

QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND SCIENCE

Question 1

In the section of the Department's submission titled 'Complexity and pace', it talks about the need for more consultation on the design of these Bills. Specifically, what forms of consultation should that take – and what should be the key objectives or outcomes of that consultation?

Response:

The Queensland Department recommends the following opportunities be considered for consulting with the states and territories on the design of the nature repair market framework:

1. Create new inter-jurisdictional working group for policy developments for the Nature Repair Market.

A formal inter-jurisdictional working group could inform policy developments under the nature repair market framework and its alignment with concurrent reforms such as the EPBC Act, Chubb Review, TNFD framework launch and draft Offsets Standard. There is an existing inter-jurisdictional working group for approaches to measuring and tracking biodiversity that has a technical role through iterative discussions regarding the development of consistent metrics and data across states and territories. An additional, policy focused interjurisdictional working group will ensure that the expertise and experience of State and Territories in designing and delivering on ground conservation and restoration policies and programs through policy, regulation, investment and market mechanisms is effectively drawn on to enhance the design of the Nature Repair Market.

2. Have a standing agenda item at the Senior Official's Group (SOG) and/or Environment Minister's Meeting (EMM) on the nature repair market.

A standing agenda item at the SOG and/or EMM would enable increased engagement and coordination with state and territory jurisdictions on the design of the nature repair market and would formalise the importance of state and territory contributions to the design of this market.

Consultation through the channels mentioned above should deliver the following objectives and outcomes:

- A formal commitment to ongoing consultation with the states and territories to inform the design and delivery of the nature repair market
- Strategic phasing of policy reform so that larger environmental reforms, such as the EPBC Act Reform, Standard for Environmental Offsets and Chubb review implementation, occur prior to the development of the nature repair market framework
- Clear governance arrangements outlining the sequencing and coordination of Commonwealth reforms, and what avenues they will occur through
- Recognition of state and territory roles in the development and prioritisation of methods under the nature repair market, including how these will align with governance arrangements
- Resourcing of state and territory contributions to the suite of Commonwealth environment reforms

Question 2

On 8 December 2022, the then Queensland Environment Minister (Minister Scanlon) held a joint press conference with the Federal Environment Minister, Minister Plibersek, at which Ms Plibersek said that they would be “kicking off” new regional planning processes in a partnership between the two governments. Ms Plibersek said that this “means less red tape, it means easier paperwork, it means less duplication, streamlining and speeding up assessment processes”. How has that announcement materialised in practical, on-the-ground, terms since then?

Response:

In relation to the regional planning partnership, the Queensland and Australian Governments are working together following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on 8 December 2022. Since signing the MOU, the Australian Government has commenced development of a National Environmental Standard for Regional Planning (‘the Regional Planning Standard’).

The Regional Planning Standard, currently in draft form, will outline the requirements for bioregional plans to be made under reformed national environment legislation. The Queensland Government understands that the Regional Planning Standard will be released for public consultation alongside an exposure draft of the reformed national environment legislation by the end of 2023.

Since signing the MOU, the Queensland Government has developed a draft methodology for the mapping and modelling of environmental values and development pressures, which will underpin a bioregional plan and ensure it meets the Regional Planning Standard, once set. The Queensland Government is also investigating ways to integrate bioregional plans into Queensland’s planning frameworks, subject to the reformed national environment legislation.

The boundaries of the three pilot bioregional plans in Queensland are currently being decided and will inform the commencement of consultation with partners before the end of 2023.

Question 3

Has the design of these Nature Repair Market Bills been a subject at a meeting or meetings of the inter-jurisdictional working group for approaches to measuring and tracking biodiversity? And, if so, on what meeting date(s)?

Response:

The inter-jurisdictional working group for approaches to measuring and tracking biodiversity met on the following dates:

- Meeting #1 - 30 March 2023 – an initial discussion on how to approach a collaborative process for biodiversity measurement and tracking, and to work towards agreed input for the May EMM paper.
- Meeting #2 - 26 April 2023 - discussed key themes around incorporating existing approaches to measuring and tracking biodiversity into a market framework and shared communication across jurisdictions to reduce confusion for landholders.
- 30 May 2023 – Agricultural Biodiversity Stewardship Pilots showcase

The aim of the inter-jurisdictional working group for approaches to measuring and tracking biodiversity, as stated in meeting papers circulated by DCCEEW, is ‘to continue iterative discussions around a consistent approach to measuring and tracking biodiversity across the states and territories, ahead of the next Environment Ministers Meeting.’