



WILDLIFE AND THREATENED SPECIES BUSHFIRE RECOVERY EXPERT PANEL COMMUNIQUÉ SEPTEMBER 2020

The Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert (the Expert Panel) has endorsed two remaining pieces of research that it had commissioned. Both scientific assessments further advance the information base available to guide recovery actions and investment decisions.

Final National prioritisation of Australian plants affected by the 2019–20 bushfire season

The Expert Panel has endorsed the revised list of plant taxa requiring urgent management intervention following the 2019–20 bushfires. This is an update to the Interim Assessment published on 23 April 2020.

The revised list identifies 486 species as the highest priority for intervention. The inclusion of more taxa, new trait data and refined threat information relative to the Interim Assessment resulted in the addition of 117 species and removal of 102 species from the interim list. In total, 26,062 plant taxa were assessed across 11 prioritisation criteria, which considered factors such as the geographic range of the species, the amount of their habitat impacted by fire, the species response to fire and where applicable, the effects of other stressors such as drought.

The Panel would like to acknowledge the contributions of all involved in the development of this list and would like to extend a special thank you to Dr Rachael Gallagher for her work in coordinating and leading both the Initial Assessment and the final priority plant list.

List of national and state ecological communities (terrestrial) that were substantially fire affected in the 2019–2020 bushfires and recommended management actions

Ecological communities are assemblages of native species that inhabit a specific geographic area. Protection of ecological communities is a principal mechanism for conserving biological diversity and is consistent with international obligations.

The Panel has endorsed an assessment by ecological community experts on the threats, impacts and priorities for responses to the 2019–20 bushfires. The assessment of fire-affected ecological communities includes:

- the identification of fire-related threats and candidate management actions for 38 ecological communities listed as threatened under *the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

- the identification of an additional 50 state and territory recognised ecological communities (or equivalent entities) that are likely to have been most affected by the 2019–20 bushfires.

This advice is the result of significant input from a range of scientists and state and federal government agencies, led by Prof David Keith from University of NSW. The Panel would like to thank all involved for their efforts in preparing this advice.

- Dr Sally Box, Chair of the Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel.

Panel members

Dr Sally Box (Chair)

Threatened Species Commissioner
Australian Government

Professor John Woinarski

Charles Darwin University
National Environmental Science Program –
Threatened Species Recovery Hub

Professor Sarah Legge

Australian National University
University of Queensland
National Environmental Science Program –
Threatened Species Recovery Hub
Threatened Species Scientific Committee

Professor Stephen van Leeuwen

Indigenous Advisory Committee

Dr Libby Rumpff

University of Melbourne
National Environmental Science Program –
Threatened Species Recovery Hub

Professor Dick Williams

Charles Darwin University

Associate Professor Dale Nimmo

Charles Sturt University

Dr Jenny Gray

Zoos Victoria

Dr Dan Metcalfe

CSIRO Land and Water

Advisers

Representatives from fire-affected states and territories (NSW, VIC, WA, SA, QLD, Tasmania, ACT)