

State Development Assessment Provisions Guidance Material

State Code 16: Native vegetation clearing

Version 1.3

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1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

State Development Assessment Provisions - State Code 16: Native vegetation clearing (code) provides the assessment criteria for assessable development that is the **clearing** of native **vegetation** under the *Planning Act 2016* (the Planning Act).

1.2 Purpose

This guidance material is not a statutory document. Its purpose is to assist applicants in preparing development applications for, or involving, the **clearing** of native **vegetation**.

The contents of the code and this guidance material are consistent with the purposes of the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) (VMA) and the [State Policy for Vegetation Management](#), version 3, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, December 2013.

1.3 Using the guidance material

This guidance material consists of the following:

- Part 1: Introduction to the code and guidance material.
- Part 2: Overview of the development assessment process for the **clearing** of native **vegetation**; explanation of the types of development to which the code applies; and advice about pre-lodgment processes.
- Part 3: Context and advice on supporting actions and methodology intended to assist the applicant in demonstrating compliance with the code.
- Appendices: Additional technical guidance for the preparation of technical assessments.

Please note that the use of this guidance material alone does not guarantee compliance with all planning and environmental management requirements for the **clearing** of **vegetation**. This guidance material should be interpreted as advice only.

1.4 Definitions and abbreviations

Words which are in **bold** print in this guidance material have the same meaning given in the Glossary of Terms found in section 16.6 of the code.

Abbreviations in this guidance material have the same meaning given in section 16.7 of the code.

2 Assessment framework

2.1 Development assessment process

Queensland's planning and development framework, underpinned by the *Planning Act 2016* (Planning Act), sets out how development applications should be made and assessed. The framework includes a process, rules and forms. Local government is usually the assessment manager, however through the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) the state is the assessment manager for some clearing purposes.

The development assessment process ensures the development proposals are assessed using a consistent process, and assessment and decision criteria, in accordance with a local government planning scheme.

SARA is responsible for delivering a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to the State's assessment of development applications. SARA provides a single agency lodgment and assessment point for development applications where the chief executive has jurisdiction under the Planning Act (where the State is the assessment manager or referral agency).

As a technical agency for development applications involving the **clearing** of native **vegetation**, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) provides SARA, as the decision maker or referral agency, with technical advice on whether the application complies with the code.

If the proposed **clearing** activity is not permitted under other **clearing** options (e.g. exempt clearing work or under an accepted development vegetation clearing code), an applicant may be able to apply for a development approval.

An applicant wanting to undertake assessable development that is the **clearing** of native **vegetation** is required by the Planning Act to apply to the relevant assessment manager, such as local government or SARA, depending on the type of application. An application made for operational work that is the **clearing** of native **vegetation** needs to be made to SARA, while applications for material change of use or reconfiguring of a lot needs to be made to local government.

A pre-lodgment meeting with SARA is strongly recommended prior to lodging the application. This will assist an applicant to understand the requirements for technical assessments under the code based on the particular circumstances of the proposed development.

DNRME will determine whether the intended **clearing** meets the requirement for a relevant purpose under section 22A of the VMA. Where the **clearing** does not meet a relevant purpose, it is classified as prohibited development by the Planning Regulation 2017. A development application cannot be accepted if the development is prohibited development.

2.2 Other legislation

Other legislation, including but not limited to the legislation listed in [Appendix 1](#), may also regulate the proposed **clearing**. It is essential that applicants check with any relevant authorities to determine if the proposed **clearing** activity is permitted or requires further approvals.

3 Assessment criteria

This part of the guidance material provides additional information to assist applicants with demonstrating compliance with the code. Each section is written according to the relevant provision in the code and provides context, supporting information and actions that may assist in demonstrating compliance with the code.

Note: The guidance material contained in this section provides guidance on the minimum requirements for responding to the criteria in the code, and additional information, data, testing, analysis and / or assessments that may be required dependent on the development and site specific circumstances.

3.1 Standard information for all applications

All development applications for the **clearing** of native **vegetation** must include standard information listed in [Appendix 2](#) of this guideline in addition to the information required to meet any of the relevant acceptable outcomes or performance outcomes below.

3.2 Relevant provisions of the code

Table 1 lists the Performance Outcomes under the code relevant to a particular **clearing** purpose.

Table 1 – Development and relevant provisions of the code

Development	Relevant performance outcomes in code
Operational work	
Public safety, relevant infrastructure activities and / or consequential development of IPA approval	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 – PO 7, 11, 16, 20, 22-24, 27
Control non-native plants or declared pests	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 8, 14, 21, 27, 33-34
Necessary environmental clearing	For land restoration and natural disaster preparation : Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 9, 12, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, 31 For natural channel diversion and contaminants removal: Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 10, 13, 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, 32
Extractive Industry	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO7, 11, 16, 22-24, 27-28
Encroachment	Table 16.2.2 - PO 2-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO8, 15, 21, 27, 37-38
Fodder harvesting	Table 16.2.2 - PO 2-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO8, 14, 21-22, 24, 39-44

Managing thickened vegetation	Table 16.2.2 - PO 2-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO8, 14, 21, 27, 35-36
Coordinated project involving an extractive industry	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 7, 11, 17, 20, 22-24, 27-28
Coordinated project involving clearing for agriculture	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 7, 11, 17, 20, 22-24, 27, 29-30
Coordinated project for all other purposes	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 7, 11, 17, 20, 22-24, 27
Material change of use and / or Reconfiguring a lot	
Material change of use and / or reconfiguring a lot – coordinated project	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - PO 7, 11, 17, 20, 22-24, 27 If involving extractive industry , then also Table 16.2.2 - PO 28 If involving clearing for agriculture, then also Table 16.2.3 - PO 29-30
Material change of use and / or reconfiguring a lot involving extractive industry	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 – PO 7, 11, 16, 22-24, 27-28
Material change of use and / or reconfiguring a lot for which there will be no clearing as a result of the material change of use or reconfiguring a lot	Table 16.2.2 - PO 5
Material change of use and / or reconfiguring a lot for which clearing is limited to clearing that could be done as exempt clearing work for the purpose of the development (as prescribed under schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017) prior to the material change of use or reconfiguring a lot application being approved.	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 and 6
Material change of use and / or reconfiguring a lot for all other purposes	Table 16.2.2 - PO 1-4 Table 16.2.3 - 7, 11, 16, 20, 22-24 and 27

3.3 Clearing avoids or minimises impacts

Context

The code ensures **clearing** and the **adverse impacts of clearing** only occur where it is demonstrated the **clearing** has first been reasonably avoided and then reasonably minimised.

Clearing of vegetation means to remove, cut down, ringbark, push over, poison or destroy in any way including by burning, flooding or draining, but does not include destroying standing **vegetation** by stock, or lopping a tree.

Adverse impacts of clearing includes but is not limited to:

- the loss of **vegetation**
- the loss of **biodiversity**
- **land degradation**
- loss of connectivity
- reduced **ecological processes**
- significant contributions to greenhouse gas emissions.

3.3.1 Performance outcome 1

PO 1 Clearing and adverse impacts of clearing do not occur unless the application has demonstrated that the **clearing** and the **adverse impacts of clearing** have been:

1. reasonably avoided; or
2. reasonably minimised where it cannot be reasonably avoided.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify all potential **adverse impacts of clearing**.
2. Demonstrate both of the following:
 - a. If and how **clearing**, and the **adverse impacts of clearing**, can be reasonably avoided.
 - b. Where it cannot be reasonably avoided, how **clearing** and the **adverse impacts of clearing** will be reasonably minimised.
3. Provide all of the following supporting information:
 - a. Any considerations in deciding the location of the development, including assessment of alternative sites, to minimise the **clearing** footprint.
 - b. Identify constraints and limitations on alternative areas e.g. **slope**, aspect, frost.
 - c. Where it is not reasonable to undertake the clearing entirely in **category X areas** or existing **cleared** areas, demonstrate how the following 'avoid and minimise' principles have been applied for the location and extent of **clearing**:
 - First – locate as much of the clearing in **category X areas** or existing **cleared** areas as reasonably possible.

- Second – locate as much of the remaining **clearing** in a **category C area** or **category R area** where reasonably possible.
- Third – where necessary to clear in a **category B area**, locate the **clearing** within **least concern regional ecosystems** where reasonably possible.
- Four – take all possible steps to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimise to the greatest extent possible, **clearing** in the following areas:
 - Within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.
 - Within 10 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** for a **stream order 1** or **2 watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
 - Within 25 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** for a **stream order 3** or **4 watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
 - Within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** for a **stream order 5** or greater **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
 - **Essential habitat**.

Mapping regulated under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* is available by requesting a Property Report available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'Property Report') or on Queensland Globe at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'Queensland Globe').

3.4 Clearing on land in particular circumstances

Context

The code ensures any proposed **clearing** is consistent with any compliance or other requirements on the land subject to the development application.

3.4.1 Performance outcome 2

PO 2 Clearing is consistent with any **notice requiring compliance** on the land subject to the development application, unless a **better environmental outcome** can be achieved.

Note: The discharge of the **vegetation management requirements** under the **notice requiring compliance** can only occur in conjunction with the **better environmental outcome** being legally secured.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **notice requiring compliance** on the land subject to proposed **clearing**.
2. Where there is a notice requiring compliance on the land subject to proposed **clearing**, demonstrate either of the following:
 - a. how the proposed **clearing** will be consistent with the **notice requiring compliance**; or
 - b. if the proposed **clearing** will not be consistent with the **notice requiring compliance**, how a **better environmental outcome** will be achieved. [Appendix 4](#) provides guidance on criteria and ratios for satisfying the requirements of a **better environmental outcome** in the code.

Further information

For further information on any **notice requiring compliance**:

- undertake a current title search. Title searches can be purchased by calling 1300 255 750 or 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or by contacting your local DNRME titles office; or
- call 135 VEG (135 834) or contact your local DNRME office (Vegetation Management).

3.4.2 Performance outcome 3

PO 3 Clearing is consistent with **vegetation management requirements** for **particular regulated areas** unless a **better environmental outcome** can be achieved.

Note: The discharge of the **vegetation management requirements** under the **notice requiring compliance** can only occur in conjunction with the **better environmental outcome** being legally secured.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **particular regulated areas** on the land subject to proposed **clearing** and the associated **vegetation management requirements**.
2. Where there is a **particular regulated area** on the land subject to proposed **clearing**, demonstrate either of the following:
 - a. how the proposed **clearing** will be consistent with the associated **vegetation management requirements**; or
 - b. if the proposed **clearing** will not be consistent with the associated **vegetation management requirements**, how a **better environmental outcome** will be achieved. [Appendix 4](#) provides guidance on criteria and ratios for satisfying the requirements of a **better environmental outcome** in the code.

Further information

For further information on any **particular regulated areas**:

- undertake a current title search. Title searches can be purchased by calling 1300 255 750 or 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or by contacting your local DNRME titles office; or
- call 135 VEG (135 834) or contact your local DNRME office (Vegetation Management).

3.4.3 Performance outcome 4

PO 4 Clearing of a legally secured offset area:

1. is consistent with the **offset** delivery plan, or agreement for the **offset area** on the land subject to the development application; or
2. only occurs if an additional **offset** is provided that is consistent with the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014* and the relevant policy in the Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, 2014.

Note: Reference to 'agreement' above includes the 'agreed delivery arrangement' for the offset area as well as instruments associated with the **legally secured offset area**. **Clearing** should be consistent with any agreement however described.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **environmental offset agreement** or similar agreement on the land subject to **clearing**.
2. Where there is an **environmental offset agreement** or similar agreement on the land subject to **clearing**, demonstrate either of the following:
 - a. how the **clearing** will be consistent with consistent with the **offset** delivery plan or agreement for the **offset area**; or
 - b. if the **clearing** will not be consistent with the consistent with the **offset** delivery plan or agreement for the **offset area**, secure an additional **offset**. Further guidance for **offset requirements** is provided in [Appendix 5](#).

3.5 Clearing of vegetation as a result of a material change of use or reconfiguring a lot

Context

Where development involves a material change of use of a lot or reconfiguring a lot, exempt clearing work for **clearing vegetation** under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulations 2017 which applies to the land may change. Exempt clearing work which will become available as a result of the development is referred to in the code as **clearing as a result of a material change of use** and **clearing as a result of reconfiguring a lot**.

3.5.1 Performance outcome 5

PO 5 Clearing as a result of a material change of use, or clearing as a result of reconfiguring a lot does not occur.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate that no **clearing** will result from the material change of use of a lot or reconfiguring a lot.
2. Demonstrate that no additional exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 will become available if the development is approved.

The application should include all of the following:

1. Details on the location and extent of the development footprint (preferably in a digital format such as shapefile or kml). This includes the location of built infrastructure (buildings, stormwater management systems, water supply, sewerage systems, roads, vehicle parking, vehicle and pedestrian access, utility corridors, services, **firebreaks**, **fire management lines**, safety buffers, any **areas** associated with the proposed use of the lot, boundary fence lines, and location of any excavation and filling).
2. Any additional exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 that will become available as a result of the development e.g. **routine management**, **essential management**, residential clearing exemptions.

3.6 Clearing that could already be done as exempt clearing work

Context

Where development involves a material change of use of a lot or reconfiguring a lot, the code identifies applications where the extent of the proposed **clearing** could be undertaken as exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 prior to the application being approved.

3.6.1 Performance outcome 6

PO 6 Clearing does not occur unless it is **clearing** that could be done as **exempt clearing work** for the purpose of the development (as prescribed under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017) prior to the material change of use or reconfiguring a lot application being approved.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating the extent of the proposed **clearing** could be undertaken as exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 prior to the development application being approved.

3.7 Wetlands

Context

For the purposes of the code, a **wetland** is defined as an area of land that supports plants or is associated with plants that are adapted to and dependent on living in wet conditions for at least part of their life cycle, and are shown on the **vegetation management wetlands map**.¹

Wetlands can be threatened by changes in both surface water and **groundwater** levels as a result of changes to the structure and function of native **vegetation** within and surrounding the **wetland**. Retaining **vegetation** associated with these natural **wetlands** will help provide:

- bank stability to reduce bank erosion
- suitable water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants
- aquatic habitat
- terrestrial habitat which shelters and provides habitat and roosting sites for fauna.

3.7.1 Performance outcome 7

PO 7 Clearing maintains the current extent of vegetation associated with any natural **wetland** to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 7 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 7.1
- Acceptable outcome 7.2
- Acceptable outcome 7.3

AO 7.1 Clearing does not occur in a natural **wetland** or within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint
2. Demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in a natural **wetland** or within 100 meters of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.

¹ This map can be requested from the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au—search for ‘vegetation management’

AO 7.2 Clearing within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**:

1. does not occur within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**; and
2. does not exceed widths in table 16.3.1 in this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how the **clearing** will not:
 - a. occur in a natural **wetland** or within 50 meters of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**; and
 - b. exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code. These widths are based on **regional ecosystem** structure category, which can be found in the **regional ecosystem description database**.

AO 7.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing of vegetation** associated with a natural **wetland** (**matter of state environmental significance**).

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** will be reasonably minimised.
4. Where an offset is required, the application should satisfy the requirements listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** will be reasonably minimised.
4. Demonstrate how the **clearing maintains the current extent** of **vegetation** associated with any natural **wetland** to protect bank stability, water quality, aquatic habitat and terrestrial habitat.

3.7.2 Performance outcome 8

PO 8 Clearing maintains **vegetation** associated with a natural **wetland** to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

Performance outcome 8 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- To control non-native plants and **declared pests**: Acceptable outcome 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3
- For **managing thickened vegetation**: Acceptable outcome 8.4
- For **encroachment**: Acceptable outcome 8.5 and 8.6
- For **fodder harvesting**: Acceptable outcome 8.7 and 8.8.

Where the clearing is necessary to control non-native plants or declared pests:

AO 8.1 Where **clearing** is necessary to control non-native plants or **declared pests**, **mechanical clearing** does not occur within five metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

AO 8.2 Clearing only occurs:

1. within a 1.5 metre radius from the base of the stem of individual non-native or declared pests; or
2. to the extent necessary to provide access for the control of the non-native plants or **declared pests**.

AO 8.3 Clearing for access tracks running parallel to a natural **wetland** is not to be located within 10 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

These acceptable outcomes can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide reasons why **clearing** is necessary to control non-native plants or **declared pests**.
2. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur within five meters of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.
5. Demonstrate how **clearing**:
 - a. Occurs only within a 1.5 metre radius from the base of the stem of individual non-native or declared plants; or
 - b. Occurs only to the extent necessary to provide access for the control of the non-native plants or **declared pests**.
6. Demonstrate how **clearing** for access tracks running parallel to a natural **wetland** is not to be located within 10 metres of the natural **wetland**.

Where the clearing is for managing thickened vegetation:

AO 8.4 Mechanical clearing does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. inside the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**;
2. within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur inside the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.
3. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

Where the clearing is for encroachment:

AO 8.5 Mechanical clearing does not occur within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

AO 8.6 Clearing does not include the application of **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides** within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland** or within the distance specified from a **wetland** in the directions for use on the label for the product, whichever is the greater

These acceptable outcomes can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.
3. Demonstrate how any clearing does not include the application of **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides** within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland** or within the distance specified from a **wetland** in the directions for use on the label for the product, whichever is the greater

Where the clearing is for fodder harvesting:

AO 8.7 Mechanical clearing does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. inside the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.
2. within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.

And

AO 8.8 Mechanical clearing that is **strip harvesting** or **block harvesting** does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. inside the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**;
2. within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.

These acceptable outcomes can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur inside the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.
3. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.
4. Demonstrate how any proposed **strip harvesting** or **block harvesting** will not occur within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and development extent within the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**, and within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** and development within the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**, and within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland** maintains **vegetation** associated with a natural **wetland** to protect:
 - a. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion
 - b. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants
 - c. aquatic habitat
 - d. terrestrial habitat.

3.7.3 Performance outcome 9

PO 9 Clearing maintains **vegetation** associated with any natural **wetland** or **rehabilitates** the cleared area to protect:

1. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
2. aquatic habitat; and
3. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

Performance outcome 9 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 9.1
- Acceptable outcome 9.2
- Acceptable outcome 9.3

AO 9.1 Clearing does not occur in, or within 100 metres of, the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **clearing** will not occur within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

AO 9.2 Clearing within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**:

1. does not occur within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**; and
2. does not exceed the widths in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will not:
 - a. occur in a natural **wetland** or within 50 meters of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**; and
 - b. exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code. These widths are based on **regional ecosystem** structure category, which can be found in the **regional ecosystem description database**.

AO 9.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, the **cleared** area is **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** will be reasonably minimised.
4. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and development extent within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** and development within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland** maintains **vegetation** associated with a natural **wetland** or **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area to protect:
 - a. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
 - b. aquatic habitat; and
 - c. terrestrial habitat.

Further information

Information available for **wetland** mapping:

- Vegetation management report and the accompanying maps using the [online request form](#) available from www.qld.gov.au search for 'vegetation map' or 'property report'.
- GIS data sets from the www.data.qld.gov.au search for 'vegetation management act series'
- Queensland Globe: <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>

Information available for rehabilitation plans:

- Guidelines for **necessary environmental clearing**: www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'

3.7.4 Performance outcome 10

PO 10 Clearing maintains the current extent of vegetation associated with any natural **wetland** or rehabilitates the **cleared** area to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 10 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 10.1
- Acceptable outcome 10.2
- Acceptable outcome 10.3
- Acceptable outcome 10.4

AO 10.1 Clearing does not occur in, or within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **clearing** will not occur within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of a natural **wetland**.

AO 10.2 Clearing within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland** and:

1. does not occur within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**; and
2. does not exceed the widths in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will not:
 - a. occur in a natural **wetland** or within 50 meters of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**; and
 - b. exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code. These widths are based on **regional ecosystem** structure category, which can be found in the **regional ecosystem description database**.

AO 10.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, the **cleared** area is **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** will be **reasonably minimised**.
4. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

AO 10.4 Where **clearing** is for **natural channel diversion** or **contaminants removal**, and clearing cannot be reasonably avoided, and:

1. **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; and
2. the **cleared** area cannot be reasonably **rehabilitated**

an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with a natural **wetland** (a **matter of state environmental significance**).

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with the natural **wetland** will be reasonably minimised.
4. Demonstrate why the **cleared** area cannot be reasonably **rehabilitated**.
5. Providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**.
6. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **wetland** within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and development extent within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland**.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** and development within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any natural **wetland** maintains **vegetation** associated with a natural **wetland** or **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area to protect:
 - a. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion
 - b. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants
 - c. aquatic habitat
 - d. terrestrial habitat.

3.8 Clearing associated with watercourses and drainage features

Context

For the purposes of the code, a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** is a feature which exhibits characteristics defined by the code, and is shown on the **vegetation management watercourse map**.²

This part of the code ensures the impacts of **clearing** on **watercourse** or **drainage features** are reasonably avoided, reasonably minimised, **rehabilitated** or counterbalanced by an **offset**.

3.8.1 Performance outcome 11

PO 11 Clearing maintains the current extent of vegetation associated with any **watercourse or drainage feature** to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 11 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 11.1
- Acceptable outcome 11.2
- Acceptable outcome 11.3

AO 11.1 Clearing does not occur in any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in table 16.3.2 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near to the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** prescribed in table 16.3.2 of the code.

² This map can be requested from the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au—search for ‘vegetation management’

AO 11.2 Clearing within any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in table 16.3.2 of this code:

1. does not exceed the widths in table 16.3.1 of this code; and
2. does not occur within five metres of the **defining bank**, unless **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near to the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrating that any **clearing** proposed inside the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** prescribed in in table 16.3.2 of the code satisfies all of the following:
 - a. Is limited to the widths in table 16.3.1 of the code.
 - b. Will not occur within five metres of the **defining bank**, unless **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
 - c. Where the **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**—provide the reasons why it is necessary.

AO11.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** (a **matter of state environmental significance**).

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** will be reasonably minimised.
Identify whether there is a **significant residual impact**.
4. Where an **offset** is required for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the requirements listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** will be reasonably minimised.
4. Demonstrate how the **clearing maintains the current extent** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** to protect bank stability, water quality, aquatic habitat and terrestrial habitat.

3.8.2 Performance outcome 12

PO 12 Clearing maintains **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse or drainage feature** or **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 12 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 12.1
- Acceptable outcome 12.2
- Acceptable outcome 12.3

AO 12.1 Clearing does not occur within any **watercourse or drainage feature**, or within the relevant distances from each **defining bank** of any **watercourse or drainage feature** in table 16.3.2 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse or drainage feature** within or near to the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in a **watercourse or drainage feature** or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse or drainage feature** prescribed in table 16.3.2 of the code.

AO12.2 Clearing in any **watercourse or drainage feature**, or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse or drainage feature** in table 16.3.2 of this code:

1. does not exceed the widths in table 16.3.1 of the code; and
2. does not occur within 5 metres of the **defining bank**, unless **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse or drainage feature**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse or drainage feature** within or near to the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrating that any **clearing** proposed inside the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse or drainage feature** prescribed in table 16.3.2 of the code satisfies all of the following:
 - a. Is limited to the widths in table 16.3.1 of the code.
 - b. Will not occur within five metres of the **defining bank**, unless **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse or drainage feature**.
 - c. Where the **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse or drainage feature**—provide the reasons why it is necessary.

AO 12.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, the cleared area is **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **environmental clearing management plan** demonstrating how the cleared area will be **rehabilitated** over time taking into account the short-term and long-term impacts of the **clearing**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirements of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Further information

- *Necessary environmental clearing under the Vegetation Management Act 1999: A guideline for development applications*, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, August 2016 available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'.

3.8.3 Performance outcome 13

PO 13 Clearing maintains the current extent of vegetation associated with any **watercourse or drainage feature** or **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 13 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 13.1
- Acceptable outcome 13.2
- Acceptable outcome 13.3

AO 13.1 Clearing does not occur within any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** or within the relevant distances from each **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in table 16.3.2 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near to the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** prescribed in table 16.3.2 of the code.

AO 13.2 Clearing in any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, or within the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in table 16.3.2 of this code:

1. does not exceed the widths in table 16.3.1 of this code; and
2. does not occur within five metres of the **defining bank**, unless **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

-

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near to the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrating that any **clearing** proposed inside the relevant distance of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** prescribed in in table 16.3.2 of the code satisfies all of the following:
 - a. Is limited to the widths in table 16.3.1 of the code.
 - b. Will not occur within five metres of the **defining bank**, unless **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
 - c. Where the **clearing** is required into or across the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**—provide the reasons why it is necessary.

AO 13.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and:

1. **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; and
2. the **cleared** area cannot be reasonably **rehabilitated**

an offset is provided for any acceptable significant residual impact from clearing of vegetation associated with a watercourse or drainage feature (a matter of state environmental significance).

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** will be reasonably minimised.
4. Identify whether there is a **significant residual impact**.
5. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

3.8.4 Performance outcome 14

PO 14 Clearing maintains **vegetation** associated with any **watercourse or drainage** feature to protect:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating all of the following where relevant:

- Acceptable outcome 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3 (to control non-native plants and **declared pests**)
- Acceptable outcome 14.4 (**managing thickened vegetation**)
- Acceptable outcome 14.5 and 14.6 (**fodder harvesting**)

Where the clearing is necessary to control non-native plants or declared pests:

AO 14.1 Mechanical clearing does not occur within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

AO 14.2 Clearing only occurs:

1. within a 1.5 metre radius from the base of the stem of individual non-native plant or **declared pest**; or
2. to the extent necessary to provide access for the control of the non-native plant or **declared pest**.

AO 14.3 Clearing for access tracks running parallel to a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** is not to be located within 10 metres of the **defining bank** of the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

These acceptable outcomes can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide reasons why **clearing** is necessary to control non-native plants or **declared pests**.
2. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur within five meters of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
5. Demonstrate how **clearing**:
 - a. Occurs only within a 1.5 metre radius from the base of the stem of individual non-native or **declared plants**; or
 - b. Occurs only to the extent necessary to provide access for the control of the non-native plants or **declared pests**.
6. Demonstrate how **clearing** for access tracks running parallel to a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** is not to be located within 10 metres of the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

Where the clearing is for managing thickened vegetation:

AO 14.4 Mechanical clearing does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
2. within 10 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** that is a **stream order 1** or **2 watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
3. within 30 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** that is a **stream order 3** or **4 watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
4. within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** that is a **stream order 5** or more **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in or within 50 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, nor within the specified distance of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** for the relevant **stream order**.

Where the clearing is for fodder harvesting:

AO 14.5 Mechanical clearing does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**;
2. within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

AO 14.6 Mechanical clearing that is **strip harvesting** or **block harvesting** does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
2. within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in or within 100 metres of the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, nor within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
3. Demonstrate how neither **strip harvesting** nor **block harvesting** will not occur inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, nor within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and development extent inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, and within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** and development inside the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** and within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, maintains **vegetation** associated with the **watercourse** or **drainage feature** to protect:
 - a. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion
 - b. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants
 - c. aquatic habitat
 - d. terrestrial habitat.

3.8.5 Performance outcome 15

PO 15 Clearing of encroachment maintains:

1. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion; and
2. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants; and
3. aquatic habitat; and
4. terrestrial habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating acceptable outcome 15.1.

AO 15.1 Mechanical clearing does not occur within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.

AO 15.2 Clearing does not include the application of **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides** within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** or within the distance specified from a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** in the directions for use on the label for the product, whichever is the greater.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how any **mechanical clearing** will not occur within 20 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
3. Demonstrate how the **clearing** does not include the application of **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides** within 50 metres of the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature** or within the distance specified from a watercourse or drainage feature in the directions for use on the label for the product, whichever is the greater.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any natural **watercourse** or **drainage feature** within or near the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and development extent within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.
3. Provide details of the proposed **clearing** and management method, and use of any best practice methods.
4. Demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** and development within 100 metres of the **defining bank** of any **watercourse** or **drainage feature** maintains **vegetation** associated with the **watercourse** or **drainage feature** to protect:
 - a. bank stability by protecting against bank erosion;
 - b. water quality by filtering sediments, nutrients and other pollutants;
 - c. aquatic habitat; and
 - d. terrestrial habitat.

3.9 Maintaining connectivity

Context

The objective of maintaining connectivity is to prevent the loss of **biodiversity** and maintain ecological processes.

Connectivity is a measure of relationships within and between areas of **remnant vegetation**. It relates specifically to the capacity of **remnant vegetation** to provide refuge and habitat for native fauna and flora survival and movement across the landscape. Connectivity is maintained when sufficient areas of **remnant vegetation** are retained to maintain **ecological processes** and remain in the landscape.

Ecological processes include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

1. Hydrological processes
2. Soil development
3. Nutrient cycling
4. Chemical processes including storage of nutrients
5. Decomposition and cycling of organic matter
6. Pollination and seed production
7. Seed dispersal
8. Predator-prey relationships
9. Germination and recruitment of species
10. The carbon cycle and stability of atmospheric carbon
11. Habitats for flora and fauna (such as particular **regional ecosystems**, logs, rocks, debris, leaf litter, nectar, hollow bearing trees, food and shelter).

Connectivity and **ecological processes** will vary depending on the **regional ecosystem** type and condition, and is particular to the specific landscape values that are present within the subject area (the land subject to the development application and on adjacent land).

Threatening processes are natural or human induced processes that adversely affect or may adversely affect regulated vegetation, populations, ecological communities or species. A threatening process threatens or may threaten the survival, abundance or evolutionary development of a native species or ecological community and may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

1. Fragmentation
2. Land **clearing**
3. Climate change
4. Weather events
5. Weed and pests (animal and plant) infestations
6. Fire
7. Disease
8. **Land degradation**
9. Predation

Retained areas of **remnant vegetation** must be of sufficient size, configuration and condition to ensure they are resilient and able to persist despite known or likely **threatening processes**.

Threatening processes can adversely affect **ecological processes** in **remnant vegetation** by impacting their condition and resilience through:

1. Altering species composition.
2. Altering structural complexity by impacting layers i.e. canopy, mid-storey, shrub and ground layers.
3. Fragmentation of **remnant vegetation** into smaller areas.
4. Isolating **remnant vegetation** areas and altering genetic transfer.

Increasing the perimeter to area ratio of a **remnant vegetation** area causing increased edge effects such as altering microclimates, increasing exposure to sunlight, wind, nutrients and the potential for weed invasion.

3.9.1 Performance outcome 16

PO 16 In consideration of **vegetation** on the land subject to the development application and on adjacent land, sufficient **vegetation** is retained to maintain **ecological processes** and remains in the landscape despite **threatening processes**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying acceptable outcome 16.

AO 16.1 Clearing occurs in accordance with table 16.3.3 in this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will be undertaken in accordance with table 16.3.3 in the code.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how the development will retain sufficient **vegetation** to maintain **ecological processes**, and will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**. This may be demonstrated by the following (where applicable):

1. Identify and provide desktop and field data on all **ecological processes** occurring within **remnant vegetation** on the development site and on adjacent land.
2. Provide details on the location and extent of the development and **clearing** footprint (preferably in a digital format such as shapefile or kml).
3. Provide details on the location and extent of **remnant vegetation** to be retained on the development site and adjacent land.
4. An analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will maintain the **ecological processes** currently occurring.
5. Identify and provide desktop and field data on any known and likely **threatening processes**, natural or human induced, that may adversely affect the retained **vegetation**.
6. Analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**.

Further information

- Local council records – fauna and flora database of locally significant species (if available).
- Department of Environment and Science environmental report online – **Matter of state environmental significance, regional ecosystems** and biodiversity planning assessments www.qld.gov.au search for ‘environmental reports online’.
- Wildnet species lists www.qld.gov.au search for ‘request a species list’.

3.9.2 Performance outcome 17

PO 17 In consideration of **vegetation** on the land subject to the development application and on adjacent land:

1. sufficient **vegetation** is retained to maintain **ecological processes** and remains in the landscape despite **threatening processes**; or
2. where this is not reasonably possible, the applicant provides an **offset**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 17.1
- Acceptable outcome 17.2

AO 17.1 Clearing is occurs in accordance with table 16.3.3 in this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will be undertaken in accordance with table 16.3.3 in the code.

AO 17.2 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonable avoided; and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing** of **vegetation** that forms a connectivity area (a **matter of state environmental significance**).

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how the development will retain sufficient **vegetation** to maintain **ecological processes**, and will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**. This may be demonstrated by the following (where applicable):

1. Identify and provide desktop and field data on all **ecological processes** occurring within **remnant vegetation** on the development site and on adjacent land.
2. Provide details on the location and extent of the development and **clearing** footprint (preferably in a digital format such as shapefile or kml).
3. Provide details on the location and extent of **remnant vegetation** to be retained on the development site and adjacent land.
4. An analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will maintain the **ecological processes** currently occurring.
5. Identify and provide desktop and field data on any known and likely **threatening processes**, natural or human induced, that may adversely affect the retained **vegetation**.
6. Analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**.

Further information

- Local council records – fauna and flora database of locally significant species (if available).
- Department of Environment and Science environmental report online – **Matter of state environmental significance, regional ecosystems** and biodiversity planning assessments www.qld.gov.au search for 'environmental reports online'.
- Wildnet species lists www.qld.gov.au search for 'request a species list'.

3.9.3 Performance outcome 18

PO 18 In consideration of **vegetation** on the land subject to the development application and on adjacent land, sufficient **vegetation** is retained to maintain **ecological processes** and remains in the landscape despite **threatening processes**, or where this is not reasonably possible, the cleared area is **rehabilitated**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 18.1
- Acceptable outcome 18.2

AO 18.1 **Clearing** occurs in accordance with table 16.3.3 in this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will be undertaken in accordance with table 16.3.3 in the code.

AO 18.2 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided; and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; the **cleared** area is **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate why **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided (for example, provide evidence showing that alternative options were considered and were not appropriate).
2. Demonstrate the extent to which **clearing** has been reasonably minimised.
3. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Further information

- *Necessary environmental clearing under the Vegetation Management Act 1999: A guideline for development applications*, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, August 2016 available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how the development will retain sufficient **vegetation** to maintain **ecological processes**, and will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**. The application may include the following (where applicable):

1. Identify and provide desktop and field data on all **ecological processes** occurring within **remnant vegetation** on the development site and on adjacent land.
2. Provide details on the location and extent of the development and **clearing** footprint (preferably in a digital format such as shapefile or kml).
3. Provide details on the location and extent of **remnant vegetation** to be retained on the development site and adjacent land.
4. An analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will maintain the **ecological processes** currently occurring.
5. Identify and provide desktop and field data on any known and likely **threatening processes**, natural or human induced, that may adversely affect the retained **vegetation**.
6. Analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**.

Further information

- Local council records – fauna and flora database of locally significant species (if available).
- Department of Environment and Science environmental report online – **Matter of state environmental significance, regional ecosystems** and biodiversity planning assessments www.qld.gov.au search for 'environmental reports online'.
- Wildnet species lists www.qld.gov.au search for 'request a species list'.

3.9.4 Performance outcome 19

PO 19 In consideration of **vegetation** on the land subject to the development application and on adjacent land:

1. sufficient **vegetation** is retained to maintain **ecological processes** and remains in the landscape despite **threatening processes**; or
2. where this is not reasonably possible, the applicant **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area; or
3. where this is not reasonable possible, the applicant provides an **offset**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 19.1
- Acceptable outcome 19.2
- Acceptable outcome 19.3

AO 19.1 Clearing occurs in accordance with table 16.3.3 in this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will be undertaken in accordance with table 16.3.3 in the code.

AO 19.2 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided; and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; the **cleared** area is **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate why **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided (for example, provide evidence showing that alternative options were considered and were not appropriate).
2. Demonstrate the extent to which **clearing has been reasonably minimised**.
3. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Further information

- Necessary environmental clearing under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*: A guideline for development applications, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, August 2016 available from www.publications.qld.gov.au (search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines').

AO 19.3 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided: and

1. **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; and
2. the **cleared** area cannot be reasonably **rehabilitated**

an offset is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing of vegetation** that forms a connectivity area (a **matter of state environmental significance**).

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrating how the **clearing** has been reasonably avoided.
2. Demonstrating how the **clearing** has been reasonably minimised.
3. Providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**.
4. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying one of the following:

1. Demonstrating how the development will retain sufficient **vegetation** to maintain **ecological processes**, and will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**. The application may include the following (where applicable):
 - a. Identify and provide desktop and field data on all **ecological processes** occurring within **remnant vegetation** on the development site and on adjacent land.
 - b. Provide details on the location and extent of the development and **clearing** footprint (preferably in a digital format such as shapefile or kml).
 - c. Provide details on the location and extent of **remnant vegetation** to be retained on the development site and adjacent land.
 - d. An analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will maintain the **ecological processes** currently occurring.
 - e. Identify and provide desktop and field data on any known and likely **threatening processes**, natural or human induced, that may adversely affect the retained **vegetation**.
 - f. Analysis of how the **remnant vegetation** with its altered extent and configuration will remain in the landscape despite **threatening processes**.
2. Rehabilitating the **cleared** area. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.
3. Providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**.
4. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Further information

- Local council records – fauna and flora database of locally significant species (if available).
- Environmental report online – Matter of state environmental significance, **regional ecosystems** and biodiversity planning assessments www.qld.gov.au search for 'environmental reports online'.
- Wildnet species lists www.qld.gov.au search for 'request a species list'.

3.10 Soil erosion

Context

All soils are subject to erosion, but in nature the rate of erosive soil loss broadly equates to the rate of soil formation. Activities that increase the exposure of the soil surface to rainfall, runoff or wind are likely to accelerate the rate of soil erosion in excess of the rate of soil formation. The scenario whereby the soil becomes progressively shallower is not sustainable, particularly as the lost surface soil is the main source of most plant nutrients. Reductions in soil depth will affect the capacity of the soil to store water for plant use. Both of these outcomes will have significant, adverse effects on crop or pasture growth and yields, and general soil health.

Soils differ in their susceptibility to erosion, which is commonly referred to as their erodibility. The erodibility of a soil will depend on a wide range of factors, such as the particle size distribution in the soil, the organic matter content, the mineralogy of the clay fraction, the soil permeability, and soil structure and cohesiveness.

Due to certain intrinsic chemical and physical attributes, subsoils are generally more erodible than surface soils. Hence, once the surface soils are lost, the rate of soil loss will often accelerate. This can result in serious land management issues, such as the formation of large gullies.

Where there are highly dispersible subsoils present, subsoil erosion can occur even without the removal of surface soil. Anything that may allow the rapid ingress of water into the subsoil, such as the installation of underground services or fence posts, or where the surface soil remains attached to the root bole during **clearing** operations, can provide conditions that may result in tunnel erosion or piping. These forms of erosion often occur in association with a single rainfall event, and can be extensive.

The fate of eroded soil is also important. In the erosion process the soil components become entrained in runoff, either in suspension or as bedload material. At some point between the site of that erosion and the sea, the transported material will be deposited, either temporarily or permanently. While some of that deposition might initially take place in close proximity to the source, the movement of sediment across the landscape and into **watercourses** can affect other land and will inevitably impact on water quality. Thus the impacts of soil erosion are not confined to the site of that erosion.

In relation to the **clearing** of native **vegetation**, the reduction in protective groundcover (e.g. cover foliage, leaf litter etc.) post **clearing** is the most significant factor affecting accelerated rates of erosion and sedimentation.

This part of the State Code ensures that measures are employed to prevent or rectify the accelerated rates of soil loss and sediment movement resulting from the **clearing** of native **vegetation**.

3.10.1 Performance outcome 20

PO 20 Clearing does not result in:

1. accelerated soil erosion including, but not limited to - mass movement, gully erosion, rill erosion, sheet erosion, tunnel erosion, stream bank erosion, wind erosion, or scalding; and
2. any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility — including, but not limited to water holding capacity, soil structure, organic matter, soil biology, and nutrients, within or outside the land the subject of the development application.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 20.1
- Acceptable outcome 20.2

AO 20.1 Clearing is undertaken in accordance with a sediment and erosion control plan, which includes measures to ensure the rates of soil loss and sediment movement are the same or less than those prior to the proposed development.

Note: For guidance on developing a sediment and erosion control plan, please refer to the Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control Document, IECA, 2008.

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing a comprehensive sediment and erosion control plan (SECP) for the proposed **clearing**. The plan needs to adequately address the potential for and management of erosive soil loss and sediment movement and deposition in the context of:

- **clearing** operations
- post-**clearing** or post development land use
- on-site impacts
- off-site impacts.

The level of detail required within an SECP will vary depending on the complexity of the development and the soil loss and sediment movement risk associated with the development application. The level of detail will need to be case specific, and must provide sufficient detail to demonstrate that erosion control is feasible and practicable. [Appendix 3](#) provides guidance on the basic requirements of an SECP including further information that may assist with the development of the SECP.

AO 20.2 The local government is the assessment manager for the development application.

This acceptable outcome is automatically met if local government is the assessment manager for the development application. Where local government is the assessment manager, appropriate conditions to address soil erosion and sediment issues will occur through their assessment process.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will not result in either of the following:

1. **Accelerated soil erosion.**
2. Any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility (both within and outside the land the subject of the development application).

To demonstrate that **clearing** will not result in **accelerated soil erosion**, the following evidence should be provided:

1. Desktop and field data for soil erosion presence and future risk, both within the **application area** and on the land surrounding the **application area**.
2. Any potential increased soil erosion that may be caused by the proposed **clearing**, both within the **application area** and on the land surrounding the **application area**.
3. The **clearing** methods and management strategies that will be employed to either prevent or rectify increased soil erosion caused by the **clearing**.

To demonstrate that **clearing** will not result in any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility (both within and outside the land the subject of the development application), the following evidence should be provided:

1. Desktop and field data for chemical, physical and biological fertility characteristics of the soil within the **application area** and on the land surrounding the application area.
2. Any potential impacts the proposed **clearing** may have on these characteristics.
3. The **clearing** methods and management strategies that will be employed to either prevent or rectify any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility (both within and outside the land the subject of the development application).

3.10.2 Performance outcome 21

PO 21 Clearing does not result in:

1. accelerated soil erosion - including, but not limited to - mass movement, gully erosion, rill erosion, sheet erosion, tunnel erosion, stream bank erosion, wind erosion, or scalding; and
2. any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility— including, but not limited to water holding capacity, soil structure, organic matter, soil biology and nutrients, within or outside the land subject of the development application.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- to control non-native plants and **declared pests**: Acceptable outcome 21.1 and 21.2
- for **managing thickened vegetation**: Acceptable outcome 21.3 and 21.4
- for **encroachment**: Acceptable outcome 21.5
- for **fodder harvesting**: Acceptable outcome 21.6 or 21.7.

Where the clearing is necessary to control non-native plants or declared pests:

AO 21.1 Mechanical clearing retains 50 percent of the ground cover (dead or alive) in each 50 by 50 metre (0.25 hectare) area.

AO 21.2 New access tracks to gain access to non-native plant or **declared pest** infestation do not exceed five metres in width or de-stabilise the banks of any **watercourse or drainage feature** as a result of crossing, construction or use.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide the **clearing** methods.
2. Within the proposed **clearing area**:
 - a. provide the desktop and field data for ground cover and how it varies across the area; and
 - b. demonstrate how **mechanical clearing** will retain or achieve 50 per cent of ground cover within each 50 x 50 metre area³
3. Identify present and new proposed access points and tracks to the weed infestation (for example, through GPS coordinates).
4. Provide the widths of new proposed access, demonstrating they will not create tracks of cleared **vegetation** greater than 5 metres in width.
5. Where a new proposed access track will require the **clearing of vegetation** within or near to the **defining bank** of a **watercourse** or **drainage feature**, provide desktop and field data for bank stability of the **watercourse** or **drainage feature**.⁴
6. Demonstrate how **clearing** methods and construction and use of the access track will maintain bank stability.

Where the clearing is for managing thickened vegetation:

AO 21.3 Mechanical clearing does not:

1. occur in a **regional ecosystem** in table 16.3.6 of this code that states 'mechanical clearing not permitted';
2. disturb more than 50 per cent of the ground surface or result in any hectare having less than 50 per cent **ground cover**, whether dead or alive; and
3. occur on **slopes** in excess of 5 percent.

AO 21.4 Mechanical clearing does not occur within 50 metres of an area of **soil erosion and instability**.

³ The best case scenario is that living native ground cover vegetation exceeds 50 per cent of each 50 x 50 metres area. However, it can also be achieved by leaving dead vegetation matter (for example mulched

⁴ Consider soil erosion measures when you are 'near to' the bank to minimise bank destabilisation.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide details of the **clearing** methods.
2. Within the proposed **clearing** area:
 - a. provide details to demonstrate that mechanical thinning will not occur in any **regional ecosystems** list in table 16.3.6 of the code that states 'mechanical thinning not permitted'; and
 - b. provide desktop and field data for **ground cover** and **slope** and how it varies across the area; and
 - c. demonstrate how **mechanical clearing** will not disturb more than 50 per cent of the ground surface or result in any hectare having less than 50 per cent **ground cover**, whether dead or alive; and
 - d. demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in the areas identified as greater than 5 per cent **slope**; and
 - e. identify any areas of **soil erosion and instability** within the **clearing** area, or within 50 metres of the **clearing** area; and
 - f. demonstrate how **clearing** will not occur within 50 metres of any area of **soil erosion and instability**.

Where the clearing is for encroachment:

AO 21.5 Mechanical clearing:

1. is limited to **slopes** less than five percent; and
2. retains 50 percent of the ground cover (dead or alive) in each 50 by 50 metre (0.25 hectare) area.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide the proposed **clearing** methods.
2. Within the proposed **clearing** area:
 - a. provide desktop and field data for ground cover and **slope** and how it varies across the area; and
 - b. demonstrate how **mechanical clearing** will retain or achieve 50 per cent of ground cover within each 50 x 50 metre area² and
 - c. demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in the areas identified as greater than 5 per cent **slope**.

Where the clearing is for fodder harvesting:

AO 21.6 Mechanical clearing does not occur on a **slope** greater than five percent.

AO 21.7 Mechanical clearing does not occur within 50 metres of an area of **soil erosion and instability**.

These acceptable outcomes can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide desk top and field data for **slope** and how it varies across the proposed **clearing** area.
2. Identify any areas of **soil erosion and instability** within the **clearing** area, or within 50 metres of the **clearing** area.
3. Demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in the areas identified as greater than five per cent **slope**. Demonstrate how **clearing** will not occur within 50 metres of any area of **soil erosion and instability**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will not result in either of the following:

1. **Accelerated soil erosion**.
2. Any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility (both within and outside the land the subject of the development application).

To demonstrate that **clearing** will not result in **accelerated soil erosion**, the following evidence should be provided:

1. Desktop and field data for any areas of **soil erosion** and future risk of **soil erosion**, both within the **application area** and on the land surrounding the **application area**.
2. Any potential increased **soil erosion** that may be caused by the proposed **clearing**, both within the **application area** and on the land surrounding the **application area**.
3. The **clearing** methods and management strategies that will be employed to either prevent, manage or rectify **accelerated soil erosion** caused by the **clearing**.

To demonstrate that **clearing** will not result in any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility (both within and outside the land the subject of the development application), the following evidence should be provided:

1. Desktop and field data for chemical, physical and biological fertility characteristics of the soil within the **application area** and on the land surrounding the application area.
2. Any potential impacts the proposed **clearing** may have on these characteristics.
3. The **clearing** methods and management strategies that will be employed to either prevent or rectify any associated loss of chemical, physical or biological fertility (both within and outside the land the subject of the development application).

Further information

- Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (3rd edition) available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'soil conservation guidelines Queensland'
- DNRME soil data available from www.qld.gov.au search for 'soils data'
- Soils mapping and soil site data is available to view through the Soils Globe. This is a feature globe available in the Queensland Globe. Datasets have been grouped by survey type and scale, and listed by project code. <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>
- Land suitability mapping available at <https://www.qld.gov.au> search for 'land suitability maps'.

3.11 Salinity

Context

Salinity is the presence of salts (such as sodium chloride, magnesium and calcium sulfates) and bicarbonates, in soil and water. Saline soils occur naturally in parts of Queensland from coastal to inland areas. Naturally occurring **salinity** is referred to as primary **salinity**. Examples of naturally occurring saline areas include salt lakes, salt pans, salt marshes and salt flats. However, **salinity** can be induced by land management practices that change the way water and salt move in the landscape – this is referred to as secondary **salinity**. It can occur in grazing lands, cropping lands and urban areas.

In 2001, the area of saline land in Queensland was assessed as 48,000 hectares (ha), most of which is in South East Queensland.

Not only in Queensland, but throughout Australia, **salinity** is a major natural resource issue. It can be challenging to manage because the expression of the problem can occur decades after the initiation and effects may occur some distance from where the causes originated.

The harmful effects of **salinity** include lost agricultural production, poor water quality, loss of **biodiversity** and damage to infrastructure and urban areas.

3.11.1 Performance outcome 22

PO 22 Clearing does not contribute to or accelerate **land degradation** through **waterlogging**, or through the **salinisation** of **groundwater**, surface water or soil.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying acceptable outcome 22.1.

AO 22.1 Clearing does not occur within 100 metres of a **salinity expression area**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **salinity expression areas** within the **clearing** area, or within 100 metres of the **clearing** area.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will not occur within 100 metres of any **salinity expression area**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how the development will not contribute to or accelerate **land degradation** through **waterlogging** or the **salinisation** of **groundwater**, surface water or soil.

The application should include, but not be limited to, addressing and demonstrating all of the following (where applicable):

1. Soil types and landform (including **slope**).
2. Presence of primary or secondary **salinity** or **waterlogging** in or immediately adjacent to the land being cleared.
3. **Salinity** levels in soil, surface water and **groundwater** (<20 m depth) in or immediately adjacent to the land being cleared.
4. Land suitability for the proposed post-**clearing** land use in the area being cleared.
5. Expected hydrologic impact in the context of **salinity** processes.

Further information

- Salinity Management Handbook, second edition, Department of Environment and Resource Management, 2011 available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'salinity management handbook'.
- DNRME soil data available from www.qld.gov.au search for 'soils data'.
- Soils mapping and soil site data is available to view through the Soils Globe. This is a feature globe available in the Queensland Globe. Datasets have been grouped by survey type and scale, and listed by project code. <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>

3.12 Conserving endangered and of concern regional ecosystems

Context

Regional ecosystems are **vegetation** communities that are associated with a particular combination of geology, land form and soil in a bioregion. The classification of **vegetation** communities as **regional ecosystems** recognises the interaction between geology, landform, soils and **vegetation** patterns and, therefore, the way the landscape is broadly functioning.

Each **regional ecosystem** has been assigned a **vegetation** management status based on its current remnant extent—that is, how much of it remains in a bioregion. The **vegetation** management status types are:

1. **Endangered regional ecosystems**
2. **Of concern regional ecosystems**
3. **Least concern regional ecosystems**

3.12.1 Performance outcome 23

PO 23 Clearing maintains the current extent of endangered regional ecosystems and of concern regional ecosystems.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 23.1
- Acceptable outcome 23.2
- Acceptable outcome 23.3
- Acceptable outcome 23.4

AO 23.1 Clearing does not occur in an **endangered regional ecosystem** or an **of concern regional ecosystem**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the proposed **clearing** will not occur in **category A** or **category B** areas containing **endangered regional ecosystems** or in **category A** or **category B** areas containing **of concern regional ecosystems**.

AO 23.2 Total clearing of **endangered regional ecosystems** and **of concern regional ecosystems** combined does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the total combined proposed **clearing** of **endangered regional ecosystems** and **of concern regional ecosystems** does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 23.3 Total **clearing** of **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems** combined does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the total combined proposed **clearing** of **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems** does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 23.4 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, an offset is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from clearing of **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems** (a matter of state environmental significance).

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems** within the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** will **maintain the current extent** of any **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems**.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems** has been reasonably avoided.
4. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **endangered regional ecosystems** and of **concern regional ecosystems** has been reasonably minimised.

Further information

- Request a Property Report (containing a Vegetation Management Supporting Map) for a lot/plan; and to apply to change a vegetation map: www.qld.gov.au search for 'vegetation maps'
- Queensland Globe: <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>
- General information on **regional ecosystems**: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystems'
- Download the Regional Ecosystem Description Database: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystem database'.

3.13 Essential habitat

Context

Essential habitat is the habitat of native wildlife prescribed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* as endangered, vulnerable or near threatened wildlife (**protected wildlife**).

Essential habitat mapping is shown on the 'Vegetation Management Supporting Map' which is part of the [Vegetation Management Report](#). The mapping relies on information sourced by a number of different government and non-government agencies and experts.

Essential habitat is defined as a **category A, B or C** area shown on the **regulated vegetation management map**:

1. that has at least three **essential habitat** factors for **protected wildlife**, that must include any **essential habitat** factors that are listed as mandatory for the **protected wildlife** in the **essential habitat database**; or
2. in which the **protected wildlife**, at any stage of its lifecycle, is located.

Essential habitat factors are components of the wildlife's habitat (including, but not limited to, a landform, pollinator, **regional ecosystem**, soil and water) that is necessary or desirable for the wildlife at any stage of its lifecycle.

3.13.1 Performance outcome 24

PO 24 Clearing maintains the current extent of essential habitat.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 24.1
- Acceptable outcome 24.2
- Acceptable outcome 24.3
- Acceptable outcome 24.4

AO 24.1 Clearing does not occur in **essential habitat**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will not occur in **essential habitat**.

AO 24.2 Clearing in **essential habitat** does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the **clearing** of **essential habitat** does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 24.3 Clearing in **essential habitat** does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the clearing of essential habitat does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

AO 24.4 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing** of **essential habitat** (a matter of state environmental significance).

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **essential habitat** within the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** will **maintain the current extent** of any **essential habitat**.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **essential habitat** has been reasonably avoided.
4. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any **essential habitat** has been reasonably minimised.

Further information

- Request a Vegetation Management Report (containing a Vegetation Management Supporting Map) for a lot/plan: www.qld.gov.au search for 'vegetation map' or 'property report'.
- Queensland Globe: <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>
- General information on **regional ecosystems**: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystem'.
- Download the Regional Ecosystem Description Database: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystem database'.

3.13.2 Performance outcome 25

PO 25 Clearing does not occur in **essential habitat**, or where this is not reasonably possible, the applicant **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 25.1
- Acceptable outcome 25.2
- Acceptable outcome 25.3
- Acceptable outcome 25.4

AO 25.1 Clearing does not occur in **essential habitat**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will not occur in **essential habitat**.

AO 25.2 Clearing in essential habitat does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the **clearing of essential habitat** does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 25.3 Clearing in essential habitat does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

The acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the clearing of essential habitat does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 25.4 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, the cleared area is **rehabilitated**.

The acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **essential habitat** within the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with any **essential habitat** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with any **essential habitat** has been reasonably minimised.
4. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by providing an **environmental clearing management plan** demonstrating how the cleared area will be **rehabilitated** over time taking into account the short-term and long-term impacts of the **clearing**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Further information

- Request a Vegetation Management Report (containing a Vegetation Management Supporting Map) for a lot/plan: www.qld.gov.au search for 'vegetation map or property report'.
- Queensland Globe: <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>
- General information on **regional ecosystems**: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystems'
- Download the Regional Ecosystem Description Database: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystem database'.
- Guidelines for **necessary environmental clearing** available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'

3.13.3 Performance outcome 26

PO 26 Clearing does not occur in **essential habitat**, or where this is not reasonably possible, the applicant **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area, or **maintains the current extent of essential habitat**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 26.1
- Acceptable outcome 26.2
- Acceptable outcome 26.3
- Acceptable outcome 26.4
- Acceptable outcome 26.5

AO 26.1 Clearing does not occur in **essential habitat**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** will not occur in **essential habitat**.

AO 26.2 Clearing in **essential habitat** does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the **clearing of essential habitat** does not exceed the width prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 26.3 Clearing in **essential habitat** does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that the **clearing of essential habitat** does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 26.4 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, the cleared area is **rehabilitated**.

The acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **essential habitat** within the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with any **essential habitat** has been reasonably avoided.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing of vegetation** associated with any **essential habitat** has been reasonably minimised.
4. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

AO 26.5 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and:

1. **clearing** has been reasonably minimised; and
2. the cleared area cannot be reasonably **rehabilitated**,

an offset is provided for any acceptable significant residual impact from clearing of essential habitat (a matter of state environmental significance).

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **offset** for any acceptable **significant residual impact**. Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **essential habitat** within the proposed **clearing** footprint.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** of **vegetation** associated with any essential habitat has been reasonably avoided.
3. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Further information

- Request a Property Report (containing a Vegetation Management Supporting Map) for a lot/plan: www.qld.gov.au search for 'vegetation map or property report'.
- Queensland Globe: <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>
- General information on **regional ecosystems**: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystems'.
- Download the Regional Ecosystem Description Database: www.qld.gov.au search for 'regional ecosystem database'.
- Guidelines for **necessary environmental clearing** available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'

3.14 Acid sulfate soils

Context

Acid sulfate soils are coastal soils and sediments containing iron sulfides (mainly pyrite), found on low lying coastal land, predominantly below five metres Australian Height Datum (AHD).⁵ They can also be found in some inland areas at higher elevations.

Acid sulfate soils are environmentally benign if they remain in an anoxic (oxygen-free), water logged environment. If acid sulfate soils are dug up or drained and exposed to oxygen, the iron sulfides oxidise, releasing sulfuric acid and soluble iron. The acid can mobilise aluminium, lead or other heavy metals if present in the soil. Rainfall can then wash the acid and metals from the disturbed soil into the surrounding environment, degrading waterways and adversely affecting the built environment.

Acid sulfate soils occur as:

- potential acid sulfate soils: soil or sediment that contain iron sulfides which have not been exposed to air, and have not oxidised. These soils have potential to produce acid if oxidised.
- actual acid sulfate soils: soil or sediment containing highly acidic soil horizons (with a pH < 4) caused by some or partial oxidation of iron sulfides. These soils often exhibit straw or butter coloured mottles. These soils may have the potential to continue to oxidise.

The disturbance of acid sulfate soils should be avoided. Where avoidance is not practicable, the disturbance should be managed to prevent the release of acid and soluble iron to the surrounding environment. This is achievable by identifying areas with high probability of containing acid sulfate soils, conducting an ASS site investigation, and devising and implementing an acid sulfate soils management plan to prevent the mobilisation and release of **contaminants**.

This part of the code ensures acid sulfate issues resulting from **clearing** are avoided or appropriately managed.

3.14.1 Performance outcome 27

PO 27 Clearing does not result in, or accelerate, disturbance of acid sulfate soils or changes to the hydrology of the location that will result in either of the following:

1. aeration of horizons containing iron sulphides; or
2. mobilisation of acid or metals.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 27.1
- Acceptable outcome 27.2
- Acceptable outcome 27.3

⁵ The Australian Height Datum sets the mean sea level for the Australian Coastline at zero metres. "Below five metres Australian Height Datum" effectively means land elevations that are less than five metres above sea level.

AO 27.1 Clearing does not occur in **land zone 1, land zone 2** or **land zone 3**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify the land zones in which **clearing** is proposed⁶
2. Demonstrate that **clearing** will not occur in **land zone 1, land zone 2** or **land zone 3**.

AO 27.2 Clearing in **land zone 1, land zone 2** or **land zone 3** in areas below the five metre Australian Height Datum only occurs where:

1. it does not involve **mechanical clearing**; and
2. acid sulfate soils are managed consistent with the *State Planning Policy*, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 7 July 2017, and with the soil management guidelines in the *Queensland Acid Sulfate Soil Technical Manual*, Department of Science Information Technology Innovation and the Arts.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify whether **clearing** in **land zone 1, land zone 2** or **land zone 3** will occur in areas below the five metre AHD⁵.
2. Where **clearing** will occur any of the above identified areas, provide both of the following:
 - a. The proposed **clearing** methods to demonstrate that **mechanical clearing** will not be involved.
 - b. How acid sulfate soils will be managed consistent with the *State Planning Policy*, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 7 July 2017, and with the *Soil Management Guidelines in the Queensland Acid Sulfate Soil Technical Manual*, Department of Science Information Technology Innovation and the Arts.

AO 27.3 The local government is the assessment manager for the development application.

If local government is the assessment manager, the application automatically complies with performance outcome 27. Where local government is the assessment manager, appropriate conditions to address acid sulfate issues will occur through their assessment process.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how the development will not result in disturbance of acid sulfate soils, or changes to the hydrology of the location that will result in either aeration of horizons containing iron sulfides or mobilisation and release of acid or metals.

⁶ Land zones are categories that describe the major geologies, associated landforms and geomorphic processes in Queensland. The land zone can be identified by the middle number in the three digit regional ecosystem identification code. For example, the regional ecosystem identified by the code 12.3.4 is in land zone 3

Further information

- Queensland acid sulfate soil technical manual: laboratory methods guidelines V2.1, 2004.
- Queensland acid sulfate soil technical manual: soil management guidelines V4.0, 2014.
- Guidelines for sampling and analysis of lowland acid sulfate soils in Queensland 1998.
- Queensland acid sulfate soil technical manual: legislation and policy guide V2.2, 2004.
- Search for the above guidelines in the Queensland Government library catalogue www.qld.gov.au search for 'library catalogue'

3.15 Staged clearing

Context

Clearing required to establish or expand an extractive pit or quarry should only be undertaken as the extractive area expands for operational needs. Restricting **clearing** to the current operational area allows for the retention of the environmental values provided by the retained **vegetation** over time.

3.15.1 Performance outcome 28

PO 28 Clearing:

1. is staged in line with operational needs that restrict **clearing** to the current operational area
2. only occurs in the area from which material will be extracted, and any reasonably associated infrastructure, within the term of the development approval, and
3. does not occur without required permits.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify the current operational area for the **extractive industry**.
2. Provide the following information for the five year period after the development application is approved:
 - a. proposed staging for the extraction of materials; and
 - b. any reasonable associated infrastructure.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** will be limited to these areas where materials will be extracted and for the construction and maintenance of any associated infrastructure.
4. Declare any other permits which are required for the proposed development (for example, any permit required for the extraction of material).
5. Demonstrate that these permits are already acquired, or how they will be acquired prior to **clearing**.

3.16 Clearing for agriculture (coordinated project)

Context

The code requires that **clearing** for an agricultural coordinated project is only undertaken where it is demonstrated that the land is suitable and there is sufficient access to water (if the project involves irrigated crops).

3.16.1 Performance outcome 29

PO 29 Clearing only occurs where the land is suitable for agriculture having regard to topography, climate and soil attributes.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating that the land is suitable for agriculture in accordance with the Guidelines for Coordinated Projects involving Clearing for Agriculture (Land Suitability and Water Availability), Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, 2018.

3.16.2 Performance outcome 30

PO 30 For applications for irrigated crops, the owner of the land has, or may have, access to enough water for establishing, cultivating and harvesting the crops to which the **clearing** relates.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide the crop type and calculations for the amount of water that will be required to establish, cultivate and harvest crops on the land.
2. Demonstrate that there will be sufficient secure water available for the proposed development. For example, provide the following information:
 - a. details of any water entitlement (i.e. water licence or water allocation);
 - b. details of annual average rainfall for the area;
 - c. capacity of any water storage infrastructure; and
 - d. details of the proposed irrigation systems.

Further information

- CropWaterUse Tool App is available online at: <https://waterschedpro.net.au/>

This tool allows farmers to undertake an approximate calculation of crop irrigation requirements at different times of the year.

Once you have a clear idea of the crop you intend to plant and irrigation system, you can use this tool to determine irrigation requirements. Reports and graphs from the tool can then be printed and submitted with your application to support your analysis. The outputs from these reports and graphs include:

- crop life-cycle daily water use
- total cumulative crop water use
- total cumulative rainfall
- irrigation frequency.

3.17 Clearing for necessary environmental clearing – land restoration and natural disaster preparation

Context

Clearing for **land restoration** or **natural disaster preparation** should only be undertaken where it is necessary to address an environmental issue, not to permanently remove a regional ecosystem from the landscape.

This part of the code ensures the **clearing** of **vegetation** for these purposes is either avoided, maintains **regional ecosystem** structure or function, or is followed by **rehabilitation**.

3.17.1 Performance outcome 31

PO 31 Clearing does not occur, or where this is not reasonably possible, the applicant **rehabilitates** the **cleared** area.

Demonstrating Acceptable Outcomes

Performance outcome 31 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 31.1
- Acceptable outcome 31.2
- Acceptable outcome 31.3
- Acceptable outcome 31.4

AO 31.1 Clearing maintains the natural floristic composition and **range of sizes** across the **application area**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following for each **regional ecosystem** within the proposed **clearing** footprint:

1. Provide desktop and field data for floristic composition and **range of sizes**.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will maintain a natural floristic composition and **range of sizes**.

AO 31.2 Clearing does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing the width of the proposed clearing, demonstrating that it will not exceed the limits prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 31.3 Clearing does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing the areas of the proposed clearing, demonstrating that it will not exceed the limits prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 31.4 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been reasonably minimised, the cleared area is **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **environmental clearing management plan** demonstrating how the **cleared** area will be **rehabilitated** over time taking into account the short-term and long-term impacts of the **clearing**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Assessment against performance outcome

This performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate why **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided (for example, evidence showing that alternative options were considered and were not appropriate)
2. Provide an **environmental clearing management plan** for the proposed **clearing** area. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

Further information

- Guidelines for **necessary environmental clearing** are available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'

3.18 Clearing for necessary environmental clearing – natural channel diversion and contaminant removal

Context

Clearing for **natural channel diversion** or **contaminant removal** should only be undertaken to address an environmental issue, not to permanently remove a **regional ecosystem** from the landscape.

This part of the code ensures the **clearing** of **vegetation** is either avoided, does not disrupt the structure or function of the **regional ecosystem**, is followed by **rehabilitation**, or is counterbalanced by providing an **offset**.

3.18.1 Performance outcome 32

PO 32 Clearing does not occur, or where this is not reasonably possible, the applicant **rehabilitates** the cleared area or **maintains the current extent of vegetation**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

Performance outcome 32 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 32.1
- Acceptable outcome 32.2
- Acceptable outcome 32.3
- Acceptable outcome 32.4
- Acceptable outcome 32.5

AO 32.1 Clearing maintains the natural floristic composition and **range of sizes** across the **application area**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following for each **regional ecosystem** within the proposed **clearing** footprint:

1. Provide desktop and field data for floristic composition and **range of sizes**.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will maintain a natural floristic composition and **range of sizes**.

AO 32.2 Clearing does not exceed the widths prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate why **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided (for example, provide evidence showing that alternative options were considered and were not appropriate).
2. Provide the width of the proposed **clearing**, demonstrating that it will not exceed the limits prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 32.3 Clearing does not exceed the areas prescribed in table 16.3.1 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate why **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided (for example, provide evidence showing that alternative options were considered and were not appropriate).
2. Provide the area of the proposed **clearing**, demonstrating that it will not exceed the limits prescribed in table 16.3.1 of the code.

AO 32.4 Where **clearing** cannot be reasonably avoided, and **clearing** has been minimised, the **endangered regional ecosystems** and **of concern regional ecosystems** are **rehabilitated**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **environmental clearing management plan** demonstrating how the **cleared** area will be **rehabilitated** over time taking into account the short-term and long-term impacts of the **clearing**. [Appendix 6](#) provides guidance on criteria for satisfying the requirement of an **environmental clearing management plan**.

AO 32.5 Where **clearing** an **endangered regional ecosystem** or **of concern regional ecosystem** cannot be reasonably avoided, minimised or **rehabilitated**, an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact** from **clearing** of an **endangered regional ecosystem** or **of concern regional ecosystem** (a **matter of state environmental significance**).

This acceptable outcome can be met by providing an **offset** for any **acceptable significant residual impact**. Where an **offset** is provided for any **acceptable significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following listed in [Appendix 5](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

This performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate both of the following:
 - a. how the impacts have been reasonably avoided.
 - b. How the impacts have been reasonable minimised / mitigated.
2. Provide either:
 - a. an **environmental clearing management plan** demonstrating how the **cleared** areas will be **rehabilitated**; or
 - b. evidence demonstrating how **clearing** will **maintain the current extent** of **vegetation**.

Further information

- Guidelines for necessary environmental clearing available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'necessary environmental clearing guidelines'
- Significant Residual Impact Guideline, Department State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, 2014 available from www.qld.gov.au search for 'significant residual impact guideline'.
- Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy 2017 version 1.3, Department of Environmental and Heritage Protection available from www.qld.gov.au search for 'environmental offsets policy'.

3.19 Conserving remnant vegetation that are regional ecosystems – necessary to control non-native plants and declared pests

Context

Each different **regional ecosystems** exhibit a unique composition of plant species. The persistence of a **regional ecosystem** in the landscape requires that these species contain both mature and immature and recruiting individuals.

This part of the code ensures that **clearing** for weed management maintains a natural floristic composition of the **regional ecosystem** subject to **clearing**.

3.19.1 Performance outcome 33

PO 33 Clearing activities:

1. maintain the natural floristic composition and **range of sizes** of each species of the **regional ecosystem** evenly spaced across the **application area**; and
2. retain **mature trees**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 33 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 33.1
- Acceptable outcome 33.2

Where the clearing method is mechanical clearing:

AO 33.1 Mechanical clearing does not exceed the limitations defined in table 16.3.4 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide desktop and field data identifying the percentage of weed coverage across the **regional ecosystem** where **clearing** is proposed
2. Provide details of the proposed **mechanical clearing** methods
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** methods will meet the **clearing** limitations in table 16.3.4 in the code.

Where the clearing method is root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides:

AO 33.2 Root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicides are not:

1. applied via **aerial application**; or
2. ground applied on a broad acre basis; or
3. used inconsistently with the product directions.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide the name of the proposed herbicide—identifying whether it is a **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicide**.
2. Where a **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicide** will be used— provide the proposed herbicide application methods to demonstrate both of the following:
 - a. it will not be applied by aircraft (for example fixed wing aircraft or a helicopter) or applied to soil on a broad acre basis⁷
 - b. it is consistent with the product directions on the product label and the [*Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority \(APVMA\)*](#).

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following for each **regional ecosystem** within the proposed **clearing** footprint:

1. Provide desktop and field data for floristic composition and **range of sizes**.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will maintain a natural floristic composition and **range of sizes**.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** will retain **mature trees**.

⁷ Broad acre application of a herbicide is any application other than selective application (for example, spraying the herbicide from the back of a moving vehicle).

3.20 Requirements for dense regional ecosystems – necessary to control non-native plants or declared pests

Context

A **dense regional ecosystem** is one with a dense **vegetation** structure, for example rainforest or vine scrub. These **regional ecosystems** are identified as 'dense' by the [Regional Ecosystem Description Database \(REDD\)](#). **Dense regional ecosystems** rely on dense canopy cover and natural thickening processes to persist in the landscape.

Opening the canopy cover by **clearing** in a **dense regional ecosystem** can expose the area to threats such as fire, weed infestation, and increased herbivory of recruiting plants.

This part of the code ensures that **clearing** for weed management maintains the presence, structure and function of **dense regional ecosystems**.

3.20.1 Performance outcome 34

PO 34 Clearing retains canopy **vegetation** in **dense regional ecosystems**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

Performance outcome 34 can be met by demonstrating any of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 34.1
- Acceptable outcome 34.2

AO 34.1 Clearing does not occur in **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.5 of this code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating that **clearing** avoids **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.5 of the code.

AO 34.2 Clearing and associated soil disturbance in **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.5 of this code only occurs:

1. within a 1.5 metre radius from the base of the stem of individual non-native plants or **declared pests**; and
2. to the extent necessary to provide access for the control of the non-native plants or **declared pests**.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide the location and extent of present access points and tracks.
2. Demonstrate why any existing access points and tracks are not sufficient for the weed management activity.
3. Provide the location and extent of proposed **clearing**:
 - a. for new access points and tracks; and
 - b. for removal of the weed infestation.
4. Demonstrate how **clearing and associated soil disturbance** will be limited to the area within 1.5 metres from the base or stem of the non-native plant or **declared pest**.⁸

⁸ Associated soil disturbance is any disturbance of the soil as a result of the clearing activity. State Development Assessment Provisions Guidance Material - State code 16: Native vegetation clearing, Department of Natural Resources and Mines and Energy, 2018

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how **clearing** within **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.5 of the code will retain all canopy vegetation.

⁹ Canopy **vegetation** is any **vegetation** which makes up part of the **regional ecosystems** canopy layer.

3.21 Restoring vegetation – managing thickened vegetation

Context

Each different **regional ecosystems** exhibit a unique composition of plant species. The persistence of a **regional ecosystem** in the landscape requires that these species contain both mature and immature and recruiting individuals.

This part of the code ensures that **clearing** for **managing thickened vegetation** restores the natural floristic composition and range of sizes of each species of the regional ecosystem.

3.21.1 Performance outcome 35

PO 35 Clearing activities:

1. restore the natural floristic composition and **range of sizes** of each species of the **regional ecosystem** evenly spaced across the **application area**; and
2. retain **mature trees, habitat trees** and **tall immature trees** and **thickets**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

Performance outcome 35 can be met by demonstrating all of the following:

- Acceptable outcome 35.1
- Acceptable outcome 35.2
- Acceptable outcome 35.3
- Acceptable outcome 35.4
- Acceptable outcome 35.5
- Acceptable outcome 35.6
- Acceptable outcome 35.7

AO 35.1 Clearing does not occur in any of the following areas:

1. in **thickets**;
2. for mechanical managing of thickened vegetation – within five metres or less from the trunk of a **mature tree, habitat tree** or **tall immature tree**.

AO 35.2 Clearing retains:

1. all **mature trees** and **habitat trees**;
2. a full **range of sizes** and species typical of the **regional ecosystem** in the area; and
3. where the number of **mature trees** plus **habitat trees** is less than 20 per hectare, **tall immature trees** to total 20 **mature trees, habitat trees** and **tall immature trees** per hectare.

AO 35.3 If **clearing immature trees**, retain **immature trees** distributed in a pattern that is as natural as possible and of at least the number specified in table 16.3.6 of this code.

AO 35.4 If **clearing low shrubs**:

1. in **regional ecosystems** where **clearing** is restricted to **low shrubs** as specified in table 16.3.6 of this code – **clearing** retains all **immature trees**;
2. in **regional ecosystems** where **clearing** is not restricted to **low shrubs** as specified in table 16.3.6 – **clearing** retains at least the number of **immature trees** specified in table 16.3.6; and
3. **clearing** retains at least 10 per cent of the predominate species that have thickened.

AO 35.5 **Mechanical clearing** does not result in debris being stacked or pushed against a **mature tree, habitat tree** or **tall immature tree**.

AO 35.6 **Clearing** is not undertaken by:

1. **aerial application** of any herbicide;
2. application of a **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicide**.

AO 35.7 Chemical **clearing** does not occur within five metres of the trunk of a **mature tree, habitat tree or tall immature tree**.

These acceptable outcomes can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide desktop and field data for the floristic composition and **range of sizes** for each of the **regional ecosystems** proposed to be thinned (typical of the relevant **regional ecosystem/s** in the area).
2. Identify any **thickets** in the area/s proposed to be thinned.
3. Demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** methods will not result in **clearing in thickets**.
4. Demonstrate how all **mature trees, habitat trees and tall immature trees** will be retained.
5. Demonstrate how any proposed **mechanical clearing** methods will not result in **clearing** within five metres or less from the trunk of a **mature tree, habitat tree or tall immature tree**.
6. For each **regional ecosystem** proposed to be managed, demonstrate how **clearing** will retain a full **range of sizes** and species typical of the **regional ecosystem** in the area.
7. If **clearing immature trees**, demonstrate how the proposed **clearing** methods will retain **immature trees** distributed in a pattern that is as natural as possible and of at least the number specified in table 16.3.6 of the code.
8. If **clearing low shrubs**, demonstrate how the proposed **clearing**:
 - a. in **regional ecosystems** where **clearing** is restricted to **low shrubs** (as specified in table 16.3.6 of the code), retains all **immature trees**;
 - b. in **regional ecosystems** where **clearing** is not restricted to **low shrubs** (as specified in table 16.3.6 of the code), retains at least the number of **immature trees** specified in table 16.3.6 of the code; and
 - c. retains at least 10 per cent of the predominate species that have thickened.
9. If **mechanical clearing**, demonstrate how **clearing** will not result in debris being stacked or pushed against a **mature tree, habitat tree or tall immature tree**.
10. If chemical **clearing**, demonstrate how **clearing** is not undertaken by either:
 - a. **aerial application** of any herbicide; or
 - b. application of a **root-absorbed broad spectrum herbicide**.
11. If chemical **clearing**, demonstrate how **clearing** does not occur within five metres of the trunk of a **mature tree, habitat tree or tall immature tree**.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following for each **regional ecosystem** within the proposed **clearing** footprint:

1. Provide desktop and field data for the floristic composition and **range of sizes** for each of the **regional ecosystems** proposed to be managed (typical of the relevant **regional ecosystem/s** in the area).
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will restore the natural floristic composition and **range of sizes** for each species for each **regional ecosystem**, and how the **range of sizes** for each species will be evenly spaced across the relevant **regional ecosystem**.
3. Demonstrating how **clearing** will retain all **mature trees, habitat trees, tall immature trees and thickets**.

Further information

- Guide to using accepted development vegetation clearing codes – Managing thickened vegetation and fodder harvesting (March 2018) available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'A guide to using accepted development vegetation clearing codes'.

3.22 Clearing limited to specific regional ecosystems and methods – managing thickened vegetation and encroachment

Context

Thickening and **encroachment** are important natural processes in certain **vegetation** types. This part of the code ensures that managing thickened vegetation and **clearing of encroachment** is only undertaken in **regional ecosystems** that will benefit from these land management activities.

3.22.1 Performance outcome 36

PO 36 Clearing must be for the purpose of restoring the remnant **regional ecosystem** and only occur if all of the following apply:

1. **clearing** is in **regional ecosystems** prescribed in table 16.3.6 of this code; and
2. **clearing** is in accordance with the **clearing** restrictions for the **regional ecosystem** prescribed in table 16.3.6 of this code;

unless the **clearing** is solely for removing native plants not naturally occurring within the **regional ecosystem**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate how **clearing** is for the primary purpose of restoring the remnant **regional ecosystem**.
2. Provide the proposed **clearing** areas demonstrating **clearing** is only in **regional ecosystems** prescribed in table 16.3.6 of the code.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** will be undertaken in accordance with the **clearing** restrictions for the **regional ecosystem** prescribed in table 16.3.6 of the code.

3.22.2 Performance outcome 37

PO 37 Clearing of encroachment does not occur, other than in the **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.7 of this code.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating that the proposed **clearing** area only occurs in **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.7 of the code.

3.23 Mature trees and habitat trees – encroachment

Context

Mature trees and **habitat trees** are critical components of many **regional ecosystems**.

This part of the code ensures **clearing** for **encroachment** retains all **mature trees** and **habitat trees** unless the species is not a natural component of the **regional ecosystem**, or is threatening the natural structure and floristic composition of the **vegetation**.

3.23.1 Performance outcome 38

PO 38 Clearing of encroachment:

1. results in the restoration of the **regional ecosystem**;
2. retains **mature trees** and **habitat trees**;
3. retains all woody **vegetation** within a **grove**; and
4. retains representatives of all immature, non-encroaching species in a natural pattern.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate that **clearing** will result in the restoration of the **regional ecosystem**, and **clearing** will be restricted to:
 - a. areas of **encroachment**; and/or
 - b. species which are not included in the natural floristic composition of the **regional ecosystem**.
2. Identify all **mature trees**, **habitat trees** and **groves** within proposed **clearing** areas.
3. Demonstrate how **clearing** methods will retain all **mature trees**, **habitat trees** and woody **vegetation** with **groves**.
4. Demonstrate how **clearing** methods will retain representatives of all immature non-encroaching species in a natural pattern.

3.24 Limits to clearing for fodder harvesting

Context

This part of the code ensures **fodder harvesting** is restricted to areas, **regional ecosystems** and **fodder_species** which can support sustainable **fodder harvesting** activities.

3.24.1 Performance outcome 39

PO 39 Clearing is limited to:

1. the extent necessary to provide fodder for stock; and
2. areas where the stock is located, and the stock has sufficient water.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide details for the areas where stock are located, and water access points for each location.
2. Provide details for the number of stock at each location for which the fodder will be harvested.
3. Provide calculations demonstrating that the extent of proposed **fodder harvesting** is proportionate to the number of stock.
4. Where appropriate, provide evidence of any obstacles preventing **fodder harvesting** in more appropriate areas (e.g. steep **slopes**, fire, high water levels).

3.24.2 Performance outcome 40

PO 40 Clearing only occur:

1. in **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.8 or table 16.3.9 of this code; and
2. in accordance with the harvesting method limitations for the **regional ecosystem** listed in table 16.3.8 or table 16.3.9 of this code.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

This performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrating the proposed **fodder harvesting** will only be in **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.8 or table 16.3.9 of the code.
2. Demonstrating that the harvesting method/s will comply with the harvesting method limitations for the **regional ecosystem** listed in table 16.3.8 or table 16.3.9 of the code.

Further information

Guide to using the fodder code (May 2018) –available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'A guide to using the fodder code'.

3.24.3 Performance outcome 41

PO 41 Clearing consists predominantly of **fodder species**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide a list of the **fodder species** to be targeted by **fodder harvesting**.
2. Demonstrate how the **fodder harvesting** methods will target these species and avoid non-**fodder species**.
3. Where the **clearing** of non-**fodder species** is necessary to access the **fodder harvesting** area or as a consequence of harvesting **fodder species**—provide the location and extent of **clearing** of non-**fodder species**.

3.25 Conserving vegetation – fodder harvesting

Context

Each different **regional ecosystems** exhibit a unique composition of plant species. The persistence of a **regional ecosystem** in the landscape requires that these species contain both mature and immature and recruiting individuals.

This part of the code ensures that **clearing** for **fodder harvesting** maintains, a natural floristic composition and **range of sizes** of each species of the regional ecosystem.

3.25.1 Performance outcome 42

PO 42 Clearing is carried out in a way that conserves:

1. **remnant vegetation** in perpetuity; and
2. the **regional ecosystem** in which the vegetation is situated.

Demonstrating acceptable outcomes

Performance outcome 42 can be met by demonstrating all of the following where relevant:

- Acceptable outcome 42.1 (all harvesting methods)
- Acceptable outcome 42.2 (selective harvesting)
- Acceptable outcome 42.3 (strip and block harvesting)
- Acceptable outcome 42.4 (strip harvesting)
- Acceptable outcome 42.5 (block harvesting)

AO 42.1 Clearing does not result in the removal of non-fodder species with a height of four metres or more.

This acceptable outcome can be met by demonstrating how the proposed fodder harvesting will not result in the removal of non-fodder species which are four metres or more in height.

AO 42.2 Selective harvesting:

1. retains all non-fodder species except where the damage is an unavoidable consequence of **clearing** the selected fodder tree; and
2. when using a chainsaw in **regionals ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.8 of the code, retains at least one fodder tree for every fodder tree cleared; and
3. in **least concern regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.9 of the code, retains at least one fodder tree for each fodder tree cleared; and
4. in **of concern regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.9 of the code, retains at least two fodder trees for each fodder tree cleared.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Demonstrate how the proposed clearing will ensure all non-fodder species will be retained (except where damage of vegetation is unavoidable when clearing the selected fodder tree).
2. When **clearing** in **regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.8 of the code using a chainsaw, demonstrate how **clearing** retains at least one fodder tree for every fodder tree cleared.
3. When **clearing** in **least concern regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.9 of the code, demonstrate how **clearing** retains at least one fodder tree for every fodder tree cleared.
4. When **clearing** in **of concern regional ecosystems** listed in table 16.3.9 of the code, demonstrate how **clearing** retains at least two fodder trees for every fodder tree cleared.

AO 42.3 Strip harvesting and block harvesting:

1. where **fodder harvesting** has previously occurred in an area of a lot, only occurs if all of the following apply:
 - a. the **vegetation** has not been **cleared** in the last 10 years; and
 - b. the average height of the fodder trees is at least 70 per cent of the height of the tallest stands of **fodder species** in the **regional ecosystem**; and
 - c. the fodder trees that were previously harvested have now attained an average height of at least 4 metres.
2. aligns **clearing** along the contour where practical; and
3. does not occur in patches of **regional ecosystems** that are less than 10 hectares in area or less than 500 metres wide.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Where the proposed fodder harvesting area includes areas that have been previously cleared for fodder harvesting, provide evidence to demonstrate that the previously harvested areas are areas where:
 - a. the **vegetation** has not been **cleared** in the last 10 years; and
 - b. the average height of the fodder trees is at least 70 per cent of the height of the tallest stands of **fodder species** in the **regional ecosystem**; and
 - c. the fodder trees that were previously harvested have now attained an average height of at least four metres.
2. Demonstrate how the propose **clearing** aligns along the contour where practical.
3. Provide evidence to demonstrate how **clearing** will not occur in **regional ecosystems** that are less than 10 hectares in area or less than 500 metres wide.

AO 42.4 Strip harvesting:

1. does not result in any **strip harvesting area** exceeding 50 metres in width; and
2. results in all **strip retention areas**:
 - a. being preserved along the length of the **strip harvest areas** to a width of at least 1.5 times that of the adjacent **strip harvest area**; and
 - b. containing **fodder species** with an average height of at least four metres; and
3. does not result in **clearing** for machinery access between **strip harvest areas** exceeding 15 metres in height.

AO 42.5 Block harvesting:

1. does not result in any **block harvest area** exceeding one hectare; and
2. results in **block retention areas**:
 - a. being preserved between **block harvest areas** in accordance with the widths specified in table 16.3.10 of the code; and
 - b. containing **fodder species** with an average height of at least four metres; and
3. does not result in **clearing** for machinery access between **block harvest areas** exceeding 10 metres in width.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide evidence to demonstrate how **block harvesting** does not result in any **block harvest area** exceeding one hectare.
2. Provide evidence to demonstrate how **block harvesting** will result in **block retention areas**:
 - a. being preserved between **block harvest areas** in accordance with the widths specified in table 16.3.10 of the code; and
 - b. containing **fodder species** with an average height of at least four metres.
3. Demonstrate how **block harvesting** does not result in **clearing** for machinery access between **block harvest areas** exceeding 10 metres in width.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Provide evidence to demonstrate how **clearing** will conserve the vegetation as **remnant vegetation** in perpetuity.
2. Demonstrate how **clearing** will conserve the **regional ecosystem** as a functioning **regional ecosystem**.

Further information

Guide to using the fodder code –(May 2018) available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'A guide to using the fodder code'.

3.26 Cleared vegetation – fodder harvesting

Context

Vegetation debris left by **fodder harvesting** provides a range of benefits for the **regional ecosystem**, such as:

- reduced erosion risk
- habitat for wildlife
- protection for seedlings and seed banks

This part of the code ensures **vegetation** cleared for fodder is left where it falls.

3.26.1 Performance outcome 43

PO 43 Fodder harvesting is carried out in a way that results in the woody biomass of the **cleared vegetation** remaining where it is **cleared**.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

No acceptable outcome is prescribed.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by demonstrating how **fodder harvesting** methods will leave harvested **vegetation** (and other woody biomass) where it is cleared.

3.27 Conserving the fodder resource – fodder harvesting

Context

To ensure **fodder harvesting** remains sustainable, the code requires the extent of **fodder species** to be maintained at sustainable levels within each fodder **regional ecosystem**.

3.27.1 Performance outcome 44

PO 44 Fodder harvesting is carried out in a way that will conserve the fodder resource.

Demonstrating acceptable outcome

Performance outcome 44 can be met by demonstrating acceptable outcome 44.1.

AO 44.1 Within any 10 year period, commencing from the expiry date of any development approval or any Accepted Development Vegetation Clearing Code notification, **clearing** does not occur:

1. More than once in the same area of a lot; and
2. In more than 50 per cent of the area of the **regional ecosystem** listed in table 16.3.8 and table 16.3.9 of this code on the lot; and
3. in areas required to be retained under this code, a development approval or any accepted development vegetation clearing code.

This acceptable outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following within any ten year period from the expiry of any development approval or the expiry of any accepted development vegetation clearing code notification:

1. Demonstrate that **clearing** has not occurred more than once in the same area of a lot.
2. Demonstrate that **clearing** does not occur in more than 50 per cent of the area of any **regional ecosystem** listed in table 16.3.8 and table 16.3.9 of the code on the lot.
3. Demonstrate that **clearing** does not occur in areas required to be retained under this code, a development approval or any accepted development vegetation clearing code.

Assessment against performance outcome

The performance outcome can be met by satisfying all of the following:

1. Identify any **fodder harvesting** which has previously occurred on the lot for each **regional ecosystems** where **fodder harvesting** is proposed. This includes **fodder harvesting** under any development approval or any Accepted Development Vegetation Clearing Code.
2. For each **regional ecosystem**, provide:
 - a. the desktop and field data for the **fodder species** within each **regional ecosystem**
 - b. the extent of harvesting of each **fodder species** in the previous 10 years.
3. Demonstrate how **fodder harvesting** will be carried out in a way that will conserve the fodder resource.

Further information

Guide to using the fodder code (May 2018) available from www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'A guide to using the fodder code'.

Appendix 1- Other relevant legislation

Activity	Legislation	Agency	Contact details
Interference with overland flow Earthworks, significant disturbance	<i>Water Act 2000</i> <i>Soil Conservation Act 1986</i>	Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.dnrme.qld.gov.au
Indigenous Cultural Heritage	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> <i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Queensland Government)	Ph. 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.datsip.qld.gov.au
Mining and environmentally relevant activities Infrastructure development (coastal) Heritage issues Protected plants and protected areas ¹⁰	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> <i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995</i> <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i> <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) www.des.qld.gov.au
Interference with fish passage in a watercourse, mangroves Forest activities	<i>Fisheries Act 1994</i> <i>Forestry Act 1959</i>	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 25 23 www.daf.qld.gov.au
Matters of National Environmental Significance including listed threatened species & ecological communities	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	Department of the Environment, (Australian Government)	Ph: 1800 803 772 www.environment.gov.au
Development and planning processes	<i>Planning Act 2016</i> <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>	Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)
Local government requirements	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i> <i>Planning Act 2016</i>	Your relevant local government office	

¹⁰ In Queensland, all plants that are native to Australia are protected plants under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#), which endeavours to ensure that protected plants (whether whole plants or protected plants parts) are not illegally removed from the wild, or illegally traded. Prior to **clearing**, you should check the flora survey trigger map to determine if the **clearing** is within a high-risk area by visiting [For further information or assistance on the protected plants flora survey trigger map for your property](#), contact the Department of Environment and Science on 13QGOV (13 74 68) or email

¹¹ Contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries before **clearing**:

- Any sandalwood on state-owned land (including leasehold land)
- On freehold land in a 'forest consent area'
- More than five hectares on state-owned land (including leasehold land) containing commercial timber species listed in parts 2 or 3 of Schedule 6 of the Vegetation Management Regulation 2012 and located within any of the following local government management areas—Banana, Bundaberg Regional, Fraser Coast Regional, Gladstone Regional, Isaac Regional, North Burnett Regional, Somerset Regional, South Burnett Regional, Southern Downs Regional, Tablelands Regional, Toowoomba Regional, Western Downs Regional.

Appendix 2 - Standard application information for all applications

All development applications for the **clearing** of native **vegetation** must include all of the standard information in addition to the information required to meet any of the relevant acceptable outcomes or performance outcomes in the code.

No.	Standard Information	Tick
1	Where the application is for a Material Change of Use or Operational Works, the relevant purpose under section 22A of the VMA to which the application relates.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Details on the location and extent of the development and clearing footprint by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. digital data in a format such as shapefile or .kml (preferred); OR b. a map showing— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the boundary of the area on an image base; and ii) 5 or more points visible in the image base that correspond to identifiable fixed features; and iii) the Map Grid of Australia 1994 coordinates and zone references for each point, acquired by GPS or similar system of satellites that receives and processes information; and iv) a description of the feature that each point represents; OR c. a description of the boundary of the area by reference to Map Grid of Australia 1994 coordinates and zone references for the area. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Details on how the clearing of vegetation and the adverse impacts of clearing will be avoided (e.g. any alternative sites) and minimised.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Details on the location and extent of native vegetation to be retained on the development site and adjacent land.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Location, extent and details of any of the following within the development and clearing footprint:	<input type="checkbox"/>
	a. all adverse impacts of clearing .	
	b. any notice requiring compliance on the lot the subject of the application, and the requirements of the notice requiring compliance .	<input type="checkbox"/>
	c. any particular regulated areas on the lot the subject of the application, and the associated vegetation management requirements .	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. any legally secured offset area on the lot the subject of the application, and the offset delivery plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	e. where the application is for a material change of use, any clearing as a result of a material change of use including any additional exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 e.g. routine	<input type="checkbox"/>

	management, essential management and residential clearing exemptions, that will become available as a result of the development.	
f.	where the application is for a reconfiguration of a lot, any clearing as a result of the reconfiguration of a lot including any additional exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 e.g. routine management, essential management and residential clearing exemptions, that will become available as a result of the development.	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	where the application is for a material change of use or a reconfiguration of a lot, any clearing that could be done as exempt clearing work under Schedule 21 of the Planning Regulation 2017 prior to the material change of use or reconfiguring a lot application being approved.	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	any clearing within 100m of the defining bank of any natural wetland, watercourse or drainage feature including any existing bank erosion.	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	areas of essential habitat .	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	areas of soil erosion , including, but not limited to - mass movement, gully erosion, rill erosion, sheet erosion , tunnel erosion, stream bank erosion, wind_erosion , or scalding .	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	areas of land degradation .	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	any clearing in land zone 1, land zone 2 or land zone 3 .	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	<u>clearing method/s</u> including where those clearing methods will be undertaken within the clearing footprint, and staged (if relevant).	<input type="checkbox"/>
n.	any areas of of concern regional ecosystem and endangered regional ecosystem .	<input type="checkbox"/>
o.	any existing and proposed infrastructure including buildings, stormwater management systems, water supply, sewerage systems, roads, vehicle parking, vehicle and pedestrian access, utility corridors, services, firebreaks, fire management lines , safety buffers, any areas associated with the proposed use of the lot including boundary fence lines and any excavation and filling.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Details of the way the proposed clearing achieves the performance outcomes under the State code 16: Native vegetation clearing.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 3 - Typical elements of Sediment and Erosion Control Plan (SECP)

The SECP must address the control of erosion and sediment movement associated with the actual **clearing** of the **vegetation**, as well as erosion and sediment movement associated with the post-**clearing** land use.

The SECP should include all of the following:

1. A suitably detailed description of the existing environment.
2. A suitably detailed description of proposed **clearing** and the post-**clearing** land use.
3. An erosion hazard and risk assessment associated with both:
 - a. the **vegetation clearing operations**; and
 - b. the post-**clearing** activities on the development site.
4. A detailed description of the proposed erosion and sediment control measures applicable during:
 - a. the **vegetation clearing** operations; and
 - b. the subsequent land use.
5. Details of the proposed performance monitoring program and an SECP review process.

The level of detail required in an SECP will be case specific. In some instances the necessary level of detail could be more than that shown below. In some cases it might be less. In any case, it needs to be clearly evident from the description of the existing environment and the proposed land **clearing**, and more importantly the erosion hazard and risk assessment, that the level of detail is appropriate. It is also necessary that any measures proposed in the SECP be demonstrably feasible and practicable to apply.

Description of the existing environment

The description of the existing environment should include all the following:

1. Climatic conditions (both long term and those likely to be experienced during and immediately after the proposed **clearing** operations), including intensity frequency duration data tables for the site.
2. Site topography (in particular **slope** gradients, orientations and lengths).
3. Soil types, characteristics and attributes.
4. Site hydrology and drainage.
5. Existing **vegetation**.
6. Any existing soil erosion or similar soil or **land degradation**.

Description of the proposed land clearing

The description of the proposed land **clearing** and future use of the land should include all of the following:

1. The nature or method and staging of the proposed land **clearing**.
2. The proposed post-**clearing** land use(s).
3. The physical extents and characteristics of the area that will be disturbed during or in association with the proposed development.
4. A suitably detailed site plan showing:
 - a. Disturbance areas.
 - b. Existing slope gradients and orientations and/or elevation contours.
 - c. The extents of identified soil types and vegetation communities.
 - d. Natural drainage lines and **watercourses** (including all first or higher order streams identified in departmental mapping).

Erosion hazard and risk assessment

The erosion hazard and risk assessment should include all of the following elements:

1. A spatial and temporal assessment of the erosion hazards associated with the proposed development,
2. A risk assessment complementing the hazard assessment, including a clear linkage between the assessed risk and the requisite control measures and design criteria that are to be applied to mitigate the identified risks.
3. An erosion risk map including zones differentiating the areas associated with different erosion risks and any areas where soil disturbance is to be avoided (i.e. areas where the erosion risk is too high to disturb).

Proposed erosion and sediment control measures

The description of the erosion and sediment control measures must cover both the land **clearing** phase and the subsequent land use or uses to be undertaken in the cleared area.

The description of the control measures should include all the following where applicable:

1. The associated performance criteria, such as design storm frequencies and durations, exceedance probabilities, recurrence intervals, maximum design velocities, maximum design discharges, flowpath roughness, bed **slopes**, settling velocities, analyse concentrations and other quantitative standards applicable to the various elements of the system design.
2. Engineering design calculations and suitably detailed drawing design drawings for all permanent and temporary drainage, erosion and sediment control measures, including all of the following, where applicable:
 - a. Clean water diversion banks.
 - b. Runoff control ('contour') banks.
 - c. Waterways and drains.
 - d. Any sedimentation systems.
 - e. Any other structures providing for the temporary or permanent impoundment of runoff water.
 - f. Outlet structures, weirs, by-washes and spillways.
 - g. Culverts, causeways and drains.
 - h. Energy dissipation structures.
 - i. Pre and post-**clearing** discharge hydrographs for the discharge points on the property boundary.
 - j. The construction materials used in any structures.
3. Details of any chemicals or ameliorants that might be applied to stabilise soil or to flocculate suspended particulates in any runoff, as well as applicable dosing or application methods and rates.
4. A suitably detailed site plan showing the locations of all of the following, where applicable:
 - a. All the structures – both temporary and permanent – identified above.
 - b. Any soil stockpiles – either temporary or permanent.
 - c. The nominated discharge points for runoff from the site.
5. The nature and form of any revegetation, rehabilitation or re-stabilisation.
6. Details and the scheduling for all of the following:
 - a. The removal of any temporary erosion and sediment control measures.
 - b. The undertaking of any proposed revegetation, rehabilitation or re-stabilisation measures.
7. Details of how the above measures address the identified hazards and risks, and how those measures align with the elements of the SECP.

Performance monitoring program

The description of the proposed monitoring program should include all of the following, where applicable:

1. Timing or frequency and the locations of sites at which monitoring data and samples will be collected.
2. Pro forma checklists and forms to be used in the monitoring process.
3. The chemical and physical analyses proposed to be undertaken on any samples collected (including references to recognised standard laboratory methods).
4. The nature of the accreditation held by any chemical or physical analysis laboratory undertaking the specified tests.
5. The way in which monitoring data is to be used to determine the effectiveness of the SECP, with particular reference to the metrics and measures that are to be in establishing the success or shortcomings of the SECP.
6. The process by which the SECP might be revised and modified to reflect any identified deficiencies.

Design guidelines and further reading

Unless otherwise advised, design criteria, performance standards and design calculations used in the SECP should be consistent with those provided in the following guideline or standard publications:

- 'Soil conservation guidelines for Queensland', DSITI (2015) available at www.publications.qld.gov.au search for 'soil conservation guidelines Queensland'
- 'Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control', IECA (2008) available at www.austieca.com.au search for 'best practice erosion and sediment control' <https://www.austieca.com.au/publications/books-1-3> ;
- 'Australian Rainfall and Runoff', Geoscience Australia (2016) available at <http://arr.ga.gov.au> search for 'guideline'.

Additional guidance, particularly as it applies to control measures that might be required during the vegetation clearing phase, might also be sought from the following publications:

- 'Guideline: Stormwater and environmentally relevant activities', DEHP (2014) www.qld.gov.au search for 'stormwater guideline'
- 'Principles of construction site erosion and sediment control', Catchments & Creeks (2012) <https://www.austieca.com.au/documents/item/430>
- 'Manual for erosion & sediment control', Sunshine Coast Regional Council (2008) www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au search for 'erosion and sediment control manual'
- 'Introductory erosion and sediment control guidelines for Queensland councils', LGAQ (2006) <https://www.lgaq.asn.au> search for 'erosion and sediment control'
- 'Environmental best management practice guidelines: Erosion and sediment control', Civil Contractors Federation Queensland (2011) www.civiltrainqld.com search for 'erosion and sediment control'
- 'Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction', Landcom, (2004) www.environment.nsw.gov.au search for 'managing urban stormwater'

Appendix 4 - Better environmental outcomes

Better environmental outcome means an environmental outcome provided on land in exchange for an area to be developed which is a **particular regulated area**, or is subject to a **notice requiring compliance (impact area)**, and:

1. is located in a **category X area**;
2. contains a predominate vegetative layer which is at least two meters in height;
3. achieves one of the applicable **better environmental outcome** requirements in the options table below;
4. is legally secured using a **declared area (voluntary)** before the commencement of works;
5. is located within the same bioregion as the **impacted area**, or where it is not reasonably possible, located in an adjacent bioregion;
6. is configured in a way that maintains ecosystem functioning and remains in the landscape despite **threatening processes**;
7. is managed under a comprehensive management plan back to **remnant vegetation (a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map)** within a period of 20 years; and
8. is shown as a **category A area on the regulated vegetation management map** until the area becomes **remnant vegetation** and is mapped as a **category B area on the regulated vegetation management map**.

Options for securing an area to satisfy better environmental outcome requirements:

Requirements	Size
Where the impact area does not include a Restoration Notice, Enforcement Notice or Compliance Notice (Option 1 OR Option 2):	
<p>Option 1: the area to be used as the Better Environmental Outcome contains at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area; OR • a higher regional ecosystem status (e.g. endangered or of concern) than the values of the impact area. 	<p>Equal to double the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater.</p>

<p>Option 2: the area to be used as the Better Environmental Outcome contains at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse on the vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature map. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland on the vegetation management wetland map. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a location that creates a corridor between regional ecosystems that are mapped as either a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which are each at least 4 hectares in size. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an area that adjoins either an area mapped as a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map which is at least 4 hectares in size. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another area of environmental significance to flora or fauna under other State or Commonwealth legislation. 	<p>Equal to four times the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater.</p>
<p>Where the impact area includes a <u>Restoration Notice</u>, <u>Enforcement Notice</u> or <u>Compliance Notice</u>:</p>	
<p>The area to be used as the Better Environmental Outcome contains all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an area that is the same broad vegetation group and regional ecosystem status as the impact area. • where the impact area is associated with a watercourse or wetland, associated with a watercourse or wetland. • an area that is of suitable quality and can achieve a gain in habitat quality sufficient to compensate the impact area as assessed in accordance with the Guide to determining terrestrial habitat quality, A toolkit for assessing land based offsets under the Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy, version 1.2 April 2017. 	<p>Equal to four times the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater.</p>

Better Environmental Outcome Management Plan: To demonstrate how the **better environmental outcome** will be managed and achieved, a better environmental outcome management plan should be provided. The better environmental outcome management plan should include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

1. Property owner's details.
2. Description of the area/s the subject of the better environmental outcome, including a map showing the location and extent.
3. Description of the works / management actions that will be undertaken, including the methods, timing, frequency, intended benefits etc.
4. The environmental values (identified as performance outcomes in the code) that will be achieved by the works / management actions.
5. Description of the management actions that will be undertaken to ensure that the effects of the works do not result in **land degradation**.
6. Details of who is responsible for all works and management actions, and the estimated length of time the area/s will be managed.
7. Monitoring and auditing processes including adaptive management approaches to rectify negative results from the monitoring and auditing processes.
8. Record keeping process for retaining appropriate records for monitoring and auditing processes.

The level of detail required in a management plan will depend on the nature and scale of the activity being undertaken.

You are required to keep appropriate records detailing the progress and effectiveness of all works and management actions. These records are not required to be submitted to DNRME, however, they must be made available to DNRME upon request.

Appendix 5 - Environmental offsets

Where an **offset** is provided for any acceptable **significant residual impact**, the application should demonstrate / provide all of the following:

1. How the impacts have been reasonably avoided.
2. How the impacts have been reasonable minimised / mitigated.
3. Whether there is a **significant residual impact** - Guidance for determining if a prescribed activity will have a **significant residual impact** is provided in the Significant Residual Impact Guideline, Department State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, 2014 available at www.qld.gov.au search for 'significant residual impact guideline'.
4. How the significance of the impact can likely be addressed through a suitable **offset**.
5. Details of the proposed **offset** that achieves a conservation outcome for the impacted matter and is compliant with the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014* and the Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy 2017 version 1.3, Department of Environmental and Heritage Protection available at www.qld.gov.au search for 'environmental offsets policy'.

Further information

For further information on any **environmental offset agreement**:

1. Undertake a current title search. You can buy title searches by calling 1300 255 750 or 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or by contacting your local DNRME titles office; and
2. Call 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or contact your local Department of Environment and Science office.

Appendix 6 - Environmental clearing management plan

The provision of an **environmental clearing management plan** demonstrating how the **cleared** area will be **rehabilitated** over time and taking into account the short-term and long-term impacts of the **clearing** should address all of the following where required/relevant:

- property owner's details
- description of the area that will be **cleared**, including a map showing the location and extent
- description of the **clearing** activity that will be undertaken, including the component of **necessary environmental clearing** to which the management plan relates
- details of the **clearing** methods, timing, frequency, intended benefits etc.
- the environmental values (identified as performance outcomes in the code) that will be impacted by **clearing**
- description of the management actions that will be undertaken in the **cleared** area to:
 - a. **rehabilitate** or restore the environmental values impacted by **clearing**; and
 - b. ensure that the effects of **clearing** do not result in **land degradation**
- who is responsible for each management action and the estimated length of time the area will be managed.
- monitoring and auditing processes including adaptive management approaches to rectify negative results from the monitoring and auditing processes
- record keeping process for retaining appropriate records for monitoring and auditing processes.

The level of detail required in a management plan will depend on the nature and scale of the activity being undertaken.

You are required to keep appropriate records detailing the progress and effectiveness of each management action. These records are not required to be submitted to DNRME, however, they must be made available to DNRME upon request.