Minutes

Meeting Two of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 20 December, 2011

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Lois Ransom, DAFF; Mikael Hirsch, DAFF; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Sophie Peterson, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Sam Malfroy, PHA; Kareena Arthy, DEEDI; Suzy Perry, DEEDI; Jim Thompson, DEEDI; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI.

Apologies: Mike Ashton, DEEDI; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed the Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG) to the teleconference and the Members introduced themselves and provided information on their role.

The Chair reinforced the need for urgency in progressing objectives of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management (MRT2M) Program and this was noted by all Members.

Item 2 – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for the MRTMG were discussed and it was agreed that PHA would develop a set of Terms of Reference similar to those being developed for the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group. These will be circulated for approval.

Item 3 – Governance Arrangements

Membership

The MRTMG will be comprised of the following:

Colin Grant, DAFF (Primary member)
Lois Ransom, DAFF (Secondary member)
Greg Fraser, PHA (Primary member)
Rod Turner, PHA (Secondary member)
Kareena Arthy, DEEDI (Primary member)
Mike Ashton, DEEDI (Secondary member)
Bruce Christie, NSW DPI (Primary member)
Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI (Secondary member)

It was agreed that other people would be invited to attend the meetings as appropriate.

Chair

It was confirmed that Colin Grant will be the Chair of the MRTMG.

Secretariat and Administration Support

PHA will provide the Secretariat and administration support for the program. PHA will circulate minutes and talking points for approval before making them public on the MRT2M Program website shortly after each meeting.

Roles and Responsibilities

PHA and the MRT2M Program partners will continue to work together to finalise the details of each contract and the operational plans for each of the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust.

Item 4 – Communication

Communication Protocol

It was agreed that the media enquiries can be initially directed to the MRT2M Program website as meeting minutes and talking points will be made public on the site. It was further discussed that all Members of the MRTMG are authorised to speak directly with the media when contacted if they are comfortable doing so and the questions are of relevance to their organisation.

It was suggested, however, that any Member of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group who has spoken directly to the media should advise the other Members of the MRMG that they have done so.

Publications

Nursery and Garden Industry Australia's (NGIA) "Australian Nursery Industry Myrtle Rust (*Uredo rangelii*) Management Plan 2011" and Forest and Wood Products Australia's (FWPA) "Myrtle Rust – Forest Industry Issues Paper" were circulated and their suitability for upload to the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website discussed.

DEEDI advised that the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage has published a "Management Plan for Myrtle Rust on the National Parks Estate" and that DEEDI is also developing a Myrtle Rust document.

PHA will seek permission from NGIA, FWPA, and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage to make their respective documents available on the website.

DEEDI will make their document available once complete.

Item 5 – Operating Plan

It was discussed that PHA currently has only high level information on the projects outlined in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust. In order for PHA to develop and finalise contracts for these projects PHA must be provided with more detailed information such as the original project proposals including objectives, the type of work and or experiments to be completed, the scale of this work, expected outcomes, and proposed budgets as well as information on which aspects of the proposals have been agreed upon by DAFF.

DAFF agreed to provide PHA with this information.

It was also agreed that although submission of a manuscript or manuscripts to scientific journals would be desirable, it will not be stipulated in the contracts that this be a required outcome of any of the projects.

At this point the MRTMG was advised that the personnel from DAFF that have been responsible for Myrtle Rust up until now will not be working for DAFF in 2012. As such, DAFF's accountability and responsibility for Myrtle Rust will be transferred to the Chief Plant Protection Officer.

It was discussed that OCCPO will taking on the technical leadership for Project 5.1 (APVMA registration of fungicides). OCCPO will convene and provide the Secretariat for a Reference Group of technical experts from DAFF, PHA, DEEDI, NSW DPI, and NGIA. OCCPO must ensure that PHA has sufficient technical information to develop the contract for this project.

It was requested that PHA circulate the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust to all Members of the MRTMG.

It was also requested that PHA complete a Gap Analysis to identify other R+D being undertaken on Myrtle Rust prior to the next meeting of the MRTMG. The output will be used to determine if there is duplication or gaps in the current suite of R+D activities across a diverse range of organisations.

It was noted that Biosecurity Queensland hosted a National Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in September to discuss current and proposed Myrtle Rust research opportunities. Minutes were not taken but DEEDI agreed to forward the presentations from the Workshop to PHA for use in the Gap Analysis. DEEDI agreed to forward the presentations to DAFF as well.

Item 6 – Reporting

Update from DEEDI

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

PHA agreed to provide a link to the Biosecurity Queensland Myrtle Rust website on the MRT2M Program website.

Update from NSW DPI

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in New South Wales. The New South Wales report is attached at Attachment B.

PHA will also provide a link to the NSW DPI Myrtle Rust website on the MRT2M Program website.

Item 7 –Future Meetings

It was agreed that the MRTMG would meet monthly via teleconference. PHA will send out proposed dates for the next six meetings (from January to June inclusive) for confirmation.

Item 8 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from Biosecurity Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting 2 held by teleconference 20 December 2011

Queensland Myrtle Rust Program

Goal

Help Queenslanders adapt to living with the impacts of Myrtle Rust

Objectives

Ensure people are aware of Myrtle Rust and know what to do
Assist industry to operate and trade
Learn more about Myrtle Rust
Limit impacts on natural and built environmental assets as much as practical

Elements and sub-elements of the Queensland Myrtle Rust Program

Knowledge and Understanding

- Coordinated knowledge and information capture
- Integrated surveillance program
- Diagnostics
- Population genetics
- Disease epidemiology
- Host specificity
- Chemical control
- Resistance breeding
- Monitor impacts

Disease Management

Education and Training

Stakeholder Engagement

Adaptive Strategies

Legislation and Regulation

Market Access

Communication and Community Engagement

The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program work plan

The Myrtle Rust Program has developed a full work plan of activities, into which affected industries and other stakeholders have had significant input into the deliverables and priorities, initially through the Myrtle Rust Control Group and now through the Myrtle Rust Advisory Committee.

Current situation
Below is an overview of the current situation in Queensland (as at 20 December 2011):

Total number of known Myrtle Rust cases in Queensland	922
Total number of known affected (host) species	113
Total number of known affected (host) genera	34
Number of Council areas with Myrtle Rust cases	18
Names of Council areas with Myrtle Rust cases	Brisbane City Bundaberg Regional Cairns Regional Fraser Coast Regional Gold Coast City Gympie Regional Ipswich City Logan City Moreton Bay Regional Redland City Scenic Rim Regional South Burnett Regional Sunshine Coast Regional Toowoomba Regional Townsville City Western Downs Regional Whitsunday Regional

**new local government area*

Recent significant detections of Myrtle Rust in Queensland
The disease is established in coastal areas of south east Queensland and the furthermost north detection of Myrtle Rust in Queensland (established in the natural environment, rather than a detection of the disease in a nursery situation) is at Bundaberg (in the Botanic Gardens and some backyards).

Another recent detection of significance is in natural areas at Hervey Bay, which is a serious threat to the Fraser Island World Heritage Area.

Rockhampton
Myrtle Rust was identified in nursery stock in a retail nursery in Rockhampton in early December. Surveillance conducted in the area suggests that the disease has not spread to the natural environment. All plants in the infected lines have been removed from sale and destroyed and tracing investigations were conducted to determine where the infected plants came from to prevent recurrence of the incident.

Under Queensland legislation, it is an offence to sell or trade in plants that are infected with Myrtle Rust. Biosecurity Queensland is working with the affected businesses to ensure they have information on the prevention and management of the disease in nursery situations. The wholesale nursery that supplied the plants has also been provided similar information.

Increased infection in eucalypts
At the start of summer we started recording an increased incidence of Myrtle Rust on eucalypts. Significant infections have been found in the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens, south east Queensland and in northern New South Wales.

Host affected include:
Eucalyptus grandis (rose gum) trees up to two years old are showing moderate infection at this stage and will be monitored. This species is a common timber tree, extending from Newcastle, NSW to Bundaberg, Qld and is also common in the wet tropics.

Eucalyptus tereticornis (forest red gum) saplings also have significant infections. This species, which extends over much of eastern Australia, is used extensively in revegetation sites and is an important food and habitat tree for koalas.

Eucalyptus curtisii (plunkett mallee) trees, mature, immature and coppiced, are severely infected. This species is native to Queensland.

Eucalyptus planchoniana (bastard tallow wood)

*Eucalyptus cloeziana**(Gympie messmate)

Corymbia torelliana (cadagi)

*Corymbia henryi**(large leaved spotted gum)

Corymbia citriadora ssp. *variegata**

These species are important timber species (*) and habitat trees.

Website

The Biosecurity Queensland website is being continuously updated with new information on Myrtle Rust including disease management and monitoring, legislative requirements, images of affected hosts etc.

New hosts and susceptibility rating

The Myrtle Rust Program has rated the susceptibility of all known Myrtle Rust host species in Queensland based on a four point scale from 'Extremely Susceptible' to 'Relatively Tolerant'. These ratings are based on current observations in Queensland and may be subject to change over time. These ratings have been applied to all species on the Queensland Myrtle Rust Host List.

On-line reporting system

Suspect reports are captured through the dedicated on-line reporting system. Reports are also received through the Call Centre on the 13 25 23 number.

So far Biosecurity Queensland has received 2468 calls related to Myrtle Rust.

We also have a dedicated Myrtle Rust email address for enquiries – myrtlerust@deedi.qld.gov.au

Community and stakeholder engagement

The Myrtle Rust Program has developed a suite of education and awareness materials including Myrtle Rust brochures, factsheets, posters, banners, and an information pack for stakeholders.

Communiqué

The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program issues a monthly communiqué to stakeholders and other interested parties. This communiqué includes a current situation report as well as updates on the programs activities.

Myrtle Rust training program

A pilot Myrtle Rust training session was held in Mossman last week as a first step in the development of a Queensland Myrtle Rust Training Program for 2012. Over 30 people from Cairns Regional Council and other government organisations joined in the six hour session to gain a comprehensive understanding of Myrtle Rust, including management and decontamination options.

The Myrtle Rust Training will be presented by the Australian Network for Plant Conservation Inc. in association with the Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust (Sydney).

Myrtle Rust business and community information sessions

Sessions for both community stakeholders and affected businesses are being conducted throughout regional Queensland.

The first of these information sessions was held in Hervey Bay in November and the second was held in Bundaberg last week. There has been a great turn out from a range of businesses and community and environmental organisations including nurseries, arborists, land care groups, gardening groups and Council officers.

The next Myrtle Rust Information Sessions will be held in Rockhampton in January 2012 (dates and venue TBA).

Stakeholder engagement

The Myrtle Rust Program recently held a forum of key staff from Councils that are currently managing large scale Myrtle Rust infections in their region. The objective of the forum was for staff to share their experiences and learning's in managing Myrtle Rust infections in different situations, including revegetation of natural environments, management of parklands and street trees.

The issues and information discussed will also help in the information provided to newly infected regions and in the development of the Myrtle Rust Management Guide.

Knowledge and understanding

The Knowledge and Understanding component of the Myrtle Rust Program is funded by the Queensland Government and also the CRC for National Plant Biosecurity.

Current focus is on host range and disease epidemiology so as to determine economic, environmental and social impacts of Myrtle Rust in Queensland.

E.g. Impact on* Melaleuca *and regeneration

Myrtle Rust Program scientists are currently assessing the impact of Myrtle Rust on *Melaleuca quinquenervia* at several regeneration sites in South East Queensland. Initial results are showing an increase in disease incidence and severity levels with 94 percent of trees displaying some level of impact.

Areas known to have natural infections of Myrtle Rust in *Melaleuca quinquenervia* include coastal heathland environments around Beerburrum and Toolara State Forest, as well as sites in Sunnybank and the Tinchi Tamba wetlands.

Melaleuca quinquenervia is now rated at the highest level of susceptibility to Myrtle Rust. *Melaleuca nodosa* and *Melaleuca saligna* have also recently been rated as being highly susceptible to Myrtle Rust.

Monitoring and assessment at key regeneration sites will continue on a monthly basis. We already have 6 months data on epidemiology and impact of th

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting 2 held by teleconference 20 December 2011

Following the initial detection of Myrtle Rust in NSW, response, education material and communication with broad stakeholder was prepared and rolled out during the response program.

A suite of fungicides are now available on emergency permit for all stakeholders.

NSW DPI still fields enquiries on Myrtle Rust control, especially from home gardeners

The Office of Environment & Heritage has developed a "Management Plant for Myrtle Rust on the National Parks Estate".

Updates on Myrtle Rust are sent to a wide range of stakeholders via the electronic biosecurity bulletin.

Myrtle Rust remains confined to coastal NSW with no reports from west of the Great Dividing Range.

A level of surveillance in the west of the Great Dividing Range is being conducted by Regulatory and District Horticulturists.

Minutes

Meeting Three of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 24 January, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Lois Ransom, DAFF; Robyn Martin, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Sophie Peterson, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Sam Malfroy, PHA; Kareena Arthy, DEEDI; Mike Ashton, DEEDI; Suzy Perry, DEEDI; Jim Thompson, DEEDI; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI.

Apologies: Bruce Christie, NSW DPI.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed the Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG) to the teleconference and the Members introduced themselves.

Item 2 – Update on Secretariat Activities

Rod Turner advised the MRTMG that the minutes from Meeting Two have been finalised. It was agreed that PHA will make the minutes available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management (MRT2M) Program website. It was decided that the Action List would be removed from the minutes prior to posting as this list would be dynamic and would become out-dated quickly. It was decided that the Terms of Reference for the MRTMG will also be made available on the website.

Item 3 – Update on Project Activities

Rod Turner advised that as PHA is dealing with a range of stakeholders and sometimes multiple stakeholders for any given project, the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust are in various stages of completion. Many are in the final stages and have been sent to the researchers for final approval.

He also advised that PHA is keeping a record of the details of each project and the current status of the corresponding contract. This document can be made available to the MRTMG if desired.

The Chair thanked PHA for their work in development and provision of papers for the MRTMG Meeting as well as the work being done to negotiate and contract projects described in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust.

Item 4 – Gap Analysis

Rod Turner explained to the MRTMG that PHA has compiled a draft document listing the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust as well as R+D projects from other funding streams. Rod advised that although this document is by no means complete, it is already evident that some projects may overlap. For example, there are multiple projects investigating host range. These projects are funded by different funding bodies and it will be necessary to approach each of these funding bodies to see if there is any overlap in the potential host species that are being tested.

It was discussed and agreed that if Members of the MRTMG were aware of any R+D projects that haven't been included in this document they should forward the details of these projects to Jenna Taylor at PHA. PHA will look at alternative electronic ways to collate this information.

It was also discussed that the use of both *Uredo rangelii* and *Puccinia psidii* in this document was confusing and that nomenclature should be consistent between projects. Although in many cases PHA can confirm that the use of *Puccinia psidii* in this document does actually refer to Guava rust from South America and was therefore used correctly, there is some disagreement among researchers as to whether the Australian Myrtle Rust should be named *Uredo rangelii* and/or *Puccinia psidii* and this is reflected in the names of some of the projects listed in this document. It was agreed that Lois Ransom would consult with DEEDI out of session and decide upon standard MRTMG nomenclature for Myrtle Rust to resolve this issue.

Item 5 – Reporting

Update from DEEDI

Mike Ashton gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland.

PHA agreed to provide a link to the Domestic Quarantine website and specifically to information on ICA-42 on the MRT2M Program website.

Update from NSW DPI

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in New South Wales.

It was discussed and agreed that DEEDI and NSW DPI would forward summarised reports of their respective Myrtle Rust activities to PHA following all meetings for attachment to the minutes. The DEEDI report is attached at Attachment A. The NSW DPI report is attached at Attachment B.

Item 6 –Future Meetings

Members were reminded that the MRTMG is to meet monthly via teleconference and that the dates for the next six meetings have been confirmed. Members were advised that it was decided during the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group meeting that future teleconferences would be only 30 minutes long. It was agreed that this will be adopted for the MRTMG meetings also and that the Myrtle Rust meeting would continue to be held directly after the Asian Honey Bee meeting.

It was also discussed and agreed that representatives from Victoria DPI should be invited to future meetings given the new detections of Myrtle Rust in Victoria. Colin Grant will write to a senior official from Victoria DPI and formally invite them to participate in the MRTMG.

Item 7 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle rust in Queensland – report from Biosecurity Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Three held by teleconference on Tuesday, 24 January 2012

The following was reported:

1. Myrtle rust has been recorded on 120 host species in Queensland from 34 genera in the Myrtaceae family, some of which are endangered, vulnerable or near-threatened species. The host range continues to expand and now includes key species of eucalypts (*Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia*) and paperbark (*Melaleuca*).

2. The geographic range is also rapidly expanding, with the disease now established and widespread in South East Queensland and north as far as Rockhampton. Myrtle Rust has been diagnostically confirmed at over 175 sites in Queensland with a further 397 sites confirmed through photographic or other evidence. It is currently established in at least 19 Queensland local government areas.

3. Myrtle Rust was recently confirmed in the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens and in a residential garden in Farnborough north of Yeppoon. These are the first confirmed cases of Myrtle Rust in the natural environment in the Rockhampton area and the most northerly detections of Myrtle Rust in Queensland to date outside a plant nursery.

4. Myrtle Rust was also recently confirmed in a residential garden in Gladstone. This is the first known natural infection of Myrtle Rust in the Gladstone Regional Council area. This and the Rockhampton infections indicate the disease is now established and becoming widespread in central Queensland.

5. The disease appears to be spreading steadily north from south east Queensland where it was initially detected in December 2010. To date there has been no evidence of satellite infections in more remote centres despite the detection of the disease in nurseries in a number of centres including Cairns, Townsville and Airlie Beach in north Queensland during 2011. The reasons for this are not clear.

6. A $750,000 Myrtle Rust Program has been established by Biosecurity Queensland with the goal of helping Queenslanders live with the impacts of Myrtle Rust. This will be achieved through targeted disease management, research, education and awareness, market access initiatives and, where practical, protection of strategic assets. A further $100,000 has been allocated by DEEDI's Horticulture and Forestry Science in 2011-12 to help the Queensland hardwood plantations industry manage the impacts of the disease.

7. The Queensland Government is encouraging the development of a comprehensive national program of activities to assist in the adaptation to Myrtle Rust. This program will complement the $1.5 million the Australian Government has allocated to its 'Transition to Management' Program for Myrtle Rust.

8. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program is continuing to monitor the host and geographic range of the disease in Queensland through surveillance, tracing, stakeholder input and a dedicated on-line Myrtle Rust Reporting System accessible from the DEEDI website.

9. The Program has responded to more than 2,700 public enquiries since the disease was first detected in Queensland. Public reports have increased significantly during the spring and summer months due to rising temperatures and humidity producing conditions that are ideal for disease development and spread.

10. The Program is engaging with a wide range of industry, government, environmental and community stakeholders across Queensland. The program recently commenced a series of industry and community forums which are being delivered across the state to provide information and advice to businesses, councils, residents, environmental and other interest groups. Information sessions on Myrtle Rust were held in Hervey Bay and Bundaberg in late 2011 and sessions will be held in Rockhampton on 24 January 2012. Similar sessions will be delivered in Mackay in early February and in north Queensland regional centres over the coming weeks. These forums provide individuals, businesses, councils and other interested stakeholder groups with information and advice on myrtle rust and what they can do to minimise spread and manage the disease.

11. The Program is working closely with affected industry and government stakeholders such as the Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland, DERM, various businesses and local councils to help resolve the many policy and operational issues associated with managing Myrtle Rust and its impacts.

12. Some of the impacts already affecting stakeholders include the affects on production, cost and efficacy of chemical control, loss of street and amenity trees, cost of tree removal, replacement of susceptible species, loss of species, loss of biodiversity, reduced flowering and seed production, impact on regeneration and subsequent ecosystem damage, and loss of ecosystem functions such as climate regulation and carbon sequestration.

13. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program includes a 'Knowledge and Understanding' component to learn more about this disease and how it will behave under Australian environmental conditions. Important baseline data is being gathered to enable better impact assessments of the affects of Myrtle Rust in Queensland and Australia as the true impact of this disease may not be realised for the next 5 to 10 years or more.

14. A number of research projects are also underway in Queensland to investigate host specificity, disease epidemiology and disease development to increase our understanding of *Puccinia psidii* in Australia. This research will help develop better options for disease management and potentially identify resistant varieties within susceptible Myrtaceae species.

15. The Queensland Government has had its procedure for the certification of live plants of the Myrtaceace family for freedom of Myrtle Rust using an an Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) arrangement endorsed. Information on this procedure (ICA-42 in Queensland) is available from the Domestic Quarantine website.

Attachment B

Myrtle rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Three held by teleconference on Tuesday, 24 January 2012

It was discussed that most of the activities reported at the last Meeting are still current. Additionally, the following was reported:

1. Myrtle rust has become more active according to the internal and external reports we have received in the recent weeks. Most calls are from backyarders on how to manage Myrtle rust. Staff from Forests NSW have reported Myrtle rust on young plants in the managed plantation. The damage is not obvious at this stage but this may change as the season progresses.

2. Distribution - Coastal NSW from the North down to Batemans Bay in natural vegetation. Myrtle rust has not been detected west of the Great Dividing Range.

3. Fungicide Project - Angus has had discussions with Robert Park to ensure that every possible synergy is sought.

4. A teleconference was held in late December 2011 with the aim of connecting people who are involved in plant conservation and Myrtle rust research – exploring collaborations aimed at conserving some of the badly affected hosts of Myrtle rust. The meeting involved staff from the Australian National University, Orange Botanic Gardens, Burrendong Arboretum, Australian Botanic Gardens (Mt Annan, NSW), DPI NSW, the Office of Environment & Heritage, Royal Sydney Botanic Gardens, Biosecurity Qld, and the Department of Environment & Resource Management Qld. The teleconference discussed and agreed on 2 main outcomes:

    - The current seed collection and storage project being run through the Australian Botanic Gardens at Mt Annan is to include Myrtle rust hosts.

    - Efforts are to go into establishing collections of live plants, including potentially resistant individuals, at refuge gardens (e.g. overseas and inland NSW) for posterity and research purposes.

Minutes

Meeting Four of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Wednesday 29 February, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Mike Cole, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Sam Malfroy, PHA; Amy Forbes, PHA; Mike Ashton, DEEDI; Suzy Perry, DEEDI; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Hugh Millar, DPI Vic; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic.

Apologies: Lois Ransom, DAFF; Sophie Peterson, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Kareena Arthy, DEEDI; Jim Thompson, DEEDI; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG), and in particular Hugh Millar, Pat Sharkey, and Russell McMurray from DPI Vic who were attending an MRTMG meeting for the first time.

Item 2 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Three. The status of each action item was discussed and amendments were made to the action list where necessary.

Item 3 – Reporting from PHA

Rod Turner advised that as PHA is dealing with a range of stakeholders and sometimes multiple stakeholders for any given project, the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust are still in various stages of completion. The contract for Project 3.2 has been signed. The remaining contracts, with the exception of that for Project 3.4, are in the final stages and have been sent to the researchers for final approval.

PHA presented a paper to the MRTMG proposing that the MRTMG endorse a course of action that deviates from the method understood and described in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust but achieves the same, if not improved, outcomes.

It was discussed that Angus Carnegie has been offered a fellowship and will travel to Hawaii and South America. It was agreed that PHA should approach Angus regarding the possibility of linking his overseas activities to Project 3.4.

It was also discussed that Project 3.4 could be completed overseas and that a component of this work may have already been completed overseas. It was agreed that PHA would consult with Suzy Perry out of session and rewrite their proposal to reflect Suzy's knowledge of overseas activities.

Item 4 – Scientific Advisory Group

Rod Turner advised that a Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group (MRSAG) has been formed and is comprised of the following members:

Member	Organisation
Rod Turner	PHA (Chair)
Mike Cole	DAFF

Alison Saunders	RIRDC
Angus Carnegie	NSW DPI
Jonathan Lidbetter	NSW DPI
Bill Foley	ANU
Bob Makinson	Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney
Caroline Mohammed	University of Tasmania
David Smith	Biosecurity Victoria
Geoff Pegg	DEEDI
Suzy Perry	DEEDI
Louise Morin	CSIRO
Peter Entwhistle	Tea Tree Industry
Robert Park	The University of Sydney, Plant Breeding Institute

Mike Cole was thanked for his work in establishing the MRSAG. Mike advised the MRTMG that, although the MRSAG is yet to meet, there is a desire to develop a national list of Myrtle Rust host species that have been identified using a standardised susceptibility rating system.

Item 5 – SharePoint

It was discussed PHA has developed a SharePoint site for the sharing of MRTMG and MRSAG documents. The SharePoint site will be used as a means of distributing the agenda and any other documents prior to MRTMG and MRSAG teleconferences and as a repository for finalised minutes and action lists. The editing of documents, however, will continue to be done by emailing the MRTMG secretariat.

It was agreed that members of the MRTMG will have access to both MRTMG and MRSAG documents while members of the MRSAG will have access to MRSAG documents only.

It was also agreed that PHA would circulate instructions regarding accessing the SharePoint site.

Item 6 – Reporting from DEEDI

Mike Ashton gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland. The report is attached at Attachment A.

Item 7 – Reporting from NSW DPI

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. The report is attached at Attachment B.

Item 8 – Reporting from DPI Vic

Hugh Millar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. The report is attached at Attachment C.

Satendra Kumar offered to make NSW's resources available to Victoria if Victoria has a need for them.

Item 9 – Myrtle Rust Technical Liaison

Pat Sharkey advised that the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) would like to learn more about the ecological impacts of Myrtle Rust that have been observed interstate and the scope for management of these impacts.

It was discussed and agreed that representatives from environmental departments will be invited to the next meeting of the MRTMG with a view to them forming a network for information sharing. Colin Grant will write to a senior official at DSEWPAC formally inviting them to participate. This letter will then be circulated to Mike Ashton, Satendra Kumar, and Hugh Millar who will use it as a template when writing to senior officials at the environmental departments in their respective jurisdictions.

It was also discussed and agreed that links to websites which may be of use to DSE should be posted on the SharePoint site. Mike Cole will forward a list of such websites to PHA for this purpose.

Item 10 – Next Meeting

Members were advised that it was decided during the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group (AHBTMG) meeting that the newly adopted 30 minute duration was not long enough and that future AHBTMG meetings would be 1 hour in duration as was originally agreed. It was agreed that this will be adopted for the MRTMG meetings also. The MRTMG will next meet via teleconference from 3.00pm-4.00pm on Tuesday 27 March. This meeting will be held directly after the Asian Honey Bee meeting.

Item 11 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle rust in Queensland – report from Biosecurity Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Four held by teleconference on Wednesday, 29 February 2012

1. The geographic range of Myrtle rust in Queensland remains restricted to South East and Central Queensland from the New South Wales border to Yeppoon and west to Toowoomba. There has been no recorded extension of range since the previous MRTMG meeting in January. While this is good news, it is not expected to last with the disease expected to continue to spread north along the east coast of Queensland over the coming months.

2. Six new species have been confirmed as hosts of Myrtle rust in Queensland since the January MRTMG meeting. The total number of confirmed host species in Queensland is now 125.
One of these new host species, *Mitrantia bilocularis*, is from a new genus bringing the total number of genera from which host species have been confirmed in Queensland to 35.

3. Queensland nursery businesses can now be accredited under the Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) Scheme to certify consignments of myrtaceous plants as meeting interstate quarantine entry requirements for Myrtle rust. Accreditation under the ICA Scheme is an alternative to certification by Biosecurity Queensland inspectors and will help nursery businesses save both time and money. A new ICA Operational Procedure, *Nursery Freedom, Treatment and Inspection for Myrtle Rust* (ICA-42), has recently been endorsed which allows businesses to become accredited to issue Plant Health Assurance Certificates for consignments of nursery stock of the Myrtaceae family to verify they meet the quarantine entry requirements of the Northern Territory, Victoria and South Australia.

4. Myrtle Rust Information Sessions were held in Mackay on 14 February 2012 and Cairns on 29 February 2012. Further Information Sessions are scheduled for Gladstone and Townsville during March. Planning is underway for similar sessions in South East Queensland over the coming months. Feedback continues to be supportive of the sessions and the need for more information on management options, identification materials and ongoing research on different aspects of the disease.

Attachment B

Myrtle rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Four held by teleconference on Wednesday, 29 February 2012

1. New South Wales in well into a "management" mode for Myrtle rust. Comprehensive information on Myrtle rust management for all stakeholders is available at DPI website (http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust). This includes:

- What is Myrtle rust?
- Reporting
- Host list and distribution
- What can I do to manage Myrtle rust?
- Myrtle rust management resources and factsheets for:-
  a. Home gardeners
  b. Bush regenerators
  c. Nursery and Garden Industry
  d. The environment
- Further information and links

2. Myrtle rust remains restricted to coastal New South Wales. Despite no movement restrictions since the stand-down of the eradication response program, Myrtle rust has not been detected in natural vegetation in the west of the Great Dividing Range. Commercial nurseries and high risk sites in western New South Wales are being monitored via active and passive surveillance by DPI Extension and Agriculture Compliance staff.

3. New South Wales nursery businesses can now be accredited under the Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA-42) scheme to certify consignments of myrtaceous plants as meeting interstate quarantine entry requirements for Myrtle rust. Accreditation under the ICA Scheme is an alternative to certification by Agriculture Compliance staff and will help to reduce the regulatory burden on both industries and the Government. ICA-42 has been endorsed by Northern Territory, Victoria and South Australia.

Attachment C

Myrtle rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Four held by teleconference on Wednesday, 29 February 2012

1. DPI has detected Myrtle rust at 25 sites in the greater metro area, although the rate of detection has slowed recently. The majority of these sites are wholesale and retail nurseries from which infected plants have been removed and destroyed or treated, reinspected and released when no signs of disease are in evidence. These sites are being monitored.

2. The disease has established to various levels in the grounds of nurseries and private properties (3 in all), where it is being controlled but eradicated by plant removal, pruning and chemical means.

3. Myrtle Rust was detected in a botanic park site (17 Feb) in the south east of the city. The botanic park staff, with advice from DPI, are pruning the infected plants and applying chemical treatments to control the spread of disease.

4. A state Myrtle Rust Coordinating Committee of state and local government agencies and private industry stakeholders has been established to help manage the response and assist with surveillance, reporting, tracing and providing information on control.

5. BV staff have delivered 15 training sessions on Myrtle Rust to over 600 personnel from nurseries, DSE, Parks Victoria, local councils, interest groups and beekeepers.

6. BV is receiving about 20 calls a week to the Customer Service Centre about suspect disease and related issues.

7. BV is in the process of transitioning from emergency response mode to a management program. A project manager is being appointed to oversee staff, who will be involved with:

- provision of training and information packages for businesses and land managers;
- coordination of a passive surveillance and reporting program for stakeholder groups;
- monitoring effectiveness of the Australian Nursery Industry Myrtle Rust Management Plan;
- undertaking disease identification and diagnostics;
- providing advice to agencies and stakeholders particularly in relation to detections in new species, plantations and native forests; and
- recording and mapping outbreaks, assisting with impact assessment on species and ecosystems and fulfilling national reporting obligations. which will involve activities aimed at assisting public and private land managers identify and slow the spread of disease.

Minutes

Meeting Five of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 27 March, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Robyn Martin, DAFF; Leanne Herrick, DAFF; Anne Ferguson, DSEWPaC; Belinda Brown, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Sophie Peterson, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Mike Ashton, DEEDI; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Anne Dennis, DSE; Hugh Bramwells, DSE.

Apologies: Lois Ransom, DAFF; Mike Cole, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Sam Malfroy, PHA; Kareena Arthy, DEEDI; Suzy Perry, DEEDI; Jim Thompson, DEEDI; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Hugh Millar, DPI Vic; Tuesday Phelan, DSE.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG), and in particular Anne Ferguson from DSEWPaC, Belinda Brown from DEWHA, Anne Dennis and Hugh Bramwells from the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment who were attending for the first time. It was noted that Tuesday Phelan from the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Graham Wilson from NSW's Office of Environment and Heritage have both accepted their invitations to participate in the MRTMG but were unable to attend this meeting. It was also noted that Queensland's Department of Environment and Resource Management is yet to accept their invitation for a representative to participate in the MRTMG.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

After a brief discussion, led by Colin Grant, the minutes from Meeting Four were endorsed with only minor changes. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Four. The status of each action item was discussed and amendments were made where necessary.

Item 4 – Reporting from PHA

Contracts

Rod Turner advised that as PHA is dealing with a range of stakeholders and sometimes multiple stakeholders for any given project, the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust are still in various stages of completion:

PHA is currently negotiating with DPI Vic over milestones and milestone payments for Project 3.1.

The contract for Project 3.2 has been signed and the first milestone payment made to CSIRO.

The Orange Agricultural Institute has indicated to PHA that it is no longer interested in undertaking Project 3.3. PHA is yet to receive formal notification of this.

PHA is working with Suzy Perry and Morag Glen to determine how much of Project 3.4 has already been completed overseas and how the remaining work will be best completed. PHA will also approach Angus Carnegie regarding the possibility of linking his upcoming overseas activities to Project 3.4.

The Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens has requested that some minor changes be made to the milestones in the contract for Project 3.5 that was originally sent for consideration. PHA has accepted these changes and will send an amended contract to the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens for signing. PHA is aware that some work that will impact on this project may exist internationally. If this work is published this contract will be varied so as to achieve a positive outcome.

The University of Sydney Plant Breeding Institute has revised its proposal for Project 4.1 to reflect a reduced timeframe. PHA will amend the original contract accordingly and send it to the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens for signing.

PHA is currently waiting to receive a revised proposal from the University of Sydney for Project 5.1.

The contract for Project 6.1 has been sent to ANU for consideration. It is currently being reviewed by ANU's legal office.

The contract for Project 6.2 has been sent to CSIRO for consideration.

SharePoint

Sophie Peterson advised that PHA has developed a SharePoint site for the sharing of MRTMG and Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group (MRSAG) documents. The SharePoint site will be used as a means of distributing the agenda and any other documents prior to MRTMG and MRSAG teleconferences and as a repository for finalised minutes and action lists.

While usernames and passwords have already been generated for most members of the MRTMG and MRSAG, they have not yet been generated for newer members as PHA's IT support is on leave. Once these outstanding usernames and passwords have been generated Jenna Taylor will circulate usernames and passwords as well as instructions regarding accessing the SharePoint site to all members then commence using the SharePoint site as described above. In the meantime, however, Jenna will continue to distribute the agenda and any other documents for future teleconferences via email.

Item 5 – Reporting from Queensland

Mike Ashton gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland. The report is attached at Attachment A.

Item 6 – Reporting from NSW

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. The report is attached at Attachment B.

There was some discussion regarding the circumstances under which "Guava Rust"[1] was detected on guava in Northern NSW. The general consensus was that Myrtle Rust has not jumped hosts.

Item 7 – Reporting from Victoria

Russell McMurray and Anne Dennis gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. The report is attached at Attachment C.

The MRTMG was particularly interested in the fact that DSE is investigating seed banks for endangered species at risk from Myrtle Rust. Satendra Kumar advised that similar work is being undertaken by the Royal Botanic Gardens and Mount Annan Botanic Gardens in Sydney and the

[1] There is some disagreement among researchers as to whether the Australian rust should be named *Uredo rangelii* (Myrtle Rust) or *Puccinia psidii* (Guava Rust) and this is reflected here. It is anticipated that the results from Project 3.1 will resolve this issue.

Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra. Belinda Brown advised that there is also an Australian Seed Bank Partnership.

It was agreed that Satendra Kumar would contact Anne Dennis to discuss this further and that they would write a paper outlining what is being done at present and how these activities could be coordinated. This paper will be discussed at the next meeting of the MRTMG.

Item 8 – Myrtle Rust Technical Liaison

Pat Sharkey reminded Members that it was identified at the previous meeting of the MRTMG that there is a need for liaison between environmental departments to increase awareness of the ecological impacts of Myrtle Rust that have been observed interstate and the scope for management of these impacts. After some discussion it was agreed that, as MRTMG Members are largely unfamiliar with the environmental issues, the representatives from environmental departments would meet out of session between MRTMG meetings and decide on issues (such as the seed bank issue) to be discussed at the next meeting of the MRTMG. It was also agreed that Satendra Kumar would coordinate this liaison.

Item 9 – Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the MRTMG was scheduled for Tuesday 10 April. It was decided during the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group (AHBTMG) meeting that the AHBTMG meeting on this date would be cancelled as the two week turnaround between meetings was insufficient. It was discussed and agreed that the MRTMG meeting on Tuesday 10 April would be cancelled also and the MRTMG will next meet via teleconference from 3.00pm-4.00pm on Tuesday 15 May.

Item 10 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle rust in Queensland – report from Biosecurity Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Four held by teleconference on Tuesday, 27 March 2012

1. There has been no extension of geographic range in Queensland since the February MRTMG meeting. Myrtle Rust detections in the natural environment remain restricted to South East and Central Queensland in an area stretching from the New South Wales border to Yeppoon in Central Queensland and west as far as Toowoomba. There have been no detections of Myrtle Rust in the environment west of the Great Dividing Range.

   To date, there have been some detections in nurseries in centres outside the current known infested area (i.e. Cairns, Townsville, Airlie Beach, and Chinchilla) but there is no evidence that the disease has established in the environment in any of these centres.

   The disease is, however, expected to continue to spread north along the Queensland coast.

2. There have been no new species identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust since the February MRTMG meeting. The total number of confirmed host species in Queensland remains at 125 species from 35 genera. These have been diagnostically and botanically confirmed in Queensland.

   When data from other states is added (not all diagnostically or botanically confirmed), the total is estimated to be around 250 species from 50 genera in Australia so far. This is already well in excess of the total number of species and genera known to be hosts worldwide prior to the detection of Myrtle Rust in Australia (70 species from 17 genera) and the disease is yet to reach its full geographic range.

   Of interest is that some species initially thought to be resistant from host testing following the detection in NSW are now being shown to be hosts in the field.

3. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program is currently working with the Local Government Association of Queensland, local councils, the Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland, and other key stakeholders to develop a practical disease management guide to help people dealing with Myrtle Rust. The guide will be developed along similar lines to the industry Farm Biosecurity Manuals developed by PHA and will provide people with tools and strategies that will help them assess the risks associated with Myrtle Rust and develop strategies for managing the disease that are appropriate for their needs. The guide is expected to be released in the next few months.

4. The Myrtle Rust Advisory Committee, which is made up of representatives from key stakeholder groups and oversees and advises the Queensland Myrtle Rust Program, met on 29 February 2012. The Committee was updated on developments in Queensland and in other jurisdictions and reviewed the Program's Work Plan for 2011/12.

5. Myrtle Rust Information Sessions for the community, local businesses, and the council were held in Gladstone during March. Further sessions are planned for Townsville in April and throughout SE QLD over the coming months.

6. The Myrtle Rust Program provided an information sheet to delegates attending the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia National Conference on the Gold Coast during March. The information sheet provided advice and information to delegates on Myrtle Rust and risk mitigation measures they could take to minimise the risk of moving the disease back to their businesses or jurisdictions following the conference.

   The Myrtle Rust Program also had a stand at the Redlands Research Station during the Conference tour of the station. The stand provided delegates with information about Myrtle Rust, detailed the

R&D work the Program is currently doing, and provided delegates with access to staff who could answer their questions about the disease and its management.

7. Queensland's Department of Environment and Resource Management has been successful in obtaining a $300K Caring for Our Country grant to address Myrtle Rust management in World Heritage Areas in Queensland.

   The project, *Mitigating the impacts of Myrtle Rust disease on Queensland World Heritage Areas*, will develop a long-term monitoring program and management strategies for rainforest areas in Queensland's World Heritage Areas.

   The project will be led by Dr Gordon Guymer, who works closely with the Myrtle Rust Program and is a member of the MR Advisory Committee.

   The project will be conducted over a three year period with the aim of:

   - Identifying and tracking the infection and impact of Myrtle Rust in the Gondwana, Fraser island and Wet Tropics World Heritage Areas
   - Improving the understanding of the disease's biology in rainforest conditions
   - Supporting Myrtle Rust research projects
   - Modelling the potential long-term impacts of the disease on host plant species and associated dependent flora and fauna.

Attachment B

Myrtle rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Four held by teleconference on Tuesday, 27 March 2012

1. As reported during the February MRTMG meeting, New South Wales is well into a "management" mode for Myrtle Rust. Comprehensive information on Myrtle Rust management for all stakeholders is available from the NSW DPI website (http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust).

   This information includes:

   - What is Myrtle Rust?
   - Reporting
   - Host list and distribution
   - What can I do to manage Myrtle Rust
   - Myrtle rust management resources and factsheets for:
     - Home gardeners
     - Bush regenerators
     - Nursery and Garden Industry
     - The environment
   - Further information and links

2. There have been no reports of Myrtle Rust in natural vegetation to the west of the Great Dividing Range thus far.

3. In early March suspect symptoms of rust was reported on guava from Northern NSW. Diagnosticians from DEEDI confirmed this as "Guava Rust"[2]. The guava in question was a self-sown seedling growing as a weed on a property that was present in close proximity to an infected *Rhodomytus psidiode*s. The plant had already been cut down and the sample had to be collected from prunings. Only a single pustule was found after the plant had been cut down for several days. No further rust symptoms were noted on guava in the surveillance that was conducted in the vicinity.

[2] There is some disagreement among researchers as to whether the Australian rust should be named *Uredo rangelii* (Myrtle Rust) or *Puccinia psidii* (Guava Rust) and this is reflected here. It is anticipated that the results from Project 3.1 will resolve this issue.

Attachment C

Myrtle rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic and DSE for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Four held by teleconference on Tuesday, 27 March 2012

1. DPI Vic has detected Myrtle Rust at 28 sites in the greater metro area. The majority of the sites are wholesale and retail nurseries or private residences with a direct link to these nurseries. Disease at the majority of these sites have been contained in that the infected plants have been removed and destroyed or treated and no further signs of disease are in evidence.

Detections consist of:

Site	Number of detections	Status
Wholesale and retail nurseries	19	All contained - no further evidence of symptoms.
Private residence (with trace linkages to infected nursery)	6	Five contained - no further evidence of symptoms. One site remains infected, ongoing pruning, fungicide treatment and reinspection program in place.
Private residences (currently with unknown trace)	1	Contained - no further evidence of symptoms.
Botanic park (with trace linkage to infected nursery)	1	Ongoing surveying, pruning, removal and fungicide treatment of trees in conjunction with park management and local council.
Street frontage (with trace linkage to infected residence)	1	Recent detection (21 March) by BV staff surveying streets surrounding detection site. Council advised and a decision is pending as to whether affected trees (2) will be removed or whether a program of pruning and fungicide treatment will be undertaken by the council.

Myrtle Rust has currently been detected on:

Acmena smithii (lilly pilly); *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle); *Backhousia citriodora* (lemon scented myrtle); *Lophomyrtus* X *ralphii* (Black Stallion); *Metrosideros collina* (Fiji Christmas bush); *Metrosideros excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas bush); *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle); *Syzygium australe* (lilly pilly/scrub cherry/Aussie southern); *Syzygium paniculatum* (dwarf magenta cherry); and, since the last report, on *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton wax) and *Callistemon sp.* (bottle brush, species identification pending).

2. Ongoing surveying around detection sites is being conducted to provide early identification of any spread of disease from affected properties. To date only one such survey has indicated any spread of the disease into the surrounding area (street frontage detailed above).

3. BV is coordinating a network of sentinel sites throughout Victoria. These sites, currently approaching 100, are located in areas which are frequently visited by the general public, have a high risk of a spore finding a susceptible host and can be easily and regularly monitored by selected stakeholders. BV staff are monitoring some of these sites but most are being established by other agencies that are providing data from the sites to BV.

4. BV is continuing to receive about 20 calls and email enquiries per week through the Customer Service Centre and plant protection email account about suspect disease and related issues.

5. A Myrtle Rust Coordinating Committee of state and local government agencies and private industry stakeholders has been active in managing the response and assisting with surveillance, reporting, tracing and organisation of communication and training activities.

6. In early March, BV transitioned from emergency response mode to a project based program. The Victorian Myrtle Rust Response Program Plan is being revised to reflect the current situation and to provide detail of changing response activities in the likely event that the number of detections rises or the disease becomes established in the natural environment.

7. BV staff have delivered 17 training sessions on Myrtle Rust to over 700 personnel from nurseries, DSE, Parks Victoria, local councils, interest groups, and beekeepers.

8. BV staff have worked with the Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria (NGIV) to deliver ICA 42 accreditation courses and provide inspection services to nurseries seeking accreditation to trade Myrtaceae to South Australia.

9. BV staff have worked closely with the organisers of this year's Melbourne International Flower and Garden show and the Melbourne City Council to ensure stall holders are aware of Myrtle Rust and the regulatory requirements for moving Myrtaceae into Victoria.

   Staff from BV have provided advice on appropriate protocols to minimise the risk of disease transfer and allow exhibitors to display their Myrtaceae at the Show. A team from BV will visit the show the day before opening to inspect the site and speak with stall holders.

   BV is also providing literature to NGIV as well as the Australian Plant Society and the Victorian Horticultural Society for display and distribution during the Show. The intention is for a BV expert on Myrtle Rust to visit the show periodically to provide further advice if needed.

10. DSE is exploring the potential *ex-situ* conservation (seed banking) of the most threatened and significant Myrtaceae at risk from Myrtle Rust in Victoria.

Minutes

Meeting Six of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 15 May, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Lois Ransom, DAFF; Leanne Herrick, DAFF; Anne Ferguson, DSEWPaC; Ian Mason, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Alison Cleary, PHA; Mike Ashton, DEEDI; Suzy Perry, DEEDI; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Gavin Matthew, AFPA; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Apologies: Mike Cole, DAFF; Robyn Martin, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DSEWPaC; Sophie Peterson, PHA; Sam Malfroy, PHA; Kareena Arthy, DEEDI; Jim Thompson, DEEDI; Gordon Guymer, DERM; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Hugh Millar, DPI Vic; Anne Dennis, DSE; Tuesday Phelan, DSE.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG), and in particular Ian Mason from DSEWPaC, Graham Wilson from NSW's Office of Environment and Heritage, Gavin Matthew and Peter Grist from the Australian Forest Products Association, and Lucy Sutherland from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership who were attending for the first time. It was noted that Gordon Guymer from Queensland's Department of Environment and Resource Management has accepted his invitation to participate in the MRTMG but was unable to attend this meeting.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Five had been circulated for comment, comments had been received, and all amendments requested had been made. There were no further comments made or amendments requested and the minutes were endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Five. The status of each action item was discussed and amendments were made where necessary.

Item 4 – Reporting from PHA

Contracts

Rod Turner advised that as PHA is dealing with a range of stakeholders and sometimes multiple stakeholders for any given project, the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust are still in various stages of completion. In most cases, the researchers have agreed to the funding offered and the milestones but the business managers are concerned about IP and have requested that changes been made to PHA's standard contract.

PHA then gave a brief outline of each project:

PHA is currently negotiating with NSW DPI over milestones and milestone payments for Project 3.1. It was originally intended that DPI Vic would complete this work but NSW DPI was asked to provide a quote for the same work for comparison and they are able to complete this work for $50,000 less than DPI Vic.

Colin Grant asked if anyone would like to comment on this as he was aware that it may be a sensitive issue. Russell McMurray stated that he had no issue with the contract being given to NSW DPI but that he hoped that the documentation provided to both organisations had been the same. Rod assured him that in both cases the wording had come straight from the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust.

The contract for Project 3.2 has been signed and the first milestone payment made to CSIRO. A progress report was received on 2 May and has been circulated to the MRTMG.

The Orange Agricultural Institute has indicated to PHA that it is no longer interested in undertaking Project 3.3.

PHA has written and circulated to the MRTMG a paper outlining proposed variations to Project 3.4 (see below).

The contract for Project 3.5 has now been signed.

The University of Sydney Plant Breeding Institute has revised its proposal for Project 4.1 to reflect a reduced timeframe. PHA has sent a contract to the University of Sydney for consideration. The business manager requested that the contract be for research rather than consultancy, their main issue being the ownership of IP. PHA has since sent a modified version of the contract to the University of Sydney for consideration but the Business manager has been holding it up. The business manager has now agreed to forward it to the legal area for their consideration.

The University of Sydney has revised its proposal for Project 5.1 and PHA has sent them a contract for consideration. As with Project 4.1, the Business manager has been holding it up. It is now with the legal area for their consideration.

The contract for Project 6.1 has been sent to ANU for consideration. It is currently being reviewed by ANU's legal office.

The contract for Project 6.2 has been sent to CSIRO for consideration. CSIRO has come back with some changes that they would like made to the contract. These changes appear to differ from those that were made to the contract for Project 3.2 prior to its approval. Mikael Hirsh has been asked to follow this up.

Proposal to Alter Projects

Rod Turner briefly summarised two papers which had been circulated to the MRTMG, the first proposing alterations to Project 3.4 and the second proposing the funding of travel costs for Dr. Robert Hauff, Forest Health Coordinator with the Division of Forestry and Wildlife at the Department of Land and Natural Resources in Hawaii, to attend and speak at the Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop to be held in Brisbane on 19 and 20 June. Field visits would be incorporated into this trip also.

The MRTMG endorsed both proposals and agreed that, in future, PHA was authorised to make decisions and advise the group at the next meeting.

SharePoint

Jenna Taylor advised that usernames and passwords for the SharePoint site have now been generated for all members of the MRTMG and that she would circulate these the following day with instructions on how to access the site.

Jenna also advised that the agendas, attachments, minutes, action lists, and other relevant documents from previous meetings have been uploaded to the SharePoint site. She asked members

to log on to the site at their earliest convenience and to let her know if they have any problems so that these can be resolved prior to the next meeting.

Although usernames and passwords have been generated for members of the MRSAG also, these will not be circulated until the MRSAG is ready to meet.

Item 5 – Reporting on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

Mike Ashton gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland. The report is attached at Attachment A.

Mike also advised that the functions of the former Department of Environment and Resource Management are now delivered by five different departments. It was requested that Mike advise these departments that, if they would like to be represented on the MRTMG, they will need to make themselves known to Jenna Taylor at PHA.

Item 6 – Reporting on Myrtle Rust Activities in NSW

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

Item 7 – Reporting on Myrtle Rust Activities in Victoria

Russell McMurray and Hugh Bramwells gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. Their reports are attached at Attachment C.

Lois Ransom asked if Victoria is still enforcing restrictions on the movement of Myrtaceous species from other states/territories into Victoria. Pat Sharkey advised that these restrictions would be rescinded by 30 June.

Item 8 – Update on National Myrtle Rust Activities

Anne Ferguson advised that, at the end of April, Tony Burke had listed Koala as a vulnerable species with Myrtle Rust being a potential threat to their habitat. There is information regarding this on the DSEWPaC website. It was requested that Anne forward a link to this website to Jenna Taylor and that Jenna put a link on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website and the MRTMG SharePoint site.

Anne also advised that there is $280,000 worth of Caring for our Country funding for Myrtle Rust-related activities.

Item 9 – Update on the Myrtle Rust Technical Liaison Group

Satendra Kumar advised that, during discussions with Anne Ferguson and Belinda Brown it was decided that Lucy Sutherland would be invited to attend this meeting to provide an update on Myrtle Rust-related seed bank and genetic conservation issues.

The issue of whether or not it is necessary to form a Technical Liaison Group was discussed and, as there are now representatives from environmental departments on the MRTMG, it was decided that it is not necessary.

Item 10 – Update 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 D.

The ASBP request that the MRTMG considers endorsing a national collecting program. Such endorsement would assist in securing funding for this program. Colin Grant advised that there is Caring for our Country funding that the ASBP could tap into. He suggested that the ASBP put together a proposal.

Item 11 – Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the MRTMG was scheduled from 3.00pm-4.00pm on Wednesday 27 June.

Members were also advised that it was decided during the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group (AHBTMG) meeting that following the June meeting, AHBTMG meetings would be held once every two months with urgent meetings being called in between if required. It was discussed and agreed that the same would happen for MRTMG meetings. Monthly meetings will resume in March 2013 as both Transition to Management Programs begin to draw to a close.

Colin Grant invited Lucy Sutherland, Gavin Matthew, and Peter Grist to attend future MRTMG meetings and requested that Jenna Taylor put a link to the ASBP and AFPA websites on both the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website and the MRTMG SharePoint site.

Item 12 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Qld for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Six held by teleconference on Tuesday, 15 May 2012

1. Myrtle Rust has been detected at a number of significant new sites in Queensland since the last meeting. These include in a council nursery and residential garden in Mossman, in the Mossman Gorge National Park, in Kuranda on the edge of the Barron Gorge National Park, in the Smithfield Conservation Park just north of Cairns, and in a residential garden in Mareeba.

   An unconfirmed report of Myrtle Rust in the Herberton Range State Forest near Atherton on the Atherton Tablelands has been received also.

   These detections confirm that Myrtle Rust is now established and widespread in Far North Queensland.

   The disease has likely been present in the area for some time but long periods of wet weather over summer and autumn has probably masked the symptoms, with constant heavy rain washing the distinctive yellow spores from affected foliage. Now we have had a prolonged period of warm dry weather, the disease is becoming evident in multiple locations at the same time.

   Biosecurity Queensland is working with key stakeholders in the area, including the Cairns Regional Council, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) and Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (DNPRSR), to implement strategies to manage the impacts and minimise further spread.

   A joint Queensland DAFF/DNPRSR media release was distributed on 14 May 2012 to alert the public in Far North Queensland to these detections, advise ways they can minimise the risk of spread (including into other national parks and world heritage areas) and seek their assistance to track the disease's spread, host range and impacts.

   Myrtle Rust represents a significant risk to North Queensland's National Parks and World Heritage Areas, including the Wet Tropics and Islands on the Great Barrier Reef, due to the hot, humid conditions and high rainfall (which are ideal for disease development and spread) and the number of potential host species in the area.

   Many rainforest species are known to be susceptible to Myrtle Rust and there is increasing concern as to the long term impacts of the disease on the values of Queensland's World Heritage Areas, including species and habitats listed under the (Commonwealth) *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

   Myrtle Rust also represents a significant risk to the natural regeneration of the Wet Tropics and the resilience of these vegetation communities following significant cyclonic and other environmental events. While the impacts are yet to be determined, it will be critical to track and quantify the disease's impacts on regeneration of the natural environment to the development of long term management strategies for the disease.

   Myrtle Rust has also been detected in the natural environment in Mackay and on North Stradbroke Island off the south east coast of Queensland since the last meeting. These detections represent a further extension of range of the disease in South East and Central Queensland.

   There have been no detections of Myrtle Rust in the environment west of the Great Dividing Range.

2. Three new species have been identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust since the last meeting. These are *Acmena smithii, Syzygium boonjee,* and *Corymbia ficifolia* X *C. ptychocarpa*. *Acmena smithii* and

Syzygium boonjee have previously been recorded as hosts in Victoria and New South Wales respectively. The total number of confirmed host species in Queensland is now 128 species from 35 genera.

3. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program is finalising the first draft of its disease management guide. The draft guide will be discussed and reviewed by key stakeholder groups to ensure that it meets their needs before being finalised and made publicly available. The guide is expected to be released before the end of the financial year.

4. The Myrtle Rust Advisory Committee meets again on 17 May 2012. The Committee will be updated on developments in Queensland and in other jurisdictions and reviewed the Program's Work Plan for 2011/12. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program, in association with the Advisory Committee, will commence development of a work plan for 2012/13 once resourcing and management arrangements for the Program for next year are finalised.

5. Jenna Taylor, Project Officer with Plant Health Australia and secretariat for the MRTMG spent three days with the Queensland Myrtle Rust Program during April to learn more about the disease and its impacts, and how the disease is being managed in Queensland. Program staff enjoyed Jenna's visit and the opportunity to detail the work they have been doing. It is believed Jenna gained a lot from the time she spent here in Queensland.

6. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program will be hosting the second national Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane at the Mount Coot-tha Botanical Gardens on Tuesday 19 and Wednesday 20 June 2012.

   It was agreed at the previous workshop held in Brisbane in September 2011 that a follow-up workshop should be held in the first half of 2012.

   The aim of the workshop is to convene a national meeting of key researchers and other stakeholders involved in Myrtle Rust research and development in order to:

   - Collate current research projects being undertaken including objectives and outputs,
   - Provide an update on progress against current research activities,
   - Facilitate discussion and collaboration to progress priority R&D activities,
   - Identify gaps in R&D activities and work areas, and
   - Facilitate collaborations and linkages amongst key researchers and stakeholders nationally and internationally.

   A proposal has been prepared for consideration by the MRTMG for the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program to fund the travel costs of Dr Robert Hauff, Forest Health Coordinator, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Department of Lands and Natural Resources in Hawaii to attend the workshop as the key note international speaker.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI and OEH for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Six held by teleconference on Tuesday, 15 May 2012

1. As reported during the last meeting, New South Wales is well into a "management" mode for Myrtle Rust. Comprehensive information on Myrtle Rust management for all stakeholders is available from the NSW DPI website (http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust).

   This information includes:

   - What is Myrtle Rust?
   - Reporting
   - Host list and distribution
   - What can I do to manage Myrtle Rust
   - Myrtle rust management resources and factsheets for:
     - Home gardeners
     - Bush regenerators
     - Nursery and Garden Industry
     - The environment
   - Further information and links

2. There have been no reports of Myrtle Rust in natural vegetation to the west of the Great Dividing Range thus far.

3. Bob Makinson from the Royal Sydney Gardens completed a series of training program on Myrtle rust management in NSW and Qld.

4. Angus Carnegie has just returned from studying Guava rust in South America, Florida and Hawaii. Further details will be reported at the next meeting.

5. A part of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program, contracts for two Myrtle Rust projects are being finalised with Plant Health Australia. Work is anticipated to commence shortly.

6. DPI NSW with DAFF Qld have secured CRC for National Plant Biosecurity funding to study the impact of Myrtle Rust on selected Myrtaceae in natural vegetation.

7. The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) prepared a Myrtle Rust Management Plan in 2011 to guide its management of Myrtle Rust on National Parks across coastal NSW. The priority of this initial plan was to use biosecurity measures to reduce the likelihood of human-assisted spread between bushland areas. However it appears that the disease has continued to spread and is now a widespread endemic disease in bushland areas of coastal NSW. Accordingly, NPWS intends to revise this management plan in the second half of 2012. This revision will be done in consultation with other land managers and authorities with a responsibility for management of this disease in NSW, including Forests NSW, Department of Primary Industries, and Royal Botanic Gardens. The review is expected to consider:

   - Developing amended biosecurity measures which better reflect the current disease risk situation,
   - Gaining updated and ongoing information on Myrtle Rust distribution in bushland areas, particularly National Parks,
   - Assessing the impact of myrtle rust in natural areas, particularly in NPWS estate. This assessment will particularly focus on species affected, extent of infection, and

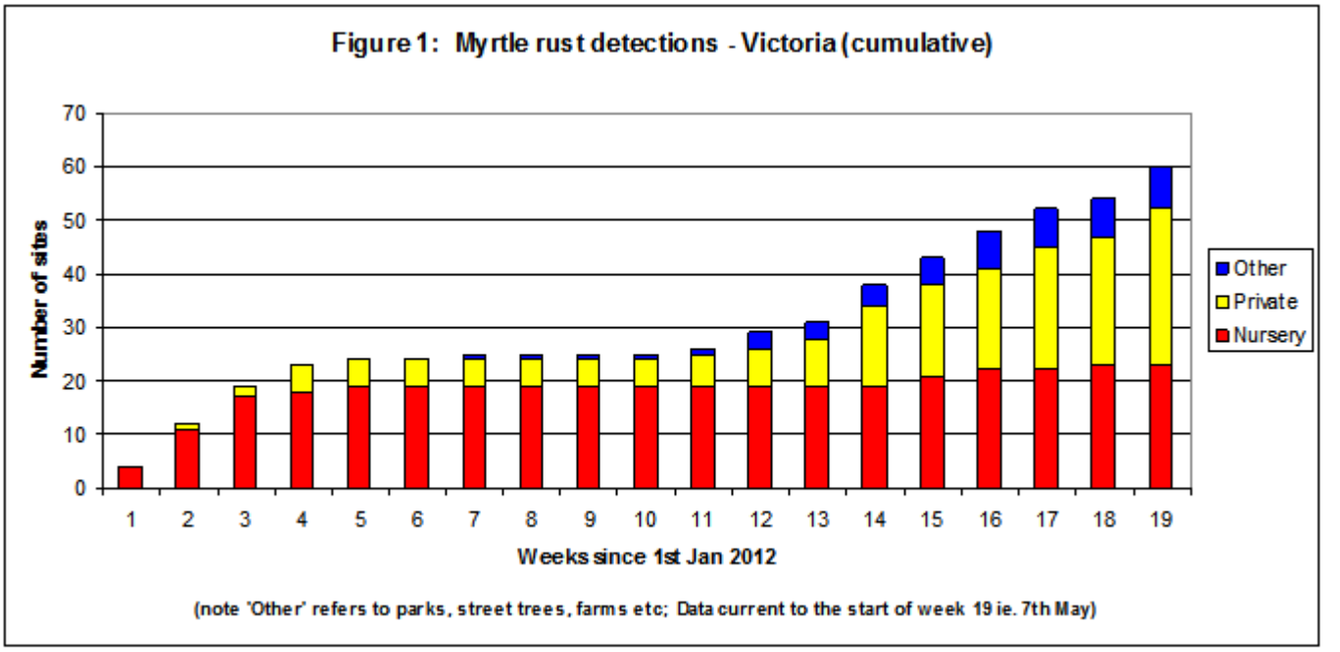
impacts on plant reproduction and survival. It will consider methodologies developed for this in other jurisdictions, and

- The need for ex situ conservation measures including seed bank initiatives.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic and DSE for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Six held by teleconference on Tuesday, 15 May 2012

1. Myrtle rust has now been detected at 60 sites in Victoria.



Several of the recent detections have been on much larger plants (hedges and small trees). The disease has been particularly severe at several sites indicating that Myrtle Rust may have been established on the plants for some months. The size of the plants and severity of infection represents a significant management issue for home owners.

Although the majority of cases have been in nurseries and private residences within metropolitan Melbourne and the Mornington Peninsula, Myrtle Rust has also been detected in regional Victoria at Lorne, Tynong North, Ballarat, East Gippsland (near Bairnsdale) and Shepparton. With the exception of Shepparton in which six properties were affected, each of these detections was on single properties. Control activities have been conducted by the property owners and to date, appear to have been successful.

Myrtle rust has not yet been detected in Victorian bushland or the natural environment but has been detected in two public parks/gardens of significance, two council plantings (garden beds) and once in street trees in the metro area.

Myrtle Rust has currently been detected on the following hosts in Victoria:

Acmena smithii (lilly pilly); *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle); *Austromyrtus dulcis* (midgen berry); *Backhousia citriodora* (lemon scented myrtle); *Callistemon harkness* (bottle brush); *Callistemon* 'Kings park special' (bottle brush); *Callistemon viminalis* (bottle brush); *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton wax); *Eucalyptus olida* (strawberry gum) *Lophomyrtus* X *ralphii* (Black Stallion); *Metrosideros collina* (Fiji Christmas bush); *Metrosideros excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas bush); *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle); *Syzygium anisatum* (aniseed myrtle);*Syzygium australe* (lilly pilly/scrub cherry/Aussie southern); and *Syzygium paniculatum* (dwarf magenta cherry).

2. The Victorian Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee consisting of DPI Vic, DSE, Parks Victoria (PV), local councils, botanic gardens, forestry, nursery and beekeeper representatives is continuing to meet on a regular basis and is actively involved in planning, monitoring, reporting and conducting industry education activities.

   Over 1000 people have attended ongoing Myrtle Rust information and ID sessions. In the last month, sessions have been conducted in Monash, Bambra, Traralgon, Knox, Cardinia and Shepparton.

   Two additional newspaper interviews have been conducted with Shepparton News (5th and 11th May).

3. There is a strong demand from local councils and other groups for training. Seven training sessions have been conducted by program staff in the last month.

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

   Over 100 sentinel sites have been established around the state (with the assistance of many stakeholder groups) to provide early warning in high risk areas and significant bushland sites. DPI is coordinating the sentinel site network but is actively monitoring only a relatively small number of these sites with much of the monitoring work being done by stakeholder groups.

   Routine monitoring of the sentinel sites has led to the early detection of Myrtle Rust in a public park/garden. Park staff were able to restrict visitor access to the affected area, remove the affected plants and apply preventative chemical treatments to limit the spread of the pathogen within the park and movement from the park on visitor's clothing.

   Forward tracing is being conducted to properties in regions of the State where the disease has not yet been reported.

5. The focus of recent operational activities has been the provision of advice to affected land holders to assist them to manage the disease on their land.

   The cost and lack of availability of effective curative fungicides for use in the home garden is preventing many home owners from effectively controlling Myrtle Rust in their gardens. APVMA permit number PER12828 deals specifically with home garden application and lists three chemicals. These chemicals are readily available at nurseries, however, all three are protectant products with none to only limited curative activity. Products with curative activity (ie. suitable for treatment of symptomatic plants rather than protection of non-symptomatic plants) are available for use by persons generally under APVMA permit PER12156. Most of these products cannot be purchased at nurseries and must be sourced at agricultural chemical suppliers. The minimum pack size is 1L (at approximately $200/L). The price and difficulty to obtain these products mean that most home gardeners will not use them and untreated home garden plants will become a key threat to Victorian native bushland.

   Following discussions with Bayer and Yates, there is potential for this issue to be resolved by spring. These companies have recently undertaken Myrtle Rust trials using a new product, recently registered for Azalea blight and available in small dropper packaging at nurseries. Yates have indicated an interest in pursuing a minor use permit for use of this product against Myrtle Rust.

6. A revised Myrtle Rust Response Program Plan (V2) has been prepared and is currently going through the DPI Vic approvals process before it can be distributed electronically to members of the state Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee.

7. ICA 42 training has been rolled out with the assistance of the Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria (NGIV) to enable affected nursery and cut flower growers to be accredited to trade Myrtaceae into South Australia and the Northern Territory. More than 110 people from 60 businesses have now completed this training.

8. DSE has prepared a priority list of Myrtaceae considered at risk from Myrtle Rust based on endemism, conservation status, rarity and biogeographic risk factors (based on an inferred CSIRO climatic model).

9. DSE has contracted the Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG) in Melbourne to collect seeds of 4 "priority one" Myrtaceae species (those most at risk) for *ex-situ* conservation both at the RBG and Kew in London as part of the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership. 13 of the 17 priority one taxa were already in storage.

10. DSE is seeking collaboration with other states and the Federal Government for seed collection of "priority two" species not currently safeguarded *ex-situ*. This totals approximately 30 of the 77 priority 2 taxa.

Attachment D

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Six held by teleconference on Tuesday, 15 May 2012

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership (ASBP) is governed by The Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens Inc. (CHABG) and supported by the Director of National Parks who provides a National Coordinator and supports the secretariat. The partnership was established in 2010 as a strategic response to threats to biodiversity and builds on a legacy and $24 million investment from 2001-2010. 1/3 of Australia's flora and 1/4 of listed species have been banked. Duplicate collections are held at the Millennium Seed Bank in the UK.

The ASBP includes Australia's nine capital city conservation seed banks (based in botanic gardens apart from DEC, WA), ANPC, GA and two universities that support the Brisbane Botanic Gardens. The partnership is a collaborative effort building a national network of native plant seed banks, developing enabling technologies (around seed biology research to support conservation and restoration) and sharing biological knowledge to ensure future access to Australia's diverse native botanical resources.

In response to the emergence and rapid spread of Myrtle Rust, the CHABG agreed that consideration be given to Myrtle Rust and the implications for conservation, seed bank collections and the ramifications for our practice. The BHABG is meeting shortly to develop national protocols.

There is a need to prioritise collecting for long term conservation (especially increasing genetic representation in *ex situ* collections). As such it is necessary to access information about which species are susceptible to or declining because of Myrtle Rust as well as which genera seem more susceptible.

Currently, there isn't a good understanding about the movement of Myrtle Rust through seed lots. While it is considered a low risk, there is potential for transmission to new areas through collecting from wild populations or loss/wastage of financial resources through failed planting in restoration activities. Therefore, the consequences of this transfer could be high.

There is also a need for communication, training and capacity building in the public domain (particularly NRM groups, Catchment Management, GA and others) as the government rolls out funding for on-ground activities (such as with the Biodiversity Fund and Caring for our Country). These activities may involve seeds collected from wild populations and possible spread of the rust to new areas or other seed lots.

1. Seed has been collected from a total of 618 Myrtaceous species and 769 accessions in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, and Tasmania and 173 species in the ACT. Each bank has prioritised banking and listed species (state-listed).

2. The NSW Seed Bank has a rainforest seed project and has placed some priority on Myrtaceae (e.g. Rhodamnia). 329 Myrtaceous species have been banked.

   The NSW Seed Bank is also developing protocols for the RBGDT Living Collection; Seed Bank (how not to transfer rust into seed packets) and Field Collecting.

3. No recent collections have been made in Queensland post-MSB funding.

   Queensland has applied for funding with NPWS for Myrtaceae-focussed collecting.

Myrtle Rust is being monitored in the Garden collection in the partnership Herbarium. Taxa are being monitored also.

Griffith University is working on storage of recalcitrant species.

The University of Queensland has studies underway looking at the effect of a range of environmental conditions (temperature, salt, osmotic potential) on the germination of six selected Myrtaceae species.

4. DSE in Victoria has been approached and has agreed to fund the collection of 4 outstanding species which are regarded as a high priority in terms of Myrtle Rust (i.e. susceptible and rare).

   DSE has a 3-stage process with stage 2 focusing on banking 30 species.

5. Tasmania is considering the prioritisation and targeting of work and is awaiting instructions into genetically viable collections from experts (Brett Potts) from the Uni of Tasmania.

   Tasmania is also awaiting a focussed species list and will compare this with a list from Forestry so as to avoid duplicating collections.

6. The ANBG has banked seed from 173 Myrtaceous species from wild collections, 18 of which have more than one population banked. Seed has been banked from 195 Myrtaceous species from all collections.

7. The ANPC has delivered a comprehensive one-day workshop 'Myrtle Rust – a new threat to Australia's biodiversity' at 11 regional locations in NSW and one in Queensland.

8. The ASBP is developing a strategic collecting program involving the seed banks in vulnerable Myrtle Rust areas to determine what has been banked and what hasn't.

   The program will also determine the number of populations banked and develop target species and target populations to be collected from. Plant geneticists suggest where possible to collect from 30 separate populations to ensure that genetic diversity is represented.

The ASBP requests that the MRTMG considers endorsing a national collecting program. Endorsement from a group of such high calibre would assist the ASBP in fundraising to build this program of work.

Minutes

Meeting Seven of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Wednesday 27 June, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Sophie Peterson, DAFF; Chris Howard, DAFF; Louise Clarke, DAFF; Neal Hardy, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Susanna Driessen, PHA; Brad Siebert, PHA; Mike Ashton, DAFF Queensland; Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Apologies: Lois Ransom, DAFF; Mike Cole, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Leanne Herrick, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Denise Smith, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DSEWPaC; Sam Malfroy, PHA; Kareena Arthy, DAFF Queensland; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Hugh Millar, DPI Vic; Anne Dennis, DSE; Tuesday Phelan, DSE; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG), and in particular Chris Howard and Louise Clarke from DAFF, Neal Hardy from DSEWPaC, and Gordon Guymer from the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation, and the Arts who were attending for the first time.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Six had been circulated for comment. No comments or amendment requests had been received. As such, the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Six. The status of each action item was discussed and amendments were made where necessary.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Rod Turner advised that the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust are still in various stages of completion. In most cases, the researchers have agreed to the funding offered and the milestones and have commenced work, but the Business Managers are concerned about IP and have requested that changes been made to PHA's standard contract.

Rod then gave a brief outline of each project:

PHA is currently negotiating with NSW DPI over milestones and milestone payments for Project 3.1.

The contract for Project 3.2 has been signed and the first milestone payment made to CSIRO. A progress report was received on 2 May and was circulated to the MRTMG prior to the previous meeting.

The Orange Agricultural Institute has indicated to PHA that it is no longer interested in undertaking Project 3.3 and the outcomes are being achieved through another project.

PHA circulated to the MRTMG prior to the previous meeting a paper outlining proposed variations to Project 3.4.

The contract for Project 3.5 has been signed.

The Business Manager for the University of Sydney Plant Breeding Institute is still holding up the signing of the contract for Project 4.1 due to concerns about the ownership of IP. Greg Fraser met with the University of Sydney last week to discuss this issue and DAFF has provided some alternative wording for the IP clause.

As with Project 4.1, the Business Manager for the University of Sydney is still holding up the signing of the contract for Project 5.1 due to concerns about the ownership of IP.

The contract for Project 6.1 has been sent to ANU for consideration. It is currently being reviewed by ANU's legal office. PHA will meet with ANU tomorrow to discuss this contract.

The contract for Project 6.2 has now been signed.

Item 5 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

Mike Ashton gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland. The report is attached at Attachment A.

Mike also advised that he would forward the presentations from the National Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop to Jenna Taylor so that they can be made available to Members via the SharePoint site and the public via the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Gordon Guymer advised that the functions of the former Department of Environment and Resource Management are now delivered by the following five different departments:

Department of Energy and Water Supply
Department of Environment and Heritage Protection
Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing
Department of Natural Resources and Mines
Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts

Gordon represents the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts and suggested that it might be useful to have a representative from the Department for Environment and Heritage Protection also attend future MRTMG meetings. It was agreed that Gordon would contact the Department for Environment and Heritage Protection regarding this.

Item 6 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in NSW

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. The report is attached at Attachment B and also captures Office of Environment and Heritage activities that were not reported during the meeting due to Graham Wilson's absence.

Item 7 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Victoria

Russell McMurray and Hugh Bramwells gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. Their reports are attached at Attachment C.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

Neal Hardy advised that he did not have any activities to report.

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 D.

During the previous MRTMG meeting it was decided that the ASBP would prepare a proposal for Caring for our Country funding to build a comprehensive *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support conservation. Lucy advised that building an *ex situ* collection and undertaking work on seed biology would not traditionally meet the criteria for Caring for our Country funding and asked for advice on the most appropriate way to progress this approach to the Caring for our Country Program. It was discussed that the Caring for our Country Program has recently released a Consultation Discussion Paper on *Protecting and conserving national significant species, ecosystems and biodiversity in the next phase of Caring for our Country* and that it may be appropriate for the ASBP in collaboration with PHA and the MRTMG to prepare a response to the Discussion Paper highlighting Myrtle Rust.

Hugh Bramwells suggested the Biodiversity Fund as another possible source of funding.

It was also suggested that the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program may be able to contribute a small amount of funding also.

It was agreed that Rod Turner and Jenna Taylor will organise a meeting with Lucy and Hugh to discuss these issues while Colin Grant and Louise Clarke will look at what is currently happening within DAFF with regards to the Caring for our Country Program.

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 E.

It was discussed that the Forestry Industry collects seed soon after harvest for regeneration and that some of this seed could be provided to the Australian Seed Bank Partnership. PHA will also invite both Peter and Gavin Matthew to their meeting with Lucy and Hugh.

Item 11 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that it was decided during the previous meeting that, following this meeting, MRTMG meetings would be held once every two months with urgent meetings being called in between if required and monthly meetings resuming as the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program begins to draw to a close. As such, meetings will be scheduled for August, October, and December 2012, and February, April, May, and June 2013. Jenna Taylor will advise Members of the dates of these meetings.

Item 12 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Qld for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Seven held by teleconference on Wednesday, 27 June 2012

1. There have been ongoing detections of Myrtle Rust in Far North Queensland since the last meeting. These include new detections in the Forest Creek area north of the Daintree River, and in Tolga and Yungaburra on the Atherton Tablelands.

   There have been no detections of Myrtle Rust in the environment west of the Great Dividing Range.

   As at 22 June 2012, there were 196 known infected premises in Queensland (sites where there has been a confirmed diagnosis and a confirmed identification of host species). There were a further 618 highly suspect reports (reports that have not been diagnostically or botanically confirmed but have been verified through photographic or other evidence), and 785 suspect reports (reports which have not been verified but are in known host species in known infested areas) of Myrtle Rust in Queensland. This brings the total number of suspected cases of Myrtle Rust in Queensland to 1,599.

   To date, 21 local government areas in Queensland have had confirmed cases of myrtle rust.

   Based on information from overseas, with the cooler weather conditions during winter, it is anticipated that new detections of Myrtle Rust will slow over the coming months and pick up again in spring and summer. However, data from public reports received in Queensland during winter 2011 showed ongoing disease activity in the South East of the state during that period. The warmer climate in North and Far North Queensland may mean that there is little to no reduction in disease activity in these tropical parts of Queensland over winter. Weather conditions in the North of the state over the cooler, drier months of late autumn, winter and early spring may actually be more conducive to disease development and spread than the very hot and wet months experienced in the tropics over summer due to the pathogen's intolerance to temperatures above 32°C and the 'washing' effect heavy rainfall has on Myrtle Rust spores.

2. Six new species have been identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust since the last meeting. These are *Melaleuca nervosa, Melaleuca salicina, Rhodomyrtus effusa, Rhodomyrtus macrocarpa, Syzygium cormiflorum* and *Syzygium kuranda.* The total number of confirmed host species in Queensland is now 134 species from 35 genera.

3. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program is finalising the first edition of its Myrtle Rust disease management guide. The draft guide is currently being reviewed by key stakeholders. Once comments have been received and incorporated into the draft, the guide will be submitted for final proofing, design and artwork by DAFF's publishing unit. It is expected to take at least eight weeks from submission to publication.

4. The Myrtle Rust Program recently presented information sessions on Myrtle Rust to affected stakeholders in Townsville and Cairns. The Townsville sessions were well attended with 61 people attending the two sessions. Due to the recent establishment of the disease in Far North Queensland, a second information session was presented in Cairns. This session was attended by 70 people.

   These Myrtle Rust Information Sessions have been an integral part of the program with sessions delivered in Hervey Bay, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Cairns, Mackay, Gladstone and Townsville over the last eight months.

Raising awareness of the disease has helped the Program promote public reporting of suspect detections of Myrtle Rust in regional areas and to track and monitor the disease's spread and host range in Queensland.

5. The Myrtle Rust Advisory Committee met on 17 May and 21 June 2012. The Committee was updated on the current disease situation and other developments in Queensland and other jurisdictions, and reviewed the Program's progress against its Work Plan for 2011/12. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program, in association with the Advisory Committee, will commence development of a work plan for 2012/13 once resourcing and management arrangements for the Program for next year are finalised.

6. The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program hosted the second national Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane at the Mount Coot-tha Botanical Gardens on Tuesday 19 and Wednesday 20 June 2012.

   The Workshop was a follow-up to the initial Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop that was hosted by the Program in September 2011. The aim of the workshop was to bring all researchers working on Myrtle Rust and other interested stakeholders together to discuss and prioritise current and future Myrtle Rust R&D activities in Australia.

   During the workshop, international keynote speaker, Robert Hauff, Forest Health Coordinator, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawaii, provided an excellent presentation on the impacts of *Puccinia psidii* in Hawaii; research, disease monitoring and surveillance, and biosecurity protection activities in Hawaii; proposed future work; and their international collaborations. Mr Hauff also visited key researchers working on Myrtle Rust in New South Wales and Queensland as well as field sites and areas affected by Myrtle Rust in both states.

   Mr Hauff's visit was funded by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry through the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program.

   The Workshop was attended by more than 50 people from Australia and New Zealand.

   The first day of the Workshop comprised presentations on topics such as *Puccinia psidii* overseas; the current Myrtle Rust situation in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria; proposed and current Myrtle Rust R&D projects; and disease management, epidemiology, host specificity and impacts (economic, social and environmental).

   The second day of the Workshop comprised a field trip to a lemon myrtle (*Backhousia citriadora*) field site at Beerburrum north of Brisbane. The site was established as a germplasm collection and research facility and is currently jointly owned by Queensland DAFF and CSIRO. The facility is the subject of a RIRDC-funded CSIRO R&D project to identify any inherent resistance to Myrtle Rust in this collection of *B. citriadora* seedlots and clones. The field trip was followed by a general discussion on future Myrtle Rust research and management in Australia.

7. The Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity (CRCNPB)-funded project *Understanding eucalyptus rust epidemiology and host specificity to determine disease impact in Australia* (CRCNPB 70186), which has been led by the Queensland Myrtle Rust Program and delivered in conjunction with Queensland DAFF's Horticulture and Forestry Science Program and New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, was successfully completed in May and the final project report has been submitted to the CRCNPB for approval.

   Our thanks to the CRCNPB for the $200K in funding that was provided to deliver this important research project.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI and OEH for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Seven held by teleconference on Wednesday, 27 June 2012

1. Myrtle rust is considered endemic in NSW, with a confirmed distribution in native environments from Batemans Bay to the Queensland border. However, there have been no reports of Myrtle Rust in natural vegetation to the west of the Great Dividing Range thus far.

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

3. A number of staff attended the second National Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane and found it to be very useful. This was further augmented by the visiting scientist doing a tour of sites in NSW.

4. Angus Carnegie has recently returned from 2 weeks in Brazil, Florida and Hawaii, funded by the Gottstein Trust. In Brazil Angus visited Professor Acelino Alfenas (Federal University of Viçosa) as well as eucalypt plantation companies (Veracel & Suzano) to learn more about the impact and management of Guava rust. In Florida he visited Dr Rayamajhi (USDA Invasive Plant Research Laboratory) to look at the impact on *Melaleuca quinquenervia* and observe how insect damage can exacerbate the impact of the rust. In Hawaii, he met with Dr Janice Uchida (University of Hawaii) and Robert Hauff (USDLNR Division of Forestry & Wildlife) to investigate the impact in the native environment and monitoring of the rust, as well as current and proposed legislative actions to restrict further strains entering Hawaii. The trip also established links with overseas researchers that will help with the upcoming DAFF T2M projects. Angus presented information about his trip at the National Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane and will complete a report by October 2012.

5. Monitoring the impact of Myrtle Rust on *Rhodamnia rubescens* in native environments continues with a site in Olney State Forest where half the trees have been kept free from rust using fungicides. After 10 months there is a significant improvement in foliage production in trees free of rust compared to those where rust has caused almost complete loss of foliage and resulted in mortality for some plants. Monthly monitoring at the site continues with the hope of being able to quantify the impact on flower set, fruit production, and survival of seedlings to trees. This work was partly funded by the Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity.

6. Data on Myrtle Rust locations collected by Forests NSW and Angus Carnegie have been supplied to OEH for inclusion in the Wildlife Atlas.

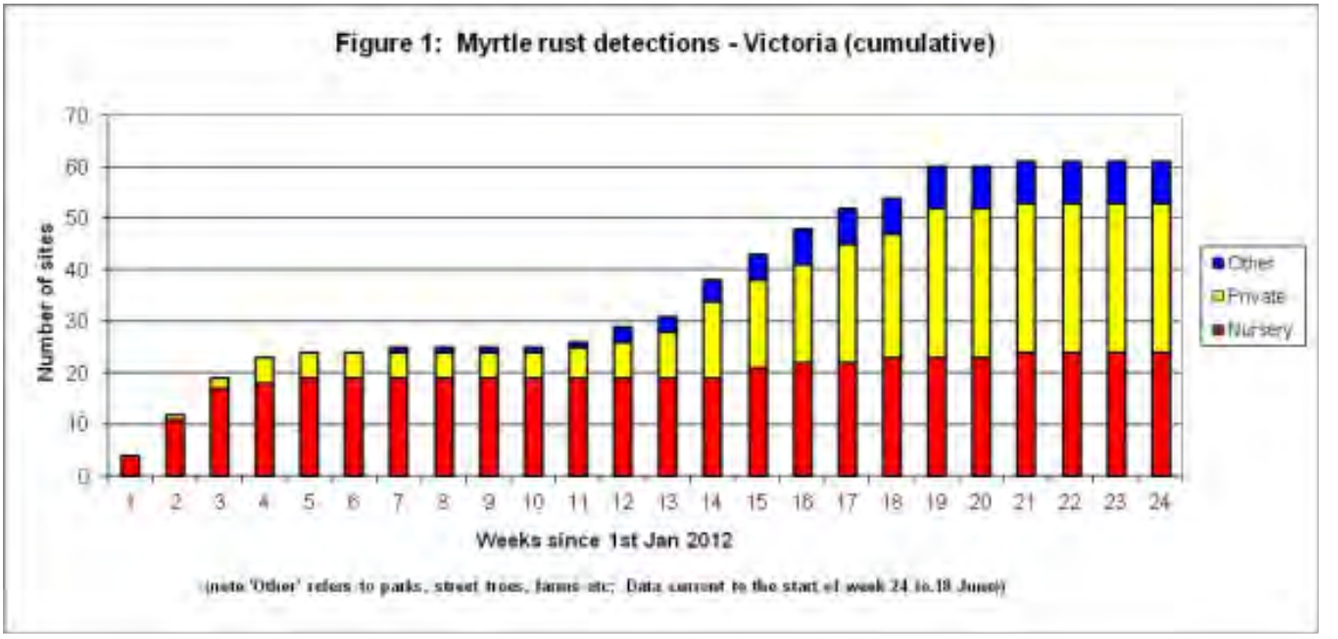
7. National Parks & Wildlife Service prepared a Myrtle Rust Management Plan in 2011, which principally focused on biosecurity measures to reduce the potential for spread and recording the distribution of infected sites. However now that the disease has become widespread and endemic, this plan requires revision, with the focus to move to management of impacts in natural bushland areas, including protection of key threatened species sites and the capacity to reduce broader impacts. In addition for highly threatened species, gene storage issues may need consideration.

At this stage, the review is being proposed in 2012-13 in conjunction with Forests NSW, NSW DPI, the Royal Botanic Gardens, and other relevant public land managers as it may provide a cross tenure framework for Myrtle Rust management across bushland areas of NSW. This work will be done in collaboration with related work nationally and in other states.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic and DSE for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Seven held by teleconference on Wednesday, 27 June 2012

1. Myrtle rust has now been detected at 64 sites in Victoria. The detection rate has slowed right down with the onset of winter.



Several of the recent detections have been on much larger plants (hedges and small trees). The size of the plants and severity of infection represents a significant management issue for home owners.

Although the majority of cases have been in nurseries and private residences within metropolitan Melbourne the Casey shire "hot spot" in outer Melbourne is continuing to expand. At least one council and two residences have removed or are about to remove infected Myrtaceous hosts and replant with non-susceptible hosts.

There have been no new detections of Myrtle Rust in regional Victoria since the last meeting.

Myrtle rust has not yet been detected in Victorian bushland or the natural environment.

2. Myrtle Rust has currently been detected on the following hosts in Victoria:

Acmena smithii (lilly pilly); *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle); *Austromyrtus dulcis* (midgen berry); *Backhousia citriodora* (lemon scented myrtle); *Callistemon harkness* (bottle brush); *Callistemon* 'Kings park special' (bottle brush); *Callistemon viminalis* (bottle brush); *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton wax); *Eucalyptus olida* (strawberry gum) *Lophomyrtus* X *ralphii* (Black Stallion); *Metrosideros carminea Red rata* (Crimson rata); *Metrosideros collina* (Fiji Christmas bush); *Metrosideros excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas bush); *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle); *Syzygium anisatum* (aniseed myrtle);*Syzygium australe* (lilly pilly/scrub cherry/Aussie southern); and *Syzygium paniculatum* (dwarf magenta cherry).

3. The Victorian Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee consisting of DPI Vic, DSE, Parks Victoria (PV), local councils, botanic gardens, forestry, nursery and beekeeper representatives is continuing to meet on a regular basis and is actively involved in planning, monitoring, reporting and conducting industry education activities.

   Over 1500 people have attended ongoing Myrtle Rust information and ID sessions. During June, sessions have been conducted in Noojee, Bairnsdale, and Traralgon. At the Traralgon meeting the Myrtle Rust CD's and notes on Myrtle Rust were handed out, all of which were well received, and consequently additional material has been requested. We are currently out of CDs.

4. A second factsheet of Myrtle Rust symptom images has been prepared and distributed to stakeholders.

   A Myrtle Rust update (16 May) has been prepared and distributed to stakeholders.

   A notice has been distributed to Industry to advise that import restrictions are to be lifted.

   The website has been updated as required.

   Gordon Berg was interviewed about Myrtle Rust by the Shepparton News on 4 June.

4. There is a strong demand from local councils and other groups for training. Seven training sessions have been conducted by program staff in the last month.

5. There has been no need to run any ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training courses this month. NGIV is keeping a waiting list of interested participants, but it appears that industry needs for this course have been met at present.

   The Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne have requested a Myrtle Rust Identification and Sampling course (a modified version of the ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training course) to be held before spring. Course details and date are yet to be decided.

6. David Smith, Forestry Biosecurity Officer and Dr Jacky Edwards attended the Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane on 19 June and presented the Victorian update.

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

   Over 105 sentinel sites have been established around the state (with the assistance of many stakeholder groups) to provide early warning in high risk areas and significant bushland sites. DPI is coordinating the sentinel site network but is actively monitoring only a relatively small number of these sites with much of the monitoring work being done by stakeholder groups.

   A "very small" survey of attempted "clean ups on site" indicated a 66% success rate.

6. The focus of recent operational activities has been the provision of advice to affected land holders to assist them to manage the disease on their land.

   Yates is continuing to pursue a minor use permit for use of new product recently registered for Azalea blight against Myrtle Rust.

7. A revised Myrtle Rust Response Program Plan (V2) has been prepared and is currently going through the DPI Vic approvals process before it can be distributed electronically to members of the state Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee.

8. Biosecurity Victoria, in response to requests from interstate jurisdictions, has determined that, from 30 June 2012, Myrtle Rust will be declared as an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order will be rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host materials will be able to enter Victoria from New South Wales and Queensland without certification. It will remain illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle Rust. In addition, adherence to the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia's Myrtle Rust management plan will help to minimise the sale of diseased plants and reduce the risk of spreading Myrtle Rust further within the State.

Attachment D

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Seven held by teleconference on Wednesday, 27 June 2012

1. The ASBP partners in the state jurisdictions of New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, Victoria, and Tasmania as well as the national jurisdiction (Australian National Botanic Gardens) have all agreed to contribute and support a national collecting programme. The ASBP has recently received a $78,000 seed collecting grant from the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew for its 1000 Species collecting program targeting endemic, endangered and economic valuable species. Although part of this collecting programme will collect seed from Myrtaceae species, the money is to target those that do not exist in current conservation seed bank collections.

   135 Myrtaceae species are being targeted as part of the 1000 Species project.
   47 of these 135 are in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, and Tasmania (those remaining are in South Australia and Western Australia).
   27 of these 47 are from genera reported to be susceptible to Myrtle Rust.

2. The Kew grant will only cover a small programme of work therefore additional resources need to be secured in order to build a national *ex situ* collecting program with genetic diversity.

3. During the previous MRTMG meeting it was discussed that the ASBP would prepare a Caring for our Country proposal for building a comprehensive *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support conservation. Priority would be placed on collecting threatened species and building a genetically diverse collection. The ASBP would take a national approach to safeguarding species from Myrtle Rust.

Attachment E

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Seven held by teleconference on Wednesday, 27 June 2012

1. Companies are continuing to undertake monitoring and surveillance activities and are also training staff in the identification of Myrtle Rust.

2. Elders has committed seed and seedlings to research studies.

Minutes

Meeting Eight of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 21 August, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Louise Clarke, DAFF; Neal Hardy, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Fiona Giblin, DAFF Queensland; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Martin Mebalds, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Gavin Matthew, AFPA; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Apologies: Sophie Peterson, DAFF; Mike Cole, DAFF; Chris Howard, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Sam Malfroy, PHA; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Anne Dennis, DSE; Tuesday Phelan, DSE.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG) and introduced Vanessa Findlay who has been appointed as the new Chief Plant Protection Officer and will be chairing the MRTMG in the future.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Seven had been circulated for comment out of session. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request that an amendment be made. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Seven. The status of each action item was discussed and amendments were made where necessary.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Rod Turner advised that all but one of the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust have now been signed and these projects are all underway. In most cases the researchers had commenced work prior to the signing of the contracts.

The remaining contract is for Project 3.4, the collecting trip to South America to collect isolates of *P. psidii* and send them back to Australia for use in some of the other projects. As has been discussed in previous meetings, PHA has become aware of a ban on the export of specimens and DNA out of Brazil and has been investigating the possibility of Professor Acelino Alfenas from the Department of Plant Pathology of the Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil making collections of *P. psidii* in South America and sending them to Australia. Acelino has a collaborative group of international researchers working on *P. psidii.* that includes Australian researchers and PHA is holding a teleconference next Monday with some of these Australian researchers to discuss this option.

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 and Hugh Bramwells gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. Their reports are attached at Attachment C.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

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

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.

Colin Grant praised the response to the Country Program Consultation Discussion Paper on *Protecting and conserving national significant species, ecosystems and biodiversity in the next phase of Caring for our Country* and thanked those Members who contributed to the submission, in particular Lucy who coordinated this collaborative effort.

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 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that it had been decided previously that future meetings will be scheduled for October and December 2012, and February, April, May, and June 2013. Jenna Taylor will consult with Vanessa Findlay to set dates for these meetings and will advise Members of the decision.

Item 12 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Qld for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Eight held by teleconference on Tuesday 21 August 2012

Geographic Range

There have been ongoing detections of Myrtle Rust in far north Queensland since the last MRTMG meeting on 27 June 2012. These include detections in Mossman, Smithfield, Kuranda, Mareeba, Tolga, Atherton and the Daintree River.

There have also been new detections recorded at Townsville and Ingham. In Townsville, the disease had previously been detected in a plant nursery, but not in the natural environment. The new detection is at the Townsville Botanic Gardens, and indicates that the disease is now established in the Townsville region.

The report of Myrtle Rust at Ingham was from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) who detected the disease in plants purchased from a council nursery for planting at a regeneration site. The infected plants have been destroyed.

The disease is also now established on Fraser Island, where it is a significant threat to the Fraser Island satinay (*Syncarpia hillii)* and other species of Myrtaceae that dominate the four main vegetation communities on the island. Fraser Island is a World Heritage Area.

There continues to be no detection of Myrtle Rust in the environment in Queensland west of the Great Dividing Range.

As at 21 August 2012, there were 207 known infected premises in Queensland (sites where there has been a confirmed diagnosis and a confirmed identification of host species). There were a further 662 highly suspect reports (reports that have not been diagnostically or botanically confirmed but have been verified through photographic or other evidence) and 828 suspect reports (reports which have not been verified but are in known host species in known infested areas) of Myrtle Rust in Queensland. This brings the total number of suspected cases of Myrtle Rust in Queensland to 1697.

To date, 21 local government areas in Queensland have had confirmed cases of Myrtle Rust.

Host Range

Five new species have been identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust in Queensland since the last MRTMG meeting. These are: *Homoranthus papillatus, Homoranthus melanostictus, Syzygium puberulum, Leptospermum madidum,* and *Tristaniopsis exiliflora.* The known host range in Queensland now covers 139 species from 36 genera.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The Myrtle Rust Program continues to work with affected stakeholders, including businesses, local governments and the community to help them manage the disease at affected sites.

Research and Development

The Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity (CRCNPB) funded project *Understanding eucalyptus rust epidemiology and host specificity to determine disease impact in Australia* (CRCNPB 70186), which has been led by the Queensland Myrtle Rust Program and delivered in conjunction with Queensland DAFF's Horticulture and Forestry Science Program and New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, was successfully completed in May and the final project

report has now been approved and published on the CRCNPB website. Again, our thanks to the CRCNPB for the $200K in funding that was provided to deliver this important research project.

The Queensland Myrtle Rust Program is currently preparing a preliminary research proposal, *Managing myrtle rust and its impacts in Australia*, for consideration by the new Plant Biosecurity CRC. The key Queensland collaborators are: DAFF (Biosecurity Queensland and Horticulture and Forestry Science), Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland, and the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. The key NSW contributors are the Department of Primary Industries, and the Office of Environment and Heritage. The University of Tasmania will also participate in the project.

The project builds on the research and outcomes from CRC70186, with the key research areas being:

1) disease epidemiology and factors influencing disease development
2) impact of Myrtle Rust on native Myrtaceae
3) pathogen variability and host specificity, and
4) protecting Australian plant industries against Myrtle Rust.

The research areas are designed to complement the activities outlined in the national *Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust*.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI and OEH for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Eight held by teleconference on Tuesday 21 August 2012

1. Myrtle rust is considered endemic in NSW, with a confirmed distribution in native environments from Batemans Bay to the Queensland border. However, there have been no reports of Myrtle Rust in natural vegetation to the west of the Great Dividing Range thus far.

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

3. A number of staff attended the second National Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane and found it to be very useful. This was further augmented by the visiting scientist doing a tour of sites in NSW.

4. Angus Carnegie has recently returned from 2 weeks in Brazil, Florida and Hawaii, funded by the Gottstein Trust. In Brazil Angus visited Professor Acelino Alfenas (Federal University of Viçosa) as well as eucalypt plantation companies (Veracel & Suzano) to learn more about the impact and management of Guava rust. In Florida he visited Dr Rayamajhi (USDA Invasive Plant Research Laboratory) to look at the impact on *Melaleuca quinquenervia* and observe how insect damage can exacerbate the impact of the rust. In Hawaii, he met with Dr Janice Uchida (University of Hawaii) and Robert Hauff (USDLNR Division of Forestry & Wildlife) to investigate the impact in the native environment and monitoring of the rust, as well as current and proposed legislative actions to restrict further strains entering Hawaii. The trip also established links with overseas researchers that will help with the upcoming DAFF T2M projects. Angus presented information about his trip at the National Myrtle Rust Research and Development Workshop in Brisbane and will complete a report by October 2012.

5. Monitoring the impact of Myrtle Rust on *Rhodamnia rubescens* in native environments continues with a site in Olney State Forest where half the trees have been kept free from rust using fungicides. After 10 months there is a significant improvement in foliage production in trees free of rust compared to those where rust has caused almost complete loss of foliage and resulted in mortality for some plants. Monthly monitoring at the site continues with the hope of being able to quantify the impact on flower set, fruit production, and survival of seedlings to trees. This work was partly funded by the Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity.

6. Data on Myrtle Rust locations collected by Forests NSW and Angus Carnegie have been supplied to OEH for inclusion in the Wildlife Atlas.

7. National Parks & Wildlife Service prepared a Myrtle Rust Management Plan in 2011, which principally focused on biosecurity measures to reduce the potential for spread and recording the distribution of infected sites. However now that the disease has become widespread and endemic, this plan requires revision, with the focus to move to management of impacts in natural bushland areas, including protection of key threatened species sites and the capacity to reduce broader impacts. In addition for highly threatened species, gene storage issues may need consideration.

   At this stage, the review is being proposed in 2012-13 in conjunction with Forests NSW, NSW DPI, the Royal Botanic Gardens, and other relevant public land managers as it may

provide a cross tenure framework for Myrtle Rust management across bushland areas of NSW. This work will be done in collaboration with related work nationally and in other states.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic and DSE for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Eight held by teleconference on Tuesday 21 August 2012

Geographic Range

Myrtle Rust has now been detected at 68 sites in Victoria which is an increase of four sites since the last MRTMG meeting.

Several of the recent detections have been on much larger plants (hedges and small trees). The size of the plants and severity of infection represents a significant management issue for home owners.

Although the majority of cases have been in nurseries and private residences within metropolitan Melbourne the Casey shire "hot spot" in outer Melbourne is continuing to expand.

There have been no new detections of Myrtle Rust in regional Victoria since the last meeting.

Myrtle rust has not yet been detected in Victorian bushland or the natural environment.

Host Range

Myrtle Rust has currently been detected on the following hosts in Victoria:

Acmena smithii (lilly pilly); *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle); *Austromyrtus dulcis* (midgen berry); *Backhousia citriodora* (lemon scented myrtle); *Callistemon harkness* (bottle brush); *Callistemon* 'Kings park special' (bottle brush); *Callistemon viminalis* (bottle brush); *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton wax); *Eucalyptus olida* (strawberry gum), *Lophomyrtus* X *ralphii* (Black Stallion); *Metrosideros carminea Red rata* (Crimson rata); *Metrosideros collina* (Fiji Christmas bush); *Metrosideros excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas bush); *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle); *Syzygium anisatum* (aniseed myrtle);*Syzygium australe* (lilly pilly/scrub cherry/Aussie southern); and *Syzygium paniculatum* (dwarf magenta cherry).

Training and Communication

The Victorian Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee consisting of DPI Vic, DSE, Parks Victoria (PV), local councils, botanic gardens, forestry, nursery and beekeeper representatives is continuing to meet on a regular basis and is actively involved in planning, monitoring, reporting and conducting industry education activities.

Over 1500 people have attended ongoing Myrtle Rust information and ID sessions.

During July, two media interviews were given by Gordon Berg, one to Libby Price for the ABC Country Hour on 3 July and the other to the Swan Hill Guardian on 5 July.

The website has been updated and factsheets distributed as required.

The number of calls about Myrtle Rust received by the DPI Customer Service Centre has declined slightly during the winter.

There has been no need to run any ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training courses this month. NGIV is keeping a waiting list of interested participants, but it appears that industry needs for this course have been met at present.

A Myrtle Rust Identification and Sampling course (a modified version of the ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training course) was presented at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne on 31 July.

There is a strong demand from local councils and other groups for training. Consequently it is anticipated that training sessions will re-commence in September as the weather warms.

Surveillance and Tracing

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

Over 105 sentinel sites have been established around the state (with the assistance of many stakeholder groups) to provide early warning in high risk areas and significant bushland sites. DPI is coordinating the sentinel site network but is actively monitoring only a relatively small number of these sites with much of the monitoring work being done by stakeholder groups.

Market Access and Compliance

From 30 June 2012, Myrtle Rust has been declared as an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order has been rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host materials are able to enter Victoria from New South Wales and Queensland without certification. It remains illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle Rust. In addition, adherence to the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia's Myrtle Rust management plan will help to minimise the sale of diseased plants and reduce the risk of spreading Myrtle Rust further within the State.

Management

The focus of recent operational activities has been the identification and provision of advice to affected land holders to assist them to manage the disease on their land.

Yates is continuing to pursue a minor use permit for the Zaleton fungicide product for use against Myrtle Rust.

One commercial garden maintenance company report that two sprays of Triforine fungicide appeared to have "cleaned up" a Myrtle Rust infection at Berwick.

Attachment D

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Eight held by teleconference on Tuesday 21 August 2012

Geographic Range

DSEWPaC is liaising with representatives from the State agencies to coordinate a national map to record how Myrtle Rust is moving across Australia.

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 Meeting Eight held by teleconference on Tuesday 21 August 2012

Situation Update

As was discussed at the previous meeting, the ASBP in collaboration with PHA, Hugh Bramwells from DSE, Gavin Matthew and Peter Grist from AFPA, and Neville Walsh from the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne has prepared a response to the Caring for our Country Program Consultation Discussion Paper on *Protecting and conserving national significant species, ecosystems and biodiversity in the next phase of Caring for our Country* highlighting Myrtle Rust. This submission has been accepted by Caring for our Country and will be reviewed by the Caring for our Country design team before becoming a public document and being made available from the Caring for our Country website. It is hoped that the submission will help inform the direction of the next round of Caring for our Country funding.

The ASBP will next prepare a proposal for Caring for our Country funding to build a comprehensive *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support conservation. Priority will be placed on collecting threatened species and building a genetically diverse collection. The ASBP will take a national approach to safeguarding species from Myrtle Rust. It is understood that the next open call for funding proposals will be in November 2012.

The ASBP is also preparing a submission to the Dahl Trust. The Dahl Trust operates a Small Grants Program, the principal purpose of which is the protection and enhancement of eucalypts as a significant aspect of Australia's natural environment and the provision of information and education about eucalypts. As such, the ASBP aims to raise awareness of Myrtle Rust through its submission to the Dahl Trust and highlight the impact that it has on eucalypts in the hopes that the ASBP will be granted funding.

Attachment F

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Eight held by teleconference on Tuesday 21 August 2012

Situation Update

Companies are continuing to undertake monitoring and surveillance activities and are also training staff in the identification of Myrtle Rust.

Myrtle Rust has not yet spread into nurseries nor has it affected commercial operations.

In the last few weeks AFPA has become a member of PHA and will be working with PHA to produce an Industry Biosecurity Plan for the forestry industry.

AFPA has also applied to become a Party to the EPPRD. PHA has initiated the admission process.

Minutes

Meeting Nine of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Louise Clarke, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Nin Hyne, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Nick Woods, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Shaun Suitor, DSE; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Mike Cole, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DEWHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Anne Dennis, DSE; Andrew Greenwood, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG) and in particular David Forsyth from DSEWPaC, Nick Woods from PHA, and Shaun Suitor from DSE who were attending for the first time. Colin then explained that Vanessa Findlay was an apology and that, in her absence, he would be chairing the meeting.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Eight had been circulated for comment out of session. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request that an amendment be made. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Eight. All action items had been completed.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Jenna Taylor advised that all but one of the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust have now been signed and these projects are all underway. In most cases the researchers had commenced work prior to the signing of the contracts.

There are two progress reports and a final report due at the end of November. These will be circulated to the MRTMG prior to the next meeting.

The remaining contract is for Project 3.4, the collecting trip to South America to collect isolates of *P. psidii* and send them back to Australia for use in some of the other projects. As has been discussed in previous meetings, PHA has become aware of a ban on the export of specimens and DNA out of Brazil and has been investigating the possibility of Professor Acelino Alfenas from the Department of Plant Pathology of the Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil making collections of *P. psidii* in South America and bringing them to Australia. Acelino has a collaborative group of international researchers working on *P. psidii* that includes Australian researchers and, following the previous meeting, PHA held a teleconference with some of these Australian researchers to discuss this option. Acelino will be contacted and a proposal developed for this work. This will be circulated to the MRTMG prior to the next meeting.

Item 5 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

There was no representative from Queensland in attendance. As such, no update was given on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland.

Item 6 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in NSW

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. His report is attached at Attachment A.

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 B.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

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

Colin Grant praised the idea of the workshop and suggested that Jenna Taylor provide DSEWPaC with the contact details of the MRTMG members; researchers working on Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program funded projects; and the members of the Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group, all of whom should be invited to the workshop. Colin also suggested that PHA give a brief presentation on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program at the workshop.

Hugh Bramwells commented that it would be useful to hear from the other states on the impacts that they have observed in their jurisdictions. David agreed and advised that he was also proposing to invite representatives from non-affected states and territories in order to increase their awareness of key issues regarding Myrtle Rust.

It was also discussed that the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program may be able to provide some financial assistance for key people to travel to Canberra to attend the workshop if required.

Item 9 – Report on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership

There was no representative from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership in attendance. As such, no update was given on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities.

Colin Grant reminded members that and that Lucy Sutherland had prepared a collaborative response to the Caring for our Country Program Consultation Discussion Paper on *Protecting and conserving national significant species, ecosystems and biodiversity in the next phase of Caring for our Country* highlighting Myrtle Rust and that this submission has been accepted by Caring for our Country and will be reviewed by the Caring for our Country design team before becoming a public document and being made available from the Caring for our Country website. It is hoped that the submission will help inform the direction of the next round of Caring for our Country funding.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Gavin Matthew gave an update on the Forestry industry's Myrtle Rust activities. His report is attached at Attachment D.

Item 11 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEDST on Tuesday 11th December 2012 and were asked to add this time and date to their diaries.

Item 12 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Geographic Range

Myrtle Rust is considered endemic in NSW, with a confirmed distribution in native environments from Batemans Bay to the Queensland border. However, there have been no reports of Myrtle Rust in natural vegetation to the west of the Great Dividing Range thus far.

Communication

There have been no reports on Myrtle Rust on biosecurity hotline in the last four months.

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

Research and Development

Work on the fungicide project under the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program is progressing well. Some preliminary will be available for circulation prior to the next MRTMG meeting.

Management

Discussions are being held within NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust to be managed as an established disease and management information has been provided by the extension arm of NSW DPI.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Geographic Range

There have been 3 new detections of Myrtle Rust in Victoria since August bringing the total to 71 infected premises mainly across Melbourne with outliers in Shepparton, Lorne, Bairnsdale and Ballarat.

The new infected premises were found in the Casey Shire (metro Melbourne) where natural spread has been identified.

The recent detections have been on much larger plants which represents a significant management issue for home owners.

Myrtle Rust has not yet been detected in Victorian bushland or the natural environment.

The expectation is that as temperatures rise in late spring there will be a marked increase in Myrtle Rust detections.

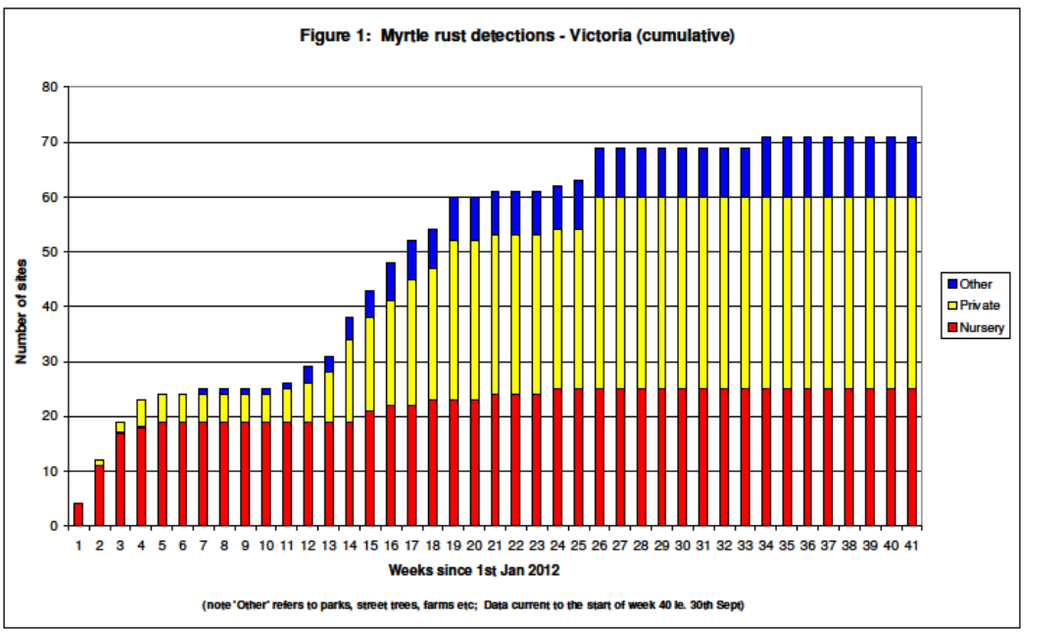


Figure 2 Map of detection sites as of 15 October 2012

Host Range

Myrtle Rust has currently been detected on the following hosts in Victoria:

Acmena smithii (lilly pilly); *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle); *Austromyrtus dulcis* (midgen berry); *Backhousia citriodora* (lemon scented myrtle); *Callistemon harkness* (bottle brush); *Callistemon* 'Kings park special' (bottle brush); *Callistemon viminalis* (bottle brush); *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton wax); *Eucalyptus olida* (strawberry gum), *Lophomyrtus* X *ralphii* (Black Stallion); *Metrosideros carminea Red rata* (Crimson rata); *Metrosideros collina* (Fiji Christmas bush); *Metrosideros excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas bush); *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle); *Syzygium anisatum* (aniseed myrtle);*Syzygium australe* (lilly pilly/scrub cherry/Aussie southern); and *Syzygium paniculatum* (dwarf magenta cherry).

Training and Communication

Over 1600 people have attended ongoing Myrtle Rust information and ID sessions.

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

Two information sessions were held in September and more are planned for regional councils in the next few months.

There has been no need to run any ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training courses over winter.

The website was updated in September and factsheets distributed as required.

There was a well presented segment on the TV show Gardening Australia (ABC) in early October where John Arnett from the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne was interviewed about Myrtle Rust.

20 public enquiries regarding Myrtle Rust have been recorded over the last 2 months.

Surveillance and Tracing

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

Over 120 sentinel sites, mainly in forested areas, have been established around the state (with the assistance of stakeholder groups) to provide early warning in high risk areas and significant bushland sites. DPI is coordinating the sentinel site network but is actively monitoring only a small number of these sites with much of the monitoring work being done by stakeholder groups. Data from these other sites is being provided by land managers for collation by DPI

Market Access and Compliance

From 30 June 2012, Myrtle Rust has been declared as an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order has been rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host materials are able to enter Victoria from New South Wales and Queensland without certification. It remains illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle Rust. In addition, businesses are encouraged to adhere to the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia's Myrtle Rust management plan to minimise the risk of spreading Myrtle Rust further within the State.

Management

The Victorian Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee consisting of Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Parks Victoria (PV), local councils, botanic gardens, forestry, nursery and beekeeper representatives met in early September to plan "monitoring" activities over the next six months.

Phase 3 – Monitoring Plan for Myrtle Rust has been developed and was endorsed at the meeting. The Plan focuses on providing training and technical advice to land managers, following up detections in new hosts and high risk areas of plantation and natural bush and collecting surveillance and impact data.

DPI has appointed a pathologist to assist with the program over the next six months.

Yates is continuing to pursue a minor use permit for the Zaleton fungicide product for use against Myrtle Rust.

Attachment C

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Situation Update

DSEWPaC is proposing to hold a national workshop on the environmental impacts of Myrtle Rust on Wednesday 12 December, 2012, in Canberra. A draft agenda will be circulated to the MRTMG this week and comments regarding the agenda, potential speakers, and attendance will be welcome. Invites will be sent out in the next few weeks.

Attachment D

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Situation Update

The forestry industry's annual forest health surveillance activities have been tailored to Myrtle Rust and key staff involved in these surveillance activities are being trained in the identification of Myrtle Rust.

A broader training program for operational staff is underway also.

Screening of seedlings has been undertaken by CSIRO with the screening of high risk areas such as nurseries being a priority.

AFPA has been working with PHA to review the forestry industry's Industry Biosecurity Plan.

In anticipation of becoming a Party to the EPPRD, AFPA has met with the Levies Revenue Service within DAFF to discuss the implementation of an EPPRD levy.

Minutes

Meeting Ten of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 11 December, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Rose Hockham, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Louise Clarke, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DEWHA; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Anne Dennis, DSE; Andrew Greenwood, DSE; Shaun Suitor, DSE; Peter Grist, 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 Nine had been circulated for comment out of session. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request that an amendment be made. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Nine. The status of each action item was discussed and amendments were made where necessary.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Jenna Taylor advised that all but one of the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust have now been signed and these projects are all underway.

Since the last meeting, PHA has received two progress reports and a final report 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 are three further progress reports due at the end of December and another at the end of January. Jenna will circulate these to both the MRTMG and the MRSAG prior to the next meeting.

With regards to the remaining contract, as was advised at the last meeting, one of the Australian researchers in Acelino Alfenas' collaborative group of international researchers working on *P. psidii* was to contact Acelino then develop and provide to PHA a proposal for Acelino to make collections of *P. psidii* in South America and bring them to Australia for use in research. PHA is yet to receive this proposal. Rod Turner is chasing this. Colin Grant stressed that this was a matter of priority.

Item 5 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

There was no representative from Queensland in attendance. As such, no update was given on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland.

Item 6 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in NSW

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. His report is attached at Attachment A.

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 B.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

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

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 D.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Gavin Matthew gave an update on the Forestry industry's Myrtle Rust activities. His report is attached at Attachment E.

Item 11 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEDST on Tuesday 19th February 2013 and were asked to add this time and date to their diaries.

Item 12 – Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked the Members of the MRTMG for their participation in the teleconference and, in closing the meeting, reminded the Members that the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program would conclude at the end of June 2013 and advised that he had asked Jenna Taylor to draft a Cessation Strategy for the Program which will be similar to the Cessation Strategy that was written by DAFF Queensland for the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Program. Jenna will circulate a draft Cessation Strategy to the MRTMG prior to the next meeting.

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Ten held by teleconference on Tuesday 11 December, 2012

Geographic Range

There have been no new detections of Myrtle Rust in NSW since October. 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.

Research and Development

Progress on a number of projects under the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program will be presented at the "Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems" National Workshop organised by DSEWPaC tomorrow.

Management

Myrtle rust is being managed as an established plant disease in New South Wales.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Ten held by teleconference on Tuesday 11 December, 2012

Geographic Range

There have been no new detections of Myrtle Rust in Victoria since October. The total number of infected premises stands at 71 infected premises mainly across Melbourne with outliers in Shepparton, Lorne, Bairnsdale and Ballarat.

At least one infected premises is actively sporulating.

Myrtle Rust has still not been detected in the natural bush.

Temperatures rise in late spring have largely not eventuated but when they occur in summer there is expected to be a marked increase in Myrtle Rust detections.

Training and Communication

Over 200 people have attended Myrtle Rust information and ID sessions since October.

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

Five information sessions have been held since October and more are planned for the New Year.

There has been no need to run any ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training courses over winter.

Version 2 of the CD-ROM of training resources, including more images of symptoms found in Victoria, was produced and made available after stocks of the previous version (350) were exhausted.

An October Myrtle Rust update was produced and distributed to the contact list.

The DPI website was maintained and updated as required, including dates of upcoming information sessions. Around 540 visits to the Myrtle Rust landing page were made during November, plus many further visits to linked pages.

In response to requests from external agencies, information and/or images were provided for four events (field days, festivals etc.), a council newsletter, and a 4-wheel drive magazine.

15 public enquiries regarding Myrtle Rust have been recorded over the last 2 months.

Surveillance and Tracing

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

Over 120 sentinel sites, east and west of Melbourne and largely south of the divide and mainly in forested areas, have been established and data from these sites is being provided by land managers for collation by DPI. These sites provide early warning in high risk areas and significant bushland sites. DPI is coordinating the sentinel site network but is actively monitoring only a small number of these sites with much of the monitoring work being done by stakeholder groups.

Market Access and Compliance

From 30 June 2012, Myrtle Rust has been declared as an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order has been rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host materials are able to enter Victoria from disease-affected states without certification. It remains illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle Rust. In addition, businesses are encouraged to adhere to the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia's Myrtle Rust management plan to minimise the risk of spreading Myrtle Rust further within the State.

Management

Phase 3 – Monitoring Plan for Myrtle Rust is still active. The Plan focuses on providing training and technical advice to land managers, following up detections in new hosts and high risk areas of plantation and natural bush and collecting surveillance and impact data.

Yates has submitted an application to the APVMA for a change of label for Zaleton fungicide for use against Myrtle rust. The application is expected to take six months to process.

Attachment C

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Ten held by teleconference on Tuesday 11 December, 2012

Situation Update

DSEWPaC is holding its "Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems" National Workshop tomorrow in Canberra. There are 52 confirmed attendees including representatives from non-affected states and territories. There will be presentations on each of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program research projects as well as presentations from NSW, Queensland, and Victoria. At the end of the Workshop there will be an open discussion to identify gaps in the current research which should be taken into consideration when planning future Myrtle Rust research.

A report on the Workshop will be circulated early in the New Year.

Attachment D

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Ten held by teleconference on Tuesday 11 December, 2012

Caring for our Country Update

The Australian Government put a strategy document on the Caring for our Country website yesterday and it appears that they will be calling for proposals to be submitted shortly.

Fundraising

The ASBP submitted a grant proposal to a Trust for seed collections of species susceptible to Myrtle Rust in September 2012 and were notified in October 2012 that it was unsuccessful. Although the Trust was interested in the project, rather than supporting the building of ex situ collections with genetic diversity, the Board would prefer to support new species collections to Australia's conservation seed banks. The ASBP was encouraged to revise the proposal and resubmit in the next round in March 2013.

Participation

The ASBP will be represented at the "Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems" National Workshop tomorrow.

Updates from Select Individual Partners

Victoria
The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne are collecting seed from species that have been identified as susceptible based on the DSE list of primary, secondary, and lower risk taxa. The seed bank team have collected all but one (16/17) of the primary species both through existing and recent targeted collection, and they are collecting species from the secondary list with around 18 of the 27 taxa having been collected. They received a small amount of funding for the primary species but the remainder has been unfunded and is being done opportunistically during field trips which are funded through other resources.

Tasmania
The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens is a member of the Tasmanian Myrtle Rust group. This group has been invited to send material to a mainland testing facility for susceptibility testing. They are presently drawing collections together for this screening and the seed bank will be making additional provenance collections for *Melalueca pustulata*, *Melaleuca virens,* and *Leptospermum grandiflorum* for this program.

Attempts are being made to engage and encourage local groups to collect seeds of *Melaleuca* and other Myrtaceae for banking, but this hasn't drawn much response as yet.

Queensland
The Brisbane Botanic Gardens seed bank has been making seed collections targeting Myrtaceae in South East Queensland. Collections have been made on *Eucalyptus planchoniana* in the Helidon Hills and *Eucalyptus tindaliae* on South Stradbroke Island. *Eucalyptus curtisii* has been collected from two separate populations in Moggill and *Eucalyptus cloeziana* from near Gympie. Additionally, a collection of *Xanthostemon oppositifolius* has been made at KinKin, and also a collection of *Austromyrtus glabra*.This has been done essentially to increase the genetic diversity of the collections.

New South Wales

Plantbank (Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust) has funding for one collector position for their Rainforest Seed Conservation Program plus two more externally funded science positions to work on rainforest seeds commencing in the New Year. Species that susceptible to Myrtle Rust are a focus for the program.

Staff are currently collecting from rainforest habitats, especially the north coast of NSW, and expect to be making some Myrtaceae collections in the New Year. There was a recent collecting trip to the NSW coast, however, did not make any Myrtaceae collections (fruiting occurs in late summer generally). Field observations indicate that the current dry spell has resulted in less prevalent (more patchy) Myrtle Rust outbreaks in comparison to the previous wet summer seasons.

The following are some points on their observations regarding Myrtle Rust:

Generally, through observations and through discussions with local botanical consultants, Myrtle Rust appears to be less active during the current period but was still observed on a number of specimens. Some previously affected plants show no active Myrtle Rust and have unaffected new growth. The level of infection between and within species is variable. During the most recent collecting trip to the north coast, there was much less active Myrtle Rust observed than during the trips earlier this year and late last year.

More specifically,

Bellinger Valley

- While Myrtle Rust was very active and many specimens of *Rhodamnia rubescens* were suffering severe defoliation during previous trips, last month many of the previously damaged plants had no observable sporulation and there was significant new growth.
- Active Myrtle Rust was collected from an *Anetholea anistata* during April 2012 but last month there was no active Myrtle Rust present.

Burringbar area

- A couple of specimens of *Rhodomyrtus psidioides* that have been killed through defoliation due to Myrtle Rust have been identified as have a couple of other specimens with minor damage. Samples have been sent to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney.
- While there is evidence of previous damage to specimens of *Rhodamnia maideniana,* there is no observable active Myrtle Rust. Samples have been sent to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. A nearby specimen of *Rhodamnia maideniana* appeared to have no previous or current damage.
- Regrowth (30cm) on specimens of *Rhodomyrtus psidioides* that had been cut to ground level under power lines had considerable active sporulation. A sample has been sent to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney.

Mullumbimby

- Leaf damage has been observed on specimens of *Rhodamnia rubescens* and *Choricarpia subargentea* but there was no active sporulation and it may not have been Myrtle Rust. Samples have been sent to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney.
- Leaf damage has also been observed on *Rhodamnia argentea* but it may have been from previous Myrtle Rust infection. There was no observable sporulation. Again, samples have been sent to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney.

Bulli

- While specimens of *Rhodamnia rubescens* were suffering severe defoliation during 2011 and2012, over the past couple of months there has been considerably less sporulation and a lot of unaffected new growth.

Given the most current observations and continuing favourable conditions, there will be an increased chance of making seed collections from species such as *Rhodamnia* that have been shown to be highly susceptible to Myrtle Rust. The collection of seed from these species remains a priority for the Rainforest Seed Conservation Program.

Attachment E

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Ten held by teleconference on Tuesday 11 December, 2012

Situation Update

AFPA has finished reviewing the forestry industry's Industry Biosecurity Plan and this document is now back with PHA for finalisation.

Additionally, AFPA has now signed the EPPRD.

Participation

Peter Grist will represent AFPA at the "Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems" National Workshop tomorrow.

Minutes

Meeting Eleven of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Louise Clarke, DAFF; Melissa Hart, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Geoff Pegg, DAFF Queensland; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Stuart Holland, DPI Vic; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Rose Hockham, DAFF; Nin Hyne, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DEWHA; Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Anne Dennis, DSE; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Andrew Greenwood, DSE; Shaun Suitor, DSE; Peter Grist, 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 Ten 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 ran through the action list from Meeting Ten 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 are three further progress reports due. Jenna Taylor will circulate these to both the MRTMG and the MRSAG as soon as they are received by PHA.

With regards to the remaining contract, as has been advised previously, one of the Australian researchers in Acelino Alfenas' collaborative group of international researchers working on *P. psidii* was to contact Acelino then develop and provide to PHA a proposal for Acelino to make collections of *P. psidii* in South America and send them to Australia for use in research that will complement the whole genome sequencing of *U. rangelii* that is currently being undertaken by NSW DPI. The collections may be used in morphological work also. Acelino is available to travel to Australia in June to attend 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.

Item 5 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

Geoff Pegg gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland. His 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. His 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.

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.

Colin Grant suggested that Lucy take the lead on coordinating the development of a Caring for our Country application and to liaise with PHA in arranging a meeting with any MRTMG Members who are interested in contributing to the development of this proposal.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Gavin Matthew 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 the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program would conclude at the end of June 2013 and it is likely that there will be no further funding available beyond June other than Caring for our Country and Biodiversity Fund funding. As such, Colin had 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 has done so and a draft Cessation Strategy was circulated to the MRTMG prior to the meeting.

Colin highlighted the fact that future activities have been identified in the draft Cessation Strategy. In some cases a party has already agreed to fund the activity, for example maintenance of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website by PHA. In other cases, although no one party has as of yet agreed to fund the activity, we can be confident that it will be funded, for example national registration of the most effective fungicide(s) for controlling Myrtle Rust (as identified in the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program-funded fungicide efficacy trials) will be completed and funded by chemical registrants. In other cases still, for example the building of a comprehensive *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support conservation placing prioriy on collecting threatened species and building a genetically diverse collection, it is intended that a funding proposal will be submitted for the activity.

In the case of the activities that remain, funding must be committed to each before the end of June so that the MRTMG will not have to coordinate this beyond the conclusion of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program. It was discussed that many Members do not yet have an indication of their organisation's budget for the next financial year and as such are unable to commit funding at this stage.

It was agreed that this issue should be discussed further at the next meeting at which time the Members may be aware of their organisations' budgets for the next financial year and therefore which activities they may be able to commit to.

Item 12 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEDST on Tuesday 16th April 2013 and were asked to add this time and date to their diaries.

Item 13 – Close of Meeting

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

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Eleven held by teleconference on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Reports

Myrtle Rust reports have declined in the last couple of months following extended hot and dry weather conditions. However, recent rains have seen a slow increase in infection levels on known hosts.

Host Range

New hosts for Queensland detected in January/February 2013

Nine new species were identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust in Queensland in January and February. These are:

- *Austromyrtus* sp. (Lockerbie scrub)
- *Backhousia hughseii*
- *Rhodamnia blairiana*
- *Syzygium apodophyllum*
- *Syzygium bamagense*
- *Syzygium erythrocalyx*
- *Syzygium endophloium*
- *Syzygium pseudofastigiatum*
- *Syzygium macilwraithianum*

Research

Impact on *Melaleuca quinquenervia*
Approximately two years of data has now been collected from a natural regeneration site of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* with disease ratings completed on a monthly basis. Other data collated includes impact on growth rate (done 6, 12 and 18 months since first detection) and impact on flowering rate.

The findings are that there is a significant correlation between disease severity and apical growth rates and also between disease levels and flower production.

Flowering was monitored over time and seed has now been collected from trees that were more resistant under field conditions. Seedlings have been germinated and will be tested under glasshouse conditions to determine levels of resistance/susceptibility within the progeny.

Impact on *Melaleuca quinquenervia* regeneration plantings
Four regeneration sites, established as part of the two million tree program, are being assessed in collaboration with Brisbane City Council and students from Griffith and Queensland Universities. Changes in disease severity are being assessed monthly in relation to site (inland vs coastal; mixed vs monoculture), climate, and tree age. Twelve months of data have been collated to date.

Disease Epidemiology studies
Disease epidemiology data has been collated from sites in Brisbane examining disease incidence and severity in relation to climatic conditions. This data is being compared to experiment sites in NSW (Angus Carnegie). Approximately two years of data has been collated and is in the process of being analysed.

Plantation eucalypts – resistance screening
Disease screening has been completed for the main species used in hardwood plantation development in Queensland. These are:

- *Eucalyptus cloeziana* (Gympie messmate – inland and coastal ecotypes)
- *Eucalyptus argophloia* (Chinchilla white gum – rare and endangered)
- *Corymbia citriodora* subsp. *citriodora* (Spotted gum)
- *Corymbia citriodora* subsp. *variegata* (Spotted gum)
- *Corymbia henryi* (Spotted gum)
- *Corymbia torelliana* (Gadagii)
- *Corymbia torelliana* x CCV hybrids (Corymbia hybrid)

Of all species tested *Eucalyptus argophloia* was found to be most susceptible. However, in all cases resistance was identified at a provenance level. Studies on *Eucalyptus cloeziana* suggest some ecotype difference with coastal provenances being more susceptible than inland provenances.

Evidence from all studies shows the possibility of selecting trees for breeding resistance.

A paper has been submitted:

Pegg GS, Brawner JT, Oostenbrink J, Lee DJ Screening *Corymbia* populations for resistance to *Puccinia psidii.* Submitted December 2012 Plant Pathology

Testing of eucalypt species of significance to Asia and Africa has commenced in collaboration with FABI (University of Pretoria). Seedlings are being established and inoculations will commence in approximately two months' time. Species being studied include:

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

Seed includes provenance material from Australia and seed orchard material from, Asia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Student Projects
Honours Project – Griffith Uni
Studying the impact of Myrtle Rust on the rare and endangered *Gossia gonoclada.*

PhD Student – QUT
Impact of Myrtle Rust on flora and fauna in coastal *Melaleuca* ecosystems.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI and OEH for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Eleven held by teleconference on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Geographic Range

Reports in natural areas are down from last year.

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.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Eleven held by teleconference on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Geographic Range

There has been only one detection of Myrtle Rust since the last meeting in December 2012. This was on a private property in the eastern metro area of Melbourne.

The total number of infected premises stands at 72 mainly across Melbourne with outliers in Shepparton, Lorne, Bairnsdale, and Ballarat.

The disease is still active at a number of sites but has not been detected in the natural bush.

Low temperatures in late spring and the dry weather over summer has contributed to a much lower than expected spread of disease.

Training and Communication

A number of public information sessions were held since the last meeting and at least six more are planned in regional areas over autumn.

Over 2000 people have now attended Myrtle Rust information sessions.

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

Version 2 of the CD-ROM of training resources, including images of symptoms found in Victoria is now available.

The DPI website was updated recently, including dates of upcoming information sessions. Around400 visits per month have been made to the Myrtle Rust landing page.

Information and/or images were provided for field days, festivals, council newsletters, and magazines.

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.

Market Access and Compliance

From 30 June 2012, Myrtle Rust has been declared as an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order has been rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host material is able to enter Victoria from disease-affected states without certification. It remains illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle Rust.

Management

The Victorian Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee of government and industry representatives has not met since the last meeting but are being kept aware of developments.

DPI activities are according to “Phase 3 – Monitoring Plan for Myrtle Rust”, which focuses on providing training and technical advice to land managers, following up detections in new hosts and high risk areas of plantation and natural bush and collecting surveillance and impact data.

Attachment D

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Eleven held by teleconference on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Workshop

DSEWPaC held its “Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems” National Workshop in Canberra in December.

A two page summary of the outcomes of the Workshop will be circulated to participants shortly.

Management

DSEWPaC is writing a threat abatement plan for Phytophthora with a view to doing the same for Myrtle Rust in the future.

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 Eleven held by teleconference on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Caring for our Country Update

The call for submission of applications for Caring for our Country funding came out last week.

Page 15 of the Caring for our Country Guidelines for applicants indicates support for seed-related work and consequently provides opportunities for a bid to build collections of species susceptible to Myrtle Rust i.e. '*While we are seeking applications to maximise on-ground activities, we recognise that many recovery programs incorporate other activities such as education or appropriate collection and storage of seed. Applications are invited for projects that invest in education, training or other activities supporting species recovery programs where it can be demonstrated that these activities are essential to the success of on-ground outcomes*.'

Lucy has contacted the ASBP members to ensure that there would be no conflict or overlap with applications they may be preparing for local work. At the moment there are no obvious conflicts and Lucy is proposing that an application be prepared for the building of an *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support species recovery. Lucy is not currently clear on the size of this proposed project and whether it will require an Expression of Interest (projects over $1 million) due on 18 March or a full application (projects $50,000-1 million) due 10 April.

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.

Attachment F

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Eleven held by teleconference on Tuesday 19 February, 2013

Situation Update

There have been no detections of Myrtle Rust in plantations.

The forestry industry's Industry Biosecurity Plan has been finalised and released.

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 Suitor, 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

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

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.

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*
- *Pilidiostigma 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Minutes

Meeting Thirteen of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Attendees: Tom Aldred, DAFF (Chair); Luke Osbourne, DAFF; Nin Hyne, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Karen Butler, DSEWPaC; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Angus Carnegie, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Russell McMurray, DEPI; Gabrielle Vivian-Smith, DEPI; Hugh Bramwells, DEPI; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Colin Grant, DAFF; Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Chris Howard, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Louise Clarke, DAFF; Rose Hockham, DAFF; Melissa Hart, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DEWHA; Greg Fraser, PHA; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Geoff Pegg, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Stuart Holland, DEPI; Anne Dennis, DEPI; Andrew Greenwood, DEPI; Shaun Suitor, DEPI; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Tom Aldred welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG) and introduced himself as Chair. Tom explained that he has recently taken over the role of First Assistant Secretary for Plant Biosecurity and that it had been intended that he would chair the MRTMG from the next meeting onwards. However, Colin Grant had been called to Parliament House at short notice this afternoon and, as such, Tom would be chairing today also. He passed on Colin's apologies.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Twelve had been circulated for comment out of session. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request that an amendment be made. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

The Chair went through the action list from Meeting Twelve 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.

PHA has not received any progress reports from researchers since the last meeting. There was a progress report due at the end of April which is now overdue. Jenna Taylor is following this up and will circulate the report to both the MRTMG and the MRSAG as soon as it is received by PHA.

Two researchers have contacted PHA to request extensions to allow sufficient time for the contracted work to be completed. PHA has discussed this with DAFF and the extensions have been granted.

PHA is working to finalise the remaining contract and the contract is currently with the research organisation for signing. The contract has been approved by the finance department and is currently with the legal team for approval. The researcher has already commenced work.

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. Acelino Alfenas from the Federal University of Viçosa in Brazil is travelling to Australia to assist with some of the Australian Government funded research and will attend the workshop as keynote speaker. Elodie Nakamura from the Department of Veterinary, Food, and Rural Affairs in New Caledonia will also be in attendance and will provide an update on the recent detection of Myrtle Rust in New Caledonia. Rodney advised that the dates have been changed from the 17th and 18th of July to the 24th and 25th of July. A venue has been secured and Jenna will send invitation to the MRTMG next week.

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

Angus Carnegie 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

Gabrielle Vivian-Smith gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. Her 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.

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

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

Item 11 – Legacy Document

The Chair reminded the Members that Colin Grant had previously asked Jenna Taylor to draft a Legacy Document outlining both the outcomes of the Transition to Management Program and the work that can be done as a result of these outcomes. A draft Legacy Document has been circulated to the MRTMG as a basis for discussion. It was noted, however, that the majority of the research has not yet been completed and several of the projects will continue until October. As such, the draft lacks detail at this stage. Outcomes will be added to the document as final reports are received from researchers. In the meantime, however, comments on the structure of the document are welcome as are comments on the points listed under "Future Activities". The "Future Activities" section was pulled from the draft Cessation Strategy and has been updated based on discussions during the previous Meeting and comments that had been received since. Suzy Perry reminded Members that she has formed a small working group which was meeting via teleconference the following week to discuss four of the points in this section.

It was suggested that the Legacy Document should:

- indicate who will be responsible for the future governance of the Program;
- outline the KPIs identified at the start of the Program and list the deliverables and resultant outcomes of each research contract against these in order to evaluate the success of the Program;
- identify gaps in the research to inform future activities; and
- identify who will be responsible for future activities and whether there is funding or the work will be done in kind.

It was decided that much of this could be discussed in detail at the workshop in Sydney and PHA would put this on the agenda for the workshop. The Chair requested that any comments on the draft document be emailed to Jenna Taylor over the next two weeks so that the document can be updated accordingly and circulated to the MRTMG for discussion at the next Meeting and prior to the workshop.

Item 12 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEST on Tuesday 25th June 2013 and were asked to add this time and date to their diaries.

The Chair advised Members that although the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program will come to a formal conclusion on 30th June 2013, many of the research contracts will run beyond this date. As such, it was proposed that the MRTMG continue to meet after the meeting on 25th June to discuss topical issues. The Members agreed with this approach. It was decided that PHA would select dates in September and December in line with Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group meetings and advise Members by email.

Item 13 – Close of Meeting

Before closing the meeting, the Chair advised that Colin Grant had requested that he pass on Colin's thanks and appreciation to the Members of the MRTMG for their participation in the MRTMG to date.

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Thirteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Reports

Reports of Myrtle Rust in Queensland have been steady over the past few weeks..

To date, 4550 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

There has been no change to the geographic range of Myrtle Rust in Queensland since the last meeting in April 2013. 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

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

- *Eugenia natalitia*
- *Gossia bamagensis*
- *Syzygium minutiflorum*

The known host range in Queensland now covers 160 species from 39 genera within the Myrtaceae family.

Research Activities

Impact

A monitoring program has been established for investigating changes in species susceptibility over time at a site at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens including assessments for:

- Overall impact and % impact caused by the disease
- Disease impact on new flush
- Presence/absence of disease on flowers/fruit

15 different tree species have been selected and will be assessed every month.

Site assessments for the impact on *Melaleuca quinquenervia* are ongoing with the second year of flowering now well underway.

An additional site has been established investigating the impact of Myrtle Rust on coppice production and survival (e.g. following fire or storm damage).

Host differential set
Clones have been made of resistant and susceptible seedlings from *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and *Melaleuca quinquenervia*. Species to be added include: *Eucalyptus pellita* and *Eucalyptus globulus*.

Host screening
Screening completed for Simon Southerton/CSIRO resistance marker studies on: *Eucalyptus globulus, Eucalyptus pellita, Eucalyptus dunnii* and *Eucalyptus nitens* (to be assessed next week).

Additional screening is underway for provenance and family variation for: *Eucalyptus pellita, Eucalyptus urophylla, Eucalyptus grandis* and *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI and OEH for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Thirteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Geographic Range

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.

Host Range

Jonathan Lidbetter is maintaining a national host list for Myrtle Rust, based on the state lists from NSW, Queensland and Victoria. There are approximately 270 hosts recorded in Australia and approximately 350 globally.

Surveillance Activities

Myrtle Rust has been found in *Eucalyptus* plantations but little impact has been observed. Surveillance and reporting by environmental management agencies (Forestry Corporation, OEH) continues in native forests.

Monitoring Activities

Angus Carnegie has been monitoring *Rhodamnia rubescens* in native forest on the Central Coast for the last 18 months in collaboration with Geoff Pegg from DAFF Queensland. He has been monitoring the impact on growth and survival in a disease-exclusion trial.

Management

OEH is writing a best practice protocol to help minimise national spread of Myrtle Rust and other plant diseases and has just employed someone to undertake this work for the next five months.

International Collaboration

A forest pathologist and a botanist from Scion in New Zealand visited Australia in May. They used this visit as an opportunity to meet with Angus Carnegie and Geoff Pegg and learn from them what they could about Myrtle Rust, including detection on a wide range of hosts and key systems required in an emergency response.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DEPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Thirteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Reports

There have been three new detections of Myrtle Rust since the last meeting in April 2013. These consisted of a detection in the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens; one at Rippon Lea National Trust House and Gardens; and one at a private residence in Drouin.

A new host species (*Lophomyrtus obcordata*) was reported at the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens.

The Drouin detection is the first report in the Shire of Baw Baw with trace back indicating a possible source from plants purchased from a retail nursery up to 18 months ago.

The weather conditions over Autumn were conducive to the spread of the disease.

Geographic Range

There are 76 detection sites. Most are located in Melbourne, with outliers in Shepparton, Lorne, Bairnsdale, Ballarat and now Drouin. Not all of these sites are currently active.

The disease has not yet been detected in natural bush.

Training and Communication

Approximately 110 people in total attended six information sessions held in May.

There is continuing demand from local councils and land management groups for Myrtle Rust awareness, hygiene and identification information. Further sessions are scheduled to be held in June.

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 for collation by DEPI.

Market Access and Compliance

Due to a recent detection in a retail nursery, a letter to the nursery industry has been drafted and will made available for distribution through industry networks before the end of May.

Attachment D

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Thirteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Workshop

A summary of the outcomes of DSEWPaC's "Myrtle Rust in natural ecosystems" National Workshop is now available from the DSEWPaC website.

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 Thirteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Caring for our Country Update

Lucy Sutherland advised that the ASBP was not invited to expand on the Expression of Interest that was submitted to Caring for our Country for funding for the building of an *ex situ* collection of Myrtaceae species to support species recovery.

Additional Funding Applications

Lucy is still trying to secure resources and is waiting to hear back regarding two additional applications for funding that were submitted recently; one with the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife and the other with the Dahl Trust.

Attachment F

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Thirteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 28 May, 2013

Situation Update

AFPA will participate in Suzy Perry's "Future Activities" working group.

Minutes

Meeting Fourteen of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 25 June, 2013

Attendees: Tom Aldred, DAFF (Chair); Chris Howard, DAFF; Luke Osbourne, DAFF; Karen Butler, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Gabrielle Vivian-Smith, DEPI; Hugh Bramwells, DEPI; Liz Minchinton, DEPI; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Rose Hockham, DAFF; Nin Hyne, DAFF; Melissa Hart, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Geoff Pegg, DAFF Queensland; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Angus Carnegie, NSW DPI; Russell McMurray, DEPI; Peter Grist, AFPA; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

The Chair 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 Thirteen had been circulated for comment out of session. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request that an amendment be made. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

The Chair advised that all of the action items from the previous meeting were either complete or addressed later in the agenda. As such, the status of each action item was not discussed here.

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 a progress report from one of the researchers. This has been circulated to the MRTMG for their information. It has also been circulated to the members of the Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group (MRSAG) who have been invited to provide comment on the report if they wish to.

PHA is working to finalise the remaining contract and the contract is currently with the research organisation for signing. The contract has been approved by the finance department and is currently with the legal team for approval. The researcher has already commenced work.

Workshop

Jenna Taylor has sent out invitations to the Myrtle Rust workshop in Sydney on the 24th and 25th of July. 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. Acelino Alfenas from the Federal University of Viçosa in Brazil is travelling to Australia to assist with some of the Australian Government funded research and will attend the workshop as keynote speaker. Elodie Nakamura from the Department of Veterinary, Food, and Rural Affairs in New Caledonia will also be in attendance and will provide an update on the recent detection

of Myrtle Rust in New Caledonia. Rodney advised that there is capacity to accommodate additional participants and requested that members advise Jenna as soon as possible if they know of others in their organisation that would like to attend.

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 gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. His report is attached at Attachment B.

Suzy Perry commented that she relies on Geoff Pegg to forward her updated versions of Jonathan Lidbetter's national host list. She suggested that a more official means of sharing the list would be useful.

Item 7 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Victoria

Gabrielle Vivian-Smith gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. Her report is attached at Attachment C.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

Karen Butler advised that she had nothing additional to report on behalf of DSEWPaC since the last meeting.

Item 9 – Report on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership

As there was no representative from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership in attendance, the Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities were not reported.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Gavin Matthew advised that he had nothing additional to report on behalf of the Forestry industry since the last meeting.

Item 11 – Legacy Document

The Chair reminded the Members that it was agreed at the previous meeting that they would email any comments that they have on the draft Legacy Document to Jenna Taylor. Jenna has since updated the document taking into account these comments as well as discussions from the teleconference that Suzy Perry had held to consider four of the points in the "Future Activities" section.

The Chair advised that, being relatively new to the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program, he felt that the document would benefit from inclusion of an extract from earlier material setting out the core themes to be addressed by the Program.

The Chair also acknowledged the fact that the majority of the contracts were yet to deliver and, as such, suggested that the MRTMG pause work on the document until after the conclusion of the contracts at which time more information would be available regarding the outcomes of the research. The MRTMG agreed with this proposed approach.

In the meantime, however, the Chair asked if there were any broad comments that members would like to make.

Hugh Bramwells agreed with the Chair with regards to including an extract from earlier material setting out the core themes to be addressed by the Program as this would allow the Legacy Document to be a standalone document. Hugh also made some suggestions regarding the formatting of the section on evaluation.

Karen Butler advised that she had some minor comments to make and would send them to Jenna in track changes.

Suzy Perry raised the issue that there has been no input from those jurisdictions that are not yet affected by Myrtle Rust. She questioned how the document would sit once these directions get Myrtle Rust. It was discussed that jurisdictions that are not yet affected by Myrtle Rust have been invited to attend the workshop in July and that they could be engaged at the workshop.

There was also some concern regarding the term "Legacy Document" as there was the potential for the document to become a prospectus for future direction but it was agreed that this issue would be revisited once work on the document recommences.

Item 12 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that, although the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program will come to a formal conclusion on 30th June 2013, many of the research contracts will run beyond this date. As such, it was agreed at the last meeting that the MRTMG would continue to meet after 30th June to discuss topical issues.

The Chair advised Members that the Asian Honey Bee Transition to Management Group had agreed to meet next on Thursday 26th September and proposed that the MRTMG meet on this date also. The MRTMG agreed. As such, the next meeting of the MRTMG is now scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEST on Thursday 26th September 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.

Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in Queensland – report from DAFF Queensland for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Fourteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 25 June, 2013

Reports

Reports of Myrtle Rust in Queensland have been steady over the past few weeks.

To date, 4571 reports or enquires regarding Myrtle Rust have been received by DAFF Queensland's Myrtle Rust On-line Reporting System.

Geographic Range

There has been no change to the geographic range of Myrtle Rust in Queensland since the last meeting in May 2013. 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

No new species have been identified as hosts of Myrtle Rust in Queensland since the last meeting in May 2013.

The known host range in Queensland now covers 160 species from 39 genera within the Myrtaceae family.

Research Activities

Disease monitoring and host screening activities continue.

Plant Biosecurity CRC Project

DAFF Queensland's CRC project "Development of a nationally standardised disease rating system to help manage Myrtle Rust in Australia" has now been approved by the Plant Biosecurity CRC Board. The aim of this project is to develop and deliver a nationally standardised Myrtle Rust rating system for a range of myrtaceous species growing under different environmental conditions which will enable affected stakeholders to better manage myrtle rust and its consequences in Australia. This project will determine whether a standardised disease rating system can be applied across a range of genera and species of Myrtaceae, for both field and glasshouse based systems in Australia.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Fourteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 25 June, 2013

Host Range

As has been advised previously, Jonathan Lidbetter is collating and maintaining an unofficial national host list for Myrtle Rust. He has been given approval to continue with this work but is reliant on collaboration with Queensland and Victoria.

Workshop

A number of researchers from NSW DPI are presenting at the Myrtle Rust workshop in Sydney on the 24th and 25th of July. Additional representatives from NSW DPI will be in attendance at the workshop.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DEPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Fourteen held by teleconference on Tuesday 25 June, 2013

Host Range

There have been no new hosts identified since the last meeting in May 2013.

Geographic Range

There has been no extension of geographic range since the last meeting in May 2013.

The disease has not yet been detected in natural bush.

Surveying

DEPI is resurveying a number of properties on which Myrtle Rust has been detected previously. 75% of these properties have come up negative for Myrtle Rust when resurveyed.

Workshop

Liz Minchinton will represent DEPI at the Myrtle Rust workshop in Sydney on the 24th and 25th of July.

Minutes

Meeting Fifteen of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Wednesday 9 October, 2013 – 3.00pm – 3.30pm

Attendees: Tom Aldred, Department of Agriculture (DA) (Chair); Chris Howard, DA; Benjamin Finn DA; Tegan Ludzioweit, DA; Karen Butler, Department of Environment (DE); Alex Blanden, DE; Sophie Peterson, PHA (Secretariat); Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Geoff Pegg, DAFF Queensland; Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Liz Minchinton, DEPI; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Andrew Wilson, DA; Luke Osbourne, DA; Nin Hyne, DA; Greg Fraser, PHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Melissa Hart, DA; David Forsyth, DE; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Angus Carnegie, NSW DPI; Gabrielle Vivian-Smith, DEPI; Hugh Bramwells, DEPI; Russell McMurray, DEPI; Peter Grist, AFPA; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG).

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

The draft minutes from Meeting Fourteen were circulated out of session and no comments were received. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request an amendment. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

The only action item that remained open was that of comments on the Legacy document. Members were again provided the opportunity to forward any comments they had so far. It was noted that this document will include outcomes of the research projects, many of which are completed or now due.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Sophie Peterson updated the status of the research projects that were provided an extension but are now due. There are still two projects yet to reach their Final Report dates. The final research contract has now been signed though the research had commenced prior to this. One project has requested a further extension and further details regarding this request have been sought.

As there are several Final Reports due close together, PHA will await receipt of them all prior to circulating to the MRT2MG and the Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group MRSAG.

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 gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. His report is attached at Attachment B.

Item 7 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Victoria

Liz Minchinton gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. Her report is attached at Attachment C.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

Karen Butler advised that she had nothing additional to report on behalf of DE since the last meeting.

Item 9 – Report on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership

Lucy Sutherland from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership provided a written report presented by PHA. This is attached at Attachment D.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Gavin Matthew advised that he had nothing additional to report on behalf of the Forestry industry since the last meeting.

Gavin asked if there was a report that came out of the Workshop held in Sydney. Sophie Peterson undertook to provide some dot points out of the workshop (included below) as well as including a summary in the Legacy document.

- Workshop provided a forum for the exposure of preliminary results for all of the T2M funded research projects
- The molecular taxonomy of the organism is proving / proved more challenging than expected
- Australia only has one "strain" of the rust pathogen but, unfortunately, it is one of the more aggressive strains
- Resistance is being detected within species and the implications of this are still to be determined but for species with low population diversity there is a risk the species will be lost
- Effective chemicals for use in nurseries, gardens and urban environments have been determined and data provided to chemical companies so they can register the new use uses
- Guidelines need to be developed for Transition to Management so all involved/potentially involved know what is expected
- Project development should be a highly consultative across a wider stakeholder base (including environment, tourism etc)
- Listing of Myrtle Rust caused by *Puccinia psidii sensu lato* as a Key Threatening Process under the EPBC Act (1999) should be investigated
    - Whilst the environmental agencies supported this approach, a number asked some fundamental questions: what could be done to minimise environmental impact of this organism? And what would listing achieve?

There was some discussion at the teleconference regarding listing of Myrtle Rust caused by *Puccinia psidii sensu lato* Key Threatening Process under the EPBC Act (1999). Karen Butler undertook to follow up with Joanne Nathan (who attended the Workshop) if any applications for listing of the disease as a Key Threatening Process had been received and other details about the application process (i.e., who can submit a proposal?)

Item 11 – Next Meeting

The date for the next meeting was not set but was proposed for late January.

Item 12 – 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

Queensland Update – Meeting Fifteen of the Myrtle Rust Transition Management Group Fifteen held by teleconference on Wednesday 9 October, 2013

Disease Reports

Reports of myrtle rust in Queensland have been increasing over the past few weeks.
To date, 4723 reports or enquires regarding myrtle rust have been received by the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Myrtle Rust On-line Reporting System.

Geographic Range

The current geographic range of *Puccinia psidii* extends from the Queensland/New South Wales border in the south, to Cooktown in far north Queensland.
Recently, there was a report of myrtle rust on Geraldton wax at Chinchilla, which is still being investigated. If confirmed, this will be the first record of myrtle rust being established in the environment west of the Great Dividing Range in Queensland.

Host Range

Five new species have been identified as hosts of myrtle rust since the last MRTMG meeting.

The new species are:
Gossia lewisensis
Homoranthus virgatus
Hypocalymma angustifolium
Leptospermum trinervium
Syzygium banksii

The known host range in Queensland includes over 165 species from 38 genera within the Myrtaceae family

Research Activities

Disease monitoring and host screening activities continue.

The PBCRC project 'Managing myrtle rust and its impacts' has commenced.

Field assessments investigating disease rating systems, disease epidemiology and impact have continued in Qld and NSW. Rust levels are higher in October than previous years despite minimal rainfall since June.

Clones of hosts of different rating susceptibilities (1-5 based on Brazilian rating system) are being developed and will be used to:

- Test difference in isolate aggressiveness
- Test effect of leaf age on disease development
- Test effect of spore concentration on symptom development and severity

Screening of commercial eucalypts

- Spotted gum (*C. variegata*) and *E. globulus* are being examined at a family level for resistance genes in collaboration with the University of Tasmania.

- Collaborative process in place with Acelino Alfenas in Brazil to look at differences in susceptibility of eucalypts to the strain of rust present in Australia and those in Brazil. A student will be coming to Australia for 12 months centred out of the Sunshine Coast University and DAFF Queensland.

Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Fifteen held by teleconference on Wednesday 9 October, 2013

- No new reports of Myrtle Rust were received in July/August and only 3 were received in September
- It is unknown if this is due to season (winter) or the length of time the pathogen has been in NSW and the general awareness on its management is relatively good
- No reports of Myrtle Rust have been received from the west of the Great Dividing Range in NSW
- Dr Angus Carnegie is involved in a CRC for Plant Biosecurity funded research work with DAFF Queensland
- The MRT2M funded project 'Genome sequencing of myrtle rust, *Puccinia psidii sensu lato*' conducted by NSW DPI researchers (led by Dr. Mui-Keng Tan) has been completed and the report will be of interest to all.

Attachment C

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries Victoria for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Fifteen held by teleconference on Wednesday 9 October, 2013

Situation Report

- There have been two new detections since the June 2013 report, at adjoining private residences in Canterbury, inner eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The infections, all on *Lophomyrtus* (probably "Black Stallion") may have been present since last Autumn as old lesions appear to be re-sporulating (Fig. 1.).
- The total number of myrtle rust detected sites stands at 78, mainly across Melbourne, with outliers in Shepparton and Ballarat (Fig. 2.).
- The disease has not yet been detected in natural bushland.
- The weather conditions over winter were not conducive to the spread of myrtle rust but this has changed with the warmer, wet weather in spring. Disease development trends have been similar in 2013 to those of 2012 (Figs. 3. and 4.).

Training and Communication

Approximately 425 people attended seven information sessions held from late May to early September at Alexander, Nillumbik, Sunraysia, Yates, Leongatha, Westgate Park and Treenet National Street Tree Symposium.

A presentation by Professor Alfenas from the Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil, a world authority on myrtle rust, was given at DEPI Knoxfield. The seminar was attended by over 60 people including scientists, government agents, the nursery and forestry plantation industries, councils and friends groups. Professor Alfenas was also taken on a tour to the Otway Ranges. A report on the professor's visit was submitted to 'Around the State', DEPI's internal e-newsletter.

Information and images were provided for a national myrtle rust update in the 'Horticultural Media Australia News' magazine.

There is still a demand from local councils and land management groups for myrtle rust awareness, hygiene and identification information.

The DPI website updates included dates of upcoming information sessions and has recorded 423 visits to the myrtle rust landing page during May and 335 in August.

Another myrtle rust update was prepared and distributed to the Coordination Committee and other relevant and interested parties in September 2013.

Surveillance and Tracing

There has been good participation from stakeholder groups in the surveillance program and participation is increasing. Over 150 sentinel sites have now been established and data from these sites is provided by land managers e.g. Parks Victoria, for collation by DPI (Fig 5). These sites provide an early warning in areas of high risk such as significant bushland sites. Recently members of the Varroa mite project of the DEPI "Growing Fruit and Fibre Initiative" will add myrtle rust surveys to their list of surveyed diseases which will further increase the sentinel site network.

Market Access and Compliance

On 30 June 2012, myrtle rust was declared an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order was rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host material is able to enter Victoria from disease affected states without certification. It remains illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle rust.

Management

- Some of the sites re-surveyed during autumn and winter and declared negative for myrtle rust may be re-surveyed in Spring to determine if the disease symptoms have re-appeared.
- One nursery is using a boom to blow air into seedling trays to reduce leaf wetness. It has achieved both an impressive reduction in general fungal diseases and an increase in whole seedling growth (Peter D Clarke pers. comm.).

Fig. 1. *Lophomyrtus* plants showing symptoms of myrtle rust (see arrows) with sporulation on old lesions – Canterbury residential site September 2013.

Fig. 2a. Myrtle rust infected premises, state wide (winter 2013).

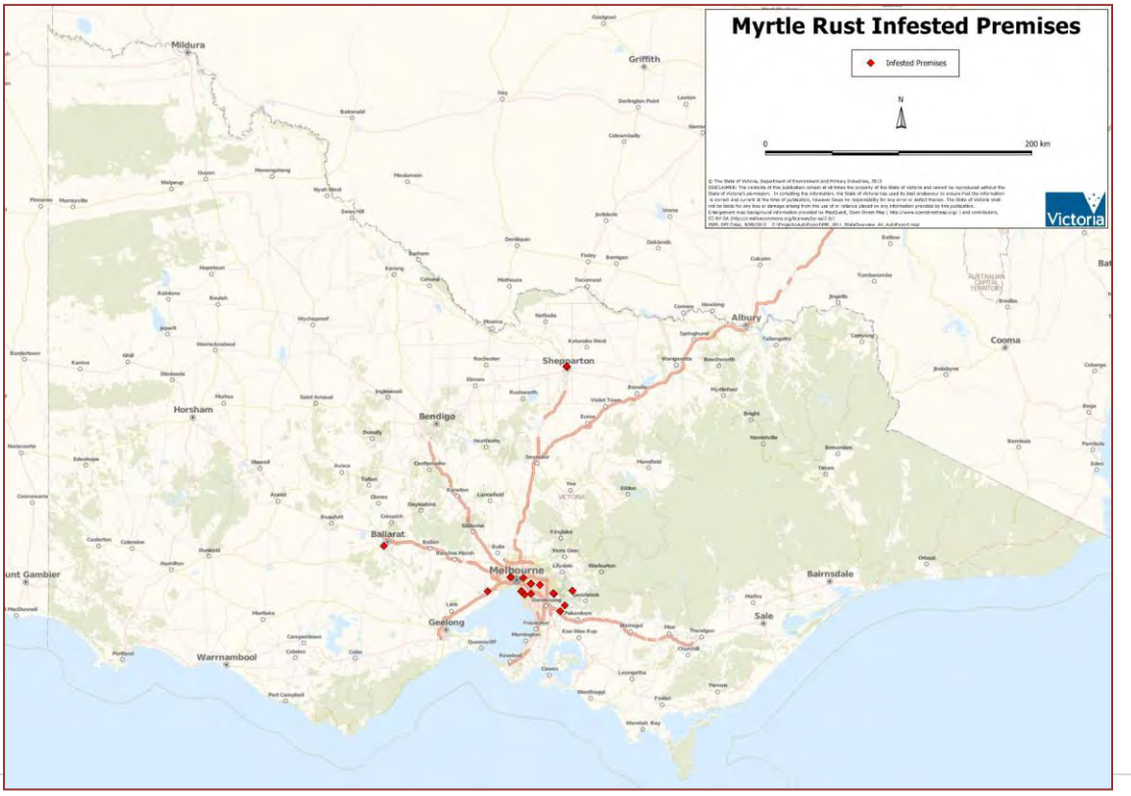


Fig. 2b. Myrtle rust infected premises (winter 2013) Melbourne CBD.

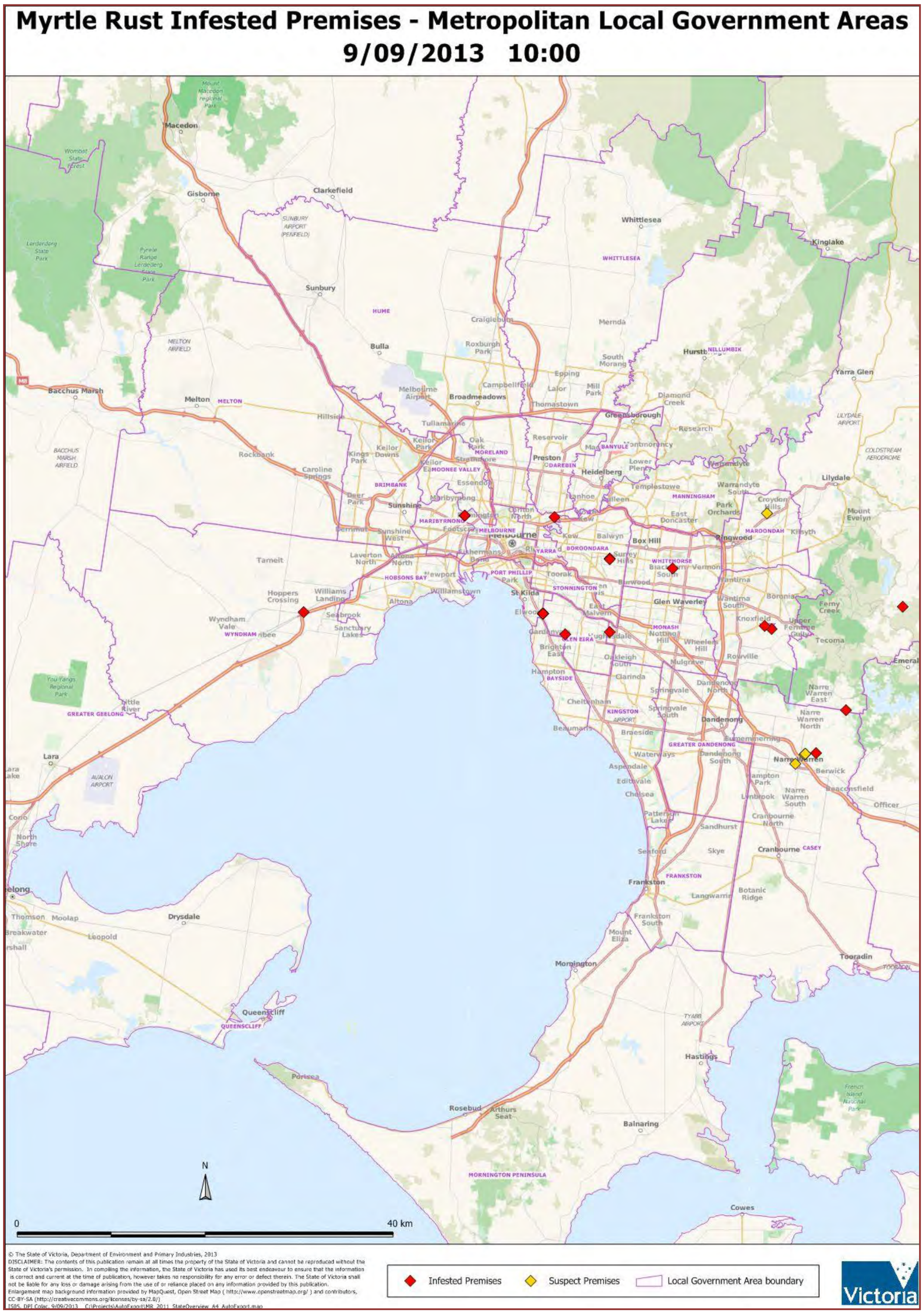


Fig. 3. Cumulative monthly myrtle rust detections for 2012.

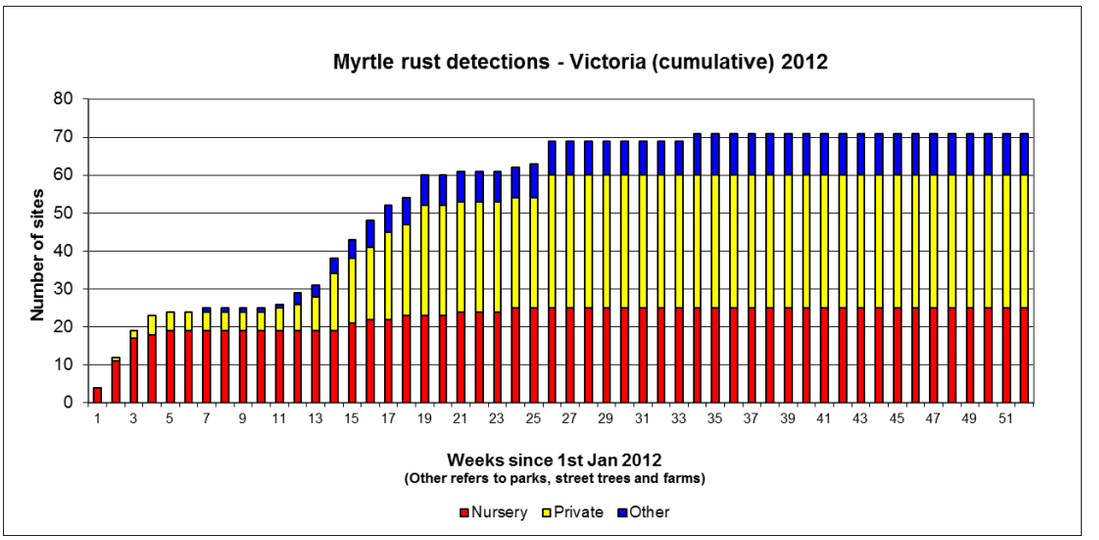
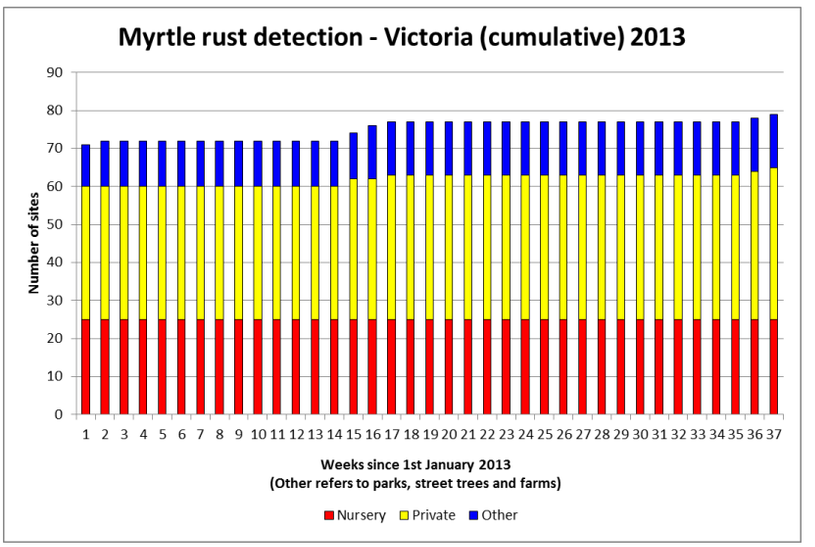


Fig. 4. Cumulative monthly myrtle rust detections for 2013.



Attachment D

Report from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Fifteen held by teleconference on Wednesday 9 October, 2013

Report to the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group 09/10/2013

1. The Partnership has received a grant from the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife to collect and bank seeds of 8 threatened species susceptible to myrtle rust. The work will focus in NSW and Qld.
2. The Partnership was invited to submit a large grant proposal to a Trust for conservation seed banking of Eucalypt species. The Secretariat will be advised at the end of the week if the grant application was successful.
3. The ASBP has recently investigated the status of eucalypt taxa in Australia's conservation seed bank collections. A summary of the findings is presented below:

Within Australia's conservation seed banks there are estimated to be 5055 collections of eucalypt taxa in the broad sense including *Angophora, Eucalytpus, Corymbia, Stockwellia* and *Allosyncarpia*. Of the total number of existing eucalypt collections, around 23% (n=1152) have been collected and banked to the international standards established as part of the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership.
Of the 1145 recognised eucalypt taxa according to the Australian Plant Census, there are collections of 666 (58.2%) of these taxa in Australian conservation seed banks that meet the international standards for collecting and storage (Table 1).
Of the seventy six (76) eucalypt taxa listed as threatened in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC 1999), 81.6% are contained in Australian conservation seed bank collections.
Few of the collections are in sufficient quantities for species recovery actions or for conservation of the genetic diversity of the species, especially when the geographic (and by implication, genetic) range of widespread species is considered. More specifically, there are several critical gaps in Australia's eucalypt conservation ex situ seed collections:

- There are 487 eucalypt taxa that have no collections within Australia's conservation seed banks.
- Fourteen (14) of the EPBC listed eucalypts are not represented in Australia's conservation seed bank collection.
- Few of Australia's current conservation collections capture the genetic diversity of eucalypt taxa.

Table 1: Eucalypt conservation seed collections in Australia (Years 2000-2013)

Eucalypts (species numbers include phrase names and hybrid species)	**Number of taxa in Australia according to the Australian Plant Census**	**Number and % of eucalypt taxa in seed banks[1]**
Angophora species	12	10 (83.3%)
Angophora subspecies[2]	2	2 (100%)
Corymbia species	98	45 (43.9%)
Corymbia subspecies2	13	1 (13%)
Eucalyptus species	825	532 (64.5%)
Eucalyptus subspecies2	156	72 (46.1%)
Eucalyptus varieties2	37	4 (10.8%)
Stockwellia species	1	0
Allosyncarpia species	1	0

[1] Using the Australian Plant Census (APC), 62 taxa (equivalent to 62 collections) were excluded from this table because the taxonomy of these collections could not be verified. The majority of these are likely to be excluded or doubtful names that have not yet been entered into the Australian Plant Name Index (APNI) database.
[2] These figures represent non-autonym taxa and are not included in the species numbers given.

Minutes