

# WILDFLOWER SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (INC.) REVEGETATION POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

A major aim of the Wildflower Society is the preservation of native flora. The natural Western Australian landscape is a valuable asset worthy of protection and conservation, thus retaining our sense of place.

Land clearing in Western Australia has resulted in extensive loss of native vegetation, habitat and landscape amenity. In the Perth Metropolitan area and the wheatbelt, only small patches of remnant vegetation remain. Many species of plants and animals are either extinct or threatened with extinction. Our unique Western Australian landscape has been modified and often bears little resemblance to that which existed before European settlement.

Clearing of native vegetation in rural areas has caused a rise in water table levels resulting in salinisation and waterlogging of soil. This has led to the continual degradation of remnant vegetation and loss of productive agricultural land. This scenario is likely to increase dramatically in the short term.

Revegetation of rural catchments is one of the key strategies for controlling rising water tables and salinity. While commercial species (e.g. blue gums and oil mallees) are being used and are valuable to primary industry, indigenous (local native) vegetation can re-establish the Western Australian landscape amenity and provide habitat for our endangered fauna.

The aim of this policy is to provide a set of standards and guidelines to encourage the preservation and regeneration of indigenous vegetation.

## PRINCIPLES OF REVEGETATION

### OBJECTIVES

1. To promote the use of local native species in revegetation projects.
2. To encourage as far as possible the reconstruction of the vegetation community indigenous to the locality.
3. To ensure that revegetation provides the basis for a sustainable functioning ecosystem.
4. To encourage the establishment of native vegetation corridors throughout urban and rural landscapes.

### POLICY STATEMENTS

**1.1** Revegetation projects should use local native species, either grown from seed collected from the locality or by direct broadcasting of locally collected seed.

**1.2** Local seed orchards need to be established to provide a suitable source of seed from local provenance species for regeneration projects.

**1.3** Seed orchards should be designed to both maintain genetic integrity of each species and the intraspecific variation within each species, so that inbreeding depression and hybridisation can be prevented.

**2.1** Retention of remnant native bushland and natural regeneration is preferable to revegetation. An expressed intention of rehabilitation should not be taken as an excuse for clearing.

**2.2** On sites adjacent to native bushland local provenance species only should be used. Use of the same species from other locations can interfere with the genetic integrity of local species. Use of non local plants may also increase the threat of weed invasion.

**2.3** Sites that are modified or degraded in areas remote from remnant vegetation may need different species for revegetation. Examination of flora growing in similar climatic and soil conditions should provide guidance.

**3.** Projects should aim to re-establish the biological, genetic and structural diversity of local native vegetation to ensure the provision of diverse fauna habitats. This will be more sustainable and will buffer the ecosystem against environmental fluctuations.

**4.** Where practicable, revegetation programs should be planned to link remnant vegetation in the region to provide flora and fauna corridors.

**WILDFLOWER SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (INC.)  
PRINCIPLES OF SEED COLLECTION AND USAGE**

**PREAMBLE**

For many years the Society has sold seeds to both Society members and the general public. Society members have donated time to collecting, selecting, preparing and distributing wildflower seed for sale. In times when wildflower seed was only available through specialist bodies, these seed banks allowed Society members and the wider community access to a variety of seeds of our wildflowers in quantities suitable for home gardens at low cost. For many years this was a core activity of the Society and raised a large proportion of the Society's consolidated funds. Today wildflower plants and seeds are much more readily available to the home gardener through nurseries and seed merchants. Also revegetation programmes and bushland restoration have created a wildflower seed industry calling for the collection of tonnes of seed. This seed industry is regulated through the Department of Conservation and Land Management. As the peak community group concerned with flora conservation in the state, the Wildflower Society serves on advisory groups related to this industry. The Society's Flora Conservation Principles are the basis for our advice on these groups and our own everyday activities. These factors and the continued loss of bushland areas in the state have resulted in the need to develop a Wildflower Society Seed Policy that complements our Principles of Flora Conservation.

This policy recognises that the Society has a role in supplying seed for home gardens and a commitment to ensure that seed sources do not compromise the preservation of our bushland.

**PRINCIPLES OF SEED COLLECTION AND USAGE**

**1. CULTIVATION**

Cultivation in gardens gives people the opportunity to care about, study and enjoy our flora and lessen human impact on our environment. The commercial collection of seed from the bushland is incompatible with flora conservation. All commercial production of seed should therefore necessarily be based on cultivation.

**2. SEED ORCHARDS**

Seed for cultivation in gardens and for most revegetation projects should be sourced from cultivated plants in seed orchards. Seed orchards should be designed to both maintain the genetic integrity of each species and intraspecific variation within each species. Seed collected from bushland can be used to establish orchards.

**3. REVEGETATION**

Revegetation projects range from habitat reconstruction for nature conservation to land reclamation and the appropriate source of seed will depend on the nature of the project. Habitat reconstruction that is adjacent to areas of bushland requires seed of local provenance. The more distant the revegetation is from natural populations the less stringent is this requirement and seed should then be sourced from seed orchards.

**4. RESTORATION**

Bushland restoration aims at maintaining the ecological integrity and evolutionary processes in bushland areas. Seed required for restoration work should be of local provenance, being seed collected from plants growing in the same community and position in the landscape within a reasonable distance of the bushland area being restored.