

**REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS THE
LANTANA STRATEGIC PLAN
(2001 – 2003)**

Prepared by:

*Andrew Clark National Projects Coordinator (Lantana)
and National Lantana Management Group
South East Region (Brisbane Office)
Natural Resources and Mines
07 3224 8383 (andrew.clark@nrm.qld.gov.au)*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lantana is a highly invasive weed affecting a range of land-uses across a wide range of climatic and topographically different areas. The extremes of infestation and taxonomy of this weed are characteristic its complexity and the difficulty in integrating control measures and finding suitable biocontrol agents. The extensive infestation across more than 4 million hectares poses a threat to economically effective control.

Funding from AFFA will be sought to match full-time status for national coordination and additional or carryover funding for best practice aspects, extension and community biocontrol programs. This will help ensure consistent national approaches to management of this weed are maintained. Staffing, funding and climatic issues have all contributed to various project components being slowed at times.

Overall the project has achieved good recognition and acceptance that lantana is a social problem for landholders showing the necessity of increased responsibility for action amongst target groups. Stigmas such as “good stewardship” and “land value” provide valuable incentives to landholders, local government, regions and State government for the recognition of promoting sustainable landuse and regeneration of natural ecosystems. Interest by a wide variety of community groups, landholders and individuals in this national program has created a willingness to participate where possible. Current results of the five components of this project are below:

Component 1: The National Lantana Management Group (NLMG)

- top priority (as agreed by the NLMG) is to encourage State Government’s uniformity in declaring lantana through legislation by:
 - phase 1: preventing sale, supply and distribution across States and territories.
 - phase 2: declaring to “prevent lantana spreading and its numbers systematically reduced”. Strategic areas should receive a higher declaration status of “continual active suppression and control”
- priority to establish lantana containment lines to prevent it affecting strategic areas or threatening species.
- priority to include lantana included in regional weed strategies.

Component 2: Extension and education

- new extension products developed and existing fact sheets reviewed – display units, posters, brochure, stickers, bookmarks, fact sheets, biocontrol information sheets, awareness and impact brochure.
- creation of web site for Lantana WONS information.
- attendance at events, conferences and at display opportunities. Positive comments received.
- High number of media stories in regional and metropolitan newspapers and broadcast media.

Component 3: Best practice

- survey of landholders, land managers and agencies helped collect data about current practice. More than 1000 respondents returned forms which met expectations.
- Lantana Current Practice Manual has achieved first draft stage. Liaison with CRC for Weed Management about their lantana guideline (commissioned by EA).
- Commencement of State-wide mapping from the compiled data from survey, bio-control releases, regional groups and local government.

Component 4: Community biocontrol program

- ‘release and monitoring’ program implemented with community groups in north Queensland and on the south coast NSW. Technical staff made releases in the NSW north coast and South East Queensland with some success to assist research. Agents reared at Alan Fletcher Research Station, Tropical Weeds Research Station and Grafton Research Station:
 - *falconia intermedia* (a leaf-sucking bug)
 - *prospodium tuberulatum* (lantana rust)

- All releases of *Aconophora compressa*, a stem-sucking bug, have ceased. Further testing being undertaken by AFRS to ascertain the extent of likely damage from the bug.
- Further research into other biocontrol agents is ongoing to assist in finding effective agents.

Component 7: Tilba Conservation Area

- 28 applications for devolved funds were received and evaluated by committee.
- Mapping of lantana infestations in the Central Tilba area complete.
- Lack of moisture is withholding viable control of lantana in this area. Window of opportunity in November and December 2003.