2025. This was a collaborative effort between councils and the WMB.
    - City of Darwin, City of Palmerston, Litchfield Council Councillors and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Palmerston and surrounding suburbs, for any newsletter communications.
- Gamba grass requirements posters printed and displayed at GAP collection points and various shopping centre, council and MLA notice boards.
- Gamba Grass Annual Report 2025 (DLPE 2025) released and made publicly available online.
- QR codes on GAP herbicide drums and gamba grass management guides linking to the NTG gamba grass control page, including 'how to' videos.
- The use of 'gamba control site' and 'control gamba now' corflutes through the Darwin rural area.
- Gamba grass radio interviews and social media - Facebook posts throughout the year.
- Distribution of gamba grass management guides and ID booklets to various locations, such as the GAP collection points, Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM) Conference, GLNP 'Got Gamba?' community field day and key stakeholders on request.
- Outcomes of quarterly WAC meetings uploaded online at: Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee | Department of Lands, Planning and Environment.

Strategic Action: "By July 2021, develop a communications plan to raise awareness of gamba grass management requirements and available support. Engage with the community. Education and awareness activities are implemented to encourage compliant behaviour".

Performance indicator: "Changes in active management and voluntary compliance levels."

A summary of trends in effort and compliance is provided against Goal 2. Further changes may be evident in future reports by looking at whether there is an increase in the number of properties already compliant at the time of initial inspections, or whether achieving compliance is more dependent on the active compliance programs.



Photo 4: WMB GAP staff distributing herbicide



Photo 5: WMB staff at market stall

Strategic Action: "By July 2023, complete a social marketing study (subject to funding) to identify community perceptions, needs and barriers regarding gamba grass management."

Performance indicator: "Better understand community perceptions, needs and barriers regarding gamba grass management."

In the absence of a social marketing study being completed, as reported in earlier reports, annual Have Your Say surveys have been undertaken since 2021 to gauge feedback from the community on implementation of the gamba plan. This information is useful to some extent in understanding this performance indicator. To reflect this, this performance indicator has been marked as having made some progress but with some concerns.

Annual Have Your Say survey results have been presented in each gamba grass annual report since 2021. Annual surveys will continue to inform this performance indicator.

Strategic Action: "Improve landholder capacity for reporting gamba grass points in the Class A zone".

Performance indicator: "Public reporting to WMB on gamba infestations in the Class A zone."

It is essential that every gamba grass plant in the gamba grass Class A zone is reported to the WMB. This enables the WMB to track the eradication of gamba grass across this zone and look at potential spread pathways. The most efficient method of reporting these points is through using the NT WeedMate App. A total of 10 organisations have used the NT WeedMate App in 2025/26 to record gamba grass presence and absence points in the Class A zone. Of worthy note is that 154 new devices have been registered for NT WeedMate across the NT over the reporting period, representing a 33% increase in devices registered. This demonstrates a positive upward trend in NT WeedMate use. The WMB continue to promote the use of the NT WeedMate App to landholders in the Class A zone. Information about NT WeedMate is available at: NT WeedMate App | Department of Lands, Planning and Environment.

Strategic Action: "Development of an efficient tool (subject to funding) to encourage public reporting of gamba grass sightings and management effort. Promote the report gamba tool to encourage public reporting of problem gamba grass in the Class B zone."

Performance indicator: "Public reporting of problem gamba grass."

The WMB maintains a 'Report Problem Gamba Tool' for online reporting of concerns about unmanaged gamba grass. The tool can be found at Gamba grass | NT.GOV.AU and all reports made are automatically emailed to the WMB for follow-up. Alternatively, problem gamba grass can be reported to the WMB via phone or email.

The WMB received approximately 63 gamba grass complaints in the 2025/26 financial year, spanning the Darwin rural area, Darwin urban area, Palmerston and surrounding regions. All complaints received are documented. If a complaint is received during the compliance season, the property will be inspected as part of the inspection program. Complaints received outside this period are recorded for follow-up action, which may include a property inspection, engagement with land managers, follow-up correspondence and the issuing of penalty infringement notices if the matter is not resolved.

The WMB received several complaints about gamba grass in the Katherine region during this reporting period. These complaints were concerning gamba grass on the roadsides. The WMB referred these complaints to DLI for actioning.

Strategic Action: "Establish and support cross tenure working groups to ensure coordinated management of gamba grass across different land tenures."

Performance indicator: "An increase in coordinated management effort."

A summary of current collaborative partnerships for improving gamba grass management are outlined as follows:

- Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee – Refer Goal 5.
- Weed and Fire Working Group – The Weed and Fire Working Group continued to collaborate on best practice management of weeds and fire management on government land, including gamba grass. Members of the group include Crown Land Estate, DLPE; Civil Services, DLI; Power and Water Corporation; WMB, DLPE; Parks and Wildlife Commission, DTH; Bushfires NT and Northern Territory Fire and Emergency Services (NTFES). This group has met once over the reporting period, providing updates on each group's seasonal programs, discussing areas of concern and better co-ordination of management effort across adjoining lands.
- Gamba Action Program – The WMB continued to collaborate in 2025/26 with stakeholders, such as the Coomalie Community Government Council, the Territory Wildlife Park and local bushfire brigades, to deliver the GAP. During the season, a total of 3,106 individuals accessed GAP across 3,184 properties. GAP herbicide was limited to one 5 L container per property, for up to two properties. Spray units were also available for landholders to loan. A total of 184 equipment loans were recorded during the 2025/26 season. This represents a 15% decrease in equipment loans from the 2024/25 season, which saw 217 loans. For more information on spray equipment available to loan – refer Gamba grass | NT.GOV.AU. The WMB also develops and implements a GAP Communications Plan to promote the GAP and to support landholders with gamba grass management advice.
- Gamba Litchfield Neighbours Project - The GLNP is a 3-year program funded by DLPE at $150,000 per year. The project, designed and delivered by the WMB, aims to improve the capacity of land managers in the Coomalie Community Government Council (Coomalie Council) area and sustain a longer-term approach to reducing the impacts of gamba grass, especially in those areas neighbouring Litchfield National Park. Over the reporting period (year 1 of the project) the following has been delivered through this project:
    - A 'Got Gamba?' community field day was held in Batchelor in November 2025 to engage and educate local landholders and land managers on gamba grass identification and management. The field day was attended by the WMB, Parks and Wildlife, Crown Land Estate and the Coomalie Council
    - GAP was boosted for Coomalie residents with additional herbicide and a quickspray unit available for loan from the Coomalie Council administration office
    - Funding to Coomalie Council for a gamba grass survey and development of a weed management strategy for Coomalie Council owned and managed land.
- TNRM partner of the GEBC Project – TNRM were subcontracted by the NLC to support capacity building of rangers in the gamba grass Class A (eradication) zone, in line with objectives of the Australian Government funded GEBC Project. Capacity building focussed on educating rangers about gamba grass establishment processes, building awareness of gamba grass as a threat to savannas and increasing rangers' confidence in recognising, detecting and responding to gamba grass in the landscape.

Research Institutions working with the NTG

- **National Environmental Science Program (NESP) - Invasive Grass Research Project –** NESP researchers are now in the final year of a four-year research project - Supporting the strategic management of invasive grasses - NESP Resilient Landscapes Hub. This project aims to support the strategic management of invasive grasses in northern Australia – in particular, gamba grass, para grass and olive hymenachne, to reduce their impacts on biodiversity. This project provides support to managers of protected areas and Indigenous ranger groups through co-development of user-friendly mapping, monitoring and decision-support tools. The project is collaborating with research users to address 'Target 10' of the Threatened Species Action Plan that, by 2027, 'Gamba grass is reduced to an area less than its 2022 range', and all seven objectives of the 2026 Threat Abatement Plan.

  Over the reporting period, NESP researchers have assisted land managers to use the grassy weeds aerial survey app. For example, NESP researchers travelled to Ramingining in Arnhem Land to assist the WMB to use the app to map olive hymenachne in the Arafura Swamp with ASRAC rangers. NESP researchers also assisted Parks and Wildlife Commission NT to use the survey app to conduct gamba grass surveys, including re-surveying the Tabletop Range at Litchfield National Park, and surveying Silkwood Station for gamba grass for the first time. NESP researchers have also conducted on-ground surveys for gamba grass in Litchfield National Park to train rangers in on-ground survey methods.

  The NESP aerial weed survey protocol has been drafted as an Ecological Monitoring System Australia (EMSA) module with the Australian Government Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) and, when finalised, the survey module will be published as a TERN EMSA module.

- **Gamba Grass Biocontrol Research –** CSIRO has established partnerships with collaborators across Africa and is currently undertaking native-range exploration to identify potential biocontrol agents for gamba grass. To date, seven sites have been surveyed, spanning from Mfeyaki in the south to the Kosi Bay Border Post near Mozambique in the far north of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Additional surveys were completed at two sites in Zimbabwe. Preliminary assessments have revealed visible insect-feeding damage on tillers collected from these sites, suggesting the presence of host-associated herbivorous insects. Monitoring of insect emergence from collected samples is ongoing. Future survey efforts will continue to focus on identifying potential stem-boring agents similar to *Tetramesa* species. In parallel with native-range surveys, population genetics studies have commenced. The WMB has approved a permit for CSIRO to collect gamba samples from 78 sites across Darwin, Litchfield, Roper Gulf, Katherine, Victoria Daly, Coomalie, West Daly, Mataranka, and several unincorporated areas, to determine whether distinct populations occur within Australia. DNA extraction from these samples is currently underway.

  The DLPE continues to invest $150,000 annually over five years to support CSIRO research into biological control agents for gamba grass. Other financial contributors to this project include the DLI, NTFES and the NLC. This investment contributes to the development of sustainable, long-term management options for one of the NT's most significant invasive grass species.

Various Landcare Groups

- **Casuarina Coastal Reserve Landcare Group -** The Casuarina Coastal Reserve Landcare Group continues to collaborate with Parks and Wildlife to tackle gamba grass within the Reserve through the 'Adopt a Spot' Project. More information can be found at: Casuarina Coastal Reserve Landcare Group - Landcare NT.
- **Gamba Grass Roots Landcare –** The Gamba Grass Roots Landcare Group continues to play a role communicating about gamba grass. More information can be found at: Gamba Grass Roots - Landcare NT.
- **Weedwalkers Top End Landcare Group -** The Weedwalkers Top End Landcare Group continue to work in collaboration with Parks and Wildlife to conduct survey and control of outlier gamba grass plants at remote locations within Litchfield National Park. Refer: Weedwalkers Top End Landcare Group - Landcare NT.
- **Landcare NT -** As part of the Darwin Harbour Catchment Waterways Project (a $3.82 million Australian Government funded project), Landcare NT have engaged a consultant to map gamba grass at Ludmilla Creek, Mitchell Creek and Rapid Creek catchments. This data will complement existing data from Sandy Creek within Casuarina Coastal Reserve and underpin ongoing efforts by the community to work with land managers in these catchments to address the species. Refer: Creek Connections by Landcare NT.

Objective:

4b: "Ensure adequate information and knowledge of gamba grass management is available and up to date, which translates into improved management approaches."

Strategic Action: "Research is undertaken that supports improved gamba grass management outcomes by addressing identified research gaps".

Performance indicators: "the Gamba WAC reviews annually key knowledge gaps that need to be addressed to improve gamba grass management outcomes."

Key gamba grass knowledge gaps have been documented in annual gamba grass reports since 2021. The WMB have liaised with the Weeds Working Group (an interjurisdictional working group) reporting to the Environment and Invasives Committee about mechanisms that may be explored for researching and reporting further on knowledge gaps. The group discussed an avenue may be through, for example, the creation of a Northern Australia Weeds Action Group. Whilst the WMB are considering this further, progress during the reporting period on key knowledge gaps is documented below.

Knowledge gap 1: Accurate gamba grass distribution records in both the Class A and B zones

Progress has been made towards developing a better understanding of gamba grass distribution records across the Class A (eradication zone), as documented and presented under Goal 1. In addition, the NESP Resilient Landscape Hub has also developed a new grassy weeds aerial mapping app for government weeds officers and other weeds managers to map gamba grass via aerial survey, as documented under Goal 4.

Knowledge gap 2: Integrated gamba grass management regime (herbicide and fire)

It has been observed, if fire passes through an area where gamba grass has been sprayed and subsequently appears dead, it can render the gamba spraying ineffective and/or stimulate regrowth or seed production. As no formal trials have been undertaken to prove this theory, research into these interactions is required.

Knowledge gap 3: Integrated gamba grass management regime (alternatives to glyphosate)

The WMB and GEBC Project staff have been investigating a report of potentially herbicide-resistant gamba grass, received during the last reporting period. Tests undertaken were inconclusive. Seeds from the suspected herbicide resistant gamba grass did not germinate, which was likely due to late glyphosate treatment by Parks and Wildlife impacting the viability of the seed produced. Further seeds have been collected and the WMB will conduct trials of their own using these seeds over the next year. If gamba grass is confirmed to develop resistance to glyphosate, it will create a serious knowledge gap, as alternative chemical treatments for gamba grass are currently limited. A research project considering alternatives to glyphosate is documented at: Gamba grass is a key threatening process in northern Australia - NESP Resilient Landscapes Hub. This research highlights that further testing is needed.

Knowledge gap 4: Integrated gamba grass management regime (biocontrol)

Research into a suitable biocontrol agent for gamba grass has commenced and has been documented under Goal 4.

Knowledge gap 5: Involving people and agencies in improved gamba grass action

The most effective means of increasing community involvement in gamba grass action and improved implementation of gamba control programs remains a knowledge gap. Although various communication methods are utilised with the aim of increasing involvement in gamba grass management, getting more people on board remains an ongoing challenge. As gamba grass remains an ongoing threat, more effort is required.

Knowledge gap 6: Measuring the positive impacts from gamba grass management and negative impacts on the economy from a significant gamba grass fire event impacting tourism assets

Understanding the positive impacts of gamba grass management on ecosystem services (including health, amenity and tourism), as well as the negative impacts of a significant gamba grass fire event on the economy is a significant knowledge gap. A better understanding of the economic consequences of gamba on tourism assets, human life, biodiversity and environmental and culturally sensitive areas would inform and underpin improved investment in gamba grass regulation and management.

Strategic Action: "Research is undertaken that supports improved gamba grass management outcomes by addressing identified research gaps."

Performance indicators: "Feedback to be sought annually to inform knowledge gaps."

The annual survey of community members to inform this annual report focused on the GAP this year. One survey question asked, 'what do you think would help you more in managing gamba grass on your property'. 30% of participants responded with gamba identification assistance, 25% stated gamba spraying workshops, 19% stated planning assistance at a property level and 26% stated 'other'. This information will be considered in next year's GAP in terms of how this support may be delivered.

Strategic Action: ""Promote research activities and updated management recommendations"

Performance indicators: "Land manager awareness of improved management approaches."

In recent years, new gamba grass online resources have been emerging that include information on gamba grass management approaches and research outcomes.

The Gamba grass | NT.GOV.AU webpage has been updated with links to resources including:

- Research synthesis of gamba grass - Research synthesis of gamba grass - NESP Resilient Landscapes Hub
- Gamba Grass Hub - GAMBA GRASS HUB | Territory NRM
- How we stop Gamba Grass on Country video - How We Stop Gamba Grass on Country
- National Best Practice Management Manual for Gamba Grass - Gamba Grass - Weeds Australia
- Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Project - GEBC project | Safeguarding biodiversity and significant places from Gamba

Links to other resources will continue to be included as they become available.

Strategic Action: "Delivery of gamba grass forums with a focus on celebrating gamba grass successes and educating the community / land managers on how to manage gamba grass and identifying other needs."

Performance indicator: "Capacity to manage gamba grass effectively has increased."

An annual 'gamba grass research and development community forum' is proposed under the gamba plan. A 'Got Gamba?' community field day was held in November 2025 in Batchelor, hosted by the WMB.

Strategic Action: "Collaborate with other jurisdictions: a) to identify funding options for production of a National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by December 2022. b) On the production of a National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by early 2024."

Performance indicator: "Pathway is identified to produce National Gamba Grass Best Practice Manual." "Collaborate with other jurisdictions on the production of the National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by early 2024"

The National Best Practice Manual for Gamba Grass has been finalised and is available at: Gamba Grass - Weeds Australia. This manual has been prepared by consultancy Wild Matters, funded by the Australian Government.

Goal 5 – Implement transparent and accountable compliance, monitoring and reporting processes

Objective:

5a: "Deliver a transparent and risk-based compliance program."

Strategic Action "A risk-based compliance program is developed. The compliance program is promoted to the community. The compliance program is implemented annually".

Performance indicator: "Responsiveness to public enquiries."

The WMB responds to all enquiries from the public. The WMB maintains a generic phone number (8999 4567) and email address (weedinfo@nt.gov.au) to receive public enquiries. When gamba grass complaints are made to the WMB about gamba grass, they are recorded, triaged and followed up by authorised weeds officers. While the WMB does not provide updates to every complainant on every complaint received, this does not mean that gamba grass complaints are not actioned.

Strategic Action "A risk-based compliance program is developed. The compliance program is promoted to the community. The compliance program is implemented annually".

Performance indicator: "Public awareness of the parcel compliance rating system."

An online Check your gamba grass risk | NT.GOV.AU tool was developed in 2021. Through this tool, landholders can answer a series of questions about the gamba grass on their property and will be provided a risk rating and advice on what they should do to manage their risk.

This self-assessment score system aligns with a similar process used to assess landholder parcels for compliance.

The 'Check Your Gamba Risk Tool' went live on 1 April 2021. Over the reporting period of 2025/26, there were 129 views of the risk tool.

Strategic Action "A risk-based compliance program is developed. The compliance program is promoted to the community. The compliance program is implemented annually".

Performance indicator: "Application of the parcel compliance rating system."

Application of the parcel compliance rating system has been discussed under Goal 2.

Objective:

5b: "Collaborate with key stakeholders to undertake regular monitoring and reporting of performance against the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030."

Strategic action: "By 30 September each year, deliver an annual report which addresses all performance indicators".

Performance indicator: "Regular, transparent, and meaningful reporting that is effectively promoted to the public."

This annual report has been developed to fulfil this requirement. A GAP Survey was conducted in January to May 2026 for a 14-week period seeking comment on the GAP that can also help inform progress against the gamba grass Class B zone. A total of 212 participants responded to the survey. Summarised results have been included within this report.

Strategic action: "Effectively communicate key outcomes of the annual report to the community".

Performance indicator: "Community awareness."

A communications plan has been developed that documents the mechanisms for informing the community about gamba grass matters, including the promotion of this report and key outcomes from the report.

Objective:

5c. "Ensure ongoing independent oversight of delivery of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030."

Strategic action "Ongoing collaboration with the WAC regarding implementation of this plan".

Performance indicator: "Retention of the WAC."

The WAC is continuing to oversee implementation of the gamba plan with the WMB continuing to meet 3-4 times a year with the WAC.

Three meetings were held during the reporting period:

- 14 October 2025
- 4 February 2026
- 27 May 2026.

A summary of key items tabled at meetings and details of representatives forming the WAC can be found online at:

Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee | Department of Lands, Planning and Environment

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Appendix 1 Excerpt from Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 to summarise plan performance in 2026

Performance Indicators Legend		
On track	Progress but some concerns	Significant concerns with progress

Table 7: Goal 1 - Eradicate gamba grass from the Class A (eradication) zone				
Objectives	**Strategic actions**	**Who**	**Performance indicators**	**Performance measures**
1a. Understand the distribution of gamba grass in the Class A zone.	By July 2021, design a mapping and monitoring program for the Class A zone.	WMB	By July 2022, the extent of gamba grass has been assessed for land parcels identified in the monitoring and mapping program.	A generalised map of distribution or gamba grass presence confidence is publicly available. Annual measurement of gamba grass in hectares using available spatial data and eradication status information.
	By July 2021, commence the mapping program in the Class A zone.	WMB / land owner / occupiers		
	By July 2022, complete the mapping program and continue monitoring in the Class A zone.	WMB/ land owner / occupiers		
1b. By July 2023, all gamba grass in the Class A zone is under an active eradication program and all gamba grass plants have been destroyed (unless under permit)	Individuals, land owners and occupiers implement required actions as per Section 4.	Land owners and occupiers	By July 2023, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as b) active management. By July 2025, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as c) monitoring phase. By July 2026, all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone are classified as d) eradicated.	A register is maintained by WMB of all known land parcels with gamba grass in the Class A zone according to their current eradication status: a) unmanaged b) active management c) monitoring phase d) eradicated Summary data of a, b, c and d is produced. Annual summary data produced showing progress toward eradication.
1c. By July 2026, all gamba grass in the Class A zone is eradicated (unless under permit).	Assess eradication status for land parcels.	WMB		
1d. By July 2026, a review of the permit system pertaining to gamba grass is completed.	Existing permits that allow grazing of gamba grass in the Class A zone are reassessed to ensure they are appropriate.	WMB WAC	Review of permit system is completed as it pertains to gamba grass.	Annual reporting on gamba grass grazing permit conditions and compliance. Outcomes of the July 2026 review are made publicly available.
1e. Review the Class A and B zone boundaries to improve the protection of areas in the Class B management zone that are free of gamba grass.	By July 2026, review the Class A and Class B zones to ensure the Class A zone captures areas that are free of gamba grass and where eradication is considered feasible.	WMB WAC	By July 2026, revised Class A and B zones are declared if recommended by the review process.	Gamba grass management zones review discussion paper is produced through consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the WAC. Updated Class A and B zone map is produced if zones are amended.

Table 8: Goal 2 – Contain and control gamba grass by actively managing infestations across the Class B zone and preventing spread into new areas				
Objectives	**Strategic actions**	**Who**	**Performance Indicators**	**Performance Measures**
2a. Reduce seed production. 2b. Implement weed hygiene measures to reduce gamba grass seed spread. 2c. Reduce gamba grass outliers at a land parcel and landscape scale. 2d. Prevent gamba grass spreading into clean areas. 2e. Reduce gamba grass abundance and density in the Class B zone. 2f. Reduce gamba grass presence around landholder infrastructure.	Land owners, occupiers and all users of land implement required actions as per Sections 3 and 4.	Land owners, occupiers and all users of land	An annual compliance program is developed and implemented to assess compliance with this plan and compliance action is taken against properties not complying.	Proportion of assessed land parcels that: a) Are already compliant at time of initial assessment and no follow up action is required. b) Voluntarily meet management requirements after being informed of non-compliance. c) Had compliance action taken due to non-compliance. Annual summary of a, b and c produced including the total number and area of parcels assessed as a proportion of the area of the Class B management zone.
			By July 2024 and annually afterwards there is an improvement in gamba grass management as evidenced by an improvement in parcel compliance score.	Proportion of land parcels that have had multiple year compliance assessments and: a) Compliance score has improved indicating reduced gamba density. b) Compliance score is unchanged indicating no reduction in gamba density. c) Compliance score has worsened indicating increased gamba density. Annual summary of a, b, and c produced.
			Reduction in area affected by gamba grass in target areas.	Gamba grass presence measured annually (1km grid map showing the area affected by gamba grass).
2g. Understand the distribution of gamba grass in the Class B zone.	The WMB are to undertake an annual assessment of land impacted by gamba grass. A mapping and monitoring program is developed for the Class B zone.	WMB	Increased understanding of priority areas for future mapping in the Class B zone.	Aerial survey of gamba grass within the Class B zone (pending funding). Key areas of gamba grass improvement are reported on annually including metrics for the following: a) area sprayed b) the number of properties sprayed c) tenure types. Categorised list of priority areas that require gamba grass mapping is produced.

Table 9: Goal 3 - Protect priority environmental and cultural assets from the impacts of gamba grass				
Objectives	**Strategic actions**	**Who**	**Performance Indicators**	**Performance Measures**
3a. Identify key environmental and cultural assets[12] at risk of being impacted by gamba grass and incorporate into relevant Weed Management Branch, stakeholder and land manager regional plans, strategies and compliance programs.	By December 2022, key environmental and cultural assets[12] at risk of being impacted by gamba grass have been identified with stakeholder input.	WMB Non-Government Organisations Landholders and occupiers	By December 2022 a list has been developed of key environmental and cultural assets[12].	By January 2023, a list of priority assets identified is made publicly available (with exclusion of certain sacred sites if necessary).
	Identified key environmental and cultural assets[12] have been prioritised in WMB and stakeholder planning processes.	WMB and landowners and occupiers with environmental and cultural assets	Key environmental and cultural assets[12] are prioritised in landholder management programs including regional plans.	An annual summary is produced to demonstrate progress towards protection of key environmental and cultural assets[12]. An annual map is produced with gamba grass overlayed across key environmental and cultural assets[12] for target locations[13].

[12] Environmental and cultural assets as outlined in the WMB Regional Weed Management Strategies.

[13] This performance measure requires stakeholders to be working towards collecting data (e.g. presence, absence and treatment) so more informed maps can be predicted over time.

Table 10: Goal 4 - Increase community capacity and willingness to participate in gamba grass management				
Objectives	**Strategic Actions**	**Who**	**Performance Indicators**	**Performance Measures**
4a. Engage with the community and obtain a high level of public support for gamba grass management action resulting in an increase in voluntary compliance with gamba grass management requirements.	By July 2021, develop a communications plan to raise awareness of gamba grass management requirements and available support. Engage with the community. Education and awareness activities are implemented to encourage compliant behaviours.	WMB	Public knowledge of gamba grass impacts and management requirements has increased. Changes in active management and voluntary compliance levels.	Delivery of the communications plan, including participation in public events. The number of people participating in the Gamba Action Program has increased. Annual review and update of communications plan. Annual summary data produced as per Goals 1 to 3.
	By July 2023, complete a social marketing study (subject to funding) to identify community perceptions, needs and barriers regarding gamba grass management.	WAC lead in conjunction with Non-Government Organisations	Better understand community perceptions, needs and barriers regarding gamba grass management.	Development and completion of the social marketing study by 2023. Post study completion, and delivery of strategies that incorporate study outcomes to increase uptake of gamba grass management in the community.
	Improve landholder capacity for reporting gamba grass points in the Class A zone.	WMB	Public reporting to WMB on gamba infestations in the Class A zone.	Uptake of NT WeedMate. Presence / absence of gamba grass in the Class A zone is being reported to the WMB for a) all historical gamba grass points; and b) new sightings.
	Development of an efficient tool (subject to funding) to encourage public reporting of gamba grass sightings and management effort. Promote the report gamba tool to encourage public reporting of problem gamba grass in the Class B zone.	WAC lead in conjunction with Non-Government Organisations	Public reporting of problem gamba grass.	The number of reports being made of problem gamba grass via the gamba reporting tool at nt.gov.au/gamba
	Establish and support cross tenure working groups to ensure coordinated	WMB	An increase in coordinated management effort.	Promote active working groups achieving effective gamba grass management across tenures.

Table 10: Goal 4 - Increase community capacity and willingness to participate in gamba grass management				
	management of gamba grass across different land tenures.			
4b. Ensure adequate information and knowledge on gamba grass management is available and up to date, which translates into improved management approaches.	Research is undertaken that supports improved gamba grass management outcomes by addressing identified research gaps.	WMB Research partners WAC	The Gamba WAC reviews annually key knowledge gaps that need to be addressed to improve gamba grass management outcomes. Feedback to be sought annually to inform knowledge gaps.	Key knowledge gaps are reported on annually including: a) further research or work needed to address these knowledge gaps, and b) any progress being made to address these knowledge gaps.
	Promote research activities and updated management recommendations.	WMB and Research partners	Land manager awareness of improved management approaches.	Research outcomes that can improve gamba grass management outcomes are a) made available to the public; and b) reported on annually. Integration of research outcomes into core business activities.
	Delivery of gamba grass forums with a focus on celebrating gamba grass successes and educating the community / land mangers on how to manage gamba grass and identifying other needs.	WAC in conjunction with relevant stakeholders	Capacity to manage gamba grass effectively has increased.	Delivery of gamba grass forums (every 2 to 3 years) to celebrate gamba grass successes, provide education and identify needs.
	Collaborate with other jurisdictions: a) to identify funding options for production of a National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by December 2022. b) On the production of a National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by early 2024.	WMB	Pathway is identified to produce National Gamba Grass Best Practice Manual. Collaborate with other jurisdictions on the production of the National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by early 2024.	Progress is made towards development of National Gamba Grass Best Practice Manual. Delivery of National Best Practice Gamba Grass Manual by early 2024.

Table 11: Goal 5 – Implement transparent and accountable compliance, monitoring and reporting processes				
Objectives	**Strategic actions**	**Who**	**Performance Indicators**	**Performance Measures**
5a. Deliver a transparent and risk-based compliance program.	A risk-based compliance program is developed. The compliance program is promoted to the community. The compliance program is implemented annually.	WMB	Responsiveness to public enquiries.	Proportion of public enquiries responded to regarding the compliance process.
			Public awareness of the parcel compliance rating system.	Number of online downloads of the parcel compliance rating system, annually.
			Application of the parcel compliance rating system.	Annual summary of outcomes as per Goal 1 - 3.
5b. Collaborate with key stakeholders to undertake regular monitoring and reporting of performance against the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030.	By 30 September each year, deliver an annual report which addresses all performance indicators.	WMB WAC	Regular, transparent, and meaningful reporting that is effectively promoted to the public.	Public release of an annual report reviewed by the WAC that addresses performance indicators and measures within this plan. Annual online feedback undertaken to inform annual report.
	Effectively communicate key outcomes of the annual report to the community.	WMB	Community awareness.	Number of mechanisms used to promote the key outcomes of the annual report.
5c. Ensure ongoing independent oversight of delivery of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030.	Ongoing collaboration with the WAC regarding implementation of this plan.	WMB	Retention of the WAC.	WAC are communicating with their represented stakeholders on performance of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 and acting on feedback received from stakeholders.