

# Northern Territory Biosecurity Strategy

2016-2026



Our natural environments and resources underpin our lifestyle, culture and livelihoods.

## foreword

Our primary producers have long been a driver for economic sustainability for the Northern Territory, and the expansion of domestic and international market opportunity positions them well for our future plans. The growth of nature tourism and recreation based on our wild rivers, national parks and contrasting regional landscapes has a huge place in the social and economic development of the Northern Territory.

Plant and animal pests and diseases can threaten the present and future wealth of our primary production industries, with the potential to restrict or shut down business activity overnight. So too can chemical contaminants and residues that linger in our environments. Our quality, safe produce underpins our market advantage.

Our environmental values on which tourism and lifestyle so critically depend are also at risk of pest incursions. Biosecurity risks are often unknown, unpredictable and diverse. Strong and effective frameworks and action plans must be put in place to minimise the incidence of plant or animal pests or diseases entering, establishing and impacting the Northern Territory.

We cannot make our borders completely impermeable to biosecurity threats. We have already experienced the effects of environmental pests such as cane toads, tramp ant varieties, Mimosa and Cabomba, animal pests such as cattle tick, also horticultural plant pests such as Panama Disease, Grapevine Leaf Rust, Banana Freckle, Cucumber Green Mottle Mosaic Virus and Black-striped Mussel.

As a signatory to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity, the Northern Territory Government is committed to the national approach to biosecurity management. The Northern Territory Biosecurity Strategy 2016-2026 sets out a plan of action that is tied to that commitment. The Strategy focuses on building strong partnerships, implementing effective legislation, risk-based planning, conducting targeted surveillance and border protection, developing sophisticated response capability, and improving governance networks informed by science and strategic risk assessment.



Our industries and communities understand the essential role biosecurity plays. This strategy provides for the building of an even more effective biosecurity program across the Northern Territory. Collaborative biosecurity planning and management will demonstrate confidence that we can all contribute to the Northern Territory's current and future potential and status as a premium primary production region, and iconic lifestyle and holiday destination. Strong working partnerships between government, industries, communities and our domestic neighbours will be essential to our success.

How closely and collaboratively we all engage on biosecurity will define how secure and enviable our future will be.

**Hon Gary Higgins MLA**  
Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries  
Minister for Land Resource Management



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OUR vision:  
OUR vision

All Territorians share the responsibility to minimise the threat and impact of plant and animal pests and diseases to the Northern Territory's economy, natural environment and community.





## OUR MISSION:

# OUR MISSION

To create the best possible biosecurity outcomes by partnering and sharing the responsibility to stay vigilant, deliver modern, risk-based programs and innovative solutions that minimise the likelihood of pests and diseases impacting our economy, natural environment and community.

The costs and benefits of maintaining a biosecurity system are shared.

Success is only achievable with cooperation and a joint commitment from all stakeholders and the community.

As we implement this strategy we need to ensure that:

- We learn from the past and build on our existing capability to take preventative action, and minimise or eliminate risks to our economy, environment and community.
- Our efforts and investments are shared, integrated, targeted by evidence and based on the best available risk mitigation strategies.
- Biosecurity as a shared responsibility becomes the norm and that all efforts are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all stakeholders and the community.

# introduction and purpose

# introduction and purpose

## What is biosecurity?

Biosecurity is the management of risks to the economy, the environment and our community posed by the impacts of plant and animal (including fish) pests and diseases entering, emerging, establishing or spreading in the Northern Territory. The potential for biosecurity threats to damage livelihoods, lifestyles, product reputation and market integrity is significant and increasing. Maintaining and improving our biosecurity status is fundamentally important to the ongoing health, wellbeing and prosperity of the Northern Territory.

Our activities to safeguard the Northern Territory must succeed on three fronts:

- **Prevention** - minimising the likelihood of entry, emergence and spread of plant and animal pests and diseases into the Northern Territory from interstate or overseas, or regions and properties within the Territory.
- **Elimination** - promptly detecting, containing, and eradicating plant and animal pests and diseases with the potential to cause significant adverse impacts.
- **Management** - minimising and controlling the impact of established plant and animal pests and diseases on our economy, environment and community.





Targeted and strategic protection is an important investment by all stakeholders in the Northern Territory's future. Biosecurity is a shared responsibility.

### Why is biosecurity important?

Biosecurity programs are important to the livelihoods of many Australians, including the people of the Northern Territory. Every day in Australia, biosecurity programs protect an agricultural industry forecast to contribute \$60.3 billion to the national economy in 2016-17. Earnings from farm export are forecast to be \$45 billion in that same year. Biosecurity programs also protect Australia's \$2.5 billion fisheries and aquaculture sector; and the food and fibre production industries that feed our domestic markets.

The Northern Territory has a significant primary production sector that contributes over \$600 million to the economy per annum. The national agenda to develop northern Australia positions us nicely as a primary production precinct and transport gateway into Asia. This highlights that the opportunities for growth in agriculture are significant for the Northern Territory. Effective biosecurity prevention, elimination and management strategies are essential to our success.

Gaining access to new markets, encouraging new investors, expanding production and increasing trade and transport volumes to drive our regional economy forward is greatly dependent on our capacity to verify freedom from any new high risk plant and animal pests and diseases, and to be prepared for any response with effective management systems in place.

Biosecurity also plays an important role in protecting our environment and lifestyle. The Northern Territory's tourism visitor economy was valued at approximately \$1.9 billion in recent years and its value is strongly linked to nature-based activities such as fishing, camping and national park visitation.

Territorians enjoy a wild and remote back yard. The climate, rivers, coast and wilderness areas entice locals to spend their recreational time outdoors. We fish, hunt, camp, sightsee and roam our landscapes and waterways to immerse and connect ourselves to the precious natural assets the Northern Territory holds. It is critical that we maintain the uniqueness and integrity of our natural systems to protect our tourism economy and lifestyle. Biosecurity programs are an essential part of the overall effort to protect our environmental and lifestyle values.

A new and innovative approach to biosecurity is absolutely necessary to address the increasing risk and potential effects of plant and animal pest and disease incursions in an increasingly globalised community.

A strategic biosecurity program will support sustainable productivity and growth in the Northern Territory.

We will make national and international links with contemporary research, development and extension initiatives which will support the drive for new food options and expansion in agriculture. We will show responsiveness to new and existing threats and most importantly, biosecurity will involve everyone through the vision of shared responsibility.

The threats are real. The recent outbreaks of Banana Freckle Disease in the Darwin region and Cucumber Green Mottle Mosaic Virus in Katherine, Ti-Tree and the Darwin rural area are clear reminders of how important it is to safeguard our industries through appropriate biosecurity measures. These examples demonstrate how much impact such incursions can have on the business operations of individuals, the community and the economy more widely. Major Northern Territory industries, such as cattle, our seafood sector, mango production, tourism and a range of other agricultural enterprises are vulnerable to biosecurity impact. Recent Browsing Ant and Asian Honey Bee detections in the Northern Territory are also important reminders that pests and diseases can gain entry and their establishment has the potential to severely damage our ecosystems, environmental assets and/or lifestyle.

# *purpose of the strategy*

## *PURPOSE*

The Northern Territory Biosecurity Strategy has been devised for the period 2016-2026 with wide-ranging key actions and outcomes under six goals.

The intent is to progressively implement the actions as a community to develop a contemporary, sophisticated and integrated biosecurity system for the Northern Territory.

A new and forward-thinking strategic direction aims to bring the people of the Northern Territory together to collectively provide the best assurance that plant and animal pest and disease threats and impacts can be prevented, eliminated or managed across the biosecurity continuum.





Katherine Gorge, photo courtesy of Tourism NT

## scope of the strategy

The Northern Territory Biosecurity Strategy focuses on pest and disease threats and chemical contamination and residue that can affect:

- Animal and plant industries, including agriculture, forestry, commercial fisheries and aquaculture.
- The integrity of natural systems and processes (terrestrial and aquatic).
- Lifestyle, recreation, cultural heritage, tourism and social amenity.
- The infrastructure, transport and service industries including energy, shipping and water supply networks.
- Human health, exclusively with respect to the transfer of animal diseases to humans (diseases known as zoonoses, for example Hendra virus).

The Northern Territory Biosecurity Strategy 2016-2026 commits Governments, industry and the community to share the responsibility of protecting our agricultural resources and other assets and values listed from impact. Threats can be caused by exotic, emerging, established or endemic:

- Terrestrial or aquatic plant pests and diseases;
- Terrestrial or aquatic animal pests and diseases;
- Terrestrial or aquatic plant or animal pests that may be specifically defined as invasive species; and
- Zoonotic diseases of public health significance.

The Strategy focuses directly on biosecurity as it is defined, however it is recognised that strong cooperation needs to exist between biosecurity and animal welfare (particularly in the area of disease), genetic modification and food safety in the primary production and processing environment. While these areas are excluded from the scope of the Strategy, the intent is to engage and work synergistically with those areas rather than replace the existing strategic policies that direct them. With the exception of zoonoses, the strategy will not address communicable diseases, as human biosecurity is a specific area of health, measures for which are outside the scope of this Strategy.

# the legislative and policy basis for action

## legislative and policy

### National context

The Northern Territory Government is a signatory to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity, under which nationally agreed approaches are established and all jurisdictions have roles and responsibilities. As a participant in the national agenda, the Northern Territory must ensure it is a contemporary and effective biosecurity delivery agent, and that our policy direction is both aligned with national goals and objectives and remains relevant to the local context.

The *Commonwealth Biosecurity Act* commenced in June 2016 as the primary piece of national biosecurity legislation. It is co-administered by the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Water Resources and Health.

As jurisdictions move to a consistent and coordinated approach, most have recently updated or are in the process of reviewing their legislative and policy frameworks that guide biosecurity implementation. The Northern Territory considers that legislative review to harmonise primary industry biosecurity in consultation with other agencies responsible for plant and animal biosecurity is a priority reform area. This work is a key action within the Biosecurity Strategy.

### Commitments and guiding principles

The Northern Territory is a remote part of Australia with responsibility for an extensive area of land and sea.

It shares borders with Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland, has several populated islands included in its territory and is recognised for its close proximity to Asia. Our natural environment is unique, geographically and climatically challenging, and spans diverse types from arid land to tropical coasts. A substantial part of the Northern Territory is held and cared for by Traditional Owners and great value is placed on cultural heritage. We have extensive livestock, cropping and horticultural precincts and strong access to local, domestic and international markets.

In managing our biosecurity efforts, the Northern Territory will place priority on assessing our specific challenges and regional differences as part of the decision-making to ensure we are focused on the right risks at the local and national level. Our attention will be on the biosecurity continuum, our approach will be measured by risk, our efforts will be transparent and our actions will be based on science. We will be looking for capability from all our people for the future management of biosecurity.



We have the following international and national obligations and value our local priorities, and we will act accordingly.

- i) **International Biosecurity Commitments:** Actions in the Strategy are consistent with requirements as specified in international agreements and instruments under the World Trade Organisation and International Maritime Organisation. In particular this includes the Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement and the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments.
- ii) **National Biosecurity Commitments:** The actions within the Strategy assist the Northern Territory to fulfil its obligations under national animal, plant and environmental cost-sharing agreements in relation to emergency animal disease, plant pest incursions, aquatic pest incursions and environmental biosecurity threats. The Strategy supports many of the national initiatives documented in the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity. The Strategy also contributes to national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation and to marine pests through the Marine Pest Inter-Governmental Agreement.
- iii) **State Biosecurity Commitments:** The Northern Territory will retain its current policy to support the promotion of sustainable economic development within the Northern Territory by effectively managing risks to the economy, environment and human health posed by pests and diseases and to support the continued access to domestic and international markets for Territory primary industry products. The commitment will be strengthened by the new directions set out by this Strategy, underpinned by the core principles that follow.



To ensure focused biosecurity program delivery, the Northern Territory will be guided by the following core principles that are regarded as essential to success:

1.	Legislation and policy	Clear, pragmatic and effective legal and policy frameworks that meet national obligations will empower a fresh risk-based and shared approach to biosecurity management in the Northern Territory.
2.	Risk management approach	It is not possible to isolate the Northern Territory from biosecurity threats and it is not possible to immediately detect every incursion as it may be unknown or unpredictable. New decision-making frameworks will guide priorities and threats will be managed within an agreed acceptable level of risk.
3.	Shared responsibility	Biosecurity in the Northern Territory is everyone's business and is therefore a shared responsibility. Working partnerships are in everyone's best interest and will result in better knowledge, advice and biosecurity outcomes.
4.	Biosecurity as a continuum	Effective biosecurity management addresses risks before they reach our borders, at our borders and within our borders.
5.	Sound technical base	The Northern Territory's biosecurity system, and in particular the processes for risk identification, decision-making, response preparedness and conducting operations must be sound and our people appropriately skilled to ensure strong on-ground protection.
6.	Resource allocation	Resources will be allocated according to risk and informed by benefit cost analysis. This will include decisions about timing, priority and approach to activities and how these activities will be funded and staffed.
7.	Prevention and early response	Our industries and communities are engaged and educated about biosecurity as a primary form of prevention, to maximise early detection of pest and disease incursions to enable rapid and cost-effective eradication.
8.	Adaptive management	Continual improvement and responsiveness to new technologies and business systems and tools, and up-to-date knowledge about new or emerging risks will allow the program to adapt to changing circumstances and remain relevant.
9.	Accountability and transparency	Roles and responsibilities for biosecurity are known and respected by all stakeholders and decisions are transparent, justified and well understood.





# goal 1

## Adopt contemporary best practice legislative and policy frameworks that enable effective and efficient biosecurity action

The Northern Territory Government will work with our partners and the community to review and establish clear legal protocols and policy arrangements that:

- Simplify and clarify the legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks under which government agencies, industry and communities operate.
- Harmonise with other jurisdictions and enable best practice management of biosecurity through a process that involves industry and the community in identifying and addressing risks.
- Clearly define the rights, roles and responsibilities of government, industry and community with respect to biosecurity.

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>1.1 Adopt contemporary best practice legislative and policy frameworks to steer biosecurity action in the Northern Territory.</b>	1.1.1 Review and identify all obligations under established agreements and ensure full implementation.	The Northern Territory fulfils its obligations under national biosecurity agreements.
	1.1.2 Review existing biosecurity legislation, taking into account legislation in other jurisdictions, to determine the validity of the existing framework.	A simplified legislative framework that clearly defines rights, roles and responsibilities and is harmonised with best practice approaches nationally and inter-jurisdictionally.
	1.1.3 Based on the review, develop a new legislative framework for protecting the Northern Territory's biosecurity that is consistent with best practice.	The reputation of the Northern Territory as a source of high quality, low risk product is protected and underpinned by appropriate legislation.
	1.1.4 Under a revised legislative framework, identify pathways for appropriate self-regulation based on risk and third party audit protocols.	Industry based quality assurance systems play a greater role in interstate market access.
	1.1.5 Update and publish contemporary policy statements regarding all significant components of biosecurity program delivery in the Northern Territory.	A clearly communicated and well understood approach to biosecurity program delivery in the Northern Territory.

# goal 2

## Focus on risk and strategic deployment of resources

# goal 2

The Northern Territory Government will work with our partners and the community to:

- Develop and adopt a risk assessment and mitigation framework to guide how prevention, detection, eradication and mitigation projects are delivered.
- Allocate and deploy resources cost effectively to focus on risks in order of priority and with keen regard to impact minimisation and the likelihood of success.
- Implement approaches to biosecurity decision-making that have greater clarity and transparency in order to assist understanding within the wider community and encourage greater collaboration in protecting our resources and environment.

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>2.1 Transition biosecurity management in the Northern Territory to a risk-based framework to direct actions.</b>	2.1.1 Review existing risk frameworks, nationally and internationally.	Ongoing transparency in business planning and priority setting to guide resource allocation for maximum impact and return on investment.  Core biosecurity work, as determined from the risk assessment approach, is undertaken.
	2.1.2 Develop and implement a new risk assessment framework that is consistent with requirements of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity and responsive to the Northern Territory's needs.	
<b>2.2 Create a suite of decision- making tools to establish consistency and clarity of application and better understanding of roles and obligations.</b>	2.2.1 Develop and adopt an integrated decision-making framework to prioritise and inform decisions on where to direct investment.	Documented and clearly understood decision-making tools to ensure consistency, transparency and certainty.
	2.2.2 Adopt use of suitable decision tools to routinely guide planning of actionable responses to issues, in a manner consistent with other jurisdictions.	Biosecurity resources are clearly planned and focused on areas of greatest return on investment.
	2.2.3 Use benefit cost analyses and other economic tools to routinely assess and guide effective resource allocation strategies.	Essential biosecurity work is appropriately resourced.

# goal 3

## Involve everyone in protecting the Northern Territory from biosecurity threats

The Northern Territory Government will:

- Improve community engagement and capability to contribute to protecting the Northern Territory.
- Take a partnership approach to identifying and addressing priority risks and issues and engage industry and the community in surveillance, detection, incursion response and recovery planning.
- Build stronger partnerships between industry and government in a wide range of activities to safeguard our natural resources and economy.
- Strengthen links with Traditional Owners and involve Indigenous knowledge networks in biosecurity programs.
- Establish and maintain contemporary agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions and other partner agencies.

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>3.1 Increase the capacity and capability of the community to deliver 'grassroots' biosecurity surveillance and monitoring.</b>	3.1.1 Develop a clear understanding of social structures and capacity to engage in biosecurity work.	A strong community engagement program has created a skilled and aware community that is engaged in biosecurity surveillance, detection, incursion response and recovery.
	3.1.2 Secure dedicated resources for, and establish a targeted and comprehensive biosecurity community engagement, extension and education program.	
	3.1.3 Develop training programs tailored to high priority pests, diseases and/or weeds.	
	3.1.4 Develop and promote easy to use technologies for public biosecurity reporting.	
	3.1.5 Establish social media as a communications and extension tool to extend the outreach of biosecurity as an important issue for all.	

# goal 3



Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>3.2 Establish clear frameworks that involve industry and the community and ensure the NT has strong on-ground biosecurity protection.</b>	3.2.1 Establish a high level Northern Territory Biosecurity Advisory Committee with the appropriate skill and diversity drawn from government, industry and community.	Industry and community enabled and actively involved in biosecurity risk identification, priority setting, management and response planning in the Northern Territory.
	3.2.2 Work with stakeholders to develop a co-management policy for biosecurity in the Northern Territory.	Farm biosecurity and better internal business practices are helping to minimise chemical contamination and the entry and establishment of exotic pests, diseases and weeds onto Northern Territory properties.
	3.2.3 Benchmark industry understanding of biosecurity issues, obligations and surveillance capability.	Industries have a clear understanding of their role and obligations to ensure that biosecurity is safeguarded.
	3.2.4 Ensure industries and communities are aware of legislative requirements relating to biosecurity, or have access to information to become aware.	
	3.2.5 Ensure clarity on co-investment priorities for action nationally and with stakeholders.	
	3.2.6 Develop clear guidelines for activating better biosecurity practices within businesses and on farms to maximise on-ground success.	
	3.2.7 Develop targeted risk identification and mitigation training and extension packages to support increased industry capability.	
	3.2.8 Develop education and assistance programs that guide communities on how to adapt to, and take responsibility for responding to a biosecurity incursion and management situations.	

# goal 3



Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>3.3 Bring traditional knowledge to the table and create stronger links with Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory.</b>	3.3.1 Establish a collaborative approach to biosecurity management with Land Councils to facilitate broad engagement with Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.	A stronger and better informed biosecurity management system networked across the Northern Territory.  Enhanced ability to conduct responses on country.
	3.3.2 Train and actively involve Aboriginal Rangers in biosecurity surveillance and response.	Stronger biosecurity systems for Indigenous owned primary industries (e.g. fisheries, pastoral stations).  Indigenous Rangers are well trained and play an important and recognised role in early detection of biosecurity issues and eradication of exotic pests.
<b>3.4 Build strong partnerships with neighbouring jurisdictions and other agencies.</b>	3.4.1 Continue to participate in forums to develop, agree and adopt formal national biosecurity arrangements in all jurisdictions.	An integrated approach to biosecurity management in the Northern Territory and a risk-based approach to sharing responsibility with neighbouring jurisdictions.
	3.4.2 Develop and coordinate risk mitigation strategies for established pests, diseases and weeds to ensure border integrity and protect proof of freedom.	
	3.4.3 Encourage adoption of biosecurity as a key feature of local government and land services strategies in the Northern Territory.	



## goal 4

## Protect our assets and safeguard our opportunities

# goal 4

The Northern Territory Government will work with our partners, stakeholders and communities to:

- Develop and maintain a strong surveillance and monitoring system that dovetails with business biosecurity systems at the 'farm gate'.
- Develop a robust Northern Territory biosecurity "response preparedness" capacity and capability.
- Develop and maintain a sophisticated IT system that underpins our biosecurity and facilitates knowledge development, swift data interrogation and effective decision-making.

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>4.1 Implement up-to-date monitoring and compliance strategies that fulfil legislative obligations.</b>	4.1.1 Contribute to, and adopt, national priority lists for surveillance for chemical contaminants, exotic pests, diseases and weeds.	Chemical contaminants and residues, exotic pests, diseases and weeds are detected shortly after entry into the Northern Territory (or before they become established and spread) to enable successful eradication.
	4.1.2 Develop priority lists for surveillance for all biosecurity sectors and use these as the basis for determining surveillance schedules.	Industry, the community and the natural assets of the Northern Territory are effectively protected from accidental and deliberate translocation events.
	4.1.3 Develop an audit framework based on risk and compliance history.	Biosecurity incursions are eradicated successfully because of their early detection.
	4.1.4 Design and implement a strategic, evidence-based compliance monitoring and enforcement program.	Market access is underpinned by strong surveillance to demonstrate area freedom.

# goal 4



Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>4.2 Improve how the Northern Territory responds to biosecurity emergencies.</b>	4.2.1 Develop a comprehensive biosecurity response plan that aligns with national deeds and the Northern Territory Emergency Plan.	The Northern Territory is aligned with best practice and prepared to conduct swift and effective responses to serious biosecurity incursions.
	4.2.2 Foster a culture of biosecurity 'response preparedness' in the Northern Territory.	An element of response preparedness is included in all relevant departmental job descriptions.
	4.2.3 Develop a whole-of-government policy on response coordination and resourcing.	All relevant Northern Territory Government employees receive at least basic response preparedness training.
	4.2.4 Establish a response preparedness training program in line with national obligations.	Lead respondents for biosecurity events are appropriately trained.
	4.2.5 Establish and maintain core emergency response leadership, incident control and first response teams.	Strong interstate collaboration to raise capacity to respond to incursions is built and cooperative training is delivered by experts.
	4.2.6 Revise emergency preparedness and response plans.	An agreed approach to rapid response protocols is established with our neighbours.
	4.2.7 Establish/renew memoranda of understanding with all neighbouring jurisdictions in order to clearly define roles and responsibilities.	Cross border responses with other jurisdictions are handled in a consistent and collaborative manner to achieve prompt results.
	4.2.8 Form strong alliances with interstate response teams, share training and conduct joint exercises routinely.	The Northern Territory has a well understood whole of government approach to responding to all types of biosecurity incursions.

# goal 4

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>4.3 Improve early detection, traceability and reporting systems across all sectors by drawing on the latest technology.</b>	4.3.1 Benchmark where detection and reporting expertise, strengths and weaknesses exist within government, industry and community.	Efficient systems exist for the early detection, reporting and tracing of exotic pests, diseases and weeds.
	4.3.2 Pursue early adoption of new technology to improve detection capability.	Improved capability so that industry and the community become a key part of the front line of effective detection.
	4.3.3 Develop new or updated reporting pathways to ensure detection and reporting returns improve.	Market access is underpinned by strong surveillance to demonstrate area freedom.
	4.3.4 Implement tracing systems that meet national standards as a minimum requirement.	The Northern Territory has a strong tracing capability that strengthens our ability to respond to issues and to facilitate proof of freedom.
	4.3.5 Adopt and implement mandatory communication and awareness extension plans in biosecurity projects to ensure ongoing knowledge development across government, industry and community.	Biosecurity projects are effectively communicated and well understood by the community in real time.
	4.3.6 Develop efficient tools for determining proof of freedom.	



# goal 5

## Create better knowledge systems to ensure our risk detection and response systems are as effective as possible

The Northern Territory Government will work in accordance with our commitment to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity, focusing on:

- Making contributions to the National Plant and Animal Biosecurity Research, Development and Extension Strategies.
- Establish better information management and sharing systems to inform biosecurity programs.
- Adopt new/novel technology that offers significant capability improvements for detection and treatment.
- Maintain and enhance our R&D capability to underpin our science based decision-making (policy), surveillance and response capability.

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<b>5.1 Develop or adopt contemporary information management systems to underpin biosecurity.</b>	5.1.1 Review existing use of information technology systems in biosecurity management in the Northern Territory and identify future needs.	The Northern Territory has a modern highly effective biosecurity IT system that underpins surveillance, diagnostics and engagement and strongly supports prompt and effective decision-making.
	5.1.2 Develop and adopt information management systems that are based on contemporary practice and allow for easy access to information.	
	5.1.3 Establish and maintain spatial analytical capacity to provide sophisticated support to risk assessment and incident control.	
<b>5.2 Developing an enhanced R&amp;D capability that delivers relevant science that underpins our biosecurity.</b>	5.2.1 Work with industry, community and science providers to prioritise research according to critical need and with regard to the National Plant and Animal Biosecurity RD&E strategies.	Research capability that effectively addresses gaps in knowledge to underpin responses.  Research capability that adds value to policy.
	5.2.2 Develop a biosecurity research and development strategy that focuses local scientific effort on areas of strategic need and local capability, and benefits from broader collaboration.	An advanced diagnostics and detection toolkit that enables efficient surveillance and monitoring.
	5.2.3 Seek innovative solutions and implement an 'early adopters' strategy to using science to yield diagnostic, detection and surveillance efficiency.	Early detection underpinned by modern and highly effective diagnostics and leading edge surveillance technology, including remote sensing.

# goal 6

# goal 6

Continuously improve biosecurity program delivery in the Northern Territory



Photo courtesy of the Northern Territory Seafood Council

The Northern Territory Government will strive for ongoing improvements to ensure biosecurity management stays at the forefront of best practice nationally.

Objectives	Key Actions	Intended Outcomes
<p><b>6.1 Ensure effective implementation of the Strategy.</b></p>	<p>6.1.1 Stakeholders are engaged to develop and activate an implementation plan that prioritises key actions from this strategy and ensures systematic delivery of the intended outcomes.</p>	<p>Biosecurity is effectively and systematically implemented in a transparent manner to achieve the vision.</p>
<p><b>6.2 To measure and assess the performance of the biosecurity program to drive continuous improvement.</b></p>	<p>6.2.1 Benchmark performance via surveys, review of plans and evaluation of how well existing activities align with obligations and priorities.</p> <p>6.2.2 Design and implement an annual audit and review system to identify strengths and gaps to inform resource allocation and development activity.</p> <p>6.2.3 Engage with performance assessment processes nationally to learn and adopt improved practices as they emerge.</p> <p>6.2.4 Develop a targeted reporting framework and report on program performance annually.</p> <p>6.2.5 Formal evaluation of the Strategy is conducted.</p>	<p>A culture of ongoing assessment and performance improvement ensures that the Northern Territory is protected from biosecurity issues to the highest possible standard.</p> <p>The community strongly supports investment and partnership in biosecurity because it understands the significant benefits that have been demonstrated.</p>

*"let's share the responsibility"*

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