

MVG 15—LOW CLOSED FORESTS AND TALL CLOSED SHRUBLANDS

- Characterised by dense foliage in the upper layers and by low stunted species usually between 5 m and 10 m in height, sometimes referred to as ‘scrubs’.
- Occur in a range of climatic zones, but many occur within coastal or subcoastal environments dominated by *Banksia*, *Leptospermum* and *Kunzea* species or *Melaleuca* with a mix of other species. A few occur in alpine environments in Tasmania.
- Support a large range of species, partly as a result of their geographical range and partly from the variation in soils and site conditions.



Photo: R. Purdie

Melaleuca lanceolata thicket, Rottneest Island, WA

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Facts and figures

Major Vegetation Group	MVG 15—Low Closed Forests and Tall Closed Shrublands
Major Vegetation Subgroups (number of NVIS descriptions)	Low closed forest or tall closed shrublands (including <i>Acacia</i> , <i>Melaleuca</i> and <i>Banksia</i>) (115)
Typical NVIS structural formations	Low closed forest Low closed mallee forest Closed shrubland (mid, tall) Tall closed heathland
Number of IBRA regions	28
Most extensive in IBRA region	Est. pre-1750 and present: Coolgardie (WA)
Estimated pre-1750 extent (km²)	25 819
Present extent (km²)	16 278
Area protected (km²)	4 963

Species

Western Australia

Various mixtures of casuarina, melaleuca and acacia species occur in this group, for example *Allocasuarina campestris*, *Acacia rostellifera*, *Acacia quadrimarginea*, *Ac. acuminata*, *Ac. ligulata*, *Melaleuca cardiophylla* and *M. uncinata* (broombush).

New South Wales

Coastal distributions of *Banksia* and *Melaleuca* species.

Eastern Victoria

Distributions of *Leptospermum lanigerum*, *Melaleuca squarrosa*, *L. continentale*, *M. ericifolia*, *L. laevigatum*, *Acacia mucronata* and *Callistemon pallidus*.



Photo: M. Fagg

Coastal scrub near South Durras, NSW

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Western Victoria

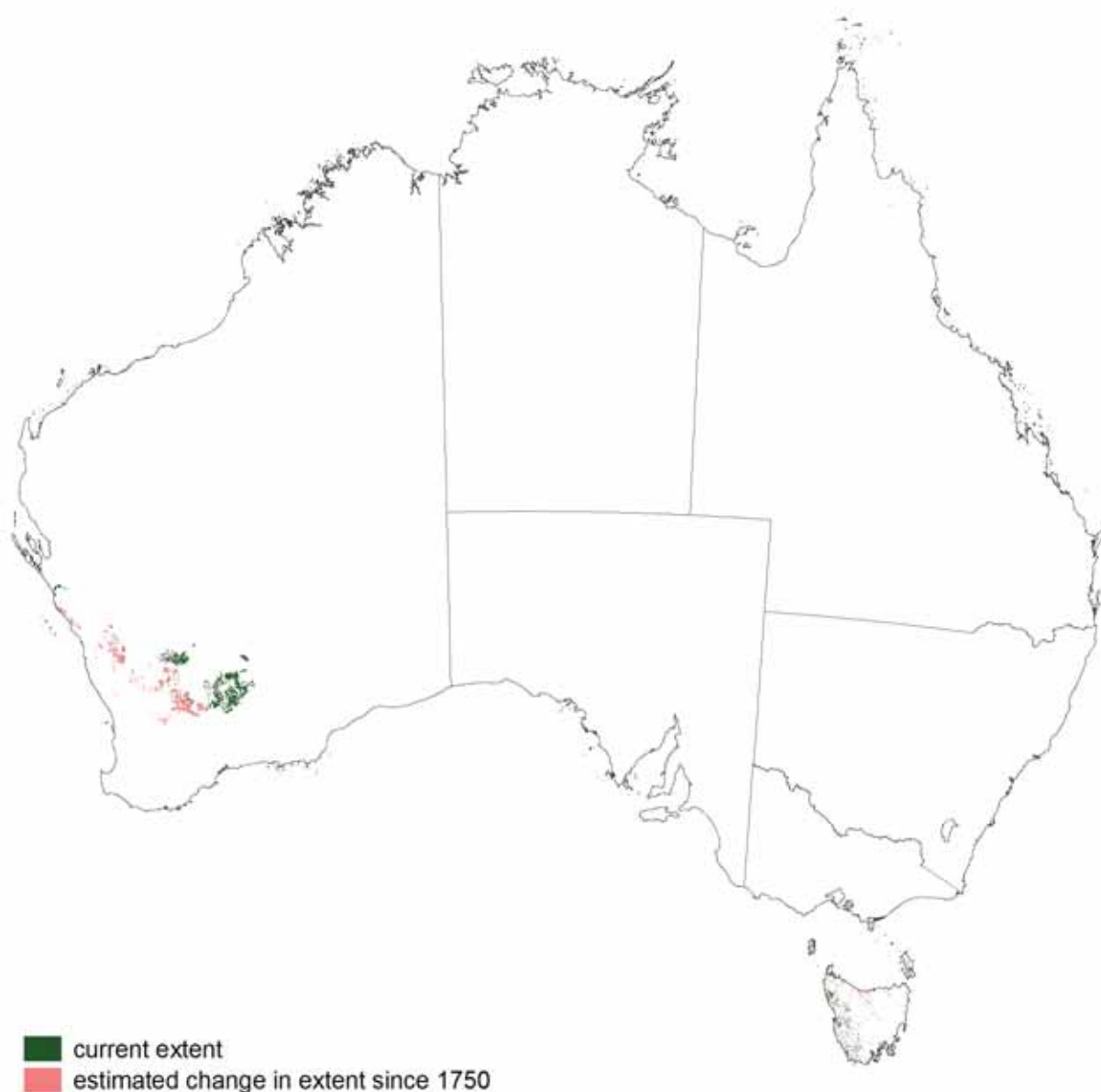
Includes a range of *Leptospermum* and *Eucalyptus* species.

Tasmania

Includes *Melaleuca ericifolia*, *Leptospermum laevigatum*, *L. scoparium*, *Pomaderris apelata*, *Ozothamnus turbinatus*, *L. lanigerum*, *L. glaucescens*, *M. squarrosa* and *M. squamea*.

Geography

- Position in the landscape is variable from near coastal to mountain tops.
- Extent varies from a few hectares to larger pockets. They are generally patchy in occurrence within these areas depending on local site conditions.



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Change

- Approximately 33% of the estimated pre-1750 extent cleared accounting for 0.9% of total clearing in Australia.
- Approximately 9 500 km² cleared since European settlement
- Extent has decreased in coastal areas often as a result of urban development and clearing for agriculture. Fire regimes may also have changed from 'natural' for many occurrences.

Tenure

Low Closed Forests and Tall Closed Shrublands occur largely in protected areas or forest reserves.

New South Wales:	protected areas, leasehold land and freehold land
Queensland:	protected areas, state forests, leasehold land, isolated areas on freehold land
Tasmania:	protected areas, freehold land, state forests and other crown land
Victoria:	protected areas, state forests and isolated areas on freehold land
Western Australia:	some leasehold land, protected areas, other crown land and isolated fragments on freehold land

Key values

- With about one-third of the remaining extent of this vegetation type already in protected areas, the values of these landscapes are relatively well protected.
- Low Closed Forests and Tall Closed Shrublands often support diverse faunal communities and provide food and shelter for fauna that are often both reliant on this vegetation group and on the surrounding landscapes.

Management considerations

- Protection from loss by clearing, grazing, infrastructure development.
- Maintenance of appropriate fire regimes.
- Management requirements are community specific.

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.

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Data sources

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

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 areas identified in Western Australia due to improved data supplied to NVIS.
- Fewer areas of this MVG in New South Wales and Victoria in NVIS 3.0 are due to data interpretations of the available data.
- See the [Introduction to the MVG fact sheets](#) for further background on this series.



Photo: L. Berzins

Melaleuca sp. thicket lining watercourse, Denmark, WA