

Minutes

Meeting Twelve of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Ian Mortimer, DAFF; Rose Hockham, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Apologies: Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Louise Clarke, DAFF; Nin Hyne, DAFF; Melissa Hart, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DEWHA; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Geoff Pegg, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Stuart Holland, DPI Vic; Anne Dennis, DSE; Andrew Greenwood, DSE; Shaun Sutor, DSE; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG).

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Eleven had been circulated for comment out of session. No comments or amendment requests had been received and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. They have been made available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant went through the action list from Meeting Eleven and the status of each action item was discussed.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Rodney Turner reminded Members that all but one of the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust have been signed and the researchers are actively undertaking work.

Since the last meeting, PHA has received three progress reports from researchers. These have been circulated to the MRTMG for their information. They have also been circulated to the members of the Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group (MRSAG) who have been invited to provide comment on the reports if they wish to.

There is another progress report due at the end of this month. Jenna Taylor will circulate this to both the MRTMG and the MRSAG as soon as it is received by PHA.

PHA is working to finalise the remaining contract and the contract is currently with the researcher for signing.

As has been advised previously, PHA is also working to organise a Myrtle Rust workshop in Sydney. This workshop will be funded by the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program and will provide an opportunity to discuss the Program's research projects, the outcomes of this science, as well as future directions. It was originally intended that the workshop be held in June but PHA is now looking at the 17th and 18th of July as these dates better suit Acelino Alfenas who is travelling to Australia from Brazil to assist with some of the Australian Government funded research and who will also speak

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at the workshop. PHA has been in touch with NSW DPI regarding a venue for the workshop and David Forsyth regarding the list of invitees from DSEWPaC'S December workshop.

Item 5 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

Suzy Perry gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland. Her report is attached at Attachment A.

Item 6 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in NSW

Satendra Kumar and Graham Wilson gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. Their report is attached at Attachment B.

Item 7 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Victoria

Russell McMurray gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. His report is attached at Attachment C.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

David Forsyth gave an update on national Myrtle Rust activities. His report is attached at Attachment D.

It was also discussed that DSEWPaC has an arrangement with the affected jurisdictions whereby the State governments provide DSEWPaC with data relating to the distribution of Myrtle Rust in their jurisdiction. This data is not made publicly available but is used to produce a number of maps overlaying the known national distribution of Myrtle Rust with the distribution of EPBC-listed Myrtaceous species and ecological communities with a Myrtaceous element. David Forsyth explained that NSW has provided its data as part of an annual update from NSW OEH but DSEWPaC has not received data from Queensland or Victoria for some time. Suzy Perry and Russell McMurray agreed to provide David with this data.

Colin Grant asked whether this data would be made publicly available in the future and David explained that that some of this data may be sensitive or be held under IP by certain institutions.

Item 9 – Report on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership

Lucy Sutherland gave an update on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities. Her report is attached at Attachment E.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Peter Grist gave an update on the Forestry industry's Myrtle Rust activities. His report is attached at Attachment F.

Item 11 – Cessation Strategy

Colin Grant reminded the Members that he had previously asked Jenna Taylor to draft a Cessation Strategy for the Program which was similar to the Cessation Strategy that was written by DAFF Queensland for the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Program. Jenna did so and a draft Cessation Strategy was circulated to the MRTMG prior to the last meeting in February 2013.

Colin advised the Members that he has since asked Jenna to turn the Cessation Strategy into a Legacy Document. The Legacy Document will outline both the outcomes of the Transition to Management Program and the work that can be done as a result of these outcomes. As such, Colin requested that Members provide comment to Jenna on the points listed under "Future Activities" in the draft Cessation Strategy, fine-tuning them where necessary and advising as to which, if any, of these

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activities their organisation would undertake to do. The Members agreed and briefly discussed each of the points to ensure consistent understanding of each of the points.

It was decided that a small working group would be formed to address four of the points. Suzy Perry will take the lead on this and David Forsyth and Graham Wilson will help facilitate this.

It was also decided that Jenna would update the "Future Activities" section based on the discussion during the Meeting and circulate it to the Members by Friday 19 April so that they could provide further comment.

Jenna will draft a Legacy Document incorporating these comments and circulate it to the Members prior to the next meeting.

Item 12 – Next Meeting

Colin Grant explained to the Members that the next meeting of the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group had been moved from Tuesday 21st May to Tuesday 28th May due to a clash of schedules and proposed that the next meeting of the MRTMG be moved to this date also. The MRTMG agreed. As such, the next meeting of the MRTMG is now scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEST on Tuesday 28th May 2013. Jenna Taylor will email Members to remind them of this.

Item 13 – Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked the Members of the MRTMG for their participation in the teleconference and closed the meeting.

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Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Twelve held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Reports

Myrtle Rust reports have increased in the past few weeks and continue to increase with the ongoing wet weather.

To date, 4502 reports or enquires regarding Myrtle Rust have been received by DAFF Queensland's Myrtle Rust On-line Reporting System. This reporting system commenced on 5 January, 2011, after the disease was first detected in Queensland, and the Customer Service Centre continues to receive and collate calls and public enquiries relating to detections of Myrtle Rust, disease management, and requests for advice and information.

Geographic Range

The geographic range of Myrtle Rust in Queensland now extends from the Queensland/New South Wales border in the South, to Cooktown in the North of the state.

There continues to be no records of Myrtle Rust being established in the environment West of the Great Dividing Range.

Host Range

New hosts for Queensland detected in January/February 2013

Six new species have been identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust in Queensland since the last meeting in February 2013. These are:

- *Darwinia citriodora* (Lemon-scented myrtle)
- *Eugenia uniflora* (Surinam cherry)
- *Melaleuca paludicola*
- *Ptilidostigma tetramerum*
- *Thryptomene saxicola* (Rock thryptomene)
- *Syzygium aqueum* (Water apple, Water cherry)

The known host range in Queensland now covers 158 species from 39 genera within the Myrtaceae family.

Surveillance Activities

Surveys were recently conducted in North Queensland around Cairns, Kuranda, Mareeba, the Atherton Tablelands, and Herberton Range. Myrtle Rust is widespread in each of these areas and is causing significant levels of infection on a range of hosts.

Gossia myrsinocarpa (Malanda ironwood, Small-flowered lignum) was significantly impacted at Lake Eachum National Park with 100% of trees showing high to extreme levels of infection. Infection of flowers was also detected.

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Research Activities

Disease screening work is continuing for eucalypt species with testing of the following species being assessed in the next 2 weeks comparing provenance and family susceptibility levels. Also included are seedlots from South Africa.

- *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*
- *Eucalyptus grandis*
- *Eucalyptus pellita*
- *Eucalyptus urophylla*

Clones of resistant and susceptible *Melaleuca quinquenervia* are being established for use as standards in future screening programs and to test for changes in the pathogen and new incursions.

Research Project Proposals

Plant Biosecurity CRC Proposal

The preliminary research proposal *Managing Myrtle Rust and its impacts in Australia*, submitted to the new Plant Biosecurity CRC was approved, and it is anticipated that the final project proposal will be approved on 22 May at the next CRC board meeting.

Northern Biodiversity Fund

A full proposal for management of Myrtle Rust was requested and has been submitted to the Northern Biodiversity Fund through the University of the Sunshine Coast.

Caring for our Country

A Caring for our Country proposal *Managing and protecting Australian ecosystems threatened by Myrtle Rust* will also be submitted this week.

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Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI and OEH for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Twelve held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Geographic Range

The level of reporting since the last meeting in February 2013 has been low, with the occasional report in natural areas. It is unclear as to whether this is due to low incidence (perhaps due to the mild summer) or lack of desire to report.

Despite Myrtle Rust being considered endemic in NSW, the disease is yet to be reported in natural vegetation in the west of the Great Dividing Range.

Communication

The NSW DPI Biosecurity website (<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust>) is being updated regularly and remains the major site for information on Myrtle Rust management in NSW. Further information on Myrtle Rust management in natural vegetation is available from <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/pestsweeds/20110683myrtlerustmp.htm>.

Management

OEH is writing a best practice protocol to help minimise national spread of Myrtle Rust and other plant diseases.

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Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Twelve held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Geographic Range

There have been only three new detections of Myrtle Rust since the last meeting in February 2013.

Two of these were on adjacent private properties in Ascot Vale in the Melbourne Metropolitan.

The third detection was in a retail nursery and it is suspected that it may have come from NSW. Some awareness training may be required in the retail nursery industry.

The weather has contributed to a much lower than expected spread of disease.

Training and Communication

Five public information sessions have been held since the last meeting.

There is still a strong demand from local councils and other land management groups for information and training.

Surveillance and Tracing

There has been good participation from stakeholder groups in the surveillance program.

Over 150 sentinel sites have now been established and data from these sites is being provided by land managers, e.g. Parks Victoria, for collation by DPI. These sites provide early warning in high risk areas such as significant bushland sites.

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Attachment D

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Twelve held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Workshop

A summary of the outcomes of DSEWPaC's "Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems" National Workshop will be on DSEWPaC's website shortly.

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Attachment E

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Twelve held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Caring for our Country Update

Lucy has prepared and submitted an Expression of Interest to Caring for our Country for ~\$2 million worth of funding over 4 years for the building of an *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support species recovery. She is expecting to find out in June whether or not this has been accepted. Lucy thanked those MRTMG Members who assisted her in the development of the Expression of Interest.

Fiona Giblin from the University of the Sunshine Coast also submitted an Expression of Interest for funding for Myrtle Rust-related work. Lucy and Fiona were in constant contact during the development of the submissions to ensure that the projects were clearly aligned but did not overlap so as not to compete for funding.

Updates from Select Individual Partners

Lucy had nothing additional to report from the last meeting in terms of the ASBP partners and their Myrtle Rust-related work.

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Attachment F

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Twelve held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 April, 2013

Situation Update

Members continue to monitor for signs of Myrtle Rust in their operations.

No major impacts have been observed in plantations.