

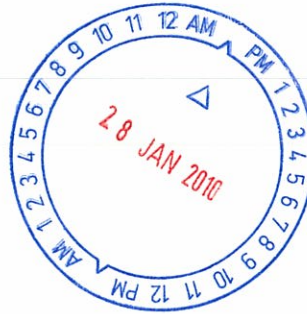


OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DG011/33

Dr John Williams
Chairman
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
Sydney NSW, 2001

Dear Dr Williams,



25 JAN 2011

Environmental Outcomes Assessment Methodology

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments to the Environmental Outcomes Assessment Methodology under the *Native Vegetation Act 2003*.

Overall, Industry and Investment NSW (I&I NSW) supports the intention of the proposed changes to streamline the assessment of native vegetation clearing proposals. In reviewing Chapter 8 as it is currently written it is difficult to ascertain whether the revised assessment process, in the case of the five native vegetation categories, will actually result in a streamlined approval process. The wording of Chapter 8 appears to be fairly complicated and therefore not that streamlined. In particular the definitions could be refined and better articulated.

I note that the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) intends to undertake trials of Chapter 8 in the field to ensure that the changes do actually streamline assessment processes. This is supported and it would be considered useful to undertake these trials in both the coastal catchments and the inland catchments.

The other issue for Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) is whether the information that is required to undertake the streamlined assessment process is actually available. As the streamlined process would be compromised without the data it would be useful for DECCW to consult with the CMAs to ensure they have access to the necessary information.

I&I NSW would also support the implementation of additional actions that would contribute to streamlining the assessment process for clearing native vegetation such as further training for CMA staff regarding sampling, mapping, stratification of vegetation type and condition, improvement of mapping tools, and reviewing each assessment chapter to ensure that the assessment can be undertaken as efficiently as possible.

Please contact Megan Knight, I&I NSW, on telephone number 02 8289 3960 or email: megan.knight@industry.nsw.gov.au if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely



RICHARD SHELDRAKE
DIRECTOR GENERAL