# Queensland Environmental Offsets Framework

**Direct Benefit Management Plan Checklist**

Note: This checklist is designed to assist proponents and technical officers in determining whether or not a proposed Direct Benefit Management Plan (DBMP) provides actions sufficient to counterbalance the impacts of future prescribed activities on prescribed environmental matters; and the management actions are best achieved through actions in a DBMP.

**Table 1 – Requirements for DBMPs**

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| **Requirements for DBMP** | **Yes** | **No** | **Not applicable** |
| Does the DBMP list the *prescribed environmental matters* the DBMP will offset?  Note, where the DBMP is for Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES), have the relevant actions applying to MNES been endorsed by the Commonwealth? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP identify the current status of the prescribed matters and their presence in the area? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP list the main factors contributing to the decline of the prescribed matter/s in the area and extent of impact on the prescribed matter/s with the DBMP area?  Note, the DBMP should identify:   * What are the key threats? * How significant/extensive are these threats? * List the major threats in priority order. |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP list the range of actions that will be undertaken to address the key threat/s on the prescribed matter?   * Have all available actions been identified and considered? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP provide a map (preferably digital) that clearly identifies the area to which the DBMP applies with Global Positioning System (GPS) points, including any areas subject to specific management measures? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP demonstrate how it will achieve a *conservation outcome* for the *prescribed environmental matter*?  Note, things to consider:   * What are the proposed management objectives and outcomes for the DBMP? * What measures will be undertaken to achieve the management objectives and outcomes? * What performance criteria will the actions be measured against? * Are any restrictions proposed to be imposed on the use of the area to achieve the management objectives and outcomes? * What is the hierarchy/prioritisation for the management measures? * Are multiple actions that need to occur at the same time clearly outlined? * Does the DBMP provide detail descriptions of the activities, methods, timeframes and standards to be applied or reference documents outlining these details? |  |  |  |

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| **Requirements for DBMP** | **Yes** | **No** | **Not applicable** |
| Does the DBMP focus on the priority actions required to improve the viability of the matter?  Note: Priority actions are those actions that address key threats to the prescribed matter, not just any threat.Examples include:   * How do the proposed management actions improve the viability of the *prescribed environmental matter* compared to other options that could be undertaken to address key threats? * Why are the proposed management actions better than other options available? Will use of the DBMP achieve a better *conservation outcome* than a traditional land-based offset? * Are the actions undertaken in the most strategic location, for example in a Strategic Offset Investment Corridor or strategic areas within the marine environment where the best outcome for the matter can be achieved? * Will there be multiple benefits to implementing the actions in the DBMP, e.g. for other non-target matters? * Will the actions build on existing measures and capacity in the area covered by the DBMP? * Are priority areas for the offsets identified and justified? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP list and validate evidence (i.e. scientific, methodology, research) that demonstrates a *conservation outcome* will be achieved by the priority actions in the DBMP? |  |  |  |
| Are the proposed actions in the DBMP additional to existing activities and measures being undertaken for that matter?  This includes over and above existing:   * management activities that are already occurring for that matter; * requirements of laws and conditions relating to the matter; and * requirement of funding agreements for that matter; |  |  |  |
| Is the DBMP inconsistent with the legislation under which the prescribed environmental matter administered for example *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, *Marine Park Act 2004* and *Fisheries Act 1994*? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP provide an analysis of the risks associated with achieving a conservation outcome for the prescribed environmental matter?  Consider:   * What is the level of risk associated with achieving the management objectives and outcomes? * What actions are proposed to minimise the risks and remedial actions that will be undertaken if any of the risks occur? * Will existing permitted or proposed use of the area, or the zoning for the area, for activities other than offsets under the DBMP, affect the achievement of a conservation outcome? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP include indicative costing of the management actions included in the DBMP?   * Provide supporting evidence and basis for the costings. |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP deliver actions that are efficient, effective, timely, transparent, and scientifically robust, ensuring transparency in governance arrangements—including being able to be readily measured, monitored, audited, and enforced? |  |  |  |

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| **Requirements for DBMP** | **Yes** | **No** | **Not applicable** |
| Is legal security required to meet the objectives of the DBMP? What justification is provided for not using legal security (if applicable)? |  |  |  |
| Where legal security is required, has the DBMP provided guidance on suitable legal security options for the duration of the impact on the prescribed environmental matter? |  |  |  |
| Has any part of the proposed method of the DBMP been patented or has patent pending?   * Are there any relevant patent applications existing or proposed to be made? * What part (e.g. process, method) is proposed to be patented? * If yes, how will copies be made available? |  |  |  |

**Table 2 – DBMPs – indirect action requirements**

| **Requirements for indirect actions included in a DBMP** | | | |
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| **Indirect action requirements** | **Yes** | **No** | **Not applicable** |
| Does the DBMP include indirect actions?   * Examples of ‘indirect actions’ include signage in key areas to educate the public regarding the risks to a threatened or migratory species, where it can be demonstrated that this is likely to improve the viability of the species; or research into effective re-vegetation techniques for a threatened ecological community or regional ecosystem. |  |  |  |
| Do indirect actions make up greater than 10% of the proposed DBMP? |  |  |  |
| Note if the answer above is yes, then does the DBMP provide sufficient justification for research or education being greater than 10%? |  |  |  |
| Does the DBMP include evidence that the research or education component proposed under the DBMP will:   * improve the viability of the impacted *prescribed environmental matters;* * target key research/education activities as identified in ‘back on track’ actions for biodiversity or relevant Commonwealth approved recovery plan and threat abatement plan; * be undertaken in a transparent, scientifically robust and timely manner; * be prepared or has been prepared by a qualified individual or organisation in a suitable manner; and * consider best practice research approaches? |  |  |  |
| Has the research program been tailored to at least a postgraduate education level?   * Note: there will be scope to engage other educational levels in educational programs. |  |  |  |
| Will the research program present findings that can be peer-reviewed? |  |  |  |

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| **Requirements for indirect actions included in a DBMP** | | | |
| **Indirect action requirements** | **Yes** | **No** | **Not applicable** |
| Will the research program findings be published in an internationally recognised peer-reviewed scientific journal or be of a standard that would be acceptable for publication in such a journal?   * Publications should be submitted to free, open access journals. * Data and information collected should have creative commons licensing and be free and accessible. |  |  |  |
| Will the research program’s outputs inform future management decisions on the *prescribed environmental matters* and, where possible, be readily applicable to other similar matters (e.g. species groupings)? |  |  |  |
| Will the education program be likely to vary in scope, mode of delivery and duration according to the target audience and the *prescribed environmental matters* (for instance, school or community programs, signage or printed materials)? |  |  |  |
| Will the education program seek to attain measurable outcomes? |  |  |  |
| Does the education program demonstrate to a reasonable extent how it will assist to counterbalance a significant residual impact of the prescribed activity on the *prescribed environmental matters*? |  |  |  |
| Will the education program be targeted toward behavioural change and subsequent improvement in the viability of the *prescribed environmental matters*? |  |  |  |

**Table 3 – DBMPs – Endorsements**

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| **DBMP endorsements** | **Yes** | **No** | **Not applicable** |
| Have relevant owners of the land subject to the DBMP endorsed the DBMP (where relevant)? |  |  |  |
| Has the administering agency responsible for listing/declaring and protecting the matter covered by the DBMP endorsed use of the DBMP? |  |  |  |