



Government
of South Australia

Declared Plant Policy

This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.

prickly acacia (*Vachellia nilotica* subsp. *indica*)

Prickly acacia is a woody weed of the arid zone, a thorny tree with the potential to form extensive, impenetrable thickets. There are large infestations in Queensland that extend close to the South Australian border, and it is believed to have the potential to become a problem in this State.

The power to enforce control of prickly acacia on leasehold land is necessary for regional landscape boards to implement control programs under the *National Strategic Plan for Prickly Acacia*.

Management Plan for Prickly Acacia

Outcomes

- The northern rangelands and their native vegetation protected from invasion by prickly acacia.

Objectives

- To contain prickly acacia by eradicating the existing infestation from South Australia.
- To prevent any further spread of prickly acacia within South Australia.

Best Practice Implementation

Actions at State level:

- Prohibition on sale of prickly acacia in South Australia.

Actions at regional level:

- Regional landscape boards in the pastoral zone to enforce destruction of spot infestations.

Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

prickly acacia policy

Region	Actions
Alinytjara Wilurara	Limited action (regional alert)
Eyre Peninsula	Limited action (regional alert)
Green Adelaide	Monitor
Hills and Fleurieu	Monitor
Kangaroo Island	Monitor
Limestone Coast	Limited action (regional alert)
Murraylands and Riverland	Limited action
Northern and Yorke	Limited action
South Australian Arid Lands	Monitor

Declaration

To implement this policy, prickly acacia is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia so that any further sale or movement of the plant can be prevented. Its entry to South Australia, movement or transport on a public road by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant are prohibited. Notification of infestations is necessary to ensure these are destroyed.

The Alinytjara Wilurara and SA Arid Lands Landscape Boards may require land owners to destroy prickly acacia plants on their land. These two landscape boards are required to destroy plants on road reserves in their regions.

Prickly acacia is declared in category 1 under the Act for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its entry, road transport or sale can only be issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water or their delegate pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying prickly acacia on public roads, or bring them into the State. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying prickly acacia. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive, DEW.

The following sections of the Act apply to prickly acacia throughout each of the regions noted below:

Sections of Act	Region									
	AW	EP	GA	HF	KI	LC	MR	NY	SAAL	
186(1) Prohibiting entry to area	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
190 Requiring notification of presence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
192(1) Land owners to destroy the plant on their properties	X								X	
192(2) Land owners to control the plant on their properties										
194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves										

Review

Success of the program will be measured by the eradication of the currently known outbreak and its effectiveness in preventing any further incursion of prickly acacia into South Australia. In the event of further widespread discoveries of prickly acacia, application of this policy will be reviewed to achieve containment using the most appropriate method.

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025, or in the event of a change in the status of prickly acacia as a Weed of National Significance.

Weed Risk

Invasiveness

The summer rainfall tropical zone of Australia, extending into the subtropics of Queensland and the North Western Plains of NSW, is suitable for prickly acacia; the pastoral zone of South Australia is regarded as marginal habitat for this species. While prickly acacia poses a medium risk across the whole rangeland, certain environments such as riparian zones are vulnerable.

Impacts

In the areas where it grows, prickly acacia can form extensive, impenetrable thickets that compete with more desirable rangeland vegetation, hinder stock access to water and make mustering difficult.

Potential distribution

Due to the large infestations of prickly acacia in Queensland close to the border, there is an ongoing risk of further incursions.

Feasibility of Containment

Control costs

Herbicides are available to destroy prickly acacia. The remoteness of the site of incursion in the north-east of the State makes access the main component of control costs.

Persistence

Prickly acacia is present in a very limited area, and eradication of this population is feasible. Local eradication actions are the most cost-effective way to prevent spread to sites at risk.

As well as a seed bank of long lived seeds, prickly acacia regenerates vigorously from basal buds.

Current distribution

There are large infestations in Queensland that extend close to the South Australian border, and it is believed to have the potential to become a problem in the northern parts of this State. Prickly acacia is easy to eradicate from South Australia, where it currently occurs as one small known population.

Prickly acacia is not sold in the retail trade, and is not regarded as a useful amenity tree.

State Level Risk Assessment

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

Land use	Weed Risk	Feasibility of control	Response at State Level
Grazing - rangeland	medium 59	very high 1	contain spread alert

Considerations

Prickly acacia is a Weed of National Significance, and one of the three prickly bush weeds of concern in semi-arid Australia. It was introduced to Australia in the 1890s and promoted as a shade tree and for forage in tropical Queensland. The summer rainfall tropical zone of Australia, extending into the subtropics of Queensland and the North Western Plains of NSW, is suitable for prickly acacia; the pastoral zone of South Australia is regarded as marginal habitat for this species.

Risk assessment at the State level indicates a management action of containment, with prickly acacia treated as an alert species to prevent its spread into rangelands. Containment is supported by declaration for mandatory destruction in the two regions that include the northern rangelands.

Within South Australia, there is at present a single confirmed population of prickly acacia at Cordillo Downs in the South Australian Arid Lands region. Prickly acacia was also collected in 1987 beside an old outstation near Stirling North in the Northern and Yorke Natural Resource Management region, but cannot now be relocated at that site.

Synonymy

Vachellia nilotica (L.) Delile subsp. *indica* (Benth.) Kyal. & Boatwr., Bot. J. Linn. Soc. 172: 515 (2013)

Basionym: *Acacia arabica* var. *indica* Benth., London J. Bot. 1: 500 (1842)

Nomenclatural synonym: *Acacia nilotica* (L.) Delile subsp. *indica* (Benth.) Brenan, Kew Bulletin 12: 84 (1957)

Other common names include babul, gum arabic tree, prickly mimosa and Winton prickly bush.

References

Agriculture & Resource Management Council of Australia & New Zealand Australia & New Zealand Environment & Conservation Council and Forestry Ministers (2001) 'Weeds of National Significance Prickly Acacia (*Acacia nilotica* subsp.*indica*) Strategic Plan.' (National Weeds Strategy Executive Committee: Launceston)

Spies, P. & March, N. (2004) 'Prickly Acacia National Case Studies Manual'. (Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy: Cloncurry).

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Date: 28 March 2021