

# Using photography to elicit grazier values and management practices relating to tree survival and recruitment

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## Abstract

Integrating conservation and agricultural production is a major challenge globally. The upper Lachlan catchment of Australia is dominated by livestock grazing, and is threatened because most native woodland vegetation has been cleared. A third of all remaining tree cover occurs as scattered trees in grazing pastures. These scattered trees are dying from old age and are not regenerating due to grazing pressure. Previous work has revealed management strategies that are more likely to maintain tree cover, such as low-input rotational grazing. We asked graziers to photograph significant features on their properties, and used the images as prompts in later interviews. This elicited graziers' landscape values and other drivers of their management practices related to tree cover. The targets that our 25 case landholders chose to photograph, and the ways they discussed them in later interviews, reflected the focus of past education and incentive programs, suggesting that well-designed policies, educational messages and incentives do seem to reach landholders and result in improved practices. For example, many landholders reported management activities related to the protection of large woodland patches or the maintenance of coarse woody debris. The maintenance of scattered tree cover has not been a focus of policy initiatives in the past. Despite this, the narratives elicited by photos of isolated and scattered trees showed graziers valued them and were aware of and concerned about their decline, yet lacked knowledge about how to protect and regenerate them. Graziers urgently need unambiguous advice and practical assistance to help them adapt their practices to maintain scattered trees in the long term.

**Keywords:** Photo-elicitation; Scattered trees; Fertiliser; Rotational grazing; Landscape values; Holistic resource management

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