Summary of changes to the native vegetation removal regulations

December 2017

This table is a high-level summary of the key changes to the native vegetation removal regulations, as a result of a recent review. The table provides a comparison of the previous and new systems. Documents and resources to support implementation of the changes are available on the DELWP website: https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation/native-vegetation.

Previous system (pre December 2017)	New system (post December 2017)
Purpose of Clause 52.17: – Avoid and minimise the removal of native vegetation that makes a significant contribution to Victoria's biodiversity	**Purpose of Clause 52.17:** – Avoid and minimise the removal of native vegetation (greater emphasis on avoiding removal as the first step for all applications)
Incorporated document *Permitted clearing of native vegetation – Biodiversity assessment guidelines*	**Incorporated document** *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation*
Biodiversity value of native vegetation considers: – Extent – Condition – Strategic biodiversity value – Habitat for rare or threatened species	**Biodiversity value of native vegetation considers:** – Extent – Condition – Strategic biodiversity value – Habitat for rare or threatened species – Large trees – Endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes – Sensitive wetlands and coastal areas
Three risk-based pathways based on amount and location of proposed native vegetation removal: – Low, moderate and high – Two area thresholds (0.5 and 1 hectare) – Location risk map based on potential to impact on rare or threatened species when removing small amounts of native vegetation – All scattered trees considered large trees in area. Trees that overlap double countered in DELWP tools.	**Three assessment pathways based on amount, location of proposed native vegetation removal, and if the removal includes large trees:** – Basic, Intermediate and Detailed – One area threshold (0.5 hectare) – Location map based on potential to impact rare or threatened species when removing small amounts of native vegetation, endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes and sensitive wetlands and coastal areas – Differentiation in scattered trees size, large or small. Tree overlap in DELWP tools dissolved.
Application requirements: – Minimisation statement and offset strategy required for moderate and high risk-based pathway applications – Habitat hectare assessment and assessment of impact to rare or threatened species required for moderate and high risk-based pathways	**Application requirements:** – Avoid and minimisation statement and offset strategy required for all assessment pathways – Habitat hectare assessment and assessment of impact to rare or threatened species required for Detailed Assessment Pathway
Decision guidelines: – Incorporated document only addresses biodiversity value of native vegetation – For low risk-based pathway no assessment of impact to biodiversity, straight to offset pathway – Consider minimisation statement and offset strategy for moderate and high risk-based pathway – Consider impacts on rare and threatened species habitat for high risk-based	**Decision guidelines:** – Incorporated document address biodiversity and other values of native vegetation – Consider avoid and minimisation statement and offset statement for all applications – Consider impacts on large trees, endangered EVCs, wetland and sensitive coastal areas for Intermediate and Detailed Pathways – Consider impacts on rare and threatened species habit for Detailed Assessment Pathways
Offsets: – Offset measured in general or specific biodiversity equivalence units – Secure specific offsets if species habitat is significantly impacted, otherwise secure general offsets – No flexibility in the use of the habitat importance maps to determine species habitat	**Offsets:** – Offsets measured in general or species habitat units – Secure species offsets if species habitat is significantly impacted, otherwise secure general offsets – If large trees are removed, offset must include large trees – Ability to supplement the habitat importance maps with site collected information to determine species habitat, where there are clear inconsistencies

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