

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.2 – Assistance for collaborations and innovation

DEST Question No. E1005_07

Senator Milne asked on 14 February 2007, EWRE Hansard page 78-79.

Question:

Weeds Program

Senator Milne—So as of July next year, we have no major research funding into weeds in Australia?

Mr Cook—That does not necessarily follow.

Senator MILNE—What else have we got?

Mr Cook—I cannot give you a comprehensive list off the top of my head, but I am happy to take it on notice and come back to you.

Answer:

Weeds Program

The National Weed Advisory Group (NWAG) is responsible for advising the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources on weed issues.

The two principle sources of Australian Government funding for weed management in Australia are currently:

- *Defeating the Weed Menace Programme.*
This programme provides \$44.4 million over four years to 2008 for national action on Australia's most threatening weeds through the Defeating the Weed Menace (DWM) programme. This programme identifies Australia's most threatening weeds and implements management measure such as on-ground control and eradication, research into cost effective management techniques, development of biological controls for key weeds, and awareness campaigns.
- *The Natural Heritage Trust.*
The \$3 billion Natural Heritage Trust is able to support activities for on the ground control of weeds of national significance.

Additional sources of Government support are provided by the following areas:

- Bureau of Rural Sciences – allocates a limited amount of funding to provide advice on weed management to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and its ministers on a needs basis.
- CSIRO – Plant Industry, Entomology, Sustainable Ecosystems and ENSIS – CSIRO carries out a range of research on agricultural and environmental weeds and has an international reputation in the biological control of weeds.

- Australian Research Council – the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) is open to funding applications across all fields of research except clinical medicine and dentistry.

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation – The RIRDC invests in R&D to meet the priorities of its industry and government clients in: new rural industries; established rural industries; and national rural issues. RIRDC has supported R&D into weeds where that research has been an industry priority.