

Information sheet

Environmentally relevant activities

Undertaking Environmentally Relevant Activities in or near endangered regional ecosystems

This information sheet contains details, both on policy and procedures, in relation to Schedule 19 of the Environmental Protection Regulation 2019, concerning endangered regional ecosystems. It applies to those environmental authorities issued for eligible Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERAs) for which standard conditions will apply. Biodiversity offset requirements will need to be addressed for authorities relating to ineligible ERAs.

Policy position

Endangered regional ecosystems (ERE), as mapped by the administering authority¹ highlight the potential existence of an important environmental value that needs to be addressed when planning mining activities in, or adjacent to, these areas. The presence of an ERE does not automatically mean that mining activities will be prohibited in these areas. Further information on regional ecosystem descriptions can be found on the Queensland Government website at <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/ecosystems/descriptions>.

The following hierarchy will be applied to manage the environmental impacts of mining in or adjacent to, an ERE (in order of preference):

1. Avoid impacts to the ERE
2. Minimise impacts to the ERE and rehabilitate the ERE
3. Permanent loss of the ERE.

A standard application to conduct a resource activity will be regulated through standard conditions that stipulate what Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERAs) can occur beyond certain distances of environmentally sensitive areas. These distances vary depending upon the mining tenure type.

Under s. 121 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, an application for an eligible² ERA may be processed as either a standard or variation application. A standard application is for an authority which is to be subject to the standard conditions. A variation application applies when the applicant seeks a change to the standard conditions. A site-specific application must be made when any of the ERAs for the authority are ineligible ERAs.

For those ERA projects with eligible ERAs which propose to conduct activities within the buffer zones around environmentally sensitive areas, additional conditions may be required. This project will require a variation application for an environmental authority if the relevant standard conditions cannot be met.

¹The Department of Environment and Science is the administering authority for Chapter 5 activities under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

² An eligible ERA means an environmentally relevant activity that complies with the eligibility criteria in effect for the activity.



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For those ERA projects with ineligible ERAs which propose to impact on EREs or other State significant biodiversity values, the Queensland Government offset policy may apply. This project will require a site-specific application for an environmental authority.

Procedures

The administering authority will assign a project director and project manager for all Environmental Authority applications. The project manager from the administering authority will be the key point of contact for all matters associated with the application, including issues regarding EREs.

The administering authority encourages applicants to use the pre-lodgement service. A pre-lodgement meeting can be arranged through the project manager for all applications involving EREs.

Where an identified ERE is either not present, or mapped in an incorrect location, or it can be shown that the mapped area should not be an ERE, an applicant should provide evidence of this to the Queensland Herbarium and seek to have the ERE mapping changed. This information should be endorsed by a suitably qualified and experienced professional.

Additional information

The administering authority also provides internet access to mapping of the EREs through 'Maps of environmentally sensitive areas for mining' on the administering authority [website](#). The rules for determining biodiversity status are also listed.

Note that the mapping that is applicable to the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* is slightly different from the mapping that is used in assessing mining projects.

Copies of Queensland legislation may be accessed from the Queensland legislation website, www.legislation.qld.gov.au. Paper copies may be purchased from LitSupport Pty Ltd on the Queensland legislation website, www.legislation.qld.gov.au/information/purchaseprintedleg.

Further information

The latest version of this publication can be found at www.des.qld.gov.au.

Disclaimer:

While this document has been prepared with care it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Department of Environment and Science should satisfy themselves independently and by consulting their own professional advisors before embarking on any proposed course of action.

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Version history

Version	Effective date	Comments
3.00	31 March 2013	Updated to reflect amendments to the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> as a result of the <i>Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012</i> .
3.01	20 August 2018	The document template, header and footer have been updated to reflect current Queensland Government corporate identity requirements and comply with the Policy Register.
4.00	14 July 2022	Document updated to align with the Environmental Protection Regulation 2019. Facsimile number under 'Enquiries' removed. Plus other minor amendments.