

## Response ID ANON-4EM2-EKSA-V

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**

Submitted on **2020-01-16 16:06:00**

### Your details

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

craig chappelle

#### 2 Can we publish your response?

Yes, you may publish my response in full

#### 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?

Environmental / NRM

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.:

For more than a century WA's native vegetation (NV) has been treated as the enemy of economic, social and cultural development. This has contributed to a broken social contract between government and ordinary people, irredeemable loss of fauna habitat, land clearing second only to Queensland's, a rate of species extinction among the highest in the world and, oh yes!, climate change. NV "management" has never been consistent, transparent, strategic or balanced, so I doubt very much that this objective will be achieved – or, more importantly, CAN be achieved, even with the best will in the world. As one who has actively criticised and opposed the over-exploitation of NV (especially forests) for 40 years I am dubious about the honesty behind this objective, other than as a sinecure. In my view, ALL NV is unique and at-risk.

##### Objective 2 matrix - Objective 2:

Strongly supported

##### Please explain in the text box below.:

The key words being "restored" and "improve". However, see answer to 1 above.

### Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:

Strongly supported

#### Please explain in the text box below.:

Obviously, given my previous comments – but not at the cost of all the other "ordinary" NV. "Ecosystem" means that everything in it relates to and is interdependent with everything else ... When are we (by which I mean our governments and their agents) going to wake up to that fact and stop kidding ourselves that playing at the edges is not a solution but mere window-dressing? When are we going to mature as a society and live WITH our environment instead of trying to conquer it?

### 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.:

To change, at a fundamental level, the way we have operated until now; to treat all NV equally.

### 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, Other

#### If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

To discuss and advocate and educate people about the essential importance of NV, encourage them to treat it with respect, and discourage wanton destruction.

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

Other

#### If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

All of the above! The most useful thing, though, would be to learn from history, and accept that our way of dealing with NV to date has been flawed, heavily biased in favour of economic imperatives, and has demonstrated little or no sensitivity to natural cycles and variables, or sustainability. We now know that beyond reasonable doubt, but have we the courage to alter our course?

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

#### Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

Improved awareness among all sectors of society of the vital importance that the retention and improvement/expansion of NV plays in the health of our environment and thus, us and our communities.

### 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:

2

Rank better reg elements - Ensuring development is sustainable:

3

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:

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

1

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.:**

"Better" is a weasel word, and begs the questions: better than what, and for whom? No single adjective is going to capture fully or even begin to elucidate what needs to occur, which is for the rules to be rewritten in favour of NV – or at least with NV being given a far higher priority than it currently has. So let's use sentences in plain English, instead of snappy slogans.

## **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:**

1

**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:**

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

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

2

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

3

**Please explain in the text box below.:**

Why can't we do all seven?! They're all important, and leaving out any (except where duplication and overlap would be counterproductive) provides more opportunities for loopholes to be exploited by vested interests.

### **17 What other opportunities are presented by a bioregional approach?**

**Please explain in the text box below.:**

I guess that some sort of framework is necessary to structure implementation of NV programs, and bioregions form an existing framework ... but whether it is the best or most appropriate in the future depends on the outcome/s of this policy discussion and what goals are determined to be most desirable and achievable.

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

**Please explain in the text box below.:**

As per above.

## **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, Private land management

**Please explain in the text box below.:**

They're (mostly) all good, so they're (mostly) all needed. Of course they won't all get a guernsey, which leads to the question: why not? If we have good ideas about what is needed to fix a problem, why is any one idea worth less than another? The answer of course is economics ... or more accurately, cost. The truly economic answer is always to do everything that's needed. Economics has the same root prefix as ecology. They are interdependent - though you wouldn't think so, the way humans operate!

The reality is that we can no longer fix everything that's wrong, even if we had unlimited funds, so we have to prioritise. The important thing is not to let the "lesser" ideas disappear, but to keep them on the table for a later time, when those funds become available and they become relatively more important.

### **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.:**

DO what you say needs to be done! Not to meet the news cycle or pander to the political cycle, but to recognise and feed into the natural cycles.

## **Upload a document**

### **21 If you would like to upload a document to support your submission, please upload it here.**

**Upload document 1 here.:**

No file was uploaded

**Please describe which question(s) document 1 relates to. :**

**Upload document 2 here::**

No file was uploaded

**Please describe which question(s) document 2 relates to. :**