



Australian Government
National Land & Water Resources Audit



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Establishing a baseline of Australia's Native Vegetation Extent 2004-05

The National Land & Water Resources Audit and the Bureau of Rural Sciences worked with state and territory governments to develop a national baseline of native vegetation extent for the year 2004-05.

In 2004 there was over 676 million hectares of native vegetation, covering 88% of the Australian continent.

Background

Native vegetation mapping was collated by the National Land & Water Resources Audit for the Australian Native Vegetation Assessment 2001. This data is maintained through the National Vegetation Information System (NVIS) and now includes mapping to 2004.

The NVIS database was first used to approximate the remaining extent of native vegetation for the 2001 assessment.

However, this data represented the extent of mapped vegetation rather than a baseline of native vegetation existing at any particular point in time. Therefore directly comparing the 2001 data and the 2004 baseline is inappropriate.



Available from: www.environment.gov.au/erin/nvis

States and Territories use different definitions which may depend on vegetation condition states (e.g. regrowth) or the presence of certain species or may be legal definitions under vegetation management legislation.

The Audit and BRS have worked with states and territories to develop their individual baselines of native vegetation extent for the year 2004.

National reporting of these baselines is available through Australia's Resources Online (ARO).

What is "native vegetation"?

Stands or blocks of naturally occurring plant communities whose presence in a location is not due to human intervention



ARO: www.environment.gov.au/erin/nvis

The Audit provides data, information and nationwide assessments of Australia's land, water and biological resources to support sustainable development

Indicators

The Executive Steering Committee for Australian Vegetation Information (ESCAVI) has recommended three indicators of native vegetation extent and distribution and one for vegetation condition:

- extent of all native vegetation
- extent of native vegetation types
- proportion compared to pre-1750 types
- condition compared to a benchmark state

These indicators are part of the National NRM Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: www.nrm.gov.au/publications/factsheets/me-indicators.

National baseline

The Audit has collated a national baseline for the extent of native vegetation for the year 2004. This national baseline is dependant on definitions of native vegetation used by each state/territory which are not consistent. However the baseline provides a starting point for future assessments of change.

Table 1 shows the extent of native vegetation reported by each state, territory and a collation for Australia. In 2004 there was over 676 million hectares of native vegetation covering 88% of the country.

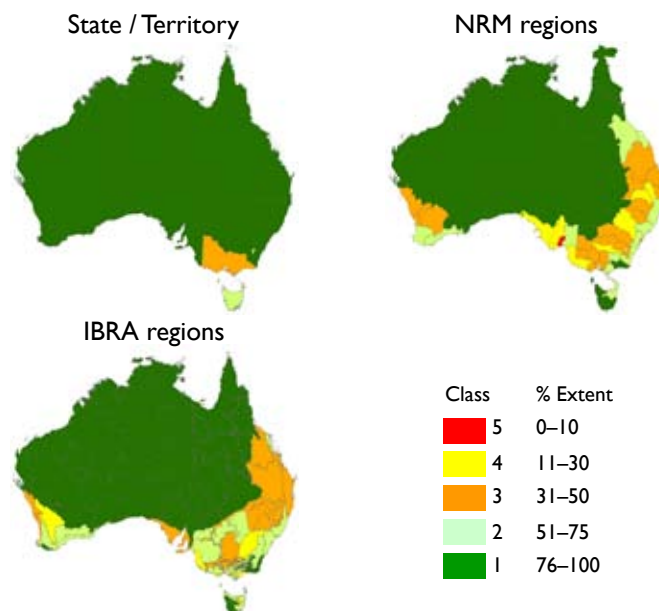
Table 1 Extent of native vegetation reported by each state, territory and a collation for Australia

State	Base-line date	Date reported	Native vegetation extent (Ha)	Total area (Ha)	%
Australia	2004	2008	676,745,888	768,278,712	88
ACT	2004	2008	177,879	243,151	88
NSW	2004	2008	69,980,691	80,102,152	87
NT	2004	2007	132,421,716	134,313,828	99
Qld	2003	2006	139,819,766	172,939,770	81
SA	2004	2007	84,416,131	98,432,191	86
Tas	2005	2008	5,071,672	6,859,319	74
Vic	2005	2008	10,569,891	22,687,003	47
WA	2004	2007	234,288,141	252,701,293	93

This national collation of native vegetation extent data has been used to classify the extent by each state/territory, regions of the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia and Natural Resource Management regions — all have different implications for the future management of Australia's natural resources.

Moving forward requires clearer definition of the specific data needs for reporting and interpretation of indicators. There must be acceptance and support for roles and responsibilities in data collection, management, reporting and assessment. Strategic and coordinated investment is essential to ensure that the required data is collected and made available to all users.

Classes of native vegetation extent 2004



Further information

National Land & Water Resources Audit: www.nlwra.gov.au
 Australian Natural Resources Atlas: www.anra.gov.au
 Australia's Resources Online: <http://www.anra.gov.au/aro/>
 National Vegetation Information System: <http://www.environment.gov.au/erin/nvis>
 Integrated Vegetation Online: www.brs.gov.au/intveg



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