

A wide-angle photograph of a Western Australian landscape. The foreground is a reddish-brown dirt path. In the middle ground, two kangaroos are running across the path. The background features a line of trees, including a prominent dead tree trunk, under a cloudy sky. The overall scene is a natural, open landscape.

# Promoting Biodiversity Net Gain in Western Australia

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**Findings from an IUCN independent review with Newmont**

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There is a growing awareness among governments and the private sector that conservation and development need to go hand in hand. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) promotes the mitigation hierarchy approach with a net gain target for biodiversity in all landscape planning. By applying IUCN's Review Protocol on biodiversity net gain at different sites, both Newmont and IUCN are on a journey to explore the challenges and opportunities of scaling up such approaches across the private sector.

## IUCN – Newmont collaboration

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IUCN, a recognised global authority on biodiversity, and Newmont, a global mining company, have established a three-year collaborative agreement to help the company meet its global targets to achieve no net loss in key biodiversity values, and net gains where possible. As part of the agreement, Newmont asked IUCN – including representatives of IUCN Member organisations and its expert commissions – to conduct independent reviews at select Newmont mine sites using the IUCN Biodiversity Net Gain Review Protocol. This protocol aims to help transform their operations to meet today's widely accepted global goals for biodiversity and sustainable development.



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**Newmont integrates biodiversity considerations into its operations.**

The overall objective of the collaborative agreement is to review biodiversity management approaches, projects and lessons learned from Newmont's experience in integrating biodiversity into its operations. This includes applying the mitigation hierarchy to meet commitments as well as provide recommendations for improving and highlighting experience to support the global conservation community.

## Newmont's biodiversity approach and commitments

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Since 2014, Newmont has committed to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem considerations into its business. Newmont's Biodiversity Management Standard outlines the company's approach to managing and mitigating biodiversity risks, achieving no net loss and providing net gain, when possible, of key biodiversity values. The Standard is being applied to all of its new projects and expansions.

Newmont requires that all of its operating sites conduct biodiversity risk assessments. The assessments are used to develop biodiversity action plans, which provide strategic direction for conserving species of concern, minimising disturbances and restoring disturbed habitat.



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**Achieving a no net loss of key biodiversity values is part of company's approach.**

Newmont's aim in the partnership with IUCN is to provide further insight into how the company can improve implementation of its biodiversity management standard and meet or exceed its commitments. Newmont understands that managing the impacts of its activities on biodiversity, critical habitats and ecosystems – at every stage of the mine lifecycle – is essential for ensuring its operations remain safe, responsible and profitable well into the future. The collaborative agreement and independent reviews led by IUCN support Newmont achieving this goal.



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**Covering more than 1.1 million hectares, the Peel-Harvey Catchment hosts an array of ecosystems and economic activities, including mining.**

## Independent review – 2019 Newmont Boddington site visit

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Review Team visited the Boddington Mine (Boddington) in Western Australia in May 2019. Boddington is a gold and copper mine located 13 km northwest of the Boddington town and approximately 140 km southeast of Perth.

The key objectives of the IUCN review were to:

- Review Newmont Boddington's biodiversity programmes and provide recommendations for improvement and future direction;
- Consider undertaking a no net loss forecasting exercise at the operational level;
- Identify risks and opportunities associated with the existing biodiversity management plan;
- Provide a learning platform for the ongoing IUCN-Newmont relationship.

Boddington is located within the Northern Jarrah Forest biogeographic subregion, which is a centre for plant endemism and a refuge for a number of threatened small mammal species.

Biodiversity here is under pressure from multiple threats including climate change (dry climate), habitat clearance and degradation linked to agriculture, gold and bauxite mining, urban expansion, invasive weeds and diseases, animals killed by poisoning, shooting or vehicle strikes, changing fire regimes and feral species.

Newmont Boddington is implementing an extensive set of environmental management plans aimed at managing the operation's impact on the complex environment in which it operates. Particularly notable is the comprehensive work on dieback control and management. It is also undertaking an ambitious forest restoration programme on Hotham Farm.

Newmont Boddington has established a restoration offset programme that is likely to deliver considerable value to biodiversity in the region. Implementation of the long-term monitoring programme for Hotham Farm will help track restoration progress and guide early adaptive management responses. A number of valuable collaborations with external organisations have been established, which will help drive positive conservation outcomes.



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Forest restoration on Hotham Farm is a key component of the company's environmental management plan.

## Priority recommendations

During the IUCN-led review in 2019, experts proposed several recommendations, including:

### Biodiversity management strategy and communication

- Develop an integrated biodiversity management strategy to consolidate and coordinate current and future biodiversity management requirements, both internal and external.
- Consider undertaking a no net loss forecasting exercise to support the development of the strategy.
- Develop a communication strategy to disseminate conservation management outcomes, build awareness and help identify synergies with potential partners.

### Adaptive management framework

- Establish an adaptive management framework to guide implementation, monitor, manage and respond to risks, and conduct adaptive management around both the Hotham Farm restoration and mine rehabilitation. This could be used to measure progress and support continuous improvement.

The review looked at other areas including options for feral animal monitoring and management, and threatened species management. The review also suggested considering the establishment of a predator-proof wildlife sanctuary. Newmont Boddington is further evaluating partnerships and collaborations to support improvement of regional biodiversity conservation recommendations.

## Summary and path forward

In addition to contributing to improved land management and conservation approaches, IUCN anticipates that its Members, regulatory agencies, non-governmental organisations and technical specialists will be able to use the review's findings in other biodiversity contexts of conservation knowledge and management systems.

Independent reviews such as these help document lessons learned in the practical application of the

mitigation hierarchy, often in varied and perhaps challenging situations. These lessons become invaluable markers for conservation leaders and mining company biodiversity specialists to improve conservation outcomes as more and more private sector companies develop and implement similar biodiversity programmes.

An IUCN-led review team plans to visit another Newmont site in 2021, as part of the three-year agreement.



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