

Name

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Theme 1: Objects and principles for biodiversity conservation

Check box to view and respond to questions

Should there be an aspirational goal for biodiversity conservation?

Yes. A genuine goal, not one which is simply window dressing to make the Government bodies appear to be responsible.

Given available evidence about the value and state of the environment, are the existing legislative objects still valid? Do the current objects align with international and national frameworks, agreements, laws, obligations? If not, what objects are required?

Unable to say. (Haven't the research ability nor the time to source all of this information)

To what extent are the current objects being met?

as for the previous question

Could the objects of the current laws be simplified and integrated? If so, how?

as for the previous question

Theme 2: Conservation action

Check box to view and respond to questions

Is the current system effective in encouraging landowners to generate public benefits from their land and rewarding them as environmental stewards? Or are current mechanisms too focused on requiring private landowners to protect ecosystem services and biodiversity at their own cost?

There is a small amount of funding available to assist landowners to protect ecosystems, many of whom are willing to augment these grants with their own money. Unfortunately there is a need for a greater focus (& money) to be placed on efforts of all sorts to support biodiversity.

Are there elements of the current system for private land conservation that raise impediments (for example, binding nature of agreements and potential loss of production) for individuals who want to manage their land for conservation? If so what are they? What incentives might be effective, efficient and equitable in promoting biodiversity conservation on private land?

The support I receive through my conservation agreement comes with a justifiable and reasonable set of conditions (which myself & the funding body negotiated). My block of 40Ha is one of a lifestyle nature (initially logged & grazed to some extent) which has a great potential for

restoring/rehabilitating. I have no first hand knowledge of the situations relating to more typical farming land.

What should be the role of organisations and bodies, such as the Nature Conservation Trust, in facilitating and managing private land conservation through mechanisms such as conservation and biobanking agreements?

The approaches that organisations such as the NCT of NSW is taking being appear to be of great effect. It would be a great shame to see and achievements to biodiversity restoration being undone due to a lack of continuing focus and funding, or any major shift in policy.

How should the government determine priorities for its investment in biodiversity conservation while enabling and encouraging others (e.g. community groups) to contribute to their own biodiversity conservation priorities?

One very obvious & critical way in which governments should determine priorities is to look at the situation from an environmental point of view first of all. Any group that is formed to make these determinations should NOT HAVE ANY VESTED INTERESTS or conflicts of interest. The people taking on this job should be independent of government and, to a large part, of a scientific background. One particularly essential element that must be present, is for the government to put a stop to huge overarching environmental danger presented by Coal Seam Gas mining operations. In addition, landowners should be given the right to say "no" to any person/group intent on reducing the biodiversity entering their property.

How can the effectiveness of conservation programs be monitored and evaluated?

Apart from the landowner sending in a report, I believe that the property should be visited, before, during and after the contract time. This way money will not be wasted and the monitor can give the landowner advice on the way.

How should any tradeoffs be assessed?

The enormity of the project, the financial standing and ability of the landowner, the difficulty of the terrain, the nature of the surrounding land & landowners are among some of the considerations that could be considered in assessing tradeoffs.

To what extent is the system forward looking or dealing with legacy impacts?

I question the actual soundness of any covenant that is added to the property deed. Does such a covenant stand for ever? Can the covenant be removed by unscrupulous owners or those to which they sell their land too? Again, perhaps one of the biggest dangers is the ability of mining companies, for example, simply walking onto a property & taking over. At present there is no legal way of stopping this. What of the legacy then? Even mining activities not actually on the property (particularly CSG) can have an enormous permanent impact on all matters environmental.

To what extent does current practice (rather than the legislation) determine outcomes?

I can only say that in my experience, current practice appears good (with the exception perhaps of increased monitoring).

Theme 3: Conservation in land use planning

Check box to view and respond to questions

How effective are current arrangements at ensuring biodiversity values are identified early and properly considered in strategic planning systems? How can they be improved?

Effective.

How effective are current arrangements for delivering strategic outcomes for biodiversity and enhancing ecosystem services? How can they be improved?

Good with perhaps increased monitoring (of an advisory nature).

How should the effectiveness of strategic planning approaches be monitored and evaluated?

As is but more often.

Theme 4: Conservation in development approval processes

Check box to view and respond to questions

To what extent has the current framework created inconsistent assessment processes, environmental standards, offset practices and duplicative rules? What can be done to harmonise processes?

Assessment processes appear to be O.K

Can we have a single, integrated approach to the approval of all forms of development, including agricultural development, that is proportionate to the risks involved? If yes, should one methodology (or a harmonised methodology) be used to assess all impacts? Does a need remain for some differences in assessment approaches?

No. I believe that each case should be judged & managed on it's own merits although there are some core factors that could be considered. For example, the removal of trees and the overuse or contamination of water.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different biodiversity assessment methodologies? Are the rules transparent and consistent? Is the way data is used to underpin decisions transparent? Do the assessment methodologies appropriately accommodate social and economic values?

I am not aware of what underpins decisions apart from the outcomes I see in my own agreement. By my negotiating with NCT of NSW I formed the opinion that all was transparent. Since the goal of any such organisation as NCT is to protect and rehabilitate the environment I don't think that too much emphasis should be put on the social & economic values. Obviously if the later appear of major importance to any would-be recipient of such a funding agreement maybe the recipient isn't worthy of receiving funding. Otherwise the consideration of the latter two should again be on a merit basis.

Does the regulatory system adequately protect listed threatened species, populations and ecological communities? Is there utility in specifically protecting these entities through the regulatory system?

On the surface it would appear that threatened species are being protected. But again while governments & other beaurocratic organisations can negate the protection originally given to large tracts of land (National Parks, Reserves, forests, water catchment areas, the building of highways

through waterlands and old-growth forests) as well as privately owned land, how can these species be actually protected. Legislation must be put into place that prevents these atrocities.

Are there other models (international or Australian) that regulate activities impacting on biodiversity that may be relevant to NSW?

Unable to say.

Are there other models (international or Australian) that regulate activities impacting on biodiversity that may be relevant to NSW?

Unable to say

To what extent has the current regulatory system resulted in lost development opportunities and/or prevented innovative land management practices?

Unable to say. The term "developmental opportunities" sends a chill down my spine!!

Some impacts cannot be offset. What are they? Are these appropriately addressed in approval systems? What is the relevance of social and economic benefits of projects in considering these impacts?

Some impacts MUST be prevented & cannot be offset (as mentioned before). Social & economic benefits must take a second place (as mentioned before)

How can offsets be more strategically located?

I don't believe in offsets. It's false environmental economy. In many instances already, offsets are conducted but these have simply been the planting of any specie of tree in any sort of ground with no maintenance or monitoring and that's that! No good at all.

Are there areas currently regulated that would be better left to self-regulatory codes of practice or accreditation schemes?

None!

Theme 5: Wildlife management

Check box to view and respond to questions

Have the threats to biodiversity posed by: (a) people taking animals and plants from the wild, (b) feral animals and weeds, and (c) illegally imported species, been effectively managed?

No. As usual lack of funding, lip service stuff.

Has the NPW Act and the supporting policy framework led to a positive change in the welfare of native animals (captive and free-living)? What role if any should the government have in ensuring the welfare of individual native animals – particularly where there are already stand-alone welfare laws such as the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979?

Unfamiliar with this act. If I am correct I believe that NPW is involved in the purchase of environmentally valuable land which is a great thing. With greater funding more land could be purchased & more money could be spent on rehabilitating and maintaining it.

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No Answer

Are the provisions for marine mammals effective?

No. There are too few marine exclusion zones, there is insufficient policing of these zones as well as commercial & recreational fishing activities, gain due mainly to insufficient funding. The Commonwealth Government couldn't even send the Japanese whalers packing!! (I know that's not a NSW gov't problem)

Is the current framework for wildlife licensing, offences and defences, including those applying to threatened species, easily understood? Is the current licensing system too complex? How can it be improved and simplified to focus on conservation outcomes?

Unable to answer. What about banning pet shops? - fewer wild dog & cat problems.

Is there currently appropriate regulation for the sustainable use and trade of wildlife?

unable to answer

Theme 6: Information provisions

Check box to view and respond to questions

What information should be generated about the different kinds of value (for example, monetary and intrinsic value) of biodiversity and other natural assets in NSW?

As much as possible. The general public needs to be educated. For example, communities attempting to move bat colonies away. Regulations should be brought in to exclude housing development from a zone around existing colonies.. Educate people. Perhaps wildlife groups can be assisted in some way in this process, maybe some more formal gatherings, planning?

What type, quality and frequency of data should be collected about biodiversity? Who should be responsible for such a system?

Qualified or at least skilled people should do this. The data collected should be appropriate to need and at intervals that match the importance or urgency of any situation.

Is current data about biodiversity highly credible and readily accessible? If not, how can quality and access be improved?

Data only available to those who seek it. It needs to be spread more widely, (pushed at people)

How effective is the threatened species listing process (including the listing of key threatening processes) in guiding subsequent conservation action?

Seems O.K

Should threatened species listing decisions be decoupled from decisions on conservation actions (including recovery planning) and regulatory processes?

No

To what extent, if any, does having national and state lists of threatened species cause confusion, regulatory burden or duplication of conservation effort? How could national and state lists be rationalised?

Would think so. Unsure.

To what extent is the identification of critical habitat an effective tool for biodiversity conservation? Should we list critical habitat for more species where relevant and useful?

Very. Yes

Should private conservation data be collected and if so how?

Yes. Again can only effectively be done by skilled & knowledgeable people

Other comments

I apologise if my comments appear somewhat vacuous, but I have little knowledge of matters regulatory. I do believe vehemently that unless efforts are made to control those elements that are either opposed or indifferent to the environment, (lack of government funding, freedom of the mining industry to override landowners wishes and environmental regulations, ineffectual EPA, vested interests within the government bodies, etc) then all that is being done here is probably a waste of time and effort. I realise that these problems are beyond your control (or are they?). Apologies for being so negative. Do your best.