



Department of **Planning,**  
**Lands and Heritage**



# **Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines – Consultation Summary**

November 2019



# Consultation Summary: Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines

The Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines (Guidelines) have been developed by the Pastoral Lands Board (PLB), whose role under Part 7 of the *Land Administration Act 1997* (LAA) is, in part, to ensure pastoral leases are managed on an ecologically sustainable basis.

Pastoral lessees are required to manage and work the land under the lease to its best advantage as a pastoral property, use methods of best pastoral and environmental management practice, and maintain the indigenous pasture and other vegetation on the land to the satisfaction of the PLB.

These Guidelines are designed to provide up-to-date information on good practice pastoral land management, and have been developed in consultation with pastoralists, to assist them in meeting those requirements.

## Context for the Guidelines

### *Auditor General's Report: Management of Pastoral Lands in Western Australia*

The Auditor General's Report of October 2017, *Management of Pastoral Lands in Western Australia* (the Report), focussed on monitoring and compliance of rangeland condition. It highlighted the Government's failings in that area, also finding the State is not providing enough guidance or support to pastoralists on *how* to comply with land condition requirements in the LAA.

The Report recommended the PLB, with support from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), should:

- 3b.** Develop, publish and circulate policies to prevent the degradation of rangelands and to rehabilitate degraded or eroded rangelands to restore their pastoral potential, as prescribed under the LAA;
- 3c.** Provide guidance on good practice soil, vegetation, stocking and feral animal management techniques, and rehabilitation techniques, to protect and improve the environmental condition of pastoral lands.

The Guidelines will meet Recommendation **3c** and contribute significantly to the development of an appropriate suite of policies as outlined in Recommendation **3b**.

### *Advice from the Pastoral Lands Board to Government*

The Guidelines are closely aligned with strategic advice the PLB provided to the Ministers for Lands and Regional Development; Agriculture and Food. This advice was provided to the Ministers before the Auditor General's Report was released. In that advice, the PLB stated:

- improved land management leads to improved environmental outcomes, which leads to improved economic opportunities, resulting in more people and more money to improve further land management; and
- significant change is required at all levels – legislative, regulatory, and policy – to strengthen the pastoral industry.

The Guidelines provide advice on ecological management, with a firm understanding that good land management brings better economic outcomes. Better economic outcomes will assist rangelands communities to grow and thrive, bringing better social outcomes. The triple bottom line approach is essential to the Guidelines.

### *Responding to the OAG*

The PLB has responded to the Auditor General's Report by progressing a policy review, which includes the Guidelines. In addition, the following policies are at different stages of development:

- 1) The Cultivation of Non-Indigenous Plant Species on Pastoral Land in WA;
- 2) Policies in respect of land monitoring and compliance

Consultation on these policies will occur as appropriate.

In October 2017, the State Government announced a renewed focus on Pastoral Lands Reform.

Pastoral Lands Reform is focusing on improving the condition of the pastoral estate and industry pastoral management practices. It aims to encourage best-practice land management and more effective administration of the pastoral estate. Pastoral Land Reform offers improved security of tenure and opportunities for investment in capital infrastructure to pastoralists.

The Guidelines support Pastoral Lands Reform by promoting good land management practices and informing policies around the prevention and rehabilitation of degraded land.

Over the next three years, Government plans to:

- Develop regional land condition standards;
- Develop practical land management guidance materials based on the Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines and Policies;
- Design a risk-based pastoral land monitoring, compliance, and support program based on on-ground and satellite monitoring; and
- Work with industry to co-design and define best-practice for business and land management.

## What are the Guidelines?

The Guidelines contain a series of techniques and tools for **good land management practice**. They are designed to provide information to land managers on a range of pastoral land management challenges.

Chapter Title	Key Areas in Chapter
<b>Land Management</b>	Land Management Planning; Objective Setting; Mapping the Land under the Lease; and Priority Setting
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Waters; Roads and Tracks; Fences and Stockyards
<b>Grazing Management</b>	Pasture Budgeting; Responding to Seasons; and Grazing Systems
<b>Fire, Weeds, and Feral Animals</b>	Fire management; Biosecurity and Pest Control on Pastoral Leases; Introduced Weeds; Introduced Animals; Large Feral Herbivores; Wild Dogs; Feral Pigs; and Native Animals
<b>Regenerating and Rehabilitating Degraded Areas</b>	Definition of Degradation; Priority Setting; and Remediation Techniques

## Process for Developing the Guidelines

These Guidelines have been developed in close consultation with pastoralists and land managers. Much initial understanding of good land management was gained by attending forums such as:

- Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association AGM and Field Days in Kalgoorlie in 2018;
- Pilbara Rangelands Biosecurity Group LFH Forum and AGM, Karratha 2018; and
- Rangelands NRM Post-AGM Forum, Perth Zoo, 2018.

In addition, one-on-one meetings with pastoralists were held on-station across two trips:

- Gascoyne, Murchison, Pilbara, March 2019; and
- Kimberley, April 2019.

A large amount of consultation was also undertaken with several key Government agencies, including:

- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development;
- Department of Biosecurity, Conservation, and Attractions;
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation; and
- Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

The Guidelines are focussed on providing up-to-date information on good practice pastoral land management by engaging with pastoralists in a meaningful way.

## **Consultation Process**

The current consultation process involves engaging with pastoralists and other interested groups, such as peak industry bodies, Government agencies, and not-for-profit groups working in the Rangelands. The PLB is seeking feedback on the Guidelines that provides insights into:

- The quality of the information provided in the Guidelines, including any errors that need correcting;
- Any obvious gaps in the information provided;
- Whether there is a need for more clarity around issues experienced differently in different regions, and how that might be included.

Additionally, the PLB is keen to hear about the best way for the Guidelines to be presented in order to be useful. The Guidelines are only good if they can be used. The PLB acknowledges that the Guidelines in their current form will not meet the “usefulness” criteria, and as a result seeks the views of pastoralists on how to make the information included in the Guidelines easy to use.

Feedback will be gratefully accepted now, but the PLB also envisages a process, yet to be determined, by which more detailed feedback from pastoralists on the useability of the Guidelines can be received. This feedback will be translated into new-look Guidelines that will again be shared, to ensure that the Guidelines are indeed useable.

**For a copy of the Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines, please visit the following site:**  
**<https://consultation.dplh.wa.gov.au/>, or contact: [plb@plb.wa.gov.au](mailto:plb@plb.wa.gov.au).**