

Response ID ANON-4EM2-EKSY-M

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**

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Your details

1 What is your name?

Name:

Leonie Stubbs

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?

Other

If other, please specify.:

Volunteer at a conservation reserve

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:

Supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

Considering so little native vegetation remains I believe that there should be an emphasis on environmental outcomes. If we continue to give the same weight to economic, social and cultural outcomes then it will be impossible to fulfil the second objective. There are huge opportunities for infill housing in the metropolitan and outer metropolitan areas of Perth so opening up more land with native vegetation for housing on the outskirts of the metropolitan and outer metropolitan areas should not be an option. In many country towns we now see housing on prime agricultural land, yet we continue to clear more land for agriculture. There should be no further clearing of native vegetation for agriculture. The evidence shows that as we clear the land the rainfall patterns change with reduced rainfall over the cleared areas.

Objective 2 matrix - Objective 2:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

The evidence is overwhelming that there is much greater value in retaining native vegetation than having to restore it. If we put a stop to clearing it will lead to significant innovation in how existing cleared land can be used. That's what we are good at – innovating when (and only when) there are no other options

available.

Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:

Strongly supported

Please explain in the text box below.:

There should definitely be a higher priority for unique and at-risk vegetation, but this will soon encompass a high degree of remaining vegetation.

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.:

Better information

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

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)

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.:

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:

Rank better reg elements - Equitable treatment of all proponents:

3

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

2

Rank better reg elements - Other:

If you selected Other, please provide further information.:

Improved protection for native vegetation is definitely the most important factor in streamlining the regulation processes. It is also very important that the State's citizens have confidence in the regulatory system for all stakeholders and that we know that the officers of the public service are acting in the best interests of all West Australians and not those with a vested interest in a specific outcome for their sole benefit.

15 What other opportunities are presented by better regulation?

Please provide your answer in the text box below.:

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:

1

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:

3

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

A bio regional approach is definitely an improvement on a one-size fits all model particularly in regard to a state the size of Western Australia. Leveraging local knowledge together with a scientific evidenced based approach is vital to get the best environmental outcome for our native vegetation. An pertinent example is prescribed burning which if it remains at current levels in south west Australia has the capacity to do as much damage to the area's biological diversity as land clearing has done in the past. However, prescribed burning in the Kimberley is a different matter and should be approached differently.

A scientific evidence based approach should be applied. In many instances it is ignored when vested interests push their agenda. So transparent outcomes and objectives tailored to regional ecosystems and risk types is paramount to retain the public's confidence in the processes.

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.:

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

Please explain in the text box below.:

I commend the government on the Ranger program – it offers so many benefits it should be expanded.

I believe carbon farming opportunities should also be expanded as a way to improve the sustainability of pastoral leases.

Another very, very important initiative is to employ more people across DBCA and other government departments associated with management of native vegetation. For example, on ground work grinds to a halt in parks during bush fire season as all staff are directed to fight fires. Just one or two people are expected to manage several parks. Disillusionment and frustration follow both for the staff and also for volunteers working in the parks. The bush fire catastrophe in the Eastern States has highlighted the fact that "the market" was not capable of or interested in responding to the fires – it was the public service, volunteers and community who worked tirelessly to protect people, their built assets and our natural assets. It is people in the community we need to invest in – have more working for the public service as a public good. There are heaps of opportunities to improve native vegetation management if we had more people working in the sector.

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.:

In my opinion, environmental offsets policies are a deception. However this may be due to my experience in the metropolitan area and in relation to threatened species such as Carnaby's Black Cockatoos. For example, I do not see how any environmental offsets have in any way made life easier for our Black Cockatoos – retention of native vegetation was the only way they would survive into the future.