

Media Statement

24 June 2019

Eliwana Iron Ore mining project recommended for environmental approval

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has recommended environmental approval for the Eliwana Iron Ore Mine Project, subject to conditions including minimising impacts on surface and groundwater, flora and vegetation, subterranean fauna and places of Aboriginal cultural significance.

Fortescue Metals Group (FMG) propose to develop and operate the Eliwana Iron Ore Mine Project, located 90km north-west of Tom Price in the Pilbara.

EPA Chair Dr Tom Hatton said if all the recommended conditions were implemented, the proposal would be environmentally acceptable.

“The EPA has recommended a range of conditions on the Eliwana Iron Ore Mine Project to manage impacts to local flora, fauna, surface water, groundwater and Aboriginal heritage,” Dr Hatton said.

“Our environmental impact assessment found there would be a significant impact from the clearing of 7,900 hectare of vegetation as part of the proposal, which is habitat for the northern quoll, ghost bat and Pilbara olive python,” Dr Hatton said.

“The EPA has recommended the proponent offset this impact through a contribution to the Pilbara Environmental Offsets Fund and it has also recommended the creation of management plans to minimise impacts to surface water, groundwater, flora and vegetation and native animals.”

Through the assessment process the EPA extended its consultation time with Native Title Holders to ensure it understood the potential for the proposal to impact places of Aboriginal cultural significance.

“The EPA has recommended a condition requiring the proponent to manage impacts to cultural values, through ongoing consultation and co-operation with the Traditional Owners of the proposal area, the Puutu Kuntj Kurrama and Pinikura people,” Dr Hatton said.

The EPA’s report to the Minister for Environment is now open for a two-week public appeal period, closing 8 July 2019. Appeals can be made at www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au.

The Minister for Environment will make the final decision.

EPA Report 1614 is available at www.epa.wa.gov.au/epa-assessment-reports.

EPA Media Contact: Vivienne Ryan on 0400 866 450