Western Australia and Northern Territory Ministers have agreed in principle to collaborate in the battle against the cane toad.

The two Ministers have also signed a joint letter to Federal Minister Senator Ian Campbell calling on the Commonwealth to back the battle with new funding.

Western Australia Minister for Agriculture and Forestry Mr Kim Chance said: “It is essential that we direct resources right now to stopping the western spread of the cane toad. The entry of this pest into Western Australia must be prevented if at all possible.

“The Northern Territory Government has successfully lobbied to set up a National Taskforce on Cane Toads, and they are in the thick of the campaign right now.

“It makes sense for Western Australia to work collaboratively with the Northern Territory Government.

“The collaboration between our two Governments is likely to involve WA providing funding for projects aimed at stopping the spread of cane toads within the NT.”

The Northern Territory’s Minister for Parks and Wildlife, Dr Chris Burns, said he was very enthusiastic about the agreement with Western Australia.

“The Western Australian Government is showing the foresight that was sadly lacking in previous Territory governments which did nothing to prevent the spread of the cane toad from Queensland to the NT.”

“The Martin Government has invested more than $1.1 million of new money into the battle against the cane toad.

“We are investing funds into:

- long-term biological research aimed at wiping out the toads;
- moving threatened species into protected areas under the Island Ark program;
- cane toad trapping and local elimination in collaboration with Frogwatch.”

In March, Dr Burns wrote to the Federal Minister asking him to match NT funding of $422,000 provided to Frogwatch’s Toad Busters campaign.
“Recently I received a disappointing response from the Commonwealth to the effect that the Commonwealth’s contribution could be taken from other Commonwealth environmental programs,” Dr Burns said.

“I’m not asking to have other environmental programs knocked off. What we need is new Commonwealth dollars directed at this enormous environment threat.

“At today’s Ministerial Council, Senator Campbell spoke to me and indicated that the Commonwealth may change its stance and provide new money.

“The Territory would welcome such a funding approach from the Commonwealth.”

Dr Burns and Mr Chance have now signed a joint letter to the Federal Minister requesting additional funding for the battle against the cane toad.

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