

**MEETING TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED HMR WIND FARM ON
INDIGENOUS VEGETATION AND FLORA, 9 April 2009**

ATTENDEES AT MEETING

William Shaw and Dr Tim Martin; Gerry Kessels and Britta Deichmann.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We agreed at this meeting to focus the discussion on what we consider to be the most important issues relating to effects on indigenous vegetation and flora:

- We agree that the most significant ecological values relating to indigenous vegetation relate to the larger patches of indigenous vegetation and that the parts of the site dominated by pasture have only low ecological values in terms of vegetation and flora. Acknowledging also that wetlands, including some small sites, are of significant ecological value.
- We agree that there are examples of both secondary and remnant indigenous primary forest present at some of the proposed turbine sites and that the vegetation pattern is a mosaic that reflects disturbance history.
- We agree that, as a basic principle, it is preferable to avoid clearance of indigenous vegetation. Where clearance cannot be avoided, mitigation will be required, including revegetation.

VEGETATION CLEARANCE

Further information and clarification has been provided in the rebuttal evidence of Mr Kessels and in the rebuttal evidence of Mr James, with a slight increase in the area to be cleared. Although the composition of the indigenous vegetation to be cleared is not entirely clear (from the Beca analysis of vegetation clearance presented in the rebuttal evidence of Mr Chris James), it is nevertheless agreed that about 16.3 ha of indigenous vegetation will be cleared as a direct impact of wind farm clearance. It is also agreed that more than 11 ha could also be affected by 'topping and thinning'. It is agreed that the areas of indigenous vegetation to be affected include sites of significant ecological value.

ASSESSMENT OF ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

We agree that there were some areas of ambiguity or lack of clarity in the information originally presented by the applicant that have been now clarified in rebuttal evidence. As noted above, we agree that all larger areas of indigenous vegetation and all wetlands (other than very small examples dominated by exotic species) within the project area have significant ecological values.

EDGE EFFECTS

Mr Kessels is in agreement with Mr Shaw that edge effects are a significant effect resulting from development of wind farm infrastructure in indigenous vegetation and that these effects need to be taken into account in consideration of ecological mitigation. Mr Kessels agrees with Mr Shaw's calculation of the scale of potential edge effects.

MITIGATION

We agree that the quantum of mitigation needs to take account of both direct and indirect adverse effects on indigenous vegetation and flora.

We agree that large-scale development projects of this type need to, firstly, wherever possible, minimise adverse ecological effects; secondly, to mitigate or compensate for all adverse ecological effects; and thirdly, to consider opportunities to produce a net environmental benefit. There should be not net loss of indigenous vegetation, key species, or key ecological processes.

Mr Kessels is in general agreement with Mr Shaw about the need for ecological mitigation in relation to adverse ecological effects in relation to this particular project.

Mr Kessels and Mr Shaw agree that it is very important to exclude domestic stock, control browsing pests (especially goats) to a very low levels to enable successful establishment (including planting and natural regeneration) of indigenous re-vegetation to repair construction damage and minimise edge effects.

We agree that a mitigation package could or should include:

- Intensive sustained or targeted pest control;
- Targeted natural features; (key natural features in or adjacent to the wind farm project);
- Long term formal legal protection, not necessarily directly affected, e.g. sites of similar value in the same area;
- Funding for the above works needs to be provided on a long term/sustained basis.

We agree that mitigation needs to address all key issues associated with adverse ecological effects associated with indigenous vegetation and flora (this also could address mitigation requirements for indigenous fauna such as terrestrial birds and lizards potentially affected by habitat loss), including areal extent, age of vegetation, time for recovery, composition and quality.

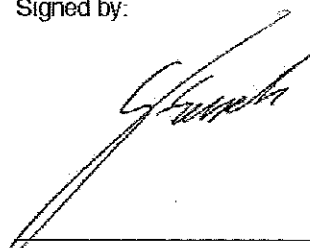
Signed by:



William Shaw

Date: 14 April 2009

Signed by:



Gerry Kessels

Date: 14 April 2009