

Gamba grass weed advisory committee meeting #6

Meeting summary

Time 9am – 1:30pm

Date: Tuesday, 22 February 2022

Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee members present		
Anna Boustead	Representing the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN)	AB
Susanne Casanova	Chair - Representing Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM)	SC
Justin Dunning	Representing Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT)- local government interests	JD
Dr Keith Ferdinands	Proxy for Anthony Kerr - representing Northern Land Council	KF
Sharon Jones	Representing NTG – Vacant Crown Land (VCL)	SJ
Louise Kean	Representing NTG – Parks and Wildlife	LK
Dr David Liddle	Representing Environment Centre Northern Territory (ECNT) / Gamba Grass Roots	DL
Dr Natalie Rossiter	Charles Darwin University (CDU)	NR-R
Gamba Grass Weed Advisory Committee apologies		
Romy Carey	Representing the pastoral industry	RC
Shelly Haitana	Representing tourism industry	SH
Anna Malgorzewicz	Representing Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) – local government interests	AM
Other attendees present:		
Kelly-Marie Benham	Guest Presenter – NTG Bushfires NT	KB
Emma Burcher	Weeds Planning Officer – Weed Management Branch (WMB)	EB
Chris Parker	Onshore Petroleum Weed Management Officer (WMB)	CP
Matt Sheehan	Guest Presenter – Wild Matters	MS
Nigel Weston	Director - Weed Management Branch (WMB)	NW

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

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

WAC member	Objective of plan	Key outcomes this quarter
AB	(4a)	Savanna Fire Forum was held on the 15 th – 16 th February 2022. A report will be available online for the event. AB is working on the development of a new Savanna Fire Management method. Consultation to be held by ICIN in March and April 2022. One area they are looking at is areas being excluded where there is gamba – results in issue of stopping gamba reports. The new methods to be in place by February 2023.
SC (chair)	(1a), (4b)	Gamba along road corridors – have been collecting data and using the data to assess changes from one season to the next. Planning the Gamba Grass Community Forum – PEW to help promote. Business as usual for the Gamba Army.
JD	(2a-2f)	Gamba spraying has been undertaken on land the Litchfield Council manages. All fire breaks sprayed. Follow up control to commence in April 2022. Round 2 gamba slashing is commencing around the road verges. Weeds going off property / onto road verges is an ongoing problem.
KF	(1a–1c)	Chasing up items required under Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 – Class A zone gamba point status.
SJ	(2a-2f)	VCL Weeds Officer has been replaced. VCL are spraying at the moment. Fire Contract to be redone for Control Burn Program and is currently out for tender.
LK	(2a-2f)	Gamba grass ‘adopt-a-spotters’ in the Casuarina Community Reserve are going well. Parks have been liaising with the Gamba Army about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knuckey Lagoons • Casuarina Coastal Reserve • Charles Darwin National Park Funding available for purchasing additional chemical and strategic weed management in Litchfield National Park. Nitmiluk National Park – no gamba has been observed. Draft NT Parks Masterplan 2022 – 2052 being released for comment in March 2022.
DL	(2a-2f), (4b)	Casuarina Coastal Reserve – community members have adopted spots under the Parks Volunteer Program. Are overlaying 20m x 20m grids over the area to track gamba progress across the area. Gamba Grass Roots – have a focus at the federal level with the election coming up and are talking to various parties about how they may support gamba management. Intention to be involved in the Fire Ready Week – March 2022 and the Gamba Grass Community Forum proposed to be held in April 2022. Encourages the next Gamba Grass Annual Report to be issued in a timely manner.
NR-R	(3a), (1c)	Presented results of gamba distribution modelling conducted for Litchfield National Park for the year 2031 and costed management scenarios. Three main scenarios were examined: (1) no active management, (2) eradicating gamba in the current Litchfield gamba eradication zone and (3) eradicating gamba grass in a significantly expanded eradication zone (to protect the majority of visitor assets in the park). Research suggests an investment of >\$1 million per year, for 5 years, is required for an intensive gamba eradication program in order to protect most visitor sites in the park from gamba grass. The remaining area of Litchfield National Park will be surveyed and mapped this year. Natalie also highlighted that the Threatened species – Strategy Action Plan 2021 – 2026 has recently been released by the Commonwealth Government. The Action Plan includes 16 targets. Target 3 is to ‘Reduce Gamba Grass to an areas less than its 2021 range

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		by 2026'. Methods for measuring the range at 2021 to be discussed further. Natalie highlighted the need for aerial survey in the Class A zone.
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WMB attendees	Objective of plan	Key outcomes this quarter
EB	(1a), (3a), (4a)(4c)	Class A Zone - Data on presence / absence of gamba has been requested from Class A zone properties. Data is being supplied by land owners. Mapping and monitoring program and analysis of Class A zone data is progressing. Environmental and cultural assets at threat from gamba. WMB have been discussing the scope of this project. Information prepared for workshoping later today. Gamba Communications progressing: Annual Report and Snap Shot, core flutes, bus wrap, radio ads, facebook posts, newsletter articles. Public reporting tool - A proposal presented to the WAC for promoting methods of reporting gamba grass distribution.
EB on behalf of Roni Opden (Gamba Fire Mitigation Unit)	(4a), (2a-2f), (5a)	Fire Ready Week from 1 - 5 March 2022. Fire Ready Assistance Program for the elderly and vulnerable - \$50,000 per annual ongoing funding for this program. Approximately 35 blocks per season to be treated. Slow start to 21/22 season with some contractor and rain delays. Gamba Fire Mitigation - Compliance - commenced inspections 06/12/21. 1500 + properties have been prioritised for inspections based on fuel risk and previous effort. 670+ have been scored to date (priority round 1 inspections) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43 'good work' letters sent • 58 advice letters sent • 158 order to control. Priority round 2 inspections are underway.
CP	(4b)	ID Brochure is progressing. Comments received from the WAC after distribution to the WAC in December 2021 are appreciated.
NW	(1a - 1c), (2a-2f) and (4c)	1879 participants in the gamba action program so far this season. The Aboriginal Ranger Grants is another area gamba is being managed. There is a new NT Weeds Strategy (comprising the regional strategies for Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs).

Guest presenter	Objective of plan	Key outcomes this quarter
MS	(4b)	Consultant working on the Gamba Grass Best Practice Manual. Workshops to commence soon. The Best Practice Manual is proposed to be complete by Nov/Dec 2022.
KB	-	Update on new Australian Fire Danger Rating System. Will see all state and territories using the same rating system. The system is proposed to be rolled out in September 2022.