

## Response to supplementary letter from the Select Committee on the Proposal to Raise the Warragamba Dam Wall

**27 November 2019**

### Questions on Notice

#### Question

The Committee requests information about how the Framework for Biodiversity Assessment will be used in both the assessment of impacts and in determining offset requirements for the project.

#### Answer

The Environmental Impact Statement is to be undertaken in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEAR's) issued on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018. The assessment of impacts to biodiversity are being assessed using the Framework for Biodiversity Assessment (OEH 2014). The Framework requires preparation of a Biodiversity Assessment Report and a Biodiversity Offset Strategy.

In accordance with the SEARs, the EIS will need to include three distinct Biodiversity Assessment Reports:

- Upstream Biodiversity Assessment Report to assess impacts of the proposal on biodiversity upstream of the dam wall
- At dam construction Biodiversity Assessment Report to assess impacts at the construction site resulting from construction of the raised dam
- Downstream Biodiversity Assessment Report to assess impacts of the proposal on biodiversity downstream of the dam wall

The EIS will also need to include a Biodiversity Offset Strategy that outlines how offsets have been considered and proposals on how they will be implemented.

The biodiversity assessment is still in progress. However, the assessment of threatened species and their habitat, ecological communities and prediction of the nature, extent, duration and consequences of the impacts will vary within each Biodiversity Assessment Report area.

The Framework for Biodiversity Assessment and guidelines includes the use of a credit calculator for determining offsets for direct impacts, and provisions for assessing impacts that are infrequent, cumulative, or difficult to measure. The Framework for Biodiversity Assessment and guidelines will be applied to each Biodiversity Assessment Report according to the assessed impact.