

Southdown Magnetite Project

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999 APPROVAL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)?

A: It is the federal legislation for protecting the environment and is managed by the federal Department of the Environment and Energy (DotEE). It is different from the Western Australian legislation for protecting the environment which is managed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). The Southdown Magnetite Project needs to get an EPBC Act approval from the federal government before the Project can be built.

Q: What will the EPBC Approval cover for the Southdown Magnetite Project?

A: The approval would cover the following:

- Mine site.
- Slurry and return water pipelines between the mine and the Port of Albany.
- Desalination plant and infrastructure corridor near Cape Riche.
- Storage and ship loading facilities at the Port of Albany.
- A potential borefield near Wellstead. This is currently under investigation only at this stage and separate approvals would be required to allow for water use.

The approval does not cover:

- The powerline required for the project. Western Power has already gained EPBC Act and state environmental approvals for this.
- Albany Port dredging, land reclamation and ship berth construction. The Southern Ports Authority has already gained EPBC Act and state environmental approvals for this.

Q: What is an EPBC Act Approval?

A: The EPBC Act focuses on federal government environmental interests called matters of national environmental significance (MNES). The states and territories have responsibility for environmental matters of state and local significance. There are nine MNES protected by the EPBC Act. The DotEE has decided the only one relevant to this project is 'listed threatened species and ecological

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communities'; that is, specific animals and plants (or plant communities) that are listed by name under the EPBC Act that could be affected by the project, and therefore need to be investigated.

State approvals have already been granted for the project that address state and local environmental factors. These approvals are Environment Protection Act 1986 Ministerial Statement Numbers 816, 904, 987 and 1061.

Q: What MNES are relevant to this project?

A: Detailed environmental impact assessments were carried out for the project to see if plants and animals protected by the EPBC Act would be significantly affected by the project. These concluded:

- **Plants:** There are no plants or plant communities listed under the EPBC Act at the time of referral that will be impacted.
- **Marine animals:** A number of marine species listed under the EPBC Act were identified through desktop assessment as potentially occurring in the vicinity of the Port of Albany and Cape Riche. These species were then reviewed in detail to determine the risk of impact from the proposal. With the design and management measures proposed, including management endorsed under the State approval, the risk of significant impacts to the identified marine MNES was determined to be negligible.
- **Terrestrial (land based) animals:** Three EPBC Act listed species were identified as potentially relevant for the project; Chuditch, Western Ringtail Possum, and Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo. Further studies were carried out for these which found that:
 - Potential impact to Chuditch and Western Ring Tail Possum is negligible.
 - There will be no impact to Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo breeding areas, and impact to plants that they feed on will amount to less than 2% of these types of plants within a 15 km radius of the mine area and less than 1% of plants within 1 km of the slurry and desalination plant pipelines.

Q: What will be done to manage and counterbalance (offset) impact to Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo feeding habitat?

A: Three key actions are proposed to manage and offset impacts to Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo feeding habitat. These are:

1. Minimise clearing for the project as far as practicable.
2. Re-plant up to 273 ha within the mine area including plants that provide food for Black-Cockatoos.
3. Purchase of existing bush with quality food for Black-Cockatoos to be protected under conservation estate. Specific properties have not yet been selected for this.