



# Wildlife Monitoring Strategy

## 5.0 Welfare, Safety and Other Statutory Obligations

Monitoring of wildlife must take into account animal welfare and the health and safety of staff and volunteers.

- 5.1 All monitoring programs must comply with the requirements of the *Animal Welfare Act 1993* and the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*.
- 5.2 All monitoring programs must comply with any relevant requirements of the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*, *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and any other relevant legislation.
- 5.3 Establishment reports for wildlife monitoring programs must contain an explicit statement about whether the monitoring program meets the legislative requirements in 5.1 and 5.2.

## 6.0 Public Communication

As the primary stakeholder the public should have an awareness of, and should be able to access information on, wildlife monitoring in Tasmania.

- 6.1 Establish web pages to make available to the public what wildlife is being monitored and results of the monitoring with regular updates.
- 6.2 Encourage staff to publish results of monitoring programs in agency publications, popular articles and in peer reviewed journals.
- 6.3 Undertake pro-active and positive engagement with the media to promote monitoring programs.

## 7.0 Capacity

There will always be more species of wildlife to monitor than there are resources available to adequately monitor them. Tasmania's capacity to monitor wildlife would be improved through strategic partnerships with the community and relevant institutions.

- 7.1 Encourage further collaboration with other organisations to participate in monitoring and analysis.
- 7.2 Encourage and, where appropriate, co-supervise post-graduate students in the review of survey designs.
- 7.3 Encourage non-departmental people to assist with monitoring programs where appropriate.
- 7.4 Investigate other methods of remote monitoring of species and their habitat.
- 7.5 Ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of monitoring efforts.

## REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This strategy will be reviewed three years after it's implementation and progress considered annually through Branch Business plans.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Driessen, M.M. and Hocking G.J. (2008) *Review of Wildlife Monitoring Priorities* Nature Conservation Report 08/02. Department of Primary Industries and Water, Tasmania.

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## INTRODUCTION

Wildlife monitoring is an integral part of wildlife management and conservation that informs managers of the success or otherwise of their programs. For a wildlife monitoring program to be successful, it must be capable of detecting significant changes in what is being managed and there needs to be rigour in analysing, reporting and responding to the results of data collected. There are far more species of wildlife that could be monitored than there are resources available and therefore priorities need to be determined to effectively manage Tasmania's wildlife.

In Tasmania, the Department of Primary Industries and Water is responsible for the conservation, management and protection of Tasmania's wildlife under the provisions of the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*, the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* and the *Whales Protection Act 1988*. Currently, over forty species of wildlife are monitored, mostly rare and threatened species and harvested species, by staff in the Resource Management and Conservation Division.

This strategy is the outcome of a four-step process:

1. A review of existing wildlife monitoring programs undertaken by the Resource Management and Conservation Division.
2. The development and application of a decision key to determine priorities for wildlife monitoring in Tasmania.
3. A comparison of wildlife monitoring priorities, determined using the decision key, with wildlife monitoring currently being undertaken.
4. Development of strategies to improve wildlife monitoring and to achieve the strategic goal.

This process is reported in a *Review of Wildlife Monitoring Priorities* (Driessen and Hocking 2008).

A number of other organisations undertake wildlife monitoring in Tasmania, including the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Tasmania, Forest Practices Authority, the Australian Antarctic Division and Birds Tasmania. This strategy establishes a model for setting priorities for wildlife monitoring in Tasmania and may be useful to other organisations.

## STRATEGY CONTEXT

This strategy applies to wildlife<sup>1</sup>, with the exception of plants, as defined under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* and does not apply to fish as defined under the *Living Marine Resources Act 1995* or the *Inland Fisheries Act 1995*. It also applies to fauna listed under the schedules of the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*.

This strategy also applies to introduced animals (either intentionally or accidentally introduced) that have an impact, or have potential to impact, on environmental values. An introduced animal is defined as any species of animal that is not native to an area.

This strategy covers the State of Tasmania including off-shore islands and subantarctic Macquarie Island.

This strategy supports both state and national legislative obligations and agreements.

## STRATEGY GOAL

The overall goal of this strategy is to ensure that priority species of wildlife are being monitored using appropriate scientific methods and that the information gathered is appropriately stored, managed and disseminated.

## STRATEGIC OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategy proposes seven outcomes and 28 recommendations aimed at achieving the strategy goal.

### 1. Monitoring Priority Wildlife

Tasmania has a rich and diverse wildlife assemblage, including endemic and threatened species. Priorities for monitoring will be determined using a clear and transparent process.

- 1.1 Priorities for monitoring will be determined using the Decision Key for Determining Priorities for Wildlife Monitoring (contained in the report titled "Review of Wildlife Monitoring Priorities").
- 1.2 Monitoring priorities and the decision key will be reviewed in light of new information to ensure that monitoring continues to meet the needs of conservation and management.
- 1.3 Facilitate research to determine which species of wildlife are most at risk from climate change and require monitoring.

### 2. Quality Assurance

Wildlife monitoring programs must be capable of detecting significant changes in what is being managed and there needs to be rigour in analysing, reporting and responding to the results of data collected.

- 2.1 Establish an advisory group to assess adequacy and efficiency of current monitoring programs, review monitoring priorities and, where necessary, recommend new monitoring programs.
- 2.2 The proponent of a new wildlife monitoring program must prepare a written proposal that is approved by the relevant Branch Manager and incorporated into the Branch Business Plan.
- 2.3 New monitoring programs must be consistent with the monitoring strategy.
- 2.4 New monitoring programs that involve significant time and resources need to include sufficient resources for appropriate statistical advice in its funding arrangements.
- 2.5 Where appropriate, monitoring programs should specify triggers for management response and the type of response.
- 2.6 All existing monitoring programs that involve significant time and resources should be subject to independent peer review such as publication in peer-reviewed journals or independent scrutiny.

### 3.0 Knowledge Management

Large amounts of information are associated with monitoring programs, particularly in relation to how they are undertaken, the data collected, the analysis and reporting. This corporate information must be adequately documented, stored and made available within the agency as well as for public use.

- 3.1 The monitoring methods for new programs as well as all existing programs must be written up as establishment reports detailing everything necessary to undertake the monitoring program.
- 3.2 All existing reports on methods and future establishment reports must be stored electronically, backed-up at a central location available to all divisional staff, and maintained by relevant sections within each branch of the division with proper support from the agency.
- 3.3 Copies of all monitoring data should be stored and backed-up at a central location available to all divisional staff, and maintained by relevant sections within each branch of the division with proper support from the agency.
- 3.4 An appropriate system needs to be established with on-going support by the Resource Management and Conservation Division and by Corporate Information Technology Branch, to enable efficient centralised storage of monitoring information.
- 3.5 The Natural Values Atlas will be the central repository for information on wildlife monitoring undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries and Water.

### 4.0 Staff Training and Development

Staff should be provided with opportunities to improve their skills by attending training courses on monitoring, data storage, data analysis and preparation of scientific manuscripts.

- 4.1 Provide information to staff about their role in implementing the strategy.
- 4.2 Encourage staff participation in relevant training programs.
- 4.3 Staff should be encouraged and given time to publish results of monitoring programs in peer reviewed journals.

<sup>1</sup>wildlife' means any living creature other than (a) a dog or cat; (b) domestic stock; (c) fish, within the meaning of the *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995*; (d) an animal that (i) is being farmed under and accordance with the *Animal Farming (Registration) Act 1994*, or (ii) has been so farmed and is legally in the possession of any person.