



Submission by the South Australian Farmers Federation (SAFF) Natural Resources Committee

in response to

The Parliament of South Australia Natural Resources Committee

Inquiry into Invasive Species

September 2010

CHAIR: Mr Joe Keynes

CONTACT: Natural Resources Executive Officer
Ms Sandra Keane
Email: skeane@saff.com.au

ABN: 75 266 051 838

Telephone: (08) 8410 7233
Facsimile: (08) 8211 7303

Level 1 / 67 South Terrace,
Adelaide, SA 5000
Postal Address: PO Box 6014
Halifax Street, SA 5000

Email: info@saff.com.au
Website: www.saff.com.au

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the South Australian Farmers Federation I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Inquiry into Invasive Species.

Pest animals in Australia pose enormous costs to agriculture in terms of economic loss and control measures. Pest species are not just introduced species, but also native species that are out of balance with the environment.

SAFF believes strongly in a combination of biodiversity gains and productivity gains and so seeks effective control protocols for all nuisance species. An integrated, whole of community approach for pest species management is required. Government, industry and conservation groups must work together with the aim of achieving sustainable agriculture and biodiversity outcomes. However, management can not take place unless Government (State and Federal) provide adequate and timely funding opportunities that can achieve results for multiple species and not just one or two 'priority' species.

SAFF's Natural Resources Committee has developed two Policies in relation to introduced and native invasive species. They show the priorities and concerns of the Federation:

1. Invasive Pest Animal Policy

This policy relates to invasive introduced animals of important economic and environmental significance (eg. european red fox, european wild rabbit, meat rabbits, feral goat, feral pig, feral deer, feral camels):

a. Control strategies of invasive pest animal species should be:

- Socially and environmentally acceptable
- Efficient in terms of eliminating vermin (approximately 100% kill rate)
- Cost effective
- Specifically target problem animals

b. SAFF believes it is the responsibility of all landowners including national parks, to implement effective control measures. Management plans are an effective tool as they involve strategic planning, set goals, are outcome driven and enable landholders plan for the future.

c. SAFF believes there should be a national eradication program for invasive pest animals involving all States. However, in the absence of a nationally coordinated and funded scheme, SAFF actively supports effective and targeted regional management strategies comprising of, but not limited to:

- Comprehensive baiting programs
- Smart targeted bounties involving licenced individuals
- Coordinated control programs carried out by licenced sporting shooters, following strict codes of practice
- "Judas" technique in control programs
- Effective biological and fertility control

d. SAFF emphasises that there are rights and responsibilities of land managers to control declared pest animals under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*.

e. Partnerships between government and private industry need to be furthered and effective management techniques employed by both. SAFF strongly supports continued funding for research into invasive pest animals to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods and integrated management) to control or eliminate populations. This is critical to achieve economic and biodiversity gains.

2. Overabundant Native Animals Policy

This policy relates to the management of invasive native animals of important economic and environmental significance (kangaroo, dingo, emu, wombat) on a state and national level:

a. Control strategies of invasive native animal species should be:

- Socially and environmentally acceptable
- Cost effective
- Specifically target problem animals

b. SAFF believes it is the responsibility of all landowners including national parks, to implement effective control measures. Management plans are an effective tool as they involve strategic planning, set goals, are outcome driven and enable landholders to plan for the future.

c. Partnerships between government and private industry need to be furthered and effective management techniques employed by both. SAFF strongly supports continued funding for research into overabundant native animals to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods and integrated management) to control pest populations. This is critical to achieve economic and biodiversity gains.

d. The Federation will continue to meet with the Department for Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on a minimum quarterly basis to discuss issues around overabundant native species management in South Australia.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FARMERS FEDERATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Goat management must be co-ordinated at a state and national level.
- All State Government departments must have similar goals and strategies for goat management.
- A commercial goat industry if established must be highly regulated, including strict management controls on animal containment.
- SAFF opposes opportunistic harvesting of goats.
- There must be continued funding for research into goats to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.
- SAFF fully supports the State Government in the culling process to manage camel numbers in pastoral South Australia. This is the only way to significantly impact on numbers.
- A commercial camel industry if established must be highly regulated including strict management controls on animal containment. There are too many issues, for which regulations and policies have not been developed, for SAFF to support a camel industry at this stage.
- SAFF opposes opportunistic harvesting of camels.
- There must be continued funding for research into camels to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.
- SAFF supports effective techniques for the management of foxes, such as baiting, bounties and biological controls.
- There must be continued funding for research into foxes to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.
- Feral deer is a major Biosecurity issue to livestock, and must be managed as a matter of urgency to prevent further spread of populations.
- A commercial deer industry must be highly regulated, including strict management controls on animal containment. Deer used for commercial enterprises should be able to be identified through tagging and tracking.
- SAFF is concerned that there is inadequate control of feral deer by the responsible authorities in parks, and this needs to be urgently addressed.
- SAFF supports two dog policies. South of the Dog Fence, SAFF supports the exclusion of dingoes in recognition of the massive economic damage which they and dingo/domestic dog hybrids can cause commercial livestock industries. North of the Dog Fence, SAFF accepts that dingoes are Australia's 'wild dog' with a right to a place in the natural environment.
- SAFF supports the absolute need of a well maintained Dog Fence.
- All landholders must remain vigilant in the management of dingoes/wild dogs, and be aware of their responsibilities as land managers. Support from non-industry community members is also essential.

- There must be more research into wombat behaviour and distribution, given that wombats are being seen to inhabit new areas of the State, and are becoming a pest in existing areas.
- In areas of the State where wombat numbers are of a concern, wombat management zones could be developed. Within a core area wombats breeding populations are protected; an adjacent zone would manage wombats; and any area outside of that would allow culling to protect the landscape and farming industries.
- Guidelines and management tools to control the growing kangaroo populations in the settled areas need to be identified.
- SAFF supports sustainable kangaroo management.
- All landholders must take responsibility to manage the weeds on their properties, regardless of whether the land is freehold or crown land.
- Government must acknowledge that some native plant species are becoming a nuisance and must make the Native Vegetation regulations flexible enough to deal with this change in the landscape.
- Education of the general public and landholders is vital to the prevention on new invasive species into South Australia, which will require additional financial support to NRM Boards.
- Funding must be spent on research into the impacts of climate change in the natural movement of invasive species across State borders.
- A proactive approach preventing species from becoming pests should be supported. NRM Boards must work with the community to get landholders to report increases in specie population sizes or movement of species into new locations.
- Publicity associated with some species, such as wombats, can make rational management almost impossible. Government agencies must continue their stance on management options, which may not be supported by the general public; but are in the best interest of preventing high economic and biodiversity damage to the States farming land.
- Government departments must work together to look at the 'big picture' which is what is the 'best outcome' for the South Australian landscape. This is the goals of the State NRM Plan, but can not work in the 'real world' if departments stop at their 'boundaries'.
- Legislation and policies must be developed that are integrated and work cooperatively to deal with any type of invasive species. They must be 'pro-active', and not just 're-active' when a crisis point has been hit.
- Funding dates for NRM Boards must be flexible as to when the monies can be spent, as the time of the year when the money becomes available, may not provide the best outcome for the management of the NRM issue.
- Landholders must be able to receive funding for landscape management, as one problem can't be fixed without fixing another. This is an issue when landholders purchase new properties that were not managed well.

1. EXISTING INVASIVE SPECIES PROBLEMS INCLUDING WEEDS, MICE AND LOCUSTS

A. GOATS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Goat management must be co-ordinated at a state and national level.
- All State Government departments must have similar goals and strategies for goat management.
- A commercial goat industry if established must be highly regulated, including strict management controls on animal containment.
- SAFF opposes opportunistic harvesting of goats.
- There must be continued funding for research into goats to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.

Feral goat numbers are currently at their highest since 1990. Work on the feral goat issue really needs some upper level discussion and support. Current work done by NRM Boards is not achieving the results it should. It has been suggested strongly that South Australia needs a state coordinator who would liaise with a national coordinator. A national approach is required as South Australia has a significant problem with goats crossing its borders. The most recent is an issue with the Victorian national parks department who are being very uncooperative. Goats travel further than many think, so we need to have some consistent policy across all levels of Government.

The Federal Government is happy to have some goats around and say that eradication is not feasible or economical. State Government however, have different policies. The then DWLBC wanted high levels of control, pushing for eradication; and the Pastoral Board has an eradication policy. The NRM Boards risk assessment is to manage the population (in NRM risk assessment, manage is well down the list or middle of the range of priorities). The NRM Boards have the responsibility to deal with the issue, so why then do we need these other Departments having conflicting directions? This only creates confusion for landholders of knowing who to believe or what is their legal responsibility. Landholders are the key to managing the populations and they must be given the correct information to manage this pest animal.

A commercial goat industry if established in South Australia must be highly regulated, including strict management controls on animal containment.

SAFF opposes opportunistic harvesting of goats as it will not have a great influence on the impact of goats on the landscape.

SAFF strongly supports continued funding for research into invasive pest animals such as goats, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.

B. CAMELS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- SAFF fully supports the State Government in the culling process to manage camel numbers in pastoral South Australia. This is the only way to significantly impact on numbers.
- A commercial camel industry if established must be highly regulated including strict management controls on animal containment. There are too many issues, for which regulations and policies have not been developed, for SAFF to support a camel industry at this stage.
- SAFF opposes opportunistic harvesting of camels.
- There must be continued funding for research into camels to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.

Camels are a very serious issue for pastoralists in South Australia in that they destroy farm infrastructure, they are damaging the Dog Fence, they can wreck watering holes and they have significant negative impacts on pastures.

The SAFF fully supports the State Government in the culling process to manage camel numbers in pastoral South Australia. This should be the main priority for direct and effective camel management. The Federation does not support a camel industry as a high priority as:

- The use of camels for meat will not have a significant impact on camel numbers.
- The development of abattoirs creates a conflict between the culling of camels and use of camels for meat. Time and energy will be spent defending the cull, rather than getting on with the job. As has been seen with the feral goat industry, use of goats in the meat industry does not get to the issue of reducing numbers which is what is actually needed.
- The transportation of camels is complex given the animal welfare issues and the new transport code which dictates rest times for truck drivers.

A commercial camel industry if established in South Australia must be highly regulated, including strict management controls on animal containment.

SAFF opposes opportunistic harvesting of camels as it will not have a great influence on the impact of camels on the landscape.

SAFF strongly supports continued funding for research into invasive pest animals such as camels, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.

C. FOXES

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- SAFF supports effective techniques for the management of foxes, such as baiting, bounties and biological controls.
- There must be continued funding for research into foxes to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.

SAFF supports effective techniques for the management of foxes, such as regional baiting programs, smart targeted bounties involving licensed individuals and research into effective biological control methods.

SAFF strongly supports continued funding for research into invasive pest animals such as foxes, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their ecological impact and effective control systems (including biological methods) to control or eliminate populations.

D. DEER

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Feral deer is a major Biosecurity issue to livestock, and must be managed as a matter of urgency to prevent further spread of populations.
- A commercial deer industry must be highly regulated, including strict management controls on animal containment. Deer used for commercial enterprises should be able to be identified through tagging and tracking.
- SAFF is concerned that there is inadequate control of feral deer by the responsible authorities in parks, and this needs to be urgently addressed.

The distribution and abundance of feral deer varies across South Australia, but is increasingly a concern in the South East and Mid North where populations of deer are causing significant damage on agricultural properties and in national parks.

Feral deer can have an economic impact on agriculture through crop damage by grazing, physical disruption (walking through crops) and damage to property (e.g. fencing). Feral deer can have a significant impact on natural resources; including the degradation of soil and land, competing with native animals for specific sources of food and habitat and biodiversity impacts through damaging and/or destroying native vegetation. Feral deer may also have significant potential as a vector for disease transfer to stock (e.g. OJD) and are therefore a major Biosecurity issue. As the deer is in higher rainfall and populated areas, control methods are often limited.

The commercial deer industry must be highly regulated, including the registering of commercial enterprises, and strict management controls on containment and transfer of deer to minimise escapes. Deer used for commercial enterprises should be able to be identified through tagging and tracking and have appropriate infrastructure to keep deer contained.

Predominately, the most significant impact of deer is on agricultural enterprises adjoining National Parks. SAFF is concerned that there is inadequate control by the responsible authorities in parks, and this needs to be urgently addressed.

E. DINGOES/WILD DOGS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- SAFF supports two dog policies. South of the Dog Fence, SAFF supports the exclusion of dingoes in recognition of the massive economic damage which they and dingo/domestic dog hybrids can cause commercial livestock industries. North of the Dog Fence, SAFF accepts that dingoes are Australia's 'wild dog' with a right to a place in the natural environment.
- SAFF supports the absolute need of a well maintained Dog Fence.
- All landholders must remain vigilant in the management of dingoes/wild dogs, and be aware of their responsibilities as land managers. Support from non-industry community members is also essential.

SAFF supports the absolute need of a well maintained dog fence.

North of the Dog Fence, SAFF accepts that dingoes are Australia's 'wild dog' with a right to a place in the natural environment. Control of dingoes in these areas should be limited to the current practice of controlling populations in the Dog Fence buffer zone area and when dingo numbers increase to the point of becoming a production/management problem to South Australia's northern cattle industry.

South of the Dog Fence, SAFF supports the exclusion of dingoes in recognition of the massive economic damage which they and dingo/domestic dog hybrids (wild dogs) can cause commercial livestock industries. Wild dogs are becoming a huge problem inside the dog fence adjacent to the pastoral areas. The problem lies with change of land use inside the fence which has allowed wild dogs to breed up. The fence itself is in good order.

Land use changes such as:

- Sheep grazing to private conservation parks
- Sheep grazing to indigenous ownership
- Sheep grazing to mining leases
- Sheep grazing to cattle grazing

The mining companies and cattle graziers are co-operating with eradication of wild dogs. The state run national parks strategically bait and are very supportive. The private conservation parks are the main problem and seem unwilling to bait. They need to be reminded that wild dogs inside the fence must be eradicated; this is the law.

The Biteback project funded by the Sheep Industry Fund and administered by the SAAL NRM Board has been successful in developing a program that creates local action panels in hot spots to have a harmonised system of education, baiting and follow up trapping to get on top of the problem. Obviously the sheep industry needs to be continually vigilant and proactive, but support from non-industry community members is also essential.

F. WOMBATS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There must be more research into wombat behaviour and distribution, given that wombats are being seen to inhabit new areas of the State, and are becoming a pest in existing areas.
- In areas of the State where wombat numbers are of a concern, wombat management zones could be developed. Within a core area wombats breeding populations are protected; an adjacent zone would manage wombats; and any area outside of that would allow culling to protect the landscape and farming industries.

Anecdotal information and the survey information gathered for the SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board report titled 'A Land System Based Management Plan for Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats in the Murraylands, SA'; indicates that total grazing pressure on farming land by wombat activity is on the increase. The above mentioned report states:

'Regional assessment of wombat activity confirmed that in some areas of the Murraylands there has been a detectable increase in wombat burrowing activity across the past 30 years...'

'Clearly there is an urgent need for more information on wombat activity patterns and abundance as it relates to changes in temporal and climatic variables...'

Another report titled 'Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats in the Far West Coast District of South Australia: Assessment and Implications of Warren Distribution and Population Density 1980, 1995 and 2002' written by the University of Adelaide; states:

'It is suggested that if the population density at present is high enough to seriously impact upon local farmers, this impact is likely to increase in the future...'

'Whatever the reason for the increase in wombats as a pest in the Far West coast there is little available information that provides quantitative population estimates or locally specific measures of warren distribution. Furthermore a comparative evaluation of population and distribution over time has never occurred and prevents an understanding of the consequences of a culling system...'

SAFF recommends more research into wombat behaviour and distribution, given that wombats are being seen to inhabit new areas of the State, and are becoming a pest in existing areas. They are moving into these new areas as a result of the changing landscape due to drought – shift from grasses/herbs to shrubs/saltbushes. Wombats are causing economic loss through crop and machinery damage and land management issues, which then fall onto the responsibility of the individual landholders. But if landholders can only obtain culling permits for less than 10 wombats at a time, it leaves them in an unworkable situation.

SAFF supports a recommendation of the SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board report that 'the Murraylands southern hairy-nosed wombat distribution be divided into core (essential for the long term survival of the species), intermediate and peripheral zones for conservation, and management actions tailored to suit these zones'. This approach should be taken in all areas of the State where wombat numbers are a concern. SAFF suggests that within the core area, wombats breeding populations are protected, an adjacent zone would manage wombats and any area outside of that would allow culling to protect the landscape and farming industries.

G. KANGAROOS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Guidelines and management tools to control the growing kangaroo populations in the settled areas need to be identified.
- SAFF supports sustainable kangaroo management.

Construction of the Dog Fence in South Australia to protect the pastoral sheep industry has caused kangaroo populations south of the fence to expand above sustainable limits. This is a result of reduced predation and construction of additional watering points through pastoral activities. Over abundance of kangaroos has increased the Total Grazing Pressure (TGP) on pastoral lands having the dual effect of impacting on production and NRM. TGP is an NRM issue as grazing in pastoral country is exclusively reliant on native vegetation, and unsustainable grazing by kangaroos will impact on biodiversity and habitat of other native species.

Kangaroo populations are not only affecting pastoral regions, but numbers are also increasing in the lower South East, Murraylands and Fleurieu Peninsula. In these areas they graze on crops, and shelter in patches of remnant vegetation which as a result become overgrazed.

Guidelines and management tools to control the growing kangaroo populations in the settled areas need to be identified. The only tool available is to 'shoot and let lie' as these areas are outside of the commercial harvest zone. Issues arise around adherence to the code of practice which includes the appropriate firearm, animal welfare, farmers not having enough time to do another chore and dealing with the carcass. An impact of the system is that the carcass must be appropriately disposed of as the effect on the hay industry if a bone is found in export hay, could be quite damaging. This is a Biosecurity issue at a very high level depending on the trading partner. Hay being sent to local feedlots could raise some implications too. Also with some of these areas becoming part of the lifestyle / rural living landscape, how do we manage the species if shooting is the only available tool and it is too dangerous to shoot?

The SA Farmers Federation supports sustainable macropod management. The operational details of which should be region specific to allow for fine tuning of the program:

- Kangaroos are a resource from which financial and social gain can be extracted - not simply a native species to be ignored or treated as a pest when in excessive numbers.
- The harvesting component of the management strategy needs to be fostered and developed.
- Both the commercial harvest and/or cull should be controlled by the land managers.

- SAFF supports 'shoot and let lie', but it should only be used as a last resort if a commercial harvest can not be developed.

H. WEEDS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- All landholders must take responsibility to manage the weeds on their properties, regardless of whether the land is freehold or crown land.

In the days of Animal Plant Control Boards and previous to this, the State Government use to control a large number of weeds. There were times in some areas where this was ineffective, e.g. spraying roadsides when the paddock next to it was covered in weeds, but at least the Government was 'seen' to be trying to control the problem.

In recent times, decisions to control weeds is being based on financing control measures from a human resourcing point within the NRM Boards, which has resulted in less 'on ground' control of weeds. In the last couple of years, it has been decided that some species will no longer be controlled due to a lack of money. This is unreasonable as it loses all credibility with landholders who have been forced for many years with an imposed cost only to find out it is no longer a requirement as Government has run out of money. Together with that, it is very hard to enforce that private landholders must control their weeds, when the adjoining national park or crown land doesn't, with the excuse that there is no money to do it, or the budget for this region will not cover any cost for this park. Another problem is that parks have a different list of priority weeds to that of NRM Boards, who is meant to be the environmental manager of the region. There must have one authority making the policy, and also taking that policy to the community for comment.

I. NATIVE PLANTS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Government must acknowledge that some native plant species are becoming a nuisance and must make the Native Vegetation regulations flexible enough to deal with this change in the landscape.

Since the inception of the Native Vegetation Act, our natural bush land has changed and not all for the better. In the non cropped areas, bush land density has increased. In some areas this is not an issue as it is not classed or used greatly for financially productive activities e.g. Adelaide Hills region. In other areas where agricultural production is the main activity, reduction of productive capacity is becoming a bigger problem. The increase of native plants in the Rangelands such as Nitre Bush, Wait-A-While, Acacia Victoriae, Hop Bush and Eremophila to name a few, are becoming a problem. Most of these can grow rapidly or germinate with summer dominant rains. With climate change, this problem will escalate due to the prediction of increased summer rains. The Native Vegetation Act is not flexible enough for the rangeland zone with the Native Vegetation Council's policy of no broadacre clearance being a major contradiction to the desires of parts of the regulations. With no ability to manage these species effectively, total loss of production and biodiversity decrease will occur in some areas.

2. PREVENTING NEW INVASIVE SPECIES PROBLEMS, EG. CANE TOADS

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Education of the general public and landholders is vital to the prevention on new invasive species into South Australia, which will require additional financial support to NRM Boards.
- Funding must be spent on research into the impacts of climate change in the natural movement of invasive species across State borders.

In the prevention of new invasive animal species into South Australia e.g. Cane Toads, it is vital to educate the general public and landholders about the threatening species, what they look like, their probable impacts and control methods. This requires additional Government financial support as NRM Boards no longer have enough funding to do everything. Other species to consider are plants like Parkisonia, Mesquite and others Weeds of National Significance.

One of South Australia's biggest threats is the impending floods of the river systems from Queensland and New South Wales. The impact of climate change is that floods are going to become more regular which moves seeds and potentially water borne animal species, across the State borders. With a wetter and warmer environment, there is the potential that the plant seeds can germinate and establish. It is therefore important that funding be spent on research into the impacts of climate change in the movement of species across State borders. Also with the river flooding and increase in tourism in the northern parts of the State, seeds can be easily spread by sticking to mud or tyres and dropping off at any time. This could be currently happening with so many people visiting the Lake Eyre river systems.

3. COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF INVASIVE SPECIES

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A proactive approach preventing species from becoming pests should be supported. NRM Boards must work with the community to get landholders to report increases in specie population sizes or movement of species into new locations.
- Publicity associated with some species, such as wombats, can make rational management almost impossible. Government departments must continue their stance on management options, which may not be supported by the general public; but are in the best interest of preventing high economic and biodiversity damage to the States farming land.

A proactive approach preventing animals from becoming pests should be supported. Prevention is much more efficient and cost effective than trying to control or eradicate pest species once established. NRM Boards must educate their community about pest species in the region, and encourage landholders to report increases in specie population sizes or movement of species into new locations.

SAFF is aware that the publicity associated with some species, such as wombats, can make rational management almost impossible. Unfortunately media reports have tended to play on reader's emotions and omit how native fauna can adversely impact on agriculture and the environment. This does not assist the community in understanding the numerous and complex issues involved in conserving and protecting the environment and agricultural lands from native fauna when their numbers are unsustainable with the environment. Government agencies must continue their stance on management options, which may not be supported by the general public; but are in the best interest of preventing high economic and biodiversity damage to the States farming land.

4. STATUTORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORKS TO PREVENT AND MANAGE INVASIVE SPECIES

SAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Government departments must work together to look at the 'big picture' which is what is the 'best outcome' for the South Australian landscape. This is the goals of the State NRM Plan, but can not work in the 'real world' if departments stop at their 'boundaries'.
- Legislation and policies must be developed that are integrated and work cooperatively to deal with any type of invasive species. They must be 'pro-active', and not just 're-active' when a crisis point has been hit.
- Funding dates for NRM Boards must be flexible as to when the monies can be spent, as the time of the year when the money becomes available, may not provide the best outcome for the management of the NRM issue.
- Landholders must be able to receive funding for landscape management, as one problem can't be fixed without fixing another. This is an issue when landholders purchase new properties that were not managed well.

The effects of invasive species are all linked in some way. The worst case scenario is when the native plants take hold and colonise. They can become so thick that the landholder can no longer maintain good land management practices. On top of this, feral goats increase with no ways to control them due to the vegetative cover, kangaroos are unable to be culled and slowly build numbers, rabbits dig in the shrubbery and some weeds such as onion weed can become a feature as there is no competition and the soils become poorer in nutrients.

If we took the approach as outlined in the State NRM Plan and worked on a landscape scale, we could fix all the issues and improve the health of the environment and achieve triple bottom line. The problem is that each department is not interested in looking at the big picture, just their little sector from their own perspective. We need laws that integrate and work cooperatively to deal with any type of invasive species which are 'pro-active', and not just 're-active' when a crisis point has been hit.

In reference to Government funding for NRM Board projects, funds are allocated to set dates when the monies must be spent. Sometimes this is not at the appropriate time to get the best outcome for the problem at hand. For instance, crown land weed funding is per financial year with money allocated somewhere around September or later after all the weeds have set seed.

The farming community is retracting in numbers with property sizes increasing due to financial constraints and reducing profitability. This has impacts that are compounding for land management. As property sizes increase, the cost to maintain control of pests, weeds and animals is increasing with fewer resources to be able to combat the problem. Some Government assistance will be required to help remediate some of inherited problems so that biodiversity is maintained or improved, e.g. matching in-kind funding for rabbit ripping with allowances for fox baiting as part of the program.