

Draft *Santalum spicatum* (Sandalwood) Biodiversity Management Programme frequently asked questions

What is a biodiversity management programme and why does sandalwood need one?

In accordance with Part 5 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act), the purpose of a biodiversity management programme is to provide for the conservation, protection, and management of native species. Sandalwood is a native species that has remained in commercial demand for over 170 years and as such, requires a biodiversity management programme to deal with matters that may impact on its continued ecologically sustainable use.

Sandalwood is listed as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) red list. Why does the draft *Santalum spicatum* (Sandalwood) Biodiversity Management Programme (Sandalwood BMP) not address this?

The processes for assessing species' conservation status are separate to the purpose of a biodiversity management programme, being to set parameters to manage for conservation, protection and ecologically sustainable use.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) has received a nomination for sandalwood to be listed as a threatened species under the BC Act. As the species occurs in Western Australia and South Australia, the nomination is subject to the national Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding – Agreement on a Common Assessment Method for Listing of Threatened Species and Threatened Ecological Communities (see awe.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/cam). As such, the nomination has been referred to the Commonwealth to facilitate cross-jurisdictional assessment. Listing under the State's BC Act will be considered once the Commonwealth process is complete.

The outcome of the listing assessment may change management of the species in Western Australia.

Why doesn't the Sandalwood BMP recommend annual harvest quantities?

The *Sandalwood (Limitation on Removal of Sandalwood) Order (No. 2) 2015* (Sandalwood Order) remains in place until 31 December 2026. As such, the Government is committed to the Sandalwood Order's prescribed quantities through licences and contracts until that time.

The Sandalwood BMP contains a strategy to review and revise the Sandalwood Order quantities that may be taken while maintaining the productive capacity of sandalwood populations and associated ecosystems. With information gained from inventory and population condition monitoring consistent with actions in the Sandalwood BMP, DBCA expects to be able to provide informed recommendations to the Minister for Environment on future sandalwood harvest levels.

Why isn't the Sandalwood BMP ending wild sandalwood harvest?

The BC Act provides for the ecologically sustainable use of native animals and plants. Ecologically sustainable use of sandalwood enables commitments made through the Taskforce for the

Advancement of Aboriginal economic development using wild harvest sandalwood to be met. The Sandalwood BMP seeks to provide an appropriate balance in providing economic opportunities for Aboriginal communities and regional businesses in a manner that does not diminish the viability and condition of wild sandalwood populations. Further, the sandalwood industry provides investment into programs for sandalwood regeneration and restoration that are hoped to be delivered through joint management of lands with traditional owners.

Why is plantation sandalwood not replacing the harvest of wild sandalwood?

Plantation sandalwood is outside the scope of a biodiversity management programme as permitted by the BC Act. The commitments made through the Taskforce for the Advancement of Aboriginal economic development using wild harvest sandalwood support wild sandalwood resources, particularly in proximity to Rangeland Aboriginal communities remaining available for harvest at ecologically sustainable levels.

The maturing plantation resource was a component that influenced the 10-year timeframe of the Sandalwood Order, and is expected to be considered in formulating the next Order.

Why does the Sandalwood BMP not consider traditional cultural, medicinal and nutritional uses of sandalwood?

Section 5 of the BC Act specifically limits the scope of biodiversity management programmes to matters of biodiversity and matters that impact biodiversity (including ecologically sustainable use).

What are the sandalwood licensing guidelines that the Sandalwood BMP refers to?

The guidelines are being developed to provide guidance to DBCA staff in implementing aspects of the Sandalwood BMP that involve sandalwood licensing, licence application approvals and licence conditions for requirements such as regeneration, and for licence applicants to understand the information needed to successfully apply for a sandalwood licence.