

19 October 2021

Native Vegetation Strategy
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
Locked Bag 10
Joondalup WA 6919

Sent via email: nvs@dwer.wa.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: CONSULTATION DRAFT NATIVE VEGETATION POLICY FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia (CME) is the peak representative body for the resources sector in Western Australia. CME is funded by member companies responsible for more than 88 per cent of the State's mineral and energy workforce employment,¹ ranging from mining (mineral and petroleum commodities), manufacturing (alumina, basic inorganic chemicals, and explosives) and supporting services.

CME welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) on the Draft Native Vegetation Policy for Western Australia (the Draft Policy). In preparing this letter, CME has sought feedback from member companies.

CME supports the overall intent, purpose, and scope of the Draft Policy. Consistent, transparent objectives for the management of native vegetation across all government processes are fundamental to ecologically sustainable development across WA.

Furthermore, CME supports strategic, regionally tailored action to conserve, restore, and maintain ecological function and biodiversity at a landscape scale. To ensure success, such action must be informed and supported by consistent and reliable data and information. CME therefore supports actions by government to improve data and integrate systems to inform coherent regulation, timeliness of assessments, and transparency through evidence-based decision making.

CME supports meaningful progress on improved regulation through clear objectives, removal of duplication, improved coordination between agencies, and statutory timeframes for assessments – this includes improved policies in areas such as native vegetation, and more broadly under the Government's *Streamline WA* initiative. Cross-government regulatory processes must be improved by employing simple, well-defined approval pathways with transparent timeframes underpinned by clear, descriptive guidelines for proponent applications. This in turn increases stakeholder and community confidence in assessments, resultant decisions, and the State's overall management of its native vegetation.

CME supports the strategic use of offsets, such as through biodiversity offset funds (e.g. Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund), to efficiently manage the cumulative impacts on biodiversity in bioregions and looks forward to release of the outcomes of the current review of the State's environmental offsets framework.

CME thanks DWER for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Policy and looks forward to continuing to work with DWER to support progress of strategic actions to improve native vegetation management in WA.

Should you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Bronwyn Bell, Manager – Resource Development & Sustainability.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Carruthers, Director – Policy & Advocacy

¹ Government of Western Australia, [2020 Economic indicators resources data](#), Safety Regulation System, Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 1 April 2021.