

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001

**Assessment of the values of Immediate Protection Areas
in the Strathbogrie Ranges and Mirboo North**

Terms of Reference

Pursuant to section 26B of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change hereby requests the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (the Council) to carry out an assessment of the values of state forests¹ in the Immediate Protection Areas (IPAs) in the Strathbogrie Ranges and Mirboo North² as shown on the accompanying map.

The assessment will inform the work of an Eminent Panel for Community Engagement (EPCE) in its provision of advice and recommendations to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change on the future uses of the Immediate Protection Areas and state forest in eastern Victoria.

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- (a) identify the biodiversity, ecological and geological and geomorphological values of the specified area
- (b) identify the cultural heritage, social and economic values of the specified area
- (c) identify the current and likely future threats to those values, including climate change
- (d) identify the typical land use categories commensurate with the identified values
- (e) assess the potential economic implications of proposed land use changes recommended by the EPCE and provided to the Council

This assessment will build upon the Council's *Conservation values of state forests - Assessment report* (2017) by providing a more localised assessment of these areas.

The Council is required to consider the values referred to above at the relevant state, regional and local levels, including their occurrence in existing protected areas and on other public land.

This request is for an assessment and report on the above values and the economic implications of the proposed recommendations of the EPCE. Public consultation and recommendations are not required.

The Council will engage with the EPCE regarding the content of the Council's assessment.

The Council must publish its assessment of the matters specified in paragraphs (a) to (d) above by 31 March 2022 and submit a report on the completed assessment by 31 May 2022. *

*The date for completion of the assessment was extended from 31 May 2022 to 31 July 2022.

¹ For the purposes of this assessment, State forest is defined as the areas of public land depicted as General Management Zone, Special Management Zone and Special Protection Zone in the maps accompanying the Regional Forest Agreements as updated from time to time and expressed in the DELWP forest zoning data set (FMZ 100) as at the time of commencement of the assessment.

² For the purposes of this assessment, IPAs are defined as the areas announced as part of the Victorian Forestry Plan in November 2019 and update on 21 November 2019.