

14 October 2022

The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Minister for the Environment and Water
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

Progress of National Carp Control Plan

The NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers (NSWCFA) is the peak body for freshwater recreational fishing organisations in NSW, representing more than 30 fishing associations and clubs. The health of the freshwater environment is a major concern for us.

We understand that, after six years, the National Carp Control Plan has finally been delivered to the government, but that Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Murray Watt, and the relevant state ministers, will still not be able to view the Plan until it is further reviewed by various committees.

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and CSIRO have been developing the Plan since 2016, with the original aim of releasing the koi herpes virus to control carp by 2018. Under the previous Coalition government, there was a lack of transparency and urgency, with various extensions to deadlines to complete the Plan. Further delays and reviews by committees are now unreasonable. If those committees' opinions were so important, they should have been engaged throughout the earlier stages. More reviews and any period of public discussion will cause even more delays.

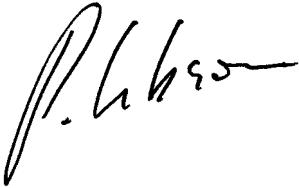
We despair at the time being wasted, especially as the European carp problem is rapidly worsening. High water levels in the Murray-Darling Basin this year will lead to an explosion in carp breeding. Whatever the advice is in the Plan, action needs to be taken as soon as possible; if the scientific advice in the Plan supports release of the virus, there should be no further dithering; if the advice is *against* release of koi herpes virus, then the government and agencies need to quickly move to alternative methods of control.

We congratulate you on becoming Minister for the Environment and Water and the quick actions you have taken on many fronts. We hope that will continue. However, although the '2021 State of the Environment' report you released in July and your recent announcement of a 'Threatened Species Action Plan: Toward Zero Extinctions', have much to say in general about the need for control of feral pests, the National Carp Control Plan is not mentioned in either. We are starting to wonder if the government is preparing to dump the Plan altogether.

We ask you and Minister Watt to treat the Plan with the seriousness and great urgency it needs.

The NSW CFA looks forward to your reply so our stakeholders are kept up to date on how the NCCP is progressing.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Gibson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Gibson

President

NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers

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