



Marion Scrymgour
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

April 12, 2007

\$506,000 to Fight Cabomba

The fight to eradicate the aquatic weed cabomba has been boosted by a \$506,000 injection of funding that will continue to protect Top End Waterways.

Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour said the funding, to be split over the next two financial years, would support the good work already undertaken to rid the Territory of the noxious weed since its discovery in Darwin River in October 2004.

"The additional \$253,000 per annum funding in 2007-08 and 2008-09 will further aid the fight against this noxious aquatic weed," Ms Scrymgour said.

"It will provide for herbicide control costs, operational costs, water quality monitoring, biological monitoring, the continuation of extension and education programs and a continuation of survey and monitoring programs for the remainder of the eradication plan."

The success of the program to date can be attributed to the significant resources invested, which has enabled the NT to develop a national best practice program for eradication.

"When cabomba was first discovered it posed a major threat to Darwin's water supply," Ms Scrymgour said.

"But with the success of the eradication program so far, the risk of cabomba spreading to Darwin River Dam has been significantly reduced with efforts having been concentrated on eradicating the noxious weed and reducing its ability to spread.

"Measures implemented as part of this overall program have included:

- The establishment of shading in areas upstream of herbicide control sites to prevent production of seed;
- Continued seed viability testing;
- Continued survey of high priority sites such as Manton Dam and Darwin River Dam; as well as
- Monitoring programs targeting biodiversity and water quality in affected freshwater and saltwater systems."

Surveys of Darwin River conducted in 2005 discovered that cabomba was producing viable seed and re-generating, the first time this had occurred anywhere in Australia, further emphasising the need to control its spread.

"Cabomba has the potential to choke waterways as it is an aggressive invader of freshwater systems, particularly if they are nutrient rich," Ms Scrymgour said.

“The Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts has achieved great results in a short period of time with little disruption to nearby landholders and the community and this latest funding will capitalise on our early success in order to achieve the best chance of eradication.”

Darwin River remains under quarantine from the Cox Peninsula Road crossing to the Leonino Road crossing and at this stage will remain so until November 2008.

Local landholders can find out current information available at www.cabomba.nt.gov.au or by phoning the cabomba hotline on 8999 8954.

All possible cabomba sightings should be reported to the hotline.

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