

Responses

SECTION 1

Do you consider the main biodiversity threats identified in the Consultation Draft (see below) to be the most important in reversing the decline in Australia's biodiversity?

Climate change:

Somewhat Agree

Invasive species:

Strongly Agree

Loss and fragmentation of habitats:

Strongly Agree

Degradation of habitats:

Strongly Agree

Unstable use of natural resources:

Strongly Agree

Changes to the aquatic environment and water flows:

Strongly Agree

Inappropriate fire regimes:

Strongly Agree

Are there any other threats you think should be addressed?

Total clearing of vegetation for urban development in WA

SECTION 2

Do you agree or disagree that the proposed 'priorities for change' (outline in the 'Making Enduring Changes' section) will be effective at delivering the Strategy's vision to ensure Australia's biodiversity 'is healthy, resilient to climate change and valued for its essential contribution to our existence'?

No. I don't think that "greater cooperation" among the sectors listed will produce anything other than more talk fests. Getting things done happens on the ground, usually driven by committed individuals or small communities addressing an environmental problem. Latterly, such groups have been cut off from funding by mountains of bureaucratic "strategies", "priorities" and "visions". No cash for tools, plants and weed control = no action to protect biodiversity.

Do you think the 'six priorities for change' identified are the most important ones? If not what others would you suggest?

Yes, but I would put them in a different order, as follows: 1 4 6 2 3 5

Do you have any comments on the vision?:

I agree with the "vision". Unfortunately the local government here doesn't - it plans to bulldoze part of its No.1 biodiversity bushland, to build an "iconic" tourist development, over 1.5 km in length, along our coastline.

SECTION 3

Do you believe the Consultation Draft:

promotes a good balance between conservation on private and public lands?

Not Sure

will facilitate a good mix of regulation and incentives?

Strongly Disagree

provides a good balance between marine and terrestrial issues?

Not Sure

provides the necessary national framework to produce innovative conservation action?

Strongly Disagree

has a sufficient focus on institutional arrangements and change?

NULL

provides sufficient emphasis on improving community awareness of biodiversity?

Strongly Disagree

addresses the need to implement conservation action at the appropriate scale(s)?

Strongly Disagree

is applicable to urban and rural environments?

Strongly Disagree

provides a clear framework for balancing conservation, social and economic issues?

Strongly Disagree

adequately deals with the issue of climate change?

Strongly Disagree

Do you have any other comments on these issues?

Community groups on the ground are fed up with the mountains of paperwork and bureaucracy we have to surmount to obtain even small amounts of funding to supplement our volunteer work. We need dollars to pay for weed control contractors, fencing contractors, sand trapping contractors, plant seedlings from nurseries, wind guards, tools. We don't need a list of your eastern states priorities, or thousands of dollars spent on air fares for "consultation". We would like you to give out some grant money for on-ground projects, and stop wasting money on talk fests for people who have never pulled a weed out in their lives.

SECTION 4

Do you think the Consultation Draft adequately covers the roles of Indigenous peoples in biodiversity management?

Yes - but where I live, on an urban fringe fighting to preserve bushland, the local indigenous people are not the slightest bit interested in being involved in biodiversity management. Most have absolutely no connection to the local area. They will not even come on site with us to discuss "indigenous consultation", unless we pay them hundreds of dollars (out of our own pockets). The situation with indigenous consultation in south-west WA is a total farce.

SECTION 5

Do you agree or disagree that the proposed arrangements for reporting on implementation will be effective in the monitoring and evaluation of the expected outcomes (results) of the Consultation Draft?

Strongly Disagree

Do you have any suggestions for alternative reporting arrangements?

An extensive reporting regime that reports that there has been no progress, is a total waste of money. You would be better to spend the money on on-ground projects that are properly monitored and accounted for by community groups, then put on the web. My last detailed monitoring and evaluation report to Envirofund was evidently lost in their system - so what was the point? If the data is lost or buried, you might as well not gather it.

SECTION 6

To what extent is the Consultation Draft an appropriate national framework to achieve biodiversity conservation benefits, considering the different responsibilities, legislation and funding arrangements between governments?

To our group it looks like a lot of words in "Management Speak", stating what should be perfectly obvious to any thinking person. I'm doubtful that your Consultation Draft will actually produce any action or results. It is just another report.

SECTION 7

Is the Consultation Draft likely to encourage a good mix of public and private investment in biodiversity conservation?

Strongly Disagree

If not, how can the Consultation Draft improve in this area?

Private industry here is driven by profit, and is not interested in biodiversity conservation. The only effective private conservation is carried out by organizations like Australian Bush Heritage etc. there is virtually no government-funded biodiversity conservation in WA since the government changed. The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is so under-funded that its reserves are in a terrible state. The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) (ie Forestry) is dominated by staff promoting inappropriate fire regimes that destroy biodiversity by burning forests every 2 years.

SECTION 8

Is the Consultation Draft sufficiently clear about its role and how it will be implemented?

It will remain just a paper strategy. There's no provision for putting it into practice on the ground.

DEC will remain underfunded and unable to act to protect biodiversity, and volunteers will remain underfunded.

SECTION 9

Does the Consultation Draft reflect the best practice on biodiversity conservation?

Yes, on paper at least. However, there is no real provision for putting it into practice on the ground. I believe that it will remain just a paper strategy.

SECTION 10

Will the Consultation Draft effectively engage private sector interests in long-term biodiversity conservation?

No. There is no profit to be made, and too much short-term cost to the private sector. The private sector interests we have had some contact with, want tax-deductibility, publicity for themselves, and not too much real work commitment. There's very little altruism or concern for the greater environmental benefit of the planet.

FINAL COMMENTS

Do you have any other comments you wish to make on the Consultation Draft?

I suggest you get rid of some of the verbiage, and concentrate your money into on-ground projects and securing land for permanent reservation for conservation purposes. Then put some money into managing it properly. We do not need more consultation with resistant or cash-strapped government agencies, we need tough laws against land clearing and effective follow-up and prosecution where there is illegal clearing. There is a lot here in WA, and the government admits it doesn't know how much. We need funding for on-ground work and staff, to protect biodiversity. Most volunteer on-ground organizations are missing out on funding to carry out projects. It appears that millions of dollars go to large bureaucratic NRM organizations, to create grand "strategies" written by desk-bound young people who never deal with on-ground realities.