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COMMENTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

The Conservation Commission welcomes the opportunity to comment on this important matter but notes that comments will be of a general nature because of the limited time available for its consideration of the Consultation Paper.

The Conservation Commission of Western Australia is a statutory authority that provides peak ministerial advice and policy development for the conservation of fauna and flora and acts as the vesting body for terrestrial conservation areas, including state forests and timber reserves. The Commission advises on ecologically sustainable land and forest management, monitors and audits the land management practices of the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the Forest Products Commission, and develops Conservation Commission policy and management frameworks for submitting, monitoring and auditing management plans.

The following comments are provided:

- The significance of climate change impacts in relation to the maintenance of biodiversity are acknowledged. Thus the necessity for action to manage for these impacts is strongly endorsed.
- While the paper acknowledges that "...Addressing the causes of climate change is clearly an important mechanism for reducing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity", it merely notes other policy developments that directly address this strategy. It does not comment on mechanisms or processes that might ensure this action is as effective as practicable. It is important that as much as possible is done to address the causes of climate change as soon as possible so that the rate of change is such that the effectiveness of adaptation and management is improved. It would be useful if direct reference to this overarching strategy was made.
- The strategies as suggested in the Paper are satisfactory as the basis for initiating action, noting that the Guiding Principles provide that the "plan will be adaptive, allowing for change as new information becomes available".

- The importance of the need to build awareness as described in Strategy 4 is endorsed, however it is suggest that consideration be given to building broader public awareness of the potential and real impacts of climate change on biodiversity given its inevitability.
- The Conservation Commission wishes to continue its involvement through direct engagement with the Task Group. It will also seek to be involved through the Department of Conservation and Land Management who are more direct participants in the process.

Yours sincerely

Dr John Bailey
CHAIRMAN

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cc Executive Director, Department of Conservation and Land Management