

NEWP framework feedback template

Module 1 - Summary of draft NEWP framework

Does the vision statement adequately explain what the NEWP framework is setting out to achieve?

Yes, this vision statement encompasses the main aspirations of the framework. This vision needs to be ambitious, yet realistic and something that all stakeholders can 'run with' in their work.

Does the Program Logic adequately describe the problem, the outcome of NEWP and how it leads to the long-term outcomes (taking into account the assumptions)?

Yes, the program logic was thorough and clear. We suggest including the establishment of the central repository, which was not included in the table, as an outcome.

The Program Objective is succinct and addresses all the main objectives, as was the Assumptions and External Factors.

Are any eligible actions missing from the scope of the framework?

The scope was broadly written in such a way that additional actions not listed in the scope can still be considered under the scope.

While the scope states 'All land uses', adding 'privately owned' or 'residential properties' to the list could provide clarity for those using the framework.

Module 2 – Governance of the NEWP framework

What is the most preferred governance model option for the NEWP steering group, in terms of being able to fulfill its intended roles and stakeholder inputs?

All 3 suggested governance models have pros and cons. The model we support as most likely to succeed is: Option 1 - Board + Stakeholder Committee.

We believe that meaningful stakeholder input is crucial to understanding weed issues and developing practical control methods and plans, which makes Option 3 - Stakeholder-led Steering Committee, seem attractive on the surface but unless carefully implemented, this model is likely to be less practical and efficient than the other models. Resourcing of stakeholders to attend meetings or for a secretariat role could assist in this.

The 2nd option - Government-led Steering Committee + Stakeholder Advisory Group, may not be conducive to uninhibited stakeholder input and could limit the sense of ownership and personal accountability required for NEWP to be a success, plus it may be difficult to have a seat at the table whilst being able to critique responses and argue for improvements outside of the group.

This leaves us with the tried and tested governance model, Option 1 - Board + Stakeholder Committee. It has provisions for stakeholder input and participation, is not overly influenced by

government, and while not perfect, we feel this is the best option for implementing the NEWP Framework.

Any of these models need adequate resourcing to function.

What adjustments would you make to improve any of the models?

Option 1 - Board + Stakeholder Committee could have set requirements for positions, eg. it could be comprised of 2 scientists/botanists, 2 land managers/practitioners, 2 government representatives, indigenous representatives, etc.; or be made up of 2 representatives from each State or Territory. This will ensure recognition of the shared responsibilities of land holders, community, industry and government in weed management, plus contribute their different perspectives, skills and specialisations.

What concerns do you have about the effectiveness of a NEWP steering group in overseeing the implementation of the NEWP framework?

Members of the steering committee may bring their own biases and agendas which may see more emphasis placed on weeds which are of personal or industry concern. This is to be expected and this passion is what we need. To properly manage these tensions for prioritization and for maximum effectiveness, the steering committee should be made up of members with differing expertise and from different regions with a clear process for decision-making.

Is there an existing organisation or program that has the ideal governance model for the NEWP framework to adopt?

Any further comments you would like to make on governance?

Module 3 – New Weeds of National Significance

Are there questions missing from, not required or that need rewording in the list of screening questions for new WoNS?

The 12 questions listed would allow the effective screening of proposed WoNS before they progress to a more rigorous formal assessment.

What concerns would you have about a publicly available, online nomination process for new WoNS?

We fully support opening future WoNS nominations to all stakeholders via an online process. This is a fairer, more inclusive method which ensures WoNS nominations are evidenced based and allows public engagement on contentious weeds such as pasture grasses to be nominated when thresholds are met and allows for all stakeholders to have their say in the public domain on the case for/against their nomination. While those in regional/remote areas may be disadvantaged by limited internet access, work arounds are possible, and the need to ensure open participation outweighs these challenges

Any further comments you would like to make on determining new WoNS?

The flow chart in Figure 3.1 - Suggested process for selecting new WoNS, clearly lays out the proposed assessment process and would be feasible to implement.

A key underlying principle that should guide these determinations are that they are evidenced based, supported by the community and that a nomination triggers plans that bring on board all stakeholders to map out ways to deal with new WoNS.

Module 4 - Weed Issues of National Significance

Do the four categories of WINS described here:

- a) provide greater clarity around what a WINS could be and the need for it?
- b) seem like things that would benefit from a strategic, integrated approach to weed management at a landscape scale within the broader issue?

Yes, the four categories cover and clarify the weed issues which WINS seeks to address. This is a welcome step.

Are there steps that are not needed or are missing in the proposed WINS selection process?

The proposed process for determining WINS is logical. One important issue to note is smaller regional/remote nominators (individuals or groups) may not have the networks or ability to build partnerships with interstate organisations as required in the nomination process. Would the WINS selection committee have the capacity/discretion to manage this inequity and facilitate inclusion by directing small, regional/remote stakeholders to possible interstate partners if required?

Are there alternate ways to prioritise issues that could be used instead?

Any further comments you would like to make on selecting WINS?

If a WINS nominee fails to be selected, will it automatically be referred for assessment for the NEWAL by the selection committee?

Module 5 – National Established Weeds Action List

Is the process for actions to be placed on the NEWAL clear?

The process is mostly clear. Clarification is required on whether a weed or issue that has failed to be selected as a WoNS or WINS, but would benefit from being on the NEWAL list, would automatically be referred for NEWAL assessment, or if the nominators would need to request consideration for inclusion on the NEWAL.

Are there alternative options for how an action is prioritised for inclusion on the NEWAL?

An alternative model that could prove to be more cost effective and timely would be to establish a separate pathway for addition to the NEWAL for weeds or issues that don't have enough information available to pass a WoNS or WINS assessment, so these knowledge gaps may be filled, rather than nominating the weeds or issues for WoNS/WINS and having them rejected.

Any further comments you would like to make on NEWAL?

Module 6 – Implementation

Do you agree with the scope of the strategic plans as outlined above?

Yes, it was good to see accountability included in the scope.

Is there anything you would include/exclude from the scope or content of the strategic plans?

The content of the plans could include a 'further reading' section at the end with links to recent research and information such as relevant Federal/State/Territory legislation.

Do you support the idea of a national repository as a way of supporting ongoing management for the current 32 WoNS and new WoNS/WINS into the future?

Yes, compiling all the relevant information for each WoNS and WINS in a central location will make finding and using the information much easier for stakeholders and agencies.

Periodic reviews of this information will ensure it is kept current. This is something that can easily be overlooked. There are already a number of Government Department websites with weeds information that are in dire need of updating.

Are there other actions that should be included in the national repository?

How could the actions under the national repository be funded/coordinated?

The repository could be funded by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) general revenue. Co-contributions could be made by relevant industries and State and Territory Governments.

It would need to be coordinated and housed by a national body such as DAWE. If the Federal Government adopts a position that this framework should be rolled out then it is contingent upon it to support this repository.

Do think there should be a formal nomination/selection process for taskforce membership? Or would you be happy for members to be appointed on merit by the NEWP steering group/national coordinator?

A formal nomination/selection process for taskforce membership will encourage a broader range of applicants and ensure that members are appointed transparently and on merit.

Assuming taskforces are nationally focused, what support can they be expected to provide groups working at the state/regional/local levels?

The taskforces could provide working groups with weed management strategies and best practice, notifications of funding opportunities such as grants, networking opportunities and information dissemination, and assistance with mapping, monitoring, communications, etc.

To what extent should taskforces influence/inform the NEWP framework's overall direction? How would they interact with the NEWP steering group?

The taskforces would be closest to those working on the ground, so are most aware of stakeholder sentiment, latest discoveries, and what is working and what is not. This information must influence and inform the framework to keep the framework functioning and current.

The taskforce coordinators would report to the National Facilitator who reports to the steering committee. We imagine that each (WoNS, WINS and NEWAL) taskforce coordinator would also provide regular update presentations to the steering committee. The Committee would then use this information to modify the framework if required.

Do you support the need for specialist support services at the national level for NEWP delivery (e.g. communications, GIS, Monitoring & Evaluation)?

Yes, the national facilitator and taskforce coordinators will need specialist support to enable them to fulfill their roles.

Are there additional coordinator hosting options that are not captured here? Which hosting model/s will be most effective?

It would be most effective if the host was involved in natural resource management, weeds or research; supports the framework objectives; and provides the coordinator with both support and autonomy to conduct their role.

How important are the coordinators' formal links to State/Territory agencies in aiding their engagement/buy-in for framework implementation?

State/Territory agencies are instrumental to implementing the framework and integrating the NEWP best practice and strategic plans into state legislation and weed management plans, so their buy-in is crucial. Formal links to agencies can be beneficial to framework implementation but should only comprise one aspect of the coordinators' role. Coordinators' must retain their ability to drive action at the local, regional, jurisdictional and national levels, and across borders, land tenures, agencies and organisations, without hinderance from state agency ties.

Do you agree that co-investment by governments, industry and community organisations will be required to successfully implement the NEWP framework?

Yes, as long as participation is not restricted to only those who contribute.

In kind contributions such as labour and community engagement must be as equally valued as financial contributions.

It would be beneficial to also include mining companies as Industry stakeholders, as they are responsible for large tracts of land and have the capacity to co-invest in implementing the Framework.

Which of these models should be examined further in developing a co-investment approach for the NEWP framework? Are there other models that should also be considered?

The simplest and clearest way of funding this work would be directly by Government's at different levels. This demonstrates a commitment by Government to deal with identified priorities within their jurisdiction, provides certainty to land managers in the field and allows for long-term planning beyond grant cycles.

We suggest using different co-investment models at different stages. One for the planning, coordination and implementation; and public funding of on-ground job programs that involve proper skills, training and support.

Grants funding, where the government provides most of the funding and an organization provides the equipment and labour, has worked well in the past, especially for smaller Landcare type community groups implementing on ground management programs. Plus, it is a model groups are used to working with.

The 'Biosecurity emergency response' model could work well for funding the framework oversight and WoNS/WINS strategic plan development.

Are there any programs or projects that had/has a co-investment model that could be adapted for implementing the NEWP framework?

Any further comments you would like to make on implementation?

Module 7 – Background

Are there any other key aspects of national policy relating to established weeds management that are missing from this section?