



Government
of South Australia

Declared Plant Policy

This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.

Eurasian water milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

Eurasian water milfoil is a submerged, summer-growing perennial herb with finely divided leaves. It closely resembles some of the many native water-milfoil species. Native to Europe and Asia, it is a serious weed in Europe and North America, where it builds up dense populations in lakes and reservoirs and spreads rapidly by fragments. It is not known to be present in Australia, and is unlikely to be traded as an aquarium plant, but could be introduced accidentally.

Management Plan for Eurasian Water Milfoil

Outcomes

- Protect streams and wetlands from degradation by major weeds.

Objectives

- Prevent incursion and establishment of Eurasian water milfoil in South Australia.

Best Practice Implementation

- Any infestation of Eurasian water milfoil discovered to be treated as an incursion and destroyed.
- To prevent introduction or spread, any sale and movement to be prohibited.
- Regional landscape boards and Green Adelaide to inspect waterways and wetlands for the presence of aquatic weeds

Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

Region	Actions								
Alinytjara Wilurara	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Eyre Peninsula	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Green Adelaide	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Hills and Fleurieu	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Kangaroo Island	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Limestone Coast	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Murraylands and Riverland	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
Northern and Yorke	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								
South Australian Arid Lands	Prevent entry or sale; destroy if detected								

Declaration

To implement this policy, Eurasian water milfoil is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia. Its entry to South Australia, movement or transport on a public road by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant are prohibited. Notification of infestations is necessary to ensure these are destroyed. Land owners are required to destroy any Eurasian water milfoil plants growing on their properties.

Eurasian water milfoil is declared in category 1 under the Act, for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its entry, sale or road transport can only be issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water or their delegate pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying Eurasian water milfoil on public roads, or bring them into the State. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying Eurasian water milfoil. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive, DEW.

The following sections of the Act apply to Eurasian water milfoil throughout each of the regions noted below:

Sections of Act	Region	AW	EP	GA	HF	KI	LC	MR	NY	SAAL
186(1) Prohibiting entry to area		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
190 Requiring notification of presence		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
192(1) Land owners to destroy the plant on their properties		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
192(2) Land owners to control the plant on their properties										
194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves										

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025 or in the event of Eurasian water milfoil being found established in SA.

Weed Risk

Invasiveness

Spreads vegetatively from stem fragments that are moved by water flow, boating and fishing activities, and also reproduces by seed. Long distance dispersal may be due to floods or dumping of unwanted vegetative material.

Impacts

It may replace native plants, and creates an unfavourable habitat for aquatic fauna by adding a sudden excess of nutrients of the water when it decays. The weed threatens the integrity of native aquatic vegetation and the movement of water in streams. Water milfoil displaces native aquatic species by forming dense stands, which reduces light and alters the temperature profile of a water body. Its dense mats can also interfere with recreational activities, boat traffic and irrigation. It may even be a safety hazard when swimmers become entangled in the thick submersed growth.

Potential distribution

Eurasian water milfoil invades freshwater systems including rivers, permanent freshwater streams, ponds and dams. It tolerates a wide range of water and temperature conditions, growing in deep fresh or stagnant to slightly brackish, stationary or flowing bodies of water.

Feasibility of Containment

Control costs

Submerged aquatic weeds are difficult to eradicate from large water bodies where adding herbicide to the water is unacceptable and expensive. Underwater vegetation may be harvested and used as compost, but this control action impacts equally on native and introduced species.

Persistence

Regrowth would occur after control by cutting or dredging. As Eurasian water milfoil has rhizomes in the substrate and may produce seeds, it would have some ability to survive unfavourable seasons in South Australia, and so persist even if not re-introduced from cultivation.

Current distribution

Eurasian water milfoil is not known to be present anywhere in Australia.

State Level Risk Assessment

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

Land use	Weed Risk	Feasibility of control	Response at State Level
Aquatic	medium 42	very high 0	contain spread alert

Considerations

The Australian Weeds Committee (which has since been replaced by the Environment and Invasives Committee) agreed at meeting no. 6, April 2003, to revise their Tier 1 and Tier 2 aquatic weed lists, adding *Myriophyllum spicatum* to Tier 1. Uniform national proclamation is necessary to ensure that these species never become established in Australia. South Australia consequently agreed to proclaim these species under the same legislative provisions as the original Tier 1 species, with prohibition on sale and enforced destruction if found.

Eurasian water milfoil is easily mistaken for the many native species of *Myriophyllum* such as *Myriophyllum simulans*. Due to its medium weed risk, absence from the country and very high feasibility of control, Eurasian water milfoil is regarded as a State Alert Weed and a high priority surveillance target to increase the likelihood of early detection.

Synonymy

Myriophyllum spicatum L., Sp. Pl. 2: 992 (1753).

Other common names include spike water milfoil.

Hon David Speirs MP
Minister for Environment and Water

Date: 28 March 2021