

# Significant New Weed Detections in the Northern Territory 2017-2021 – consequences for management

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**Summary** Seven detections of significant new weeds in the Northern Territory (NT) occurred during the five year period 2017-2021. These include: (1) two species currently or formerly targeted for national eradication – *Limnocharis flava* and *Chromolaena odorata*; (2) two new incursions of Weeds of National Significance previously detected and eradicated in the NT – *Parthenium hysterophorus* and *Cryptostegia grandiflora*; and (3) the first Australian records for three species previously identified as potential weed threats to northern Australia – *Boerhavia erecta*, *Spigelia anthelmia*, *Ludwigia leptocarpa*. While responses to four of these incursions have strained limited government resources and required prioritisation over other weed management issues, there have also been positive consequences. First, they have stimulated more effective collaborations between a wide range of stakeholders (including land managers, industry, other parts of the NT government, the States and the Commonwealth) to

improve the detection and response to weeds across a vast area (1.4 million km<sup>2</sup>) with very limited resources. Second, they have required the development, revision and implementation of emergency weed response processes and procedures informed by other national eradication programs, and consistent with the Biosecurity Incident Management System (BIMS). Third, they underscore the importance of jurisdictional and national weed risk assessment systems and committees to provide evidence-based evaluations of the significance of new incursions. During these five years, we have found that (1) close working relationships, (2) generalised incident response procedures and (3) evidence-based assessment have been central to the implementation of strategic responses to these incursions by both government and industry.

**Keywords** New detections, weed risk assessment, emergency response, eradication, collaboration