

Biodiversity Position Statement

Policy Principles

This Position Statement relates to the following Policy Principles of LGNSW:

- (6) *Local government actions reflect Ecologically Sustainable Development principles:*
- a. *Intergenerational equity – today's actions maintain or enhance the environment for future generations*
 - b. *Precautionary principle – prevent environmental degradation and manage and mitigate risk*
 - c. *Conservation of biological diversity*
 - d. *Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources – recognising the value of the environment to the community.*

Background

Councils are a key influence on local biodiversity management and have an essential role to play. This includes through planning and approval processes, community education and engagement activities, and as public land managers. Councils can develop biodiversity strategies and plans, protect biodiversity through their land use planning instruments, and manage biodiversity actively through specific programs and projects.

Councils' planning and approval processes are a key influence on local biodiversity management. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* includes objects to encourage 'the protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats' as well as reference to 'ecologically sustainable development'.

Councils have a legislative mandate to manage the ongoing challenge of development pressure and maintenance of environmental values. Councils have responded through improved knowledge of, and strategic planning for, their local biodiversity including: undertaking mapping and assessments, developing biodiversity strategies and policies and processes, and building staff capability.

Our Position

Local Government supports the conservation of biological diversity.

LGNSW advocates for:

- Protection and management of local biodiversity on an 'avoid, minimise, offset' basis.
- Closer coordination across spheres of government, and with other biodiversity resource managers, to include local biodiversity information and mapping in regional and state-wide approaches to biodiversity management.
- Resources and assistance to councils to build capacity, review systems and implement changes to NSW legislation in relation to managing biodiversity.
- Policies and practices that maximise biodiversity and the protection of threatened and endangered species, including the development and maintenance of habitat corridors.
- Wider recognition of the value of urban biodiversity and bushland areas and the implementation of management approaches to specifically meet the needs of these areas.
- Cross jurisdictional commitment to managing the threats to biodiversity including weeds, pests and other risks which impact on the integrity of local biodiversity and contribute to further losses.

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