

Hon Frank Sartor MP

Minister for Climate Change and the Environment
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



Dr John Williams
Commissioner
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Dr Williams,

Amendments to the EOAM – Chapter 8

Thank you for your letter of 4 February 2011 providing the Natural Resources Commission's (NRC) advice on proposed amendments to the Environmental Outcomes Assessment Methodology (EOAM) under the Native Vegetation Regulation 2005.

I have considered the Commission's advice, along with the public submissions made on the proposals and the results of desktop testing. I have subsequently amended the original proposals to address the key concerns raised.

Those concerns were principally about the maintenance of environmental outcomes in streamlined assessment. The proposals have been amended to reduce the number of categories of native vegetation to which the streamlined assessment approach may be applied. The remaining categories, originally proposed as categories 1, 2 and 4, have also been revised. In addition, the EOAM now requires the use of the Threatened Species Tool to determine offsets, where threatened species are predicted to occur or have been found onsite.

The amended proposals are a sensible evolution of the native vegetation assessment framework, maintaining the objectives of the State's native vegetation laws whilst incorporating the experience of five years of implementation.

It may be of interest to you to note that I have asked the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water to ensure that the performance of the streamlined assessment approach is assessed as part of the review of the Regulation due by September 2012. I would expect the NRC to be closely involved in this process.

Given the public interest in this matter and the importance of reflecting the changes that have occurred as a result of the advice and comments received on the proposals, I request that this letter be posted alongside the Commission's advice on your website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Sartor', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Frank Sartor MP

02 MAR 2011