



Consultation on draft listing assessment 'Fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline' as a key threatening process

Invitation to comment

You are invited to provide your views and supporting reasons on the draft listing assessment 'Fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline' as a key threatening process under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and whether if listed, a threat abatement plan is a feasible, effective and efficient way of abating the process.

The purpose of this consultation document is to elicit additional information to support the Threatened Species Scientific Committee's consideration of this key threatening process. As such, this draft assessment should be considered to be tentative as it may change following responses to the consultation process.

The views of experts, representative organisations, land managers, community groups and the general public are welcome. Responses can be provided by any interested person.

Anyone may nominate a native species, ecological community or threatening process for listing under the EPBC Act or for a transfer of an item already on the list to a new listing category. The Threatened Species Scientific Committee undertakes the assessment of a threatening process to determine eligibility for inclusion on the list of key threatening processes and provides its advice to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment.

Responses are to be provided in writing by email to firektpconsultation@awe.gov.au or by mail to:

The Director

Terrestrial Threatened Species Section

Protected Species and Communities Branch

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

GPO Box 858

Canberra ACT 2601

Responses are required to be submitted by 10 January 2022.

Privacy notice

Personal information means information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable.

The department collects your personal information (as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988*) in relation to information you provide as part of this consultation for the purposes of the nomination, assessment and listing process set out in Part 13 of the EPBC Act.

Personal information that you provide within, or in addition to, your comments in the threatened species assessment process may be used by the department for the purposes of its functions relating to the listing assessment of threatened species, ecological communities and key threatening process, including contacting you if we have any questions about your comments in the future.

The department may disclose your personal information to the Threatened Species Scientific Committee, the Australian Government Minister for the Environment, State and Territory Governments, and other Australian government agencies, persons or organisations where necessary for the above purposes, provided the disclosure is consistent with relevant laws, in particular the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Your personal information will be used and stored in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles.

See the department's [Privacy Policy](#) to learn more about accessing or correcting personal information or making a complaint. Alternatively, email the department at privacy@awe.gov.au

Information about this consultation process

Responses to this consultation can be provided electronically or in hard copy to the contact addresses provided on Page 1. All responses received will be provided in full to the Threatened Species Scientific Committee and then to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment.

In providing comments, please provide references to published data where possible. Should the Committee use the information you provide in formulating its advice, the information will be attributed to you and referenced as a 'personal communication' unless you provide references or otherwise attribute this information (please specify if your organisation requires that this information is attributed to your organisation instead of yourself). The final advice by the Committee will be published on the department's website following the listing decision by the Minister.

Information provided through consultation may be subject to freedom of information legislation and court processes. It is also important to note that under the EPBC Act, the deliberations and recommendations of the Committee are confidential until the Minister has made a final decision on the nomination, unless otherwise determined by the Minister.

Background information

The Threatened Species Scientific Committee is currently assessing 'Fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline' as a key threatening process.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides for the identification and listing of key threatening processes. The Threatened Species Scientific Committee undertakes assessments of nominations to list processes as 'key threatening process' under the EPBC Act. 'Fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline' is nominated for listing as a key threatening process under the EPBC Act.

A key threatening process is defined if it threatens or may threaten the survival, abundance or evolutionary development of a native species or ecological community.

Listing key threatening processes provides formal recognition that a process is a key threat to biodiversity at the national level. This raises awareness of how threats to biodiversity are operating across Australia and assists with understanding and prioritising management of these threats.

Under the EPBC Act a threatening process is eligible to be treated as a key threatening process if:

- a) it could cause a native species or ecological community to become eligible for inclusion for listing in any category; other than conservation dependent; or
- b) it could cause a listed threatened species or a listed threatened ecological community to be listed in another category representing a higher degree of endangerment; or
- c) it adversely affects two or more listed threatened species (other than conservation dependent species) or two or more listed threatened ecological communities.

If a key threatening process is listed by the Minister for the Environment, the Minister may also decide whether a threat abatement plan is a feasible, effective and efficient way of abating the process.

Threat abatement plans provide for the research, management, and any other actions necessary to reduce the impact of a listed key threatening process on native species and ecological communities. Implementing the plan should assist the long-term survival in the wild of affected native species or ecological communities.

More information on Key Threatening Processes and Threat Abatement Plans can be found on the Department's webpage [Key threatening processes under the EPBC Act](#).

Consultation questions

You are invited to provide your views on the draft listing assessment 'Fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline' as a key threatening process and whether if listed, a threat abatement plan is a feasible, effective and efficient way of abating the process.

Please note, this list of questions is provided as a guide only. You are not required to address every question and you may provide comments separately to these.

Listing assessment

- 1) Refer Part 2: The Changing Fire Landscape. Do you have any specific feedback on the background information?
- 2) Refer Part 3: Mechanisms of biodiversity loss. Could the specific mechanisms of threat be supported by further examples of listed threatened species and ecological communities for which published evidence exists? Please provide examples against those mechanisms and if available, links to the supporting evidence.
- 3) Refer Part 4: Assessment against the three EPBC Act listing criteria. Do you have further examples of species or ecological communities that could be included to further address each criterion? Please provide examples against each of the listing criteria and if available, links to the supporting evidence.
- 4) Overall, do you consider that the proposed key threatening process to be appropriately defined and described? Please provide justification for your response.
- 5) Can you provide any additional data or information relevant to the claim that this process is having an adverse effect on species and/or ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act?
- 6) Do you have any other comments you'd like to make or information you'd like to contribute to inform the listing assessment?

Threat abatement plan decision

- 7) If 'Fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline' is listed as a key threatening process, how might a threat abatement plan improve conservation outcomes for those species and ecological communities threatened by it?
- 8) What planning and management actions are currently being implemented to abate the threat of fire regimes that cause biodiversity decline and to support the recovery of those species and ecological communities most impacted?
- 9) If a threat abatement plan is developed, what further planning and management actions should be included in the plan to effectively abate the threat?