

Terms of Reference for VEAC Riverine Red Gum Forests Investigation

Pursuant to Section 15 of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001* the Minister for Environment hereby requests the Council to carry out an investigation of public land within the area shown on the accompanying plan.

The purposes of the investigation are to:

- (a) Identify and evaluate the extent, condition, values, management, resources and uses of riverine red gum forests and associated fauna, wetlands, floodplain ecosystems and vegetation communities¹; and
- (b) Make recommendations relating to the conservation, protection and ecological sustainable use of public land as specified in Section 18 of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*.

In addition to the considerations specified in Section 18 of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Council must also take into consideration the following matters:

- Policies, programs and reports, as well as obligations, resulting from International, Commonwealth-State and Interstate agreements or arrangements, as they relate to the investigation;
- Existing State Government policies, programs, strategies and Ministerial Statements, as they relate to the investigation;
- Regional programs, strategies and plans, as they relate to the investigation;
- Possible opportunities for indigenous management involvement;
- The Yorta Yorta Co-operative Management Agreement;
- Appropriate access for commercial opportunities (eg timber, grazing, apiaries, and other resource industries), for appropriate recreation activities, and for community values and uses;
- Nationally agreed criteria for a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system, and;
- Opportunities for a joint management regime with the New South Wales Government for the Murray River and public land on its floodplains.

The Council is required to release a Discussion Paper, a Draft Proposals Paper, and submit a Final Report on the results of its investigation. The Final Report must be submitted by 1 February 2008.

¹ This includes all Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) occurring within the study area boundary.