



Planning A FUTURE for PERTH'S local BUSHLAND, WETLANDS and other NATURAL AREAS

Perth - a global biodiversity hotspot...

Perth's unusual, diverse natural flora and fauna makes it one of the most special places on Earth, but clearing and urban growth also makes this natural heritage one of the most threatened.

Over the past decade numerous initiatives by State and Local Governments and the community have helped protect many of our special, regionally significant natural areas.

Now a new initiative is being launched to help plan a future for local bushland, wetlands and other natural areas.



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION



The Local Government BIODIVERSITY PLANNING GUIDELINES for the Perth Metropolitan Region - **what are they about?**

Guidelines have been prepared for Local Governments to develop strategic approaches to conserving biodiversity. For the first time, Local Governments are being encouraged to set quantifiable targets for the protection of bushland, wetlands and other natural areas.

Local Governments using the Guidelines will prepare Local Biodiversity Strategies that will influence the Council's Local Planning Strategy and Town Planning Scheme. The way a Local Government manages local reserves, or a Council makes a decision that affects local bushland, wetlands or natural areas will be shaped by the Local Biodiversity Strategy. Each Strategy will enable Local Governments to demonstrate how they will meet biodiversity conservation objectives as part of their plans for sustainable development.

A full version of the Guidelines can be found on the Western Australian Local Government Association website www.walga.asn.au.

working towards milestones

The Western Australian Local Government Association has developed a program to reward Local Governments preparing a Local Biodiversity Strategy in accordance with the Guidelines. There are seven Milestones that reflect the major achievements of Local Governments in the local biodiversity planning process.



Milestone 1: Scoping, training and resource identification

Milestone 2: Adoption of objectives and targets for biodiversity retention, protection and management within the Local Government Area

Milestone 3: Preparation of a Local Planning Policy for Biodiversity Conservation



Milestone 4: Preparation of an Incentives Strategy for Private Land Conservation

Milestone 5: Preparation of an Action Plan for Managing Local Government reserves

Milestone 6: Formalising protection measures (in the Town Planning Scheme and Local Planning Strategy)



Milestone 7: Review and monitor implementation of the Strategy

For Local Governments with significant natural areas and development pressure, completion of all seven milestones will be important.

The Perth Biodiversity Project provides support and guidance to Local Governments on completing the Milestone program.



Key features of a Local Biodiversity Strategy

The Guidelines contain information, tools, policies and templates to assist Local Governments to undertake local biodiversity planning.

The four key aspects of a Local Biodiversity Strategy are outlined below.

1. Mechanisms to protect local natural areas

Local Biodiversity Strategies will need to use existing mechanisms to protect or retain local bushland, wetlands and other natural areas. Further innovation, proactive approaches and incentives attached to these existing mechanisms will be the key to achieving success. Mechanisms to protect local bushland, wetland and other natural areas include:

- Public Open Space allocations
- Protective land zonings, such as for Conservation
- Reservation and purchase
- Management and conservation agreements
- Subdivision for conservation
- Donations of land for tax concessions

2. Supporting private land conservation

Most local bushland, wetlands and natural areas in the Perth Metropolitan Region are in private ownership and there is a growing awareness of the importance of private landowner efforts to protect these areas. Local biodiversity planning places a greater emphasis on Local Government to provide incentives for private land conservation. There are numerous ways in which incentives can be provided to landowners conserving important natural areas. The offering of incentives for private land conservation will be critical to the success of Local Governments achieving their biodiversity conservation targets.

3. Bushland sensitive land development

Local biodiversity planning can help Local Governments integrate bushland and wetland protection into the design of new suburbs. In new residential areas, bushland and wetlands need to be planned for long-term ecological viability and ease of management as well as for their amenity and landscape value.

Local Biodiversity Strategies will ensure that priority natural areas are identified as early as possible in the land development process, and where possible, retained or protected to maximise ecological viability and minimise ongoing management costs.

4. Managing bushland and other natural areas

Another important benefit of preparing a Strategy is to help Local Governments better manage biodiversity on local reserves. Management of natural areas requires many specialised skills, such as bushland regeneration, environmental weed control, ecological assessment and fauna habitat protection. Building up this expertise in Local Governments has commenced and will be a priority over the coming decade.

Biodiversity is the variety of all life forms — the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the bushlands, wetlands and other natural areas of which they form a part.



Strategic planning for better protection of local biodiversity

Local Governments are responsible for the care, control and management of significant areas of bushland, wetlands and other important natural areas. They also have a significant role in the conservation of biodiversity through their involvement in land use planning and development processes.

The Local Government Biodiversity Planning Guidelines for the Perth Metropolitan Region have been prepared for Local Governments to strategically plan for the retention, protection and management of Perth's biodiversity. It contains relevant environmental and planning information, statistics, templates and tools for Local Governments to prepare Local Biodiversity Strategies.

Over the long-term, a Local Biodiversity Strategy will lead to the protection and better management of some of the most ecologically valuable natural areas in each Local Government. It will also facilitate sustainable development and help Local Government meet legislative and Government policy commitments.

Comment

Your comments on any part of the Guidelines are welcomed.

Written or emailed submissions can be provided to
Perth Biodiversity Project

Western Australian Local Government Association
PO Box 1544 WEST PERTH WA 6872

Or email: pbp@walga.asn.au

About the Perth Biodiversity Project

The Local Government Biodiversity Planning Guidelines for the Perth Metropolitan Region have been produced by the Perth Biodiversity Project.

The Perth Biodiversity Project is a major Local Government initiative to promote the long-term conservation of natural areas in the Perth Metropolitan Region. It is a partnership project of the Western Australian Local Government Association, Perth's Local Governments, the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust and the Swan Catchment Council.

The Perth Biodiversity Project supports Local Governments in the Swan Region through direct financial assistance for on-ground works and capacity building projects as well providing expert and technical information, advice and assistance for local biodiversity planning.



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