

# CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ERP 18 – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

PROPOSALS DUE **10 AUGUST 2018** TO [OFFICE@BNHCRC.COM.AU](mailto:OFFICE@BNHCRC.COM.AU)

## INTRODUCTION

The Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (hereafter the CRC), in conjunction with our client, the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (Victoria) (DELWP) is seeking expressions of interest for the following project.

### **Making a difference – conceptual framework to show benefits of compliance**

## PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Produce a conceptual framework or program logic that describes how effective actions in environmental compliance can be used to avoid impacts and/or harms to the environment
2. Develop defensible and measurable outcome metrics, based on robust evidence, that DELWP can implement to demonstrate they are making a positive difference to the environment, and enjoyment of that environment by the community in Victoria through their environmental compliance activities.

## BACKGROUND

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. DELWP is in the process of finalising its Environmental Compliance Policy.
2. The policy states two objectives. The first is *Reduce harms to our natural and heritage values, and the environment*. The second is *Reduce illegal, inequitable and unsafe access to public land and use of natural resource*.
3. The policy commits DELWP to using a risk-based approach to resource allocation. The policy aims to address illegal actions that:
  - are causing the most harm to the environment
  - cause the biggest impact on fair and legal access to public land
  - relate to access to natural resources - where we can make the biggest difference.
4. To be able to do this, DELWP needs a set of metrics to allow it to estimate and, over time, measure the loss that was avoided due to DELWP's compliance actions.
5. The second driver for this project is the need to measure DELWP's success and to have the evidence that allows DELWP to tell the narrative of the environmental benefits that have been achieved through compliance activities. Historically, these benefits have been difficult to

demonstrate as success for DELWP, as it has focused its measurement and reporting on avoiding harm and losses. This dilemma has been well documented and is described in Malcolm Sparrow, *The Character of Harms* (2008)<sup>1</sup>.

*Conceptual framework or program logic*

6. Articulating a conceptual framework of how environmental compliance actions result in avoided losses helps strengthen the logic and increases the effectiveness of the program. It also assists with communicating the value of the program to others.

7. DELWP's environmental compliance program works across several different topic areas including take of native wildlife, trafficking of exotic species, licensing of the sale of native flora and fauna, unauthorised use of crown land, recreational vehicles on public land, adherence to licence, permit and lease conditions, and fire prevention. This makes explaining the program logic less straightforward.

8. A compelling and cogent program logic would increase confidence in the environmental compliance program.

*Environmental avoided loss due to compliance actions*

9. As well as being able to communicate the conceptual design or program logic of the environmental compliance program, it is also important to be able to measure the outcomes of our actions.

10. Since 2003, DELWP has measured the condition and estimated the benefit of actions for improving vegetation using [Habitat Hectares](#).

11. In 2017 the Government's biodiversity strategy [Biodiversity 2037](#) developed a new index for measuring the benefit from or avoided losses due to actions for threatened species. This is called the Change in Suitable Habitat.

12. Change in Suitable Habitat is the increase in the suitability of habitat at a location in a future time (50 years) with response to sustained management of relevant threats. It is an area-based measurement reflecting the difference in persistence of a species at a location with or without appropriate management, as well as the area over which this occurs. The metric uses species distribution models as the base unit and combines it with expert elicitation of the avoided losses or benefits derived for each species for different management actions. Each situation varies in the estimated amount of difference the action makes, the amount of area and the current importance of the habitat for the species. Change in Suitable Habitat is based on 'species persistence at a location' rather than 'species' probability of extinction'.

13. Change in Suitable Habitat is biodiversity metric only. It doesn't measure the social uplift derived from acting to either improve biodiversity or reduce harm to biodiversity. However,

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<sup>1</sup> Reference - Sparrow, Malcolm K. (2008) *The Character of Harms: Operational Challenges in Control* New York: Cambridge University Press

*Biodiversity 2037* has a goal to connect people with nature. The Biodiversity Division of DELWP are working with Behaviour Works and Department of Health on social benefits of biodiversity.

14. The Change in Suitable Habitat metric is currently less than comprehensive as it doesn't yet include all aspects of biodiversity such as aquatic, most invertebrates and soil health.

*Metrics to assess the losses avoided by providing equity and legal access to public land, and use of natural resources*

15. Some organisations measure the social 'uplift' that result from their actions. Whether the causal link between the actions and the outcomes are assumed or demonstrated varies across sectors and organisations.

16. For example, the [Report on Government Services 2018](#), part c (Productivity Commission) measured the percent of people who felt safe when they were at home by themselves at night.

17. DELWP does not currently have a metric for measuring the avoided losses from actions to support objective two.

18. Many regulatory and/or compliance organisations in Victoria are facing similar challenges.

19. It is likely that various segments of the community value / measure benefits or avoided loss in different ways. These may include health, well-being, freedoms, intergenerational, connectedness, financial, reputation, and social licence.

20. Much of the existing data and metrics in this field are qualitative or subjective. This requires particular techniques for robust interpretation.

21. Metrics are only useful if the data is available to measure change or avoided losses, or if there is a pathway forward for generating or collecting this data.

22. This project aims to develop metrics to measure social 'uplift' from avoided losses.

23. One of the difficulties with designing metrics is striking the balance between representing the complexities and dynamism of the real world with the desire for simplicity and comprehensiveness. The former often results in multiple specific metrics that are designed to understand a small part of the natural world. The latter often demands that those multiple metrics are converted into an easy to understand, single metric. This project needs to address these multiple and contrasting drivers to develop workable solutions that best account for complexity.

24. In environmental or biodiversity fields as well as social sciences, it is possible to measure outcomes in multiple metrics.

25. The community and stakeholders desire comprehensive, simple metrics that tell the whole story. There is often an aspiration for a single metric.

## SCOPE

- INCLUSIONS**
1. A framework and program logic for evaluation the effectiveness and benefits of environmental compliance activities.
  2. Robust and defensible metrics, supported by evidence, to understand the social benefit of actions that avoid losses to biodiversity.
- EXCLUSIONS**
3. Metrics that DELWP doesn't have access to the data to support comprehensively across all biodiversity types across the extent of Victoria. For example, a metric that requires a spatial representation of changes in invertebrate diversity is not feasible.

## PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

### Key Steps

Key Steps	Lead	Due Date
1. Development of detailed project plan.	Provider	1 months
2. Review current science and practice regarding metrics for environmental and social 'uplift' resulting from compliance actions.	Provider	4 months
3. Interviews with leaders in compliance and regulatory practice who have made progress with these metrics	Provider	4 months
4. Run small workshop to design conceptual framework or program logic with DELWP	Provider	5 months
5. Design and facilitate a workshop with other Victorian agencies and stakeholders. Collate data to report on workshop findings.	Provider	8 months
6. Organise invitees and logistics for workshop	DELWP	8 months
7. Final report	Provider	12 months
8. Assist DELWP to fully operationalise outputs – including systems, standards and procedures for use and development and training	Provider	13 months
9. Complete project reporting and documentation.	Provider	14 months

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**Expected Outputs**

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1. A review of current science theory and practice regarding metrics for environmental and social 'uplift' resulting from compliance actions. This will include key points from interviews of experts.
  2. A program logic or conceptual framework.
  3. A report on workshop findings.
  4. A report detailing proposed metrics for environmental and social 'uplift' resulting from compliance actions.
  5. Educational materials and training information that can be used by DELWP for the implementation of the proposed framework and using the proposed metrics.
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## Quality Control

### Final report and other project outputs

It is the expectation of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and our client DELWP that the material delivered as part of this project will meet the highest scientific standards and will be suitable for internal and external distribution.

It is a requirement of this project that the final report (and any supporting material) is 'submitted to the States' satisfaction'. To ensure the final report meets this expectation it will be subject to up to two rounds of review (with a minimum of two weeks for each review) by DELWP. Research organisations are required to ensure an internal peer review process is undertaken prior to the draft final report being submitted for DELWP consideration.

Before the report is final report is submitted to the State's representative for approval it must also have been

- through an independent peer reviewer approved by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Project Manager
- professional proof read and copy edited

These steps must be arranged by the research organisation costed as part of project budget and completed within the project timeframe.

**Reports that have not been independently peer reviewed and professionally proof read and copy edited will not be considered final.** A copy of the independent peer review and the researcher response to any comments must be provided to the CRC.

### Communication

To further assist with the quality assurance, it is expected that:

- The project team will utilise a consultative approach when developing the overall framework and data management processes/criteria, and will demonstrate this by documenting engagement activities within the relevant reports. This will involve seeking input from DELWP subject matter experts to ensure development of a framework and processes that are fit for purpose.
- The research team leader will give periodic presentations (e.g. annually) to key stakeholder groups (Ecological Risk Assessment Working Group, Landscape Evaluators Working Group) to gain critical feedback on project milestones.

Any further quality control processes that are required for this piece of work, as well as key success measures, will be agreed with the DELWP Policy Lead as part of the planning process.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES

### Contractual Arrangements

This project is being delivered under an Agreement in place between the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre and the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning (DELWP) in the State of Victoria. Under this Agreement the CRC is responsible for the delivery of a number of bushfire related research projects. The contract put in place between the CRC and the research organisation selected to undertake this work will reflect the terms of the Agreement between DELWP and the CRC.

A copy of the draft contract the CRC will provide to the successful research organisation is provided with this document. This contract should be reviewed as part of the EOI process. This is a standard agreement, and any changes will be at the sole discretion of the CRC. If you would like to request amendments to any of the terms and conditions set out in the proposed contract, details of the proposed changes and the reason the changes are requested must be included with the submitted response. In considering this contract and proposing changes please note we have been advised by DELWP that (i) changes to provisions relating to the ownership of Intellectual Property will only be varied to take account of substantial in-kind contribution from the successful research organisation/s and (ii) no changes can be made to the publications approvals processes.

### Project Governance

Each project is carried out under the supervision of a Project Control Board (PCB) and in accordance with the governance arrangements agreed between CRC and DELWP.

While the contractual relationship for the delivery of this project will be between the research organisation and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC there will also be a strong relationship between the research team and DELWP staff. Communication is an important element of the success of this project and Researchers will be required to maintain strong links with both the DELWP Policy Lead and the CRC Project Manager throughout the project.

A governance plan has been prepared which shows the roles and responsibilities of each of the participants. The successful research team will be required to comply with the processes and expectations as set out in that document.

### Project Planning

The project overview included in this document describes the way the DELWP subject matter experts believe the project can most successfully be undertaken. Alternative approaches can be considered. Any alternative approaches must ensure the delivery of the required outputs including any intermediate outputs identified in this document.

Following acceptance of a project proposal the successful research organisation must prepare a detailed project plan and risk treatment plan **using the DELWP template**. This plan must be approved by the DELWP Policy Lead and will become an attachment to the contract. The project plan must be approved within 3 months of the notification of the acceptance of the project proposal.

### Reporting

The successful research organisation will be required to make at least one presentation (and possibly two) annually to the Project Control Board or other nominated DELWP group during the life of the project.

Research organisations will also be required

- to provide a poster for the annual AFAC/BNHCRC conferences;
- detailed progress reports on a quarterly basis; and
- contribute to the Project Evaluation Report.

Dates for submitting Quarterly Progress Reports

Period covered	Report required
1 July to 30 September	24 October
1 October to 31 December	24 January following calendar year
1 January to 31 March	24 April
1 April to 30 June	24 July

## SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### Submission Requirements

Research teams responding to this Call for Expression of Interest are required to submit their response, including:

- A draft project proposal (4-6 pages) clearly addressing the requirements of the specifications set out in this document. Proposals must include achievable timelines, which will be used to monitor progress. A statement of capability demonstrating the ability of the proposed project team to undertake the work. This statement of capability

should include the names and experience of key team members and their proposed contribution to the project. (The capability statement should not exceed 4 pages).

- Project budget including details of any in kind contribution from the research organisation. A statement of acceptance of the terms and conditions of the proposed contractual arrangements. If such arrangements are not acceptable details of any changes must be included with the submitted response.

#### **Additional information**

- Research bids from a consortium of research organisations with expertise in the relevant fields are specifically encouraged.
- Attached is a draft contract which we ask your organisation to review. In your response to the EOI you should identify any items in this contract that will require attention /amendment should your organisation be selected to undertake this piece of work. This contract is based on the Head Agreement between DELWP and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and as such there is very limited scope to make changes to the draft contract.

**The total maximum budget for this project is \$163,000 (excl GST) and all work must be completed by 30 September 2019.**

Any research proposal once submitted will be treated as commercial in confidence.

Applications, must be submitted to: [office@bnhrc.com.au](mailto:office@bnhrc.com.au) by 10 August 2018.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

After the closing date the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC along with the DELWP policy lead will review proposals against the evaluation criteria below and make a recommendation to the State's representative on the most appropriate organisation to undertake this work. The evaluation criteria provide an indication of those matters that should be included in the project proposal and associated documentation. Details are provided below.

Successful applicants will be advised by 3 September 2018 and it is expected work on the project will commence no later than 24 September 2018.

The decision of the BNHCRC and our client DELWP will be final. The BNHCRC reserves the right not to offer the work, or only allocate a proportion of the available funding, if a proposal does not meet the client's needs. The Project Control Board reserves the right to invite any other specific researchers as it sees fit to submit proposals before or after the closing date.

Evaluation Criterion	% weighting
<b>Research Capability</b> The capacity and capability to deliver an excellent applied research project in a Victorian environment.	15
<b>Project Proposal</b> A clear demonstration that the research team has an understanding of the project scope through the proposed research approach  The proposal must also include an indicative timetable of work and interim milestones/project outputs as described in this document  <b>Quality Control</b> Clear documentation of quality control processes including proposed internal and external reviewers. Identification of copy editors and proof readers.	50
<b>Industry Engagement</b> Strong Track record of industry engagement with the ability to support and influence bushfire management in Victoria through interaction with land and fire agency personnel  <b>Victorian Focus</b> Ability to undertake research in Victorian environments individually and/or in cooperation with land and fire managers	15
<b>Value for Money</b> Delivery of required outcome within available budget along with the ability to leverage the funds provided with in-kind contributions or supplementary opportunities.  The evaluation team will consider the membership of the project team and the proposed roles and time commitment.	20

#### Attachments

1. Call for expression of interest in this project
2. Copy of the Governance Arrangement
3. BNHCRC subcontract including project plan template and evaluation report template
4. Quarterly report template
5. DELWP report template