

Response ID ANON-4EM2-EK41-D

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**

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Your details

1 What is your name?

Name:

Keith Bradby

2 Can we publish your response?

Yes, you may publish my response in full

3 What is your email address? (optional)

Email:

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4 What is your postcode? (optional)

Postcode:

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5 Do your views officially represent those of an organisation?

Yes, I am authorised to submit feedback on behalf of an organisation

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

Gondwana Link

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

Community / Non-government organisation

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.:

While I support the statement as it reads, I am deeply concerned at the extent of vegetation loss in southern WA up to this stage of our history, and consider the only way to 'strike a balance' is through large scale ecosystem restoration to better connect, buffer and protect what little remaining native vegetation we have.

Objective 2 matrix - Objective 2:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

These will read as hollow words unless the WA Government becomes far more active in supporting large scale conservation and restoration. At present the state isn't even adequately funding ecological management of the public land estate, let alone embarking on support for large scale cross-tenure landscape scale programs.

Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

For south-western Australia it is imperative government adopt and implement a policy of 'no nett loss' for ALL vegetation. We are ranked as a global biodiversity hotspot but clearly our history shows us that all remaining vegetation is unique and at-risk.

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 be meaningful the Policy needs to provide for:

1. Effective protection and conservation management for the remaining native vegetation
 2. Pro-active engagement with programs already operating to pro-actively manage and restore vegetation at landscape scale, with a focus on ecological function.
- Come join us.

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, 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)

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 critical need is for better real time satellite assessment on vegetation condition. This would:

1. Enable real-time identification and prosecution of illegal clearing
2. Identify longer term decline in vegetation condition and support remedial action - such as when vegetation is slowly killed through salinity or waterlogging and insect or fungal attack.
3. Be linked to thermal imaging and support 'rapid response' fire fighting, rather than the long delayed responses we are seeing in the more isolated areas. Small fires are easier to put out than large ones.

Note that we consider the scale of vegetation loss is now so severe we need to prioritise overall condition assessment above more detailed studies.

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:

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:

3

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.:

The current uncertainty fostered by the lax regulatory regime is damaging to all parties involved. There is a significant need for a higher level of enforcement and certainty.

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:

1

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

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

3

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

2

Please explain in the text box below.:

Lots of the above points overlap, (i.e. 1 and 4) and most components are integral to an effective operating system, so the selection of a top three is somewhat arbitrary. Having said that:

1. No-one has any idea what the current government's objectives are so clarity on that would be really useful.
2. Those of us in the private sector who have been championing landscape scale protection, management and restoration to improve ecological function at scale are getting very impatient with the lack of meaningful government support.
3. The lack of State of Environment reporting in WA, including for native vegetation, is scandalous, and needs to be remedied.

17 What other opportunities are presented by a bioregional approach?

Please explain in the text box below.:

Depends how you define it. See below.

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

Very concerned that the old IBRA definitions of bio-regions will be used. These may be neat for a small set of data crunchers, but are relatively meaningless for anyone working in the socially, culturally and economically driven world that leads to changes. Need to place action programs on a better footing, working across socially cohesive bio-regions, rather than let the data preferences drive the whole program.

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, Nature-based or cultural tourism, Private land management

Please explain in the text box below.:

If you are serious about landscape scale and ecological function, then you need all these initiatives plus more. It's very dangerous to rely on any small set of approaches.

Additionally, it would be a positive move if industry offsets weren't used to enable conservation departments to cost-shift away from their core responsibilities. There is no real additionality in that.

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.:

It would be useful for the state government to return to funding community based vegetation protection and management programs. De-funding the successful Land for Wildlife program, and now pretending its run through NRM regional groups, was incredibly poor decision making. Similarly, the original Remnant Vegetation Protection scheme saw some 540,000ha protected for thirty years, and those thirty years are now up for the first grants.

Upload a document

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

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

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