



Clearance of Box Mistletoe *Amyema miquelii*

BACKGROUND

Several species of mistletoe are indigenous to South Australia and all are important in providing habitat for native birds and other fauna.

In some areas, however, patterns of vegetation clearance and land management have created situations where there are severe Mistletoe infestations in trees (particularly eucalypts), which are already being stressed by other factors. Research has shown that the optimum approach to this situation is to revegetate affected areas with a range of native plant species so as to help restore a better balance between Mistletoe and the host trees.

However, it is also accepted that the removal of Mistletoe from badly affected trees may help prolong the lives of those trees. This applies in particular to infestations of Box Mistletoe, *Amyema miquelii*.

The removal of Box Mistletoe is exempt under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 (Regulation 5(1)(z)) **provided that** there is compliance with the following guidelines.

GUIDELINES

1 Consultation and Endorsement

As box mistletoe can be a valuable plant in its own right, any removal on a significant scale must be discussed with, and endorsed by, the Biodiversity Assessment Team or Native Vegetation Council Secretariat, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). This requirement applies in all situations except:

- **where the mistletoe is within township boundaries; OR**
- **outside of township boundaries, where the mistletoe removal is from ten trees or less.**

2 **Subject to part 1 above, Box Mistletoe may be removed from trees where:**

- the trees are scattered or isolated trees over pasture, along roadsides, or in other situations where other native vegetation has been largely replaced by exotics, and where the trees contribute significantly to the amenity of the district or locality; **AND**
- the trees are showing signs of significant die-back which are clearly linked with the level of mistletoe infestation; **AND**
- the removal complies with other conditions as set out below.

3 The following photos to be used as a guide where Mistletoe is to be removed:

a) Class 1 (low) level infestation: tree apparently healthy: no significant loss of tree foliage:

- no mistletoe to be removed

NOTE: Some loss or fluctuation in the foliage cover of Eucalypts is quite natural: as a guide, 30% loss or more can be interpreted as indicating stress in trees where Mistletoe is present.



b) Class 2 (moderate) level infestation: tree with signs of stress or dieback; 30% to 40% of tree foliage lost with Mistletoe being the only apparent factor:

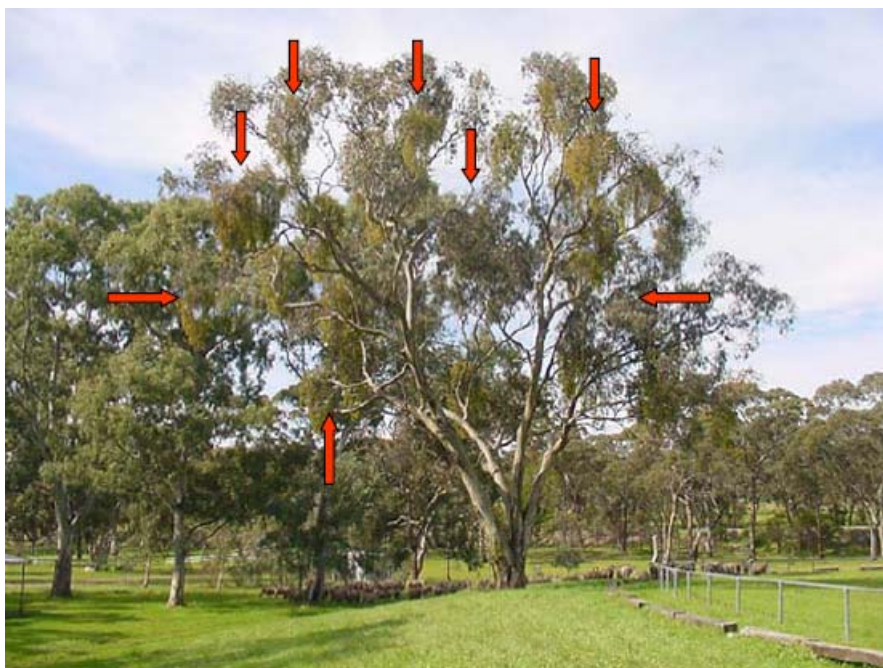
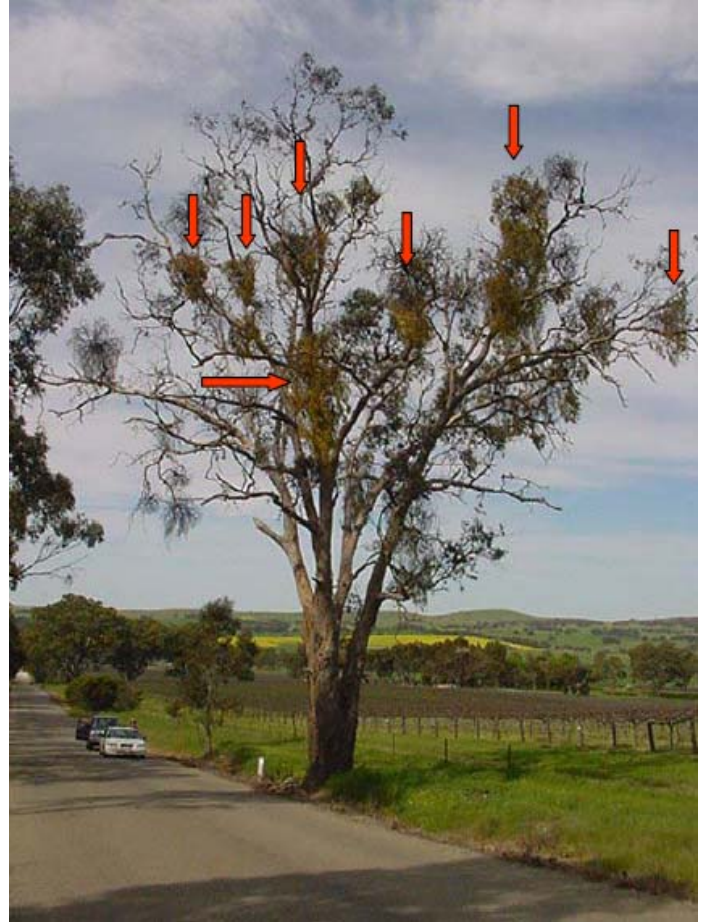
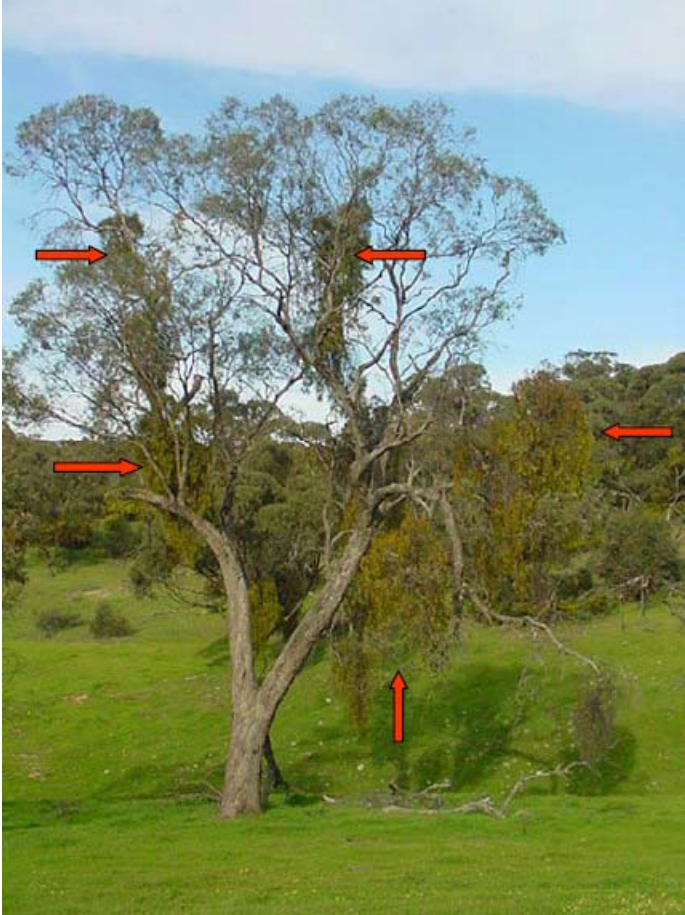
- **Up to 70% of the Box Mistletoe can be removed**

NOTE: This percentage can be increased, in consultation with DENR, where it is clear from other trees in the vicinity that Class 2 infestations can eventually contribute to more severe dieback



c) Class 3 (high) level infestation: trees clearly stressed; several Mistletoe clumps present and more than 40% of tree foliage lost:

- All Mistletoe can be removed from tree



4 **Method of Mistletoe Removal**

The method of Mistletoe removal must restrict the clearance to the mistletoe itself and a minimal amount of the host tree.

The only exception to this approach is in mallee communities where greater removal of the host tree may be appropriate in order to promote better regeneration from the host tree. Such

greater clearance must be endorsed by the Native Vegetation Council Secretariat or Biodiversity Assessment Team, DENR, and may require a clearance application to the Native Vegetation Council. In general the clearance of any vegetation containing hollows, or with the potential to develop hollows, will not be permitted within these guidelines due to their value as bird resting sites.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines issued in relation to the clearance or management of native vegetation are legally enforceable. The guidelines set out methodologies for dealing with vegetation that is causing problems in certain circumstances. Adhering to these guidelines will ensure that there is no breach of the Native Vegetation Act. Copies of this and other Guidelines can be downloaded from the website <http://www.nvc.sa.gov.au>

For more detailed information, please contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit, Department of Environment and Natural Resources on (08) 8303 9725.