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- Dominant acacias include *Acacia aneura* (mulga), *A. georginae* (Georgina gidgee), *A. tephrina* (boree), *A. cambagei* (gidgee), *A. harpophylla* (brigalow), *A. peuce* (waddy) and *A. papyrocarpa* (western myall).
- The most widespread species is mulga (*A. aneura*).
- In some places, casuarina and eucalypts occur as occasional emergents. The ground layers are generally herbaceous or chenopod shrubs such as *Atriplex, Maireana, Sclerolaena* and grasses such as *Triodia, Eragrostis, Plectrachne, Aristida* and *Austrostipa*.

Photo: M. Fagg

Acacia aneura (mulga) open woodland over *Eragrostis eriopoda*, near Thargomindah, Qld

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Facts and figures

Major Vegetation Group	MVG 13—Acacia Open Woodlands
Major Vegetation Subgroups (number of NVIS descriptions)	Brigalow (Acacia harpophylla) forests and woodlands (5) Other Acacia forests and woodlands (34) Mulga (Acacia aneura) woodlands with tussock grass (46) Other Acacia tall open shrublands and shrublands (6) Arid and semi-arid acacia low open woodlands and shrublands with chenopods (30) Arid and semi-arid acacia low open woodlands and shrublands with hummock grass (15) Arid and semi-arid acacia low open woodlands and shrublands with tussock grass (47) Mulga (Acacia aneura) woodlands and shrublands with hummock grass (4)
Typical NVIS structural formations	Woodland Open woodland (mid, low) Shrubland (tall) Tall open shrubland Sparse shrubland (tall, mid)
Number of IBRA regions	36
Most extensive in IBRA region	Est. pre–1750 and present: Mulga Lands (Qld and NSW)
Estimated pre–1750 extent (km^2)	320 981
Present extent (km^2)	314 040
Area protected (km^2)	23 815

Geography

- Occur mainly throughout the semi-arid and arid regions of south-eastern, northern and north-eastern Australia. The climatic conditions are generally dry, hot summers, with cool to warm winters. Rainfall is variable although maximum falls either in summer (northern) or in winter (southern).
- Largely occur on extensive undulating plains and downs, low hills and valleys of the rangelands.
- Largest areas occur in the Queensland (91 014 km^2), South Australia (73 939 km^2) and Western Australia (61 309 km^2).

Change

- Approximately 2% of the estimated pre–1750 extent cleared accounting for 0.7% of total clearing in Australia mainly as a result of pastoral activities in Queensland.
- Approximately 7 000 km^2 cleared since European settlement.
- Modified by clearing for pastoral activities, change in local drainage systems, increased local grazing pressure by providing stock watering, an overall increase in grazing through the introduction and spread of feral animals and changes to fire regimes.
- Main threats inappropriate fire regimes (e.g. fires too regular and/or too intense), increased total grazing pressure and continued clearing.

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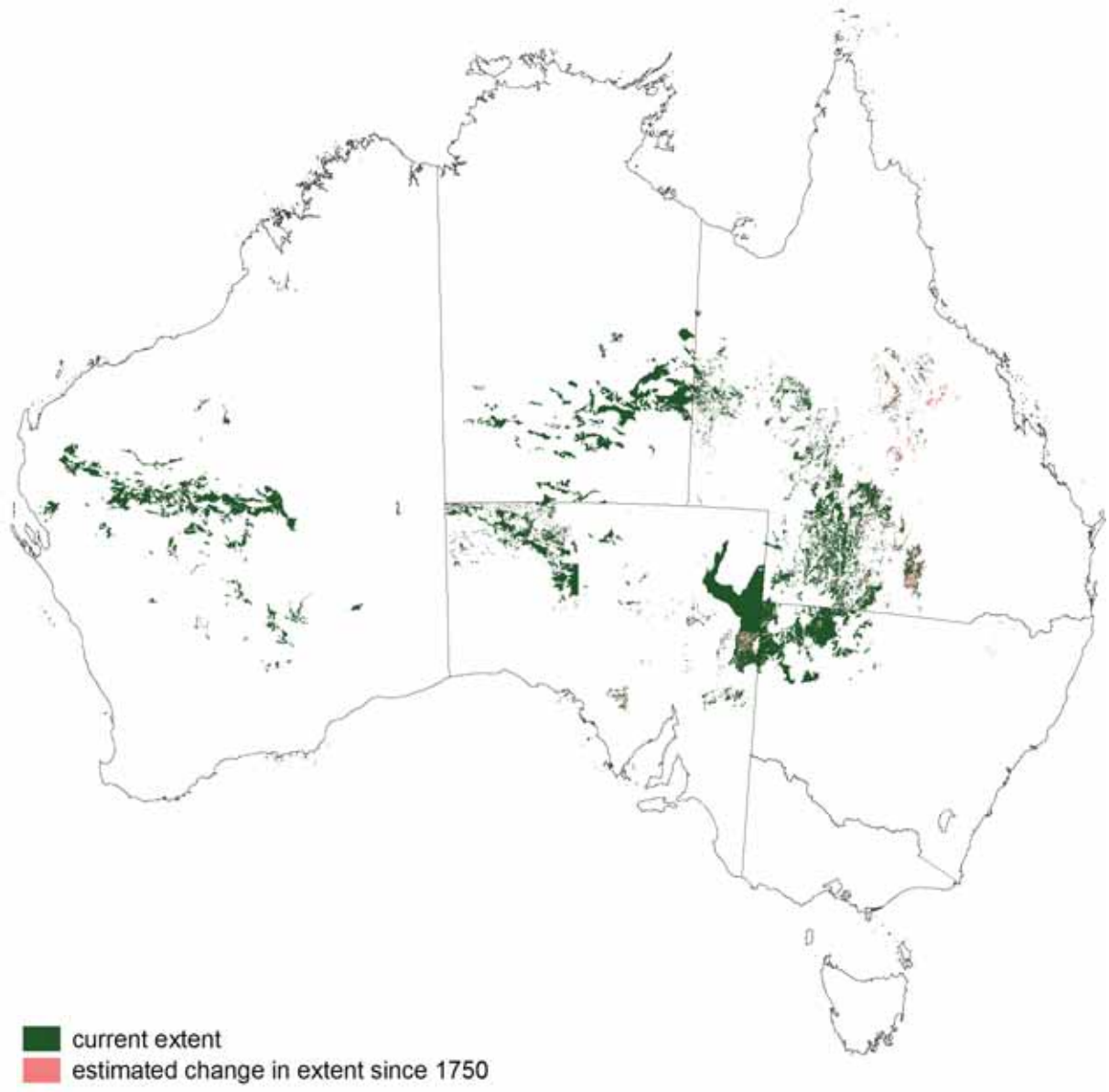
Tenure

Acacia Open Woodlands occur largely on leasehold land.

New South Wales:	leasehold, protected areas and very small areas on freehold land
Northern Territory:	leasehold land,protected areas, some freehold land, little other crown land
Queensland:	leasehold land, protected areas, isolated areas on freehold land
South Australia:	leasehold land, protected areas, little on freehold land
Western Australia:	leasehold land, protected areas, some other crown land



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Key values

- Biodiversity including some of the most widespread vegetation communities in Australia and also some which are localised.
- Remnant populations of a wide range of vertebrate and invertebrate fauna species.

Management considerations

- Control of clearing.
- Wildlife corridor re-establishment between remnants.
- Fire regimes—often changed from what is presumed to be 'natural'.
- Weed control.
- Pasture management—including the issues of buffel grass versus native grass species.

The majority of the Acacia Open Woodlands remain in private ownership or leasehold raising issues of equity relating to stewardship and management for multiple values.

References

Australian Surveying and Land Information Group (1990) *Atlas of Australian Resources. Volume 6 Vegetation*. AUSMAP, Department of Administrative Services, Canberra, 64pp. & 2 maps.

Beadle N.C.W. (1981) *The Vegetation of Australia*. Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 690pp.

National Land & Water Resources Audit (2001) *Australian Native Vegetation Assessment 2001.* National Land & Water Resources Audit, Canberra, 332pp.

Photo: M. Fagg

Acacia burkittii (sandhill wattle), near Mootwingie, NSW

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Data sources

Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA), Version 6.1.

Land Tenure in Australia's Rangelands (1955 to 2000), National Land and Water Resources Audit.

National Vegetation Information System, Version 3.0.

1996/97 Land Use of Australia, Version 2.

Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database —CAPAD 2004—Terrestrial.

Notes

- Additional large areas identified in NVIS Version 3 from improved data for Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory; also gap-filling (non-NVIS) data in South Australia.
- See the Introduction to the MVG fact sheets for further background on this series.

Photo: M. Fagg

Near Cawndilla Lake, Menindee, NSW