

Response ID ANON-4EM2-EKWP-F

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**
Submitted on **2020-02-09 16:23:04**

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:

Neutral

Please explain in the text box below.:

While I agree that the management of native vegetation should be consistent, transparent and strategic, I am concerned that 'striking a balance' between environmental and economic outcomes often results in economic outcomes being preferred over environmental outcomes. I believe that more emphasis should be placed on environmental outcomes, particularly given the climatic changes that are occurring in Western Australia.

Objective 2 matrix - Objective 2:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

In particular I support 'restoration' which has not been a priority, or if attempted, has not been fully successful.

Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

Areas which have been over-cleared must have a higher priority. The Swan Coastal Plain and Wheatbelt are the prime examples. All remaining vegetation in these areas should be protected.

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.:

The opportunity to provide clear direction on clearing is absolutely vital. One example: Bush Forever Sites in Burns Beach and also in Trigg Bushland are being cleared for development - despite current 'protection policy' from Bush Forever and from the Reserve Classification Status. This clearing is being approved by the local Councils who hold the land on behalf of the State of WA. This simply cannot be allowed to continue.

Better information

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

Other

If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

n/a

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

Evidence-base for decisions, Other

If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

Decisions made on native vegetation need to be fully evidence based. Timeliness and cost savings are minor to evidence.

The quality of evidence needs to be very high. Example: The MRA commissioned a 'botanical study' of an area in a Class A reserve, Bush Forever Site 308 (Trigg Bushland) that completely missed a new and previously unknown Threatened Ecological Community. The MRA commissioned report said that there was no reason the land couldn't be cleared for a road. In reviewing the data, it was the local Friends group that discovered the TEC.

There is no excuse for shoddy 'evidence based' decisions.

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

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

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:

1

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:

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:

2

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:

If you selected Other, please provide further information.:

15 What other opportunities are presented by better regulation?

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

It is often said by officials that they believe there needs to be a balance between development and conservation. But what do they mean and in what context?

This issue of 'balance' and 'compromise' is often brought up, but seldom in the context of true fairness or balance. For instance, if a developer wanted 'compromise' then one would have thought they might suggest giving as much to the bushland as they would like to take. But of course a 'compromise' from a developer involves nothing more than a slight reduction of unacceptable demands.

Until developers have to create some bushland within their real estate developments, public bushlands should not have to include any private development activities.

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:

Rank bioregional elements - 2. Leveraging local knowledge:

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

Rank bioregional elements - 4. Clear targets and thresholds:

3

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

1

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

2

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

Effective monitoring, evaluation and prescriptive controls (including meaningful fines to offenders) is critical to actually achieving a result.

17 What other opportunities are presented by a bioregional approach?

Please explain in the text box below.:

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

Low thresholds in areas that are relatively well vegetated could result in unanticipated clearing. Keeping the thresholds high is necessary for protection.

Other initiatives

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

Pastoral diversification, Nature-based or cultural tourism

Please explain in the text box below.:

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.:

For a start, the Government could actually use the powers it has to reduce land clearing. As that does not seem very likely, a more directive policy with backup controls (monitoring and meaningful consequences for noncompliance) needs to be put into place.