



# Clearing Permit Decision Report

## 1. Application details and outcome

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	8293/2
Permit type:	Purpose Permit
Applicant name:	Big Bell Gold Operations Pty Ltd
Application received:	8 November 2023
Application area:	26.87 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral production
Method of clearing:	Mechanical Removal
Tenure:	Mining Lease 21/10 Mining Lease 21/89 Mining Lease 21/97 Mining Lease 21/122 Mining Lease 21/123
Location (LGA area/s):	Shire of Cue
Colloquial name:	Kinsella Project

### 1.2. Description of clearing activities

Big Bell Gold Operations Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 26.87 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 74 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production.

The application is to allow for native vegetation clearing for future mining activity development, exploration activities and flexibility in making modification to new and existing operational supporting infrastructure.

Clearing permit CPS 8293/1 was granted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) on 7 February 2019 and was valid from 2 March 2019 to 2 March 2024. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 26.87 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 74 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production.

On 8 November 2023, the Permit Holder applied to amend CPS 8293/1 to extend the permit duration to 2 March 2029. The area of clearing authorised and the permit boundaries are to remain unchanged.

### 1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	29 February 2024
Decision area:	26.87 hectares of native vegetation

### 1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was made in accordance with section 51KA(1) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) and was received by the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) on 8 November 2023. DEMIRS advertised the application for public comment for a period of 7 days, and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics, relevant datasets, supporting information provided by the applicant including the results of a flora and vegetation survey and fauna survey, the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act, and any other matters considered relevant to the

assessment. The assessment identified that the proposed clearing is unlikely to have a significant impact on habitat for flora or fauna.

After consideration of the available information, 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 grant a clearing permit with standard avoid and minimise, weed hygiene, and reporting conditions.

## **2. Assessment of application**

### **2.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures**

The applicant has advised that the proposed clearing will be limited to the already approved areas under CPS 8293/1 (Westgold, 2023).

While no further evidence of avoidance or mitigation measures was provided to support the application, noting the low impact of the clearing it was deemed that no further consideration is required to minimise impacts on environmental values. Impacts from the proposed clearing can be managed via minimisation and mitigation conditions on the clearing permit.

### **2.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values**

A total of 2.29 hectares have been cleared under CPS 8293/1 (Westgold, 2023). The Permit holder has applied for an amendment to extend the permit duration of the clearing permit by five years to allow for the clearing of the remaining 24.58 hectares on the clearing permit. All of the application area showed evidence of disturbance from mining and exploration activities, as well as goat grazing and trampling (Maia Environmental Consultancy *pers. comm.*, November 30, 2018). Although the initial flora and vegetation survey conducted by Western Botanical is from 2003, Maia Environmental Consultancy conducted a desktop review in October 2018 to confirm that the findings of the Western Botanical (2003) survey were still accurate (Westgold, 2018). The results of this desktop review were shared with Big Bell Gold Operations Pty Ltd via email.

The assessment against the ten clearing principles identified that the native vegetation proposed to be cleared is not likely to provide habitat for conservation significant flora and fauna; does not contain or form a part of a Threatened or Priority Ecological Community; or impact on any riparian vegetation. At the bioregion (Murchison) and State level, over 95 per cent of the pre-European vegetation extent remains (Government of Western Australia, 2019). The nearest conservation area is located over 5.8 kilometres southwest of the application area (GIS Database) and the proposed clearing is not likely to impact on the environmental values of this area. The proposed clearing is not likely to lead to appreciable land degradation or impacts surface water quality, groundwater quality or lead to increase in flooding (GIS Database).

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance with clearing principle (e) and is not likely to be at variance with the remaining clearing principles.

The extension of duration of 5 years on the existing clearing permit is unlikely to result any significant change to the environmental impacts of the proposed clearing.

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 decision report CPS 8293/1.

### **2.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters**

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on 24 November 2023 by the Department of Energy, 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 (WCD2021/008) over the area under application (DPLH, 2024). This claim has been determined by the Federal Court on behalf of the claimant group (Yugunga-Nya). 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 no registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (DPLH, 2024). 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.

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.

## Appendix A. Site characteristics

### A.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The area proposed to be cleared is part of an expansive tract of native vegetation in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia. It is surrounded by the landscape of the Murchison bioregion and mining developments (GIS Database).
Ecological linkage	According to aerial imagery, the application area is not located within any formal or informal ecological linkage (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The application area is not located within any known or mapped conservation areas. The closest record is an Unallocated Crown Land with Department Interest located 5.8 kilometres southwest of the application area (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	<p>The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation association: 313: Succulent steppe with open scrub; scattered <i>Acacia sclerosperma</i> &amp; <i>A. victoriae</i> over bluebush (GIS Database).</p> <p>A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by Western Botanical during May, 2003. This survey recorded a chenopod plain dominated by <i>Maireana pyramidata</i>, <i>M. georgei</i>, <i>Eremophila lachnocalyx</i> and <i>Frankenia</i> sp. in the lower stratum to 0.8 metres with occasional emergent <i>Hakea preissii</i>, <i>Acacia synchronicia</i> (formerly <i>A. victoriae</i>) and <i>A. aneura</i> to 3 metres. A low stony rise to the south of the northern pit area supports scattered <i>Eremophila pantonii</i> to 2 metres while the area immediately south of the pit area supports scattered <i>Eremophila fraseri</i> shrubs to 2 metres (Western Botanical, 2003).</p>
Vegetation condition	<p>The vegetation survey (Western Botanical, 2003) and aerial imagery indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in Degraded to Completely Degraded (Trudgen, 1991) condition.</p> <p>The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix B. Representative photos are available in Appendix C.</p>
Climate and landform	The application area falls within an arid zone with an average annual rainfall (Cue Station) of 232.7 millimetres (BoM, 2024).
Soil description	<p>The soil within the application area is mapped as soils units BE2 and BE6 (GIS Database). These soil units are described by Northcote et al. (1960-68) as:</p> <p><b>BE2:</b> Generally undulating terrain on granites with rocky granitic hills, bosses and tors, some breakaways, and a surface stone mantle: chief soils seem to be shallow earthy loams underlain by a red-brown hardpan. The red-brown hardpan is often exposed in eroded sites and elsewhere is present between 8 and 40 inches.</p> <p><b>BE6:</b> Extensive flat and gently sloping plains, which sometimes have a surface cover of gravels and on which redbrown hardpan frequently outcrops: chief soils are shallow earthy loams.</p>
Land degradation risk	The application area falls within the Austin and Jundee land systems (DPIRD, 2024). The Austin land system is described as saline stony plains with low rises and drainage foci supporting low halophytic shrublands with scattered mulga; occurs mainly adjacent to lakes Austin and Annean, below greenstone hill systems. Drainage tracts are susceptible to erosion (Curry et al., 1994). The Jundee land system is described as hardpan wash plains with variable dark gravelly mantling and weakly groved vegetation; minor sandy banks; supports scattered mulga shrublands. concentrated drainage zones are mildly susceptible to accelerated erosion when degraded; hardpan plains otherwise not normally susceptible to erosion unless severely degraded (Curry et al., 1994).
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that one minor, non-perennial watercourse transects the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database), however this ephemeral drainage channel will remain unaffected by clearing activities (Westgold, 2018).

Characteristic	Details
Hydrogeography	The application area falls within the East Murchison Groundwater Area which is legislated by the RIWI Act 1914 and contains a mapped groundwater salinity of 1,000-3,000 milligrams per litre totally dissolved solids, which is described as brackish (GIS Database).
Flora	There were no records of Threatened or Priority flora species within the application area (Western Botanical, 2003; GIS Database).
Ecological communities	The Austin Land System Priority 3 Ecological Community is located approximately 20 metres to the north of the application area (GIS Database). Kinsella Project activities will not impact on this PEC (Western Botanical, 2003). There are no Threatened Ecological Communities associated with the Austin or Jundee land systems (GIS Database).
Fauna	There are no records of any conservation significant fauna species within the application area (GIS Database).
Fauna habitat	The fauna habitat within the application area is an open stony plain (quartz) which consist of mixed low open shrubland over scattered tussock grassland over white quartz. No priority fauna species, including Short Range Endemic fauna, are described as possible within this habitat (Outback Ecology, 2012).

## Appendix B. Vegetation condition rating

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. Photographs of vegetation



**Figure 1.** Northern end of the northern pit area at the Kinsella site, note old workings (Western Botanical, 2003).



**Figure 2.** Southern edge of the northern Kinsella pit, vegetation in good condition (Western Botanical, 2003).



**Figure 3.** Southern Kinsella pit area looking northwards towards the old workings visible in Figure 1 (Western Botanical, 2003).



**D.1 GIS datasets**

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

- Aboriginal Heritage Places (DPLH-001)
- Cadastre Address (LGATE-002)
- 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)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Regional Parks (DBCA-026)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- ICMS (Incident Complaints Management System) – Points and Polygons
- Threatened Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened Fauna
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

**D.2. References**

- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (2024) Bureau of Meteorology Website – Climate Data Online, Cue Station. Bureau of Meteorology. <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/> (Accessed 15 February 2024).
- Curry, P J, Payne, A L, Leighton, K A, Hennig, P, and Blood, D A. (1994), An inventory and condition survey of the Murchison River catchment, Western Australia. Department of Agriculture, Perth. Technical Bulletin 84.
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) (2024) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. <https://espatial.dplh.wa.gov.au/AHIS/index.html?viewer=AHIS> (Accessed 19 February 2024).
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2024) NRInfo Digital Mapping. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Government of Western Australia. URL: <https://maps.agric.wa.gov.au/nrm-info/> (Accessed 16 February 2024).
- 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>
- Northcote, K. H. with Beckmann G G, Bettenay E., Churchward H. M., van Dijk D. C., Dimmock G. M., Hubble G. D., Isbell R. F., McArthur W. M., Murtha G. G., Nicolls K. D., Paton T. R., Thompson C. H., Webb A. A. and Wright M. J. (1960-68) Atlas of Australian Soils, Sheets 1 to 10, with explanatory data. CSIRO and Melbourne University Press: Melbourne.
- Outback Ecology (2012) *Central Murchison Gold Project Level 1 Vegetation, Flora and Fauna Assessment*. Internal Report for Metals X Resources Limited, Perth, 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.
- Westgold Resources Limited (Westgold) (2018) Supporting Document: Kinsella Project Clearing Permit Application, December 2018.
- Westgold Resources Limited (Westgold) (2023) Big Bell Gold Operations Pty Ltd – CPS 8293/1 – Application To Extend Purpose Permit.
- Western Botanical (2003) DRF and Priority Flora Surveys Mt Magnet and Cue May 2003. Report for Mt Magnet Gold N.L. prepared by Western Botanical, 19 May 2003.

**3. Glossary****Acronyms:**

<b>BC Act</b>	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, Western Australia</i>
<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>DAWE</b>	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, 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>DEMIRS</b>	Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia
<b>DMP</b>	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DEMIRS)
<b>DoEE</b>	Department of the Environment and Energy (now DAWE)
<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.

