



## Uplands SEB (Significant Environmental Benefit) Area

### What is an SEB?

Under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* and *Regulations 2017*, land managers that clear native vegetation in South Australia are required to produce a significant environmental benefit (SEB) to 'offset' the resulting impacts on biodiversity (DEWNR 2016).

A SEB is usually achieved by protecting an area of land for conservation that provides environmental gains that exceed any damage to the native vegetation.

SIMEC Mining has offset the impact of the vegetation clearance associated with its operations in the Middleback Range Mines and over the last 15 years, this has been achieved by the establishment of the Ironstone Hill Conservation Park to the west of the Middleback Ranges. To offset future clearance, SIMEC has selected an offset area of 2,395 hectares, located approximately 50 kilometres southwest of Whyalla, South Australia, called the Uplands SEB Area Block A. Further blocks on Uplands might be added in the future.

### Why was this area was chosen?

The Uplands SEB Area was chosen because it:

- is of high biodiversity value
- is close to the clearance area and in similar vegetation types
- has the potential to improve if managed for conservation and contribute to regional biodiversity targets.

### Vegetation significance/value

The significance of this area has been identified through desktop and ecological field assessments, to measure the Uplands SEB Area's condition, biodiversity values and the potential for the vegetation to improve over time (EBS Ecology 2020).

The vegetation within the area comprises 7 broad communities (see table below), with potential habitat values for a range of important fauna and flora species such as the Slender-billed Thornbill, Malleefowl, Western Grasswren, Western Black-naped Snake and Sandalwood.

Vegetation association	Area (ha)
<i>Maireana sedifolia</i> Shrubland +/- <i>Rhagodia ulicina</i> , <i>Acacia papyrocarpa</i>	422.91
<i>Eucalyptus oleosa</i> / <i>Eucalyptus brachycalyx</i> Mallee over <i>Rhagodia candolleana</i>	681.37
<i>Rhagodia ulicina</i> / <i>Atriplex vesicaria</i> / <i>Atriplex stipitata</i> Very Low Shrubland	113.74
<i>Eucalyptus oleosa</i> / <i>Eucalyptus brachycalyx</i> Open Mallee over <i>Atriplex stipitata</i> , <i>Atriplex vesicaria</i> +/- <i>M. sedifolia</i>	1052.67
<i>Rhagodia ulicina</i> Low Open Shrubland +/- <i>Senna</i> spp, <i>Scaevola spinescens</i> , <i>Maireana sedifolia</i> , emergent <i>Myoporum</i>	107.16
<i>Casuarina pauper</i> Low Open Forest over <i>Atriplex vesicaria</i> , <i>Rhagodia ulicina</i>	4.68
<i>Acacia papyrocarpa</i> , Very Open Woodland over <i>Rhagodia ulicina</i> , <i>Maireana sedifolia</i> , <i>Atriplex stipitata</i>	12.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>2395.09</b>

## Steps involved in achieving an SEB

- Identification of an area of suitable vegetation
- Assessment of the area to determine its condition and value relative to the vegetation cleared
- Application to the Native Vegetation Council to approve the SEB and a management plan for the area
- Registration of the land for conservation on the title
- Management of the land to achieve measurable biodiversity gains over a 10-year period

## How is the SEB area calculated?

A standard metric (calculation spreadsheet) is used to determine a biodiversity score for both the impact (vegetation clearance) and SEB areas. The metric takes into account the following key factors:

- vegetation condition (diversity, structure, weeds)
- landscape context and rarity
- importance for threatened species
- patch size (ha)
- biodiversity gain from management actions.

The biodiversity score of the SEB area must exceed that of the clearance area.

## Who is responsible for the SEB area?

SIMEC is responsible for managing the Uplands SEB Area for a 10-year period under a contract (Native Vegetation Management Plan) with the South Australian Government. Thereafter, the offset area will be preserved for conservation.

## What land management issues are there and how will they be managed?

SIMEC is required to implement management actions across the Uplands SEB Area, including:

- permanent exclusion of stock from the area unless “ecologically beneficial” (e.g. grazing to control weeds)
- maintenance of fencing in a stock-proof condition
- no woodcutting or firewood collection
- control of pests (e.g. goats, rabbits, cats and foxes) and overabundant native herbivores (e.g. kangaroos) under permit
- control of noxious weeds e.g. Prickly Pear.
- fire prevention
- ecological surveys.

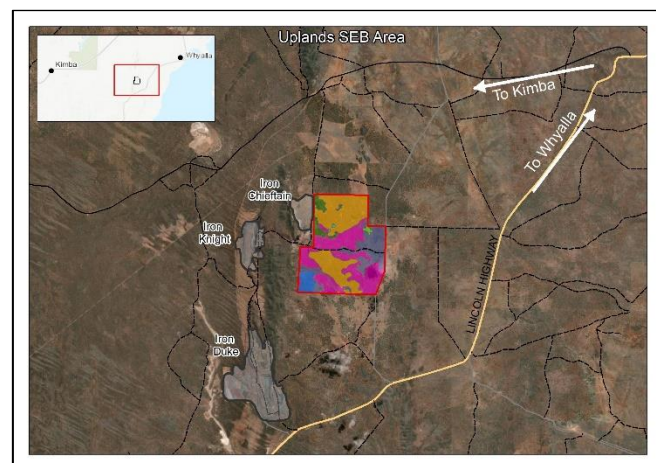
## As a local landowner, will this affect me?

The control of pests and weeds within the SEB area will be of benefit to surrounding landholders and ecosystems.

## Further information

If you would like further information on this project please contact Denise Sharp, SIMEC’s Community & Stakeholder Engagement Advisor.

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### References

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) (2016). Native Vegetation Council Policy for a Significant Environmental Benefit. Government of South Australia.

EBS Ecology (2020). Middleback Range SEB Uplands SEB Credit Assessment – Revision 3. Report to GFG Alliance. EBS Ecology, Adelaide.