ABFRP Supplemental Standard Operating Procedures for Selecting Baseline Monitoring Sites

These supplemental standard operating procedures provide additional criteria for the selection of suitable baseline monitoring sites. The criteria described here are to be used in conjunction with the ABFRP Standard Operating Procedures for Baseline Monitoring.

# Criteria for selection of monitoring sites

1. Monitoring sites should fall within the planting areas as described in the ABFRP project description document within the section titled “Selection of planting sites”.
2. Preliminary locations for monitoring sites will be determined using random points generated in accordance with the “ABFRP Standard Operating Procedures for Baseline Monitoring”.
3. After this preliminary site allocation, these locations should be assessed – using the criteria described in these supplemental standard operating procedures – to ensure that they are suitable for baseline monitoring that is consistent with the needs described in the ABFRP project description document.
4. A monitoring site should be re-allocated if the preliminary allocation falls:
   1. within a previously allocated monitoring site;
   2. within an area that is not to be planted;
   3. within an area that is subject to severe soil erosion;
   4. within 30 m of a road edge or fence;
   5. within 50 m of a water body (e.g. rivers, lakes, dams);
   6. within 30 m of reserve or farm infrastructure (e.g. houses, lodges, livestock kraals);
   7. within sites of social, cultural or historical importance (e.g. burial grounds, natural heritage sites);
   8. within 50 m of functioning agricultural lands; and/or
   9. on a cliff face or other inaccessible area where planting activities are not possible.
5. In addition, a monitoring site should be re-allocated if the preliminary allocation falls within an area of pristine thicket vegetation[[1]](#footnote-1). This is defined as thicket which does not show signs of:
6. excessive herbivory e.g. no hedging effect from goats;
7. dwarf shrub or alien plant invasion;
8. noticeable reductions of standing biomass; and
9. noticeable disturbance by human activities e.g. wood collecting, clearing.
10. If the preliminary allocation of a monitoring site does not meet the criteria described above, a new site allocation should be made in accordance with the “ABFRP Standard Operating Procedures for Baseline Monitoring”.

1. Following Lloyd, J.W., Palmer, A.R., van den Berg, E.C., van Wyk, E., & van der Merwe, J.P. 2002. Patterns of transformation and degradation in the thicket biome. In Lloyd, J.W., van den Berg, E.C. & Palmer, A.R. (Eds.), *Patterns of transformation and degradation in the thicket biome, South Africa* (pp. 58-88). University of Port Elizabeth: Terrestrial Ecology Research Unit. Report No. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)