



The Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP

Minister for Agriculture
Federal Member for New England

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Dr Kerry Harrington
Secretary
Council of Australasian Weed Societies Inc
IAE (PN 433) Massey University
PB 11-222 PALMERSTON NORTH 4442
NEW ZEALAND

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Dear Dr Harrington

Thank you for your letter of 30 May 2014 on behalf of the Council of Australasian Weed Societies about the implications of the 2014-15 federal budget on weed research and policy in Australia.

The current fiscal climate required the government to make some tough decisions in the budget and find savings across many programmes. Despite this the Australian Government spends around \$700 million each year on rural R&D and extension activities through the 15 rural R&D corporations, cooperative research centres, CSIRO, Australian Research Council grants, universities and departmental programs. In 2014-15, the government will provide an estimated \$242.8 million in matching funding to the rural R&D corporations.

The Australian Government continues to make some strategic investments into weed management research through Rural Research and Development Corporations, the Plant Biosecurity CRC and other research organisations, as well as grant funding for strategically targeted on-ground action.

The Australian Government is a member of the Australian Weeds Committee, which provides an inter-governmental mechanism for identification and resolution of weed issues at a national level in Australia. The Australian Weeds Committee has embarked on a process of revising and updating the Australian Weeds Strategy, aiming to release a new strategy in 2014 that builds on the last two decades of national level weed management achievements.

Any change to the governance arrangements of the Australian Weeds Committee would be done in such a way that its functions would be retained.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Barnaby Joyce MP