DRAFT MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS IN LAND USE PLANNING AND IEM

BIODIVERSITY PLANNING FORUM
15 MAY 2014

Biodiversity and Conservation
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

• This guideline recommends minimum requirements for the consideration of biodiversity in the course of IEM, which includes spatial and development planning, environmental assessment and decision making.

• Motivates how best available information on biodiversity priorities be used when undertaking Strategic Spatial Planning, Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA), designing EMFs, pre-application screening; and Basic Assessment, Scoping and EIA.
CONTENT OF DOCUMENT PART A

• General introduction and background

• Concepts such as biodiversity pattern and process; ecological infrastructure and ecosystem goods and services
CONTENT – PART B

• Overview of the legal landscape
• Discussion of law and biodiversity assessment in practice-how values about biodiversity are reflected in different laws
• Also distinction between laws that control and laws that guide development planning

A table presents a number of activities and all applicable laws and the authorities that are responsible for their administration
## ACTIVITIES AND APPLICABLE LAWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>NEMA</th>
<th>NEMBA/NEMPAA</th>
<th>CARA</th>
<th>NWA</th>
<th>MPRDA</th>
<th>NHRA</th>
<th>NVFA</th>
<th>SALA</th>
<th>SPLUMA &amp; planning laws</th>
<th>NFA</th>
<th>Provincial conservation ordinances (various)</th>
<th>MLRA</th>
<th>NEMICMA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of ‘virgin land’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Clearing of natural/indigenous vegetation or natural forest</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Alteration of drainage, extraction or inter-basin transfer of surface water</td>
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<td>Abstraction of groundwater</td>
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<td>Construction and expansion of dams, reservoirs, impoundments</td>
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<td>Construction of bridges, slipways, jetties</td>
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<td>Anti-erosion measures</td>
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</table>
CONTENT-PART C

- Policy framework (NDP, NSSDAP, NBSAP, NBF, etc)
- Methods of identifying priorities for biodiversity conservation (systematic biodiversity planning, hierarchy of biodiversity importance, etc)
- Useful information (NFEPA, Red List of SA Plants, IBAs)
CONTENT-PART C

Tables included provide information on the following:

• Statutory gazetted notices and guidelines related to biodiversity mainstreaming (Table 7)
• International 'best practice' guidelines on biodiversity mainstreaming (Table 8)
• South African 'best practice' guidelines on biodiversity mainstreaming (Table 9)
• Ecosystem guidelines for land use planning, environmental assessment and biodiversity management (Table 10)
CONTENT – PART D

A good practice guide to assess impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services

• Flagging biodiversity in sector-specific context
  Introduces different types of impacts on biodiversity in different ecosystems, how they should be identified, assessed and, if residual negative impacts are unavoidable, mitigated

• Scope of Assessment

• Mitigation Hierarchy
  Table 11 – guidance on appropriate specialist involvement (will vary, depending on ecosystems, habitats and species at risk)
Offsets a useful mechanism but as a last resort

- Avoid
- Minimize
- Mitigate

Ongoing and iterative consideration of alternatives to project location, siting, scale, layout, technology and design

Impacts after avoiding, minimizing, repairing/restoring (‘residual’ impacts)

Brownlie et al (2007)
This section deals with biodiversity impacts associated with different types of development, flagging biodiversity in sector specific contexts such as:

- Bounded or place-restricted infrastructure development (mining)
- Linear development (power lines, roads pipelines),
- Coastal impacts (ports, harbours, marinas),
- Forestry and agricultural impacts (irrigation, dry land cultivation, vineyards),
- Water resources development (dams, reservoirs, pipelines),
- Marine and offshore development (oil and gas), and
- Ecotourism (lodges, trails)

Includes different sector guidelines.
Minimum Requirements for Biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment. It looks at the following stages:

- pre-application screening,
- scoping, and
- environmental impact assessment
DECISION SUPPORT TOOL

• Is the information on biodiversity sufficient and relevant as the basis for impact assessment?
• Are there ecosystems and/or areas in the proposed development area of high and/or moderate importance?
• Are there species of conservation concern in the proposed development area?
• Are there important ‘ecological drivers' of ecosystem function that must be maintained?
• Are there any clear trends in land use or resource availability in the area that could affect the proposed development and its impacts?
CONCLUSION

This guideline is now available for public comment.

It has been submitted to WG 1 to comment on.

It will be submitted to WG4 and we are planning to submit to DAFF, DRDLR and DMR as well.

To get the draft, send an email to: wolivier@environment.gov.za