

Water Hyacinth - Statutory Weed Management Plan

Eichhornia crassipes (Martius) Solms-Laub

Interpretation:

In this Weed Management Plan (approved 30 August 2003):
(amendments approved 21 June 2011):

- "Act" means the *Weed Management Act 1999*.
- "Approved quarantine place" means a place approved by the Secretary under section 70 of the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997* for the purpose of examining any prescribed matter imported into or to be exported out of the State.
- "Court fine" means a prescribed penalty for breaches against the Act. Court fines may be imposed if a person is convicted of any offence against the Act.
- "DPIPWE" means the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Tasmania.
- "Infringement fine" means a prescribed penalty for breaches against the Act. Infringement fines are imposed by way of an infringement notice that may be issued by a Weed Inspector.
- "Inspector" means a Weed Inspector appointed under section 34 of the Act.
- "Penalty unit" means the basic unit of the fine for which persons who fail to comply with any prohibition or requirement under the Act may be liable. See [values of penalty units](#) under the *Penalty Units and Other Penalties Act 1987* for more details.
- "Quarantine Tasmania" means that branch of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment that, in cooperation with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, maintains both overseas and interstate quarantine barriers for this State.
- "Regional Weed Management Officer" means a person employed in the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment under that specific title.
- "Regulations" means the *Weed Management Regulations 2007*.
- "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.
- "Zone A" includes those Tasmanian municipalities for which eradication of a declared weed is the principal management objective. These municipalities are either free of the declared weed, host only small, isolated infestations, or host larger infestations which are deemed eradicable because a strategic management plan exists and the resources required to implement it have been or are likely to be secured. See [Management of water hyacinth by municipality](#) (Section 12) for details.
- "Zone B" includes those Tasmanian municipalities for which containment of the declared weed is the principal management objective. Such municipalities host large, widespread infestations

of the declared weed that are not deemed eradicable because the feasibility of effective management is low at this time. These municipalities lack a strategic management plan for the weed and/or resources to undertake control actions at a level required for eradication have not been secured. See [Management of water hyacinth by municipality](#) (Section 12) for details.

- “Water hyacinth” means *Eichhornia crassipes* (Martius) Solms-Laub. (syn. *Eichhornia speciosa* and *Pontederia crassipes*) and includes the whole plant or plant parts, live or dead.

1. Purpose of this management plan:

The purpose of this Weed Management Plan for water hyacinth is to:

- Provide direction upon the implementation of the *Act* with respect to water hyacinth.
- Specify measures to prevent the establishment and spread of water hyacinth in Tasmania.

2. Area covered by this management plan:

The State of Tasmania is covered by this Weed Management Plan.

3. Distribution and extent of the weed:

Water hyacinth is a freshwater aquatic plant that can produce a range of serious negative impacts in lakes, streams and drainage or irrigation channels. It is naturalised in a number of locations on mainland Australia.

There are no known naturalised water hyacinth populations in Tasmania. However, the plant has been recorded in aquaria in the State.

See the DPIPW [Water Hyacinth Information Page](#) for more information on this weed.

4. Importation of declared weed:

(1) A person must not import or allow to be imported into Tasmania any water hyacinth.

It is an offence against section 57(1) of the Act to fail to comply with this prohibition. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 4 penalty units. A person convicted in court of that offence may be liable to a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units.

The Secretary may exempt a person from this prohibition under section 60 of the Act.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following should be undertaken:

- Persons travelling to Tasmania, in particular from areas infested with water hyacinth, should conduct thorough searches for the presence of the plant and apply appropriate hygiene measures, such as vehicle, boat and baggage cleaning. In particular, any mud or water taken from infested areas should be removed prior to entering Tasmania. Questions or concerns about hygiene issues should be directed to Quarantine Tasmania personnel before or directly upon disembarkation in Tasmania.
- Persons importing items to Tasmania that may contain water hyacinth should have these checked for the presence of the plant. This can be arranged through Quarantine Tasmania.
- Persons importing aquarium or pond plants should verify that the species they are importing do not include water hyacinth. As plant labels are sometimes ambiguous or in error, these should not be relied upon for verification of a plant's identity. Plant identification queries may be referred to a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#).
- Persons importing aquarium or pond fish or other freshwater animals should also check that the water used for transporting these organisms does not contain water hyacinth material, in particular stolon fragments or seeds.
- Persons buying aquarium or pond products (including mail-order and internet purchases) should keep comprehensive records of their transactions, including the contact details of the supplier and the date of purchase.
- Persons importing livestock to Tasmania should liaise with suppliers on the subject of possible water hyacinth contamination, particularly in mud attached to hooves of stock or the feathers and feet of waterfowl.

Note: The importation of this species into Tasmania is also restricted under the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997*. Quarantine Tasmania should be contacted for information on the relevance and application of the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997* to activities concerning plant species.

5. Procedures for notification of the occurrence of the weed:

Inspectors shall notify a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) of any water hyacinth occurrences. The Regional Weed Management Officer will then check the identity of the plant and if water hyacinth is confirmed the Principal Weed Management Officer will initiate a weed incursion response.

6. Sale, purchase, propagation, use, &c., of declared weed:

(1) A person must not:

(a) sell water hyacinth or any material or thing containing or carrying water hyacinth; or

(b) purchase or offer to purchase water hyacinth or any material or thing containing or carrying water hyacinth; or

(c) grow, propagate or scatter water hyacinth; or

(d) store water hyacinth or any material or thing containing or carrying water hyacinth; or

(e) hire or offer for hire any material or thing containing or carrying water hyacinth; or

(f) use water hyacinth or any material or thing containing or carrying water hyacinth; or

(g) deal with water hyacinth or any material or thing containing or carrying water hyacinth in any manner that is likely to result in the spread of the declared weed.

It is an offence against section 56(1) of the Act to fail to comply with this prohibition. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 4 penalty units. A person convicted in court of that offence may be liable to a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units.

The Secretary may exempt a person from this prohibition under section 60 of the Act.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following, should be undertaken:

- Persons giving away, bartering or selling, purchasing, growing, propagating or scattering, storing, using, or otherwise dealing with aquarium or pond plants should verify that the plants in their possession do not include water hyacinth. Plant labels that often accompany aquarium or pond plants and advice from suppliers should not be relied upon absolutely for identification purposes. Any plant identification queries may be referred to a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#).

(2) It is a defence in proceedings for an offence under section 56(1) of the Act if the defendant establishes that he or she took all reasonable actions to prevent the commission of the offence.

7. Measures to reduce the number of water hyacinth plants, eradicate water hyacinth from an area or restrict water hyacinth to a particular area:

An inspector may, by serving a notice on the owner of a place, require that owner to implement any of the measures described in this part of the Weed Management Plan or any other measures consistent with it.

It is an offence against section 13(3) of the Act to fail to comply with a requirement notice issued by an Inspector. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 8 penalty units. A person convicted of that offence in court may be liable to a fine not exceeding 100 penalty units and, in the case of a continuing offence, a further fine not exceeding 5 penalty units for each day during which the offence continues.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following, should be undertaken:

- Persons maintaining aquarium or pond plants or propagating them for distribution should take steps to ensure that their plant stock does not include water hyacinth. These steps include purchasing from reputable suppliers, checking that plant purchases do not include incidental, unknown plants and having any suspect plants identified by a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#).
- Persons wishing to dispose of water hyacinth or any thing contaminated with water hyacinth should notify a Weed Inspector or a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) first, in order to receive direction and advice upon how best to do this.

8. Storage in a specified area of any thing contaminated with the declared weed:

Any thing found to be contaminated with water hyacinth may be removed to storage at an appropriate approved quarantine place. A [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) will determine whether removal to storage at any of these facilities or treatment/destruction of material *in situ* is most appropriate.

Failure to comply with this requirement is an offence against section 51(1) of the Act. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 4 penalty units. A person convicted of that offence in court may be liable to a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units

The Secretary may exempt a person from this requirement under section 60 of the Act.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following, should be undertaken:

- A person who discovers or suspects he/she possesses any thing, (e.g. aquarium, pond or aquaculture supplies) contaminated with water hyacinth should contact an Inspector or a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) without delay. The contaminated thing should not be moved, treated or disposed of prior to making this contact. If water hyacinth is confirmed, the person will be directed and advised in the proper management, including disposal, of the contaminated thing.

9. Any other measures the Minister considers appropriate to control the weed:

There are no other measures appropriate for the management of water hyacinth in Tasmania at this time.

10. Exemptions:

Persons wishing to gain exemption from any of provisions of the Act that relate to water hyacinth should contact a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) to discuss the reasons for seeking the exemption and obtain an exemption application form.

Persons granted an exemption should ensure they understand fully, any conditions specified in the exemption. Queries can be directed to a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#).

11. Review of this Weed Management Plan:

A review of this Weed Management Plan may be undertaken at least once every five years if it is necessary and desirable to do so. The review will incorporate consultation with stakeholders deemed appropriate by the Secretary, DPIPWE.

12. Management of water hyacinth by municipality:

Each Tasmanian municipality is classified into one of two management zones (Zones A or B) for the purposes of implementing this Weed Management Plan for water hyacinth.

Zone A Municipalities - eradication: Eradication is the most appropriate management objective for Zone A municipalities which have little or no water hyacinth, or when a credible plan for eradicating existing infestations is being developed and implemented. The ultimate management outcome for Zone A municipalities is achieving and maintaining the total absence of water hyacinth from within municipal boundaries.

Zone B municipalities - containment: Containment is the most appropriate management objective for Zone B municipalities which have problematic infestations but no plan and/or resources to undertake control actions at a level required for eradication. The management outcome for Zone B municipalities is ongoing prevention of the spread of water hyacinth from existing infestations to areas free or in the process of becoming free of water hyacinth.

The decision regarding which category is most appropriate for a particular municipality at a particular time is made jointly by DPIPW and each municipality. Municipalities may change categories over time. For example, a Zone B municipality may decide to develop and implement a strategic plan for water hyacinth, with eradication as the objective. Provided the plan is credible, this municipality would qualify for inclusion in Zone A. Conversely, a Zone A municipality with widespread infestations may decide to stop supporting a strategic plan for water hyacinth eradication, in which case it would be re-classified as Zone B.

There are no known naturalised water hyacinth populations in Tasmania. Therefore all municipalities are currently classed as Zone A (eradication) for water hyacinth.