

NS-R2: Natural Systems Protection

Intent

To protect significant and valuable natural systems assets identified in NS-R1, Natural Systems Assessment.

Credit Requirements

GENERAL

Demonstrate that significant and valuable natural systems assets, as identified in NS-R1 Natural Systems Assessment, are adequately protected, or that impacts are either mitigated or compensated following steps 1 to 3.

Step 1 - Protection*:

- Demonstrate that all significant assets, and at least 80% of all valuable assets, are retained on-site and protected from damage and destruction sufficient to maintain their structure and function.

*natural systems assets located within a protected area, proposed protected area, national park, ecological hot-spot or coastal conservation zone must be protected.

Step 2 - On-site Mitigation:

Where it can be demonstrated, and agreed with the UPC and EAD, that on-site protection cannot be achieved:

- Demonstrate that at least 70% of all significant assets and at least 50% of all valuable assets are retained on-site and protected from damage and destruction sufficient to maintain their structure and function;
- Mitigate for the loss of assets through on-site creation of habitat, at a ratio of 2:1 (created: lost habitat); and
- Provide an ecological corridor between the protected habitat areas (significant assets) and the mitigation areas.

Step 3 - Off-site Compensation:

Where it can be demonstrated, and agreed with the UPC and EAD, that on-site mitigation cannot be achieved:

- Compensate for the loss of assets through off-site creation of habitat, at a ratio of 2:1 (created: lost habitat);
- The compensation area must have a similar hydrological function and soil type as the original area;
- The compensation site must be:
 - Located within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi;
 - A degraded habitat; and
 - Located outside an area allocated for development within a 2030 plan.
- The habitat to be created must be:
 - A similar type to the habitat lost at the project site;
 - Of a type appropriate to the compensation site location; and
 - Located in an area surrounded and connected to a similar habitat.

The Natural Systems Protection, Mitigation or Compensation plan and supporting studies must be prepared by a *suitably qualified ecological professional*.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT/CLARIFICATIONS

Where any dredging, reclamation and/or shoreline modification is intended, the project must demonstrate compliance with all applicable legislation, regulations and guidelines