



11 Monitoring and evaluation

A key part of the Box Gum Grassy Woodland Project is monitoring and evaluation to assess whether funded projects are maintaining and/or improving the quality and extent of box gum grassy woodland, in addition to other desired outcomes as described in the Environmental Stewardship Strategic Framework.

Land manager monitoring and evaluation

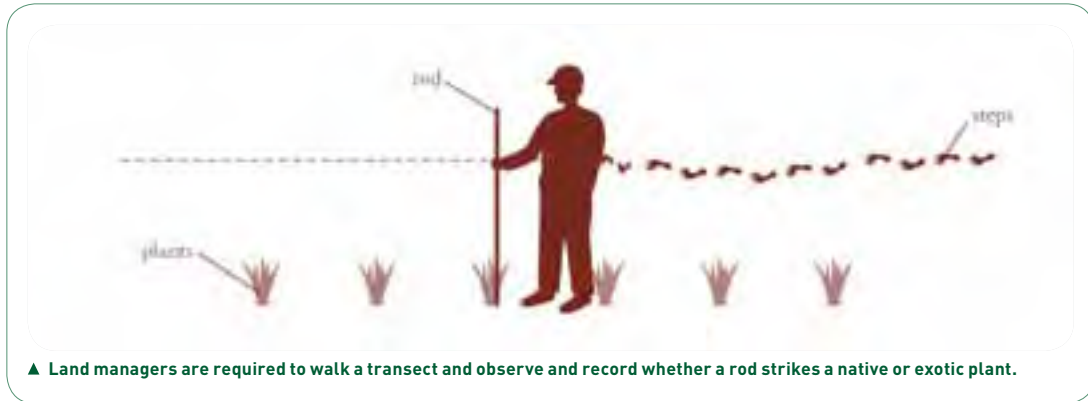
If you have a contract under the Box Gum Grassy Woodland Project, you will be required to complete simple annual monitoring and evaluation reports. These reports are not difficult or complicated and involve the following:

- Taking a photograph at approximately the same date and time each year (Spring) from a nominated point within each zone of your box gum grassy woodland patch/es to record any changes to the vegetation. A field officer will assist you to identify this point if your bid is successful. Unobtrusive markers will be placed within the patch to assist you to return to the same site for monitoring each year

- On the same day as the photo is taken, you will take approximately 50 steps between two nominated points on each plot and record after each step whether a rod held in your hand and placed on the ground in a vertical movement, hits a native or exotic plant. Initially you have the option of ticking a box labeled 'don't know' but hopefully over the length of the contract your knowledge of the plants within the patch will improve. You will have the opportunity to learn more about native and exotic species over the course of your contract
- Observing the patch/es to identify if there is evidence of grazing by kangaroos/rabbits, and identify if any eucalypt regeneration is evident.

You will record information in a template provided and submit it as part of annual reporting arrangements. As part of these reporting arrangements, you will also be required to complete a simple acquittal of funds received.

A field officer will assist with the set up of monitoring sites, including the site markers, and go over the reporting process, once a contract is in place. A monitoring information kit will be given to you to assist you with the monitoring and evaluation reporting requirements. You will also be provided with a booklet to assist with plant identification.



Other monitoring activities

To gain a scientific understanding of the Project's achievements, the Australian Government will periodically undertake detailed ecological surveys across a sample of properties. It will also be a condition of your contract to grant site access for this work, if selected as one of the sample properties. These surveys have no cost implications for you.

You will be contacted well in advance and appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure any visits happen at a convenient time for you. All information gathered during these surveys and assessments will be made available to you.

You may also be asked from time to time to participate in social surveys to give your opinions and thoughts about the conservation activities you have been undertaking, as well as provide feedback about your involvement in the Project. These surveys will, over time, provide additional information on how participating land managers are engaging in Environmental Stewardship.



▲ Land managers are asked to observe and record eucalypt regeneration in their patch (Photo: John Vranjic)