

National Register of Big Trees of South Africa (NRBTSA)

INTRODUCTION

The National Register of Big Trees of South Africa was started by the Dendrological Society of South Africa (DSSA), in 1982. The aim of the register, known as the Big Tree Register, was to recognize the largest indigenous species, measure and register them. To date more than 220 trees have been measured and registered, including a few trees from Botswana. Trees are graded on total size which is determined by a size index, based on a combination of the trunk diameter at chest height, the height of the tree and diameter of the crown.

Maintaining such a list presents many challenges, and this also applies to similar foreign lists. Many of the trees on the list have last been measured or visited more than ten or twenty years ago. Re-measuring is important, as it is sometimes found that the trees have grown, been damaged or died. The information in the list is currently under review and can therefore not be published. The list served as a basis for, and there are also congruencies with, the Champion Tree Project of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, but the NRBTSA also includes the largest specimens of smaller species. Both projects can contribute to the current rules for the conservation of trees and for public awareness concerning trees.

OWNERSHIP OF THE REGISTER

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