



DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY

**METHODS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SELECTION
OF CHAMPION TREES IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR
PROTECTION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL FORESTS
ACT of 1998 (ACT 84 OF 1998)**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1) INTRODUCTION

2) OBJECTIVES

3) CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

4) STAKEHOLDER INPUT

5) RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1) Definition of the Champion Concept

5.2) System of Categories and Criteria

5.2.1 Biological Attributes

5.2.2 Age of tree

5.2.3 Heritage Significance

5.2.4 Legislation

5.3) Application for Champion Status

5.3.1 Information required for Champion status

5.3.2 Application process

5.4) Format and Presentation of Champion Tree List in the NFA

5.5) Preliminary Champion Tree List

5.5.1 Information sources for assigning Champion status

5.5.2 Expert Panel and Evaluation Procedure

5.6) Enforcing Champion Legislation

5.6.1 Communication and awareness

5.6.2 Responsibilities for management and activities

5.6.3 Legislation

6) CONCLUSIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report deals with assigning special status to extraordinary single trees and groups of trees in South Africa, here referred to as ‘Champion’ trees. Three expert workshops, hosted by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF), were held in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape during May – July 2003.

The report proposes an objective methodology for determining Champion status. *Biological Attributes*, *Age of Tree* and *Heritage Significance* are the key parameters for evaluating Champion status. Legal provisions elsewhere are also a key consideration in the methodology.

The report also spells out a process by which stakeholders can suggest certain trees that should be on the Champion Tree List (application process), as well as evaluation procedures for the technical review of the Champion Tree List.

This work was carried out as part of the DWAF’s Champion Trees Project, and relates directly to the National Forests Act of 1998 (Act 84 of 1998).

1) INTRODUCTION

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) initiated the Champion Trees Project with the purpose of identifying exceptional trees and regulating for their special protection using the National Forests Act of 1998 (NFA). Section 12 of the NFA states that the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry can declare certain tree species and individual trees or groups of trees, as protected. Such protected trees may not be “...*cut, disturbed or damaged and their products may not be possessed, sold or transported without a licence...*”. In the case of individual trees the protection is absolute, with no potential for permission for removal except if life or property is threatened (eg by dying or leaning trees).

A list of protected tree species has recently been updated (previously reviewed in 1976), and is likely to be gazetted before the end of 2003. To date however, no individual trees or groups of trees in South Africa have been declared as protected on the basis of champion status, that is, on the basis of size, age or historical value.

The DWAF's Champion Trees Project concentrates on using various attributes to assign Champion status to individual trees or groups of trees. Similar studies have been conducted elsewhere, for example in the US and Britain, where the term, 'Champion', was applied. These countries usually list trees of exceptional size or age as their 'champion trees'.

In South Africa, reasonably sound data exist for size or age attributes, and organisations such as the Dendrological Society (then the Dendrological Foundation) have been the pioneers in this regard (e.g. Von Breitenbach, 1985). Specimens of exceptionally large-sized indigenous trees (based principally on stem, crown and diameter measurements) were listed in the South African National Register of Big Trees (not a legally recognised entity).

Many trees are linked to our country's cultural diversity and history. These trees are potential candidates for Champion status. Yet, the heritage aspects for some of these trees are formally unrecorded, and often, are known only to individuals or local communities.

The National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (Act 25 of 1999) (previously National Monuments Act 1969) is a legal tool for the protection of cultural and historical heritage. This Act, however, focuses on site protection and the scale of the surrounding environment rather than on the tree itself. Trees worthy of protection on the basis of their size or age, for example, that fall beyond the domain of the National Heritage Resources Act, can also be protected under the NFA. These two legal tools may therefore be complementary for the protection of extraordinary trees.

2) OBJECTIVES

One of the outcomes of the DWAF's Champion Trees Project is to gazette a list of Champion trees as part of the NFA. However, arriving at such a list requires considerable preparatory steps that includes clarifying (i) an objective methodology; (ii) a process by which stakeholders can suggest certain trees that should be on the list; and (iii) an evaluation procedure for reviewing the Champion Tree List. The objectives of this report therefore cover the following issues:

- The definition of a Champion status, for the purposes of the NFA;
- A method against which data can be evaluated to enable Champion status (system of categories and criteria);
- The procedures required for making proposals of trees to be listed with Champion status;
- Trees and groups of trees on the Champion Tree List, and the format of this list; and
- The evaluation procedure for reviewing existing lists and proposals submitted by interest groups.

Secondary issues were also addressed, and these include:

- A communication strategy that takes into account awareness-raising and end-users of the list of Champion Trees;
- Some legal considerations; and
- Implementation of the Champion Tree List (enforcement).

3) CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The definition of a Champion Tree should take cognisance of the following elements:

- The definition of a tree, as used elsewhere (for example, for Protected Tree Species in the NFA), is given as: ‘...*any self-supporting woody plant of >10 mm stem diameter at breast height, that is >3m high if single-stemmed, and >5 m high if multi-stemmed...*’ For the purposes of this Act tree-like plants like Aloe, cycads, palms, banana-like plants and so forth are excluded from the definition;
- Champion status can be assigned to an individual tree or group of trees;
- Living and dying trees should be regarded as candidates for Champion status. Certified dead trees that had Champion status, as well as fossilised specimens, should instead be considered as candidates for the National Heritage Resources Act. In this way, the two pieces of legislation can work synergistically. But, more importantly, there is greater scope for the NFA to

protect and extend the life-span for larger numbers of living and dying trees with Champion status i.e. the NFA invests in living biodiversity resources;

- Both indigenous and non-indigenous trees should be regarded as potential candidates for Champion status. Certain non-indigenous trees are contenders for Champion status in terms of their often strong cultural and historical links to South African heritage. For reasons relating to the history of human settlements, most non-indigenous candidates for Champion status are found in urban environments; furthermore, non-indigenous candidates for Champion status are unlikely to be listed as Category 1 or Category 2 weeds (i.e. candidates are unlikely to be pernicious, Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, Section 15 and 16). In the case where a non-indigenous Champion tree is a declared weed, then a management plan to curb its spread should be implemented by the appropriate governing authority. The chances of extensive spread are low in the built environment.
- Species in protected areas, including botanical gardens, should be considered, in relation to the proposed Protected Areas Bill and other relevant pieces of legislation; and
- The national versus regional importance (i.e. the scale of importance) should be a key consideration for champion status. Species listed as protected in other Acts and pieces of legislation (e.g. provincial ordinances or municipal by-laws) can be included in the preliminary list as potential Champion trees to be evaluated.

Other factors that underpinned the conceptual approach were the following:

- Stakeholder interests (provincial and local authorities; cultural historians; NGOs that focus on trees; wildlife/environment sector; and civil society;) should be taken into account in determining the list of Champion trees; and
- The DWAF's legal mandate and existing capacity should be considered (as expressed during the stakeholder input process, see below).

4) STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The DWAF hosted the three expert workshops in Gauteng (21 May 2003), KwaZulu-Natal (02 July 2003) and the Western Cape (04 July 2003). The purpose of these workshops was to assess stakeholder interests, and to obtain consultative guidance and consensus from experts to assist in the identification process of exceptional trees (Champion Trees) that are worthy of special protection throughout South Africa. Minutes of these workshops are available from the DWAF: Forestry Technical and Information Services. Various consultative discussions also took place outside the workshop environment.

The recommendations of this report are largely based on stakeholder inputs, and are given below.

5) RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1) Clarifying the Champion Concept

The Champion concept requires a definition for the purposes of the NFA. Trees and groups of trees proposed for Champion status should have the following attributes:

- Must fit the definition of a tree;
- Must be living or dying only;
- Can be indigenous or non-indigenous;
- May be in protected areas or in botanical gardens;
- May be listed as protected in other pieces of legislation; and
- Must be evaluated against a system of categories and criteria to merit Champion status.

Defining a group of trees for Champion status requires synergy between how a protected area is viewed in the NFA (Section 8) in relation to the Champion concept.

Firstly, the boundaries of the proposed group of trees should first be stated. An approximation of the density of trees should be made of the stand. Average values (e.g. age and biological attributes) of trees in the stand should be recorded.

5.2) System of Categories and Criteria

Biological Attributes, *Age of Tree* and *Heritage Significance* are the key categories (mutually exclusive) for assigning Champion status. If an individual tree or group of trees proposed for Champion status meets any one of these categories, or meets any one of their criteria, then that tree or group of trees may be assigned Champion status (in the case of groups of trees, average values should be used). However, limits or cut-off points still need to be set, but this can only be done once proposals and data (for *Biological Attributes* and *Age of Tree*) are evaluated for determining the list. The cut-off limit must also be set in terms of the size of the list (for example, the top 200 trees and groups of trees for Champion status). Finally, whether or not a proposed tree or group of trees is reflected as being protected in other legislation should also be a consideration.

The system for objectively assigning Champion status can be applied at the provincial or local authority level; as such, the NFA would serve as an overall framework from which other tiers of government can draw upon. Therefore, if a Champion candidate is unsuitable for Champion status in the NFA, then it might be suitable for protection in terms of provincial legislation or by-laws, provided that the system of categories and criteria is adopted by these government bodies.

5.2.1) *Biological Attributes*

Champion trees can be designated on a range of singular biological attributes, and these are:

- Diameter (d);
- Height (h);
- Crown spread ($2r$);

The height alone of a tree can be of such extraordinary value, that it might make an ideal Champion tree. The size of the crown (crown spread) or the trunk diameter of a tree, respectively, also serves as examples of factors that might determine whether or not a tree achieves Champion status. But, in some instances, the combination of diameter, height and crown spread (overall size) might also render Champion status. To this end,

the Dendrological Society of South Africa is using a measure (Size Index, *SI*) that considers a combination of diameter, height and crown spread:

$$SI = \sqrt{d \times h \times 2r}$$

As such, trees can achieve Champion status on the basis of *Biological Attributes* according to four criteria, i.e. *d*, *h*, *2r* as well as *SI* (see Esterhuysen *et al.*, 2000).

5.2.2) Age of Tree

The age of trees has traditionally been used in many parts of the world as an indicator on the importance of a species. The measure is the number of years. However, this criterion can only be used reliably for planted trees where the date of planting is known. This criterion would generally be relevant for introduced species; it is seldom possible to use this criterion for indigenous species in natural areas because dating information is very rare, and difficult to collect.

The National Heritage Resources Act broadly states that a place or object older than 60 years is of heritage value. The NFA process recommends that trees considered for Champion Tree status on the basis of age, should be at least 120 years old.

5.2.3) Heritage Significance

The National Heritage Resources Act (1999) imparts value on a place or object when aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic, or technological factors are combined. This Act provides a very useful framework for the objective evaluation of historical value or cultural significance. The difficulty lies in objectively quantifying the level of heritage significance (i.e. Champion status) in terms of national versus local importance, or to distinguish importance amongst different stakeholders or cultural groups.

The Category of *Heritage Significance* should take the following into consideration:

- Age of a particular historical event associated with the tree; and

- Heritage significance of the tree in terms of political, religious, social, judicial, education, language, economic, technology, knowledge/philosophy and *homo ludens* (collectively referred to as the Herskovits' model of cultural universals, summarised in Naudé, 2000).

Therefore, *Heritage Significance* should be considered under the following individual criteria since a tree or group of trees can be remarkable for any one of the following reasons:

- Aesthetic value (image of the tree);
- Landscape value (enhancement of the landscape);
- Historical value (related to a past event or icon);
- Cultural value (of ongoing importance to a cultural group); and
- Economic value (able to generate economic benefits such as through eco-tourism).

A sliding scale from 1 – 10 should be applied to each of the criteria comprising *Heritage Significance*. A high value (> 6) for any one of the criteria gives it potential Champion status. If an Expert Panel is appointed by the DWAF (intended as an inclusive and participatory process), then an average value should be used for each criterion.

This point scoring approach provides consistency in the evaluation procedure, and provides an opportunity to encourage debate and discussion (unlike the other categories such as *Age of Tree* and *Biological Attributes*) that are inherently more objective and quantitative.

5.2.4) Legislation

It is generally advocated that if provision is made to protect a particular species in one piece of legislation, then it should not be reflected in other pieces of legislation. Section 12 of the NFA states that the “*Minister could consider ... for protection ... if not already adequately protected in other legislation*”. Greater representation in the legal framework implies greater scope for protection i.e. that legal ‘reinforcement’ (protected in many different pieces of legislation), is the preferred state for Champion trees. There is value in duplicity and multiplicity of legislation, for example, it has advertising value if a Champion tree is reflected in several pieces of legislation. On the other hand, the trade-off may lie in conflicting pieces of legislation (e.g. conflicts in coordination involving jurisdiction,

responsibility and accountability). There is thus a need for cross-referencing between the relevant Acts e.g. Biodiversity Bill, Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, National Heritage Resources Act, and so forth.

The following decision logic is recommended after working through *Biological Attributes*, *Age of Tree* and *Heritage Significance*.

- If a proposed Champion tree or group of trees is already reflected as a protected species or tree in sub-national legislation (i.e. at the provincial level or at other tiers), then it can qualify for Champion status on condition that it meets the requirements of the scoring system. When a candidate does not clearly meet the requirements of the scoring system, then sub-national legislation can be used as a guide to exclude it from the Champion Tree List (i.e. include it if the tree is not otherwise protected);
- If it is not reflected as a protected entity in the Biodiversity Bill (threatened status or listed as on a CITES Appendix), the NFA (forest tree or protected tree species), the National Heritage Resources Act, or in legislation referring to protected areas (e.g. NFA and Protected Areas Bill), then it should be included on the **Champion Tree List** (i.e. include it if the tree is not otherwise protected); and
- Lastly, if a proposed Champion tree or group of trees is categorised as a weed in the Conservation for Agricultural Resources Act of 1983 (Act 43 of 1983), then it may still qualify for Champion status.

System for determining Champion status of trees and groups of trees (NFA, 1998)

DECISION STAGE 1

Biological Attributes*
 - Diameter (d) *and/ or*
 - Crown spread ($2r$) *and/ or*
 - Height (h) *and/ or*
 - SI ($SI = \sqrt{d \times h \times \sqrt{2r}}$) *and/ or*

**Cut-off limits (m) based on data from proposals*

OR

Age of Tree*
 - > 120 years

**Oldest specimen (years) selected; based on data from proposals*

OR

Heritage Significance*
 - Aesthetic value *and/ or*
 - Landscape value *and/ or*
 - Historical value *and/ or*
 - Cultural value *and/ or*
 - Economic value

** Scale of 1-10; use averages per criterion*

Go to DECISION STAGE 2 if there is controversy (i.e. borderline cases)

DECISION STAGE 2

INCLUDE if NOT in sub-national legislation (e.g. provincial, municipal by-laws, etc.)

AND/OR

INCLUDE if NOT in national legislation for protected species or sites (e.g. Biodiversity Bill (incl. CITES), National Heritage Resources Act, protected Areas Bill, NFA Protected Tree Species, etc.)

OR

EXCLUDE if on Category 1 (Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act), and in all cases if no management plan is currently in place or will be put in place in the foreseeable future.

5.3) Application for Champion Status

5.3.1) Information required for Champion status

Points of information should be submitted to the DWAF for proposed trees or groups of trees for Champion status, and an application form should be designed with the following in mind:

- Name of the species (scientific name and/or common name)*;
- Dimensions of the tree (Stem diameter at breast height (cm), tree height (m), crown diameter (m) and other significant measurements);
- Title deed/Street/GPS readings, and name of current landowner*;
- Motivation for proposal*;
- Substantiate why it is special (in terms of the criteria);
- State the threats to survival, and state the urgency at which intervention is required (i.e. ideas on the key threats to the tree/group of trees, ideas on how it should be managed, both over the immediate and long term);
- A photo, preferably several, of the tree and its environment;
- Name and contact details of the proposer(s)*; and
- Name(s) of potential assessors of the proposal.

The points for which the information is essential should be marked with an asterisk (*). Even if the information is partial, it should be submitted.

The application form should also have the DWAF address where the application should be lodged, with contact details (telephone and e-mail) of more than one person who can act as a referee to the application for Champion status.

Basic guidelines on using the application form, and its purposes, should be explained. The back of the form could also contain the categories and criteria for Champion trees (i.e. guidelines or important/relevant information that can support the application process). The form should also contain a disclaimer to indicate that not all proposed trees would become Champion trees.

An example of an application form can be found on the American National Register of Big trees, on: <http://www.championtrees.org/champions/nominateform.htm>

5.3.2) Application process

The application for Champion status is likely to be an ongoing activity – trees die, and new proposals for Champion status will inevitably come to the fore.

Application forms should be widely available (DWAF offices, City and Town Council offices, libraries, newspapers and the internet). Applications should be channelled to local or provincial DWAF offices. Applications should then be sifted and verified (with assistance of local capable volunteers, local authorities for urban trees, Nature Conservation Authorities for rural areas), and then submitted to one or more designated officials at DWAF (National). DWAF will then evaluate the submissions with the aid of an appointed Panel of Experts. The Panel of Experts should apply the system of categories and criteria for objectively assigning Champion status.

Von Breitenbach (1985) estimated that a rate of some 40 trees per annum can be registered, and that about 800 trees (excluding woody lianes and shrubs, and arborescent herbs) were likely to form part of a 'big tree' list. This provides an indication of the time and resources required for the DWAF's Champion Trees Project to be successful.

5.4) Format and Presentation of the Champion Tree List in the NFA

The Champion status should be clearly defined in the NFA, and there should be a single list of Champion trees in the NFA. Such a list should consist of taxonomic names with indication of the criteria under which the tree or group of trees was selected (qualification). To this end, an explanation of the criteria should be reflected in the NFA and its regulations.

The Champion Tree List should be ordered according to priority (Categories 1 - 3) associated with different penalties if there is contravention of Section 12 of the NFA.

Strict protection must be afforded in terms of Section 12 (a) and (b) of the NFA to trees and groups of trees with Champion Status, and licences for removal or drastic pruning should only be considered in extreme cases where life or property is endangered.

5.5) Evaluating Proposals and Obtaining Preliminary Information

5.5.1) Information Sources for Assigning Champion Status

Several sources of information can serve as a starting point for the development of a Champion Tree List. Sources include DWAF personnel, city and town councils, National Parks, Provincial Nature Conservation Authorities, Garden Clubs, Historical societies, tree or botanical NGOs and timber companies. It is thus necessary to dovetail the process between different groups (scientists, historians and students of culture) to obtain the relevant information.

The Dendrological Society initiated the South African National Register of Big Trees in 1982 (see Von Breitenbach, 1985). The objective of the Register was to locate and record the largest specimens of each tree species largely to use as flagships for conservation. Up to now, 20 years later, about 400 trees have been measured, but the Dendrological Society has registered about 200 trees of 92 species. A list and descriptions of the largest trees also appear in the book “*Remarkable Trees of South Africa*” (Esterhuysen *et al.*, 2001). A preliminary list to which additional specimens can be added is given in Appendix 1.

The following ad hoc proposals for Champion status were made at the stakeholder workshops hosted by the DWAF, but these proposals need to be formally submitted through the application process so that they can be evaluated against the system of categories and criteria:

- One big tree in the Bendigo Nature Reserve;
- Botanical Garden in Pietermaritzburg (Lane of London Plane; Six trees constituting the original planting);
- Cycad in the Durban Botanical Garden;
- Bembi in Karkloof (see Esterhuysen *et al.*, 2001);
- *Trichilia* (Elephant tree) in Mitchell Park (see Esterhuysen *et al.*, 2001);
- Kapok tree (*Ceiba pectandra?*), Kings House, Eastbourne;
- *Phoenix reclinata* & strangler figs (locality uncertain);
- Many trees on farms in KZN Midlands;
- A 150 year old *Ficus* trees at Valkenburg, now dying because of a park;
- Pear tree at Genadendal: it provides a historical context, through its specific gene pool; and

- *Quercus* tree near Singisi in a plantation.

Data should be collected (for *Biological Attributes, Age of Tree, Heritage Significance* and *Legislation*), and the system for Champion status should be applied. An Expert Panel should be appointed by DWAF to assist in the evaluation of potential Champion trees.

5.5.2) Expert Panel and Evaluation Procedure

The DWAF (National) should appoint a Panel of Experts to apply the system of categories and criteria for objectively assigning Champion status. The Expert Panel should inform DWAF to verify the information that is submitted on the application form. In cases where certain trees or groups of trees do not qualify for Champion status, it should be incumbent that the DWAF refers the proposal to the relevant DWAF authority (in the province or local authority) where that tree or group of trees can best be managed i.e. the DWAF should indicate the delegation of power and responsibility (as per Section 48 of the NFA). Also, feedback should be given to indicate to proposers why a tree has been adopted/rejected, in addition to alternative measures that can be taken to ensure protection.

The Expert Panel should be rotational in that expertise is brought in as and when required. The Expert Panel should have multi-disciplinary representation (environmental, historical and cultural) of both local and national experts, and relevant NGOs. The Expert Panel should meet at least once a year (may need more frequent evaluation during the first year). There should be a fixed annual deadline for applications, for example, two months before Arbor Week to enable an announcement of Champion status during Arbor Week. This should allow sufficient time for the distribution of the Champion Tree List or any revisions to key stakeholders for comment, such that it would lead to the publication of notices in the Government Gazette to declare the listed Champion trees protected

The DWAF should draw up a clear Terms of Reference for the Expert Panel such that their roles and functions are clearly understood.

5.6) Implementing Champion Legislation

5.6.1) Communication and Awareness

- Communication of the Champion concept needs to take place (i) within all the DWAF offices, as well as (ii) with the general public. Management guidelines, enforcement procedures, and monitoring procedures for Champion trees needs to be communicated/discussed within the DWAF;
- Trees and groups of trees with Champion status should be indicated on a map, akin to maps depicting historical monuments, nature reserves and city/town parks. This can help to create awareness by using the Champion concept as an inspiring symbol for conservation; and
- A publication should be made available about Champion Trees to inform the public and stakeholders, as well as to use it as a flagship/marketing tool for conservation using the various media options.

5.6.2) Responsibilities for management and activities

- The DWAF can appoint/empower (Honorary) Forest Officers (Section 65, NFA) to assist in the management of Champion trees (and law enforcement and monitoring procedures), and build responsibilities into existing job descriptions;
- The responsible authority for the management of Champion trees depends on where the tree is located, whether or not it occurs on private property, and the relevant local authority i.e. the DWAF should have a strategy/system in place to relate NFA requirements to Local Authority by-laws, and visa versa;
- The DWAF should provide general management guidelines (regulations) for Champion trees in the NFA, but the responsible authority (including government or non-government bodies to whom powers have been

delegated) should establish more explicit management, law enforcement and monitoring procedures;

- NFA regulations should provide for management of the surrounding environment of the Champion trees beyond the drip line of the tree or groups of trees (i.e. the scale of the managed environment should meet the requirements of the Champion tree);
- Management and monitoring plans should be in place for invasive and potentially invasive Champion trees, and the responsible authority should be designated;
- The prevention of vandalism might be managed through local security services;
- Compensation is required when a Champion tree's requirements interfere with the property rights of landowners, and this might take place, for example, through negotiated settlements or the presentation of a certificate that provides recognition or acknowledgement of a unique biological entity on private land.

5.6.3) Legislation

- Champion trees should be reflected in the following pieces of legislation to ensure greater legal scope for their protection: (i) Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (e.g. making an exception for the protection of non-indigenous species that have Champion status; and management plans for those with Champion status); (ii) Protected Areas Bill (e.g. making special reference to protected areas that are sites for Champion trees); (iii) Biodiversity Bill (e.g. referred to in the Chapter, "Threatened and other Protected Species"); and (iv) National Heritage Resources Act (e.g. transferring dead Champion trees from the NFA to this Act where appropriate (if the trees have cultural or historical significance) ; and using the National Heritage Resources Act to complement the NFA and visa versa);

- Other parts of the NFA can be strengthened to support the protection of Champion trees (e.g. higher than ordinary penalties); and
- Champion trees should be managed as part of the environment, such as forming part of city/rural development plans (e.g. Integrated Development Plans, IDPs); this should be reflected in the other relevant regulations such as those relating to Environmental Impact Assessments.

6.) CONCLUSIONS

This report has presented a proposed point system for assessing Champion status, and has also elaborated on the application and evaluation processes required to produce the Champion Tree List.

Future steps for the DWAF's Champion Trees Project should include inviting/advertising applications and compiling a preliminary Champion Tree List, where after applications should be screened by an Expert Panel. Once the Expert Panel has evaluated the proposals, the Champion Tree List should be ready for publication for public comment followed by final notices in the Government Gazette.

REFERENCES USED

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Naudé, M. (2000) Cultural heritage and the environmental impact assessment process. *Research by the National Cultural History Museum* 9: 38-57.

Von Breitenbach, F. (1985) National Register of Big Trees: the first three years. *Dendrologiese Tydskrif* 5(3&4): 57-68.

APPENDIX 1: Preliminary list of proposals for Champion status (Sources: Esterhuysen *et al.*, 2001; National Cultural History Museum & SA Heritage Resource Agency; Dendrological Society; the DWAF) (Note: Champion Tree proposals will be added to this list on an ongoing basis until the evaluation meeting of the Panel of Experts, whereafter a new preliminary list will be created for the next evaluation cycle.)

Tree Species / Tree Name	Size Criteria (If Applicable)				General Description	Protection Status	Location
	Height (m)	Stem (m)	Crown (m)	SI			
Adansonia digitata (Baobab) “Sagole Tree”	22	10.47	38.2	440	Largest tree of South Africa	Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act)	Sagole, Limpopo Province
Adansonia digitata (Baobab)	17	15.9	37.05	41.3	Second largest tree of South Africa	Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act)	Glemcoe farm, Hoedspruit, Mpumalanga
Ficus salicifolia (Wonderboom fig) “Wonderboom fig of Pretoria”	22	5.32	53.3	370	Largest Wonderboom fig. Old (about 1000 years) and historic – Ox wagon outspan area in earlier years, and legend that a Matebele chief was buried under the tree.	Declared as a National Heritage Resource	Wonderboom Poort, Pretoria (Tshwane metropolitan area), Gauteng
Breonadia salicina (Matumi)	41	2.44	32.3	363	Largest Matumi tree in South Africa		Amorentia Estate, Duiwelskloof, Limpopo Province
Adansonia digitata (Baobab)	19	9.08	35.3	340		Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act)	Platland, Duiwelskloof, Limpopo Province
Adansonia digitata (Baobab)	22	7.71	30.2	336		Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act)	Buffelsdrift, /Potgietersrus, Limpopo Province
Ficus sycomorus (Common cluster fig)	25	3.94	45.7	336	Largest cluster fig in SA		Langkloof, Polokwane/Pietersburg, Limpopo Province
Ficus sycomorus (Common cluster fig)	31	3.34	35.1	336			Excellence, Mica, Limpopo Province

Acacia galpinii (Monkey thorn)	30	3.01	41.2	334	Largest monkey thorn in SA		Rust de Winter, Gauteng
Podocarpus falcatus (Outeniqua yellowwood)	39	2.22	29.6	316	Largest accessible Outeniqua yellowwood in SA	Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act) Forest tree (s 7 of National Forests Act)	Diepwalle, Knysna, Western Cape
Prunus africana (Red stinkwood)	40	1.83	28.9	291	Largest red stinkwood in SA		Straalhoek, Eastern Cape
Faidherbia albida (Ana tree)	36	1.78	36.2	289	Largest Ana tree in SA	Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act)	Kruispad, Ellisras, Limpopo Province
Ficus thoningii (Common wild fig)	28	3.31	31.9	288	Largest common wild fig in SA		Eden Park, Umtentweni, KwaZulu-Natal
Podocarpus falcatus (Outeniqua yellowwood)	36	1.88	33.6	286		Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act) Forest tree (s 7 of National Forests Act)	Cyprus, Letaba, Limpopo Province
Breonadia salicina (Matumi)	41	2.06	23.6	286		Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act) Forest tree (s 7 of National Forests Act)	Ammorentia Estate, Duiwelskloof, Limpopo Province
Ptaeroxylon obliquum (Sneezewood)	45	1.29	22.7	243	Largest Sneezewood in SA		Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province
Xanthocercis zambesiaca (Nyala Tree)	22	3.54	29.8	226	Largest Nyala tree in SA		Sagole, Limpopo Province
Celtis africana (White stinkwood)	39	5.05	19.7	220	Largest White stinkwood in SA		Forest Hill, Tzaneen, Limpopo Province
Ekebergia capensis (Cape ash)	35	1.66	23.7	219	Largest Cape ash in SA		Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province
Ficus cordata (Namaqua fig)	17	4.78	32.5	212	Largest Namaqua fig in SA		Abasas, Bushmanland, Northern Cape

Cussonia spicata var. triptera (Forest cabbage tree)	30	2.02	22.1	200	Largest forest cabbage tree in SA		Berlin, Nelspruit, Mpumalanga
Ficus sansibarica (Knobbly fig)	22	2.02	32.3	178	Largest Knobbly fig in SA		Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province
Cordyla africana (Wild mango)	19	2.01	37.4	165	Largest Wild mango in SA		Vlakkult, Barberton, Mpumalanga
Anthocleista grandiflora (Forest fever tree)	30	1.27	22.6	161	Largest forest fever tree in SA		Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province
Ficus polita (Wild rubber fig)	27	3.9	26.8	156	Largest wild rubber fig in SA		Eden Park, Umtentweni, KwaZulu-Natal
Combretum imberbe (Leadwood)	21	5.46	30.3	152	Largest leadwood in SA		Carthage, Tzaneen, Limpopo Province
Tokai arboretum (All trees)					Arboretum of historic significance with trees planted there since 1885.	Declared as a National Heritage Resource	Tokai, Cape Town Metropolitan Area, Western Cape
Aruacaria heterophylla (Norfolk Island pine)	42	1.75			Largest Norfolk island pine in SA. Tree of historic significance – planted in 1826.		Drostdy Garden, Dorp Street, Stellenbosch, Western Cape
London Plane tree avenue in KwaZulu-Natal National Botanical Gardens					Tree avenue of exceptionally old plane trees – of historic value – established in 1870.	Declared as a National Heritage Resource	KwaZulu-Natal Botanical Gardens, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal
Springbok Park, Pretoria (All trees)					Indigenous tree park originating from 1905	Declared as a National Heritage Resource	Hatfield, Pretoria, Gauteng
Oak trees, Dullstroom (All oak trees declared as national heritage resources)					Historic group of oak trees of various species planted in the late 19 th century	Declared as a National Heritage Resource	Dullstroom, Mpumalanga

Irene Estate (all planted trees older than 50 years)					Estate land, parts of which were bought by prominent South African figures such as General Jan Smuts, with a variety of trees planted since the late 19 th century	Small part declared as National Heritage Resource	Irene, Pretoria, Gauteng
Tree Park, Louis Trichardt (all trees)					Indigenous tree park established in the early 1980s	Zoned as municipal park	Makhado/Louis Trichardt, Limpopo Province
Camel thorn trees, Kathu (All camel thorn trees in municipal area)					Abundance of large camel thorn trees contributes to the unique character and landscape of the town	Protected tree species (s 12 of National Forests Act)	Kathu, Northern Cape