

## Response ID ANON-4EM2-EKXR-J

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**

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### Your details

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

Graham Zemunik

#### 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?

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. :

No

### 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:**

Supported

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

Because the state has lost so much native vegetation in some areas, has so many threatened and near-threatened species, as well as the fact that some vegetation naturally has only a very restricted distribution, management of native vegetation should strive to prioritise the protection of native vegetation above other factors. "Balance" may imply an equal importance given to those listed factors (environmental, economic, social and cultural outcomes), but, as stated above, environmental factors should be given top priority.

**Objective 2 matrix - Objective 2:**

Strongly supported

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

Although strategic conservation and restoration strategies can provide the greatest impact given limited resources, it should not be forgotten that effective conservation of common species can be provided at minimal expense. One example of strategic conservation, already developed but not fully implemented, is Bush Forever - strategic conservation of bushland remnants in greater Perth.

### Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:

Supported

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

At present, the concept of Priority Ecological Communities exists but is not given any support in legislation. Priority communities and species, wherever they may be, need to be given prioritisation and protection over other (e.g., development) concerns.

### 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.:

One opportunity is enshrining the best available decision making into vegetation management. To this end, the policy setting should stipulate that decisions concerning vegetation (clearing, burning, revegetation) be supported by the best available science. Another opportunity is to arrest the decrease of native vegetation cover and threatening processes. To this end, the policy should state an aim of achieving an increase (or, at least, no net reductions) in native vegetation cover throughout all (bio)regions, along with a reduction of the threatening processes, consequently leading to a decrease in the number of threatened (or near-threatened) plant species and communities.

### Better information

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

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)

Evidence-base for decisions, Other

If you have chosen 'other', please specify:

Quality and transparency of information is critical: there are large gaps in information (e.g., species records); the quality of the information (e.g., consultant's reports) needs to adhere to high standards; transparency of information at all stages of all projects is critical to support confidence in the system and better regulation.

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

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

Proponents (for developments, clearing etc) as well as the general public will be able to better ascertain what is at risk, should vegetation be impacted in a specific area, given that the information exists and is readily available. This could speed up the approvals process as well as lead to better-informed project designs, which better take into account the native vegetation that might be impacted by the proposal.

Consolidated information across all relevant government agencies would allow all impacts on native vegetation, especially clearing, to be readily visible and available; this includes all clearing occurring under exemptions.

Another opportunity from improved information systems is cost savings through better processes, lack of duplication and sharing of information across departments.

### 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:

2

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

3

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 regulation gives certainty for proponents and improves confidence in the regulatory system as a whole. Better regulation also mean better enforcement of breaches and permit conditions, which leads to better environmental outcomes.

**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:

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

2

Please explain in the text box below.:

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

Opportunities from a bioregional approach include strengthening the protection of vegetation in highly-cleared landscapes, based on scientifically-justified analyses, rather than arbitrary thresholds. Another opportunity is the establishment and/or protection of biological corridors; such corridors can be large (at the landscape level) and may differ between the bioregions.

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

Application of relatively low, unjustified clearing thresholds in regions presently with reasonable levels of vegetation cover could lead to a perverse outcome of unchecked clearing down to that said threshold, thus repeating past mistakes. Heterogeneity within otherwise large and reasonably well preserved regions may also be ignored if a bioregional approach is overly simplistic; i.e. within any large bioregion there likely exists relatively small pockets of important, and unique, biodiversity that requires special protection.

**Other initiatives**

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

Aboriginal land management, Pastoral diversification, Nature-based or cultural tourism, Private land management

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.:

The policy setting (government-wide vegetation policy) should explicitly recognise the importance of biological corridors and the importance of roadside vegetation, which in some areas represents the last remnants of native vegetation in the area as well as providing the only habitat for some threatened species. A government-wide policy also has the potential to fully implement Bush Forever for the Perth region.

The policy setting should also set the direction for vegetation conservation across all relevant legislation, ensuring that there is consistency in all clearing-related matters, including remedying inconsistencies with respect to the myriad clearing exemptions that exist at present.

**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::**

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