

14 October 2022

Senator the Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
PO Box 6100
Senate
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 you 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 unacceptable. If those committees' opinions were so important, they should have been engaged at all of 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.

Could you please advise when you expect to receive the Plan, and how long do you expect consultations with committees and state and territory governments will take before the Plan can be seen by the public.

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

Yours faithfully,

Peter Gibson
President