

Response ID ANON-4EM2-EKW6-N

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**

Submitted on **2020-02-10 07:38:58**

Your details

1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

2 Can we publish your response?

Yes, you may publish my response anonymously

3 What is your email address? (optional)

Email:

[REDACTED]

4 What is your postcode? (optional)

Postcode:

[REDACTED]

5 Do your views officially represent those of an organisation?

No, these are my personal views

If yes, please specify the name of your organisation.:

6 Which of the following best describes the group or person you represent?

Private citizen

If other, please specify.:

7 Which of the following best describes the sector you represent?

Not applicable (private citizen)

If other, please specify.:

8 Are there specific parts of your submission that you want to keep confidential?

If yes, please outline which specific parts of your submission must be kept confidential and explain why. :

A State native vegetation policy

9 Referring to the proposed policy objective statements below, how well do you support each one in guiding our development of a policy?

Objective 1 matrix - Objective 1:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

Consistency and transparency is essential, as is balance with economic, social and cultural outcomes. These other facets of sustainability cannot be excluded from vegetation policy. If they are, native vegetation policy will be inconsistent with other aspects of government policy and make management and delivery very difficult. It is essential that Aboriginal groups with land tenure are able to utilise their land for more than vegetation management purposes on behalf of other citizens. If vegetation policy excludes economic objectives, this is a very likely outcome, particularly in the Kimberley.

Objective 2 matrix - Objective 2:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

This must be led and funded by government. Government cannot rely on developers/proponents to fund, obtain and provide the data that informs this decision-making (this is effectively what occurs now). If strategic, landscape-scale vegetation conservation is to occur, landscape-scale vegetation assessment needs to be undertaken by government now. Private land owners and managers need more certainty around what they can and cannot do with their land. This especially applies to Aboriginal groups with tenure (whether freehold or other).

Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:

Supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

A one-size-fits-all approach does not work on a state the size of WA. Policies, procedures and guidelines established to meet high pressure, low remnant vegetation Coastal Plain habitats are very difficult (and expensive) to apply in the expanse of Kimberley and Pilbara landscapes. Regionalised prioritisation is essential, as are specified regional policies, procedures and guidelines for vegetation assessment (for example: scale of monitoring - 10m transects versus 100m or 1km transects? - to meet IBSA package requirements for decision-making purposes. If the State continues (by stealth) to rely on proponents to acquire the vegetation datasets it needs to make decisions for the State, then it should review the assessment specifications on a regional basis based on SCALE.

10 What opportunities are presented by the development of a State Native Vegetation Policy focused on how government manages vegetation?

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

A one-size-fits-all approach does not work on a state the size of WA. Policies, procedures and guidelines established to meet high pressure, low remnant vegetation Coastal Plain habitats are very difficult (and expensive) to apply in the expanse of Kimberley and Pilbara landscapes. Regionalised prioritisation is essential, as are specified regional policies, procedures and guidelines for vegetation assessment (for example: scale of monitoring - 10m transects versus 100m or 1km transects? - to meet IBSA package requirements for decision-making purposes. If the State continues (by stealth) to rely on proponents to acquire the vegetation datasets it needs to make decisions for the State, then it should review the assessment specifications on a regional basis based on SCALE.

If the State has concerns that there is insufficient habitat retained within the conservation estate, then it should purchase that habitat from those who hold tenure over such areas, and not penalise the landholder by making them a quasi conservation ranger. This also applies for some Aboriginal groups (not all) who seek to do more with their land than be rangers.

Better information

11 How do you use native vegetation data within your sector? (Choose as many options as you require)

To plan for conservation, To plan for restoration, To scope offset opportunities, To inform applications to clear or impact vegetation, For baseline information for monitoring

If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

12 Which of the following elements of better information provision would be most relevant to your sector? (Choose as many options as you require)

Cost saving, Timeliness of assessments, Evidence-base for decisions

If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

13 What other opportunities are presented by improved information and improved access to information?

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

The opportunity for broader community members (other than those directly involved in the sector) to easily and clearly see how data is accumulated and used in decision-making. So many forms of remote-sensing and other data-collection are available on-line, with public accessibility important. This helps people understand how and why government makes decisions. A picture paints a thousand words.

Better regulation

14 Which of the following elements of better regulation would be most important to your sector? (Please rank your top three)

Rank better reg elements - Improved protection for native vegetation:

Rank better reg elements - Ensuring development is sustainable:

Rank better reg elements - Streamlined regulation for cost saving:

Rank better reg elements - Clearer requirements for business certainty:

2

Rank better reg elements - Improved assessment timeframes:

Rank better reg elements - Transparent, evidence-based decisions:

3

Rank better reg elements - Improved compliance and enforcement of unauthorised clearing:

Rank better reg elements - Equitable treatment of all proponents:

Rank better reg elements - Confidence in the regulatory system for all stakeholders:

Rank better reg elements - Other:

1

If you selected Other, please provide further information.:

Regionalised, scale-based requirements, guidelines and procedures for assessment and monitoring for vegetation (and fauna), including the level of detail (scale) in data requirements for IBSA packages. See previous commentary re Kimberley/Pilbara size vegetation versus Coastal Plain remnants. Current guidelines for vegetation and fauna surveys to support clearing permit or EPA development approval applications have been established based on worst-case scenario - that is, a fully developed Perth-type environment. For businesses (including farmers) and Aboriginal Corporations endeavouring to meet these requirements at scale in the Kimberley, this becomes cost-prohibitive.

15 What other opportunities are presented by better regulation?

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

Regionalised guidelines are essential if illegal clearing is to be prevented (that is, to stop the "we'll just do it" attitude).

If farmers and other land managers feel that their local or regional issues are allowed for in the regulatory framework, they will be more inclined to comply with the regulatory framework.

A bioregional approach

16 Which of the following elements are the most important to you/your sector? (Please rank your top three)

Rank bioregional elements - 1. Transparent outcomes and objectives:

2

Rank bioregional elements - 2. Leveraging local knowledge:

3

Rank bioregional elements - 3. Strategic and innovative approach to conflicting interests:

1

Rank bioregional elements - 4. Clear targets and thresholds:

Rank bioregional elements - 5. Planned approach to dealing with cumulative impacts:

Rank bioregional elements - 6. Effective monitoring and evaluation framework:

Rank bioregional elements - 7. Supporting public-private partnerships for conservation:

Please explain in the text box below.:

Regionalise. Use local knowledge. Take into account other local objectives (eg Aboriginal economic development on Aboriginal land). See previous comments.

17 What other opportunities are presented by a bioregional approach?

Please explain in the text box below.:

If offsets are established/utilised, it should be within the bioregion from where they originated. The impacts are localised, therefore the offset should be localised. This may upset regions (ie, anywhere but the Pi bara where mining offsets are not available) but perhaps urban areas should be required to offset their own impacts in other ways, and not have new developments absorb 'historical vegetation clearing debt'? This is effectively what is asked of new proponents when they are required to offset the accumulated clearing impact of the past.

So, keep the offsets local. Kimberley offsets to be spent in the Kimberley. Pi bara offsets in the Pi bara. Perth offsets in Perth.

18 What concerns are presented by a bioregional approach, for your sector?

Please explain in the text box below.:

Regionalising offsets would provide an increased scope for allowing personal interest to make its way into offset investment. (particularly in local DBCA offices - for example, if an officer has a keen interest/PhD in an individual species, they may insist on research funds into that species). This needs to be managed. It also occurs where academia is asked to comment on development proposals and individual academics with research interests 'influence' offset priorities or further research funding requirements.

Other initiatives

19 What initiatives do you think would work best to improve native vegetation outcomes in your region?

Pricing, incentives and markets (e.g. biodiversity banking, offsets, carbon farming etc), Aboriginal land management, Pastoral diversification, Nature-based or cultural tourism, Private land management, Other

Please explain in the text box below.:

Aboriginal land management DOES NOT ALWAYS EQUAL RANGERS. Speak to [REDACTED] about how they seek to manage their lands, obtained through the [REDACTED]. They do not see themselves as being janitors or default conservation estate holders for the State.

20 What else could be done to improve the management of native vegetation to arrest the decline of native vegetation extent and condition?

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

Invest in DBCA so they better manage the lands vested with them. Control the weeds (neems, parkinsonia, etc) on UCL in the Kimberley.

This is not solely about the management of private land. The State has a lot of land in its control in northern WA which agencies are poorly resourced to manage. The ALT does not have sufficient funds for basic land management. River banks are overrun by woody weeds. I live [REDACTED]. Rain trees and neems are out of control. This is State land. Private land managers are increasingly frustrated at being told how to manage native vegetation when the State agencies are unable to manage the land under their own control.