

EP Act Discussion Paper  
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation  
Locked Bag 10  
JOONDALUP DC WA 6919

16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Re: Submission to the Environmental Protection Act Discussion Paper**

Dear Sir / Madam

Katanning Landcare is a not-for-profit community group focused on supporting the community to protect and enhance our environment for future generations. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Discussion Paper.

We note that the proposed changes include a referral process for clearing permits, so that the CEO can determine if a proposal requires a full clearing permit application, or can be granted a response by the CEO directly.

Whilst we understand that this is to assist with streamlining an administrative process, we are concerned that it may lead to an increase in clearing and a devaluation of native vegetation by the community.

‘Trivial’ clearing needs to be very clearly defined, as a large number of ‘trivial’ clearing acts may add up to quite a significant amount of clearing over time. Will there be a process to cap the amount of ‘trivial’ clearing that is approved to progress without permit per year?

We are well aware that Western Australia is a large and floristically diverse state, and as such there is often limited scientific information available about a specific site. We would not like to see a lack of current or detailed information on a particular site be an opening for clearing to be allowed without a permit assessment process.

Through our regular work, we see that the exemptions (often very poorly understood) are used as an excuse for clearing as these trees etc are ‘worthless’ – otherwise they wouldn’t be exempt, would they? With creating even less situations where a clearing permit is required, we are concerned it may further devalue the importance of native vegetation to many community members. Katanning Landcare works hard to promote the value of native vegetation – from large tracts of bushland, to roadsides and sentinel paddock trees (important refuge and transit sites for birds) – and feel that this reduction in the permit system may be counterproductive to that message.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.



**Ella Maesepp BSc (Env Sc) Hons.**  
**Landcare Officer**



(08) 9821 4327



[katanninglandcare.org.au](http://katanninglandcare.org.au)

