



Our ref: DOC22/911627  
Your ref: MAAG0014844

Matthew Newton  
Principal Inspector Environment  
matthew.newton@regional.nsw.gov.au

Dear Matthew

**Seismic Surveys - Petroleum Exploration Licence 1 – Review of Environmental Factors**

Thank you for your e-mail dated 4 October 2022 to the Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Directorate (BCS) of the Department of Planning and Environment inviting comments on the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the Seismic Surveys for the Santos Petroleum Exploration Licence 1.

BCS has reviewed the REF, as we understand the proposed activity will include:

- Seismic surveying along several roads (totalling approximately 63km) within Petroleum Exploration Lease (PEL) 1
- Vegetation slashing up to three metres from the roadside.

Impacts to biodiversity values resulting from the activity are expected to be limited to the slashing of groundcover vegetation and/or pruning of branches. Slashing of vegetation would be predominately restricted to within the road corridor and immediately adjacent vegetation. It is expected that an upper maximum limit of 9ha of native vegetation may be impacted by the activity.

BCS is satisfied the project had adequately assessed the impacts of the activity on biodiversity and considers that the proposal is not likely to significantly affect threatened species, threatened ecological communities or their habitats.

BCS suggests that the REF could be improved by detailing a protocol which could be implemented by seismic-survey contractors in the field to allow for prioritised avoidance of higher biodiversity areas, where possible. For example, this protocol could include a map of ecological constrained areas and a rating system for avoidance. This may assist seismic-survey contractors to minimise the impact to higher biodiversity values when micro-sighting seismic survey lines and associated slashing works.

If you have any questions about this advice, please do not hesitate to contact Ben Ellis, Principal Project Officer, via [ben.ellis@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ben.ellis@environment.nsw.gov.au) [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Howarth'.

**Michelle Howarth**  
**A/Senior Team Leader Planning North West**  
**Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Directorate**

17 October 2022