

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MVG FACT SHEETS

Fact Sheets for the 23 Major Vegetation Groups (MVGs) have been developed to provide detailed descriptions to inform their use by planners and policy makers. A 24th Fact Sheet in the series describes the nature of non-vegetated areas within the NVIS coverage. For an explanation of the rationale and methods used for development of the MVGs, the [Overview of the Major Vegetation Group Classification](#).

Data Sources and Methods for the Fact Sheets

The information contained in the 23 MVG Fact Sheets is based on the NVIS Stage 1, Version 3.0 (see below) which includes:

- vegetation descriptions and GIS data gathered from over 100 projects by 25 government agencies across all jurisdictions; and
- other (non-NVIS) vegetation mapping to fill gaps in coverage of the continent.

Information on the MVGs has been collated and mapped at the continental scale for two major themes to illustrate the changes in vegetation since European settlement:

- estimated pre-1750 vegetation; and
- present (“extant”) native vegetation extent.

Copies of these datasets are provided on this disk. Similar continental data of 67 Major Vegetation Subgroups, of which 63 are native vegetation, is also provided.

Sources for Facts and Figures

Major Vegetation Group	The systematic name for the group
Major Vegetation Subgroups (number of NVIS descriptions)	List of Major Vegetation Subgroups occurring within the MVG. The number of NVIS descriptions is indicative of the diversity of vegetation communities within the MVS and hence the MVG
Typical NVIS structural formations	The main structural formations of the MVG, as defined in Level 2 of the NVIS Information Hierarchy
Number of IBRA regions	The number of IBRA regions where the MVG occurs and the IBRA region with the largest extent of the MVG. These figures were derived from a GIS overlay of MVG and “IBRA data (Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) Version 6.1—Regions)” Most extensive in IBRA region
Estimated pre-1750 extent (km ²)	From the MVG estimated pre-1750 vegetation dataset
Present extent (km ²)	From the MVG present vegetation dataset
Area protected (km ²)	This number was derived from a GIS overlay of MVG and CAPAD data (Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database—CAPAD 2004—Terrestrial).

- Descriptions of the main characteristics, geography and environmental characteristics of each MVG were developed by the first NLWRA (NLWRA, 2001) and updated by DEW from the re-supplied NVIS and additional references.
- References were mostly selected to give a national overview. Most of these contain useful references to state and regional sources, including the so-called “grey literature” of reports.

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- Key species were listed by the first NLWRA and considerably updated by DEW from the re-supplied NVIS.
- Distribution maps were developed from the re-supplied NVIS (Stage 1 version 3.0) and display:
 - in green: the present distribution of the MVG; and
 - in pink: the estimated area cleared or modified since European settlement of Australia.
- Information on change since settlement by Europeans, key values and management considerations were largely unchanged since the first NLWRA.
- The land tenure information has been reviewed and updated for the fact sheets. MVG boundaries from NVIS Version 3 were compared with:
 - GIS data from “Land Tenure in Australia’s Rangelands (1955 to 2000), National Land and Water Resources Audit”;
 - GIS data from “Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database—CAPAD 2004—Terrestrial”; and
 - outcomes of the Regional Forest Agreement process.

Fact Sheet Caveats and Limitations

The profile maps provided in the Fact Sheets are a guide to where particular vegetation groups occur but do not necessarily show entire distribution. This is because the scale of vegetation mapping greatly affects the types of vegetation that are shown and many mapping programs concentrate on mapping the tree components (e.g. coarse scales of mapping cannot represent small fragments of vegetation in an agricultural area or strips of vegetation along river courses and many shrublands and grasslands remain unmapped where the dominant vegetation is forest).

Many of the source datasets used for this version of NVIS have primarily classified vegetation using floristic (species) composition, with structural attributes added later to describe the resultant vegetation types. Thus areas of particular structural types, e.g. forest, may be overestimated.

The current version of NVIS (Version 3.0) updates previous versions with better data. It is generally not comparable with earlier versions and should not be used as qualitative evidence of vegetation change over the last half decade. Further details are available [Background to the National Vegetation Information System](#) in the metadata for the respective NVIS products.

Information provided under key values and management considerations is very general and should be used as a guide and starting point for further investigations at more detailed levels of management.

The information contained in the current set of MVG Fact Sheet represents a combination of existing knowledge on native vegetation from sources within the states and territories and the Australian Government. There are other known sources of vegetation information that may be incorporated in subsequent versions of the fact sheets.

References and Further Information

- Anon. (2006a) National Vegetation Information System home page. Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Canberra, <<http://www.environment.gov.au/erin/nvis/index.html>>.
- Anon (2006b) Australia’s Biogeographical Regions, Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Canberra, <<http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/ibra/index.html>>.
- Anon (2006c) The Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database (CAPAD), Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Canberra, <<http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/capad/index.html>>.
- ESCAVI (2003) *Australian Vegetation Attribute Manual, Version 6.0*. Executive Steering Committee for Australian Vegetation Information/Dept of Environment and Heritage, Canberra, <<http://www.environment.gov.au/erin/nvis/avam/index.html>>.
- National Land & Water Resources Audit (NLWRA) (2001). *Australian Native Vegetation Assessment, 2001*. National Land & Water Resources Audit Canberra, 332pp.