

WEEDS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

GORSE

(Ulex europaeus L.)

An addendum to update the “Weeds of National Significance Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) Strategic Plan”

November 2010 (amended January 2011)



National Gorse TASKFORCE

Forward

For the past seven years the National Gorse Taskforce (NGT) has been putting in place measures to equip the community to halt the spread of the green and yellow landscape-cancer, gorse. The Taskforce feel it is now time to hand responsibility back to state governments and the community.

With this in mind, during the last two years the National Gorse Taskforce has been focussing on moving the gorse Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) project to its final phase.

Taskforce members are delighted that over time we have been able to equip the community with a range of tools (including education and decision-support tools), that will allow a handover from a predominately nationally coordinated and funded process to community ownership across southern Australia.

One of the innovative tools we have used in conjunction with 17 areas is 25 year gorse eradication Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), which have been set in place during this project.

One of the great results of the MOUs is the consistent momentum that resides in organisations and communities that have signed up with the National Gorse Taskforce to eradicate gorse. As MOUs have come into place, and we have monitored their progress over the last couple of years, I have gained confidence that we can (and must) soon realise a situation where there is no longer reliance on the national gorse project.

It must be remembered that the responsibility for gorse control lies with managers of both public and private land. With this in mind, ownership, leadership and the drive for gorse management must head back to local communities, landowners and state governments.

This revision here of the action section of the WoNS Gorse National Strategy is about finalising that handover, and getting the final actions completed for a seamless handover.

The NGT and National Gorse Coordinator have spent many months developing the table attached here.

We now look forward to its implementation in the immediate future in finalising the national gorse project, and watching as over time gorse comes to be eradicated from Australian landscapes.



Ian Sauer

Chairman,
National Gorse Taskforce

Background

In June 2010, the NGT decided to proceed with a revision of the Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) Strategic Plan (also referred to as the WoNS Gorse National Strategy). The original document was published in 2003 and the revision is based predominantly on results of a 2009 review of the strategy implementation conducted by the Australian Weeds Committee (AWC).

The decision was taken by the Taskforce to revise the action component of the WoNS Gorse National Strategy. However, with the gorse project effectively reaching its concluding stages, it was decided revising and reproducing the entire document was an unnecessary use of time and resources.

In July 2010 the NGT developed a summary of recommendations from the AWC 2009 *Review of the Implementation of the Gorse Strategic Plan* and other sources, and held a national strategy revision meeting in Melbourne. This involved representatives of four states and the Australian Government (with a fifth state representative consulted subsequently too). From this came a draft table of updated objectives and outstanding actions and tasks for implementation over a 12 month period of near fulltime coordination, and then part time coordination beyond this.

From July to September 2010 there was a month by month email consultation within the Taskforce on the further development of a revised national strategy table. A brief face to face discussion in Canberra involving Australian Government representative Jeanine Baker, NGT Chair Ian Sauer and the WoNS Gorse Coordinator Michael Noble was also undertaken in August.

The attached document, an addendum to the WoNS Gorse Strategic Plan, effectively replaces Chapter 2 of that document. The full 2003 document can be accessed at www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/gorse/.

The gorse project is rapidly moving toward its third and final phase. There is a pressing need to move immediately to enact outstanding strategy actions and tasks as outlined below.

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Postscript - In late 2010 the Australian Government announced that WoNS Gorse coordination funding (along with other existing species) will drop 0.1 FTE following the 2010/11 financial year. In light of this change, a rapid revision of this document was undertaken by the Coordinator in January 2011. Focus areas for the remainder of the financial year are highlighted in yellow.

REVISED NATIONAL GORSE STRATEGY AND WORKPLAN TABLE

Yellow highlighting indicates priority completion given the recent Aust. Gov't-proposed end to coordination in mid 2011

1. Protect against, prevent spread of, and eradicate gorse in key areas

Objectives are:

A Protect clean areas and promote early detection of new infestations

B Prevent spread

C Eradication of isolated and scattered infestations

Objectives	National Action/s and Tasks	Responsibility	Resources	Performance Indicators (inc. Timing)
1A Protect clean areas and promote early detection of new infestations	<p>Create gorse awareness information and target information distribution to early detection areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify likely "early detection areas" nationally - Design and develop a double-sided gorse flyer (and place on the internet) - Distribute identification information including early detection areas 	Coordinator, National Gorse Taskforce (NGT), state agencies, regional bodies, local government, community groups	<p>Research time – Coordinator, NGT, state weed contacts</p> <p>\$4 000 - National Gorse project to produce a double-sided flyer</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$4 000</p>	<p>Key national areas identified by June 2011</p> <p>Gorse flyer developed and printed by June 2011</p> <p>Flyer and other information disseminated to key areas by Dec 2011</p>
1B Prevent spread	<p>Emphasize weed hygiene to stakeholders, as a key part of best practice management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write to national contacts outlining importance of gorse weed hygiene - Produce and publish newsletter article on gorse weed hygiene - Present a conference paper on weed hygiene 	Coordinator, National Gorse Taskforce (NGT), state agencies, regional bodies, local government, community groups	<p>Research and liaison time – Coordinator</p> <p>Component of \$11 000 National Gorse Coordinator travel budget</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$11 000 (total travel budget)</p>	<p>Correspondence on weed hygiene to national contacts database by Feb 2010</p> <p>One gorse newsletter weed hygiene article published by Dec 2011</p> <p>Weed hygiene conference paper presented by Dec 2011</p>
1C Eradication of isolated and scattered infestations	<p>Maintain, review, and manage MOUs through state and regional monitoring of eradication programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a yearly communication with each existing MOU to check on progress and needs 	Coordinator, NGT, MOU signatories, AWC	<p>Liaison and reporting time – Coordinator</p> <p>Component of \$11 000 National Gorse Coordinator travel budget</p>	<p>Annual check with each MOU and reports back to NGT completed - ongoing</p> <p>Coordinator visits carried out to MOU locations based on NGT</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (including with gorse baton holders) - Visit MOU areas and/or work with states to audit progress & needs 		\$11 000 (total travel budget)	recommendations by July 2011 and Dec 2011
	<p>Identify and encourage potential partners for signing of new MOUs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and actively pursue any remaining outstanding MOU opportunities 	NGT, Coordinator, state agencies	<p>Research, travel and liaison time – Coordinator, NGT/ state weed contacts</p> <p>\$3 000 - National Gorse project to fund travel to selected MOU locations</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$3 000</p>	<p>Proposals to identify potential MOUs completed by Dec 2011</p> <p>MOUs signed wherever agreement is reached by Dec 2011</p>
	<p>Promote research and the uptake and dissemination of research on eliminating gorse seedbanks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively pursue and promote funding and research projects that will provide guidance on gorse soil seed bank elimination techniques - Centralise research that exists - Develop a process to prioritise research needs for gorse control 	Coordinator, NGT, state agencies, AWC, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Dr John Moore, TIAR, RIRDC and regional bodies	Research and proposal development time – Coordinator, NGT/ state weed contacts	A research proposal put forward to a suitable research/funding body by Dec 2011

2. Strategic management of established infestations

Objectives are:

- A Identify key assets for protection and prioritise nationally/jurisdictionally and regionally
- B Biological control – distribute, facilitate and research

Objectives	Action/s	Responsibility	Resources	Performance Indicators (inc. Timing)
2A Identify key assets for protection and prioritise nationally/jurisdictionally and	Determine and publicise key national assets under threat from gorse, and promote control of gorse where	Coordinator, NGT, DAFF, state agencies, John Thorpe, regional	Research and liaison time – Coordinator	Key assets at threat from gorse listed nationally by June 2011

regionally	<p>threats to key assets exist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is an AWC review recommendation. Contact AWC to ensure agreed understanding of the recommendation - Research geographical overlap between key assets and gorse presence/gorse-compatible areas - Notify relevant stakeholders and promote gorse control by supporting funding applications where key assets are determined to be at threat from gorse - Publicise key asset-gorse threat overlaps by newsletter and website 	bodies, local government and community		National stakeholders notified of key assets threatened by gorse by Dec 2011
2B Biological control – distribute agents, and facilitate research	<p>Establish national bio-control contacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact bio-control program managers to reaffirm partnerships 	Coordinator, NGT, researchers	Time to research and make contact - Coord	Re-establish bio-control contacts by Dec 2010
	<p>Encourage stakeholder bio-control agent distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine where bio-control distribution/further distribution is required - Facilitate dissemination of information and agents to required areas and publish on weeds website 	Coordinator, NGT, state agencies, RIRDC, DAFF, regional bodies, local government, and community	Time required to establish needs and to facilitate the distribution of agents	Bio-control agents and information disseminated to required areas and placed on weeds website by Dec 2011
	Facilitate investigation and pursuit of new/potential bio-control agents	Coordinator, NGT, stakeholders	Time required to assess research/bio-control	National bio-control needs sought and

	and/or related needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek input from stakeholders on potential bio-control agents/needs e.g. agents to attack the soil seed bank - Communicate required agents/needs to bio-control program managers 		niche needs and communicate these to bio-control program managers/researchers	provision of results sent to program managers/researchers by Dec 2011
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3. Increased capacity and will to manage

Objectives are:

- A National collation and storage of spatial data
- B Adoption of best practice management
- C Outstanding gorse management achiever recognition
- D Project phase-down MOU debriefs

Strategies	National Action/s	Responsibilities	Resources	Performance Indicators (inc. Timing)
3A National collation and storage of spatial data	Engage with the national WoNS mapping program and collate existing gorse mapping for input to the system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively engage with the development/finalisation of the national weed mapping program - Encourage the adoption of national core attributes - Collate and provide national gorse spatial data for input into the national system 	Coordinator, NGT, Australian Government (DAFF), Tasmanian Government (DPIPWE)	Time required for liaison and collation of spatial data – Coord and Tasmanian/Aust. Government staff	All relevant and available gorse mapping data provided to WoNS national mapping program by Dec 2011
	Link weeds officers and other stakeholders to the national mapping system (including national core attributes)	Coordinator, Australian Government (DAFF), NGT, stakeholders	Time required for liaison and provision of access to spatial data – Coordinator, Australian	WoNS national mapping of gorse stakeholder access available and stakeholders notified by

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the national WoNS mapping program to establish stakeholder access potential - Notify stakeholders of the national WoNS mapping program and access to it 		Government (DAFF)	Dec 2011
3B Adoption of best practice management	<p>Deliver best practice information and implementation advice to states, regions, local government & community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare/update gorse WoNS communications plan - Update the existing gorse contact database - Produce a minimum of one gorse report newsletters/ six months - Provide ongoing advisory support to stakeholders with regard to gorse best practice management (BPM) 	Coordinator, NGT, states, regional bodies, local government and community	<p>Up to \$5 000 required to fund assistance in updating the gorse contact database - Coord</p> <p>Time required for updating of communications plan, production of newsletters and provision of advice – Coordinator</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Up to \$5 000</p>	<p>Existing gorse database updated to reflect current national gorse contacts by Dec 2011</p> <p>Communications plan prepared/updated by Dec 2010</p> <p>One gorse report newsletter completed by June 2011 and then Dec.</p> <p>Provision of ongoing advisory support on gorse BPM & referral to post-gorse WoNS contacts by June 2011</p>
	<p>Promote weedmercial use/footage inclusion in key NRM/CMA areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and notify key stakeholders on weedmercial footage availability for use 	NGT, Coordinator, regional bodies	<p>Time for identifying key stakeholders – Coord and NGT</p> <p>Time for liaison and provision of materials - Coordinator</p>	Weedmercial footage targets identified and material provided where required by Dec 2011
	<p>Establish and provide new and updated best practice management advice as required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate availability/opportunities for gorse management products for specific situations e.g. riparian gorse management - In 2013 assess the need and 	Coordinator, NGT, Australian Government (DAFF), Tasmanian Government, gorse stakeholders	<p>Time required to investigate availability/opportunities for products – Coord</p> <p>\$ required should a specific product need to be produced and disseminated</p>	<p>Availability/opportunity/requirement for situation-specific gorse products to be completed and reported back to NGT by Dec 2011</p> <p>Required products produced and/or</p>

	potential for producing an updated edition of the gorse best practice manual		\$ required should the national gorse BPM need updating	disseminated to stakeholders by Dec 2011 Requirement/feasibility for gorse manual update completed by July 2013 Revised manual produced if required by Jan 2014
	Determine the need for provision of information on techniques for restoring gorse-affected landscapes, and provide where needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile information resources on restoration - Contact stakeholders to identify interested parties and disseminate 	Coordinator, NGT, stakeholders, Aust Government, researchers, state agencies, regional bodies and community groups	Time for liaison, research and dissemination of information – Coord and NGT	Restoration information compiled and disseminated to interested stakeholders by Dec 2011.
3C Outstanding gorse management achiever recognition	Recognise outstanding gorse control achievers through award presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek further state or regional award nominations - Facilitate presentation of awards & notification of Aust Government minister 	NGT, Coordinator, Australian Government	Research/reporting time for nominations - NGT representatives Time to prepare, promote and implement presentation - Coord Component of \$11 000 National Gorse Coordinator travel budget \$11 000 (total travel budget)	Promoted award presentations to each NGT nomination by Dec 2011
3D Project phase-down MOU debriefs	On reaching the final gorse WoNS project phase (Phase 3), the Coordinator will debrief states and regions on MOU recommendations/responsibilities via AWC and direct contact	NGT, Coordinator, AWC, states, regions	Coordinator research, reporting and liaison time	Relevant states (via AWC) and regions debriefed on MOU recommendations/responsibilities by June 2011