


NOTICE OF DECISION

Regulation 104(1) - Environment Protection Regulations 2020 (EP Regulations) for a decision on draft Terms of Reference for a proposed action

Name of proposed action	Singleton Horticulture Project
Proponent	Fortune Agribusiness Funds Management Pty Ltd
NT EPA reference	EP2022/019
Description of proposed action	<p>Development of a large irrigated fruit and vegetable farm on Singleton Station, approximately 130 km south of Tennant Creek and about 35 km northeast of Ali Curung in the Barkly region. The proposed activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearing of 4,037 hectares of native vegetation on pastoral land • development of 3,300 ha of irrigated crops • groundwater extraction of up to 40,000 megalitres per year, from 144 bores, subject to development over four stages including gradual increase in extraction rates¹ • a services hub including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ accommodation for approximately 150 permanent staff and up to 1,350 seasonal staff ○ packing facilities, cold storage and machinery workshops ○ telecommunications infrastructure ○ potential future power station ○ waste and water services • access tracks, fences and fire breaks • upgrade of the power supply from Tennant Creek. <p>The operational life of the farm is planned for 30 years¹.</p>
Nature of proposed action	Horticulture (irrigated)
Decision	In accordance with EP regulation 104(1)(b), the draft terms of reference (TOR) are approved with changes the NT EPA considers appropriate.
Person authorised to make decision	Chairperson of the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority
Signature	 DR PAUL VOGEL AM
Date of decision	29 September 2023

¹ In accordance with groundwater extraction licence WDCP10358

Matters considered

EP Regulations 100, 102 and 103:

- Submissions received in relation to the draft TOR from NT Government authorities and the public during the period for submissions that concluded 13 September 2023:
 - Government authority submissions received: 5
 - Public submissions: 37.
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Consultation

The submissions received in relation to the draft TOR identified a broad range of issues. Accordingly, changes have been made to the TOR. Key changes include increasing the assessment period from two to three years, and adding the following requirements:

- a combined social and cultural impact assessment (rather than just cultural), due to the connectedness of social and cultural values
 - a socio-economic cost-benefit analysis, to give greater certainty on the predicted socio-economic outcomes
 - additional details on predicted groundwater drawdown results, and a sensitivity and predictive uncertainty analysis, to give greater certainty about predictions
 - an Authority Certificate for the entire proposal and over the whole potentially affected area, issued in accordance with *the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*, to give greater certainty about the protection of sacred sites
 - a bushfire management plan to give greater certainty on how the risk of fire to terrestrial ecosystems will be mitigated
 - peer-review of the salinity study to give greater certainty
 - to demonstrate how the view of stakeholders, including Aboriginal stakeholders, have been considered in proposed mitigation measures, monitoring and reporting.
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