

ANZECC *National Framework* for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation

QUEENSLAND WORK PLAN

The Queensland Government is undertaking a number of significant initiatives, which will assist in achieving the national goal of reversing the long-term decline in the quality and extent of Australia's native vegetation cover by June 2001. These include:

- Developing Regional Vegetation Management Plans;
- Implementing pest animal and pest plant management strategies;
- Managing national parks, reserves and other protected areas;
- Continuing research into woodland ecology for sustainable land use and greenhouse inventory purposes;
- Undertaking community education programs and extension services to promote sustainable land management practices;
- Mapping vegetation types across the State for inventory and monitoring purposes; and
- Monitoring the current cover, condition and loss of native vegetation.

In Queensland, vegetation clearing represents one of the most significant threats to the quality and extent of native vegetation. Clearing also causes land degradation in some areas and contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. In urban and peri-urban areas, land clearing is associated with urbanisation and industrial development. In rural areas, broadscale land clearing has been undertaken to develop areas for primary production and mining.

Clearing land for primary production has been encouraged in the past through Commonwealth and State Government development schemes or through conditions of leasehold tenure. However the focus of Government policy is now on sustainable development, consistent with Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD) principles, and the attitude to broadscale vegetation clearing has changed.

Queensland is currently working towards the implementation of a new integrated vegetation management framework for both freehold and leasehold land. Together with changes to the Broadscale Tree Clearing Policy for Leasehold Land under the *Land Act 1994*, the new framework will aid in attaining the government's objective to develop and implement a comprehensive system of native vegetation management on all tenures that will achieve:

- The ecologically sustainable development of land.
- The protection of biodiversity and other environmental and social values.
- Planning certainty for landholders, industry and the community.

Key Government departments involved in supporting this process include the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) (lead agency); the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Department of Communication, Information, Local government, Planning and Sport (DCILGPS); and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). Local governments are also taking an active interest in vegetation management issues and will have key roles in the implementation of the vegetation management framework.

This Queensland work plan details the activities these departments and local governments are undertaking and the respective timeframes involved in order to implement the National Framework in Queensland.

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Management Mechanisms	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Success Measure	Level of Achievement
Roles & Responsibilities of Governments	Develop a comprehensive framework for the management of native vegetation consistently across all tenures, which clearly defines the roles, and responsibilities of landholders, local governments and the State Government.	DNR, DCILGPS, EPA, DPI	June 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles defined. • Framework of legislation, policy and procedures implemented. • Administrative procedures operating efficiently by late 2001 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles are defined • Framework in place • 70% achievement in administration procedures
<i>State Government Role</i>	The Department of Natural Resources is currently facilitating the implementation of new arrangements for native vegetation management over freehold land through legislative and policy changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new legislation, policy and management tools to manage native vegetation on freehold land. 	DNR (lead agency), DCILGPS, EPA, DPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide cross tenure vegetation management legislation, policy and procedures operational in 2000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessation of unsustainable vegetation clearing • Curtailing of land degradation caused by loss of vegetation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Res- 70% of state (ongoing review) • RVMPs just beginning- will be completed by late 2002 at current rate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and define State interests in vegetation management for consideration by local government. • Consult with local governments to ensure identified State interests are integrated into local government planning schemes. 	DNR (lead agency), EPA, DPI, DCILGPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with local governments completed prior to planning scheme implementation. • On-going as required for revisional planning schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning scheme objectives consistent with the protection of remnant native vegetation. • Reduction in the rate of loss of remnant native vegetation within local government boundaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR inputs to local planning schemes on vegetation are in place • Within 18 mths 20-25 Integrated Planning Act veg schemes in local areas/ rest in 2003
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify and implement management controls over other threatening processes to native vegetation such as pest and weed species. 	DNR, DPI, EPA, DCILGPS, Local governments	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of area covered by pest and weed control plans and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently revising work plan to integrate land protection and RFA actions. Indicators will be revised then

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<i>Local Government Role</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare local government planning schemes consistent with requirements of the <i>Integrated Planning Act 1997</i> (IPA), State policies, State interests and other regional or local plans regarding native vegetation management. • Develop and implement procedures to facilitate the assessment of development applications involving clearing of native vegetation on freehold land, which require the Department of Natural Resources to act as a referral agency for consideration of the vegetation clearing component. 	Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning schemes must be completed by 2003 • Application procedures by March 2001. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % and number out of the 138 local governments that have incorporated State interests in vegetation management into planning schemes. • Administrative arrangements operational for processing development applications involving vegetation clearing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20-25 by mid 2002/ rest by 2003 at current rate • 70%
Planning & Assessment					

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<i>Vegetation Inventory etc</i>	<p>Vegetation mapping for the State is currently being updated and refined. Vegetation mapping of regional ecosystems has been completed for 60% of the State to at least 1:250 000. The whole of the South East Queensland and Desert Uplands Bioregions have been mapped to at least 1:100 000. Completing the Brigalow Belt is the next mapping priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete survey and mapping of regional ecosystems at 1:100 000 scale for the following bioregions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern and Southern Brigalow Belt; • Central Queensland Coast; and • Einasleigh Uplands. • Complete mapping of pre-clearing coverage and remnant vegetation for western bioregions such as the Mitchell Grass Downs and also for Cape York Peninsula. & wet trpoics • Explore options for funding and establishing a process for identifying areas which should be declared by the minister as being of high nature conservation value and/or vulnerable to land degradation as a result of vegetation clearing. 	EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major vegetation pre-clearing zones mapped by June 2000. • Brigalow Belt & Qld Central Coast due June 2000. • Einasleigh due 2001. • Complete State by December 2004. • Declaration process established by July 2000. • Wet tropics bioregion 1:100,000 Jan 2001 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of State covered by Pre-clearing regional ecosystem type and remnant vegetation maps. • Vegetation mapping information available to stakeholders. • Declaration process established. • Process in Place for amending and updating maps in consultation with landholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation maps should be available for purchase by the end of October. 50% achieved • Proposal for declaration process outlined by Peter Young of EPA. 40% • Process implemented for amending and updating maps. Amendments occurring progressively. 80% complete as waiting on staff to begin in their new positions to determine if operating effectively.
	<p>A number of local governments have vegetation mapping of their local areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to map vegetation at property and local area scales. • Ensure that local vegetation mapping can be utilised to upgrade the Queensland Herbarium maps and that it is consistent with the regional ecosystem approach to vegetation mapping 	Local government, EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of State covered by accurate vegetation mapping at 1:50000 scale or less. • Local small scale vegetation mapping is able to be integrated with larger scale regional ecosystem mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some vegetation mapping completed for particular shires – SEQ and coastal. • Issue of using alternative scales for vegetation mapping unresolved.

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<i>Threatened Species/Ecological Communities assessment</i>	<p>Queensland Native Flora and Fauna is protected by the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>. Its nature conservation provisions provide for the listing of species and critical habitat for protection within all tenures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to review schedules of protected species or habitats to update current status if presumed extinct, endangered, vulnerable, rare or common species. 	EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of species de-listed • Number of recovery plans implemented • Information available to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of species delisted, however mainly due to discoveries of other populations • Recovery plan for 1 plant finalised and published. 12 due in the next few months. 81 in total to complete. • Fact Sheets and CD circulated
<i>Regional Vegetation Management Planning</i>	<p>Regional Vegetation Management Planning is to be introduced as a requirement as part of the new vegetation regulatory arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the formation of regional groups of community representatives and stakeholders to develop regional vegetation management plans. • Facilitate the preparation and review of the plans. • Develop, implement and review regionally applicable development assessment codes for vegetation clearing on freehold and leasehold land as part of the regional planning process. 	DNR, EPA, DPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning process for preparing Regional Vegetation Management Plans by Nov 2000 • Plans to be finalised progressively with all initial plans for the state finalised by June 2002. • Implementation of regionally applicable development assessment codes by June 2002. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guideline group boundaries and membership agreed. • Plans developed with wide community input and support • % of Bioregions within Queensland covered by Regional Vegetation Management plans. • % of all clearing applications consistent with regional vegetation management plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guideline group boundaries agreed & advertising for membership beginning • Proposals for planning process 75% complete. • Only 1 regional plan not to Minister yet. • Too early to determine other success measures

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<i>Natural Resource Management (NRM) Regional and State Strategies</i>	<p>NRM Regional strategies integrate catchment based or local plans within a region and aim to improve natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and sustainable production at a regional level. Most of the States regions are now covered by NRM strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop State NRM strategies • Continue to facilitate the development and review of regional NRM strategies to identify priorities for directing funding and project initiation into native vegetation management and associated sustainable land management projects and initiatives 	DNR, DPI, Local councils, Community.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of State covered by NRM Regional Strategies • Number of NRM regional strategies which have goals and objectives for native vegetation management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% to stage of agreement by local groups- CMCs • 100% have goals and objectives for native vegetation management and conservation
<i>Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a joint State Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management Statement for Queensland which integrates Natural Resource Management strategies and complements the National Strategy for the Protection of Australia's Biodiversity (1996) 	DNR, EPA, DPI, DCILGPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation statement by August 2000 • Final statement by July 2001 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management Statement for Queensland. • Statement objectives are being achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too early to determine
	<p>A Nature Conservation Strategy for South East Queensland is being developed in conjunction with the updating of the SEQ 2001 Regional framework for growth management and will provide a framework for biodiversity conservation and management within the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a Nature Conservation Strategy for the South East Queensland that is consistent with other relevant plans and government initiatives for the area. 	EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft plan September 2000. • Final plan due for release April 2001. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan finalised and implemented. • Set objectives in native vegetation protection and conservation are being achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft plan finalised and sent to advisory group 9/10/00. Due to go to stakeholders by mid November and full public consultation after that.

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<i>Recovery Planning</i>	Recovery plans are prepared for Queensland species identified as being endangered or vulnerable under the <i>Commonwealth Endangered Species Protection Act 1992</i> . Recovery plans are also prepared for regional ecosystems that are recognised as being threatened. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to prepare and implement recovery plans for priority threatened species and regional ecosystems. 	EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of endangered species and ecosystems that have a recovery plan prepared and implemented. • Number of previously endangered species considered to be no longer endangered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 recovery plan for 1 plant finalised. 12 due in next few months. 81 in total to complete
<i>Protected Area management plans</i>	Management plans are required to be prepared for all protected areas declared under the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> . The EPA is responsible for the preparation of these plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to prepare, monitor and review protected area management plans 	EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of protected areas which are subject to a current management plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking (DNR)
Reserve System					
<i>Gazettal of National Parks and other conservation reserves</i>	Qld has 450 protected areas including 215 National Parks. This represents 7, 029,319 hectares or 4% of Queensland. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage National Parks, reserves and other protected areas to protect their ecological integrity. • Increase the representation of regional ecosystems in protected area estate through land acquisition. • Maintain comprehensive records of vegetation protected. 	EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of regional ecosystems represented in protected area estate. • Within National Park or reserve boundaries, the ecological integrity of regional ecosystems is not threatened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking (EPA)
<i>Voluntary conservation agreements</i>	Voluntary agreements between private landholders and EPA are made under the direction of the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> and guided by the nature conservation extension program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage private landholders to enter into voluntary conservation agreements. 	EPA	On-going	Extent of native vegetation in voluntary conservation agreements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing at 40-50 p.a.

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	<p>Some local governments currently establish voluntary conservation agreements with private landholders to protect locally valued native vegetation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to establish voluntary conservation agreements with private land holders to protect native vegetation. 	Local governments	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of local government voluntary conservation agreements established. • Number of local governments operating rate rebate and voluntary agreements with landholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking
Communication & Capacity Building					
<i>Community Education</i>	<p>Many land management and conservation programs currently utilise extension services for community education. Extension officers are employed by DNR, EPA and DPI in areas such as land protection (weeds and pest control), land management, farm forestry, nature conservation on private land, woodland ecology, farm management, property planning and vegetation management as well as for specific Natural Heritage Trust and Landcare projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide extension and advisory services to facilitate best practice land management including forums, field days and workshops. 	DNR, DPI, EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of regional vegetation plans that incorporate best practice land management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be all

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	<p>Information is currently available to the public on a range of vegetation management and associated topics in a range of forms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop and provide information regarding native vegetation management and good land management practices through a range of medium including published material and internet web sites. 	DNR, DPI, EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised scientific compendium “Native Vegetation Management in Queensland Background, Science and Values” due by June 2000 • Management guidelines for salinity and erosion assessment due by January 2001 • Management guidelines for riparian zones, clumps, strips and remnants due by January 2001 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is readily available and accessible by landholders. • Increased adoption of best practice vegetation and sustainable land management practices. • Trends in clearing • Distribution of clearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific compendium published and available
<i>R&D and Extension</i>	<p>A range of research projects are undertaken to improve knowledge regarding woodland ecology in the context of vegetation management in Queensland including remnant patches and their viability for survival; tree establishment and revegetation; biodiversity assessment of regional ecosystems; and managing vegetation in agricultural landscapes and for greenhouse inventory purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Research and extension projects to increase Queensland's capacity to adopt best practice vegetation and land management. 	DNR, DPI, EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of R&D with emphasis on ecological function rather than restoration ecology. • R&D outcomes reflected in vegetation management plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&D thresholds and ecological functions critical to Qld are identified

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	<p>DRN Vegetation Management Officers, EPA officers and DPI property planning officers are responsible for all extension services associated with broadscale vegetation clearing on leasehold lands. Gather and disseminate practical knowledge and information on best practice vegetation management, revegetation techniques, and sustainable land management practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage exchange in information between researchers, government, stakeholders, landholders and property managers regarding native vegetation management. 	DNR, DPI, EPA, Local governments	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in extent of native vegetation retained on freehold and leasehold land • Participation of property managers and landholders in local planning projects and initiatives, workshops and forums. • BMP in vegetation management plans and local government plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too early to assess
<i>Land for Wildlife</i>	<p>Land for wildlife helps property managers find better solutions for their land management problems to conserve and enhance property biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support Land for Wildlife scheme 	Local government, EPA.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of properties with registered Land for Wildlife. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking (EPA)
Incentives					
<i>Financial Incentives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options for funding and establishing an incentives and enterprise adjustment package to encourage adoption of best practice vegetation management and facilitate adoption of the new vegetation management controls • Develop delivery systems and guidelines for the implementation of the incentives scheme and financial assistance package utilising community consultation. 	DNR	June 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of best practice by landholders. • Smooth transition by individual landholders to new regime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting on Commonwealth commitment
<i>Build up and Development Strategy schemes: eg South-west strategy and Desert Uplands Community Scheme</i>	<p>Build up and development strategy schemes are being utilised to provide opportunities for individuals and communities to increase their standard of living by applying principles of economic development, environmental management and social development.</p>	DNR, DPI, EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of appropriately sized properties, which have been successfully amalgamated. • Decline in loss of vegetation cover in the Desert Uplands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under review

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to conduct property assessments as required. Continue to support the maintenance or re-negotiation of the South-west strategy and Desert Uplands community scheme. 			bioregions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable land practices implemented in the South west 	
Regulatory Mechanisms					
<i>Land Clearing Regulation</i>	Regulatory controls for broadscale clearing of leasehold land have existed since the enactment of the <i>Land Act 1962</i> . Clearing on leasehold land is currently managed by the <i>Land Act 1994</i> . The Broadscale Tree Clearing Policy for leasehold land under the <i>Land Act 1994</i> was reviewed in December 1999 in light of proposed changes to the arrangement for freehold land.	DNR	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy objectives are being achieved. Cessation of broadscale clearing of “endangered” and “of concern” regional ecosystems on leasehold land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too early to determine Broadscale tree clearing policy for leasehold land that protects endangered and of concern regional ecosystems implemented and operational.
	The <i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i> was passed through parliament in December 1999 to control broadscale clearing of native vegetation on freehold land. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the <i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i> Develop and implement a policy for vegetation management on freehold land including the derivation of a Statewide assessment code for clearing applications. Develop and implement delivery systems and administrative procedures to facilitate the implementation of vegetation management legislation and policy. Develop and implement long term arrangements to coordinate the regulation of vegetation clearing across all tenures. 	DNR, DCILGPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation management legislation implemented with final stage administrative procedures operational by January 2001. Vegetation Management policy and development assessment code implemented upon proclamation of the legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation enacted and administrative procedures operating effectively % reduction in loss of native remnant vegetation on freehold land. No decline in the conservation status of regional ecosystems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation management legislation amended to remove protection of <i>of concern</i> regional ecosystems. Administration procedures implemented. 75% operational. Too early to determine other measures

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<i>Species protection</i>	The <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> provides for the declaration of National Parks, protected areas and protected flora. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Planning and Assessment mechanisms for actions etc. 	EPA			
<i>Protection of land from pest and weed species</i>	A consultation draft of the new <i>Land Protection Bill 1999</i> has been released which is proposed to replace the <i>Rural Lands Protection Act 1985</i> in managing weeds, pest animals and the stock route network. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enact the Land Protection Bill • Facilitate the development and implementation of state strategies and state policies on weed and pest animal control methods, hygiene and quarantine, enforcement and control services and specific weeds. • Facilitate the development and regular review of 3 year strategic local government area pest plant and animal management plans 	DNR, local government	December 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation enacted by end 2000 • % of local governments with current weed and pest management plans • State weed strategy and state pest animal strategy completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation on track • Local governments currently preparing weed and pest management plans despite the legislation not being enacted to date • Checking weed and pest strategies (DNR)

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Monitoring & Evaluation					
<p><i>Cover & Condition Monitoring</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State wide landcover and trees study (SLATS) 	<p>Figures on land use changes and associated loss in remnant native vegetation have been compiled for year 91-95, 95-97, 97-99 by the SLATS project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to undertaken inventory projects and monitor land cover change on a bioregion or regional ecosystem basis via remote sensing and GIS technologies at 2 yearly intervals. Develop a framework to enable data collated to inform real time decisions on broadscale clearing applications, policy making and other natural resource management issues. Continue to undertake field validation for SLATS program by TRAPS and QGRAZE. 	DNR (lead agency), DPI, EPA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current data on extent of vegetation cover and land clearance is available including rate of clearing Data available is able to inform real time decision making regarding native vegetation management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLATS released September 2000. SLATS is used in RE mapping SLATS used in assessment of clearing applications GIS and information support for vegetation management are in place
<i>State of Environment Reporting</i>	<p>A Queensland State of Environment report was released on the 8th November 1999.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare State of Environment reports at regular (4 year) intervals which include reporting on changes in native vegetation quality and extent. 	EPA, DNR	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A State of Environment report is produced on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too early to determine
<i>Defining Regional ecosystems</i>	<p>The EPA has recently released a comprehensive guide to Queensland'' bioregional ecosystems and their conservation status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to refine the defining characteristics of regional ecosystems Review regional vegetation management plans and assessment codes in light of changes to regional ecosystem definitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA DNR 	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional ecosystems reflect biodiversity in he landscape Local vegetation management guidelines and codes are reflective of recognised current regional ecosystem boundaries and definitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject of ongoing research