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**Should there be an aspirational goal for biodiversity conservation?**

Yes

**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?**

It seems to me that current legislation is far too "one size fits all", given the actual diversity and complexity within farms and between farms in even slightly different regions, therefore the act becomes very impractical and in the end does not achieve as much as it could. We should worry about our environment first and not necessarily be bound by international frameworks.

**To what extent are the current objects being met?**

Any conservation work is very specific to that particular area, so the broad brush approach will never achieve the best result. Legislation is often a political solution to a practical problem, so the end result is usually less than ideal for conservation of any type. If governments were prepared (actually us the taxpayer) to put sufficient funds to resource these conservation issues properly, we may get some real results. We need more people on the ground to assess all of these different environments, farms or whatever to actually achieve the best result for the environment, rather than have political lip service paid to the issue and the non land managing public feel that something is being done, but less than ideal is achieved and often the farmer bears the costs, of not being able to develop land sustainably due to the one size fits all policy, or has to bear the cost of eco services for the wider community.

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

I am sure they can be but the issue is govts actually putting money and resources into the issue to assist land managers, both physically and monetarily to achieve better ecological outcomes for that specific piece of land, which in turn can make that land more profitable, but also can return eco services to the wider community.

User just submitted the survey 'Theme 2: Conservation action' with the responses below.

**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?**

Yes and yes.

**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?**

New South Wales- I cannot quote the specific issues but a landholder just wants a fair deal in providing there community benefits. again each issue is very specific, and on a case by case basis needs assessment. If I could manage a piece of nature valuable land and get a return from the taxpayer, relative to traditional farming of that land that is fine, and I would be prepared to have restrictions placed on me/ my title to have that security of income.

**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?**

I would have no issue as long as the agreements take both sides of the issue and a fair result can be negotiated by the parties.

**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?**

Put money where its political mouth is. Support local landcare to assist local communities to encourage landholders to be involved in conservation issues and see the value in these initiatives for their own farm businesses and the community- education etc as well.

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

Generally by the good and professional local landcare people we now have- not the larger bodies like catchment management.

**How should any tradeoffs be assessed?**

By each situation being assessed professionally in conjunction with the land manager, to come up with the site specific tradeoffs, that give the best balance and environmental return.

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

Too often many of these issues are dealt with on a shorter term basis, which may not be the best way for long term outcomes. Sometimes buckets of money are thrown at the "flavour of the month issue" rather than a sound strategic approach. ie the political solution to the practical issue!!

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

Legislation try's to determine outcomes but more often than not this fails, but current or sound practice fails as well because it does not necessarily fit with the one size fits all legislation.

### **Theme 1: Objects and principles for biodiversity conservation**

No Answer

**Should there be an aspirational goal for biodiversity conservation?**

No Answer

**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?**

No Answer

**To what extent are the current objects being met?**

No Answer

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

No Answer

### **Theme 2: Conservation action**

No Answer

**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?**

No Answer

**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?**

No Answer

**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?**

No Answer

**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?**

No Answer

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

No Answer

**How should any tradeoffs be assessed?**

No Answer

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

No Answer

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

No Answer

### **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?**

More staff for Landcare locally to work with landholders to identify areas of significance and then have some funding and/or incentives for the landholders to use to protect/enhance these areas.

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

Just not enough staff to facilitate services etc.

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

By local landcare or professional eco service people who have the skills to evaluate.

### **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?**

Each site is very different and the current legislative framework of one size fits all, does not really address the key environmental issues of each site to best advantage for the environment, landholder, or the public good.

**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?**

Every site is different so I would guess that there are basic parameters, but specific ones for specific sites/needs. For example, from a farming perspective, ground cover is paramount, but how that can be achieved will depend on the site, and past and current management, so assessment or methodology I suspect has to be flexible to accommodate different sites? A common-sense approach.

**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 do not understand specific methodologies. However as in the last answer, with every site different, if the incorrect methodology is used then a less than ideal outcome will be achieved for social and economic values, apart from possibly the less than ideal environmental result. A local case in point was a property near me in a high altitude area with a history of dieback was inappropriately cleared, and was fined, and I believe correctly so, (should probably have been more) whereas only 60 km away another property was assessed under the same rules, fined, and I believe that due to the altitude difference, soil type difference, little history of dieback, and the farmer actually left around 35% untouched with understory intact, so his result was good environmentally, sound financially, and did give good triple bottom line result. Why would these two different situations be assessed with the same ground rules?? I believe it is incompetence, and just shows that legislation can be flawed, and that common-sense did not prevail.

**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?**

I doubt it, as for example, a property can be cleared of all dead, standing and fallen timber, trees and seedlings less than 20 years old, and leave a monoculture of similar age trees, so how could this be adequate?????????.

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

Don't know- let commonsense prevail, and educate landholders as to the value of biodiversity, as well as the public as to the cost of actually preserving it- landholders are generally willing to share a fair share of the burden but not the majority of it.

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

Don't know.

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

There are always going to be trade-offs, but too often the "big end of town" or the vocal green more extreme groups have sway because of political issues.

**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?**

As above, but there does need to be more transparency and honesty, particularly by politicians as to these issues, and what it means in both short and long term results.

**How can offsets be more strategically located?**

Don't know.

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

Unless governments( us the voter!!!) are actually prepared to properly fund assesment etc, then there will be more self regulation, which may or may not be in the best long term interests of the environment. As stated before too often legislation/regulation is politically driven rather than practically driven.

## **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?**

Probably in most instances no, because of insufficient resources. One only has to drive around NSW to see such things as St.Johns wort rampant on public land and roadsides.

**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?**

1) dont know 2) probably minor

**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?**

As above- same question???

**Are the provisions for marine mammals effective?**

Possibly in Australia but it is about time we took a proper stand against Japanese whalers.

**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?**

Don't know, but if regulators take a long term common-sense view then we probably can achieve a better result- again if resources are given, and prepared to be given by the taxpayer.

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

Probably, but enforcement is the real issue - legislation only is complied with by honest people.

**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?**

The more the better- farmers need to know more as to the economic benefits to them, but at the same time the general public also needs to know what are the actual costs to society to preserve them! For example a national park is fine, but if it is not managed for weeds, feral animals etc etc then of what use is it??

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

Landholders can often complete surveys etc, but there is a much greater cost if this is collected by public purse employees.

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

Not sure , but with the Internet access should be easy- links on emails etc for simple access . Any data is only as good as the way or accuracy with which it is collected.

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

Don't know.

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

If it is threatened, then that is the case!!!!!!!!!!!! Only then would new actions or decisions be made- I don't understand the current process, but to me 1) Is it threatened- Yes/no 2) can it be preserved- Yes/no 3) what regulation might be needed.

**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?**

Surely they are just one list!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**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?**

Yes, as long as this habitat is managed appropriately by the public purse, and a landowner is not disadvantaged by having to maintain at his cost some area that suddenly becomes valuable as a habitat, or if it contains some rare animal.

**Should private conservation data be collected and if so how?**

Yes- most landholders who have property with good conservation values are generally willing to assist with data collection, or for example uni students can do this for course work etc.

**Other comments**

Unfortunately too often as I have mentioned the general public think legislation will fix the issues and thus there are too many political fix's for what are very practical problems and environmental issues. Fixing these issues comes at a cost, and there needs to be more honesty from everyone as to the social, economic, and environmental bottom lines of doing something or nothing. Unfortunately too often there is little long term planning by all of us.