

Biosecurity—EIS information guideline

Introduction

This guideline advises proponents about the information and assessment requirements in relation to biosecurity when preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS).

In this sense, biosecurity relates to managing pest plants and animals, diseases, and contaminants.

General biosecurity obligation

Proponents preparing an EIS need to address their *general biosecurity obligation*. All Queenslanders have a general biosecurity obligation under Queensland's *Biosecurity Act 2014* (see Chapter 2, Part 1 of the Act). This means that everyone is responsible for managing biosecurity risks that are:

- under their control and
- that they know about, or should reasonably be expected to know about.

A biosecurity risk is the risk that exists when you deal with:

- any pest, disease or contaminant
- something that could carry a pest, disease or contaminant (e.g. animals, plants, soil, and equipment—which are known as 'carriers').

You are also obliged to minimise the likelihood of causing, and limit the consequences of, a biosecurity event. A biosecurity event is an event that:

- has, or may have, a significant harmful effect on human health, social amenity, the economy, or the environment and
- is caused by a pest, disease or contaminant.

Other key concepts include: biosecurity matter; prohibited matter; and restricted matter—for more information about these matters, see Chapter 1, Part 4 of the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, and the Queensland Government's [Biosecurity](#) website (Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2019).

Other applicable legislation includes the Biosecurity Regulation 2016 (Qld), Mineral Resources Regulation 2013 (Qld) and *Biosecurity Act 2015* (Cwlth).

If you are a landowner or leaseholder, you are obliged to stay informed about the biosecurity risks that could be on your property or be caused by your activities. You are also obliged to manage the biosecurity risks and potential carriers appropriately.

For this reason, your EIS must survey the project site for existing biosecurity risks, assess the likelihood that your project poses any biosecurity risks, and propose measures to avoid or minimise biosecurity risks and biosecurity events that your project could cause.

Existing biosecurity risk

Conduct field surveys of the project site for existing pest plants and animals, diseases or contaminants that might pose a biosecurity risk. Describe the methods and results of the field surveys. Address aquatic and marine biosecurity risks if the project site or its boundary includes a waterway, wetland, estuary, and/or coastline.

List and quantify all identified pest plants and animals, diseases or contaminants. Illustrate their locations on maps at a suitable scale, and provide photographs of them whenever possible.

Identify and describe existing carriers for biosecurity risks at and around the site—e.g. equipment used for the current land use(s).



Potential carriers

Identify and describe those activities of the proposed project that could potentially act as carriers for biosecurity risks. Expressly address common potential carriers such as:

- vehicles, and other wheeled or tracked equipment, moving around, and in and out of the site
- excavating, moving, and stockpiling soil
- boats, pontoons, dredgers, and their trailers
- water extraction or transfer, such as pumping from one place to another through pipelines, existing drainage lines or new diversion channels
- garbage storage and disposal, which can attract and feed pest animals.

Also, identify and describe any uncommon or unique carriers that could arise from the project's activities.

Managing biosecurity risk

You have an obligation (the general biosecurity obligation mentioned above) to take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent or minimise the biosecurity risk(s) associated with your project, its activities, and your use of the land even if that land is owned by someone else. Refer to the Queensland Government's [Invasive plants and animals](#) website (DAF, 2018) for more information.

Your EIS must assess and describe all your project's biosecurity risks and potential biosecurity events.

Your EIS must propose detailed, practical measures that would prevent or minimise all identified biosecurity risks and potential events. These measures should address:

- nationally significant pest animals, weeds and diseases under the Commonwealth's biosecurity framework including [weeds of national significance](#)
- *prohibited matters*, *restricted matters* and *restricted places* under Queensland's *Biosecurity Act 2014*
- designated pests under Queensland's *Public Health Act 2005*
- relevant biosecurity matters under regional and local government biosecurity plans.
- actions that may be undertaken to prevent or limit damage to Australia's marine environment or industry in accordance with guidance by the [National Marine Pest Sectoral Committee](#) and [Australian marine pest monitoring manual](#) (Commonwealth of Australia 2009).

Develop, and include in the EIS, strategies that will:

- prevent the further spread or contamination of existing biosecurity threats
- remove, control and limit the introduction and establishment of new biosecurity threats onsite or to adjacent properties
- reduce the risks of disease-causing agents, weeds and chemicals
- prevent or minimise potential biosecurity impacts on terrestrial and aquatic environmental values (cross link to terrestrial and/or aquatic ecology section of the EIS).

Ensure that all the project's measures and strategies align with relevant national, state and local biosecurity strategies, plans and priorities including:

- [Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017–2027](#) (IPAC 2017)
- [Australian Weeds Strategy 2017–2027](#) (IPAC 2017)
- biosecurity surveillance or prevention measures authorised under Queensland's *Biosecurity Act 2014*
- nationally significant pest animals, weeds and diseases under the Commonwealth *Biosecurity Act 2015* framework
- local government and regional biosecurity plans.

All such actions must be measurable and auditable so that their success can be evaluated. Take all reasonable steps to work with neighbouring properties to prevent or minimise biosecurity risks.

Illustrate on maps and diagrams the locations and details of facilities you would use to manage biosecurity risks. Such facilities might include the following types:

- wash-down or decontamination facilities for vehicles and equipment (including personal equipment)
- quarantine areas (e.g. vehicle no-go areas)
- weed-controlled soil stockpiles
- garbage storage and disposal
- exclusion fencing.

Assess whether any of the proposed management actions might have consequential impacts on the environment, and propose measures to avoid any significant impacts. For example, if toxic baits would be used to control pest animals, describe how native wildlife would be prevented from consuming the baits, or if chemicals would be sprayed to control weeds, describe how you would avoid risk to native plants and wildlife and avoid contaminating land, air or water.

You should consider whether a [biosecurity management plan](#) (Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2019) would be appropriate for the lease.

Your EIS must include a monitoring program that provides:

- measurable objectives for determining the success of risk management measures
- monitoring actions, and a schedule for implementing them
- corrective actions if monitoring finds that risk management measures are not succeeding or have failed.

If any animals would be agisted on any part of your lease you may need to register with the Queensland Government as a [biosecurity entity](#) (Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2019).

References

Note: These references were correct at the time of publication. Where more recent versions are available, these must be used.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2020, Invasive plants and animals, Queensland Government, Brisbane, viewed April 2020, <<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity/invasive-plants-animals>>.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2020, Biosecurity, Queensland Government, Brisbane, viewed April 2020, <<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity>>.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2020, Biosecurity planning to protect your property, Queensland Government, Brisbane, viewed April 2020, <<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity/policy-legislation-regulation/biosecurity-planning>>.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2019, Biosecurity entity registration, Queensland Government, Brisbane, viewed April 2020, <<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/livestock/biosecurity-entity-registration>>.

Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry 2014, DAFF Environmental Impact Assessment Companion Guide, Queensland Government, Brisbane, viewed April 2020 <<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/daff-environmental-impact-assessment-companion-guide/resource/7b1825c4-5e42-4cf8-aa2d-7fa55c2f5e4c>>.

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry 2010, Australian marine pest monitoring manual, Version 2.0, Australian Government, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, viewed April 2020, <<https://www.marinepests.gov.au/sites/default/files/Documents/australian-marine-pest-monitoring-guidelines.pdf>>.

Marine Pest Sectoral Committee, viewed April 2020, <<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/marine-pests/mp-sect-committee>>.

Invasive Plants and Animals Committee 2017, *Australian pest animal strategy 2017-2027*, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, viewed April 2020, <<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/pest-animals-and-weeds/review-aus-pest-animal-weed-strategy/aus-pest-animal-strategy>>.

Invasive Plants and Animals Committee 2017, *Australian weeds strategy 2017-2027*, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, viewed April 2020, <<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/pest-animals-and-weeds/review-aus-pest-animal-weed-strategy/aus-weeds-strategy>>.