



Government of **Western Australia**
Conservation and Parks Commission

Position Statement No 19: Carbon farming on lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission

July 2022

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The Commission's Position

The Conservation and Parks Commission (the Commission) acknowledges the important role of the conservation reserve system in protecting global carbon stores. Management of conservation reserves can support climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and emission reduction.

The Commission therefore supports carbon farming activities being considered and undertaken on lands and waters vested with the Commission under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act) to the extent that those activities:

- are consistent with the objectives of the CALM Act and relevant management plans, and the purpose for which the land was reserved under the *Land Administration Act 1997*;
- support biodiversity outcomes and employment opportunities for traditional owners; and
- generate revenue that, following the recovery of costs relating to the carbon project, is reinvested in the management of the respective reserve/s.

Context and Background

Carbon farming refers to a change in management practices aimed at increasing the amount of carbon stored in vegetation and soil (sequestration), or a reduction in the amount of carbon being released into the atmosphere (emissions reduction). Given the department manages over 31 million hectares of land and water across the state, there is potential for carbon farming projects in some areas of the CALM Act estate to contribute to meeting greenhouse gas emissions targets and contribute to global efforts to respond to climate change.

Carbon farming also has the potential to deliver a range of other benefits beyond increasing carbon stores or reducing carbon emissions, such as restoration of degraded ecosystems, empowering traditional owners, regional employment opportunities and improving biodiversity and conservation outcomes. On terrestrial sites, carbon farming may involve but not be limited to modifying prescribed fire, weed and feral animal management or undertaking planting programs. In coastal environments, 'blue carbon' farming may involve but not limited to regenerating mangrove forests, tidal marshlands and seagrass communities.

There are several mechanisms through which carbon credits can be generated in Australia, primarily through the Australian Government's Clean Energy Regulator. Projects established under the Commonwealth *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Act 2011* (the CFI Act) require the consent of eligible interest holders in project lands. For Crown lands in Western Australia, including CALM Act lands, the eligible interest holder is the Western Australian Minister for Lands, who would consider a range of matters of interest to the State, such as CALM Act interests, mining interests and native title.

Where native title rights and interests exists, the native title holder is also an eligible interest holder with a legal consent right for carbon farming projects.

Role of the Conservation and Parks Commission

The Commission has the statutory role of providing advice to the Minister for Environment on matters relating to land vested in it or under its care, control and management, and this may include advice on carbon farming proposals on such land.