THE TRANSLOCATION OF TWO CRITICALLY ENDANGERED ACACIA SPECIES

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The successful recovery of critically endangered flora will rely increasingly on the translocation of these flora to secure sites where the amelioration of threats has been successful or where current threats such as weeds are not present. Translocations are both costly and time consuming, and in many cases involve very small numbers of plants from critically endangered populations. It is most important that cost effective and efficient methodologies are developed that ensure translocation establishment and that protocols are developed for determining translocation success.

Of the 28 Acacia taxa listed as threatened (Declared Rare Flora) 12 are critically endangered and all occur in the cereal growing areas (Wheatbelt) where there has been extensive land clearing and habitat degradation. Many populations of these critically endangered Acacia taxa occur on degraded road verges and other small remnants of degraded vegetation.

By the end of 2001 CALM will have carried out 15 translocations of critically endangered taxa as part of approved Interim Recovery Plans of which two are Acacias, *Acacia aprica* and *Acacia cochlocarpa* subsp. *cochlocarpa*. Various translocation methodologies have been experimentally tested and preliminary data indicate different success rates depending upon site and climatic conditions. The development of scientifically based translocations methodologies that offer a reasonable probability of success require detailed monitoring and data analysis of experimental translocations. Equally critical, as part of the same monitoring program, is the need to develop protocols for determining and predicting translocation success. These protocols need to be based on estimates of the viability of the translocated population in terms of reproductive output (seed production, seed viability etc) and the subsequent recruitment of new individuals. Preliminary data is presented on the current status and success of translocations of *A. aprica* and *A. cochlocarpa* subsp. *cochlocarpa*.