



AUSTRALIA NATURAL VEGETATION

The map shows the probable state of Australia's vegetation around 1788 when European settlement began.

FLORISTIC TYPE

Indicated by a code letter. Floristic type is shown for the tallest stratum and also for the lower stratum where the foliage cover of the top stratum is less than 10%.

GENUS, FAMILY OR GROUP	CODE LETTER
Baccharis	a
Casuarina including Allocasuarina	b
Eucalyptus	k
Fabae	n
Chenopodiaceae (e.g. saltbush and bluebush)	l
Trees and Shrubs	m
Malvaceae	o
Myrtaceae	p
Chenopodiaceae (salt marsh)	q
Conifers	r
Myrtaceae (paperbark)	s
Antrodiaetum (ironwood)	t
Acacia including Racosperma	w
Hummock Grasses	v
Triodia and/or Plectrotrache	u
Astragalus (Mitchell grass)	d
Dichanthium (bluegrass)	e
Graminoids	f
Chenopodiaceae	g
Stipe (lockcress grass)	h
Other Grasses	y
General	x

Note: Genus or family not indicated for areas of littoral complex.

GROWTH FORM AND FOLIAGE COVER

Indicated by alpha-numeric codes and distinctive colours for the tallest stratum. Where the growth form of the tallest is shown as trees or shrubs, the growth form of the next tallest stratum with foliage cover of more than 10% is also indicated — by letter symbol and also by colour where the foliage cover of the tallest stratum is less than 30%.

GROWTH FORM	FOLIAGE COVER			
	>70%	30-70%	10-30%	<10%
Tall Trees >30 metres	T </td <td>TR</td> <td>TR</td> <td>TR</td>	TR	TR	TR
Medium Trees 10-30 metres	M	MR	MR	MR
Low Trees <10 metres	L	LR	LR	LR
Tall Shrubs >2 metres	S	SR	SR	SR
Low Shrubs <2 metres	Z	ZR	ZR	ZR
Hummock Grasses	H	HR	HR	HR
Tussocky or Tufted Grasses and Graminoids	G	GR	GR	GR
Other Herbaceous Plants	F	FR	FR	FR

Examples of depiction of tallest and lower stratum:

Tussock Grasses below Low Trees	GR	GR	GR	GR
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Littoral Complex: Intertidal mosaic of mangroves, low shrubs, herbaceous plants, bare salt flats, etc.

NOTES

RAINFORREST: Shown on this map as YL, YM and YH and typically associated with an annual rainfall greater than 1200 mm.

MAPABLE AREAS: Patches too small to map as areas but locally covering more than 500 hectares.

FOLIAGE COVER: The proportion of ground that would be shaded by a stratum if sunshine came from directly overhead and no other strata were present (projective foliage cover).

SHRUBS: Woody plant that is multi-stemmed from or near to the ground.

HUMMOCK GRASS: Mound-like plant up to about 1 metre high with repeatedly leaved stems and long spongy leaves (genus Triodia and Plectrotrache of the family Poaceae). Plectrotrache can also occur as a tussock grass.

GRAMINOID: A plant grass-like in form but not floristically of the family Poaceae (grasses).

OTHER HERBACEOUS PLANTS: Includes forbs and some grasses, e.g. small chenopods in dry inland areas with sparse foliage cover (BF1).

SOURCES

Compiled by J. A. Carruthers (Botany Department, Australian National University) in collaboration with staff geographers of the Australian Surveying and Land Information Group, Department of Administrative Services. Derived from the map 'Present Vegetation', 1:8 million scale, with reference to all relevant source material for that map and to other published and unpublished information on pre-settlement vegetation.

VEGETATION CODING

The alpha-numeric codes shown on this map provide more information than the colour-coding, which primarily shows only the structure of the tallest stratum.

The first three (occasionally four) characters of the code refer to the tallest stratum. The first — a lower-case letter — indicates the predominant floristic type, e.g. a = Eucalyptus. Occasionally, where two types are of near-equal abundance, two lower-case code letters are shown, the first indicating the slightly more abundant type. The next character — an upper-case letter — indicates the growth form, e.g. T = tall trees. The following character — a number — indicates the projective foliage cover of this stratum, e.g. 3 = 30-70%.

The next one or two characters refer to the lower stratum if it has a foliage cover of more than 10%. Where the foliage cover of the upper stratum is greater than 10% only the growth form of the lower is indicated by an upper-case letter. Where the foliage cover of the upper stratum is less than 10%, the predominant floristic type of the lower stratum is indicated by a lower-case letter followed by its upper-case letter indicating its growth form. In a few cases two lower-case floristic code letters are given for the lower stratum indicating near-equal abundance.

Vegetation that has a seasonal occurrence is indicated by italicized code characters.

In sand dune country the code is underlined if the vegetation is largely restricted to stable areas between dunes.

EXAMPLES OF CODES

genus	growth form	foliage cover	genus	growth form
wL3	w	L	3	G
wL20	w	L	20	H
uL10	u	L	10	I
uL10	u	L	10	I

As above except that vegetation indicated is that of stable areas between dune crests.

Vegetation that has a seasonal occurrence is indicated by italicized code characters, e.g. wL3.