



# Clearing Permit Decision Report

## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 5926/6  
Permit type: Purpose Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd

### 1.3. Property details

Property: Iron Ore (Mount Newman) Agreement Act 1964, Mineral Lease 244SA (AML 70/244)  
Iron Ore (McCamey's Monster) Agreement Authorisation Act 1972, Mining Lease 266SA (AM 70/266)  
Miscellaneous Licence 52/199

Local Government Area: Shire of East Pilbara

Colloquial name: Western Ridge Exploration Project

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
400		Mechanical Removal	Mineral Exploration, Hydrogeological Investigations, Creek Diversion, Geotechnical Investigations and Associated Works

### 1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant  
Decision Date: 2 April 2020

## 2. Site Information

### 2.1. Existing environment and information

#### 2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

**Vegetation Description** The following two Beard vegetation associations have been broadly mapped within the existing clearing permit area:

18: Low woodland; mulga (*Acacia aneura*); and  
82: Hummock grasslands, low tree steppe; snappy gum over *Triodia wiseana* (GIS Database).

A large-scale flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the original permit boundary (CPS 5926/1) and its surrounds in May and August 2010. During June 2014, a Level 2 flora and vegetation survey was conducted, covering the additional areas that were added to the permit under amendments CPS 5926/2 and 5926/3. A total of 28 vegetation associations from 12 broad floristic communities have been mapped within the existing permit area (CPS 5926/5) (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2016; 2019), and these are detailed in previous versions of the decision report.

The whole of the approximately 89 hectare amendment application area is broadly mapped as Beard vegetation association 82: Hummock grasslands, low tree steppe; snappy gum over *Triodia wiseana* (GIS Database).

Flora and vegetation surveys have recorded the following five vegetation associations within the amendment application area (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019; Biologic, 2019):

**Acacia low open woodland (SP):** Low open woodland of *Acacia aptaneura*, *Acacia ?ayersiana* (hybrid) and *Acacia ?incurvaneura* over tall to mid scattered shrubs of *Acacia rhodophloia* and *Senna artemisioides* subsp. *helmsii* over mid scattered hummock grasses of *Triodia pungens* and *Triodia wiseana* on red clay loam on stony plains;

**Themeda mid tussock grassland (FP):** Mid open tussock grassland of *Themeda triandra* and *\*Cenchrus ciliaris* with mid to tall open shrubland of *Acacia dictyophleba*, *Acacia bivenosa* and *Acacia inaequilatera* with low scattered trees of *Eucalyptus gamophylla*, *Corymbia hamersleyana* and *Eucalyptus xerothermica* on red sandy clay loam on drainage areas / floodplains;

**Themeda mid tussock grassland (ME):** Mid tussock grassland of *Themeda triandra*, *\*Cenchrus ciliaris* and *Eulalia aurea* with mid to tall open shrubland of *Petalostylis labicheoides*, *Acacia pyrifolia* and *Acacia maitlandii* with low scattered trees of *Eucalyptus xerothermica*, *Acacia ?incurvaneura* and *Corymbia hamersleyana* on red silty clay loam on medium drainage lines;

**Triodia mid open hummock grassland (HS):** Mid open hummock grassland of *Triodia wiseana* and *Triodia brizoides* with mid to tall open shrubland of *Acacia bivenosa*, *Acacia inaequilatera* and *Eremophila fraseri* subsp.

*fraseri* over low scattered shrubs of *Acacia spondylophylla* on red silty loam on hillslopes, hillcrest / upper hillslopes and undulating low hills; and

**Triodia mid open hummock grassland (HC):** Mid hummock grassland of *Triodia wiseana*, *Triodia brizoides* and *Triodia pungens* with mid open shrubland of *Acacia inaequilatera*, *Acacia bivenosa* and *Acacia ?adsurgens* x *rhodophloia* on red silty loam on hillcrests / upper hillslopes and undulating low hills.

\*indicates introduced species

<b>Clearing Description</b>	Western Ridge Exploration Project. BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd (BHP Billiton Iron Ore) proposes to clear up to 400 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 4,521 hectares, for the purpose of mineral exploration, hydrogeological investigations, creek diversion, geotechnical investigations and associated works. The project is located immediately south-west of BHP Billiton Iron Ore's existing Mount Whaleback mining operations, approximately five kilometres south-west of Newman, in the Shire of East Pilbara.
<b>Vegetation Condition</b>	Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery, 1994).  To:  Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994).
<b>Comment</b>	Clearing permit CPS 5926/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (now the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) on 1 May 2014 and authorised the clearing of 220 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 3,660 hectares.  Amended permit CPS 5926/2 was granted on 4 December 2014, increasing the amount of clearing authorised to 300 hectares, increasing the permit boundary to approximately 4,379 hectares, and extending the permit duration to 30 November 2024.  Amended permit CPS 5926/3 was granted on 18 February 2016, increasing the permit boundary to approximately 4,432 hectares, there was no change to the amount of clearing authorised.  Amended permit CPS 5926/4 was granted on 16 June 2016, increasing the amount of clearing authorised to 308 hectares, within the same permit boundary, and including "creek diversion" in the authorised clearing purposes.  Amended permit CPS 5926/5 was granted on 24 October 2019, increasing the amount of clearing authorised to 375 hectares, removing exclusion zones around populations of <i>Calotis latiuscula</i> as it had been removed from the Priority flora list, and extending the permit duration to 30 November 2029.  On 18 November 2019, the Permit Holder applied to amend CPS 5926/5 to increase the amount of clearing authorised from 375 hectares to 400 hectares, and increase the permit boundary to include Miscellaneous Licence 52/199.

### 3. Assessment of application against Clearing Principles

#### Comments

BHP Billiton Iron Ore has applied to amend the permit to increase the area of clearing authorised from 375 hectares to 400 hectares, and extend the permit boundary by approximately 89 hectares. The amendment extends a section of the southern boundary of the existing permit area further to the south, to incorporate the whole of Miscellaneous Licence 52/199. The additional 25 hectares of clearing will allow for the diversion of a minor ephemeral unnamed creek line (referred to by BHP Billiton Iron Ore as "Southern Creek"), and will facilitate future development activities at Orebody 35 (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019).

There are no permanent watercourses or wetlands within the amendment application area. A few minor ephemeral drainage lines occur within the amendment application area (GIS Database). The "Southern Creek" will be diverted from its natural course by the construction of a diversion bund and drain. The diversion of the creek line will occur at a point upstream of the proposed Orebody 35 mine pit, and water flows will be redirected downstream into a minor unnamed tributary of the Fortescue River (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2016).

BHP Billiton Iron Ore (2016) reports that the vegetation downstream of the proposed diversion point consists of *Acacia* low woodland, which is not considered to be riparian vegetation and is widespread throughout the permit area. As the creek line is dry for most of the year and the vegetation community is not restricted to the area surrounding the creek line, the vegetation is unlikely to be wholly dependent on water from creek flows.

As the application area includes water courses, the proposed clearing is at variance to Principle (f). However, as minor ephemeral watercourses are common and widespread in the Pilbara region, the environmental impact of the proposed clearing of native vegetation growing in association with watercourses is expected to be minimal in a regional context. The environmental impacts from the diversion of the creek line will be managed under a Mining Proposal to be assessed by DMIRS under the *Mining Act 1978* and a Bed and Banks Permit to be assessed by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act).

The application area occurs within the Hamersley subregion of the Pilbara Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) bioregion (GIS Database). The amendment application area is broadly mapped as Beard vegetation association 82, which is consistent with the majority of the previous permit area (GIS Database). Approximately 99% of the pre-European extent of Beard vegetation association 82 remains uncleared at both the state and bioregional level (Government of Western Australia, 2019). Hence, the vegetation proposed to be cleared does not represent a significant remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.

There are no conservation areas within or in close proximity to the application area (GIS Database). No flora species of conservation significance, or Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities have been recorded within the amendment application area (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019; GIS Database), and the amendment area is not likely to represent an area of greater biodiversity than the previous permit area or surrounding areas.

Ten weed species have been recorded within the amendment area, however none of these weeds are listed as a declared pest under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019). Weeds have the potential to out-compete native flora species and reduce the biodiversity of an area, and care should be taken to prevent the introduction or spread of weeds in the application area. Potential impacts to biodiversity as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the continued implementation of the existing weed management condition on the permit.

The following two fauna habitats have been recorded within the amendment application area (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019):

- **Crest/Slope:** More open and structurally simple than other fauna habitats, and dominated by varying species of spinifex. A common feature of these habitats is a rocky substrate, often with exposed bedrock, and skeletal red soils. These are usually dominated by *Eucalyptus* woodlands, *Acacia* and *Grevillea* scrublands and *Triodia* spp. low hummock grasslands;
- **Drainage Area:** Characterised by *Eucalyptus xerothermica* and *Corymbia hamersleyana* woodland over broad-leafed *Acacia* shrubland on sandy loam soils sometimes with exposed rocky areas. These areas can have high vegetation density, complexity and diversity, and often have deeper and richer soils than other fauna habitats. Grasses tend to be dominated by tussock grasses rather than spinifex, or the weed Buffel Grass \**Cenchrus ciliaris*.

These fauna habitat types are widely represented within the previous permit area and surrounding areas (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019; GIS Database). Four fauna species of conservation significance have been recorded within the amendment application area or the existing permit area, and several others have the potential to occur (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019). Some fauna species of conservation significance may forage through the amendment application area, however, the majority of these species are wide ranging (mostly birds), and none are likely to be specifically dependant on the vegetation proposed to be cleared within the amendment application area. The additional 25 hectares of proposed clearing is unlikely to have any significant impact on the availability of fauna habitat at a local or regional scale.

The amendment area falls within the Boolgeeda and Rocklea land systems, which also occur within the previous permit area (GIS Database). These land systems are considered to have a low erosion risk (Van Vreeswyk et al., 2004). The continued implementation of the existing staged clearing condition on the permit may further minimise the risk of land degradation, however the additional twenty five hectares of proposed clearing is unlikely to result in appreciable land degradation.

Approximately half of the amendment application area falls within the Newman Water Reserve, a Priority 1 Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) (GIS Database). DWER (2019) has advised that the proposed clearing of native vegetation for mining related activities is a compatible land use within the PDWSA, and can be adequately managed to reduce risks to the PDWSA, provided that activities are undertaken in accordance with relevant DWER water quality protection guidelines and notes. The proponent has confirmed that all DWER water quality protection guidelines and notes related to activities within a PDWSA will be adhered to and all necessary RIWI Act approvals will be obtained from DWER (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019). The proposed clearing of native vegetation is unlikely to significantly impact surface or underground water quality, and water management measures associated with the creek diversion will ensure that the incidence or intensity of flooding is not increased (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019).

The vegetation associations, landforms, and fauna habitat types occurring within the amendment area are similar to those occurring within the previously approved permit area, and are well represented in the region (BHP Billiton Iron Ore, 2019; GIS Database). The additional 25 hectares of clearing is unlikely to result in any significant additional environmental impacts.

The amendment application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s.51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Environmental information has been reviewed, and the assessment of the proposed clearing against the clearing principles remains consistent with the assessment contained in previous versions of the decision report.

DWER (2019)  
Government of Western Australia (2019)  
Van Vreeswyk et al. (2004)

GIS Database:

- DPaW Tenure
- Hydrography, Lakes
- Hydrography, Linear
- IBRA Australia
- Imagery
- Landsystem Rangelands
- Pre-European Vegetation
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities boundaries
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities buffers
- Threatened and Priority Flora
- Threatened Fauna

## Planning Instrument, Native Title, previous EPA decision or other matter.

### Comments

There is one Native Title Claim (WC2005/06) over the area under application (DPLH, 2020). This claim has been determined by the Federal Court on behalf of the claimant group. However, the 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 existing permit area and none within the amendment area (DPLH, 2020). 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.

The amendment application was advertised on 9 December 2019 by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

**Methodology** DPLH (2020)

## 4. References

- BHP Billiton Iron Ore (2016) Application to Amend CPS 5926/3: Western Ridge Exploration. Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Amendment Application Supporting Document. BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd, Western Australia, April 2016.
- BHP Billiton Iron Ore (2019) Application to Amend NVCP CPS 5926/5: Western Ridge. Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Application Supporting Document. BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd, Western Australia, November 2019.
- Biologic (2019) Western Ridge Detailed Flora and Vegetation Survey. Report prepared for BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd, by Biologic Environmental Survey Pty Ltd, June 2019.
- DPLH (2020) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. <http://maps.daa.wa.gov.au/AHIS/> (Accessed 6 March 2020).
- DWER (2019) Advice received in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 5926/6. Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia, December 2019.
- 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, Perth. <https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics>
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- 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.

## 5. Glossary

### Acronyms:

<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>DBCA</b>	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
<b>DEC</b>	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (now DBCA and DWER)
<b>DoEE</b>	Department of the Environment and Energy, Australian Government
<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>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
<b>DoE</b>	Department of the Environment, Australian Government (now DoEE)
<b>DoW</b>	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DPaW</b>	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
<b>DSEWPaC</b>	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (now DoEE)
<b>DWER</b>	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
<b>EP Act</b>	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , 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 indigenous to Western Australia.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare 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 clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.