



Memorandum

To: Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project Expert Panel

From: Santana Minerals

Date: 17 August 2026

Re: Response to RFI 11 Question 9 – Ecotoxicology

Please find attached Matakanui Gold Limited's response to Request for Information (RFI 11) Question 9, which requested:

An assessment of the risk of toxic effects to wildlife and humans arising from poor water quality in any surface water expression and how this will be managed, including but not exclusive to the pit lakes and Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) wetland.

In response to Question 9, MGL attaches the memorandum *Response to RFI 11 – Item 9: Ecotoxicology*, prepared by Julie Palich, Geocontam Risk Management Limited. The memorandum assesses the potential ecotoxicological risks associated with the proposed pit lakes, TSF wetland, Lower Shepherds Wetland and Rise and Shine Creek wetland, and considers risks to aquatic ecosystems, terrestrial fauna, avifauna, livestock and humans arising from predicted future water quality.

The assessment concludes that the pit lakes are expected to present a low ecological risk due to their limited habitat value, restricted ecological function, and the low likelihood of supporting diverse aquatic communities or significant avifauna populations. While some water quality parameters are predicted to exceed screening-level guideline values, these exceedances are generally associated with the naturally mineralised geological setting and do not necessarily indicate adverse ecological effects.

The existing and proposed wetlands are expected to present low to moderate ecological risk. However, the report concludes that the intended wetland ecosystems are unlikely to be precluded from establishing and functioning, and that the anticipated biodiversity benefits associated with wetland creation and enhancement are expected to outweigh the limited risks associated with intermittent water quality exceedances.

The assessment also concludes that the surface water expressions associated with the Project are unlikely to pose significant risks to human health. Potential exposure pathways are limited, there are no intended potable or recreational uses of these water



bodies, livestock access will be restricted where appropriate, and ongoing monitoring and management measures are proposed throughout the life of the Project to verify environmental performance and support adaptive management where required.

Overall, the assessment concludes that predicted water quality within the proposed surface water expressions is unlikely to result in significant toxic effects to wildlife or humans. The report finds that the low ecological value of the pit lakes, the anticipated biodiversity benefits of the wetland habitats, limited human exposure pathways, and the proposed monitoring and adaptive management framework provide confidence that environmental performance objectives can be achieved throughout the life of the Project.