

## **Attachment C: Program Guidelines**

### **C.1 Program description**

The Program must describe:

- (a) the region to which the Program applies;
- (b) the land/asset tenure across the Region, including the location of formally protected lands;
- (c) the location of developable and non-developable land;
- (d) how the Program has been developed, including governance, consultation and scientific studies used in preparing the Program;
- (e) the legal framework for implementing the Program and component policies, plans or programs, as applicable;
- (f) management, planning and approval arrangements and the person(s) or authority(ies) responsible for adopting and/or implementing the Program;
- (g) the nature and location of actions proposed under the Program as informed by the RSP;
- (h) the environmental conservation legacy of this Program; and
- (i) the circumstances and procedures that may result in the review, modification or abandonment of the Program.

### **C.2 Regional goals for conserving MNES**

The Program must set out the extent of actual and likely occurrences of current and potential<sup>1</sup> MNES within the Region, and describe:

- (a) the regional environmental and heritage context;
- (b) the condition and trends of MNES;
- (c) the location of MNES within protected and non-protected areas;
- (d) the nature, extent and effects of regional threatening processes (e.g. weed infestations, altered fire regimes, salinity, climate change) impacting on MNES;
- (e) proposed measurable extent, condition and connectivity outcomes for MNES, and the ecological rationale to those objectives;
- (f) effective measures to:
  - (i) address the regional threatening processes; and
  - (ii) achieve the desired outcomes for MNES, identified in the Program; and
- (g) the viability of MNES prior to implementing the Program, having regard to the matters set out in this Item C.2.

### **C.3 Protecting MNES from impacts of actions under the Program**

The Program must contain a strategy for protecting MNES from impacts of actions proposed under the Program. To this end the Program must identify:

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<sup>1</sup> matters potentially eligible for listing as a MNES.

- (a) approved and anticipated economic development in the Region (e.g. industrial activity, urban expansion, agricultural activity), timeframes for development, and activities proposed during the construction and operation phases;
- (b) measures that will be implemented to avoid, mitigate or offset the impacts of actions on MNES (the **proposed measures**);
- (c) the person(s) or authority(ies) responsible for undertaking the proposed measures, and strategies for maintaining effort over time;
- (d) maintenance, operational and compliance requirements associated with the proposed measures; and
- (e) timelines and accountabilities, resources, legislative and regulatory frameworks and other arrangements, in place or proposed, to implement the proposed measures.

#### **C.4 Addressing uncertainty and contingency through adaptive implementation**

The Program must contain an effective system of adaptive implementation that addresses uncertainty and plans for contingency. To this end the Program must identify:

- (a) how monitoring and evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed measures, and attainment and maintenance of the proposed outcomes, referred to in Item C.2(e), will be undertaken;
- (b) strategies for public reporting and independent auditing on Program implementation, including the independent party responsible for auditing;
- (c) strategies for continuous improvement that:
  - (i) respond to outputs from monitoring, modelling, reporting and auditing activities; and
  - (ii) ensure new information relating to the impacts of the Program are introduced, evaluated and addressed in Program implementation;
- (d) mechanisms for community and industry engagement and involvement in Program implementation; and
- (e) data and knowledge needs to address key sources of uncertainty, and implementation strategies and research priorities to address that uncertainty<sup>2</sup>. Key uncertainties may include:
  - (i) knowledge gaps in scientific understanding;
  - (ii) the timing and effectiveness of the proposed measures; and
  - (iii) capacity to implement, maintain, operate and enforce management measures.

#### **C.5 Information sources**

For information used in this Program, the Program must state:

- (a) the source of the information;
- (b) how recent the information is; and
- (c) the reliability and limitations of the information.

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<sup>2</sup> This may include building key baseline datasets to measure biodiversity condition and trends over time.