



Department of the Chief Minister
Jobs and Economy
GPO Box 4396
Darwin NT 0801

Ref No: D20-7776

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By email: DCM.Environment@nt.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

CLC comment on Draft NT Offsets Policy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NT Government's Draft Offsets Policy.

The Central Land Council (CLC) supports the intent of the offsets policy in that it strives to provide adequate protection of the NT's environmental values as a result of development and creates potential opportunities for Aboriginal rangers in the provision of environmental services.

CLC Background

The CLC aims to improve the lives and futures of its Aboriginal constituents through sustainable development and change. Consistent with its statutory functions the CLC undertakes significant initiatives relating to natural and cultural resource management, the development of remote enterprise and employment pathways, innovative community development work, ensuring land owners use income generated from land use agreements for broad community benefit, and land administration and land use agreements for third parties and traditional owners.

Offsets Policy Comments

- CLC supports a strategic and target-based approach to offsets.
- CLC supports a regional/landscape scale approach to management activities as this aligns with approaches to land management by Aboriginal people.
- The majority of offset projects will be on Aboriginal land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* meaning that Aboriginal rangers are potentially the main suppliers of offsets. It would be beneficial if the NT developed and made available to Aboriginal ranger groups a suite of acceptable offset projects. This would enable groups to align themselves to be able to take up these opportunities or target their development to do so.
- It is critical that Aboriginal organisations are involved in the process of defining the environmental targets. This could be done through existing planning processes at both the regional (e.g. IPA Management Plans) and NT wide level. The NT NRM plan is also a good reference point and an example where stakeholders across the NT engaged in a process to develop targets for the NT. As per principle 7 it is important that NT continues to engage the CLC in processes associated with the development of offset targets.
- CLC acknowledges that a monitoring scheme for offsets will be challenging but encourages the NT Government to consider a regime that is not too onerous and is developed in collaboration with Aboriginal land managers and their representative organisations.

- The principle of additionally needs to be more nuanced. The policy should allow for some discretion where the offset can add value to existing projects that are producing environmental outcomes especially as it relates to Aboriginal rangers.

Please contact Peter Donohoe on 89516304 or peter.donohoe@clc.org.au if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Martin-Jard
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER