

## Response ID ANON-4EM2-EKB4-X

Submitted to **Native vegetation issues paper**

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### Your details

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

Pam Nairn

#### 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. :

### 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.:

Unfortunately this is a motherhood statement that adds nothing to a policy. Balance is in the eye of the beholder and currently, economic factors hold the most weight. It may have been reasonable to have this as an objective 20yrs ago but WA has lost so much vegetation, particularly in the SW due to agriculture, mining and urban expansion, but also in the N and NW pastoral leases where clearing and overstocking have severely degraded the landscape that we find ourselves in a desperate situation. There needs to be much stricter restrictions on landclearing so that ecosystems can recover and threatened flora and fauna properly assessed. Fauna needs to be considered because loss of habitat is often the biggest threat to their existence.

All of our vegetation types are affected by climate change. It is a compounding problem which must be taken in to account when setting future policy to preserve our ecosystems. No clearing should be permitted if it contravenes any of the Clearing Principles.

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

Strongly supported

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

This is very important, and will required considerably greater funding and staff than are presently available. Proper funding and protection for our environment is essential for the long term economic health of our state. The EPA and The Dept Biodiversity need increased funding to put more scientists on the ground to

achieve this

**Objective 3 matrix - Objective 3:**

Strongly supported

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

At risk vegetation needs our urgent attention to preserve what is left and restore where possible. This will require more resources

**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.:**

There is the chance to achieve a single policy framework for managing native vegetation, as mentioned.

The Bush Forever reserve system must be give legislative strength instead of the current system where it can be ignored. It should include the CAR commitment.

**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.:**

It is essential that data on land clearing and other vegetation losses be recorded, monitored and made available publicly. This will enable locals to see how their area is faring, but also monitor the state's performance statewide on protecting vegetation. The goal needs to be increasing vegetation cover for WA . It should be reported with aerial images to allow people to monitor success or otherwise.

**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:

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:

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.:**

If regulations and clearing principles are clearly described and strictly adhered to proponents will more easily understand what is acceptable and what is likely to be refused. This will mean less time wasted by proponents and the regulatory bodies who must assess applications and the EPA who must decide. The land clearing principles should be upgraded and strictly adhered to. We are at a crisis point for vegetation loss in WA, and stricter regulations must apply. If any one of the Clearing Principles is at variance, approvals to clear must be refused.

**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:**

3

**Rank bioregional elements - 4. Clear targets and thresholds:**

**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.:**

Item 5. Cumulative losses need to be considered, since small bites at a system over

some time frame disguise the real losses. Also, Tradeoffs have failed eg the offset system has resulted in loss of ecosystems which cannot be replaced, and the land that has been set aside is sometimes inferior because no adequate good quality land is available.. It is sometimes far away in an area that is not threatened. The offset system needs to be replaced.

Item 3. There needs to be adequate money available to deal with conflicts between things like road safety and loss of roadside vegetation. Better road design and greater use of crash barriers may be appropriate in some areas. Or purchase of already cleared land to save particular important areas of bush.

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

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

There needs to be more financial incentives to encourage preservation of vegetation on private land. And education. eg in our pastoral lands, restoring vegetation on cleared land can result in better returns due to increased water holding capacity, less erosion and more shade for stock.

Diversification into carbon farming needs to be financially supported by government.

Theoretically, a bioregional approach by govt agencies like Main Roads would mean engagement and modification to local conditions and vegetation. This has not been the case. Main Roads, Land Corp and the dept of Transport are intransigent and unresponsive to local concerns about vegetation clearing. They are bereft of suggestions and unwilling to make any large modifications. Tinkering around the edges is not an adequate response when communities are losing highly significant trees 100's of years old. The rainfall in the SW of WA has fallen 20% in recent decades, and will continue to fall. We will not see trees growing to the same size that has occurred in the past, so particular effort should be made to preserve significant stands.

Govt agencies should be setting an example to private developers and landholders in respecting Bush Forever sites, and upholding the Principles of land Clearing.

**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?**

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

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

I do not think that using markets or offsets to save biodiversity has any examples in WA where it has worked, so I do not think it is likely to be successful without a lot of trailing and investment by govt. Carbon farming might work, but using markets to manage it will be very risky. Who will inspect and monitor the farms and pastoral leases who are claiming they have successful carbon farms? Without a large investment in monitoring and management it may fail, or even be open to rorting.

**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.:**

More data collection

More funds for more scientists and

Money for farmers and volunteers to revegetate and take land out of cropping or grazing

Make the clearing rules stricter

Do not allow exemptions which result in clearing important vegetation

More inspectors and prosecutions for illegal clearing

Logging native timbers needs to be phased out. Our SW forests are not regrowing as they once did, due to climate change.