

CROSS SECTOR WORKING GROUP

National Environment and Community Biosecurity Research
Development and Extension Strategy ([NECBRDES](#))

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Context

The National Environmental and Community RD&E Strategy (NECBRDES) complements, strengthens and supports multi-sector biosecurity RD&E approaches and activities and strives to leverage consistent and coordinated research, development and extension (RD&E). NECBRDES, revised in 2021, encompasses nine sectors within its scope (outlined under membership below), each of which play an important role in the implementation of the Strategy.

The establishment of a cross-sector working group will help to facilitate a cross-sectoral approach to biosecurity RD&E and ensure that NECBRDES represents all aspects of environmental biosecurity. The intended outcomes of improved coordination and collaboration of biosecurity RD&E will allow for better utilisation of available RD&E funds, capabilities and infrastructure across Australia.

2. Purpose of Working Group

To drive priority setting and ensure that all RD&E and capability needs across all strategy sectors are recognised and incorporated through a collaborative process. The purpose of the NECBRDES Cross-Sector Working Group is to lead the delivery of strategic action 1.1.1 of the NECBRDES (Table 1), while contributing to strategic actions 1.1.2 and 2.1.1.

The primary focus will be to periodically review individual and cross-sector priorities across the five focus areas of: (1) Risk analysis and decision making; (2) detection, diagnosis and surveillance; (3) Management methods and strategies; (4) Stakeholder engagement; and (5) Government, institutions and architecture.

Table 1- Objectives from NECBRDES that support cross-sector biosecurity RD&E efforts

Objective	Strategic actions
1.1 Coordinate national RD&E priority setting for all sectors included in NECBRDES 2021-26	1.1.1 Establish a NECBRDES cross-sector working group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• refine existing RD&E priorities across the five focus areas• identify NECBRDES cross-sector priorities and distinct sector priorities• develop an analytic framework that matches cross-sector problem statements with possible solutions including platform technologies
	1.1.2 Integrate biosecurity RD&E priorities with biodiversity threat reduction priorities to maximise benefits for threatened species and reflect this alignment in TAPs and Key Threatening Processes strategies

2.1 Facilitate investment in biosecurity RD&E priorities	2.1.1 Build the overall case for greatly increasing investment in biosecurity RD&E, including the potential environmental, social and economic benefits. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assisting in the development of business cases for potential investors or partners (e.g. industry groups) • demonstrating the value of environment and community biosecurity RD&E and engendering broader community support
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3. Roles and responsibilities

- To assist in the implementation of relevant actions under Objective 1.2 and 2.1 of NECBRDES
- Represent an individual sector of environmental biosecurity, whilst maintain a holistic view, in the spirit of cross-sector collaboration and information sharing
- Communicate the purpose and achievements of the Working Group within and across sectors and provide feedback on sectoral needs to the Working Group
- Provide a conduit of information flow to relevant sectors on RD&E opportunities or RD&E outcomes.

4. Membership

The cross-sector working group will consist of:

- The National Coordinator (NECBRDES)
- At least one representative from each of the Strategy's nine sectors:
 1. Diseases of terrestrial wild animals
 2. Diseases of marine and freshwater wild animals
 3. Diseases of captive animals
 4. Human disease animal vectors
 5. Vertebrate pests
 6. Invertebrate pests with impacts of on social amenity or natural values and freshwater
 7. Environmental weeds
 8. Marine pests
 9. Pests and diseases of plants in natural ecosystems and/or social amenities
- Indigenous Australian representation
- Representatives from the resilient landscape hub of the National Environmental Science Program (NESP)
- Representatives from biosecurity RD&E end users to ensure research priorities are aligned to needs.

3. Observers

- Threatened Species Commissioner (or representative).

4. Deliverables

Refer to strategic actions in Table 1.

5. Meetings

- The Working Group will meet a minimum of two times per year, with further meetings on an as-needs basis. Out of Session communication may occur. Meetings are to be held online unless opportunities exist to meet in person.
- Secretariat support for the working is provided by the NECBRDES National Coordinator.

- The Secretariat will prepare a record of each meeting setting out decisions and action items.

6. Review of terms of reference

These Terms of Reference are effective from December 2022 until December 2026, with periodic review as required.

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