

Ecosystems protection

This unit oversees ecosystems to ensure that they are healthy; all this is done to promote the Agency's mandate of enduring sustainable utilisation of the country's natural resources. The unit oversees various environmental issues which include the following:

- Veldt fires- major threat to biodiversity
- Wetlands and sensitive ecosystems protection
- Invasive alien species
- Land degradation
- Stream bank cultivation
- Sand and Clay extraction
- Sand and clay transportation
- Brick moulding
- Deforestation

How are veldt fires a threat to ecosystems?

- Veldt fires are a major threat to our ecosystems and biodiversity;
- Effects of fires are that they destroy plants, animals, property and human lives are lost;
- The Communal Land Forest Produce Act 19.04, Forest Act 19.05 and Statutory Instrument 7 of 2007 are used to regulate the prevention of fires.

Fire pre-suppression measures

- People should desist from starting/lighting fires during the fire season which they will not be able to control.
- Every responsible person should put standard fire guards around their properties which are at least 9m wide on each side of the boundary.
- Every responsible person must have fire fighting equipment and a trained fire fighting team.
- Failure to comply with these requirements can attract a fine of not more than \$500.00 The land owner, user/s, farmer, lessee or responsible authority are responsible for extinguishing all fires on their properties regardless of the origin.
- Every person within the vicinity of a fire is expected to put out all fires.
- After a fire out break an investigation and documentation on the causes, extent of damage will be conducted.
- The investigation is conducted by the land owner, user, lessee, farmer or local authority.

Wetlands Conservation

- A wetland " means any area of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, [with water that is static or flowing](#), fresh,

- brackish or salt, and includes riparian land adjacent to the wetland;
- Internationally wetlands are protected by the [Ramsar Convention of 1971](#) (world wetlands day 2 February)
 - In Zimbabwe section 113 of the EMA Act and section 20 of SI 7 of 2007 protect wetlands
 - Projects listed in the first schedule of the Act are exempted from Section 20 of SI 7 of 2007
 - Development of any type in a wetland should be done under written authorisation from the Agency
 - Draining, reclaiming, drilling, tunnelling, dig up, break up, introducing an exotic plant or animal, cultivating, altering the surface or vegetation on a wetland or land within 30m of the maximum flood level of public streams

Invasive Alien Species

- Invasive alien species means [exotic](#) plants which have become naturalised and [threaten the existence of indigenous species](#) by penetrating and replacing indigenous vegetation,
Water hyacinth, Cherry-pie Lantana camara L., Jointed cactus or jointed prickly pear, Azolla, Water lettuce, Dodder

Control of invasive alien species

- Responsible person must clear or cause to be cleared any invasive alien species growing on their land.
- Responsible person must report the existence of any invasive alien species
- It is an offence to have invasive alien species growing on land on which one is responsible.

Land Degradation

- Human activities that cause land degradation are sand and clay extraction, brick moulding and cultivating on land without mechanical conservation works.
- Sand and clay extraction requires a licence
- An Environmental Management Plan EMP is produced and submitted to the Agency for review.
- The Agency will look at the proposed rehabilitation and mitigation strategies.
- After reviewing the EMP the Agency will issue a license covering a number of points
- A point is an area of 20m x 20m Sand and Clay transportation requires a license
- To get a license for sand /clay transportation the Agency requires:
- Vehicle registration book

- Certificate of fitness/road worthiness
- Photographs-front and back
- Brick moulding for commercial purposes causes serious land degradation
- Commercial brick moulding is controlled through licensing
- An Environmental Management Plan is produced by the proponent and submitted to the Agency for review

Deforestation

- Brick moulding for commercial purposes causes serious land degradation
- Commercial brick moulding is controlled through licensing
- An Environmental Management Plan is produced by the proponent and submitted to the Agency for review