

GAMBA GRASS SNAPSHOT 2021

Gamba Management Framework

The Gamba Management Framework

The Gamba Management Framework aligns the strategic and actionable items of the Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security providing a holistic approach to gamba management, fire mitigation for fuel load reduction and infestation control. It is underpinned by the statutory Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030 established under the *Weeds Management Act 2001* (administered by the Weed Management Branch).

To demonstrate progress towards achieving outcomes of the 2020 – 2030 gamba plan, each Gamba Management Framework element in this snapshot summarises key achievements across 2020-2021

Weed Advisory Committee

The Weed Advisory Committee, is continuing to oversee implementation of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 – 2030.

Implementation of this plan is well underway and on track. Annual reporting against implementation of the plan up to 30 June 2021 will be updated at nt.gov.au/gamba

Weed and Fire Working Group

The Weed and Fire Working Group was established in 2020 to co-ordinate the management of weeds and fire on government land, including gamba grass. It has met three times since gazettal of the 2020 – 2030 gamba plan. The group includes agencies with land management responsibilities such as Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (Crown Lands and Transport) who spent a combined \$1.5M on gamba control in 2020-21.

An online **‘Check Your Gamba Risk’**

tool has been developed for use by landholders to check your risk and identify what you should do.

Gamba Army

In late 2020, the Northern Territory Government committed \$500,000 to establish a Gamba Army to help tackle gamba grass in prioritised public land spaces and government land areas.

Co-ordinated by Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM), the Gamba Army sprayed approximately 760 hectares across 50 land parcels over the 2020/21 control season, including:

- Litchfield National Park
- Charles Darwin National Park
- Casuarina Coastal Reserve
- Numerous vacant Crown land blocks.

For more information on the Gamba Army visit territorynrm.org.au/gamba-army

Gamba Mapping – Litchfield National Park

Charles Darwin University / National Environmental Science Program (NESP) researchers, in conjunction with the Weed Management Branch, undertook aerial survey of Litchfield National Park in April 2021.

Researchers have presented the draft results to end-users and are currently developing costed management scenarios. The NTG contributed \$100,000 to this project.

Gamba Action Program

The Gamba Action Program (GAP) was open from 30 November 2020 to 30 April 2021. The GAP is a herbicide assistance program, providing 5L or 10L containers of herbicide to landholders for gamba grass control. During this 2020 – 2021 wet season 2352 participants utilised the program. The GAP will recommence in December 2021.

Gamba Fire Mitigation Unit

The Gamba Fire Mitigation Unit was established in October 2020. Key achievements of the unit include:

- Commencement of the Fire Ready Assistance Program.
- Ongoing co-ordination with Bushfires NT and NT Fire and Rescue Service – as an example, 56 land parcels threatened by imminent bushfire risk to life and property, were referred to the relevant fire authority.

WEED
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

WEED AND
FIRE WORKING
GROUP

GAMBA ARMY

MAPPING AND
PLANNING

GAMBA
ACTION
PROGRAM

GAMBA FIRE
MITIGATION
UNIT

FIRE READY
ASSISTANCE
PACKAGE

ABORIGINAL
RANGER &
ENVIRONMENT
GRANTS

GAMBA GRASS SNAPSHOT 2021

Fire Ready Assistance Program

The Fire Ready Assistance Program commenced in early 2021. The Northern Territory Government committed \$50,000 to support this program which provides assistance to rural landholders to manage gamba grass who are willing, but unable to manage their gamba. The program will assist these landholders to install fire breaks and manage gamba fuel load.

Aboriginal Ranger & Environment Grants

Includes support through grant funding to Aboriginal rangers and local councils among others, to purchase capital items and to support project activities (land management and conservation). In the case of the Aboriginal Ranger Grant Program, as much as \$3.1 million of grant funding has been directed towards weed management - either as standalone or integrated land management programs - since it was established in 2017. Whilst mimosa management is the greater part of the weed management, the gamba component is significant.

Gamba Compliance

Gamba compliance was carried out over the 2020 - 2021 wet season to assess compliance against the requirements of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 - 2030.

Class A Eradication Zone

In the Katherine Regional Weed Management Area, in the Class A eradication zone there are currently five private properties under active management and two properties verified as having locally eradicated their gamba grass.

Public land users including roads, rail and vacant Crown land have undertaken control with a significant reduction in the number of plants.

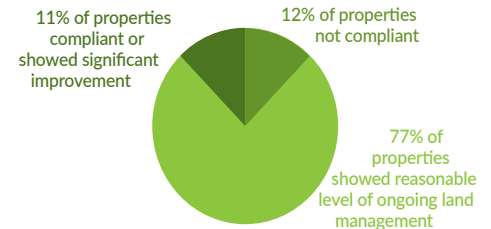
To further understand gamba grass in the Class A zone, a requirement of the Weed Management Plan for Gamba Grass 2020 - 2030 is to develop a mapping and monitoring program to track the eradication of gamba grass in the Class A zone. This program has been developed and the eradication status of properties in the Class A zone will be tracked.

Future reporting will demonstrate further progress against eradication in this zone.

Class B Growth and Spread to be Controlled Zone

Across the Class B zone an area of 4656km² is estimated as being affected by gamba grass. Compliance across this zone has been summarised as follows:

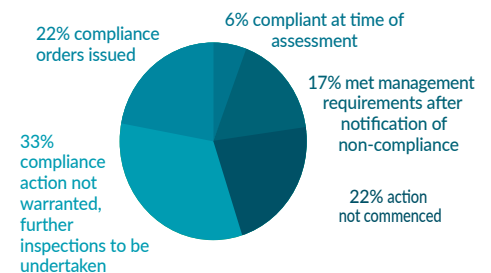
Darwin rural area



- 1695 compliance inspections undertaken
- 267 orders issued
- 2 penalty infringement notices issued

The overall compliance risk score improved by 25% on average for the Darwin rural area, when compared with the previous year.

Darwin City and Palmerston City



Katherine

In 2021 around Katherine, 28 properties within the Class B zone actively controlled gamba. Two of these properties have now been verified as locally eradicated and one property has moved into a monitoring phase.

Fire Ready Week 2021

over 100 participants

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For more information:

nt.gov.au/gamba