

Declared areas (voluntary) under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*

General guide for landowners

Effective August 2024

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List of Abbreviations

ADVCC	Accepted Development Vegetation Clearing Code
BPA	Biodiversity Planning Assessment
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
IECA	International Erosion Control Association
MGA	Map Grid of Australia
PMAV	Property Map of Assessable Vegetation
QLD	Queensland
SDAP	State Development Assessment Provisions
VMA	Vegetation Management Act 1999
VMREDD	Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database

Summary

This document provides guidance to assist landowners considering a request for an area to be voluntarily declared as an area of high nature conservation value or an area vulnerable to land degradation under 19E of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.

This includes guidance on when a declaration may be considered lawful, suitable and appropriate and how to make a request.

This guide provides general information only. Having an area declared on land may result in legal and/or financial implications. It is recommended legal and financial advice be obtained prior to making a request.

Should you need further assistance regarding declared areas (voluntary) or with your request (application), please contact the VegHub on 135 VEG.

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1. Declared areas under the Vegetation Management framework

A landowner may voluntarily request an area be declared an area of high nature conservation value or an area vulnerable to land degradation under section 19E of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* (VMA). A declaration may only be made for the purpose of managing the area to help conserve its high nature conservation value or help to prevent or minimise land degradation in areas vulnerable to land degradation. The management of areas for the conservation of the high nature conservation value or the prevention of land degradation must achieve the purpose of the VMA¹, and must be stated in the landowner's declared area management plan.

All owners and persons with a registered interest in the area to be declared must provide written consent for the declaration to be made. For a registered interest, registered means registered under the *Land Act 1994* or *Land Title Act 1994*.

Where the request meets the requirements and purpose of the VMA and is considered to be in the interests of the State having regard to the public interest, then the area may be declared. Once a declaration is made, notice of the declaration and the declared area management plan will be recorded on the registry for land titles. The declared area management plan will be binding on each person who becomes the owner of the land, whether or not the person signed the plan or agreed to any subsequent amendment of the plan, and each person who has an interest in the land.

A declared area will have effect for a specified period² rather than be a perpetual mechanism. A declared area will cease to have effect if:

- a landowner demonstrates the management outcomes under the declared area management plan have been achieved; or
- the declaration is no longer considered to be in the interests of the State, having regard to the public interest.

When a declared area comes to an end, the record on the registry for land titles for the declaration and declared area management plan will be removed.

A declaration may result in legal and/or financial implications, and accordingly it is recommended legal and financial advice be obtained prior to making a request.

2. Considerations of the Chief Executive regarding declared areas proposals

2.1 Is a proposed declared area a lawful mechanism?

When considering if a proposed declared area is likely to be a lawful mechanism, the proposed declared area must:

- relate to environmental values regulated under the VMA;
- be within the application of the VMA;

¹ Section 3(2)(c) of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* refers.

² The specified period will be a period that is reasonable to achieve the management outcomes.

- be consistent with the purpose of the VMA;
- meet the written consent requirements under the VMA; and
- be either an area of high nature conservation value or an area vulnerable to land degradation, where implementation of a declared area management plan will conserve the high nature conservation value or help to prevent or minimise the land degradation. (See section 4 below)

'Vegetation' under the VMA is a native tree or plant other than the following:

- a) grass or non-woody herbage;
- b) a plant within a grassland regional ecosystem identified in the VM REDD as having a grassland structure;
- c) a mangrove.

Information about regulated and unregulated grassland regional ecosystems under the Vegetation Management framework is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD').

The VMA applies to clearing of native vegetation, other than clearing of native vegetation on any of the following tenures:

- a) a forest reserve under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#);
- b) a national park (including national park for scientific, Aboriginal land, Torres Strait Islander land, Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land) under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#);
- c) a conservation park;
- d) a resources reserve;
- e) a special wildlife reserve;
- f) State forest or timber reserve under the [Forestry Act 1959](#);
- g) forest entitlement area under the [Land Act 1994](#).

Another important factor to consider is whether the proposed declared area would achieve the purpose of the VMA. The purpose of VMA includes conserving remnant vegetation that is a regulated regional ecosystem, maintain ecological processes, prevent loss of biodiversity and prevent land degradation. Other frameworks such as the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (Qld) will regulate clearing of native vegetation for a different purpose to that of the VMA, for example, the protection of individual tree species.

Where the proposed declared area is not for an environmental value regulated under the VMA, or not within the application or purpose of the VMA, a declaration will not be lawful.

A declaration cannot be lawfully made unless all owners and persons with a registered interest in the area to be declared provides written consent. For a registered interest, registered means registered under the *Land Act 1994* or *Land Title Act 1994*³.

A declared area must only be made for areas of high nature conservation value or areas vulnerable to land degradation where implementation of the declared area management plan for the area will help

³ Title searches can be purchased by contacting Titles Queensland online at www.titlesqld.com.au or by calling (07) 3497 4379.

to conserve the high nature conservation value, or help to prevent or minimise the land degradation (see section 5 for further guidance).

2.2 Is a declared area a suitable and appropriate mechanism?

In addition to considering whether a declared area under section 19E of the VMA is a lawful mechanism to secure an area to be managed, consideration should also be given as to whether a declared area is a suitable and appropriate in the circumstances.

As mentioned above, the intent and purpose of a declared area is to manage the area to achieve management outcomes for a high nature conservation value/s or for an area/s vulnerable to land degradation. A declared area is not a mechanism to secure an area in perpetuity, nor is the intent of a declared area to merely provide an interim legally securing mechanism whilst an area is otherwise being secured on title in perpetuity. As such, the making of a declaration to secure an area in perpetuity or as an interim securing mechanism, is not supported by the Department.

For example, some suitable and appropriate circumstances include:

- exchanges areas associated with clearing under an accepted development vegetation clearing code (ADVCC);
- a better environmental outcome area to meet a performance outcome under the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP) – State Code 16;
- a rehabilitation area to meet a performance outcome under the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP) – State Code 16;
- an area in accordance with an enforceable undertaking under the VMA;
- an environmental offset for a temporary impact⁴ under the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014* or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, for matters of environmental significance within the application of the VMA and where consistent with achieving the purpose of the VMA; and
- other conservation purposes for matters of environmental significance within the application of the VMA and where consistent with achieving the purpose of the VMA. For example, participating in conservation incentive programs for the conservation of regulated regional ecosystems on leasehold land; rehabilitating riparian vegetation for an area vulnerable to bank instability on freehold land.

2.3 Is a proposed declared area in the public interest?

A declaration may not be made in circumstances where the proposed declaration is considered not to be in the interests of the State having regard to the public interest. This ensures the decision to make or not make the proposed declared area is determined by the outcome that best serves and advances the collective interests and/or welfare of communities and society in Queensland as a whole.

⁴ Where the impact is a permanent impact on a matter of environmental significance requiring an offset under the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014* (Qld) framework or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) framework, a declared area under the VMA will not be suitable or appropriate to meet the requirements of these offset frameworks given these offset frameworks require the offset area to be secured on title in perpetuity.

Considering the public interest is a balancing test by which any number of relevant interests may be weighed one against another, and the relevant public interest factors will vary from case-to-case dependant on the circumstances of the case.

For example, declaring, assessing and regulating declared areas can involve the use and expenditure of thousands of dollars of public funds, and where making a declaration would not provide any additional benefit to the environment, it may not be considered in the interests of the state having regard to public interest. Accordingly, where a declared area is proposed for an offset for a permanent impact required to be secured on title in perpetuity, requesting a declaration over the area in addition to the legal securing mechanism required under the offset framework may not be considered in the public interest.

NOTE:

For further information on environmental offsets, including permanent and temporary impacts, and available mechanisms to legally secure environmental offset areas (including by way of a preservation covenant), contact:

- *For State environmental offsets under the Environmental Offsets Act 2014: the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation - phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68). Information is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Environmental Offsets')*
- *For Commonwealth environmental offsets under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999: the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water – phone 1800 920 528. Information is available online at www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc*

3. Application requirements

When requesting a declared area, landowners must complete a 'Request for a declared area' application form. The application form is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'declared area application form' and click on 'Applying for a development approval').

No application fee applies.

The completed application form must include all of the following:

- information on the purpose of the declared area. For example, to conserve an area of high natural value
- information to demonstrate how the area is either an area of high nature conservation value or an area vulnerable to land degradation. See section 4 and Appendix 1 for further guidance.
- sufficient information to clearly delineate the boundary of the proposed declared area and identify other property features relevant to the declared area. See Appendix 2 for further guidance.
- A proposed declared area management plan signed by all landowner/s. See section 5 for further guidance.
- any other details requested in the declared area application form.

The standard declared area process is shown in Figure 1 below.

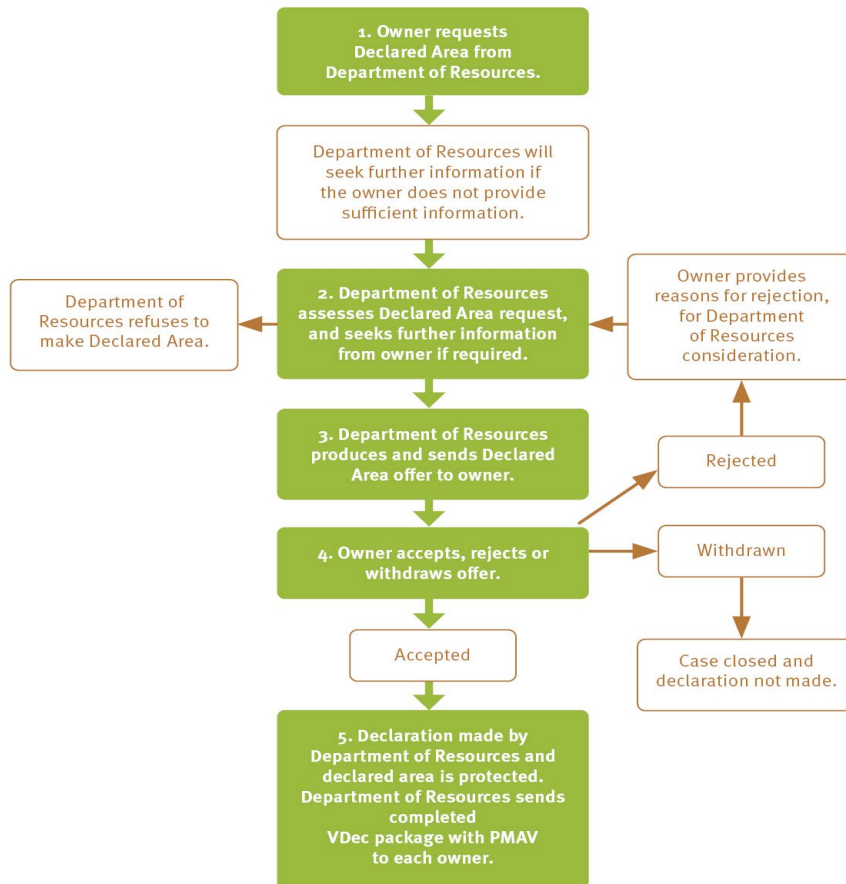


Figure 1: Standard process for a declaration

NOTE:

Written consent is required from all registered ‘owners’ of the area proposed for declaration. This must be provided to the Department of Resources prior to the declaration being made.

Owner of land includes the following—

- *for freehold land—the registered owner;*
- *for a lease, licence or permit under the Land Act 1994—the lessee, licensee or permittee;*
- *for indigenous land—the holder of the title to the land;*
- *for any tenure under any other Act—the holder of the tenure.*

written consent to the making of the declared area from all persons with a registered interest. For a registered interest, registered means registered under the Land Act 1994 or Land Title Act 1994. For example, mortgages, leases, sub-leases, covenants, easements and profit à prendres. Consent is not required for interests that are not registered under the Land Act 1994 or Land Title Act 1994, for example a exploration permit for a resource.

Title searches can be purchased by contacting Titles Queensland online at www.titlesqld.com.au or by calling (07) 3497 4379.

If you require any further assistance, please contact the VegHub via phone: 135VEG (13 58 34); or email: vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au

4. Declaration criteria

A declaration can only be made where the proposed declared area is either:

- a) an area of high nature conservation value; or
- b) an area vulnerable to land degradation.

The declared area application form must include information and evidence to demonstrate how the proposed declared area meets either criteria a) or b), or both. Guidance on the considerations, and information and evidence required for criteria a) and b) is provided in the Appendix 1 (Tables A and B).

Where a declared area is proposed to satisfy exchange area requirements, additional criteria must be met. See Appendix 1 (Table C) for detail on the additional criteria for exchange areas.

Additional information may be requested where the application does not include sufficient information and evidence.

4.1 High nature conservation values

To be considered an area of high nature conservation value, the area must be one or more of the following:

- a) a wildlife refugium—an area that is a sanctuary where a species or a group of species has retreated, or been confined, due to a threatening process (e.g. climatic change);
- b) a centre of endemism—an area containing concentrations of species that are largely restricted to the area;
- c) an area containing a vegetation clump or corridor that contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity;
- d) an area that makes a significant contribution to the conservation of biodiversity;
- e) an area that contributes to the conservation value of a wetland, lake or spring located within the proposed declared area;
- f) another area that contributes to the conservation of the environment.

NOTE:

As mentioned in section 2, these criteria are limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA.

For example, to demonstrate an area is an area that “significantly contributes to the conservation of biodiversity” or “contributes to the conservation of the environment” there should be a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA.

For instance, a proposed declaration may seek to protect an area of regulated regrowth under the VMA framework that is an of concern or endangered regional ecosystem by undertaking management activities that will maintain and support the composition, structure and function of the regional ecosystem to return the regional ecosystem back to remnant status.

This would be considered a significant and substantive contribution to biodiversity and the environment having regard to the VMA framework given the VMA framework regulates native vegetation for the conservation of regional ecosystems, and conserving remnant regional ecosystems that are environmentally sensitive (i.e. of concern / endangered) would be a significant contribution to the environment and biodiversity.

Guidance on the considerations, and information and evidence required for this criterion is provided in the Appendix 1 (Table A).

4.2 An area vulnerable to land degradation

To be considered an area vulnerable to land degradation, the area must be subject to one or more of the following:

- a) soil erosion
- b) rising water tables
- c) the expression of salinity, whether inside or outside the area
- d) mass movement by gravity of soil or rock
- e) stream bank instability
- f) a process that results in declining water quality.

As mentioned in section 2, these criteria are limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. Accordingly, to meet criteria a) to f) below, the request should demonstrate a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA by helping to prevent or minimise land degradation in the area. For instance, conservation of a regulated regional ecosystem that is associated with, and substantially or significantly contributes to, the stabilisation of the bed and banks of a watercourse regulated under the VMA framework.

Guidance on the considerations, and information and evidence required for this criterion is provided in the Appendix 1 (Table B).

5. Declared area management plan

A declared area will only be made when a declared area management plan⁵ is prepared to guide implementation of the declaration.

Accordingly, the declared area management plan for the area must outline the management intent and how the area will be managed to conserve, rehabilitate and enhance its high nature conservation value, or managed to prevent or minimise land degradation.

The level and extent of detail required in a declared area management plan will vary based on the circumstances including the location and extent of the declared area, land use for the declared area and adjacent areas, environmental values being conserved, and the proposed management activities and outcomes.

A template for the declared area management plan is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'declared area application form' and click on 'Applying for a development approval').

The declared area management plan must:

- Be signed by all registered landowners;
- Clearly identify and delineate the boundary of the proposed declared area and identify other property features relevant to the declared. See Appendix 2 for further guidance;
- Outline the management intent and outcomes for conserving the high nature conservation value or preventing land degradation, including performance indicators for management outcomes and adaptive management responses to rectify any negative outcomes; and
- Include detailed actions and activities to be undertaken to achieve the management outcomes.

5.1 Activities and restrictions to achieve the management outcomes

The declared area management plan should include actions or activities to ensure the management outcomes are achieved. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to include activities the landowner will refrain from carrying out, or include restrictions on the use or access of the declared area. For example, if the outcome is to return the area back to a remnant regional ecosystem then actions and activities to achieve this may include:

- replanting to attain the composition, structure and function of the regional ecosystem;
- a weed and / or pest management program;
- fencing to restrict stock access;
- restrict use for grazing purposes;
- stabilising areas prone to land degradation; and
- employing fire regimes appropriate to the particular regional ecosystem regional ecosystem i.e. planned regional ecosystem burns undertaken for the purpose of restoring the range of plant species, size classes, and vegetation densities typical of the regional ecosystem. A permit under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* is required for a regional ecosystem

⁵ A declared area management plan under the VMA is a separate plan to any Offset Management Plan under the *Environmental Offset Act 2014*.

burn. Regional ecosystem burns should be undertaken in accordance with fire guidelines for the regional ecosystem as outlined in the VM REDD. Access or download the database online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD').

Areas declared under section 19F of the VMA may be made a category A area on a Property Map of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV) by the Department of Resources. Clearing in a category A area on a PMAV cannot be undertaken under any accepted development vegetation clearing code. Clearing in a declared area carried out under a declared area management plan for any of the following purposes is however Exempt Clearing Work (ie. clearing that does not require a development permit under the Vegetation Management framework):

- a. necessary to control non-native plants or declared pests;
- b. to ensure public safety;
- c. for fodder harvesting;
- d. for managing thickened vegetation;
- e. for clearing of encroachment;
- f. for necessary environmental clearing; and
- g. establishing a necessary fence, firebreak, road or vehicular track and the clearing cannot reasonably be avoided or minimised.

5.2 Amending the management plan

Some circumstances may require the declared area management plan be amended, for example where the actions or activities are not proving to achieve the management outcomes and additional adaptive management responses are required to rectify the situation and achieve the intended management outcome. Or alternatively, additional actions or activities may be required following unforeseen impacts to the declared area resulting from a natural disaster.

The Department of Resources may amend the declared area management plan where the proposed amendments:

- are considered necessary and appropriate in the circumstances;
- do not change the management intent of the declared area;
- comply with the relevant requirements under the VMA;
- achieves the purpose of the VMA;
- is in the interest of the State, having regard to the public interest; and
- have the written consent of all registered owners.

To request an amendment to a declared area management plan, contact the please contact the VegHub via phone: 135VEG (13 58 34); or email: vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au

6. Declared area offer

Following assessment of a declared area request the Department of Resources may make a declared area offer. This offer will be sent to all registered landowners for their consideration. This offer will contain a draft:

- declaration notice;
- PMAV showing the declared area as a category A area on a PMAV (only if the Department of Resources proposes to make the declared area a category A area on a PMAV)
- declared area management plan⁶, including a map of the declared area.

6.1 Accepting or rejecting an offer, or withdrawing a request

Landowners can accept or reject the declared area offer, or alternatively withdraw their request.

Where a declared area offer is rejected, it is recommended landowners inform the Department of Resources of the reasons for rejection the offer. Landowners may wish to request the Department of Resources re-assess the declared area request having regard to these reasons and/or further detail or information.

Where a declared area request is withdrawn, the case will be closed and the declaration will not be made.

Before a draft declaration can be accepted, the landowners will need to ensure written consent from all persons with a registered interest in the stated area has been obtained.

7. Making the declaration

Once the Department of Resources and all landowners agree to the declared area offer with the consent of all persons with a registered interest in the stated area, the Department of Resources will make the declaration and provide all landowners with the finalised declared area package.

Where the Department of Resources elects to make the declared area a category A area on a PMAV, this package will include a copy of the PMAV and an information notice about the decision to make the PMAV.

This offer will contain a:

- declaration letter
- declaration notice
- declared area map
- declared area management plan
- PMAV (if issued by the Department)

The declaration takes effect from the date the Department of Resources signs the declaration notice. The declared area management plan and any PMAV have effect from the same date. The notice of

⁶ Where there is any change during assessment to the declared area management plan or extent of the proposed declared area, landowners are required to obtain fresh consent of all persons with a registered interest on title.

the declaration, the declared area management plan and any PMAV will be recorded on the registry for land titles. The declared area management plan will be binding on each person who becomes the owner of the land, whether or not the person signed the plan or agreed to any subsequent amendment of the plan, and each person who has an interest in the land.

8. Ending a declaration

A declared area may end where:

- a landowner demonstrates the management outcomes under the declared area management plan have been achieved.

To request a declared area be ended on grounds the management outcomes have been achieved, please contact the VegHub via phone: 135VEG (13 58 34); or email: vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au

The request must include sufficient evidence to demonstrate all management outcomes have been achieved, for example, sufficient transect data; GPS references photographs etc.;

- the declaration is no longer considered to be in the interests of the State, having regard to the public interest.

This ensures declared areas continue to best serve the advancement of the collective interests or welfare of communities and society in Queensland as a whole. Considering the public interest is a balancing test by which any number of relevant interests may be weighed one against another, and the relevant public interest factors will vary from case-to-case dependant on the circumstances of the case; or

- all of the following apply:
 - the declared area is also a legally secured offset area under the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014*;
 - a prescribed activity is, under an authority under another Act, to be carried out in or on the area; and
 - the holder of the authority has entered into an agreed delivery arrangement in relation to an environmental offset for impacts to the declared area.

9. Further information

If you have any queries regarding declared areas under the VMA or require any further assistance, please contact the VegHub via phone: 135VEG (13 58 34); or email: vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au

Appendix 1 – Criteria for declarations

The following tables provide further guidance on considerations for meeting each declaration criteria.

Table A: Criteria for high nature conservation values

Criteria for declaration	Considerations
General considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declared area (voluntary) may include an area of regrowth vegetation regulated under the VMA⁷. • A declared area (voluntary) must satisfied one (or more) of the below criterion a) to f).
a) a wildlife refugium	<p>Areas that may function as a wildlife refugium are those that maintain a ‘core’ of suitable habitat, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regulated regional ecosystems associated with watercourses, drainage features and wetlands under the VMA that provide essential habitat (regulated under the VMA) for protected wildlife species dependant on moisture and associated vegetation; • regulated regional ecosystems containing ‘old growth’ vegetation with a high proportion of hollow-bearing trees; • regulated regional ecosystems with high floristic diversity; • regulated regional ecosystems that have been reduced in size, fragmented and disturbed by grazing, clearing or invasion of pasture species and weeds, such that only pockets of habitat remain in integral or near integral condition; • uncommon regulated regional ecosystems which have remained stable for long periods; • areas of regrowth vegetation for regulated regional ecosystems containing essential habitat under the VMA for protected wildlife species. <p>As mentioned in section 2, this criterion is limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. Accordingly, to meet this criterion, the request should demonstrate a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA.</p> <p>A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of maps for the Vegetation Management framework. Vegetation Management Property Reports, together with Vegetation Management Pre-clear Regional Ecosystems maps, are available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for ‘vegetation management maps’). Alternatively, the Vegetation Management mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the “vegetation management information” from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).</p> <p>For further guidance of wildlife refugia refer to the Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology Version 2.2 (2014), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (formerly Department of Environment and Heritage Protection) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search ‘Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology version 2.2’).</p>
b) a centre of endemism	<p>Regional ecosystem mapping can compare dominant flora species across the landscape. It is possible that endemism detected in the dominant species could translate to endemism in the co- occurring, more inconspicuous species.</p>

⁷ Areas that are non remnant on the ground are generally unlikely to meet the criteria.

	<p>As mentioned in section 2, this criterion is limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. Accordingly, to meet this criterion, the request should demonstrate a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA.</p> <p>A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of maps for the Vegetation Management framework. Vegetation Management Property Reports, together with Vegetation Management Pre-clear Regional Ecosystems maps, are available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'vegetation management maps'). Alternatively, the Vegetation Management mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the "vegetation management information" from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).</p> <p>For further guidance a centre of endemism and identifying a centre of endemism refer to the Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology Version 2.2 (2014), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (formerly Department of Environment and Heritage Protection) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology version 2.2').</p>
<p>c) an area containing a vegetation clump or corridor that contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity</p>	<p>A vegetation clump is an area of vegetation that is generally large enough and configured in a way to allow regional ecosystem functioning. A vegetation corridor links areas of vegetation to allow movement of both flora and fauna species between the areas.</p> <p>The objective of maintaining connectivity is to prevent the loss of biodiversity and maintain ecological processes.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Ecological processes include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. hydrological processes; b. soil development c. nutrient cycling d. chemical processes including storage of nutrients e. decomposition and cycling of organic matter f. pollination and seed production g. seed dispersal h. predator-prey relationships i. germination and recruitment of species j. the carbon cycle and stability of atmospheric carbon k. habitats for flora and fauna (e.g. particular regional ecosystems, logs, rocks, debris, leaf litter, nectar, hollow bearing trees, food and shelter). <p>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 land and on adjacent land.</p>

	<p>Threatening processes are natural or human induced process 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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. fragmentation; b. land clearing; c. climate change; d. weather events; e. weeds and pests (animal and plant) infestations; f. fire; g. disease; h. land degradation; and i. predation. <p>Retained areas of remnant vegetation must be of sufficient size, configuration and condition to ensure they are resilient and able to persist in the landscape despite known or likely threatening processes. Threatening processes can adversely affect ecological processes in remnant vegetation by impacting their condition and resilience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • altering species composition • altering structural complexity by impacting layers (i.e. canopy, mid-storey, shrub and ground layers) • fragmentation of remnant vegetation into smaller areas • 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. <p>As mentioned in section 2, this criterion is limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. Accordingly, to meet this criterion, the request should demonstrate a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA.</p> <p>A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of maps for the Vegetation Management framework. Vegetation Management Property Reports, together with Vegetation Management Pre-clear Regional Ecosystems maps, are available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'vegetation management maps'). Alternatively, the Vegetation Management mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the "vegetation management information" from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).</p> <p>Corridors have been identified at different geographical scales by State and local governments. The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation's Biodiversity Planning Assessment (BPA) identifies Bioregional Wildlife Corridors. Information on the BPA is available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Biodiversity Planning Assessment'). To obtain further information on corridors identified by local governments, contact your relevant local government.</p>
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<p>d) an area that makes a significant contribution to the conservation of biodiversity</p>	<p>Biodiversity means the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part, and includes:</p> <p>a) diversity within species and between species; and b) diversity of ecosystems.</p> <p>Accordingly biodiversity is ‘...the variety of life, its composition, structure and function, at a range of scales’⁸.</p> <p>‘Composition’ means the variation in species, populations and gene pools.</p> <p>‘Structure’ means the physical variation of habitat and ecosystem components, such as tree, shrub and ground layers.</p> <p>‘Function’ is the way it all works together including important ecological processes such as carbon, nutrient and water cycling.</p> <p>For example, this may include areas that contain a regulated regional ecosystem under the VMA that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concentrations of disjunct populations; • concentrations of taxa at the limits of their geographic ranges; • high species richness; • concentrations of relictual populations (ancient and primitive taxa); • distinct variation in species composition associated with geomorphology and other environmental variables; • a high density of hollow-bearing trees that provide habitat for protected wildlife species regulated under the VMA; • breeding or roosting sites used by a significant number of protected wildlife species regulated under the VMA. <p>As mentioned in section 2, this criterion is limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. For example, to demonstrate an area is an area that “significantly contributes to the conservation of biodiversity” there should be a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA. For instance, a proposed declaration may seek to protect an area of regulated regrowth under the VMA framework that is an of concern or endangered regional ecosystem by undertaking management activities that will maintain and support the composition, structure and function of the regional ecosystem to return the regional ecosystem back to remnant status. This would be considered a significant and substantive contribution to biodiversity and the environment having regard to the VMA framework given the VMA framework regulates native vegetation for the conservation of regional ecosystems, and conserving remnant regional ecosystems that are environmentally sensitive</p>
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⁸ Freudenberger, D & Harvey, J 2003, Assessing the benefits of vegetation enhancement for biodiversity: A draft framework, Report for Environment Australia, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Canberra.

(ie. of concern / endangered) would be a significant contribution to biodiversity and the environment.

The VM REDD provides basic regional ecosystem information including:

- Regional ecosystem code / label (i.e. bioregion, landzone, plants);
- VMA regional ecosystem category (i.e. Least Concern, Of Concern and Endangered);
- Short description of the regional ecosystem – basic information such as the predominant canopy species, canopy cover structure (e.g. grassland, open woodland, woodland, open forest etc.);
- VMA structure category (e.g. sparse, dense);
- Long description of the regional ecosystem – more detailed information, mostly regarding understorey species and variants of the regional ecosystem; and
- Supplementary data – references to documentation that has been used to create the regional ecosystem technical descriptions provide a detailed description of the normal range in structure and floristic composition of remnant regional ecosystems and their component vegetation communities. They should be used in conjunction with the other fields from the VM REDD for a normal description of the regional ecosystem. Technical descriptions include the attributes of tree canopy height and cover, and native plant species composition of the predominant layer, which are used to assess the remnant status of vegetation under the VMA. However, as technical descriptions reflect the normal range in structure and floristic composition across the climatic, natural disturbance and geographic range of the regional ecosystem, local reference sites should be used where possible.

A full description of each regional ecosystem is available online by accessing or downloading the [VM REDD](#) at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'VM REDD').

A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of maps for the Vegetation Management framework. [Vegetation Management Property Reports](#), together with Vegetation Management Pre-clear Regional Ecosystems maps, are available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'vegetation management maps'). Alternatively, the Vegetation Management mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au> (add layers under the "vegetation management information" from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).

For further guidance on conserving biodiversity and key databases that may assist refer to the 'Special Biodiversity Values' in the [Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology Version 2.2 \(2014\)](#), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (formerly Department of Environment and Heritage Protection) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology version 2.2').

The [BioCondition Site Assessment Manual Version 2.2 \(2015\)](#), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (formerly Department of Environment, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts), provides an assessment protocol to measure how well an area of vegetation is functioning for the maintenance of biodiversity values; and helpful in determining functionally / dysfunctionality of a regional ecosystem. Access the manual at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'BioCondition Site Assessment Manual').

	<p>For further information, publications, research or data on plant species and regional ecosystems in Queensland may be available from the Queensland Herbarium. Go to www.qld.gov.au (search 'Queensland Herbarium'), email Queensland.Herbarium@qld.gov.au or call 3199 7699.</p>
<p>e) An area that contributes to the conservation value of a wetland, lake, or spring</p>	<p>Wetlands, lakes and springs, both inland and coastal, play an important role across the landscape by filtering nutrients, providing habitat for terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna and mitigating the impacts of flood waters and other adverse events.</p> <p>A wetland means 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.</p> <p>A lake means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. if a feature is identified under the <i>Water Act 2000</i> on the watercourse identification map as a lake - the feature identified on the map; or b. otherwise: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. includes a lagoon, swamp or other natural collection of water, whether permanent or intermittent, and the bed, banks and any other element confining or containing the water; but ii. does not include a lake within which the high spring tide ordinarily flows and reflows or a drainage feature. <p>A spring means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. if a feature is identified under the <i>Water Act 2000</i> on the watercourse identification map as a spring—the feature identified on the map; or b. otherwise, the land to which water rises naturally from below the ground and the land over which the water then flows. <p>As mentioned in section 2, this criterion is limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. Accordingly, to meet this criterion, the request should demonstrate a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA. For instance, conservation of a regulated regional ecosystem that is associated with, and substantially or significantly contributes to, the conservation of a wetland regulated under the VMA framework.</p> <p>Wetlands regulated under the VMA framework are shown on the Vegetation Management Wetlands Map. A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of maps including the Vegetation Management Wetlands Map. Vegetation Management Property Reports are available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'vegetation management maps'). Alternatively, the mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the "vegetation management information" from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).</p> <p>The Watercourse Identification Map under the <i>Water Act 2000</i> is also available online to be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the "water management information" from the Inland Waters layer).</p>
<p>f) Another area that contributes to</p>	<p>Environment includes:</p>

<p>the conservation of the environment.</p>	<p>a) ecosystems and their constituent parts including people and communities;</p> <p>b) all natural and physical resources;</p> <p>c) those qualities and characteristics of locations, places and areas, however large or small, that contribute to their biological diversity and integrity, intrinsic or attributed scientific value or interest, amenity harmony and sense of community;</p> <p>d) the social, economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions affecting the matters in paragraphs (a) to (c) or affected by those matters.</p> <p>As mentioned in section 2, this criterion is limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. For example, to demonstrate an area is an area that “contributes to the conservation of the environment” there should be a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA. For instance, a proposed declaration may seek to protect an area of regulated regrowth under the VMA framework that is an of concern or endangered regional ecosystem by undertaking management activities that will maintain and support the composition, structure and function of the regional ecosystem to return the regional ecosystem back to remnant status. This would be considered a significant and substantive contribution to biodiversity and the environment having regard to the VMA framework given the VMA framework regulates native vegetation for the conservation of regional ecosystems, and conserving remnant regional ecosystems that are environmentally sensitive (ie. of concern / endangered) would be a significant contribution to biodiversity and the environment.</p> <p>The VM REDD provides basic regional ecosystem information including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional ecosystem code / label (i.e. bioregion, landzone, plants); • VMA regional ecosystem category (i.e. Least Concern, Of Concern and Endangered); • Short description of the regional ecosystem – basic information such as the predominant canopy species, canopy cover structure (e.g. grassland, open woodland, woodland, open forest etc.); • VMA structure category (e.g. sparse, dense); • Long description of the regional ecosystem – more detailed information, mostly regarding understorey species and variants of the regional ecosystem; and • Supplementary data – references to documentation that has been used to create the regional ecosystem technical descriptions provide a detailed description of the normal range in structure and floristic composition of remnant regional ecosystems and their component vegetation communities. They should be used in conjunction with the other fields from the VM REDD for a normal description of the regional ecosystem. Technical descriptions include the attributes of tree canopy height and cover, and native plant species composition of the predominant layer, which are used to assess the remnant status of vegetation under the VMA. However, as technical descriptions reflect the normal range in structure and floristic composition across the
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	<p>climatic, natural disturbance and geographic range of the regional ecosystem, local reference sites should be used where possible.</p> <p>A full description of each regional ecosystem is available online by accessing or downloading the VM REDD at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'VM REDD').</p> <p>A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of maps for the Vegetation Management framework. Vegetation Management Property Reports, together with Vegetation Management Pre-clear Regional Ecosystems maps, are available online at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'vegetation management maps'). Alternatively, the Vegetation Management mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the "vegetation management information" from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).</p> <p>For further guidance on conserving biodiversity and key databases that may assist refer to the Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology Version 2.2 (2014), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (formerly Department of Environment and Heritage Protection) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology version 2.2').</p> <p>The BioCondition Site Assessment Manual Version 2.2 (2015), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (formerly Department of Environment, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts), provides an assessment protocol to measure how well an area of vegetation is functioning for the maintenance of biodiversity values; and helpful in determining functionally / dysfunctionality of a regional ecosystem. Access the manual at www.qld.gov.au (search for 'BioCondition Site Assessment Manual').</p> <p>For further information, publications, research or data on plant species and regional ecosystems in Queensland may be available from the Queensland Herbarium. Go to www.qld.gov.au (search 'Queensland Herbarium'), email Queensland.Herbarium@qld.gov.au or call 3199 7699.</p>
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Table B: Criteria for an area vulnerable to land degradation

Criteria for declaration	Considerations
General considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declared area (voluntary) may include an area of regrowth vegetation regulated under the VMA. • There are many factors that may contribute to land degradation such as soil types and their characteristics, slopes, rainfall, ground cover and management practices. These factors should be considered in relation to these criteria. • A declared area (voluntary) must satisfy one (or more) of the below criterion a) to f). • As mentioned in section 2, these criteria are limited to values regulated under the VMA and for the purpose of the VMA. Accordingly, to meet criteria a) to f) below, the request should demonstrate a substantive or significant contribution to an environmental value regulated under the VMA that achieves the purpose of the VMA by helping to prevent or minimise land degradation in the area. For instance, conservation of a regulated regional ecosystem that is associated with, and substantially or significantly contributes to, the stabilisation of the bed and banks of a watercourse regulated under the VMA framework.
a) soil erosion	<p>Soil erosion includes mass movement, gully erosion, rill erosion, sheet erosion, tunnel erosion, stream bank erosion, wind erosion, scalding and 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.</p> <p>For further guidance on developing an erosion and sediment control plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about erosion and preventing and managing erosion can be found on the Queensland State Government website: https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/management/soil/erosion/guidelines • a Federal or State government agency published advice or guide, such as the Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (3rd edition) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search "Soil Conservation Guidelines Queensland"); • the Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control Document, IECA, 2008 available online at https://www.austieca.com.au/publications/best-practice-erosion-and-sediment-control-bpesc-doc; • the Queensland Soil and Land Resource Survey Information Guideline, Department of Resources, 2021 available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Guidelines for coordinated projects involving clearing for agriculture').
b) rising water tables	<p>Excess recharge of ground water can raise water tables. Water table movement can allow salts to become mobile and accumulate at the soil surface resulting in salinisation of soils and water tables. This may include freshwater or saline seeps.</p> <p>Rising water tables can also cause water-logging, or saturation of soil, which can result in loss of vegetation.</p> <p>Retention of vegetation in these areas should be aimed at maintaining or restoring the hydrological balance.</p> <p>The following resources may be of assistance:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salinity Management Handbook: second edition, Department of Environment and Resource Management, 2011 available online www.publications.qld.gov.au (search 'salinity management handbook'). This document provides additional information and context to salinity indicators. Key pages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ page 39 – Chapter 6, Landscape Characteristics and Salinity Mapping ○ page 49 – Chapter 7, Vegetation ○ page 55 – Chapter 8, Climate and Rainfall Patterns • Imagery: to demonstrate the presence of salinity indicators (free online resources available at www.qld.gov.au search ('Queensland Globe', and 'QImagery'). <p>QLD Globe layers are also useful to provide evidence of the above salinity indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Imagery (check past imagery button for capture date details) ○ Geoscientific information- detailed surface geology ○ Contours ○ Inland waters, Groundwater, Registered water bores (DRDMW and private) ○ Soils mapping and soil site data is available to view through the Soils Globe. Datasets have been grouped by survey type and scale, and listed by project code. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology Climate Data Online: helpful to obtain rainfall data (http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data) • Soil data available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'soils data'). • Land suitability mapping available online at www.qld.gov.au search 'land suitability maps'. • Queensland Soil and Land Resource Survey Information Guideline, Department of Resources, 2021 available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Guidelines for coordinated projects involving clearing for agriculture'). • VM REDD: To identify the nature of the vegetation expected in the clearing area, and any plant species tolerant of saline conditions. Access or download the database online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD').
<p>c) the expression of salinity, whether inside or outside the area</p>	<p>Salinity is the saltiness or dissolved salt content of soil or a body of water. Salinisation is the process of accumulation of salts in soils or water to such an extent that leads to degradation of the soil or water.</p> <p>Retention of vegetation in these areas should be aimed at maintaining or restoring the hydrological balance or reducing evaporation that can cause accumulation of salts on the soil surface.</p> <p>The following resources may be of assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salinity Management Handbook: second edition, Department of Environment and Resource Management, 2011 available online www.publications.qld.gov.au (search 'salinity management handbook'). This document provides additional information and context to salinity indicators. Key pages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ page 39 – Chapter 6, Landscape Characteristics and Salinity Mapping ○ page 49 – Chapter 7, Vegetation ○ page 55 – Chapter 8, Climate and Rainfall Patterns

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imagery: to demonstrate the presence of salinity indicators (free online resources available at www.qld.gov.au search ('Queensland Globe', and 'QImagery'). <p>QLD Globe layers are also useful to provide evidence of the above salinity indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imagery (check past imagery button for capture date details) Geoscientific information- detailed surface geology Contours Inland waters, Groundwater, Registered water bores (DRDMW and private) Soils mapping and soil site data is available to view through the Soils Globe. Datasets have been grouped by survey type and scale, and listed by project code. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology Climate Data Online: helpful to obtain rainfall data (http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data) Soil data available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'soils data'). Land suitability mapping available online at www.qld.gov.au search 'land suitability maps'. Queensland Soil and Land Resource Survey Information Guideline, Department of Resources, 2021 available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Guidelines for coordinated projects involving clearing for agriculture'). VM REDD: To identify the nature of the vegetation expected in the clearing area, and any plant species tolerant of saline conditions. Access or download the database online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'VM REDD').
d) mass movement by gravity of soil or rock	<p>Mass movement includes undercutting, landslips, earthflows, landslide, rock avalanche or soil creep.</p> <p>For further guidance on developing an erosion and sediment control plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information about erosion and preventing and managing erosion can be found on the Queensland State Government website: https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/management/soil/erosion/guidelines a Federal or State government agency published advice or guide, such as the Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (3rd edition) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search "Soil Conservation Guidelines Queensland"); the Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control Document, IECA, 2008 available online at https://www.austieca.com.au/publications/best-practice-erosion-and-sediment-control-bpesc-doc; the Queensland Soil and Land Resource Survey Information Guideline, Department of Resources, 2021 available online at www.qld.gov.au (search 'Guidelines for coordinated projects involving clearing for agriculture').
e) stream bank instability	<p>Water features, both inland and coastal, play an important role across the landscape by filtering nutrients, providing habitat for terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna and mitigating the impacts of flood waters and other adverse events.</p> <p>Watercourses, drainage features and wetlands regulated under the VMA framework are shown on the Vegetation Management Watercourse and Drainage Feature Map and the Vegetation Management Wetlands Map. A Vegetation Management Property Report provides a suite of Vegetation Management maps. Vegetation Management Property Reports are available online at</p>

	<p>www.qld.gov.au (search for ‘vegetation management maps’). Alternatively, the mapping layers can be viewed in or downloaded from https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au (add layers under the “vegetation management information” from the Biota (Flora & Fauna) layer).</p> <p>For further guidance on developing an erosion and sediment control plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about erosion and preventing and managing erosion can be found on the Queensland State Government website: https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/management/soil/erosion/guidelines • a Federal or State government agency published advice or guide, such as the Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (3rd edition) available online at www.qld.gov.au (search “Soil Conservation Guidelines Queensland”); • the Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control Document, IECA, 2008 available online at https://www.austieca.com.au/publications/best-practice-erosion-and-sediment-control-bpesc-doc; • the Queensland Soil and Land Resource Survey Information Guideline, Department of Resources, 2021 available online at www.qld.gov.au (search ‘Guidelines for coordinated projects involving clearing for agriculture’).
f) a process that results in declining water quality	<p>All of the above criteria are processes that can result in declining water quality and would include increased nitrification and increased sedimentation.</p> <p>The presence of, or disturbance of, acid sulfate soils may also result in declining water quality. When exposed to air after being disturbed, soils containing iron sulfides produce sulfuric acid and often release toxic quantities of iron, aluminium and heavy metals. Mangroves, salt marshes, floodplains, swamps, wetlands, estuaries, and brackish or tidal lakes, particularly in low-lying coastal areas, are ideal for acid sulfate soil formation.</p>

Table C: Additional criteria for exchange areas (only)

Criteria for declaration (one of the following)
<p>Option 1: The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area, is dominated by native vegetation more than 10 years of age, is a functioning regional ecosystem which occurs in the same bioregion as the impact area, and is at least one of the following: <i>(More than one requirement can be ticked.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area <input type="checkbox"/> A higher pre-clear regional ecosystem status (i.e. endangered or of concern) than the values of the impact area <input type="checkbox"/> Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse <input type="checkbox"/> Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland <input type="checkbox"/> In a location that creates a corridor of at least 100 metres in width 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 and 100 metres in width <input type="checkbox"/> An area that adjoins either an area mapped as a category A area and/or category B area on the regulated vegetation management map which is at least 4 hectares in size <input type="checkbox"/> Another area of environmental significance to flora or fauna under other State or Commonwealth Legislation
<p>Option 2: The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area and is at least one of the following: <i>(More than one requirement can be ticked)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area <input type="checkbox"/> A higher pre-clear regional ecosystem status (e.g. endangered or of concern) than the values if the impact area <input type="checkbox"/> Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse <input type="checkbox"/> Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland <input type="checkbox"/> In a location that creates a corridor of at least 100 metres in width 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 at least 4 hectares in size and 100 metres in width <input type="checkbox"/> 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 <input type="checkbox"/> Another area of environmental significance to flora and fauna under other State or Commonwealth legislation

Option 3: The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X, a category B, a category C or a category R area and with specific management actions will achieve all of the following:

- A substantial conservation outcome or address a significant land degradation issue
- Remnant vegetation status

Appendix 2 - Information required to delineate the boundary of the proposed declared area and identify other property features

The declared area application must include sufficient information to clearly delineate the boundary of the proposed declared area and identify other property features relevant to the declared area.

To meet this requirement and assist the Department of Resources developing a Declared Area Management Plan, it is recommended this information be provided by way of both a map and map information in digital GIS format (eg. a shapefile or kml file). Figure 1 provides an example of the recommended mapping format and required information.

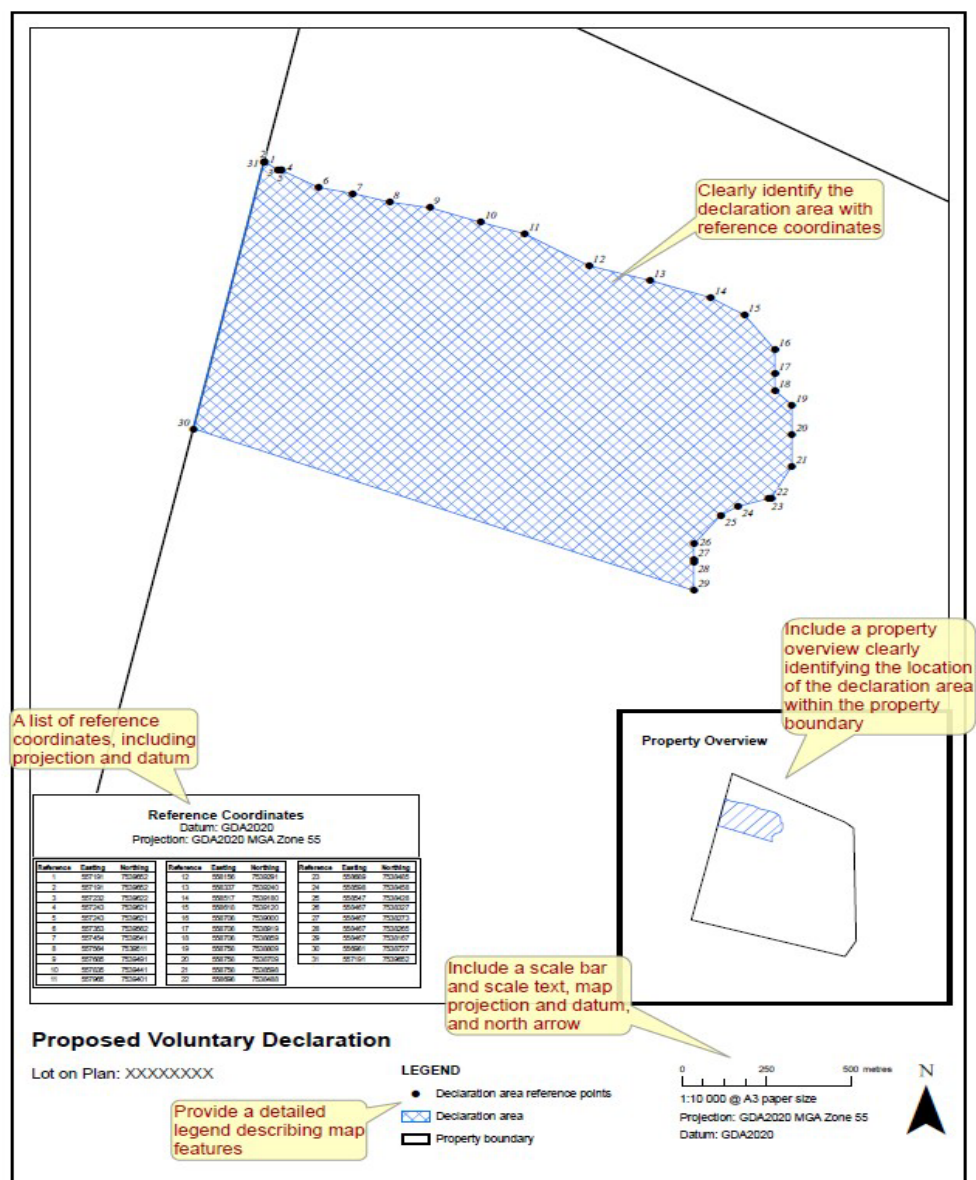


Figure 1: Example of the recommended mapping format to delineate the proposed declared area for a declared area application

Key factors in choosing a map are scale and size. Scales may vary from 1:1,000 (large scale) for a 25 ha property to 1:50,000 (small scale) for a 60,000 ha property. It is best to choose a scale that gives the detail you need with a map size that is easy to handle.

The map needs to be in a scalable format, showing clearly and accurately the proposed declared area and its relationship with the boundary of the property in which the proposed declared area is located.

For small properties (less than five ha), a cadastral map (SmartMap) or a survey plan showing property boundaries may be more useful than a map based on aerial photography. However, an aerial photo may be useful to show how the property fits into the landscape. For larger properties, satellite imagery may be more appropriate. Depending on the size of the property, an inset or property overview map may be required to adequately identify the proposed declared area.

Whichever type of map is used, a clearly defined legend should be provided to explain the information on the map.

Landowners are encouraged to provide further information that will help to assess the request. This includes:

- The inclusion of a table of reference points along with coordinate system information is highly recommended. The coordinate system should state both the datum and projection of reference points, including the Map Grid of Australia (MGA) 2020 coordinate and zone for each point acquired by a Global Positioning System (GPS) or similar system of satellites. These reference points should be taken at regular intervals to define the boundary of the proposed declared area as well as at corners, or changes in direction, and also of the external property boundary in which the proposed declared area is located;
- regional ecosystems (both remnant and not remnant) mapped within the proposed declared area;
- location of all watercourses, drainage features and wetlands within the proposed declared area and any adjacent watercourses, drainage features and wetlands relevant to the management of the proposed declared area;
- location of any existing or proposed soil erosion or sediment control infrastructure including drainage lines;
- location of any other existing and proposed infrastructure within the proposed declared area;
- topography;
- soil types;
- areas of weed infestation;
- areas with land degradation, such as salinity or soil erosion
- any other useful information.

Where a declared area offer is made, the Department of Resources will develop a Declared Area Map to identify and delineate the area subject to the declaration. See Figure 2 for an example of a Declared Area Map.



Figure 2: Example of a Declared Area Map