

MR (Major) *Acacia mearnsii*

Date assessed	2020-09-27
Year published	2023
Eicat category	MR (Major)
Justification for EICAT assessment	<p><i>A. mearnsii</i> caused a decline in grass species diversity and richness, but it returned after restoration took place (Vundla, 2018). <i>A. mearnsii</i> invasion reduced bacterial diversity (Slabbert et al., 2014). Native species diversity is lower in <i>A. mearnsii</i> invaded regions, possibly due to its allelopathic effects (Tassin et al., 2009). <i>A. mearnsii</i> invaded regions showed lower invertebrate species richness and diversity than uninvaded regions (Samways et al., 1996). <i>A. mearnsii</i> invaded soils generally had lower rhizobial diversity and were more homogenous compared to uninvaded soils (Le Roux et al., 2018). Native plant species richness decreased on all slopes invaded by <i>A. mearnsii</i> and soil became more acidic and nutrient rich (van der Waal, 2009). Soil moisture content was higher in invaded soils and diversity indices were higher in cleared and natural sites than in invaded sites (Ruwanza and Tshililo, 2019). <i>A. mearnsii</i> invaded sites had significantly lower species richness and taxonomic distinctiveness than cleared and uninvaded sites (Samways and Sharratt, 2010).</p>
Confidence rating	Low
Mechanism(s) of maximum impact	Structural Impact on ecosystem; Physical Impact on ecosystem; Chemical impact on ecosystems; Poisoning/ toxicity; Competition
Countries of most severe impact	South Africa; Mascarene Archipelago
Description of impact	<p>Impact categories ranged from minimal concern to major. <i>A. mearnsii</i> physically changed the natural environment through reducing the native species diversity and richness. <i>A. mearnsii</i> outcompeted natives and natives declined. <i>A. mearnsii</i> has chemical impacts by changing the soil properties of the natural ecosystem. <i>A. mearnsii</i> has poisoning/toxic impact through its allelopathic effect on other plants, which suppresses their growth. <i>A. mearnsii</i> has structural impacts through changes in native communities, such as arthropod community composition.</p>
Assessor	Cally Jansen
Contributors	
Reviewers	EICAT authority
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