

26 May 2003

Harbour Trust Tackles Tree Killer

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust will bring scientists, land managers, industry and the community together to discuss *Phytophthora cinnamomi* – a soil borne organism contributing to the death of trees around the harbour foreshores – in a seminar on 1 June 2003.

Executive Director of the Harbour Trust, Mr Geoff Bailey, said *Phytophthora* appears to be contributing to the dieback of eucalypts around the Harbour and was directly affecting Harbour Trust land at Middle Head-Georges Heights.

The Harbour Trust has taken the initiative on this issue and the seminar brings together experts in the field to help us better understand the problem and look for ways to slow the spread of *Phytophthora* and treat affected areas.

“It is important that land managers and the community work together on this issue and develop a coordinated response for the Sydney region. At risk are the green headlands that give Sydney Harbour its bushland character and indeed the trees in people’s gardens,” Mr Bailey said.

Phytophthora spreads naturally in soil or in flowing water. People can also spread *Phytophthora* by moving infected soil or root materials to another area. Early symptoms of affected trees include wilting, yellowing and dry leaves.

The Harbour Trust is putting in place measures to manage and prevent the spread of *Phytophthora*. These include an education campaign; measures to control stormwater flow; best practice procedures for bush regeneration activities; and guidelines for the design and construction of walking tracks including possible boot cleaning stations.

Speakers at the seminar include Dr Brett Summerell, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney; Dr Keith McDougall, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; Dr Ian Colquhoun, ALCOA World Alumina Australia; Dr David Cahill, Deakin University; and Dr Giles Hardy, Murdoch University.

Discussion at the seminar will contribute to *Phytophthora* Management Guidelines for NSW which are currently being prepared by Dr Brett Summerell for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney.

The seminar is being held in conjunction with Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, Australian Network for Plant Conservation and the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators and is supported by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

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