



MEDIA RELEASE

Draft Australian Pest Animal Strategy released for Public Comment

Territorians are being urged to comment on the recently released Draft Australian Pest Animal Strategy.

The national strategy has been developed by the Vertebrate Pests Committee (VPC), which is chaired by Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts natural resource management executive director Brent Williams.

Mr Williams said the strategy is the sister document to the National Weeds Strategy and aims to foster a more coordinated approach to combating the spread of and environmental destruction caused by pest animals such as cane toads, camels, cats, foxes, pigs and rabbits.

"I urge Territorians to comment on the draft strategy and highlight what they perceive as weaknesses within the strategy," Mr Williams said.

"The strategy is an important first step towards putting pest animals into a workable national framework and with a problem of this scale playing out on such a large stage, the best solution is a combined effort, with the different states and territories, as well as separate stakeholders, working together.

"This is a high-level policy document with provisions for targeting individual species of pest animals that are known to cause environmental damage, production losses and that threaten the survival of native plants and animals.

"Pest animals are estimated to be costing Australia \$720 million a year to control and the implementation of the strategy is based on principles such as the early detection and eradication of pest animals before they become widely established at particular areas."

Mr Williams said the strategy took a broad detailed approach to management including governments encouraging private industry to take a leadership role in pest management.

He said a largely unreported effect of the pest animal problem extends to the social and psychological implications of pest impacts on primary producers and their families.

The strategy is available at www.feral.org.au and all comments received by 7 July 2006 will be considered and used to refine the strategy.

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Brent Williams on 8999 4568

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