

Submissions on Council Plans and Policies
A Checklist for Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement

Policy

- The Council has stated policies on biodiversity protection, considering the full range of habitat types in their administrative area.
- Glossary definitions of terms like “indigenous vegetation” do not limit protection to only forest habitats (ie no height or age criteria).
- There is a policy to monitor the state of biodiversity, including extent, distribution and condition of the full range of ecosystems.

Proactive Measures/ Direct Action

- There are measures to improve biodiversity on Council-owned land.
- There are measures to improve biodiversity on private land.
- Biodiversity objectives are incorporated into Council activities such as providing fish passage through culverts when building council roads.
- Council has reserve management plans for natural areas in council reserves that include measures to maintain and enhance biodiversity, e.g. by controlling weeds, animal pests, and stock.

Advocacy

- There is a stated intention to work with community groups involved in biodiversity-related activities.
- There is a fund available for community groups or individuals undertaking biodiversity projects.
- Incentives such as rate remission, additional subdivision entitlement and funding assistance, are available to landowners and communities who voluntarily protect areas.

- There are education and information initiatives to encourage and support biodiversity protection.

Sustainable Management

- The Council has criteria to ensure that significant indigenous vegetation and the significant habitats of indigenous fauna are consistently identified.
- Priority is given to protecting and restoring threatened habitat such as coastal and lowland forest.

Regulatory

- There are rules to control clearance of indigenous vegetation and habitats.
- Vegetation clearance/ wetland drainage rules are limited to a property or an area of vegetation, such that the habitat cannot be destroyed a hectare or so at a time over a number of years.
- Rules on activities that indirectly harm ecosystems (e.g. soil disturbance, dumping fill, diverting water) have protection of significant areas of indigenous vegetation and habitat as a matter over which council will reserve control
- Subdivision incentives are available e.g. transferable rights, to encourage residential development away from sensitive natural areas