

# Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc



ABN 38 686 119 087

PO Box 29 Wentworth Falls NSW 2782

Phone: 0490 419 779

E-Mail: [bmcs@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:bmcs@bluemountains.org.au) Web Site: [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

## Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

Date: 15 November 2024

Hon Tanya Plibersek MP  
Minister for Water and Environment Parliament of Australia  
Email: [Minister.Plibersek@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Plibersek@dcceew.gov.au)

### National Threat Abatement Plan Escaped Garden Plants

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society (the Society) to support your proposed National Threat Abatement Plan on Escaped Garden Plants. **We request urgent action to regulate the nursery industry.**

The Society is a community volunteer organisation consisting of approximately 850 members. The Society's aim is to help conserve the natural environment of the Blue Mountains and to increase awareness of the natural environment in general.

The Society is strongly focused on preventing the spread of escaped garden plants and environmental weeds in the Blue Mountains. Weeds choke our natural ecosystems and streams, displace indigenous plants and destroy the habitat of indigenous animals. Weeds pose a serious threat to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWhA). At considerable expense, Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service staff, as well as many hundreds of bushcare volunteers, work hard to control the spread of weeds in the Blue Mountains. Our members and many local residents are opposed to dense thickets of Ivy, Japanese Honeysuckle, English Holly, Privet or Tutsan, for example, overrunning our local plant communities, swamps, scenic areas and bush walks. Visitors come here to view pristine bushland and our beautiful streams and waterfalls, and not expanses of Blackberry and Lantana.

Loss and degradation of native plant and animal habitat by invasion of escaped garden plants was listed as a key threatening process in January 2010 under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. However, an appropriate Threat Abatement Plan has never been developed.

The current system of plant sale self-regulation is not working. The exchange and sale of plants known to be weeds, and those with the potential to become environmental weeds, must be regulated to protect the biodiversity of the GBMWhA. Legislation and accompanying regulations that stop the exchange and sale of environmental weeds must be developed.

The Society was pleased to note that in the Environment Ministers Meeting Communique of 21 June 2024, all state environment ministers and yourself, as Australian Government Minister for Environment and Water, agreed to progress a national threat abatement plan to combat the impact on native species of a priority invasive, namely escaped garden plants. The Society notes that at its meeting of 27 August 2024 Blue Mountains City Council formally resolved to support the commitment of state and federal governments to prepare a national threat abatement plan for escaped garden plants.

The Society requests that the terms of reference for the draft plan and consultation should include research and comprehensive regulation concerning translocation, propagation, importation, and exchange and sale of potential and known environmental weeds and garden escapees and propagules (Australian and overseas species) by wholesale and retail plant distributors and outlets, nurseries, landscapers and allied industries, plant collectors, aquatic species dealers, market operators, online distributors and any other dealers in plant or associated matter.

**The Society urges you to develop and implement the national threat abatement plan as a matter of urgency. The plan must that include provisions that effectively regulate all avenues available for the sale or exchange of invasive garden plants.**

**We also request that we be advised of the anticipated timeframe for the establishment of the threat abatement plan and consultation process.**

The Society looks forward to presenting a submission on the proposed threat abatement plan during the consultation process. Thank you for considering the Society's proposals and position on this issue. I may be contacted on my email address [president@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:president@bluemountains.org.au)

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Annette Cam  
President  
Blue Mountains Conservation Society  
[president@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:president@bluemountains.org.au)