

Nature Conservation (Threatened Ecological Communities and Species) Action Plan 2007 (No 1)

Disallowable instrument DI2007— 84

made under the

Nature Conservation Act 1980, s 42 (Preparation of action plan)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The *Nature Conservation Act 1980* (the Act) is the primary ACT legislation for the protection of native plants and animals. A 1994 amendment to the Act established the Flora and Fauna Committee as an expert advisory body to the Minister. The Flora and Fauna Committee advises the Minister of ACT species and ecological communities that are threatened with extinction and recommend that they be declared accordingly.

Section 42 of the Act provides for the Conservator of Flora and Fauna to prepare an Action Plan for each species or community that has been the subject of a declaration. An Action Plan is a management response to a recognised ecological threat. It is required to include proposals for the identification, protection and survival of the species or community concerned. A process of public consultation is provided for.

Action Plan No.29 - ACT Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy, supersedes six separate Action Plans previously prepared, namely the Action Plans for:

- Two-spined Blackfish (*Gadopsis bispinosus*)
- Trout Cod (*Maccullochella macquariensis*)
- Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*)
- Murray River Crayfish (*Euastacus armatus*)
- Silver Perch (*Bidyanus bidyanus*)
- Tuggeranong Lignum (*Muehlenbeckia tuggeranong*)

Reflecting government policy, the Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy takes an integrated territory wide approach within a regional context to the protection and management of the rivers and riparian areas that support threatened species and ecological communities. The Strategy seeks to maintain and improve the natural integrity of the rivers and riparian zones, including linear and upslope habitat connectivity.

A central purpose of the Strategy is to inform decision-making with regard to conservation of threatened species, land use planning, and the development and management of land in the ACT. Specifically the Strategy:

- Identifies the vegetation communities, threatened and uncommon plant species in the riparian zones, changes to riparian zone vegetation since European settlement and ongoing threats.
- Describes the riparian zone fauna, including threatened and uncommon species, the characteristics of aquatic and riparian habitat, and threats to riparian fauna.
- Describes the fish and crayfish fauna of ACT rivers, and discusses those factors considered to have contributed to the decline of native fish species in the Murray–Darling Basin, including the ACT, and continue to be ongoing threats.
- Lists conservation goals, objectives and actions for aquatic species and flora and fauna of the riparian zone, including those species declared as threatened under the Nature Conservation Act 1980 (ACT).
- Outlines principles on which to base conservation actions.
- Provides a basis for planning and land management decisions with regard to threatened aquatic species and the riparian zone.
- Encourages community participation in the conservation of aquatic and riparian flora and fauna species and their habitat.
- Satisfies the requirement of the Nature Conservation Act 1980, that action plans include proposals for the identification, protection and survival of a threatened species or ecological community, or, in the case of a threatening process, proposals to minimise its effect.

While the legal authority of the Strategy is confined to the Australian Capital Territory, management considerations are addressed in a regional context.

This instrument revokes a previous instrument for Action Plans (DI2005-87).

An Action Plan is a disallowable instrument and must be notified, under the *Legislation Act 2001*, and presented to the ACT Legislative Assembly.