



Deciding Whether to Translocate

Doug Bickerton (DEW) May 2019

Why are you doing this?

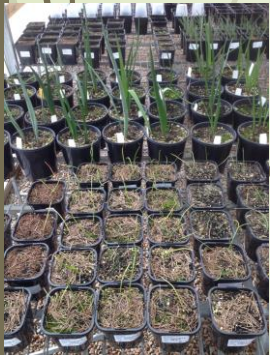
➤ Is it a conservation action?

- Will it reduce extinction risk?
- Will it maintain species or key populations?

➤ Is it an amelioration measure?

- Development offset
- Rescue dig or salvage due to habitat loss

If not, ask if it is necessary



Thelymitra epipactoides translocation.
Photos K Moritz



Do you really need to?

- **Have you explored other options?**
- Translocation is seldom the only option
- Protect and preserve habitat
- Manage and control threats
- Restore habitat
- Build resilience

Spiny daisy (*Acanthocladium dockeri*) translocation,
Barrock Station 2014



Ok, but do you REALLY need to?

- **Have you considered the benefits and risks?**
- Translocation projects can be costly and resource-intensive
- Long-term commitment
- More projects fail than succeed

*Dead translocated Wollemi Pine
(Photo: H. Zimmer)*



What are the benefits?

- Improved chance of survival for the species
- Improved chance of long-term stability for key populations
- Minimise the effects of declining population size
 - Loss of genetic diversity
 - Increased potential for inbreeding depression

Acacia enterocarpa, near Stawell, Vic.
Photo G. Rudolph





BUT THE RISKS.....

- Despite the best planning, seasonal factors may result in failure
- Poorly planned genetic mixing can have negative consequences
- Pests and diseases can be spread to the recipient site
- Competition with, and disturbance of, other species
- Unforeseen threats can cause failure
- A change in funding can prevent long-term site maintenance
- A failed translocation means a loss of valuable, finite resources

Do you know enough?

- Is the taxonomy clear and well understood?
- Do you know the full distribution?
- What is the genetic structure of the taxon and its populations?
- What are the ecological factors limiting distribution and abundance?



Western Orchid Laboratories. Photos D Bickerton



Where will you put them?

- Is the recipient site ecologically suitable?
- Is the land tenure secure?
- Are the threats understood and able to be managed at the new site?
- Is it easily accessible?



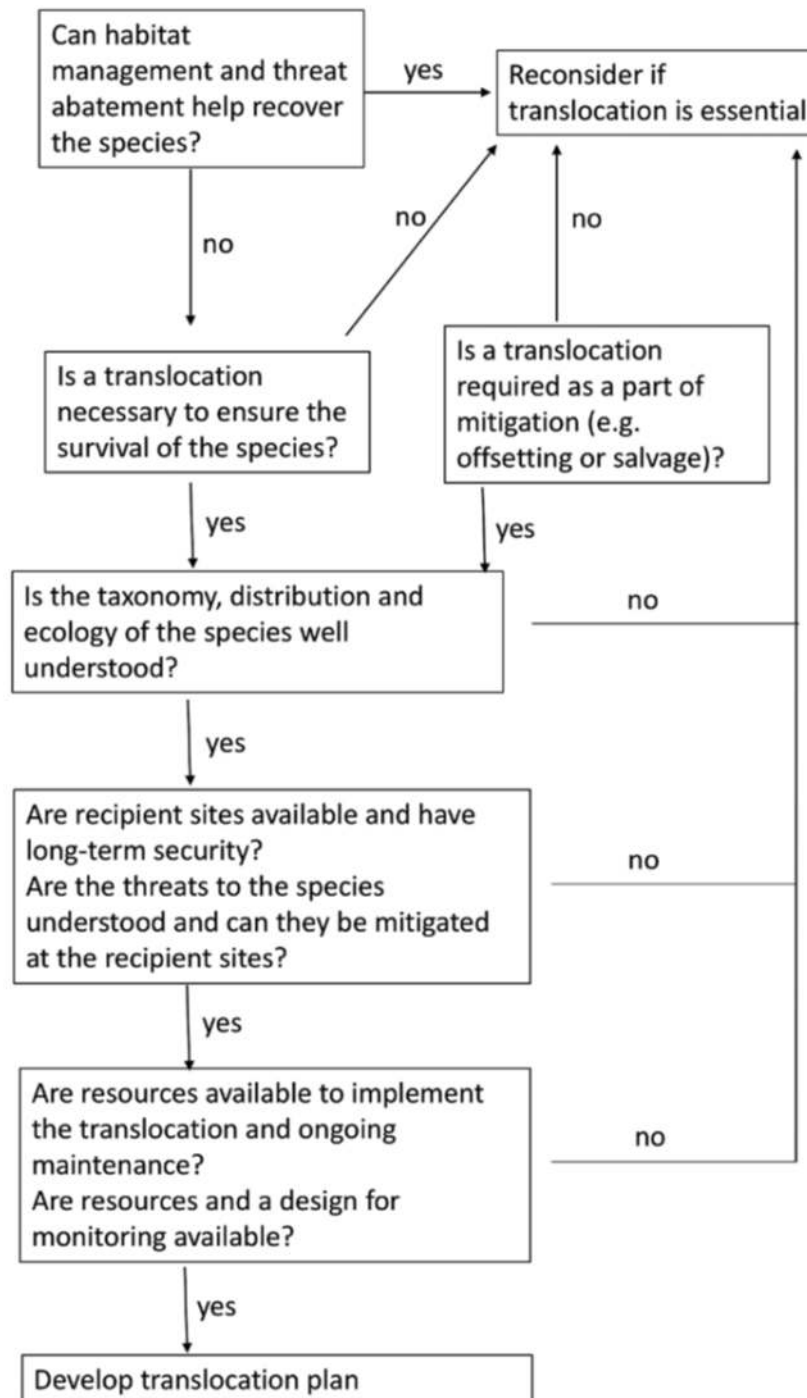
Can you last the distance?

- Do you have sufficient resources to implement the translocation?
- Can you maintain the site and manage threats long-term?
- Can you monitor the population long-term?



Translocated *Diuris behrii*, Kanmantoo 2012. Photo J Crocker





In that case, start planning!

