



# Clearing Permit Decision Report

## 1. Application details and outcomes

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	11177/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd
Application received:	7 July 2025
Application area:	0.4 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Access to and maintenance of a water bore
Method of clearing:	Mechanical clearing, blade down
Tenure:	Miscellaneous licence 47/310
Location (LGA area):	Shire of Ashburton
Colloquial name:	WARP 22

### 1.2. Description of clearing activities

Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 0.4 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 0.7 hectares, for the purpose of accessing and maintaining a water bore (Hamersley Iron, 2025). The project is located approximately 70 kilometres south south-east of Karratha, within the Shire of Ashburton (GIS Database).

The application is to allow for access and maintenance of the WARP 22 water bore which will include access to water bore, management of water bore and placement of a pipeline to water tank/s (Rio Tinto, 2025).

### 1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	14 April 2026
Decision area:	0.4 hectares of native vegetation

### 1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was submitted, accepted, assessed, and determined in accordance with sections 51E and 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE) advertised the application for a public comment for a period of 21 days, and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix A), relevant datasets (Appendix D), supporting information provided by the applicant (Appendix A) including the results of a flora and vegetation survey (AECOM, 2025), the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (Appendix B), proposed avoidance and minimisation measures (Section 3.1), relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (Section 3.3). The Delegated Officer also took into consideration the purpose of the clearing to facilitate the access and maintenance of a water bore.

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing may result in:

- the potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values; and
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable foraging habitat for six conservation significant fauna species.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing is unlikely to lead to appreciable land degradation or have long-term adverse impacts on the environmental values of the application area. The applicant has suitably demonstrated avoidance and minimisation measures.

The Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit subject to conditions to:

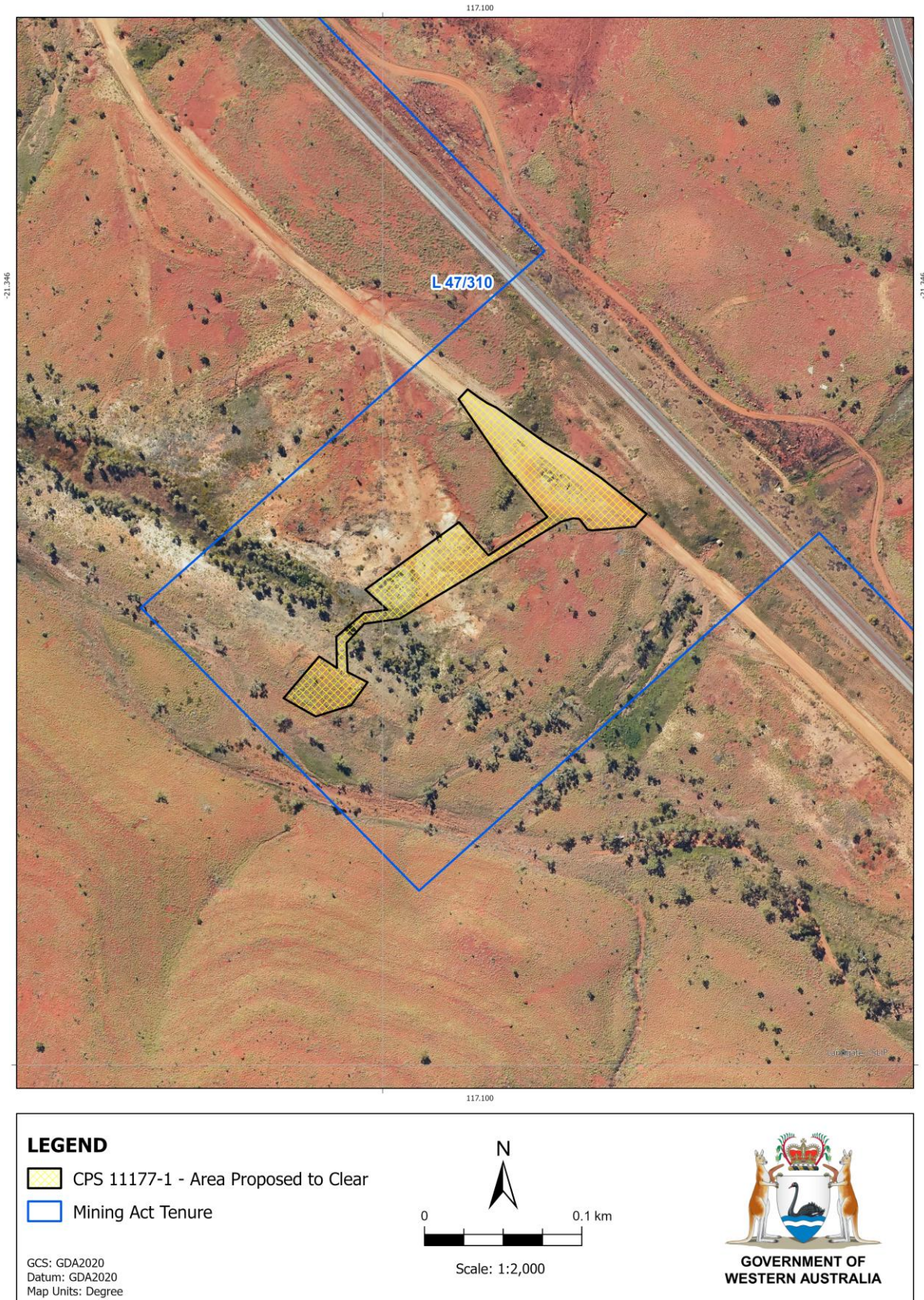
- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat

ahead of the clearing activity; and

- vegetation management condition to avoid the clearing of riparian vegetation and minimise the impacts of clearing on existing surface flows.

**1.5. Site map**

A site map of proposed clearing is provided in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1. Map of the application area. The yellow area indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit.**

## 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 (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 intergenerational equity
- 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)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act)

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 2021a)
- Technical guidance – *Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2020)

## 3. Detailed assessment of application

### 3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The Delegated Officer was satisfied that the applicant has made a reasonable effort to avoid and minimise potential impacts of the proposed clearing on environmental values. The following environmental management measures will be employed at the site (Rio Tinto, 2025):

- 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, shall be clean (weed, seed and propagule free) prior to coming to site;
- staying within the existing disturbance footprint on site where possible;
- all new disturbances are kept to a minimum;
- manage the sediment of stockpiled rail ballast and fill on site so that sediment is not allowed to enter the surrounding environment;
- inspect 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 on site;
- hydrocarbon spill response kits on site;
- no bulk hydrocarbons stored on site; and
- manage dust emissions.

### 3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

In assessing the application, the Delegated Officer has had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix A) and the extent to which the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological, conservation, or land and water resource values.

The assessment against the clearing principles (Appendix B) identified the impacts of the proposed clearing are limited, however the proposed clearing may pose a potential risk to biological values (conservation areas). The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions was contacted regarding the potential impacts of the proposed clearing on the Millstream-Chichester National Park, and there were no concerns or comments from DBCA on the proposed clearing.

Based on the 0.7 hectare size of the application area and proposed clearing of 0.4 hectares, there is unlikely to be a significant impact on environmental values from the proposed clearing.

The application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s.51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, and the proposed clearing is at variance with Principle (h), may be at variance with Principle (f), not likely to be at variance with Principles (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (g) and (i), and not at variance with Principle (j).

### 3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit application was advertised on 23 September 2025 by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

There is one native title claim (WC1999/014) over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant group. 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 is one registered Aboriginal Site of Significance located approximately 0.5 kilometres east of the application area, the Bullfrog Talu (ACH-00000630), and one lodged Aboriginal Site of Significance within the application area, Quarry and Factory (ACH-00023047) (DPLH, 2026). It is the proponent's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

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	<p>The area proposed to be cleared is a pocket of native vegetation within the Millstream Chichester National Park in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia (GIS Database). It is adjacent to the Rio Tinto Integrated Rail Network (IRN) running through the western extent of the Millstream Chichester National Park within the Chichester IBRA subregion (GIS Database). The application is located approximately 70 kilometres south south-east of Karratha</p> <p>Aerial imagery indicates the vegetation in the local area is concentrated along drainage lines and waterbodies, with the application area intersecting with one such vegetation concentration (GIS Database).</p> <p>The primary land use in the area is Crown land allocated to the Millstream Chichester National Park and Warlu Road tenure (GIS Database).</p>
Ecological linkage	According to available databases, the application area does not contain any known or mapped ecological linkages (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The application area is situated within the Millstream Chichester National Park proclaimed under the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i> (CALM Act) Section 5(1)(c) (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	<p>The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation association: 587: Chichester Plateau, Mosaic: hummock grasslands, open low tree-steppe; snappy gum over <i>Triodia wiseana</i>/hummock grasslands, shrub-steppe; kanji over <i>Triodia pungens</i> (GIS Database).</p> <p>A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by AECOM Australia Pty Ltd during June 2024. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the application area (AECOM, 2025):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ChApTw: <i>Triodia</i> hummock grasslands recorded on lower slopes adjacent to a minor flowline; and</li> <li>• EcScCc: <i>Eucalyptus</i> open woodland representing the minor flowline.</li> </ul>
Vegetation condition	The vegetation survey (AECOM, 2025) and aerial imagery (GIS Database) indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in 'completely degraded' to 'good' (Trudgen, 1991) condition. The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix C.
Climate and landform	The climate for the Pilbara region is semi-arid to tropical with an annual rainfall average of approximately 254.8 millilitres recorded at Roebourne Aero approximately 65 kilometres north of the application area (BoM, 2026; CALM, 2002; GIS Database). The application area is mapped within elevations of 310 to 320 metres Australian height datum (GIS Database).
Soil description and Land degradation risk	<p>The soil is mapped as a part of the following land system and soil descriptions (Van Vreeswyk et al., 2004; GIS Database).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capricorn Land System (282Cp)</b> Rugged sandstone hills, ridges, stony footslopes and interfluvies supporting low acacia shrublands or hard spinifex grasslands with scattered shrubs. Soils associated with this land system are stony soils, red shallow loams, red shallow sand mixed with red shallow loams, and river bed soils. Rugged terrain and lack of preferred vegetation for livestock, combined with the stoniness of the soils, make this land system resistant to erosion.</li> </ul>
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that there are no watercourses or waterbodies intersecting the application area (GIS Database). However, a minor non-perennial watercourse passes approximately 22 meters southwest of the application area. This watercourse supports the vegetation within and immediately adjacent to the application area.
Hydrogeography	<p>The application area is situated within the Harding Dam Catchment Public Drinking Water Source Area (GIS Database).</p> <p>The application area is located within the Pilbara Groundwater Area and the Pilbara Surface Water Area proclaimed under the <i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> (GIS Database).</p> <p>The nearest Wetland of National or International Importance are the Millstream Pools located approximately 25 kilometres south of the application area (GIS Database).</p> <p>The groundwater salinity is mapped as 500 to 1000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as marginal (GIS Database).</p>
Flora	There are records of 29 priority flora within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database). The 2024 AECOM survey of the application area did not locate any priority flora species within the application area (AECOM, 2025).
Ecological communities	There are no Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) or Priority Ecological Communities (PECs) within the application area. The closest recorded TEC/PEC is located less than one kilometre south of the application area:

Characteristic	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four plant assemblages of the Wona Land System (previously 'Cracking clays of the Chichester and Mungaroo Range'), P1.</li> </ul>
Fauna	<p>There are 25 records of conservation significant fauna within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database). The 2024 AECOM survey of the application area did not locate any conservation significant fauna species within the application area, but deemed that the following priority species are likely to utilise the following fauna habitats:</p> <p>Stony Plain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Pseudomys chapmani</i> (western pebble-mound mouse), P4; and</li> <li><i>Leggadina lakedownensis</i> (northern short-tailed mouse), P4.</li> </ul> <p>Minor Flowline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Falco hypoleucos</i> (grey falcon), VU.</li> </ul>
Fauna habitat	<p>Two fauna habitats were identified within the application area by the 2024 AECOM survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stony Plain Habitat characterised by scattered native shrubs over hummock grasses on lower slopes. Substrate is orange rock with clay loam underneath. Groundcover is moderate. Microhabitats are limited to the hummock grasses. Majority of this fauna habitat is directly adjacent to the rail and the rail access road where weeds are present. This habitat ranged from good to poor condition, dependant primarily on the proximity of vegetation to existing infrastructure; and</li> <li>Minor Drainage This habitat is characterised by native trees (<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> and <i>Melaleuca argentea</i>) along a minor bare creek bed. The substrate is predominantly rocky/cobbled with soil and organic matter often washed away in channel. Standing water may be present for a short period after significant rainfall events. Habitat connectivity is considered good along the drainage channel bed and in moderately dense vegetation on the banks. Fauna species are likely to utilise the open terrain as transient habitat to traverse between vegetated habitats. Microhabitats present include tree hollows, potential seasonal inundation and clearings that may support foraging and hunting. This habitat was considered to be in poor condition with high weed invasion and evidence of grazing.</li> </ul>

**A.2. Vegetation extent**

	Pre-European area (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Extent remaining (%)	Current extent in all DBCA managed land (ha)	Current extent in all DBCA Managed Land (proportion of pre-European extent) (%)
IBRA Bioregion - Pilbara	17,808,657.04	17,731,764.88	99.57	1,801,714.98	10.12
Beard vegetation associations - State					
Veg Assoc No.587	580,728.60	580,696.99	99.9	123,367.39	21.24
Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
Veg Assoc No. 587	580,728.60	580,696.99	99.99	123,367.39	21.24

Government of Western Australia (2019)

**A.3. Flora analysis table**

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above and relevant datasets (Appendix D.1), impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration (WAH, 1998; GIS Database).

The following conservation significant flora species have been recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
<b>Priority 1</b>			
<i>Tephrosia lithosperma</i>	N	<40	1
<i>Uvedalia clementii</i>	N	<40	10
<b>Priority 2</b>			
<i>Cladium procerum</i>	Y	<25	15
<i>Paspalidium retiglume</i>	N	<10	12
<i>Teucrium pilbaranum</i>	N	<25	21
<i>Trianthema sp. Python Pool (G.R. Guerin &amp; M.E. Trudgen GG 1023)</i>	N	<20	9
<b>Priority 3</b>			
<i>Dolichocarpa sp. Hamersley Station (A.A. Mitchell PRP 1479)</i>	N	<10	46
<i>Eriochloa fatmensis</i>	N	<45	18
<i>Euphorbia australis var. glabra</i>	N	<35	23
<i>Euphorbia inappendiculata var. inappendiculata</i>	N	<25	17
<i>Euphorbia stevenii</i>	N	<25	17
<i>Fimbristylis sieberiana</i>	Y	<30	30
<i>Glycine falcata</i>	N	<50	14
<i>Goodenia obscurata</i>	N	<30	29
<i>Indigofera rivularis</i>	N	<40	68
<i>Ipomoea racemigera</i>	N	<30	23
<i>Neptunia longipila</i>	N	<5	17
<i>Owenia acidula</i>	N	<35	14
<i>Pentalepis trichodesmoides subsp. hispida</i>	N	<20	15
<i>Solanum albobellatum</i>	N	<30	14
<i>Solanum sp. Red Hill (S. van Leeuwen et al. PBS 5415)</i>	N	<50	24
<i>Swainsona thompsoniana</i>	N	<20	33
<i>Terminalia supranitifolia</i>	N	<45	54
<i>Themeda sp. Hamersley Station (M.E. Trudgen 11431)</i>	N	<10	61
<i>Triodia basitricha</i>	N	<30	49
<i>Triodia pisoliticola</i>	N	<25	70
<i>Vigna triodiophila</i>	N	<35	21
<b>Priority 4</b>			
<i>Livistona alfredii</i>	N	<30	36
<i>Rhynchosia bungarensis</i>	N	<35	115

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

#### A.4. Fauna analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above and relevant datasets (Appendix D.1), impacts to the following conservation significant fauna required further consideration (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; DPIRD, 2026; GIS Database).

The following conservation significant fauna species have been recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
<b>Birds</b>			
<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> (common sandpiper)	MI	N	<25
<i>Arenaria interpres</i> (ruddy turnstone)	MI	N	<25
<i>Calidris acuminata</i> (sharp-tailed sandpiper)	MI	N	<45
<i>Calidris ruficollis</i> (red-necked stint)	MI	N	<45
<i>Falco hypoleucos</i> (grey falcon)	VU	Y	<40
<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i> (gull-billed tern)	MI	N	<40
<i>Glareola maldivarum</i> (oriental pratincole)	MI	N	<10
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> (Caspian tern)	MI	N	<40
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i> (whimbrel)	MI	N	<45
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i> (osprey)	MI	N	<45
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> (glossy ibis)	MI	N	<40
<i>Rostratula australis</i> (Australian painted snipe)	EN	N	<20
<i>Tringa glareola</i> (wood sandpiper)	MI	N	<45
<b>Fish</b>			
<i>Leiopotherapon aheneus</i> (Fortescue grunter)	P4	N	<30
<b>Invertebrates</b>			
<i>Antipodogomphus hodgkini</i> (Pilbara dragonfly)	P3	N	<30
<i>Nososticta pilbara</i> (Pilbara threadtail)	P1	N	<30
<b>Mammals</b>			
<i>Dasyurus hallucatus</i> (northern quoll)	EN	Y	<15
<i>Leggadina lakedownensis</i> (northern short-tailed mouse, Lakeland Downs mouse, kerakenga)	P4	Y	<10
<i>Macroderma gigas</i> (ghost bat)	VU	N	<30
<i>Pseudomys chapmani</i> (western pebble-mound mouse, ngadji)	P4	Y	<10
<i>Rhinonictes aurantia</i> (Pilbara form)(Pilbara leaf-nosed bat)	VU	N	<30
<b>Reptiles</b>			
<i>Anilius ganei</i> (Gane's blind snake (Pilbara))	P1	N	<30
<i>Lerista quadrivincula</i> (four-lined slider (Karratha))	P1	N	<50
<i>Liasis olivaceus barroni</i> (Pilbara olive python)	VU	Y	<30
<i>Notoscincus butleri</i> (lined soil-crevice skink (Dampier))	P4	Y	<15

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, MI: migratory, CD: conservation dependent, OS: other specially protected, P: priority

**A.5. Ecological community analysis table**

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above and relevant datasets (Appendix D.1), impacts to the following conservation significant ecological communities required further consideration.

Ecological communities recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).

Community name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Four plant assemblages of the Wona Land System (previously 'Cracking clays of the Chichester and Mungaroona Range').	P1	N	<1
Horseflat Land System of the Roebourne Plains	P3	N	<25
Kanjenjie Land System	P3	N	<30

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

**Appendix B. Assessment against the clearing principles**

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<b>Environmental value: biological values</b>		
<p><u>Principle (a):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity."</p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The area proposed to be cleared does not contain locally significant flora, fauna, fauna habitats or assemblages of plants. While it may provide suitable habitat for some priority species found within 50 kilometres of the application area, they have not been identified by the 2024 AECOM survey and the habitat found within the application area is well represented in the surrounding area.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (b):</u> "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."</p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The area proposed to be cleared does not contain significant habitat for the conservation significant fauna identified within 50 kilometres of the application area. The two habitat types identified within the application area, Minor Drainage and Stony Plain, may provide suitable foraging habitat for the following species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dasyurus hallucatus</i> (northern quoll), EN;</li> <li>• <i>Falco hypoleucos</i> (grey falcon), VU;</li> <li>• <i>Leggadina lakedownensis</i> (northern short-tailed mouse, Lakeland Downs mouse, kerakenga), P4;</li> <li>• <i>Pseudomys chapmani</i> (western pebble-mound mouse, ngadji), P4;</li> <li>• <i>Liasis olivaceus barroni</i> (Pilbara olive python), VU; and</li> <li>• <i>Notoscincus butleri</i> (lined soil-crevice skink (<i>Dampier</i>)), P4.</li> </ul> <p>Any potential impacts to these species if present within the application area can be minimised by the implementation of a slow directional clearing condition.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (c):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora."</p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>No known threatened flora species have been identified within the application area or its surrounds (AECOM, 2025; GIS Database).</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (d):</u> "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."</p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) located within or in close proximity to the application area (GIS Database).</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
A flora and vegetation survey of the application area did not identify any species or vegetation assemblages representative of any known TECs (AECOM, 2025).		
<b>Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas</b>		
<p><b>Principle (e):</b> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The extent of the mapped vegetation type in the local area is consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not considered to be part of a significant ecological linkage in the local area.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><b>Principle (h):</b> <i>“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></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The application area is within the Millstream Chichester National Park, and the proposed clearing may have an impact on the environmental values of this conservation area.</p> <p>The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) was contacted for advice regarding the proposed clearing within this conservation area, and after their review there are no comments or concerns regarding the proposed clearing (DBCA, 2026).</p> <p>Based on the proposed clearing of 0.4 hectares within an area of 0.7 hectares, and the absence of conservation significant flora or fauna species within the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to significantly impact the environmental value of this conservation area.</p>	At variance	No
<b>Environmental value: land and water resources</b>		
<p><b>Principle (f):</b> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>There are no permanent water courses or wetlands recorded within the application area (GIS Database). There is one minor non-perennial watercourse located approximately 22 metres south west of the application area, and aerial imagery indicates that vegetation growing in the south west section of the application area is growing in association with this drainage line (GIS Database). As a result, the proposed clearing may be at variance with this principle. Potential impacts to vegetation associated with this drainage line can be minimised by the implementation of a vegetation management condition.</p>	May be at variance	No
<p><b>Principle (g):</b> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The application area is mapped within the Capricorn land system, which is considered resistant to erosion (Van Vreeswyk et al, 2004; GIS Database). As such the proposed clearing is unlikely to result in appreciable land degradation.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><b>Principle (i):</b> <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.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The application area is situated within the Harding Dam Catchment, a Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) listed as Priority 1 (P1) in 1999 (DWER, 1999; GIS Database). The Harding Dam Water Reserve drinking water source protection plan – WRP 15 was published in 1999 to help protect the quality of water (Government of Western Australia, 1999).</p> <p>While this is a P1 PDWSA, the application area only covers 0.7 hectares with the proposed clearing removing 0.4 hectares of native vegetation. Additionally, the</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<p>proponent has advised that the proposed clearing will avoid the Minor Drainage habitat vegetation and avoid large trees where possible.</p> <p>The application was referred to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, and advice was received from DWER regarding the Harding Dam Catchment PDWSA, advising that the proposed clearing is considered low risk to the Harding Dam Water Reserve (DWER, 2026).</p> <p>As such, the proposed clearing is unlikely to significantly impact the Harding Dam Catchment PDWSA. Potential impacts to the Harding Dam Catchment can be minimised by the implementation of a vegetation management condition.</p> <p>The groundwater salinity in the application area is marginal, ranging from 500 to 1,000 milligrams/litre total dissolved solids (GIS Database). The proposed clearing is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of underground water.</p>		
<p><b>Principle (i):</b> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The application area occurs within the semi-arid to tropical Pilbara region, receiving an average rainfall of 254.8 millilitres recorded at the Roebourne Aero in 2025. Drainage lines in the area are dry for most of the year, only flowing briefly immediately following significant rainfall (CALM, 2002).</p> <p>There are no permanent water courses or waterbodies within the application area (GIS Database). Seasonal drainage lines are common in the region, with one drainage line intersecting the application area as recorded by the 2024 AECOM survey, and temporary localised flooding may occur briefly following heavy rainfall events. However, the proposed clearing is unlikely to increase the incidence or intensity of natural flooding events.</p>	Not at variance	No

**Appendix C. 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 D. Sources of information**

**D.1. GIS datasets**

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

- Cadastre (Polygon) (LGATE-217)
- Clearing Instruments Activities (Areas Approved to Clear) (DWER-076)
- Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Clearing Regulations - Schedule One Areas (DWER-057)
- DBCA - Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA - Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- DBCA Fire History (DBCA-060)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- HIR Carbon Sequestration Projects (DPLH-072)
- Hydrographic Catchments - Basins (DWER-027)
- Hydrographic Catchments - Catchments (DWER-028)
- Hydrographic Catchments - Divisions (DWER-029)
- Hydrographic Catchments - Subcatchments (DWER-030)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- IBSA Survey Details (DWER-118)
- IOL - Carbon and Plantation (LGATE-340)
- Kwinana - Atmospheric Waste Miscellaneous Areas (DWER-064)
- Kwinana - Atmospheric Waste Policy Boundary (DWER-065)
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Localities (LGATE-234)
- Medium Scale Topo Contour (Line) (LGATE-015)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- Threatened and Priority Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened and Priority Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened and Priority Fauna
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

## D.2. References

- AECOM Australia Pty Ltd (AECOM) (2025) AR-23-18419 – Flora, Vegetation and Fauna Habitat Assessment. Prepared for Rio Tinto Iron Ore, by AECOM, January 2025.
- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (2019) Bureau of Meteorology Website – Groundwater Information – Average Salinity. Bureau of Meteorology. <https://www.bom.gov.au/water/groundwater/insight/metadata.shtml> (Accessed 16 February 2026).
- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (2026) Bureau of Meteorology Website – Climate Data Online, Roebourne Aero (Number 004090). Bureau of Meteorology. <https://reg.bom.gov.au/climate/data/> (Accessed 16 February 2026).
- Conservation and Land Management (CALM) (2002) A Biodiversity Audit of Western Australia's 53 Biogeographic Subregions in 2002. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) *National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005*, Canberra.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2008) Species Profile and Threats Database. Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia. <https://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/sprat.pl> (Accessed 16 February 2026).
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA, 2026) Advice received in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 11177/1. Conservation and Developments Management Branch, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia, April 2026.
- Department of Environment Regulation (DER) (2014) *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation*. Perth. [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) (2026) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. <https://espatial.dplh.wa.gov.au/ACHIS/index.html?viewer=ACHIS> (Accessed 16 February 2026).
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2026a) NRInfo Digital Mapping. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Government of Western Australia. <https://dpiird.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=662e8cbf2def492381fc915aaf3c6a0f> (Accessed 16 February 2026).
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2026) Western Australian Organism List. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Government of Western Australia. <https://www.dpiird.wa.gov.au/online-tools/western-australian-organism-list/> (Accessed 16 February 2026).
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) (2026) Advice received in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 11177/1. Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia, October 2025.
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2016) Technical Guidance - Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment. [http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies\\_and\\_Guidance/EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Flora%20and%20Vegetation%20survey\\_Dec13.pdf](http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies_and_Guidance/EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Flora%20and%20Vegetation%20survey_Dec13.pdf)
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2020) Technical Guidance – Terrestrial Fauna Surveys. [https://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies\\_and\\_Guidance/2020.09.17%20-%20EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Vertebrate%20Fauna%20Surveys%20-%20Final.pdf](https://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies_and_Guidance/2020.09.17%20-%20EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Vertebrate%20Fauna%20Surveys%20-%20Final.pdf)
- Government of Western Australia (1999) Harding Dam Water Reserve – Drinking water source protection plan, May 1999. Available from: <https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2022-04/Harding-Dam-water-source-protection-plan-WRP-15.pdf>
- Government of Western Australia (2019) 2018 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of March 2019. WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. <https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics>
- Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd (2025) Clearing permit application form, CPS 11177/1, received 7 July 2025.
- Rio Tinto (2025), supporting documentation received in relation to Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd Clearing Permit Application CPS 11177/1. Rio Tinto, Western Australia.
- 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.
- Van Vreeswyk, A.M.E., Payne, A.L., Leighton, K.A. and Hennig, P. (2004) An inventory and condition survey of the Pilbara Region, Western Australia. Technical Bulletin No. 92. Department of Agriculture, South Perth, Western Australia.
- Western Australian Herbarium (WAH) (1998-) FloraBase - the Western Australian Flora. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia. <https://florabase.dbca.wa.gov.au/> (Accessed 16 February 2026).

## 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>DEMIRS</b>	Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now DMPE)
<b>DER</b>	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DMIRS</b>	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia (now DMPE)
<b>DMP</b>	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMPE)
<b>DMPE</b>	Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration
<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> (Commonwealth 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:**

**DBCAs (2023) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia:**

#### **Threatened species**

**T** 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 the species of fauna that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

**Threatened flora** is the species of flora that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

The assessment of the conservation status of threatened species is in accordance with the BC Act listing criteria and the requirements of [Ministerial Guideline Number 1](#) and [Ministerial Guideline Number 2](#) that adopts the use of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [Red List of Threatened Species Categories and Criteria](#), and is based on the national distribution of the species.

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **Extinct species**

Listed by order of the Minister as extinct under section 23(1) of the BC Act as extinct or extinct in the wild.

#### **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).

#### **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.

#### **Specially protected species**

**SP 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).

Migratory species include birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) or 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.

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

Species of special conservation need that are 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).

Currently only fauna are listed as species of special conservation interest.

**OS Other specially protected species**

Species 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).

Currently only fauna are listed as species otherwise in need of special protection.

**Priority species****P Priority species**

Priority is not a listing category under the BC Act. The Priority Flora and Fauna lists are maintained by the department and are published on the department's website.

All fauna and flora are protected in WA following the provisions in Part 10 of the BC Act. The protection applies even when a species is not listed as threatened or specially protected, and regardless of land tenure (State managed land (Crown land), private land, or Commonwealth land).

Species that may possibly be threatened species that do not meet the criteria for listing under the BC Act because of insufficient survey 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 prioritisation for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to potential listing as threatened.

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

Assessment of priority status 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 – known from few locations, none on conservation lands**

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, for example, 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 for threatened listing and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

**P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, some on conservation lands**

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, for example, 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 for threatened listing and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

**P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species – known from several locations**

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. These species need 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 a conservation dependent specially protected species.
- (c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species or lists of conservation dependent or other specially protected species, during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.
- (d) Other species in need of monitoring.

**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.