

# YELLOW CRAZY ANT BIOLOGICAL CONTROL ON CHRISTMAS ISLAND

Proposal EPBC 2013/6836

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PROPOSAL

### Background

The Director of National Parks has sought approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to control invasive yellow crazy ants on Christmas Island via the import and release of a biological control agent, a micro-wasp which targets an introduced species of scale insect utilised by crazy ants as a food source.

The proposal was determined to require assessment by Preliminary Documentation. In accordance with section 95A(3) of the EPBC Act, public comment was sought on the proposal from 6 January to 6 March 2015. The Preliminary Documentation and the original referral were published on the internet and made available at public libraries in Perth and on Christmas Island and at the office of Christmas Island National Park for the duration of the public comment period.

### Public Comments Received

Two comments were received during the public comment period—a submission from a private individual involved in environmental research and an email on behalf of the Christmas Island Tourism Association (CITA).

### Summary of Public Comments

Both comments expressed strong support for the proposal and urged that it be approved.

The environmental researcher indicated familiarity with the proposal and concluded, based on review of the documentation, that the science is very sound and that the proposal presents a safe, effective solution. The researcher considered that negative impacts on any matters of national environmental importance would be negligible and that there was no foreseeable risk to flora, fauna, communities, cultural sites or people if the proposal was not effective.

The email on behalf of CITA reiterated the association's support for the proposal, which support had been provided previously during on-island consultations about the proposal with researchers involved in its development. CITA noted the existence of safeguards to significantly minimise the risk of unintended negative side-effects from the proposal and stated its belief that there is broad community support for the proposal.

### Changes to Proposal in Response to Public Comments

As neither of the public comments identified any likely significant environmental impact arising from the proposal and did not seek any amendments, no changes have been made by the Director to either the Preliminary Documentation or the original referral in response to the public comments.