CONSULTATION PAPER

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FOR QUEENSLAND'S BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Queensland Government

Prepared by: Conservation Policy and Legislation, Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

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Contents

Acknowledgement of Country

The Queensland Government acknowledges the Country and people of Queensland's First Nations. We pay our respect to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge and thank Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the enduring relationship connecting people, Country, and ancestors—an unbreakable bond that has safely stewarded and protected the land, waters, and sky for thousands of generations.

We acknowledge the deep relationship, connection and responsibility to biodiversity, land, sea, and sky Country as an integral element of Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' identity and culture.

1 Introduction

The Queensland Government is developing a Performance Framework for *Conserving Nature – a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Queensland* (the Biodiversity Strategy).

This consultation paper provides an overview of the draft Performance Framework for feedback. Your responses to questions in this paper will be used to inform the finalisation of the biodiversity targets, actions and indicators proposed as part of the performance framework for the Biodiversity Strategy. Your feedback will also inform the future monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement that may be needed to ensure the Biodiversity Strategy's long-term vision is met.

2 Background

Queensland is the most biologically diverse state in Australia. Our globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems support the health, wellbeing, cultures and lifestyle of all Queenslanders. They are foundational to our economy and industries including tourism, agriculture, resources and the creative sector.

Queensland's biodiversity is in ongoing decline. Halting and reversing this trajectory of biodiversity loss in Queensland is a significant challenge. While the Queensland Government will lead the overall response to this important public issue, it cannot deliver the scale of action and investment that is required to recover Queensland's biodiversity alone.

Many people, organisations and agencies already make significant contributions to the important work of conserving Queensland's biodiversity. The Biodiversity Strategy, and its supporting Performance Framework, is intended to drive improved focus and coordination across all organisations and individuals that are taking part in action for biodiversity in Queensland.

The release of the Biodiversity Strategy in October 2022 was an important step in building a statewide vision for biodiversity conservation in Queensland. However, it recognised that further work was needed to improve our knowledge and understanding of biodiversity conservation and to deliver measurable results against robust targets. This is essential to achieve and scale positive outcomes for species, habitats and ecosystems.

In the 2023 report, *Protecting our threatened animals and plants* (Report 9:2022-23), the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) also emphasised the need for a monitoring framework with measures and targets for the Biodiversity Strategy. This framework would transparently demonstrate our progress towards the results that Queenslanders expect the Biodiversity Strategy to deliver.

The Queensland Government is now seeking feedback on this draft Performance Framework. It includes targets, actions and indicators, and a process for managing and utilising the best available science to continuously improve our actions to conserve Queensland's biodiversity. The Performance Framework will assess how effectively the Biodiversity Strategy is driving action across a broad suite of legislation, strategies, programs and initiatives in Queensland.

Publicly reporting on our performance using indicators published in the Queensland State of the Environment Report (QSOE Report) will support continuous improvement of our biodiversity conservation efforts over time. This ensures the Biodiversity Strategy achieves its long-term vision that 'Queensland's nature is actively supported to thrive'.

Setting ambitious but achievable targets for biodiversity, and the actions and indicators that support delivery of these is a critical step to guide the recovery of nature and the environment in Queensland. Defined targets will provide clarity and certainty to investors, industries and communities that the Queensland Government is committed to taking action to protect our biodiversity, enhancing our great lifestyle, and improving the future economic wellbeing of the state.

The Performance Framework is underpinned by objectives to strengthen our partnerships with landholders, native title holders, academia, industries and local governments. This includes improving recognition of traditional ecological knowledge within conservation science and enhancing co-stewardship opportunities for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Once established, the Performance Framework will enable more timely, transparent and comprehensive reporting and oversight of biodiversity conservation in Queensland. It will guide the actions necessary to recover our species and ecosystems wherever possible. A performance framework is also a crucial step to align with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Global Biodiversity Framework), global nature-related risk disclosure frameworks, and

Australia's soon to be refreshed National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

The Queensland Government is seeking your views on the draft Performance Framework that will be used to monitor and evaluate our progress towards delivering the Biodiversity Strategy.

2 Vision and Guiding Principles of the Biodiversity Strategy

Conserving Nature – a Biodiversity Strategy for Queensland (the Biodiversity Strategy) was released in October 2022. The Biodiversity Strategy outlines the Queensland Government's commitment to the conservation of species and ecosystems in Queensland. It highlights the need for statewide transformational change in how biodiversity is managed and integrated in decisions so that we can meet national and international ambitions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

The Biodiversity Strategy includes the overarching vision, outcomes, goals and objectives outlined in **Figure 1**. Importantly, the Biodiversity Strategy recognises that conserving nature is a shared responsibility, and that coordinated efforts across government, industry and the community will be needed to achieve sustainable use, manage risks to the environment and human health and wellbeing, and meet global sustainable development goals.

The Performance Framework builds on the components outlined in **Figure 1**. The Performance Framework will add to these components by proposing targets that will define what success looks like, with indicators for their measurement over time and evaluation of actions underway for meeting the targets and delivering the Biodiversity Strategy.

Figure 1. Overview of the Biodiversity Strategy vision, outcomes, goals and objectives

The Biodiversity Strategy also includes guiding principles that underpin all biodiversity conservation activities in Queensland. These will be fully embedded across the Performance Framework:

1. First Nations peoples will continue to play a lead role in biodiversity conservation.

2. Interventions will be delivered for species, habitats and ecosystem outcomes.

3. People and partnerships will make the Biodiversity Strategy successful.

4. Natural processes will be recognised as operating on a local-to-landscape scale and through connectivity.

5. Biodiversity responses and improvements will be regularly monitored.

6. Science, the best available knowledge, and reliable data drives decision making.

3 Performance Framework

The Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework outlined in **Figure 2** builds on the components of the existing Biodiversity Strategy to create a robust framework that will support strategic, statewide coordination. The Performance Framework is intended to support government, industry and community in effectively delivering the Biodiversity Strategy and will enable monitoring, reporting and improvement of our joint conservation efforts over time.

The Performance Framework further clarifies the vision and outcomes of the Biodiversity Strategy by defining an aim for Queensland's biodiversity to be thriving by 2050 where:

> *"Declines in Queensland's native species have been halted and reversed, and the ecological integrity of ecosystems is restored to function for people and nature.''*

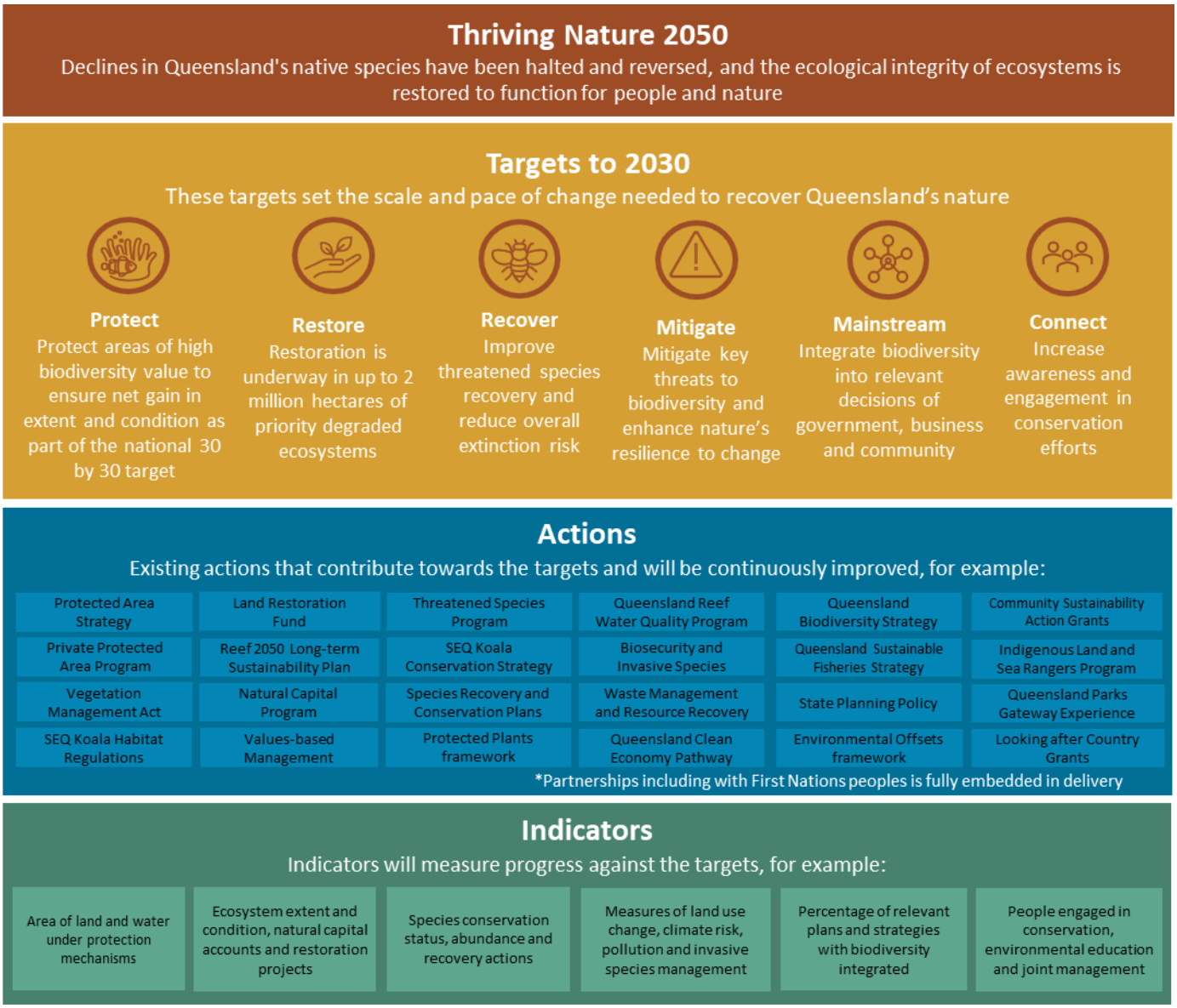
To achieve this vision, the Performance Framework sets targets, actions and indicators necessary to drive strategic approaches, continuous improvement and results for biodiversity to 2030. Setting these 2030 targets clarifies the scale and pace of change needed to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity in Queensland, and improve our social, economic, and cultural relationships with nature.

It maps a clear pathway to transition Queensland's mega-diverse biodiversity from its current state of decline, towards a 2050 state where biodiversity loss has been halted and reversed, and Queensland's economy is functioning in a way that sustains biodiversity and the services it provides.

The Performance Framework also outlines indicators that will measure and evaluate progress against the targets over time, allowing for continuous improvement as a core part of the implementation cycle.

This approach acknowledges that early action to address threats to biodiversity and halt the loss of habitat that drives decline will be significantly less costly. This is supported by evidence submitted to the independent Dasgupta review The Economics of Biodiversity, which found that delaying action by ten years would likely double the cost of recovering biodiversity and would likely make restoring functionality of nature unfeasible.

Figure 2. Overview of the Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework



QUESTION 1: What do you think successful biodiversity conservation in Queensland looks like?

QUESTION 2: Does the Performance Framework capture this? Why or why not?

QUESTION 3: Do you think this framework will help measure progress towards the 2050 vision?

3.1 Targets

Targets set the scale and pace of change required to ensure nature is thriving by 2050.

Six targets that focus on action to Protect, Restore, Recover, Mitigate, Mainstream and Connect with Queensland's biodiversity by 2030 have been developed to drive progress and continuous improvement towards the Biodiversity Strategy's long-term vision. The targets focus on biodiversity conservation efforts that are most meaningful now for delivering the required change.

Setting targets for the state is important to ensure that Queensland can effectively coordinate and track its contributions towards the Biodiversity Strategy. It also demonstrates Queensland's expected contribution towards draft Australian biodiversity targets and aligns ambitious targets set under the Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Queensland Government is proposing six targets to be achieved by 2030. While these targets are ambitious, they

are achievable considering the action that is already underway. Governments, the private sector, landholders, Traditional Owners, native title holders and communities are already working to address biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems to function for people and nature.

The six targets also provide a useful framework for reporting and support continuous improvement of the Biodiversity Strategy, ensuring that Queensland is on a trajectory to meet the aim of thriving nature by 2050.

The targets are proposed to be reviewed and reset in 2030. **Figure 3** below shows the process for this.

3.2 Actions

Actions contribute towards recovering species and ecosystems and achieving our targets.

There is a range of existing activities being undertaken by government, community and industry that contribute towards achieving the Biodiversity Strategy's vision. Actions include but are not limited to policy and legislation, on-ground restoration projects, threatened species programs, education, threat management actions, and sustainable land management.

The Queensland Government is committed to the protection and restoration of Queensland's biodiversity and environment. It is already implementing a range of initiatives through the Biodiversity Strategy that seek to avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset impacts on biodiversity.

However, the task of halting and reversing biodiversity loss cannot be achieved by the Queensland Government alone. Taking action to protect and conserve nature is a shared responsibility.

The Biodiversity Strategy, and its supporting Performance Framework, provides the necessary support and statewide coordination necessary for organisations and individuals to prioritise effectively and pro-actively participate in protecting and conserving Queensland's biodiversity.

3.3 Indicators

Indicators help us to monitor and evaluate our progress towards targets.

Indicators are measures used to assess progress. By monitoring species and ecosystems, pressures and threats, conservation responses and degrees of change in biodiversity values we can assess our progress over time. Indicators include extent of ecosystems, rates of land clearing, spread of invasive species, air quality, water quality, biodiversity and ecosystem health measures.

Monitoring indicators and how they change over time helps scientists, policy makers, and the public understand the state of Queensland's biodiversity; whether species and ecosystems are recovering or in decline, and whether they are responding to conservation efforts. They allow insight into how well management actions are working, and what might need to change to ensure the most effective and cost-efficient outcomes.

To support monitoring and evaluation of progress, the Queensland Government will maintain a suite of comprehensive, data-driven indicators that will inform our progress against the biodiversity targets. Existing biodiversity indicators for Queensland are reported against in the Queensland State of the Environment Report (QSOE Report). Many QSOE indicators will be used to assess progress against targets, and opportunities for new indicators will also be investigated to ensure sufficient information to evaluate progress.

3.4 Reporting

Reporting ensures accountability and continuous improvement of our conservation efforts.

Public reporting of indicators against targets will occur through future QSOE Reports. Indicators within this report enable monitoring of the trajectory of Queensland's biodiversity and will provide useful information about how biodiversity is responding to conservation action.

4 Continuous Improvement

The Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework will ensure that the Biodiversity Strategy and actions towards achieving Queensland's biodiversity targets can be adapted over time through a continuous improvement cycle. This ensures that the Biodiversity Strategy is accountable, robust and flexible in its approach, and can adapt to emerging trends and policies, nationally and internationally.

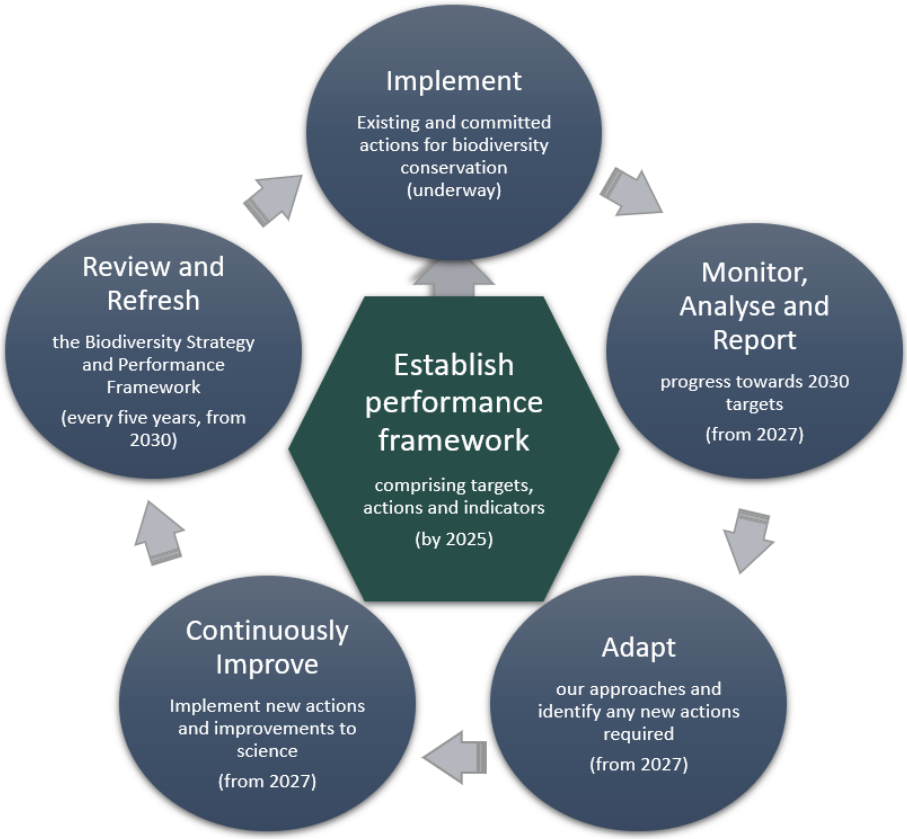
As part of continuous improvement, the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) will monitor and evaluate progress towards delivering the 2030 targets through biennial (two-yearly) reporting to Ministers. DESI will seek external evaluation of the monitoring results and incorporate any recommendations for improvements to ensure targets are met. This process may inform changes to existing programs, initiatives, and plans and potential new activities.

Striving for continuous improvement will also ensure the best available science, traditional ecological knowledge and the cultural and social values of nature are considered wherever possible, as data and information improves over time.

Public reporting of the state of biodiversity in Queensland will occur through indictors published in the QSOE Report. Indicators within this report will monitor the trajectory of Queensland's biodiversity and provide useful information about how biodiversity is responding to conservation action.

A full review of the Biodiversity Strategy and Performance Framework will occur by 2030 to ensure the framework is working effectively.

Figure 3. Continuous improvement as part of the Biodiversity Strategy and Performance Framework



QUESTION 4: What do you think of the continuous improvement cycle as shown? Does it capture the important steps needed to drive results for biodiversity conservation?

QUESTION 5: Do you see you or your organisation as a contributor to any of the stages of continuous improvement?

5 Proposed Targets

5.1 Protect

PROPOSED TARGET: Effectively protect areas of high biodiversity value to ensure net gain in extent and condition by 2030 as part of the national 30 by 30 target.

The proposed Protect target aims to ensure a net gain in the extent and condition of areas of high biodiversity value protected by 2030. This target is supported by growing Queensland's protected area estate, and through existing regulations that seek to manage development impacts in areas of high biodiversity value which encourage approaches to avoid and minimise impacts, and as a last resort, offset these through restoration measures (i.e., mitigation hierarchy). This supports collaborative action to deliver the Australian Government's national target of ensuring at least 30% of land and marine areas are protected, conserved, and effectively managed by 2030.

Queensland is the most biologically diverse state in Australia and one of the few mega-diverse jurisdictions in the world. Many areas of high biodiversity value, like the Great Barrier Reef, Wet Tropics and RAMSAR-listed wetlands are irreplaceable, or so globally significant that we cannot afford to lose them.

At present, many of Queensland's species and ecosystems are at risk of disappearing altogether if we do not effectively protect them from the impacts of key threats, such as land clearing. Conserving the high biodiversity value areas we still have is by far the most effective and least costly approach to conservation. It is also critical to ensuring that ecosystems can continue to support species, people, the economy, and the wider environment.

This target seeks to ensure that by 2030, more areas of high biodiversity value are effectively protected through protected areas and other regulatory and planning mechanisms. The target also seeks to ensure that areas of high biodiversity value are effectively managed to allow improvements in condition through activities such as invasive species control and appropriate fire management.

Effective protection mechanisms support delivery of the target and include those which enable conservation management or that ensure avoidance, mitigation, and offsetting impacts to biodiversity. This includes the designation and management of protected areas and other regulatory and planning mechanisms that ensure impacts to areas of high biodiversity value are ideally avoided, or otherwise mitigated and/or offset through restoration measures.

Other mechanisms that may effectively protect and manage biodiversity on private land, such as Special Wildlife Reserves, Nature Refuge agreements, conservation covenants and legally secured offsets could also be considered to contribute towards delivery of this target.

Implementation considerations

The Queensland Government recognises there is a need to further define and map areas of high biodiversity value in a way that also considers social, economic, cultural and spiritual values held by all Queenslanders, particularly Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are national processes underway which the Queensland Government will leverage to support this work.

Through this consultation, you are invited to share your views on what elements in the landscape could be defined as having high biodiversity values using the following characteristics as examples:

- essential to the persistence of valuable and threatened species, for example, areas of habitat critical for reproduction, shelter, food and foraging.
- important for retaining ecological connectivity, maintaining catchment health and resilience of rural/regional communities e.g., environmental water flows and/or essential nutrient cycling.
- essential to the provision of essential ecosystem services, represented through ecological, economic, social and cultural values of ecosystems.
- once lost, cannot be recovered or replaced within a timeframe that avoids detrimental impacts for threatened species persistence.
- required to be protected under legislation, for example as critical habitat necessary for the long-term persistence of a species.
- have particular cultural and spiritual importance for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Implementing the Protect target requires all levels of government, non-government organisations and industry to make a concerted efforts to work in genuine partnerships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes providing opportunities for co-design and use of traditional ecological knowledge, co-stewardship of natural

assets such as through Indigenous Management and Land Use Agreements, and considerations of cultural co-benefits.

Co-management acknowledges the deep knowledge, connection, skill and understanding of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples with Country, and their continued rights and self-determined responsibilities to care for land, sea and sky Country.

QUESTION 6: How confident are you that the Protect target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?

QUESTION 7: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Protect target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

QUESTION 8: What biodiversity values do you think are most important to consider in identifying and mapping areas of high biodiversity value?

QUESTION 9: Do you agree with the proposed characteristics to define 'areas of high biodiversity value' for this target? How might these need to be improved to ensure the target delivers the desired outcomes for Queensland's species and ecosystems?

5.2 Restore

PROPOSED TARGET: Restoration is underway in up to 2 million hectares of priority degraded ecosystems by 2030.

The proposed Restore target aims to ensure that, wherever possible, ecosystems (terrestrial and aquatic) which have been degraded are supported to recover to an adequate extent and condition to support native plant and wildlife species, landscape scale ecological functions and provide future resilience to unavoidable threats such as climate change.

Strategic restoration efforts are needed to recover Queensland's degraded ecosystems and provide the best chance halting and reversing the loss of Queensland's biodiversity. To achieve this, the Restore target prioritises action towards restoring Queensland's most degraded ecosystems, which have been reduced to below 30 per cent of their historical extent or have lost condition due to the impacts of threats such as invasive species, climate change, overuse or habitat fragmentation.

While 2 million hectares represents only a portion of all degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in Queensland, implementation of the target will seek to identify priority areas for restoration. This information will support all delivery partners to make informed decisions about where restoration projects could be located to ensure the greatest likelihood of success for biodiversity and ecosystems, and cost-effective outcomes for Queensland overall.

Taking a strategic approach helps to ensure that wherever possible, terrestrial ecosystems, particularly those that are naturally rare and range restricted, are restored in line with 30 per cent of their historical extent by 2050. This will increase the likelihood of these ecosystems, and the species that rely on them, improving in conservation status by 2050 and being more resilient to future environmental change. For many marine and aquatic ecosystems, including the Great Barrier Reef, degraded ecosystems can be restored through solutions like engineered reefs and invasive species and sediment control, which address threatening processes and deliver improvements to habitat condition.

Achieving this target will be an essential milestone towards restoring the ecological integrity of ecosystems to function for people and nature by 2050. It will contribute to safeguarding the ecosystem services we all rely upon. These services are essential to our economy and wellbeing and underpin key Queensland industries and the health of Queenslanders, particularly Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connections to Country. Ecosystem services are foundational to our economy, particularly primary production and include clean air and water, productive soils, natural pest control, pollination, flood mitigation and carbon sequestration.

For many terrestrial regional ecosystems and terrestrial fauna habitats, baselines and improvements in vegetation condition can be measured using the Queensland Herbarium's standardised Spatial BioCondition methodology. Assessments include consideration of site-based attributes including large native trees, canopy height, coarse woody debris and availability of habitat required for shelter and breeding (e.g., hollows, logs, rocky outcrops) as well as food and foraging (e.g. flowering plants, termite mounds, watercourses).

New condition assessment methods are also being developed for grazing systems and reef and bird communities, which will provide improved knowledge about how ecosystems are currently performing for biodiversity.

Implementation considerations

The proposed Restore target recognises that restoration efforts need to occur on public and on private land and waters so that there is sufficient area of habitat in suitable condition to support biodiversity and ecosystem services into the future.

Achieving the Restore target is therefore a shared responsibility. Economic incentives are increasing through existing and emerging environmental markets that allow native title holders, landholders, the food and fibre industry and natural resource managers to derive economic value from their efforts to restore and conserve biodiversity and ecosystems on private land.

The Queensland Government's nation-leading Land Restoration Fund provides valuable opportunities for landholders and native title holders to participate in ecosystem restoration projects. By setting a Restore target, improving data for monitoring extent and condition of ecosystems, and further work to spatially define our restoration priorities, Queensland will be better placed to leverage the significant private sector investment interest in restoring Queensland's landscapes and aquatic ecosystems to function for people and nature.

While some land uses may not be compatible with restoration, there are many co-existence opportunities to explore including riparian restoration that ensures healthier waterways, strategic environmental plantings to improve connectivity of habitats, and agroforestry and land spelling approaches that support the persistence of biodiversity in the landscape.

QUESTION 10: How confident are you that the Restore target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?

QUESTION 11: Are you (or your organisation) undertaking restoration projects or developing a natural capital account/ method that would provide useful information on progress towards achievement of the restoration target?

QUESTION 12: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Restore target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

QUESTION 13: What do you think is important to consider in identifying Queensland's restoration priorities? Are there any opportunities that should be considered or barriers to be addressed?

5.3 Recover

PROPOSED TARGET: Improve threatened species recovery and reduce overall extinction risk by 2030.

The proposed Restore target aims to ensure that, wherever possible, ecosystems (terrestrial and aquatic) which have been degraded are supported to recover to an adequate extent and condition to support native plant and wildlife species, landscape scale ecological functions and provide future resilience to unavoidable threats such as climate change.

Queensland is the most biologically diverse state in Australia. The Biodiversity Strategy identifies that our ecosystems contain about 85 per cent of Australia's native mammals, 72 per cent of its native birds, 50 per cent of its native reptiles and frogs, with potentially millions of native terrestrial and marine invertebrate species that we know far less about. The Queensland Government's wildlife information database Wildnet contains records of over 21,000 species, including over 320 mammals, 670 birds, 580 reptiles; 14,000 native flora and fungi species found in Queensland.

The diversity of our species, and the health of their populations, is crucial to ecosystem stability and resilience. They play a major role in ensuring ecosystems services such as nutrient cycling, pest and disease control, and pollination continue to be available.

Many species also have direct economic and cultural value. For example, for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, native species have been part of their cultures and ways of life for thousands of generations and are integral to their identity, knowledge systems, and traditional practices. Species play essential roles in creation stories, ceremonies, rituals, and songlines, and are connected to places of cultural heritage. Declines in these species have a direct and lasting impact on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

More than 1,000 Queensland native plant and animal species are formally listed as threatened with extinction. Many other native species and ecosystems that are not listed as threatened are also in a state of decline in population size,

distribution and genetic integrity across the state.

The decline of native species in Queensland is accelerating due to a combination of threats including land clearing, invasive species, climate change, adverse fire regimes, pollution, and overexploitation from human activities. This target aims to drive actions for the recovery of all native species, (including threatened species), which is further supported by delivery of the Protect, Restore, Mitigate, Mainstream and Connect targets. Reporting against these other targets will provide a useful indirect measure of progress towards meeting the Species target.

Importantly, improved monitoring and reporting against the Recover target will enable a better understanding of trends in extinction risk and species conservation status and how species are responding to our conservation efforts over time. Where species responses are not subject to time lag effects, this may enable earlier intervention so that Queensland can avoid new native species being listed as threatened.

QUESTION 14: How confident are you that the Recover target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?

QUESTION 15: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Recover target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

5.4 Mitigate

PROPOSED TARGET: Mitigate key threats to biodiversity and enhance nature's resilience to change by 2030.

The proposed Mitigate target articulates a trajectory of improvement in threat mitigation actions that addresses the key drivers of biodiversity decline in Queensland. These include: 1. land and sea use change, 2. pollution, 3. climate change and 4. invasive species. Importantly, the target recognises that not all threats to biodiversity can be eliminated, and as far as possible we should seek to actively support the resilience of biodiversity and ecosystems to adapt to future climatic changes.

Ecosystem degradation and species decline in Queensland is driven by multiple threats including habitat loss, invasive species, diseases, inappropriate fire regimes, illegal wildlife trade, pollution and climate change. Land clearing alone has had a dramatic impact on biodiversity in Queensland and has been associated with species extinction as well as being a threatening process for other species.

Increasingly, climate change is recognised as a direct and compounding threat to biodiversity. This is evident in changing fire regimes, extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and extreme heat days, and changes to seasonal rainfall and temperature. Changing climates affect biodiversity in many ways, by driving changes in species distribution and behaviour, reducing reproduction, altering the composition and functioning of ecological communities and compounding the impact of other threats.

Through the Clean Economy Pathway, Queensland is taking significant action to eliminate its contribution to climate change by 2050, which will reduce pressure on ecosystems. As enshrined in the *Clean Economy Jobs Act 2024*, Queensland is taking significant action to reduce its emissions, committing to reach 75 per cent below 2005 levels by 2035, and net zero by 2050. While this ensures Queensland is doing its part to take action on climate change, global progress to limit warming and its potential impacts rely on efforts on a global scale.

Consequently, the next step for the Biodiversity Strategy is to build the resilience of species and ecosystems, by ensuring that our restoration efforts are delivered in a way that leads to improved resilience of biodiversity to future climates. For example, by prioritising protection of climate refugia and facilitating coral reef restoration in areas less affected by the impacts of warming.

Invasive species, including weeds, pests and diseases, now also affect more than half of Australia's threatened plants, fish, reptiles and invertebrates, and impact on agriculture, tourism and culturally significant species and places for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Over-exploitation of nature's resources, including native timber, water resources and land resources, is also a primary contributor to decline in biodiversity.

The Mitigate target articulates a future state in which all Queensland industries are guided to sustainably manage these resources. This will improve the economic resilience of our industries into the future, and better demonstrate Queensland's environmental, social and governance credentials.

Key industries include those that are highly dependent on nature and the ecosystem services that it provides for their

outputs, such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, critical minerals and urban development.

QUESTION 16: How confident are you that the Mitigate target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?

QUESTION 17: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Mitigate target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

5.5 Mainstream

PROPOSED TARGET: Integrate biodiversity into relevant decisions of government, business and community by 2030.

The intent of the proposed Mainstream target is to incorporate the consideration of biodiversity into the decision-making processes of government, industry and the community. This target recognises the importance of creating an enabling environment that ensures effective action to support nature and the transformative change needed to address biodiversity loss. This target drives actions that are crucial to supporting other targets.

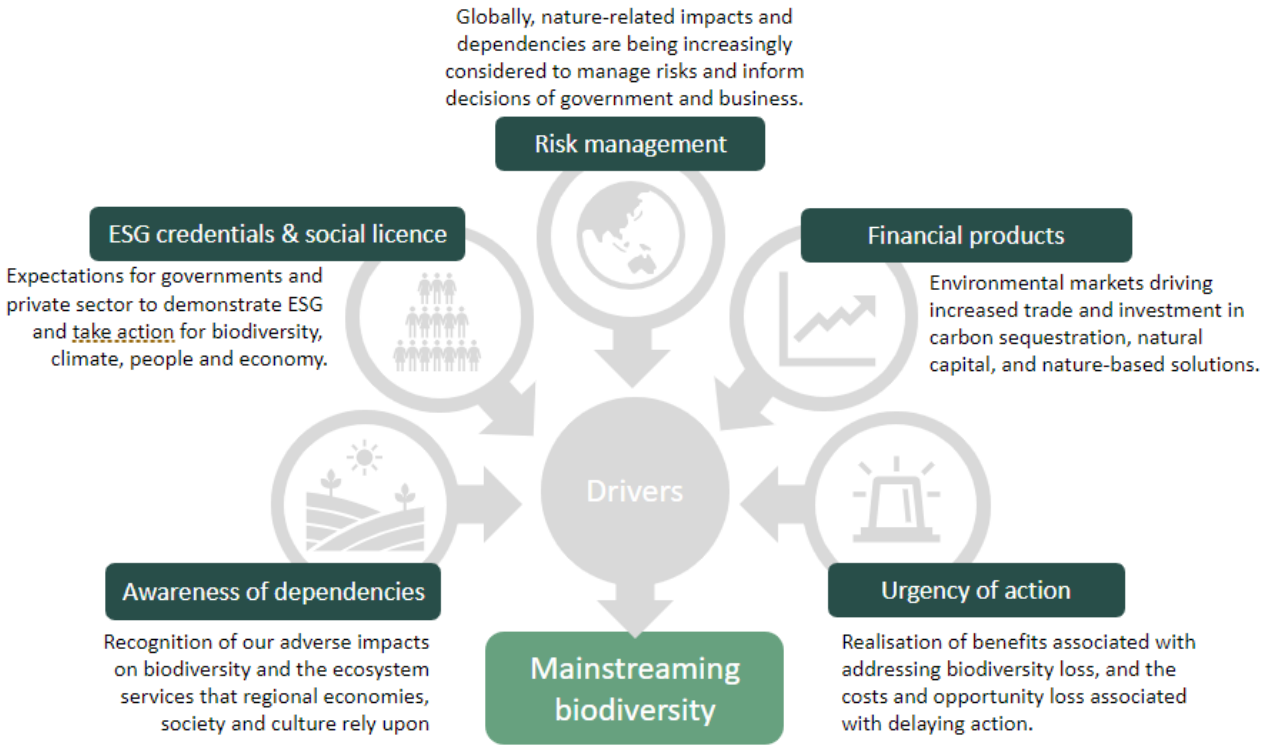
The Mainstream target recognises that nature has immense social, economic and cultural value to our society and particularly to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Taking care of biodiversity is fundamental to our current and future wellbeing as a society and needs to be taken into consideration by governments, industry and financial institutions when they are developing policies and practices. This reflects the urgent need to better integrate biodiversity considerations into decision making, as the relative costs in delayed action increasingly grow.

Significant work is underway within Queensland to provide improved tools and resources to assist capacity building in different sectors of the economy and enable entities to make better nature-related decisions. Mainstreaming considerations will be different for every sector – some sectors are highly exposed to a range of nature and biodiversity-related risks, for example agriculture, forestry, mining and urban development sectors, while others, such as information technology services may be less directly affected.

Many organisations, including natural resource management groups and local governments, are already contributing to the development of regional environmental accounts that represent the value of nature, which can support a range of stakeholders, including landholders, to better understand the value of nature (assets) on their land. Such tools provide an essential resource to allow businesses to realise the emerging economic opportunities of environmental markets, which direct investment away from projects that degrade nature, towards projects that protect and repair it.

Mainstreaming is also increasingly necessary for governments, industry and financial institutions to remain competitive as markets demand more sustainable goods and services. Due to emerging imperatives to identify and disclose nature-related risks to shareholders and the community, there is a greater focus on the increased costs and lost opportunities that arise when nature is degraded (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4. Mainstreaming consideration of biodiversity and nature into decision making is a global megatrend that is driving environmental market opportunities.



QUESTION 18: How confident are you that the Mainstream target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?

QUESTION 19: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Mainstream target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

5.6 Connect

PROPOSED TARGET: Increase awareness and engagement in conservation efforts by 2030.

The intent of the proposed Connect target is to increase awareness of, and active participation in, conservation actions to support biodiversity by Queenslanders. This target recognises the existing strong connections that Queenslanders have to biodiversity, and ongoing conservation efforts of individuals and organisations that strengthen our state's social, environmental and economic wellbeing.

The plants and animals that make Queensland special are important. Our lifestyle, culture, health, wellbeing, and economy, including tourism, production and creative industries rely on our vast range of species. Connecting with nature improves our mental and physical health.

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a unique cultural and spiritual connection with Australia's plants and animals that has developed over thousands of generations. Nature and biodiversity are integral to their cultural identity and knowledge systems. It is essential that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are supported to maintain their distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical, and economic relationship with their land and waters.

The Connect target recognises that many of Queensland's First Nations peoples have been displaced from their culture and Country, and that re-establishing and strengthening connectedness to nature and biodiversity, through joint management and co-stewardship of land and sea Country, should be a priority for Queensland.

Key to the Connect target is ensuring more Queenslanders can engage in conservation by 2030. Queensland Government programs such as the Private Protected Areas Program, Land Restoration Fund and Community Sustainability Action Grants are essential in supporting removal of economic barriers that limit people from

participating in biodiversity conservation.

Increasing engagement in conservation efforts requires that Queenslanders are aware of opportunities to participate in the conservation of species and ecosystems, and that barriers to participation are identified and addressed.

QUESTION 20: How confident are you that the Connect target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?

QUESTION 21: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Connect target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

QUESTION 22: What strategies do you think could be used to improve participation and engagement in conservation action?

6 Actions

The Queensland Government is already delivering on actions that contribute towards the Biodiversity Strategy. A selection of key initiatives being undertaken by the Queensland Government that contribute towards the biodiversity targets is included below.

The Queensland Government will continue to work with the Australian and local governments, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, community groups and private sector stakeholders to undertake biodiversity response planning and continuous improvement of actions to meet targets.

Target	Queensland Government action
Protect  Effectively protect areas of high biodiversity value to ensure net gain in extent and condition by 2030 as part of the national 30 by 30 target.	• Regulating the clearing of important habitats through the Vegetation Management framework. • Delivering Queensland's Protected Area Strategy to grow the protected area system and support species and ecosystems. • Implementing Queensland's Environmental Offsets Framework to encourage avoidance, mitigation and offsetting of impacts to biodiversity values. • Delivering the 2020 South East Koala Habitat Regulations to protect important areas of koala habitat from the impacts of development. • Working with the Australian Government to develop and implement three bioregional plans incorporating biodiversity values, traditional ecological knowledge and community objectives. • Delivering the Strategy for Conservation and Management of Queensland's Wetlands.
Restore  Restoration is underway in up to 2 million hectares of priority degraded ecosystems by 2030	• Establishing the Land Restoration Fund and Queensland Natural Capital Fund. • Actively managing our Protected Areas network to improve condition of our natural values. • Acting to protect the Great Barrier Reef through the joint Australian and Queensland Government's Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan. • Support delivery of targeted restoration of habitats, including koala habitats in South East Queensland. • Launching the Queensland Low-Emissions Agriculture Roadmap 2023-2032, including additional support for landholders to better understand the carbon farming opportunities available to complement food and fibre production systems. • Supporting Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples water entitlements to achieve enhanced cultural and environmental flow outcomes, for example for Quandamooka peoples of Minjerribah.

Recover  Improve threatened species recovery and reduce overall extinction risk by 2030	• Implementing the Queensland Threatened Species Program, which includes recovery actions for priority threatened species. • Introducing and continuously improving the 2020 South East Queensland Koala Habitat Regulations. • Removing gillnets from the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area to reduce threats to vulnerable species. • Work with the Australian Government to develop species recovery plans and maintain an accurate database of species' conservation classes. • Engage with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations on delivery of threatened species projects.
Mitigate  Mitigate key threats to biodiversity and enhance nature's resilience to change by 2030	• Legislating ambitious emissions targets under the *Clean Economy Jobs Act 2024*, committing to reach 75 per cent below 2005 levels by 2035 and net zero by 2050. • Delivery of the Renewable Energy Zone Readiness Assessments, in consultation with communities and Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to maximise opportunities to holistically manage local impacts including to biodiversity. • Managing biosecurity and invasive species risks through effective legislation and strategic planning, such as through behavioural insights and mapping invasive species risks to biodiversity values. • Transition away from the use of gillnets in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and supporting industry transitions to ensure it is gillnet free by mid-2027 to address impacts to threatened, endangered and protected species. • Work in partnership with key stakeholders to improve water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchment areas. • Introducing a waste management plan and plastic pollution strategy. • Implement First Nations peoples use of traditional land management to protect biodiversity on Country, including fire. • Managing pests and fires in the protected areas estate. • Piloting an enhanced compliance program to help landholders to comply with legal obligations under the Vegetation Management Framework.
Mainstream  Integrate biodiversity into relevant decisions of government, business and community	• Regular reporting under the State of the Environment and Queensland Sustainability Reports. • Administering local and state land use planning frameworks and schemes, which includes integration of biodiversity. • Supporting biodiversity on state owned land such as through maintaining greenspace and managing invasive species in recreational areas like schools, sporting precincts and venues. • Fauna sensitive road design guidelines to assist practitioners to design, construct and maintain roads that better accommodate needs of fauna. • Developing three pilot bioregional plans utilising new mapping and conservation planning methodologies, which will identify high biodiversity values.
Connect  Increase awareness and engagement in conservation efforts by 2030	• Maintaining a world class World Heritage and protected area estate, with gateway visitor centres. • Supporting online and in-person engagement through social media and gateway visitor centre and ecotourism program experiences. • Through the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program, delivering a co-stewardship framework that increases Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples management of protected areas. • Delivering the Community Sustainability Action Grants program that supports removal of invasive species from public and private areas.

QUESTION 23: What additional coordination and actions do you think may be needed by the Queensland Government to ensure the targets are achieved across all sectors?

QUESTION 24: Are there any l actions you (or your organisation), are taking to contribute towards Queensland's biodiversity targets?

7 Proposed Indicators

Queensland currently has over 150 established indicators in the QSOE Report, with 41 indicators specific to biodiversity that can be used for monitoring and reporting under the Biodiversity Strategy.

The QSOE Report also includes additional indicators relevant to the Mitigate target, which monitor the status of threats including land clearing, emissions, pollution, invasive species and waste.

All existing indicators included under QSOE Report provide long-term, baseline data on remnant native vegetation, freshwater, estuarine and marine wetland systems, key threats to biodiversity, as well as information on threatened species and their habitat. This data is critical under the Performance Framework, as it provides a wealth of measurable information about how biodiversity (ecosystems and species) is changing over time and in response to management actions.

Despite the strength of the indicators in the QSOE Reports, there are current and emerging gaps in biodiversity data for Queensland and across Australia relating to:

- the condition and quality of habitat in Queensland's terrestrial, marine and aquatic ecosystems
- the ecosystem services and natural capital these ecosystems provide
- rates of change in native species conservation status
- threatened fauna and flora species abundance
- measures of people's connectedness to nature and actions towards mainstreaming.

Significant work is already underway in collaboration with the Australian Government and other state governments to develop improved biodiversity data governance and repository maintenance. The increase of developed environmental accounts representing the value of nature by regional bodies and local governments, and the national integration of the system of environmental economic accounting (SEEA) are also expected to provide valuable data and analysis to inform indicators to measure targets in the future.

The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, in conjunction with other Queensland Government departments, is undertaking an assessment of existing data that is suitable to inform new biodiversity indicators and is considering which further indicators should be prioritised for development.

The objective of this assessment is to ensure that the:

- Performance Framework is supported by a suite of comprehensive, fit-for-purpose, data-driven indicators that will provide an accurate overview of the status of biodiversity in Queensland.
- indicators enable us to better monitor our progress towards the targets, to evaluate the effectiveness of approaches in contributing to the outcomes sought for 2050.

As part of this consultation paper, we are seeking input on what additional data is available to support the development of priority indicators for biodiversity, in partnership with academia, industry and non-government sectors to incorporate into future QSOE reporting and biennial reporting to Ministers. Existing indicators under the QSOE Report and potentially useful types of data and information that could be used to build new indicators as part of the Performance Framework, are outlined in table below for consultation purposes. We are also seeking any examples of existing indicators external to the current QSOE Report, or from other jurisdictions that we can learn and build on.

Targets	**Indicator** **Our measures of progress**	**Indicators** **What and how we will report**
Protect  Effectively protect areas of high biodiversity value to	Area of land and waters in national and marine park	Continue to report through existing indicators under QSOE Report relating to extent of protected areas, including: • Extent and rate of change of protected areas. • Marine parks and fish habitat areas. • Broad vegetation groups within protected areas.
	Condition of land and water in national and marine park	Explore opportunities to develop new indicators as part of biennial reporting to Ministers that relate to the protected area estate being managed under the Values Based Management Framework.

ensure net gain in extent and condition by 2030 as part of the national 30 by 30 target.	Area of high biodiversity value protected under other mechanisms	Explore opportunities to develop new indicators as part of biennial reporting to Ministers that relate to habitat that are protected under other mechanisms, such as: • Queensland's Vegetation Management framework (essential habitat for threatened species, endangered and of concern regional ecosystems). • Private Protected Areas (PPAs), for example landholders participating in NatureAssist incentives and other programs for effective conservation management. • Areas protected under the 2020 koala regulations in South East Queensland. • Areas legally secured through the Environmental Offsets framework which provide a net gain in area of habitat compared to impact site.
	Area of wetland and aquatic ecosystems under protection	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report relating to wetland and aquatic ecosystems, including: • Freshwater wetland systems within protected areas. • Estuarine wetlands within protected areas. • Extent and rate of change of riparian vegetation.
Restore  Restoration is underway in up to 2 million hectares of priority degraded ecosystems by 2030	Extent and classification of terrestrial regional ecosystems	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report relating to extent and status of regional ecosystems, including: • Extent of endangered, of concern and no concern at present regional ecosystems. • Extent and rate of change of remnant native vegetation. • Extent and rate of change of riparian vegetation.
	Condition of terrestrial ecosystems	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Fragmentation of remnant vegetation. Explore opportunities to develop new indicators under the QSOE Report that better represent the condition of terrestrial ecosystems, recognising that limited or spatially restricted information is available to understand in detail the condition of terrestrial ecosystems across Queensland. New indicators could be developed that derive from Spatial BioCondition and woody regrowth, environmental economic accounts and emerging condition assessment methodologies for bird communities.
	Condition and extent of aquatic ecosystems	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report relating to condition of terrestrial ecosystems, including: • Condition of riverine ecosystem health. • Extent and rate of change of freshwater wetland systems. • Extent and rate of change of riparian vegetation. • Extent and rate of change in estuarine wetlands. • Condition of estuarine ecosystem health. • Condition of ecological processes in the Great Barrier Reef. • Condition of marine ecosystem health. • Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area condition. Explore opportunities for new indicator development that uses emerging condition assessment methods for blue carbon (natural capital accounts) and reef communities, and inclusion in future QSOE reporting.
	Natural capital value of Queensland's ecosystem and	Explore opportunities for new indicator development for future QSOE reporting that relates to natural capital value of ecosystems, including regional scale environmental accounts

	species	and accredited accounts registered under Accounting for Nature (AfN) or other methods.
	Area of land and waters and investment in restoration projects	Explore opportunities for new indicator development as part of future biennial reporting to Ministers that uses available information on ecosystem restoration projects being undertaken by landholders, industry, government and non-governmental organisations in Queensland, including information on investment, location and co-benefits delivered.
Recover Improve threatened species recovery and reduce overall extinction risk by 2030	Extinction risk for all species	Explore opportunities for new indicator development as part of QSOE reporting that includes development of a Species extinction index and potential to utilise existing Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network Species abundance index. These will provide improved reporting of change in species status and abundance – which is a strong indicator of overall biodiversity loss.
	Species conservation status	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Threatened fauna species numbers. • Threatened flora species numbers.
	Threatened species habitat	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Density of threatened flora species habitat. • Density of threatened fauna species habitat.
Mitigate Mitigate key threats to biodiversity and enhance nature's resilience to change by 2030	Number of invasive species under active control, biosecurity incursions prevented and priority invasive species management plans in place	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Invasive non-native terrestrial fauna species. • Invasive non-native terrestrial flora species. • Invasive non-native freshwater fauna species. • Invasive non-native freshwater flora species. • Invasive non-native flora and fauna species identified in marine ecosystems. Explore opportunities to improve reporting through development of new indicators under the QSOE Report or future reports to Ministers, for example on number of local and regional plans in place that focus on priority invasive species management.
	Plastic waste and pollution in Queensland	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Per capita waste generation. • Household, commercial and industrial waste landfill. • Household, commercial and industrial waste recovered or recycled. • Illegal dumping in Queensland. Explore opportunities to improve reporting through development of new indicators under the QSOE Report, such as relate to the Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan, microplastic and marine plastic, and that better capture the impacts of environmental pollutants on biodiversity, such as for noise and light pollution, herbicides, pesticides and other contaminants.
	Sustainable use of nature's resources	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Key fish stocks. • Recreational fishing catch and participation.

		• Direct use pressure on the Great Barrier Reef. Explore opportunities to improve reporting using measures and indicators under the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027, and Forestry Sciences, including ecological risk assessments.
	Rates of land use change	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Land clearing impact on threatened fauna and flora species habitat. • Land clearing impact in woody native vegetation. • Extent and rate of change of remnant native vegetation. • Major threats to flora and fauna species.
	Climate change risks and impacts on biodiversity	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: • Climate change pressure on the Wet Tropics of Queensland, Gondwana Rainforests of Australia, the Great Barrier Reef and K'gari (Fraser Island). • Sea surface temperature. • Extreme weather events (heatwaves, hot days and days with very heavy rainfall). Explore opportunities to develop new indicators that capture the more specific impacts and risks of climate changes to biodiversity. This includes modelling of climate risk, as well as changes to abundance of those individual species that are highly sensitive to climatic changes (e.g. koalas and coral reefs), or in changes to the condition of ecosystems (e.g. native vegetation impacted by drought and fire). Data can be incorporated from the Queensland Future Climate Dashboard.
	Habitat connectivity and ecosystem resilience	Continue to report through existing indicators under the QSOE Report, including for: Fragmentation of remnant vegetation. Explore opportunities to improve reporting on measures of habitat fragmentation, connectivity, and other measures of resilience, as science is continuously improved. National processes to update the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan may increase understanding of how ecosystem resilience to climate change can be enhanced through mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction actions.
Mainstream Integrate biodiversity into relevant decisions of government, business and community	Percentage of relevant plans and strategies with biodiversity integrated	Explore opportunities to develop new indicators under biennial reporting to Ministers, which reflect the number of relevant plans and strategies published by governments and industry that effectively integrates biodiversity considerations into organisational decision making.

Connect  Increase awareness and engagement in conservation efforts by 2030	People engaged in biodiversity conservation	Explore opportunities to develop new indicators relating to peoples' engagement with Queensland biodiversity, such as number of properties registered as Private Protected Areas or under Land for Wildlife.
	Area of land and sea Country under co-stewardship or joint management arrangements with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and involvement of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in species conservation and recovery planning	Explore opportunities to develop new indicators under the QSOE Report that reports on the area of land under joint or co-management agreements with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and number of species conservation and recovery plans which have involved consultation with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples (an action under the Threatened Species Program).
	People engaged in environmental education and outreach	Explore opportunities to improve reporting through development of new indicators relating to the number of people engaged in environmental education and outreach, based on available data at the time of reporting. Explore opportunities through insight reporting.
	Funding for partnerships and community grants	Explore opportunities to improve reporting through development of new indicators under future biennial reporting to Ministers such as funding provided to partnership programs and community grants programs that contribute towards biodiversity conservation outcomes, based on available data at the time of reporting.

QUESTION 25: Are there any other existing indicators that you think are suitable for inclusion in the Performance Framework?

QUESTION 26: What are the priority indicators that you think should be developed to support reporting against the biodiversity targets?

QUESTION 27: What opportunities are there to improve data integration and sharing across non-government and government entities, to ensure biodiversity information is widely accessible, and supports reporting against biodiversity targets?

8 Supporting Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connections to biodiversity

Queensland Government acknowledges the unique and ongoing connection of First Nations Queenslanders to land, sky, wind, waters, and biodiversity. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual and physical relationship with Country, and have recognised legal rights and interests in land and sea.

The Queensland Government's Biodiversity Strategy and associated Performance Framework does not restrict the rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to make decisions on their land. The strategy and framework include actions that will support First Nations peoples' economic opportunities from their connection to Country. This includes improved landholder engagement services for all Queenslanders, including Indigenous landholders and native title holders, encouraging greater awareness of the economic opportunities provided through stewardship programs and environmental markets to enhance protection, restoration, and management of native vegetation on land.

For Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, there are ongoing economic opportunities in environmental markets to implement traditional knowledge of land and landscape management, such as cool savanna burning methods that sequester carbon and minimise impacts on biodiversity. For example, the $500 million Land Restoration Fund supports these opportunities by providing a premium payment for carbon farming projects that also deliver meaningful First Nations co-benefits.

The strategy and performance framework supports the Queensland Government's Statement of Commitment to Reframe the Relationship, by promoting the rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to foster a material economic relationship with their land and culture, including through enabling joint management, restoration and savanna burning opportunities.

The strategy and performance framework proposes to continue delivery of existing initiatives to support co-stewardship with First Nations peoples, such as the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers Program. As part of reporting under the Connect target, the framework also proposes to improve monitoring of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples involvement in decision making and conservation management, through indicators such as the area of land under joint or co-management, and in native species and ecosystem conservation and recovery planning.

As part of this consultation paper, and through the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation's Gurra Gurra framework 2020–2026, the Queensland Government is committed to working in genuine partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Queensland to achieve stronger outcomes for Country and people. As part of this consultation, we would like to ask the following questions specific to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to receive any further thoughts you may wish to provide.

QUESTION 28: Does the Biodiversity Strategy and Performance Framework reflect and support the rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in conserving Queensland's biodiversity? How can the framework be improved to addressed this?

QUESTION 29: Other than co-stewardship arrangements and First Nations involvement in recovery planning, are there other indicators of success that could demonstrate how effectively the Biodiversity Strategy engages Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in its delivery?

9 Next Steps

9.1 How to have your say

The Queensland Government, through the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI), is seeking your input on the Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework which supports Conserving Nature: A Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Queensland.

Feedback is being sought from academia, industry, regional bodies, environmental non-government organisations, First Nations peoples and the general public on the biodiversity targets, actions and indicators set out in Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework.

Submissions can be made via email to BiodiversityStrategy@des.qld.gov.au (use the subject line: Submission – Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework – [your name]).

If you are providing a written submission, below is some general guidance:

- Do you support the proposed 2030 targets for the Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework? Why or why not? If you do not support, what alternatives should be considered?
- What new research, data, actions and support from the Queensland Government may be required to ensure that the 2030 targets can be met?
- Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to meeting the targets. If so, what contributions are you making?

Further question prompts are provided throughout this consultation paper and are summarised in **Appendix 2**.

Submissions must be made by 5.00pm, Wednesday 11 September 2024.

Submissions may be published unless provided in confidence. Material provided in confidence should be clearly marked 'IN CONFIDENCE' on the front page of the submission.

While the department will endeavour to identify and protect material claimed as confidential, it cannot guarantee that submissions will not be made publicly available. There is a possibility that the department may be required to reveal information provided by respondents due to a right to information requestion under the *Right to Information Act 200*9.

For further information, please email BiodiversityStrategy@des.qld.gov.au.

10 Looking Ahead: Implementation

Implementation of the Queensland Government's Biodiversity Strategy and Performance Framework will be led by the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) and progressed in phases over the next five years.

1. Actions underway:

- Undertake consultation on the Performance Framework that will support the monitoring of progress of the Biodiversity Strategy.

2. Within the next 12 months:

- Consider consultation feedback from stakeholders and Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Performance Framework will be finalised by the Queensland Government.
- Review and progress development of priority new indicators for biodiversity.
- Assess and curate biodiversity data relevant to target reporting, including identifying data gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- Further work to establish the Biodiversity Strategy Performance Framework.

3. In two years:

- Commence reporting to Ministers on the effectiveness and progress of the Biodiversity Strategy using the Performance Framework.
- Undertake biodiversity response planning, to identify what further actions and interventions may be required to drive performance towards the Biodiversity Strategy targets.

4. In five years:

- Review and improve the Biodiversity Strategy and Performance Framework.

Appendix 1 – Summary of proposed targets, actions and indicators

Target By 2030, we will…	Actions We will achieve this through…	Indicators Our measures of progress are…
Protect  Effectively protect areas of high biodiversity value to ensure net gain in extent and condition by 2030 as part of the national 30 by 30 target.	Vegetation Management framework Protected Area Strategy and Investment program Queensland Environmental Offsets Framework 2020 South East Koala Regulations Bioregional planning Strategy for Conservation and Management of Queensland's Wetlands	Area of land and waters in national and marine park Condition of land and water in national and marine park Areas of high biodiversity value protected under other mechanisms Area of wetland and aquatic ecosystems under protection
Restore  Restoration is underway in up to 2 million hectares of priority degraded ecosystems by 2030	Land Restoration Fund and Natural Capital Fund Protected areas network Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan and Queensland Reef Water Quality Program SEQ Koala Habitat Restoration and Partnerships program Carbon Farming pillar of the Queensland Low-Emissions Agriculture Roadmap	Extent and classification of terrestrial regional ecosystems Condition of terrestrial ecosystems Condition and extent of aquatic ecosystems Natural capital value of Queensland's ecosystem and species Area of land and waters and investment in restoration projects
Recover  Improve threatened species recovery and reduce overall extinction risk by 2030	Queensland Threatened Species Program South East Queensland Koala Habitat Regulations and Conservation Strategy Removing gillnets from the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area Species recovery and conservation plans Protected plants framework	Extinction risk for all species Species conservation status Threatened species habitat

Mitigate  **Mitigate key threats to biodiversity and enhance nature's resilience to change by 2030**	Queensland Clean Economy Pathway and legislated emissions reductions targets Queensland Biosecurity Framework Queensland Invasive Animals and Plants Strategy Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy Renewable Energy Zones Readiness Assessments	Number of invasive species under control action and biodiversity incursions prevented
		Plastic waste and pollution in Queensland
		Sustainable use of nature's resources
		Rates of land use change
		Climate change risks and impacts on biodiversity
		Habitat connectivity and ecosystem resilience
Mainstream  Integrate biodiversity into relevant decisions of government, business and community	Queensland State of Environment report Queensland Sustainability Report Local and state land use planning frameworks and schemes Fauna Sensitive Road Design Guidelines Bioregional planning	Percentage of relevant plans and strategies with biodiversity integrated
Connect  Increase awareness and engagement in conservation efforts by 2030	Gateway visitor centres Ecotourism Strategy Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program Community Sustainability Action Grants Looking After Country Grants Engaging Queenslanders in Science Strategy	People engaged in biodiversity conservation
		Area of land and sea Country under co-stewardship or joint management arrangements with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, involvement of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in species conservation and recovery planning
		People engaged in environmental education and outreach
		Funding for partnerships and community grants

Appendix 2 – Summary of consultation questions

The proposed Performance Framework:

- QUESTION 1: What do you think successful biodiversity conservation in Queensland looks like?
- QUESTION 2: Does the Performance Framework capture this? Why or why not?
- QUESTION 3: Do you think this framework will help measure progress towards the 2050 vision?

The proposed continuous improvement cycle:

- QUESTION 4: What do you think of the continuous improvement cycle as shown? Does it capture the important steps needed to drive results for biodiversity conservation?
- QUESTION 5: Do you see you or your organisation as a contributor to any of the stages of continuous improvement?

The proposed Protect target:

- QUESTION 6: How confident are you that the Protect target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?
- QUESTION 7: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Protect target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?
- QUESTION 8: What biodiversity values do you think are most important to consider in identifying and mapping areas of high biodiversity value?
- QUESTION 9: Do you agree with the proposed characteristics to define 'areas of high biodiversity value' for this target? How might these need to be improved to ensure the target delivers the desired outcomes for Queensland's species and ecosystems?

The proposed Restore target:

- QUESTION 10: How confident are you that the Restore target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?
- QUESTION 11: Are you (or your organisation) undertaking restoration projects or developing a natural capital account/ method that would provide useful information on progress towards achievement of the restoration target?
- QUESTION 12: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Restore target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?
- QUESTION 13: What do you think is important to consider in identifying Queensland's restoration priorities? Are there any opportunities that should be considered or barriers to be addressed?

The proposed Recover target:

- QUESTION 14: How confident are you that the Recover target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?
- QUESTION 15: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Recover target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

The proposed Mitigate target:

- QUESTION 16: How confident are you that the Mitigate target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?
- QUESTION 17: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Mitigate target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

The proposed Mainstream target:

- QUESTION 18: How confident are you that the Mainstream target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by 2030?
- QUESTION 19: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Mainstream target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?

The proposed Connect target:

- QUESTION 20: How confident are you that the Connect target will support the Biodiversity Strategy to achieve results by

2030?

- QUESTION 21: Are you (or your organisation) taking action to contribute to the Connect target? If so, what contributions are you making and what are your measures of progress?
- QUESTION 22: What strategies do you think could be used to improve participation and engagement in conservation action?

Actions that will deliver the targets:

- QUESTION 23: What additional coordination and actions do you think may be needed by the Queensland Government to ensure the targets are achieved across all sectors?
- QUESTION 24: Are there any l actions you (or your organisation), are taking to contribute towards Queensland's biodiversity targets?

The proposed indicators:

- QUESTION 25: Are there any other existing indicators that you think are suitable for inclusion in the Performance Framework?
- QUESTION 26: What are the priority indicators that you think should be developed to support reporting against the biodiversity targets?
- QUESTION 27: What opportunities are there to improve data integration and sharing across non-government and government entities, to ensure biodiversity information is widely accessible, and supports reporting against biodiversity targets?

Questions for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- QUESTION 28: Does the Biodiversity Strategy and Performance Framework reflect and support the rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in conserving Queensland's biodiversity? How can the framework be improved to addressed this?
- QUESTION 29: Other than co-stewardship arrangements and First Nations involvement in recovery planning, are there other indicators of success that could demonstrate how effectively the Biodiversity Strategy engages Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in its delivery?