

[Proposed changes to conservation planning decisions | Have Your Say - Agriculture, Water and the Environment \(awe.gov.au\)](#)

Survey completed and submitted (Ecological Communities and Fauna) 11:20am WST

Proposed Changes to Conservation Planning Decisions – PHCC Response to the survey via [Proposed changes to conservation planning decisions | Have Your Say - Agriculture, Water and the Environment \(awe.gov.au\)](#)

We are seeking comments on the proposed decisions to not have a recovery plan for 28 threatened ecological communities. Each of these entities will have a conservation advice.

Comment on an Ecological Community

Before making your comments, we recommend that you read the TSSC's guidance document [Ongoing modernisation of conservation planning under the EPBC Act](#) which outlines the approach adopted by the TSSC in making its recommendations.

You can also provide comments on other listed species using the links below:

- [Fauna](#)
- [Flora \(A-E\)](#)
- [Flora \(F-Z\)](#)

Note: Comments are based on Ecological Communities, Flora and Fauna within the Peel-Harvey Catchment Only. Survey Questions: PHCC Response in Red

Ecological Communities Survey

1. Which ecological community are you providing comment on?

- **Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh**

2. Based on the ecological community you selected, do you agree or disagree that the recovery of this ecological community can be effectively guided through a conservation advice and should no longer have a recovery plan under the EPBC Act?*

- **Disagree**

3. Please provide your reasons for your response.

This ecological community has conservation advice not a recovery plan. Recommend development of a recovery plan for the following reasons:

- Conservation advice provides a weaker statutory protection than recovery plans, and therefore a lack of recovery plan will result in a poorer conservation outcome (adverse impacts will be greater without a recovery plan).
 - the ecological community is subject to multiple, significant threats (for example, impacts of climate change such as inundation from sea level rise, coastal development, storm water run off, agriculture and invasive species);
 - the range of the ecological community occurs across multiple state, territory or Commonwealth borders; across multiple land tenures; and/or across a high proportion of private land (saltmarsh has a wide distribution occurs across 6 Australian states, in a range of land tenures, many of which are in private land);
 - there being large numbers, and/or diverse views, of stakeholders (coastal saltmarsh has a large extent in southern and temperate areas and is subject to diverse views of stakeholders, including seen for its agriculture uses for grazing, commercial and recreational fisheries nurseries, carbon storage, climate change mitigation, water quality services);
 - the species or ecological community being subject to high development pressure or other threats that can be regulated under the EPBC Act (coastal saltmarsh is located in areas subject to coastal development for housing, recreation and industry)
4. Please provide any other comments or concerns in relation to the Minister's proposed decision not to have a recovery plan for the ecological community.
- To expand on the first justification point above, it is noted that when making a decision on an action, the Minister must 'have regard to' an approved Conservation Advice for a species or ecological community that is likely to be impacted by the action and must 'not act inconsistently' with a Recovery Plan (s139). This applies to Environmental assessors are guided by the Significant Impact Guidelines ([https://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/significant-impact-guidelines-11-matters-national\[1\]environmental-significance](https://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/significant-impact-guidelines-11-matters-national[1]environmental-significance)). Due to this, Conservation advice alone is inherently weaker than requirements under a Recovery Plan. While there is provision under Conservation Advice to develop bioregional plans, it is unclear what this actually involves and whether they are a requirement under conservation advice. While Conservation may be "nimble" and cost effective to develop, they are discretionary rather than statutory, limited in terms of detailed, specific actions (eg site specific actions), responsibilities and funding required to implement.
5. Do you have any attachments you wish to upload to support your comments
- No

6. Your name

7. Confidentiality – Is your response confidential

No

Fauna Species Survey

1

Which species are you providing comments on?*

Red-tailed phascogale - *Phascogale calura*

2

Based on the species you selected, do you agree or disagree that the recovery of this species can be effectively guided through a conservation advice and should no longer have a recovery plan under the EPBC Act?*

Disagree

3

Please provide your reasons for your response.

- The Red-tailed phascogale is subject to multiple, significant threats;
- The species is largely restricted to the Threatened Ecological Community, the Eucalyptus Woodlands of the WA Wheatbelt and is usually in association with other threatened species such as the Numbat, Woylie and Chuditch.
- The species occurs across multiple land tenures; including a high proportion of private land as well as public land; or
- The species is subject to high development pressure or other threats (such as clearing through agriculture, mining) that can be regulated under the EPBC Act.

4

Please provide any other comments or concerns in relation to the Minister's proposed decision not to have a recovery plan for the species.

Under statutory requirements, Conservation advice are inherently weaker than a Recovery Plans. It is noted that when making a decision on an action, the Minister must 'have regard to' an approved Conservation Advice for a species or ecological community that is likely to be impacted by the action and must 'not act inconsistently' with a Recovery Plan (s139). This

applies to Environmental assessors are guided by the Significant Impact Guidelines ([https://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/significant-impact-guidelines-11-matters-national\[1\]environmental-significance](https://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/significant-impact-guidelines-11-matters-national[1]environmental-significance)). While there is provision under Conservation Advice to develop bioregional plans, it is unclear what this actually involves and whether they are a requirement under conservation advice. While Conservation may be “nimble” and cost effective to develop they are discretionary rather than statutory, limited in terms of detailed, specific actions (eg site specific actions), responsibilities and funding required to implement.

8. Do you have any attachments you wish to upload to support your comments

No

9. Your name

Peel-Harvey Catchment Council Inc

10. Confidentiality – Is your response confidential

No

Flora Species Survey

Note: none of the flora species listed are within the PHCC – however we could make a general comment (if it will allow without having to click on a specific species) as we have with the above fauna species and ecological communities.