



Index of Biodiversity Surveys for Assessments

What is IBSA?

The Index of Biodiversity Surveys for Assessments (IBSA) is a new project by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. It will capture biodiversity data from land-based biodiversity field surveys that support assessments under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act), consolidate this data, and provide a platform to make it publicly available.

Once data has been used for assessment purposes, the department will make basic information for each dataset available online. Data owners will have control over how accessible the complete datasets are.

What are the benefits?

Approximately \$38 million is spent each year collecting biodiversity data for environmental assessments under the EP Act, yet the information is not currently centralised or easily discoverable.

Full participation in IBSA will deliver better environmental outcomes and improve the efficiency of assessments for proponents, by:

- reducing costs and delays associated with poor availability of biodiversity data
- allowing government, industry and the community to get maximum value from existing data
- supporting ongoing strategic planning, decision making and management.

How will it affect me?

Everybody who conducts land-based biodiversity surveys to support environmental assessments and compliance under Parts IV and V of the EP Act will be required to submit data to IBSA as part of these processes.

This includes surveys supporting:

- applications to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for native vegetation clearing permits and works approvals and licences
- referrals to the Environmental Protection Authority of proposals and schemes
- applications to the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety for native vegetation clearing permits.

The IBSA project follows consultation with industry and environment peak bodies. It is procedurally simple, allows flexibility for data owners and will include a transition period.

Data standards and other guidance material will be published before IBSA goes live at the end of April 2018.

How can I learn more?

We will be conducting a mail out to stakeholders, providing face-to-face familiarisation sessions, and publishing updated information on our website. Register your interest in receiving updates about IBSA at dwer.wa.gov.au/ibsa-register.