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Native Vegetation Policy
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To whom it may concern

SHIRE OF TOODYAY SUBMISSION FOR DRAFT NATIVE VEGETATION POLICY

The Shire of Toodyay welcomes the opportunity to comment on the *Draft Native Vegetation Policy*.

The importance of this policy cannot be understated. Without clear strategic goals dedicated to the protection and enhancement of this valuable environmental asset, it will only continue to suffer, degrade and diminish.

This policy is seen as a positive step, and one which is welcomed by the Shire of Toodyay, which has had its community recognise the importance of the natural beauty and environmental resources in its Strategic Community Plan. The *Draft Native Vegetation Policy* will be used by the Shire of Toodyay to inform future strategy and policy directions of its own.

Some general comments on the draft strategy are as follows:

Lack of inclusion of Local Government and Communities

Whilst it is recognised that this is a whole of Government policy, it should be noted that much of the important work in driving this policy will be done at a grass roots, local government, and community level. For this policy to be most effective, it will require buy in from the communities – this can be achieved by involving them and being more inclusive. Local knowledge and experience are a vital, yet sometimes overlooked, piece of this process.

Lack of connection between water resources and native vegetation

It is a universally accepted fact that plants need water to survive and thrive. Yet the *Draft Native Vegetation Policy* does not make this nexus. Australia has an arid climate, and this continues to be impacted by climate change and man's impact on the landscape. Thus, surface and ground water supplies are less reliable than they once were. Therefore, the success of this policy is largely dependent on water being included prominently in the discussion and final version.

Triple bottom line of sustainable development

Sustainable development is a balance of good social, environmental, and economic outcomes. However, with Western Australia being such a resource rich State, there are concerns that the policy is written with a 'pie in the sky' approach, with motherhood statements which ultimately are unrealistic and unachievable – given so much latitude is given to the

resources sector. The policy makes a lot of these statements – but how will they be achieved and audited?

The Shire of Toodyay has drafted a set of modifications and comments relating to its review e are included as an attachment to this submission, r inclusion into the final version of the policy.



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Draft Native Vegetation Policy	Shire of Toodyay suggested modifications/comments.
<p>Section: Purpose (p.4)</p> <p>The State Government recognises the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent the extinction of threatened species; • protect areas of high conservation value; and • achieve a nett gain in native vegetation extent. 	<p>The State Government recognises the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent the extinction of <u>all native threatened</u> species; • <u>Identify and</u> protect areas of high conservation value; and • achieve a nett gain in native vegetation extent <u>and diversity</u>.
<p>Section: Scope (p. 4)</p> <p>This policy sets strategic direction for the State Government. It applies to all State Government agencies with responsibilities that influence Western Australia's native vegetation. State Government boards and commissions (as defined in the Glossary) are encouraged to apply the policy, where relevant.</p>	<p>This policy sets strategic direction for the State Government. It applies to all State Government agencies and local government authorities with responsibilities that influence Western Australia's native vegetation. State Government boards and commissions (as defined in the Glossary) are encouraged to apply the policy, where relevant.</p>
Section: Policy statement (p.5)	<p><u>Add a new setting:</u> <u>To ensure that all data is validated by the local government and community stakeholders.</u> To ensure that data is validated by local knowledge and community stakeholders.</p>
<p>Section: Policy statement (p.5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are tailored to bioregional differences or specific challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are tailored to bioregional differences or specific challenges <u>while recognising the change in regional species distribution due to climate change and human impact.</u>
<p>Section: Context (p.6)</p> <p>It is culturally and spiritually significant to Aboriginal people, underpins community wellbeing and supports important sectors of the state's economy.</p>	<p><u>Comment</u> <u>Not only limited to indigenous people. Needs to be more inclusive.</u></p>
<p>Section: Context (p.6)</p> <p>Activities that sustain people's livelihoods and the economy – like agricultural production and urban development –</p>	<p>Activities that sustain people's livelihoods and the economy – like agricultural production, <u>and urban development, mining and the extraction of basic raw materials.</u>—</p>
<p>Table 1 (p.7)</p> <p>Heading (Organisations, businesses and individuals)</p>	<p><u>Comment</u> <u>Should involve 'community' there are many individuals who are not necessarily landholders, land managers or members of groups/organisations, but who would have contributions of value</u></p>
<p>Section: Practice (p.8)</p> <p>8. Stewardship of native vegetation by all land managers is vital to ensure landscape health – including through its integration with other productive land uses (e.g. agriculture, mining), or through its ecologically</p>	<p>8. Stewardship of native vegetation <u>(Including water and groundwater resource management)</u> by all land managers is vital to ensure landscape health – including through its integration with other productive land uses (e.g. agriculture,</p>

Draft Native Vegetation Policy	Shire of Toodyay suggested modifications/comments.
sustainable use (e.g. beekeeping, pastoralism).	mining), or through its ecologically sustainable use (e.g. beekeeping, pastoralism).
Section: Opportunities and Challenges (p. 9) 12. Traditional owners with their rich cultural knowledge of ecosystems have roles to play in co-managing, conserving and restoring native vegetation, and in planning for its management.	12. All owners including the traditional owners Traditional owners with their rich cultural knowledge of ecosystems have roles to play in co-managing, conserving and restoring native vegetation, and in planning for its management.
Section: Opportunities and Challenges (p. 9) 14. The condition and extent of Western Australia's native vegetation is declining. Addressing the decline requires coordinated management across all land tenures, supporting connectivity and maintenance of ecosystem function	14. The condition and extent of Western Australia's native vegetation is declining. Addressing the decline requires coordinated management across all land tenures, supporting connectivity and maintenance of ecosystem function. This includes the Identification and conservation of groundwater resources.
Section: Opportunities and Challenges (p. 9) 15. "... A nett improvement in the condition and extent of native vegetation can be achieved through strategic coordination and stewardship across sectors, and will restore landscape and ecosystem functions."	Comment Unrealistic proposition on its own. How is this going to be achieved?
Section: Opportunities and Challenges (p. 9) 16. In the extensive land-use zone (Figure 1), native vegetation is subject to a range of degrading processes. Coordinated management of the threats to native vegetation is needed to maintain and enhance the condition and ecosystem function of native vegetation.	16. In the extensive land-use zone (Figure 1), native vegetation is subject to a range of degrading processes. Coordinated management of the threats to native vegetation. Including water extraction and loss of water recharge areas is needed to maintain and enhance the condition and ecosystem function of native vegetation.
Section: Strategies and outcomes (p. 10) (Outcomes) Native vegetation objectives are achieved, together with other state priorities	Comment What certainty is there that native vegetation objectives are achieved and their interests are not outweighed by those of industry and general economic or social growth.
Section: Goals and Approaches (p. 11) (Approaches)	Add new approach: Consulting with Local Governments; Incorporating the environmental imperatives in Local Planning Schemes.
Section: Goals and Approaches (p. 11) v) Acquire and effectively manage a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system for terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.	v) Acquire and effectively manage a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system (incorporating road reserves and wildlife corridors) for terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Draft Native Vegetation Policy	Shire of Toodyay suggested modifications/comments.
<p>Section: Strategy 2 – Contemporary systems and practice. (p. 11)</p> <p>i) Apply regionally tailored objectives across State Government functions to ensure action and investment is coordinated and strategic.</p>	<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p><u>Climate change is changing bioregions - species distributions are changing - this needs to be incorporated so that bioregion boundaries are not rigid</u></p>
<p>Section: Strategy 2 – Contemporary systems and practice. (p. 11)</p>	<p><u>New Goal</u></p> <p><u>Contemporary systems and practice require auditing to ensure guiding principles are met and assessment processes are not adversely influenced by vested interests.</u></p> <p><u>Contemporary systems and practice require an auditing mechanism to ensure guiding principles are met.</u></p>
<p>Section: Strategy 3 – Build and share knowledge (p. 12)</p>	<p><u>New Approach</u></p> <p><u>Community involvement in data gathering (Citizen Science) would promote 'ownership'. Use of community knowledge and resources to help with this process.</u></p>
<p>Section: Strategy 4 – All sectors enabled</p> <p>v) Explore strategic coordination of funding streams (e.g. environmental or carbon offsets, restoration funding, tourism opportunities) to deliver positive native vegetation outcomes together with other priorities.</p>	<p>v) Explore strategic coordination of funding streams (e.g. environmental or carbon offsets, restoration funding, tourism opportunities) to deliver positive native vegetation outcomes <u>together with other priorities.</u></p>
<p>Section: Strategy 3 – Build and share knowledge (Priority Projects) (p. 16)</p> <p>3.4 Improve native vegetation mapping in the Wheatbelt, prioritising mapping to support strategy development (see Action 1.6).</p>	<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p><u>Local Government should be a partner agency in this</u></p>