

**Name of dataset or data source:**

Assessment of Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on Coastal Floodplains TEC on NSW Crown Forest Estate (South Coast Region)

**Custodian of the dataset or data source:**

Chief Environmental Regulator (EPA)

**Description:**

The operational map for Swamp Sclerophyll Forest (SSF) was constructed to resolve long-standing issues surrounding its identification, location and extent within the NSW State Forest estate covered by the coastal Integrated Forestry Operation Agreements. The map was constructed in two parts, with State Forests to the north of Sydney being mapped in a separate process to those to the south of Sydney. We did this to minimise the risk that relationships between regional vegetation communities and the TEC would be confounded or masked by geographical variation or other major ecological gradients, which might otherwise be a significant risk if we had treated the full latitudinal range of the TEC as a single study area. In total, we assessed 1,218,000 hectares of State Forest across coastal NSW. This consisted of 868,000 hectares of State Forest on the north coast and more than 350,000 hectares of State Forest on the south coast. In both study areas, the project's Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) Reference Panel (the Panel) preceded the assessment process by reviewing the determination for SSF and agreeing upon a set of diagnostic parameters for its identification. The Panel found that SSF is primarily defined by floristic plot data and that it is mostly located on coastal floodplains and associated alluvial landforms. Following on from these conclusions, we started the mapping process by mapping the distribution of floodplains and alluvial soils and thus identifying possible areas of SSF. For both the north and the south coast we used an existing map of coastal landforms and geology in combination with several fine-scale models of alluvial landform features to determine the likely extent of floodplains and alluvial soils within our study areas. We used aerial photograph interpretation (API) to assess the floristic and structural attributes of the vegetation cover on our modelled alluvial environments, and thus delineated polygons likely to contain SSF. We also used API to modify the boundaries of the modelled alluvial areas using a prescribed list of eucalypt, casuarina and melaleuca species in combination with the interpretation of landform elements relevant to alluvial and floodplain environments. We then compiled floristic plot data for all State Forest areas within our modelled alluvial landforms and API polygons. For both the north and the south coast the floristic plot data was sourced from both existing flora surveys held in the OEH VIS database and from targeted flora surveys conducted specifically for this project. We compared these plots with those previously assigned to flora communities listed in the determination of SSF. Both dissimilarity-based methods and multivariate regression methods were used for the comparison. The results of the comparison were then used to assess the likelihood that the plots in State forests belonged to one or more of the communities listed in the SSF determination. Following this, we developed a predictive statistical model of the probability of occurrence of SSF using plot data and a selection of environmental and remote-sensing variables. For the north coast, we used a Random Forest model, while for the south coast we used a Boosted Regression Tree model. To create the operational map, we assigned every mapped API polygon to SSF if appropriate based on the plot data, over-storey and understorey attributes, landform features and modelled probabilities underlying each API polygon. In total, we mapped approximately 1131 hectares of SSF across our study area.

Operational TEC Mapping have been derived by API at a viewing scale between 1-4000 using ADS40 50 cm pixel imagery and 1 m derived LIDAR DEM grids for floodplain EECs.

#### Data quality rating:

- ★ Institutional Environment - 4
- ★ Accuracy - 4
- ★ Coherence - 4
- ★ Interpretability - 4
- ★ Accessibility - 5

### INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Very Good



- ✓ Does the information have the potential to enhance services or service delivery?
- ✓ The following governance roles and responsibilities for this asset are clearly assigned:
  - Information Asset Owner
  - Information Asset Custodian
  - Information Steward
- ✓ Data collection is authorised by law, regulation or agreement
- ✓ The Custodial agency has no commercial interest or conflict of interest in the data

X The data aligns with the Data Quality Framework, including:

- Legislation
- Policies
- Information Asset Governance
- Standards
- Data Management Plans

### ACCURACY

Very Good



- ✓ Data has been subject to a data assurance process (for example: Checking for errors at each stage of data collection and processing, or verifying data entry and making corrections if necessary.)
- ✓ There are no known gaps in the data or if there are gaps (for example: non-responses, missing records, data not collected), they have been identified in caveats attached to the dataset.
- ✓ No changes have been made or other factors identified (for example: weighting, rounding, de-identification of data, changes or flaws in data collection or verification methods) that could affect the validity of the data; or any changes/factors have been identified in caveats attached to the asset.
- ✓ The data collection met the objectives of the primary user. The data correctly represents what it was designed to measure, monitor or report.

X Data is revised and the revision is published if errors are identified

### COHERENCE

Very Good



- ✓ Standard definitions, common concepts, classifications and data recording practices have been used.

✓ Elements within the data can be meaningfully compared.

✓ This data is generally consistent with similar or related data sources from the same discipline

✓ The data does not form part of a collection or, if it is the latest in a series of data releases, there have not been any changes in methodology or external impacts since the last data release.

✗ The data can be analysed over time (for example, there have not been any significant changes in the way items are defined, classified or counted over time).

## INTERPRETABILITY

Very Good



✓ Information is available about the primary data sources and methods of data collection (e.g. instruments, forms, instructions).

✓ Information is available to help users evaluate the accuracy of the data and any level of error

✓ Information is available to explain concepts, help users correctly interpret the data and understand how it can be used

✓ Information is available to explain ambiguous or technical terms used in the data

✗ A data dictionary is available to explain the meaning of data elements, their origin, format and relationships

i Find out more about the data dictionary from the Custodian (contact details below).

i Find out more about the primary data sources and methods of data collection from the Custodian (contact details below).

i Find out more about concepts used in this dataset and how to understand or interpret the data from the Custodian (contact details below).

i Find out more about ambiguous or technical terms used in the data from the Custodian (contact details below).

## ACCESSIBILITY

Excellent



✓ Data is available online with an open licence

✓ Data is available in machine-processable, structured form (e.g. CSV format instead of an image scan of a table)

✓ Data is available in a non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV, XML)

✓ Data is described using open standards (e.g. RDF, SPARQL) and persistent identifiers (URIs or DOIs)

✓ Data is linked to other data, to provide context (e.g. employee ID is linked to employee name or species name is linked to genus)

## DATA DISCLAIMER

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**For more information about this dataset or data source, contact:**

Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

**Data Broker email:**

N/A

**Data Broker phone:**

N/A

## Understanding the Data Quality Statement

The data quality statement aims to help you understand how a particular dataset could be used and whether it can be compared with other, similar datasets. It provides a description of the characteristics of the data to help you decide whether the data will be fit for your specific purpose.

The Data Quality statement is prepared by the data custodian (provider of the dataset), using a questionnaire that has been developed in accordance with the NSW Government Standard for Data Quality Reporting.

### **About the quality rating:**

The reporting questionnaire asks five questions for each of these data quality dimensions:

- Institutional Environment
- Accuracy
- Coherence
- Interpretability
- Accessibility

For each question: “yes” = 1 point; “no” = 0 points

The number of points determines the Quality Level for each dimension (high, medium, low). Only dimensions with four or five points receive a star.

Points	Quality Level	Star / No Star
0	Poor	No Star
1	Poor	No Star
2	Fair	No Star
3	Good	No Star
4	Very Good	Star
5	Excellent	Star

## Evaluating data quality

Quality relates to the data's “fitness for purpose”. Users can make different assessments about the data quality of the same data, depending on their “purpose” or the way they plan to use the data.

The following questions may help you evaluate data quality for your requirements. This list is not exhaustive. Generate your own questions to assess data quality according to your specific needs and environment.

- What was the primary purpose or aim for collecting the data?
- How well does the coverage (and exclusions) match your needs?
- How useful are these data at small levels of geography?
- Does the population presented by the data match your needs?
- To what extent does the method of data collection seem appropriate for the information being gathered?
- Have standard classifications (eg industry or occupation classifications) been used in the collection of the data? If not, why?

Does this affect the ability to compare or bring together data from different sources?

- Have rates and percentages been calculated consistently throughout the data?
- Is there a time difference between your reference period, and the reference period of the data?
- What is the gap of time between the reference period (when the data were collected) and the release date of the data?
- Will there be subsequent surveys or data collection exercises for this topic?
- Are there likely to be updates or revisions to the data after official release?