

APPENDIX 4

Guidelines for the Environmental Component

Introduction

As part of the Weeds of National Significance (WONS) Standing Committee on Conservation (SCC) out-of-session paper, a number of criteria were outlined, which would be used to select WONS. The environmental values attributes were described and it was agreed that all member states would provide data on species and special conservation areas threatened by weeds.

This paper describes the data that are required and the boundaries for those data. Emphasis has been placed on developing a practical system which suites the purpose of collection, with minimal effort on the part of SCC members.

Scope of Data

A State or Territory is only requested to provide data for environmental weeds nominated by their jurisdiction. Weed species have been nominated by member states, but only a proportion are environmental weeds.

Do not provide data for weeds not nominated by your jurisdiction.

Conservation Indicators

The two indicators under this section, weed infested IBRA regions and monoculture potential, will be obtained separately from other sources.

The weed infested IBRA regions will be derived from species distribution maps being prepared by Standing Committee on Agriculture & Resource Management (SCARM) members, who are expected to consult with their respective conservation agencies.

Monoculture potential will be derived from the scientific panels, where this question forms part of the invasiveness and impacts criteria.

Biodiversity Indicator

Two aspects comprise this indicator, the number of threatened species and threatened special conservation areas.

Number of Threatened Species

The number of species threatened (includes Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable in accordance with IUCN definitions) by each environmental weed nominated by the State or Territory.

The data required are the number of threatened species by each environmental weed species for the jurisdiction in question. Species counts should be supported by threatened species lists, which may be as simple as a printed list, with the affected species highlighted.

Threatened Special Conservation Areas

In response to suggestions made by SCC members, the list of special conservation areas has been expanded to include those identified under the Regional Forest Agreement process, as well as other categories described below.

For each nominated environmental weed species, count the number of areas threatened (an area of land may only be counted once per weed species). Areas, which may be included, are;

- Listed Threatened Plant Communities

- National Estate Listings

- World Heritage Areas

- Ramsar Wetlands

- Listed Important Wetlands of Australia

- Areas identified under the forest resource assessment process

- Reserved areas based on scientific study which have been identified as important plant communities and are threatened by a specific weed species (see below)

Reserved area nomenclature and assessment varies between jurisdictions, therefore a definitive list of reserves and their classifications cannot be supplied. It is up to each SCC member to identify the reserves to be included according to the principles outlined here. By example, the Parks and Wildlife Service of Tasmania has published "The reservation status of Tasmanian vascular plant communities", which makes a sound basis on which to compile the required data

The number of these sites under threat as a result of each nominated weed species is requested, with a verification list similar to that required for Threatened Species above.

Non-provision of Data

Testing of weed species for WONS is data dependent. Where the data cannot be supplied for a species the score will be reduced accordingly.

Consistency of Data

Consistency of data is critical as the ranking of WONS is based on weed species relativities. Data will be screened to assess the validity of estimates provided so as not to disadvantage other weed candidates. In some cases agencies may be asked to substantiate their data.

Submission Date for Data

In order to progress the WONS it is essential that deadlines be met. For this reason where difficulties are encountered in meeting this date it is requested that you consult the Project Manager as early as possible. Data not provided by the due date will be interpreted as non-provision of data.

It is expected that data will be provided to the Project Manager by Friday, 28 August 1998.

Further Information

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