



**Coochiemudlo Island Coastcare Inc welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Integrated Weed Management Plan (IWMP) for Coochiemudlo Island.**

After three years of discussion between Redland City Council (RCC) and Coastcare, we're pleased to have reached this point and look forward to fine tuning the IWMP over the next few weeks.

This submission aims to highlight some of the aspirations and/or concerns that appear to have been ignored or omitted in the draft IWMP. We trust it will assist deliver an outcome that is applauded by community and RCC.

Also attached is the Proposal for Consulting Services with initial Coastcare response, photographs of comments taken from the community survey and background information on saturated steam requested by the Consultant.

Coastcare looks forward to receiving the minutes of the Focus Group meeting, a second draft and hopefully another meeting before the plan goes to Community then Council.

## **Overview**

Please note specific comments have been kept as succinct as possible. Should further elaboration be required please do not hesitate to contact the President of Coochiemudlo Island Coastcare Inc.

In line with best practice natural resource and catchment management, this Plan should support Redland City Council to protect the receiving waters of the Moreton Bay Marine Park, mirroring efforts in North Queensland to reduce chemical run-off to the Great Barrier Reef. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X14000228>

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/frydenberg/media-releases/mr20170830.html>

The draft Plan should:-

- acknowledge health and environmental concerns relating to herbicide use in public open spaces and mounting legislative change led by European nations.
- take account of risk management warnings from leading insurers that has seen many local governments adopt alternate weeding strategies.(Logan City Council offered saturated steam to residents opposed to chemical weed control four years ago and recently ordered its second machine)
- acknowledge the fundamental goal of utilising alternate weed eradication strategies to reduce chemical usage
- address how progressive use of alternate methods of weed control, including saturated steam, can support the approach of chemical-free weeding in the medium term on Coochiemudlo Island.

- offer aspirational goals of a clean, green, healthy environment as a natural vision for Coochie while supporting transition from Council's first option of chemical control. NB. A tourism operator who brings small groups of international visitors to Coochie has requested involvement in restoration activities, following requests from clients who participate in similar activities in other parts of world. "Restoration tourism" is a growing industry and Coastcare has offered support. This should be explored further.

**A couple of alternate approaches** - <http://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/2013/11/22/chemical-free-weed-and-pest-control-goal-set-for-5-years>

The Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) is a progressive and innovative regional local government working on behalf of six member Councils located in Perth's eastern suburbs: **City of Bayswater, City of Belmont, Shire of Kalamunda, Shire of Mundaring and the City of Swan, Town of Bassendean.** <http://rgang.org.au/steam-weeding.html>

## Specific feedback

1. The draft plan makes no reference to the results of the community survey undertaken by Council and noted under **4.2 Deliverables** of the consulting brief.

*"Public engagement has gained valuable information on the community's perceptions and weed treatment preferences on the Island. The views on where and how weed control should be approached vary, however it is clear the community are united with a passion to see Coochiemudlo restored with all main weed infestations controlled within a 10 year time-frame"* Page 2

This comment doesn't accurately represent the feeling of the June 10 meeting with the majority of community comments (both written and spoken) about the use of chemical weed control and wish to avoid it. This was acknowledged by the consultant in a private conversation, that it was something the community felt very strongly about this. No one but the consultant mentioned a 10-year timeframe.

Please find photographs of key survey responses displayed at the meeting. We understand there were also on-line submissions received by Communications.

2. The draft plan fails to meet requirements under **Background** of the consulting brief  
*"A small minority of island stakeholders have expressed concern about the potential health impacts of chemical use for weed control. This matter will need to be addressed in the plan"*
3. We believe the plan needs to set out the aspirations of the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation, those of residents, land owners and groups charged with environmental care (Coastcare, Bushcare & Golf Club) It needs to acknowledge and respond to important aspirations.
4. Recommendations of the 2004 Coochiemudlo Island Land Management Plan prioritising weed control, including hand-weeding the Emerald Fringe have been ignored. The plan is still recognised as a valid working document by the Queensland

Government but comments at the Focus Group meeting last week reveal Council officers have not referenced the LM Plan for operational works.

[http://web01.redland.qld.gov.au/robo/plans/Coochiemudlo\\_LMP/Coochiemudlo\\_LMP\\_final\\_Dale-dan\\_03-04.htm](http://web01.redland.qld.gov.au/robo/plans/Coochiemudlo_LMP/Coochiemudlo_LMP_final_Dale-dan_03-04.htm)

**Management priorities should reflect the degree of threat, (the plan doesn't reflect this).**

5. Southwest corner – Cats Claw infestation zone **3A** should be addressed as an ongoing priority. Funds should be allocated immediately for operational works. This was highlighted 13 years ago as **HIGH priority** in the 2004 Land Management Plan.
6. The waste transfer station and adjacent wetland fringe **zone 1** is another priority. The issue of runaway garden weeds from dumped green waste will continue to plague the wetlands until properly contained/addressed.
7. It is recognised that no operational works should be undertaken until a full survey of the endangered Phaius orchid habitat is completed and recommendations received from acknowledged experts to minimise disturbance. This follows official identification and tissue sampling by the Queensland Herbarium in 2015. Consideration should be given to confidentiality for preservation purposes

<http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/e160f3e7-7142-4485-9211-2d1eb5e1cf31/files/draft-guidelines-threatened-orchids.pdf>

<https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/documents/gl-wl-pp-flora-survey.pdf>

- 8 The western mangroves, zone 4 should incorporate weed control around specific advice from local expert Bruce Wollstein and the cultural requirements and sensitivities of QYAC. Concerns over chemical leachate affecting the environmental values and Water Quality objectives of Moreton Bay should be seriously evaluated with a whole-of-ecosystem risk assessment.

**Case Studies One, Five and Six** hereunder

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/pestsweeds/130486aspsect6.pdf>

support Bruce's approach over 23 years weeding the mangroves that crowning asparagus, while slower, offers a sustainable and more permanent solution in this sensitive area.

The proposed use of spot-spraying "hot mix" - Metsulfuron-methyl plus glyphosate and penetrant/surfactant to the water's edge is not without risk **see Page 52**

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/pestsweeds/130486asparagus.pdf>

- 9 Southern zone **2** encompasses Curlew Creek, the high public usage foreshore and dog off-leash area. Following a discussion with the consultant after the Focus group meeting it was discussed making this "organic". Bi-annual hand-weeding events with Council & community west of barge ramp would be a very positive exercise.

- 10 The draft document should be viewed as part of a comprehensive integrated vegetation management plan for Coochiemudlo which includes restoration of native vegetation in zones affected by previous herbicide spraying. There is growing comment on the loss of understory along Zone 2 (the slopes west of Tageruba and north of Curlew Creek) which has made buildings visible from the bay.

## Omissions

- 11 There are no costings for planned operations, however under **4.1 Scope** there is supposed to be *“A review of control methods and options including cost-benefit analysis and applicability for use on Coochiemudlo Island”*
- 12 There is no reference to the **2004 Coochiemudlo Island Land Management Plan** recommendations for weed control despite the document being referenced by Council in the consultancy brief  
[http://web01.redland.qld.gov.au/robo/plans/Coochiemudlo\\_LMP/Coochiemudlo\\_LMP\\_final\\_Dale-dan\\_03-04.htm](http://web01.redland.qld.gov.au/robo/plans/Coochiemudlo_LMP/Coochiemudlo_LMP_final_Dale-dan_03-04.htm)
- 13 The Laurie Burns Recreation Reserve needs to be included. (RCC personnel have been observed spraying this area, including the Singapore daisy infestation and childrens’ playground without warning signs. We were advised the chemical was glyphosate and work undertaken every three weeks)
- 14 There is no mention of Curlew Creek and surrounding weed issues
- 15 There is no recognition nor consideration given to herbicide spray-free buffer zones for sensitive wetlands and riparian areas which puts a multitude of organisms, fauna and birdlife at risk, as well as native vegetation  
<https://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/resources/static/pdf/resources/reports/buffer-guide/wetland-buffer-guideline-14-04-13.pdf>
- 16 There is an apparent lack of consideration for external funding opportunity to assist weed management e.g. partnering with Coastcare/ QYAC
- 17 Despite requesting information on saturated steam weed control from Coastcare (see correspondence Email 2) there was no follow-up or contact made with other Councils/ operators successfully using this technology
- 18 Lack of discussion with Coastcare relating to the final recommendation on page 30
- 19 The reference to saturated steam doesn’t cover its proven capability over a variety of weeds e.g. metre-high Singapore Daisy and guinea grass are just two.
- 20 Monitoring and review: The latest scientific information and monitoring should be used to review the IWMP and related practises on an annual basis.

## Summation

Over the last three years Coastcare has sought principles for Action and asked Redland City Council to –

- Work collaboratively with a motivated community to share the environmental care

- Support the Ramsar Convention and promote ecologically sustainable action
- Adopt chemical-free buffer zones around the Melaleuca Wetlands, sensitive water courses and fore-dunes.
- Respond with an Integrated Weed Management Plan for the island with minimal chemical use
- Promote alternative weed eradication methods – native regeneration, hand-weeding, bio and thermal control

To date, the draft Integrated Weed Management Plan is focussed on a regime of repetitive herbicide spraying across island – every 4-6 weeks for the first year (average 10 times/annum); every 6-8 weeks for year two ( seven times/annum); every eight weeks for year three (six times); 8-12 weeks for year four ( five times) and then?

Coastcare appreciates the opportunity to respond to the first draft IWMP and hopes the aforementioned comments are addressed in the next draft.

6 September 2017