



National Biosecurity Committee
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
CANBERRA, ACT 2601
By email: nationalbiosecuritystrategy@awe.gov.au

26 November 2021

Dear National Biosecurity Committee and Project Team,

RE: Submission to initial consultation on the National Biosecurity Strategy

The Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Federal Government’s initial consultation on the National Biosecurity Strategy. ALCA’s initial guidance on the direction of the Strategy recognises the crucial importance of elevating environmental protection as a key strategic biosecurity consideration on par with protecting our communities and economy, and that these priorities are inextricably interdependent.

Please note that ALCA is happy for this submission to be published in full.

[About the Australian Land Conservation Alliance](#)

ALCA represents Australia’s leading land restoration and conservation organisations working with landholders on privately owned and managed land across Australia. Together, ALCA’s members represent a substantial and growing voice in Australia’s land management sector. Our eleven members are:

- Australian Wildlife Conservancy
- Biodiversity Conservation Trust NSW
- Bush Heritage Australia
- Greening Australia
- Landcare Australia
- Nature Foundation SA
- Queensland Trust for Nature
- South Endeavour Trust
- Tasmanian Land Conservancy
- The Nature Conservancy Australia
- Trust for Nature (Victoria)

ALCA land conservation efforts stretch across over 3 million square kilometres with more than 3000 landholders. We have over 50,000 supporters and our combined annual turnover exceeds \$200 million. Together we work to support some of the most pressing conservation issues across the country – including tackling invasive species and managing national environmental biosecurity threats, restoring endangered ecosystems, and building the protected area estate.

ALCA routinely engages with many landholders and offers advice, support and resources to landowners who protect biodiversity on their land and who help guard our environment against national, regional, and local biosecurity threats.

Initial guidance

Elevating the importance of the environment

1. The Strategy should clearly articulate the deep, inextricable, and interdependent interconnection between managing biosecurity threats to safeguard our Australian environment and the management of biosecurity threats to safeguard our communities and economy. **Crucially, communities and the economy cannot be protected without protecting our environment.** Protecting our environment should be afforded the same standing in the Strategy as protecting our community and economy.
2. **Protecting the Australian environment is a critically important national objective**, and this objective should be clearly stated in the Strategy.
3. **The Strategy must consider the entire length of the invasion curve** – whilst prevention is clearly the best approach for emerging threats, there must be approaches developed for eradication, containment and long-term management of pests, diseases, and weeds.
4. **The Strategy needs to facilitate community buy-in and support** for biosecurity action, including from the private land conservation sector.
5. In devising the Strategy, the value to national biosecurity from supporting existing private conservation landholders should be considered, as should its expansion. Private land conservation organisations and the landholders with which they engage are critical to national biosecurity outcomes.

Opportunities to leverage private land conservation organisations

6. **Private land conservation organisations are key stakeholders in our national biosecurity and should be routinely engaged** in the implementation and evolution of the Strategy.
7. The Strategy should recognise the **unique opportunity that private land conservation organisations provide as an avenue of community engagement**, with ALCA members being able to reach many thousands of landholders across over 3 million square kilometres of the Australian landmass. However, these organisations would require support to facilitate community engagement on biosecurity issues.

Data transparency and availability

8. **Increased data transparency and availability is crucial to improving biosecurity outcomes;** the Strategy will need to outline how this will be achieved.
9. Private land conservation organisations (including ALCA members) are experienced in data collection, methodologies, and handling. They often lead collaborations in right-way science approaches, as well as recognising rights and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community leadership and collaboration in land management, conservation, science, and knowledge that are relevant to the Strategy. **With appropriate support, private land conservation organisations are well-placed to contribute to Government biosecurity datasets.**

Research

10. **The Strategy should consider national biosecurity research investment priorities**, including the feasibility of high-tech control technologies for invasive species, such as – for example – gene drive.

Resourcing and cooperation

11. The Strategy will need to address funding arrangements, resourcing, and inter-governmental cooperation.



Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this initial guidance to the Federal Government's consultation on the National Biosecurity Strategy. ALCA looks forward to an ongoing engagement with Government to ensure that environmental biosecurity issues are afforded the much-needed prominence relative to their national importance in safeguarding Australia's future social and economic prosperity.

Australian Land Conservation Alliance