



Flora

Protected plants, threatened flora and clearing pressures.

How to use this handbook

This volume is the practitioner (site and technical) reference for the Flora factor. It sets out what Flora governs, every assessment element with its own process and controls, the Queensland and Commonwealth instruments that apply, and the primary metric for each element. It is decision support, not legal advice or a substitute for a site-specific assessment — confirm every regulatory point against the current instrument and, where a threshold is close or a critical exception applies, obtain specialist and legal review.

FIELD	DETAIL
Volume	05 of 17 — Environmental Knowledge Handbooks
Factor	Flora
Jurisdiction	Queensland, Australia
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Prepared by	QTEN — Queensland Technical Excellence Network
Review	SME, spatial and legal review before reliance

Executive overview

Flora values drive clearing constraints, protected-plant survey triggers and offset liability. In Queensland the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and its plant regulations protect species and impose the protected-plant clearing framework — including flora survey triggers in high-risk areas — while the Vegetation Management Act 1999 regulates the vegetation itself and the EPBC Act 1999 applies to nationally listed flora. The site-manager task is to run the protected-plant flora survey trigger check early, avoid and minimise clearing of protected and threatened flora, and hold clearing authorities and offset evidence.

Scope

Flora resolves into four secondary factors — Flora Values and Status; Flora Habitat and Ecological Function; Flora Pressures and Impacts; Flora Management and Monitoring — and twenty assessment elements. Every element is set out below with its own process and controls and its primary decision metric; identifiers are shared with the companion Knowledge System workbook and the platform calculators.

Assessment elements & process

Each assessment element below carries what it governs and its key pressures, the appropriate site process and controls, and the primary metric that measures it. Work every element that your project engages.

ASSESSMENT ELEMENT	WHAT IT GOVERNS & KEY PRESSURES	PROCESS & CONTROLS
Flora Diversity and Assemblages <i>Flora assemblage condition index</i>	Flora diversity and assemblage condition. Pressures: clearing, weeds, altered fire and hydrology.	Survey assemblages; baseline condition; avoid high-value vegetation; manage weeds and fire; monitor against the index.
Threatened and Near Threatened Flora <i>Protected flora impact significance</i>	Threatened and near-threatened flora and impact significance. Pressures: clearing, fragmentation, illegal take.	Run the protected-plant trigger check; survey; avoid and buffer; obtain a clearing permit; offset significant residual impact.

ASSESSMENT ELEMENT	WHAT IT GOVERNS & KEY PRESSURES	PROCESS & CONTROLS
Endemic and Range-restricted Flora <i>Range-loss exposure</i>	Endemic and range-restricted flora exposure. Pressures: habitat loss within a small range.	Identify range-restricted species; avoid critical populations; minimise range loss; salvage and offset where unavoidable.
Culturally Significant Flora <i>Cultural flora value impact status</i>	Culturally significant flora and value impacts. Pressures: clearing, loss of access, harm to valued plants.	Engage Traditional Owners; identify values; avoid and manage impacts; agree salvage and management measures.
Vegetation Structure and Composition <i>Vegetation structure and composition score</i>	Vegetation structure and composition against benchmark. Pressures: clearing, thinning, weeds, grazing.	Assess structure and composition to the RE benchmark; avoid and minimise clearing; rehabilitate to benchmark.
Flora Habitat Requirements <i>Suitable flora habitat retained</i>	Flora habitat requirements and suitable habitat retained. Pressures: clearing, degradation, hydrological change.	Map habitat; retain and buffer; sequence clearing; maintain the conditions the flora needs.
Plant Population Viability and Recruitment <i>Population viability and recruitment index</i>	Plant population viability and recruitment. Pressures: small populations, disrupted recruitment, edge effects.	Assess population viability; protect recruitment and seed sources; manage threats; monitor recruitment.
Pollination, Seed Dispersal and Genetic Connectivity <i>Plant reproductive connectivity index</i>	Pollination, seed dispersal and genetic connectivity. Pressures: fragmentation, loss of pollinators and vectors.	Retain connectivity and pollinator habitat; avoid isolating populations; revegetate to reconnect.
Riparian, Wetland and Aquatic Flora <i>Riparian and wetland flora condition</i>	Riparian, wetland and aquatic flora condition. Pressures: clearing, altered hydrology, weeds, sediment.	Retain and buffer riparian/wetland vegetation; protect hydrology; control weeds and sediment; rehabilitate.
Coastal, Marine and Intertidal Flora <i>Coastal flora extent and condition</i>	Coastal, marine and intertidal flora extent and condition. Pressures: reclamation, altered tidal flow, disturbance.	Map and avoid coastal/marine flora (incl. marine plants); maintain tidal exchange; manage disturbance; monitor.
Vegetation Clearing and Fragmentation <i>Residual vegetation impact</i>	Residual vegetation impact from clearing and fragmentation. Pressures: clearing, dissection, edge.	Apply the mitigation hierarchy; quantify residual impact; consolidate footprint; offset where significant.
Fire Regime and Vegetation Response <i>Fire regime compatibility</i>	Fire regime compatibility with vegetation. Pressures: too-frequent or too-rare fire, ignition risk.	Assess fire-regime needs; plan fire management to suit the vegetation; manage ignition risk; monitor response.
Weeds and Invasive Plants <i>Weed extent and control effectiveness</i>	Weeds and invasive plants — extent and control. Pressures: disturbance, contaminated fill, vehicle spread.	Map weeds; apply hygiene and certified fill; treat under the general biosecurity obligation; monitor control outcome.
Disease, Pathogens and Plant Biosecurity <i>Plant biosecurity risk</i>	Plant disease, pathogens and biosecurity risk. Pressures: soil and material movement, contaminated equipment.	Assess pathogen risk (e.g. Phytophthora, myrtle rust); apply hygiene; source clean material; monitor and respond.
Climate Change, Drought and Extreme Events <i>Flora climate vulnerability score</i>	Flora vulnerability to climate, drought and extreme events. Pressures: heat, drought, altered rainfall.	Assess climate vulnerability; select resilient provenance; protect refugia; provide establishment support.
Flora Survey and Detection <i>Flora survey adequacy and detection confidence</i>	Flora survey adequacy and detection confidence. Pressures: inadequate effort, wrong season.	Survey to guideline effort in the correct season by qualified botanists; document method and detection confidence.

ASSESSMENT ELEMENT	WHAT IT GOVERNS & KEY PRESSURES	PROCESS & CONTROLS
Protected Plant Clearing and Permit Management <i>Protected plant permit compliance</i>	Protected-plant clearing and permit compliance. Pressures: clearing without permit, non-compliance.	Confirm the clearing permit or exemption; comply with conditions; supervise clearing; record compliance.
Seed Collection, Propagation and Translocation <i>Propagation and translocation success</i>	Seed collection, propagation and translocation success. Pressures: poor provenance, low establishment.	Collect under authority with local provenance; propagate and translocate to protocol; monitor establishment.
Revegetation and Vegetation Rehabilitation <i>Revegetation trajectory against reference</i>	Revegetation and vegetation rehabilitation. Pressures: wrong species, weeds, poor establishment.	Set reference-based revegetation criteria; use local species; manage weeds; monitor trajectory against reference.
Flora Monitoring and Adaptive Management <i>Monitoring coverage and trigger response</i>	Flora monitoring and adaptive management. Pressures: inadequate monitoring, no trigger response.	Monitor against values and triggers; act on exceedance; report and adapt management.

Regulatory mapping

The instruments most often engaged for Flora. Confirm currency and application to the specific site and activity before relying on any entry.

INSTRUMENT	JURIS.	WHAT IT DOES	TYPICAL TRIGGER
Nature Conservation Act 1992	Qld	Protects native plants; protected-plant clearing framework and flora survey trigger.	Clearing in a high-risk trigger area, or impact on protected plants.
Nature Conservation (Plants) Regulation 2020	Qld	Species listings and protected-plant management.	Clearing or taking a protected plant.
Vegetation Management Act 1999	Qld	Regulates clearing of regulated native vegetation.	Clearing regulated vegetation.
Environmental Offsets Act 2014	Qld	Offsets for significant residual impacts on prescribed flora matters.	Significant residual impact on a prescribed matter.
Planning Act 2016	Qld	Development assessment for flora and vegetation matters.	Assessable development affecting flora values.
EPBC Act 1999	Cth	MNES — nationally listed threatened flora.	Likely significant impact on a listed species.

Assurance & evidence

- **Source currency.** Confirm the instruments, criteria and trigger values cited are current and correctly applied to the site and activity.
- **Records.** For each element engaged, retain the assessment, the controls applied, monitoring against the metric, and any statutory notifications — the evidence that the process was followed.
- **Independent review.** Interpretations, threshold decisions and critical exceptions are reviewed by a suitably qualified person before reliance.

TALK TO QTEN

Managing flora on a live project? QTEN helps Queensland clients turn this handbook into a defensible, evidence-backed position — scoping, assessment, controls, approvals and review. Bring us your site and we will help you get it right, and prove it.

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