



# Clearing Permit Decision Report

## 1. Application details and outcomes

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	10161/2
Permit type:	Purpose Permit
Applicant name:	Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd
Application received:	2 August 2023
Application area:	0.66 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Rail maintenance and associated activities
Method of clearing:	Mechanical Removal
Tenure:	Miscellaneous Licence 47/310
Location (LGA area/s):	Shire of Ashburton
Colloquial name:	Galah Rail Siding Renewals Project

### 1.2. Description of clearing activities

Clearing permit CPS 10161/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (now the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) on 8 June 2022 and was valid from 1 July 2023 to 1 July 2028. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 0.66 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 0.79 hectares, for the purpose of rail maintenance and associated activities.

On 2 August 2023, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety initiated the application to amend CPS 10161/1 to correct a clerical error and amend condition 7 to change the annual reporting period from financial year (1 July – 30 June) to calendar year (1 January – 31 December). The amount of clearing authorised and the permit boundary remain unchanged.

### 1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Granted
Decision date:	19 October 2023
Decision area:	0.66 hectares of native vegetation

### 1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was made in accordance with section 51K (1) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) and was initiated by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) on 2 August 2023. DMIRS advertised the application for public comments for a period of 7 days, and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix A), relevant datasets (GIS Database), the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act, and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures, the Delegated Officer determined that the proposed clearing is not likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to the environment.

The Delegated Officer decided to amend the condition 7 of the clearing permit CPS 10161/1 : annual reporting, with the conditions currently imposed on the clearing permit CPS 10161/1 for:

- avoid, minimise and reduce the impacts of clearing; and
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds.

## 2. Legislative context

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the EP Act and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004 (Clearing Regulations).

In addition to the matters considered in accordance with section 51O of the EP Act (see Section 1.4), the Delegated Officer has also had regard to the objects and principles under section 4A of the EP Act, particularly:

- the precautionary principle
- the principle of the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Mining Act 1978* (WA)

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

- *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation* (DER, December 2014)
- *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits* (DWER, October 2021)

### 3. Assessment of application

#### 3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The applicant has not provided any additional avoidance or mitigation measures, beyond the following measures provided to support the initial clearing permit application CPS 101761/1 (Rio Tinto, 2023a):

- Weed hygiene treatment of equipment prior to entering Project area;
- Visual inspections of disturbed areas for weed infestations;
- Control of known weed populations;
- All newly disturbed areas will be inspected during the annual rail weed spraying program and if any new weeds are accidentally introduced then weed spraying/removal will be undertaken;
- All imported rail ballast and fill, will be cleaned (weed, seed and propagule free) prior to coming to site;
- Staying within the existing disturbance footprint on site where possible;
- All new disturbances will kept to a minimum;
- Managing the sediment of stockpiled rail ballast and fill on site so that sediment isn't allowed to enter the surrounding environment;
- Inspecting the work and stockpile areas on site post large rainfall events to ensure the sediment control measures (where required) are working;
- Appropriate management/use of hydrocarbons and locating hydrocarbon spill response kits on site;
- No bulk hydrocarbons stored on site; and
- Managing dust emissions.

Additionally, advice received from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) for the Mining Proposal (REG ID 116513) associated to this clearing permit, indicates that the proposed management actions are adequate to prevent potential risk to water resources (DWER, 2023).

Therefore, the Delegated Officer is satisfied that reasonable efforts have been made to avoid and mitigate the potential impacts of the proposed clearing.

#### 3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

#### 3.3. The amendment being undertaken as part of CPS 10161/2 is administrative in nature. There is no change to previous assessments against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s.51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on 11 August 2023 by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

There is one native title claim (WC 1999/014 Ngarluma/Yindjibardi) over the area under application (DPLH, 2023). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant group. However, the mining tenure has been granted in accordance with the future act regime of the *Native Title Act 1993* and the nature of the act (i.e. the proposed clearing activity) has been provided for in that process, therefore, the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

There are two registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (DPLH, 2023). It is the proponent's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2021* as amended and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

Other relevant authorisations required for the proposed land use include:

- A Mining Proposal / Mine Closure Plan approved under the *Mining Act 1978*.

It is the proponent's responsibility to liaise with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, to determine whether a Works Approval, Water Licence, Bed and Banks Permit, or any other licences or approvals are required for the proposed works.

End

## Appendix A. Site characteristics

### A.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The project is located approximately 65 kilometres southeast of Karratha, within the Shire of Ashburton in the extensive land use zone (GIS Database). The predominant land use in the region is grazing of native pastures, conservation and mining activities.
Ecological linkage	According to available databases, the application area is not considered an ecological linkage (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The application area falls within the Millstream Chichester National Park (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	<p>The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation association (GIS Database):</p> <p>587: Hummock grasslands, open low tree-steppe; snappy gum over <i>Triodia wiseana</i> / Hummock grasslands, shrub-steppe; kanji over <i>Triodia pungens</i>.</p> <p>A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by Eco Logical Australia (2023) and recorded the following two vegetation associations within the application area (Rio Tinto, 2023b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VT1: <i>Acacia coriacea</i> subsp. <i>pendens</i>, <i>A. trachycarpa</i> and <i>A. pyrifolia</i> sparse shrubland over *<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i>, <i>Triodia wiseana</i> and <i>T. epactia</i> hummock grassland to open hummock grassland on slopes rises and plains. This unit covers 0.56 ha (70.20%) of the application area and was considered to be in Poor to Degraded Vegetation Condition.</li> <li>- VT2: <i>Corymbia hamersleyana</i> isolated trees over <i>Triodia wiseana</i>, <i>T. epactia</i> and *<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i> open hummock grassland on rocky basaltic slopes and rises covers 0.11 ha (13.68%) of the application area and was considered to be in Degraded Vegetation Condition.</li> </ul>
Vegetation condition	<p>The vegetation survey (Eco Logical Australia, 2023) and the assessment conducted by Rio Tinto (2023b) indicates the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in poor to completely degraded condition (Trudgen, 1991), described as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor - Still retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it after very obvious impacts of human activities since European settlement, such as grazing, partial clearing, frequent fires or aggressive weeds.</li> <li>• Completely Degraded – Areas that are completely or almost completely without native species in the structure of their vegetation; i.e. areas that are cleared or 'parkland cleared' with their flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.</li> </ul> <p>According to the vegetation mapping, 0.13 hectares (16.12 %) of the application area has been cleared for tracks and roads (Rio Tinto, 2023b).</p>
Climate and landform	The application area is mapped within elevations of 150 meters AHD (GIS Database). The climate of the region is semi-desert tropical, and the annual rainfall average of approximately 372 millimetres (BoM, 2023).
Soil description & land degradation risk	<p>The soil is mapped as part of the following soil system (DPIRD, 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rocklea system (282Rk): Basalt hills, plateaux, lower slopes and minor stony plains supporting hard spinifex and occasionally soft spinifex grasslands with scattered shrubs</li> </ul> <p>The application area is adjacent to existing railway infrastructure and part of its area has been previously disturbed by access roads (Rio Tinto, 2023b; GIS Database).</p>
Waterbodies & Hydrogeography	<p>The application area is located within the Harding Dam catchment and within the Priority 1 Harding Dam Public Drinking Water Source Protection Area (Rio Tinto, 2023b; GIS Database).</p> <p>One minor ephemeral drainage line runs through the application area (GIS Database). The mapped groundwater salinity is 500-1,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as marginal (GIS Database).</p>
Flora	No Threatened or Priority flora species were recorded, or are likely to occur within the application area (Rio Tinto, 2023b).

Characteristic	Details
Ecological communities	There are no mapped Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities (TEC/PEC) within the application area (Rio Tinto, 2023b; GIS Database). The closest PEC is located approximately eight kilometres south of the application area (Rio Tinto, 2023b).
Fauna	No conservation significant fauna species were recorded within the application area; however, two species have been identified as having the potential to occur (Eco Logical Australia, 2023; Rio Tinto, 2023b).

## Appendix B. Vegetation condition rating scale

Vegetation condition is a rating given to a defined area of vegetation to categorise and rank disturbance related to human activities. The rating refers to the degree of change in the vegetation structure, density and species present in relation to undisturbed vegetation of the same type. The degree of disturbance impacts upon the vegetation's ability to regenerate. Disturbance at a site can be a cumulative effect from a number of interacting disturbance types.

Considering its location, the scale below was used to measure the condition of the vegetation proposed to be cleared. This scale has been extracted from Trudgen, M.E. (1991) *Vegetation condition scale* in National Trust (WA) 1993 Urban Bushland Policy. National Trust of Australia (WA), Wildflower Society of WA (Inc.), and the Tree Society (Inc.), Perth.

### Measuring vegetation condition for the Eremaean and Northern Botanical Provinces (Trudgen, 1991)

Condition	Description
Excellent	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement.
Very good	Some relatively slight signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement. For example, some signs of damage to tree trunks caused by repeated fire, the presence of some relatively non-aggressive weeds, or occasional vehicle tracks.
Good	More obvious signs of damage caused by human activity since European settlement, including some obvious impact on the vegetation structure such as that caused by low levels of grazing or slightly aggressive weeds.
Poor	Still retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it after very obvious impacts of human activities since European settlement, such as grazing, partial clearing, frequent fires or aggressive weeds.
Very poor	Severely impacted by grazing, very frequent fires, clearing or a combination of these activities. Scope for some regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. Usually with a number of weed species present including very aggressive species.
Completely degraded	Areas that are completely or almost completely without native species in the structure of their vegetation; i.e. areas that are cleared or 'parkland cleared' with their flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

## Appendix C. Sources of information

### C.1. GIS databases

Publicly available GIS Databases used (sourced from [www.data.wa.gov.au](http://www.data.wa.gov.au)):

- Clearing Regulations – Schedule One Areas (DWER-057)
- DBCA – Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia – Western Australia (DBCA-045)
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrographic Catchments – Catchments (DWER-028)
- Hydrography – Inland Waters – Waterlines
- Hydrography, Linear (DWER-031)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Pre-European Vegetation Statistics
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping – Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Soil Landscape Mapping – Rangelands (DPIRD-064)
- WA Now Aerial Imagery

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- Threatened Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened Fauna

- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

## C.2. References

- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (2023) Bureau of Meteorology Website – Climate Data Online, Millstream Station. Bureau of Meteorology. <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/> (Accessed 01 September 2023).
- Department of Environment Regulation (DER) (2014) *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation*. Perth. Available from: [https://www.der.wa.gov.au/images/documents/your-environment/native-vegetation/Guidelines/Guide2\\_assessment\\_native\\_veg.pdf](https://www.der.wa.gov.au/images/documents/your-environment/native-vegetation/Guidelines/Guide2_assessment_native_veg.pdf)
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) (2023) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. <https://espatial.dplh.wa.gov.au/AHIS/index.html?viewer=AHIS> (Accessed 01 September 2023).
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2023) NRInfo Digital Mapping. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Government of Western Australia. URL: <https://maps.agric.wa.gov.au/nrm-info/> (Accessed 01 September 2023).
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) (2021) Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits. Joondalup. Available from: [https://dwer.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Procedure\\_Native\\_vegetation\\_clearing\\_permits\\_v1.pdf](https://dwer.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Procedure_Native_vegetation_clearing_permits_v1.pdf)
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) (2023) Advice received in relation to Mining Proposal application REG ID 116513 related to this Clearing Permit Application CPS 10161/1. Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia, April 2023
- Eco Logical Australia (2023) Galah Rail Siding reconnaissance and targeted flora survey. Unpublished report prepared for Rio Tinto by Eco Logical Australia, March 2023.
- Trudgen, M.E. (1991) Vegetation condition scale in National Trust (WA) 1993 Urban Bushland Policy. National Trust of Australia (WA), Wildflower Society of WA (Inc.), and the Tree Society (Inc.), Perth.
- Rio Tinto (2023a) Cover Letter – Application for a Clearing Permit (Purpose Permit) – Galah Rail Siding Renewals Project – L47/310. Prepared by Rio Tinto to support CPS 10161/1, 21 April 2022.
- Rio Tinto (2023b) Native Vegetation Clearing Permit - Clearing Principles Assessment. Prepared by Rio Tinto, April 2023.

## 4. Glossary

### Acronyms:

<b>BC Act</b>	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> , Western Australia
<b>BoM</b>	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
<b>DAA</b>	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia (now DPLH)
<b>DAFWA</b>	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (now DPIRD)
<b>DCCEEW</b>	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australian Government
<b>DBCA</b>	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
<b>DER</b>	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DMIRS</b>	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia
<b>DMP</b>	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMIRS)
<b>DoEE</b>	Department of the Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW)
<b>DoW</b>	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DPaW</b>	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
<b>DPIRD</b>	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia
<b>DPLH</b>	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia
<b>DRF</b>	Declared Rare Flora (now known as Threatened Flora)
<b>DWER</b>	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
<b>EP Act</b>	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
<b>EPBC Act</b>	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Federal Act)
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information System
<b>ha</b>	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
<b>IBRA</b>	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union
<b>PEC</b>	Priority Ecological Community, Western Australia
<b>RIWI Act</b>	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> , Western Australia
<b>TEC</b>	Threatened Ecological Community

### Definitions:

{DBCA (2019) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia}:-

**T** Threatened species:

Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act).

**Threatened fauna** is that subset of 'Specially Protected Fauna' listed under schedules 1 to 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for Threatened Fauna.

**Threatened flora** is that subset of 'Rare Flora' listed under schedules 1 to 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for Threatened Flora.

The assessment of the conservation status of these species is based on their national extent and ranked according to their level of threat using IUCN Red List categories and criteria as detailed below.

**CR Critically endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be "*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 1 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for critically endangered fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for critically endangered flora.

**EN Endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be "*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 2 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for endangered fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for endangered flora.

**VU Vulnerable species**

Threatened species considered to be "*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for vulnerable fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for vulnerable flora.

**Extinct Species:**

**EX Extinct species**

Species where "*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*", and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

Published as presumed extinct under schedule 4 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for extinct fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for extinct flora.

**EW Extinct in the wild species**

Species that "*is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*", and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild. If listing of a species as extinct in the wild occurs, then a schedule will be added to the applicable notice.

**Specially protected species:**

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as Specially Protected species.

**MI Migratory species**

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Includes birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) and The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

Published as migratory birds protected under an international agreement under schedule 5 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

**CD Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)**

Fauna of special conservation need being species dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Published as conservation dependent fauna under schedule 6 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

**OS Other specially protected species**

Fauna otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Published as other specially protected fauna under schedule 7 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

**P Priority species:**

Possibly threatened species that do not meet survey criteria, or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of priority for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to their declaration as threatened fauna or flora.

Species that are adequately known, are rare but not threatened, or meet criteria for near threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species require regular monitoring.

Assessment of Priority codes is based on the Western Australian distribution of the species, unless the distribution in WA is part of a contiguous population extending into adjacent States, as defined by the known spread of locations.

**P1 Priority One - Poorly-known species**

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less) which are potentially at risk. All occurrences are either: very small; or on lands not managed for conservation, e.g. agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, road and rail reserves, gravel reserves and active mineral leases; or otherwise under threat of habitat destruction or degradation. Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. Such species are in urgent need of further survey.

**P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species**

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less), some of which are on lands managed primarily for nature conservation, e.g. national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other lands with secure tenure being managed for conservation. Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. Such species are in urgent need of further survey.

**P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species**

Species that are known from several locations, and the species does not appear to be under imminent threat, or from few but widespread locations with either large population size or significant remaining areas of apparently suitable habitat, much of it not under imminent threat. Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from several locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and known threatening processes exist that could affect them. Such species are in need of further survey.

**P4 Priority Four - Rare, Near Threatened and other species in need of monitoring**

(a) Rare. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed, or for which sufficient knowledge is available, and that are considered not currently threatened or in need of special protection but could be if present circumstances change. These species are usually represented on conservation lands.

(b) Near Threatened. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed and that are close to qualifying for vulnerable but are not listed as Conservation Dependent.

(c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.

**Principles for clearing native vegetation:**

- (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.
- (b) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.
- (d) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.
- (e) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.
- (f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.
- (g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.
- (h) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area.
- (i) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.
- (j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.