
Review of the South East Queensland Regional Landscape Strategy

Office of Urban Management
Department of Local Government and Planning

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1 Introduction

This paper has been prepared by Tract Consultants in response to a brief presented by the Office of Urban Management, Department of Local Government and Planning.

1.1 Purpose of Review

Work undertaken to date has been unable to specifically identify those areas in SEQ that require protection from future urban development. This review has been prepared with this major objective in mind and provides the OUM with the tools necessary to identify the regionally significant landscapes and open spaces. The particular tasks include:-

- Report on the current status of the work undertaken in progressing the Regional Landscape Strategy (Open Space Planning in SEQ)
- Identify the Principles that would govern a regional landscape planning program for SEQ
- A definition of regional open space, including what would constitute the different elements of a regional landscape in SEQ
- A draft program of work required to progress the RLS work to fit in with the October 2004 draft plan deadline
- Identify a process for mapping the Regional Landscape Strategy through sensitive mapping techniques
- Where possible identify, vulnerable and sensitive areas requiring urgent protection.

2 Regional Landscape Protection in SEQ Today

2.1 History of Regional Landscape Protection in SEQ

Planning for south east Queensland's regional landscapes and open spaces has been an activity undertaken by a range of authorities since the late 1980's. At this time research demonstrated that rapid population growth and subsequent urban development in our major centres was contributing to a significant loss of the regions quality of life. With the knowledge that only 16% of the region was protected by public ownership for National Parks and State Forests, it became evident that action was required to protect significant landscape values from the threat of future urban growth.

The early 1990's saw the preparation of the SEQ Regional Growth Management Framework and Strategy, the first of its kind for the region. The series of policy papers that formed the basis of the Framework, highlighted the importance of considering all regional open space values – recreational, cultural, conservation, social and economic.

The first proposed solution for managing urban growth and the regional open spaces was the Regional Open Space System (ROSS). This system involved the State Government dedicating \$35 million over five years for purchasing open space. The implementation of this system proved a challenge given that it lacked the detailed regional planning necessary to determine which particular parcels of land would be suitable for purchasing. This system also received some particular opposition from the rural sector, and as a result an alternative approach was deemed necessary. The program was halted in 1996 by the State Government. Lessons learnt from the ROSS experience include:-

- ensure all relevant stakeholders are consulted prior to the release of a strategy that suggests acquisition processes,
- if acquisition of freehold land is deemed a necessary mechanism for protecting open space, ensure that it is supported with a detailed and valid process for identifying suitable properties
- when mapping regional open space values ensure that there are valid arguments for their inclusion and that it is based on current and relevant information

An alternative approach was sought and the Regional Landscape Strategy (RLS) was launched as a 'low-key, cooperative' program. The Regional Landscape Strategy Advisory Committee (RLSAC), consisting of a broad range of representatives, was delegated the responsibility of the implementation of the Strategy under *SEQ 2001*. A review of the experiences with the ROSS, deemed it necessary to utilise an 'equitable' approach to open space planning, and not unfairly impact on rural landholders.

The RLSAC operated from 1998 through to 2003 addressing the Principles and Actions outlined in *SEQ 2001*. The RLSAC had adopted a long-term approach to work towards protecting the lands and this was called the Regional Landscape Strategy. Although it had always been intended that a specific policy or strategy would be prepared to govern the protection of regionally significant landscapes, the Committee were focused on gathering the necessary information to devise an accurate plan. Funding for the RLS ended in June 2003, and the responsibilities of the Committee were placed with the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) until June 2004, and now sits with the Office of Urban Management (OUM) in the Department of Local Government and Planning (DLGP).

2.2 Achievements of the Regional Landscape Strategy

With a review of the SEQ Regional Plan it is necessary to acknowledge the work that has been undertaken to date and the information available to the Office of Urban Management to identify the regional landscape and open space values.

Prior to its end, the RLSAC prepared a document outlining the status of the Regional Landscape Strategy. Appendix 1 of this document is an outline of the progress made to the end of June 2003 in progressing the RLS. Major existing studies and documents that have been prepared to inform the RLS include: -

- *Regional Landscape Values – Guidelines for their protection in local government planning schemes in south east Queensland* (2001)
- *Economic Benefits of Open Space in South East Queensland* (2002)
- Various studies on Scenic Amenity values
- *Draft Glen Rock Management Plan*
- *Draft Settlement Concept Plan*
- Draft Regional Trails Framework
- Establishment of Regional Parks
- *Regional Landscape Strategy Charter 2003*
- *SEQ Recreation Demand Study*
- SEQ Community Attitude Surveys

The EPA continued the work of the RLSAC after June 2003, and in that time has undertaken further research into the processes that can be adopted in mapping the open space values of the region.

Further information on these efforts is provided in the review of existing information and identification of critical information gaps in Chapter 3.

2.3 Towards A Revised SEQ Regional Plan in October 2004

In March 2004 the State Government announced the creation of the Office of Urban Management to 'provide leadership in managing urban growth in SEQ and work collaboratively with other State Agencies, Local Governments and a range of other stakeholders to ensure high quality and sustainable outcomes for the region'. One of the major tasks involves the revision of the *SEQ RFGM 2000*.

Work has been undertaken in preparing for the release of a revised SEQ Regional Plan in October 2004. In March 2004 the Urban Management and Infrastructure Coordination Committee confirmed the elements of the revised plan. Elements will include:

- A clear statement of the Vision for the future of the Region
- A statement of Desired Regional Outcomes (DROs)
- Principles, strategies and actions to progress the DROs
- A preferred future settlement pattern, including an analysis of alternative settlement patterns
- A Map which gives spatial expression to this, plus strategic infrastructure corridors, open space areas and networks, major centres, etc
- Components of a regional infrastructure plan, including major infrastructure projects required to deliver and support the preferred settlement pattern and arrangement for an ongoing infrastructure co-ordination program
- A rolling Action Plan for implementation, and
- Sustainability indicators, monitoring and reporting and review arrangements.

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Current figures indicate that SEQ will be home to an additional 1.2 million people in the year 2026. The State government has realised that there are two key factors to address in managing this rapid population growth. Firstly, identifying future urban growth areas capable of accommodating this population and secondly, identifying the values of the region today requiring protection from urban development. The Regional Landscape and Open Spaces form a significant factor in the second element. The results of recent consultation activities has identified that the community of today place a high value on our regional landscapes and that there is concern that these values are threatened by future urban development.

Advising the review of the SEQ RFGM is the SEQ Regional Coordination Committee (RCC). The RCC consists of representatives from federal, state and local government and major authorities responsible for various aspects of urban growth management. The RCC has devised and endorsed 8 Desired Regional Outcomes (DROs) to address all aspects of regional growth management. Of these, Regional Landscape and Open Space planning is found to be relevant to six. These are listed in Figure 1 in order of relevance to the protection of regionally significant landscapes and open spaces.

Desired Regional Outcome 2

Enhanced ecological and coastal processes, biodiversity, and air and water quality, and sustainable use of natural resources – including a regional open space network that conserves scenic, cultural and recreation values and rural productivity.

Desired Regional Outcome 1

A more compact urban pattern framed by regional open space – based on a network of discrete centres of different scales and functions, that are accessible and self-contained, use energy and resources sustainable and minimise wastes.

Desired Regional Outcome 3

Cohesive urban and rural community with a strong sense of identity and place – that are inclusive, culturally vibrant, equitable and safe; with access to a full range of services and facilities; and appropriate housing that meets diverse needs.

Desired Regional Outcome 4

A dynamic and diversified economy – utilizing its competitive advantages to grow sustainable jobs, exports and investment, and providing employment, accessible to where people live.

Desired Regional Outcome 6

Social, cultural, economic and environmental infrastructure is planned, co-ordinated and delivered – with greater certainty and supporting the future settlement pattern and other desired regional outcomes.

Desired Regional Outcome 7

Aboriginal peoples are empowered to participate in government, community and cultural planning processes and Traditional Owners are engaged in all business about country.

Desired Regional Outcome 8

The Sustainable Region Plan is effectively implemented – through a strengthened collaborative partnership; commitment by Governments and industry and community groups; and alignment of their plans with the regional plan.

Figure 1 Desired Regional Outcomes relevant to Regional Landscapes and Open Spaces in order of priority

3 Working Towards a Draft SEQ Regional Plan

The State has made a clear statement that Regional Landscapes and Open Spaces are a significant element of a revised growth management framework for SEQ. The work done to date forms a solid base for the production of a plan for the protection of regionally significant landscapes and open spaces. It is important that this is in a form which can be easily implemented by all relevant stakeholders – the State government, local authorities, non-government organisations, and landholders.

3.1 Elements of an Ideal Regional Landscape and Open Space Plan

Until now the Regional Landscape Strategy has been about process and gathering information. With the State government working to release a revised SEQ Regional Plan which will be a statutory document, implemented under the *Integrated Planning Act*, it is time to arrange this information into a formal plan.

The RLSAC had been taking a long-term approach to preparing an informed State Planning Policy for Regional Landscapes, prior to the announcement of the SEQ Regional Plan being adopted as planning legislation. In determining the gaps in the existing information it is important to identify what would be the 'ideal' for an Regional Landscapes and Open Space plan. Outlined below are the elements of an 'ideal' plan that is primarily based on the typical planning process and an overview of the current status of the planning process.

3.1.1 Clear Statement of Objectives

There needs to be a clearly defined description of why regionally significant landscapes and open spaces need to be protected in SEQ. Current data indicates that the SEQ community is concerned about the loss of open space to urban development. However, when it comes to identifying particular areas which need to be protected for regional landscape and open space purposes, conflict arises. There needs to be formal acknowledgement of all of the assets held in regionally significant landscapes and open spaces – environmental, economic, cultural, and social.

3.1.2 Clear Definition of Regional Landscapes and Open Spaces

It is important to identify a clear, concise definition for regionally significant landscapes and open spaces. Complimenting the objectives described above, it should be possible to explain to someone in a small amount of words what is meant by this term. There are two existing definitions that have been used in work to date, including that used by the RLSAC and another defined by the EPA in their work. These are both very technical and complex definitions which should be simplified and condensed for the purposes of inclusion in the SEQ Regional Plan. The existing SEQ RFGM does not contain a single definition for regional landscapes.

3.1.3 A List of Values of Regional Landscapes and Open Spaces

Extending on the definition, these values are the several parts that make up the whole of a network of regional landscapes and open spaces. This a very important stage in the process as this list will determine what gets mapped, the implementation mechanisms that can be utilised, and the indicators that can be used to measure the successes in implementation.

The values currently exhibited in the SEQ Regional Framework for Growth Management 2000 in Principle 5.5 are:-

- "broad nature conservation
- high land and water conservation
- high scenic amenity
- cultural heritage and social significance to a community
- sustainable nature-based recreation

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- separation of urban areas
- linking open space lands
- outdoor recreation”

The Regional Landscape Strategy Advisory Committee has since reviewed these categories and has identified some key issues with the list and suggests that the list be revised to take into account :-

- the similarity between ‘sustainable nature-based recreation’ and ‘outdoor recreation
- the use of the word ‘high’ to describe land and water conservation and scenic amenity has the potential to be misconstrued in the determination of ‘regional significance’
- the ‘broad’ descriptor for nature conservation is in response to old policy and should be updated to reflect current policy
- further definition is required for the ‘linking of open spaces’
- the economic values of open space values such as farming, forestry, tourism and recreation are not currently captured in this definition.

A review of these values is necessary, and it is important that the revised list of values is then used to inform the preparation of appropriate maps.

3.1.4 A Map of the Regional Landscapes and Open Spaces

This is a particularly important tool in the effective implementation of the regional plan. All those involved in the implementation of the plan will require a point of reference to identify which lands in particular are included in the network of regionally significant landscapes and open spaces. In the case of SEQ it is going to be a situation of utilising a large amount of existing data and information on each of the values to make one map or a series of maps. The presentation of this map is also important. Due to the large array of values being mapped, the range of implementation mechanisms that may be utilised in protecting these values and the sensitivity in mapping some values, such as indigenous heritage values, it is important that the mapping of values is undertaken in an effective manner.

3.1.5 Implementation Mechanisms

There exists a range of tools and mechanisms that can be utilised to implement these types of plans. Although the SEQ Regional Plan will be a statutory mechanism, others include related legislation, local planning schemes, acquisition programs, voluntary programs, education programs, etc. There will be certain tools that are most suited to certain values and situations, and these need to be reviewed to ensure that the implementation of the plan is successful.

3.1.6 Monitoring Performance

It is important to test firstly, that the plan is being implemented, and secondly that it is achieving the intended objectives. Effective monitoring requires more than just a revision of the plan every 3 years. It requires constant monitoring to test whether the regionally significant landscapes and open spaces are in fact being protected. If it is found that they are still disappearing to urban development in another 3-5 years it is obvious that the plan is not effective. This could be for a number of reasons such as mapping not being kept up-to-date or changes in related legislation. For this reason it is important to identify a formal process for collecting data on a regular basis and identify some clear performance indicators which can act as triggers for revision of the policy.

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The following table provides a summary of the progress that has been made to date to prepare an effective plan and the actions that are necessary to complete this work.

Table 1 Progress Report on the Preparation of a Plan to protect regionally significant landscapes and open spaces

| Element of the Plan | Current Status | Further Work Required |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Objectives | There are some objectives that are contained within a number of documents (ie. Dept Natural Resources and Mines, 2001; SEQ RFGM 2000) which need to be collated and prioritised. | Prepare a list of clear objectives specifically focused on regionally significant landscapes and open spaces |
| Definition | Two different definitions have been found in work undertaken by the RLSAC and the EPA. | A clear and concise definition of regionally significant landscapes. |
| Values | There is a list currently contained in the SEQ RFGM but this will require review and further clarification. | A revised list of Values |
| Map | This has not been a priority action until this point in time. There is a large amount of mapping and data that can be drawn upon to map the values. *A more detailed review can be found in Section 3.2 of this report | Refer to Table 2 in Section 3.2 |
| Implementation Mechanisms | A formal review of the full scope of these mechanisms has not been undertaken, however some have been discussed by the RLSAC including voluntary conservation agreements, covenants, and the Queensland Nature Trust. | A review of the full scope of implementation mechanisms should be undertaken and tested against each of the objectives and the values that require protection. |
| Monitoring Performance | Some performance indicators have been outlined in the guidelines that were prepared for local authorities however these will need to be reviewed to check their suitability to all other stakeholders involved in implementation. | Further work required. |

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3.2 Critical Gaps in Mapping Regionally Significant Values

A critically important element of plan for protecting regional landscapes and open space is a map that the State and local authorities can utilise in implementation and that landholders can understand the values of their land and the opportunities that exist for them to protect these values. A review was undertaken of all of the mapping and data existing in relation to specific Landscape Values. These Values have been identified as important elements of the regional landscapes and open space network. The following list of values is a collaboration of:-

- those in the existing RFGM, and
- those recommended by the RLSAC in the *Issues and Options Paper for Regional Landscapes*.

The landscape values reviewed include:-

- Nature Conservation
- High Land and Water Conservation
- Scenic Amenity
- Cultural Heritage
- Urban Separation and Buffering (Regional Character Pathways)
- Open Space Linkages
- Outdoor Recreation
- Natural Economic Resources

The planning guidelines prepared by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and the Environmental Protection Agency, following the advice of the RLSAC identifies further detail on each of these values and the criteria that can be used to measure their level of 'regional' significance. For each of the Landscape Values a general review has been undertaken on the mapping available and the criteria that can be used to determine the regional significance of values. **Error! Reference source not found.** provides a summary of this review and additional detailed information and further discussion is provided in the following sections.

3.2.1 Nature Conservation

A large body of work already exists on the nature conservation values in SEQ. Both the State government and local authorities are involved in collecting and collating data on these values. Most relevant to the preparation of the SEQ Regional Plan is the *Regional Nature Conservation Strategy for South East Queensland 2003-2008* which has been prepared in response to the actions derived in *SEQ RFGM 2000*. Figure 2 is a map which identifies the biodiversity values of State, Regional and Local significance, based on the Common Nature Conservation Classification System (CNCCS). This process utilises a list of diagnostic criteria to determine the relative significance of sites. This list includes:-

- Significant habitat for "at risk" species
- Ecosystem value (including wetlands)
- Remnant size
- Relative size of regional ecosystems
- Condition
- Ecosystem diversity
- Context and connection

And other desirable criteria, including

- Other habitat for "at risk" species
- Habitat for other species
- Localised contribution to biodiversity

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- Corridor links
- Geomorphological variation
- Other ecosystem values.

The Strategy was developed under the guidance of the Regional Nature Conservation Strategy Advisory Group, which consisted of a range of representatives from State and local governments, peak industry groups, community groups and Indigenous Traditional Owners.

A bioregional corridors map (Figure 3) has also been prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency and it is necessary to ensure that this element was incorporated in the mapping of the NCS. This map is currently being referred to in the discussions regarding Natural Resource Management in SEQ.

3.2.2 High Land and Water Conservation

This value covers issues relating to the integrated catchment and management issues (e.g. soil conservation and water quality). The RLSAC has determined that high land and water conservation value relates to areas of land and water within the catchments of natural and artificial water bodies. The regional significance of a catchment is established by the extent to which its water is used for social, health economic, or environmental benefit to both the local and wider community. Areas with high land conservation value include land buffering waterways and water bodies, water catchment areas, coastal foreshores, upland bushland areas and islands (Department of Natural Resources and Mines et al., 2001).

It is recommended that this value be further clarified and work be undertaken to specifically identify the intended purpose of this value and its relationship to regional landscapes and open space. Mapping of some of these elements would be a considerable exercise (for example buffers around waterways; upland bushland areas) and it is important that the relative importance and relevance of these aspects are identified prior to arranging for mapping to be prepared.

Table 1 Critical Criteria for Regionally Significant Landscapes and Open Space

| Landscape Value | Objective | Test for Regional Significance | Mapping Undertaken | Mapping Required | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nature Conservation | To protect the biodiversity values of the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant habitat for "at risk" species ▪ Ecosystem value (including wetlands) ▪ Remnant size ▪ Relative size of regional ecosystems ▪ Condition ▪ Ecosystem diversity ▪ Context and connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nature Conservation Strategy (NCS) ▪ Bioregional Wildlife Corridors in SEQNRM | None required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirm with the EPA that the use of the NCS map for this purpose is appropriate ▪ Identify what are the implications of the other legislation such as Regional Forestry Agreement and Vegetation Management Act. ▪ Check that the Bioregional Corridors in the SEQ Natural Resource Management Strategy mapping is compatible with the NCS |
| High Land and Water Conservation | To protect the environmental values of water catchments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A major waterbody or waterway, or proposed future major constructed water body ▪ A largely uncleared area of the catchment of a major water body | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water catchments have been mapped ▪ Waterways, but not buffers and corridors | Depends on the need to address the Land Conservation values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need to confirm that 'high land conservation' is a value of the regional landscape and open spaces in the context of the proposed map. ▪ How do waterways fit in, and are there such things as regional waterway corridors? If so, how wide is the line to draw on the map? |
| Scenic Amenity | To protect those features and the access points to the scenery that is important to the identity of SEQ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The relative contribution of places to the landscape of the collective community, and the importance of these values to the community ▪ The community's liking of the scenery of open space compared to built form. ▪ The extent to which a place in the landscape is seen from important public viewing locations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scenic Amenity Study | Extract those layers from the existing mapping of the regionally significant areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Original suggestions by the consultant undertaking the Scenic Amenity study suggests that those areas with a ranking of 8-10 in the mapping are to be considered 'regionally significant' |
| Cultural Heritage | To protect indigenous and European cultural heritage values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the historical and/or cultural evolution of south east Queensland, both indigenous and post-colonisation ▪ Further criteria are adopted by the National Trust and EPA Heritage Queensland ▪ Properties or areas listed as World Heritage, State Significance and Regional Significance on the relevant heritage registers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be confirmed whether DATSIP have completed mapping of indigenous values in SEQ ▪ Review the mapping of sites undertaken by the EPA Heritage Register and the National Trust | Extract the properties of the National Trust and the Old Heritage Register which are within a non-urban context and contribute to landscape and open space. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is it possible to map the indigenous values? ▪ Consult with DATSIP on progress of mapping ▪ Consult with EPA Heritage Queensland to determine those areas/properties which could be considered to be regionally significant within the SEQ landscape and open spaces. |
| Urban Separation and Buffering (Regional Character Pathways) | To protect the gateways which demonstrate a dramatic change in character between urban and non-urban scenery and contribute to the sense of place and identity of SEQ communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distance between urban areas (??km) ▪ Frequency of use by locals and visitors ▪ Transition areas between regional centres (Brisbane to Gold Coast & Sunshine Coast & Ipswich; coasts to hinterland; Ipswich to Toowoomba & Scenic Rim | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The frequency of use by locals and visitors calculated in the Scenic Amenity study may be suitable for one of the criteria | These values need to be mapped | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is this a valid value? ▪ Protecting these areas as 'gateways' to our regional centres may be a more appropriate argument for their protection. |
| Open Space Linkages | To protect 'open space linkages that join, or help to join, two or more discrete areas currently used as open space. (DNRM, 2001) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fauna and flora corridors • Preserving significant open space features • Protecting the landscape within and between local government areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioregional Corridors are mapped and there is a need to confirm the mapping in the NCS • Recreation trails are being mapped currently | Depend on the need to map these values and the status of current mapping. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This value may not be necessary given that bioregional corridors and regional trails are addressed in other values |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| Outdoor Recreation | To protect the existing outdoor recreation opportunities in SEQ which are frequented by a number of people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review work undertaken by the Regional Trails Working Group and the Department of Sport and Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mapping supposedly being undertaken by Department of Sport and Recreation | | |
| Natural Economic Resources | To protect the natural economic resources which contribute to either the economic function of the region or open space values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a current map in the SEQ RFGM which has identified these values, however there may be a need to further clarify and identify criteria for testing regional significance. | | | |

Figure 2 Nature Conservation Significance, SEQ Nature Conservation Strategy 2003-2008

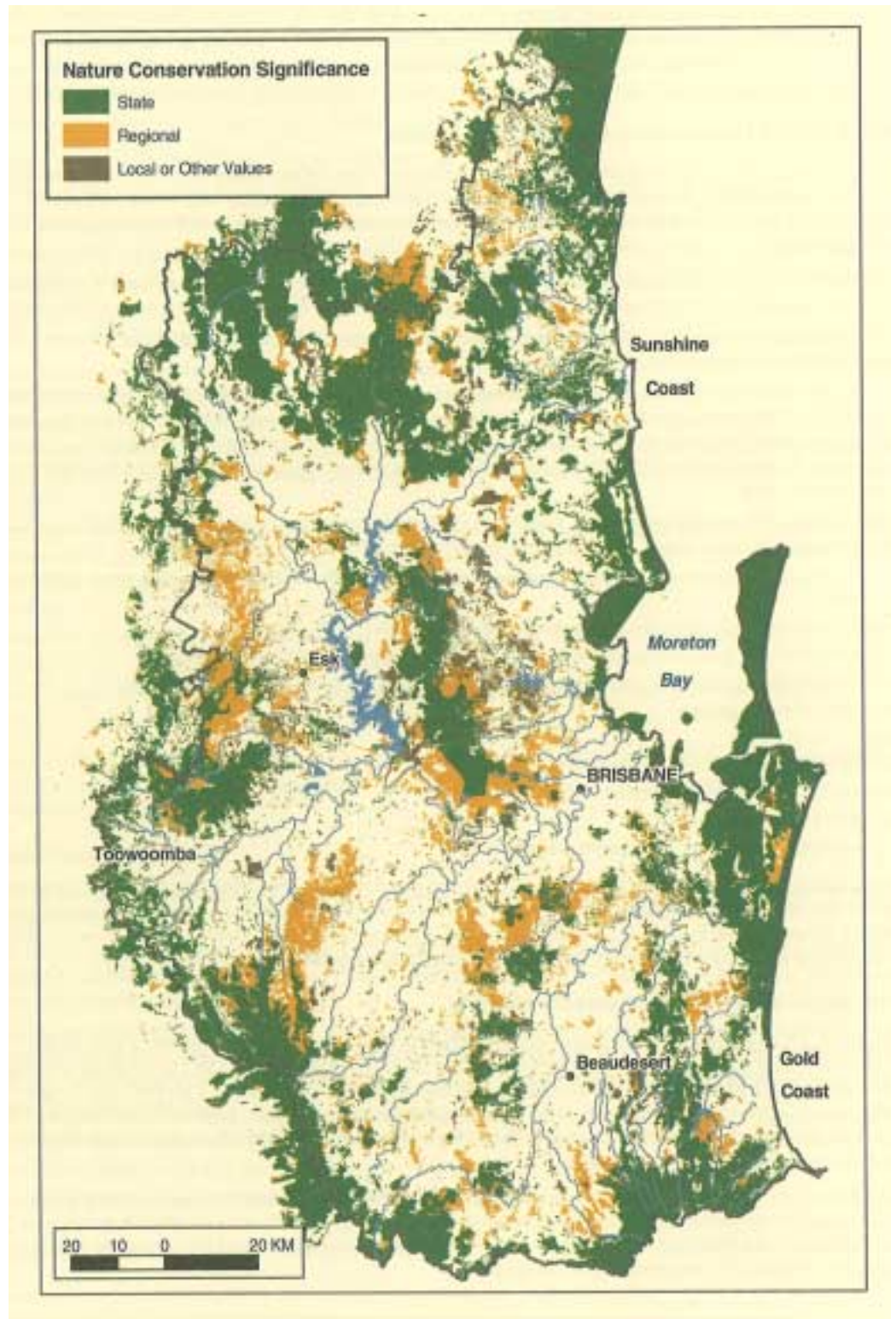
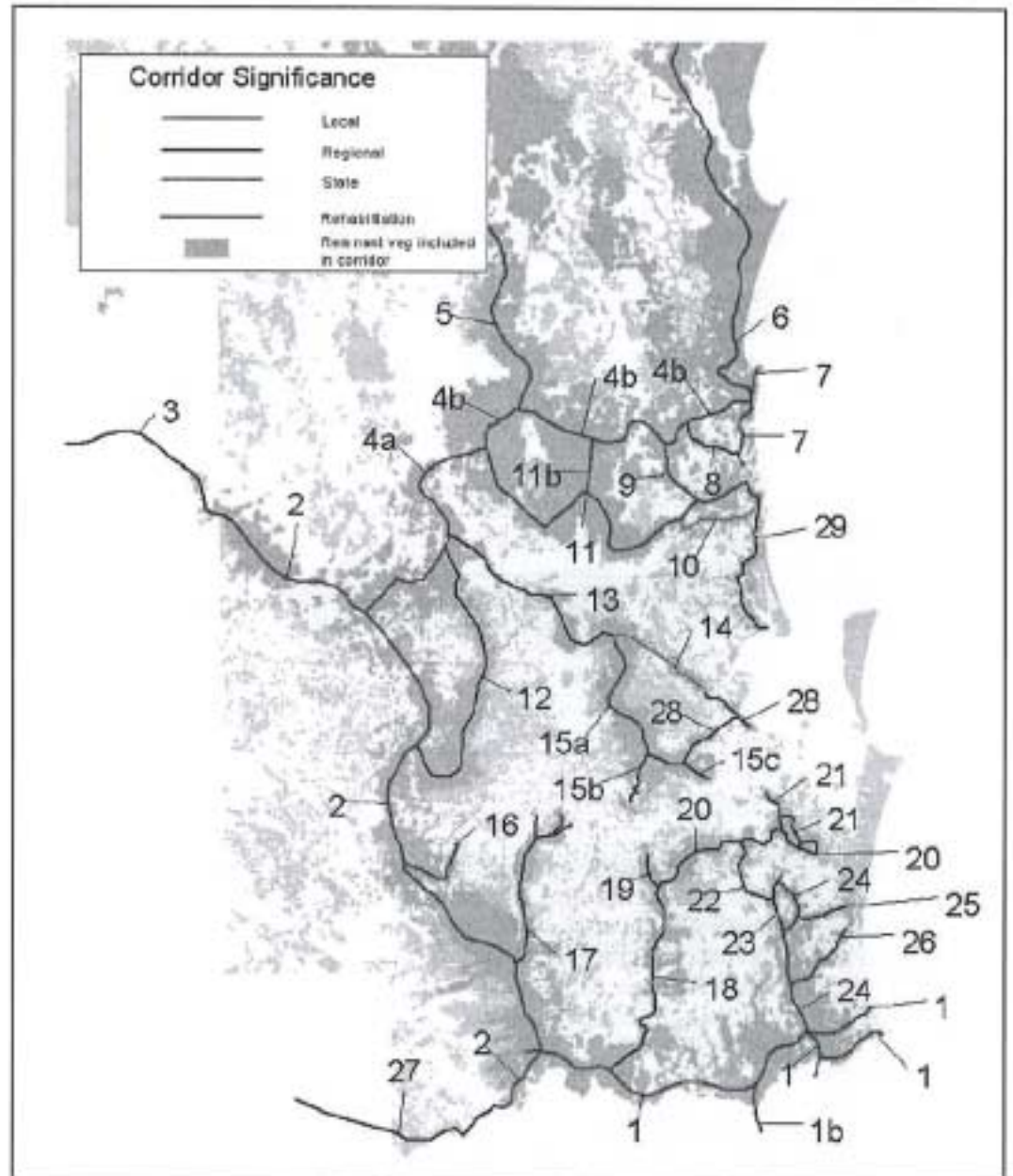


Figure 3 Bioregional Corridors, NRM SEQ Landscape Asset Summary Paper (2004)



3.2.3 Scenic Amenity

This is one of the particular areas that research has been undertaken over the last four years. An important element research and studies have been undertaken to identify a methodology for the measurement of values and identification of important scenic amenity areas in the region. The *Draft Interim Scenic Amenity Maps and Management Guidelines* were released in June 2004. This paper provides an outline of the methodology utilised for mapping and a map (of the relative significance of the non-urban areas for their scenic amenity value.

3.2.4 Cultural Heritage

Upon looking at the criteria that had been outlined in the planning guidelines (Department of Natural Resources and Mines, 2001), it was obvious that this category was incredibly broad and attempted to capture both the indigenous and post-colonisation values.

The list of measurement criteria suggested in the guidelines is similar to that utilised by the Queensland Heritage Trust and the National Heritage Trust. Although these criteria are useful in determining whether an area/property is of heritage significance, further definition is required to determine whether they are of 'regional' significance. Further work needs to be undertaken to determine the methodology that has been utilised by Queensland Heritage in mapping these values.

3.2.5 Urban Separation and Buffering

This is an area which may require particular attention and further definition. Little work has been undertaken on measuring the significance of these values in SEQ and this could be one of the areas which comes under most criticism by the public. Considering that these areas are those that are most likely threatened by future urban development and are held in the possession of landholders with the impression that they may be able to develop in the long-term.

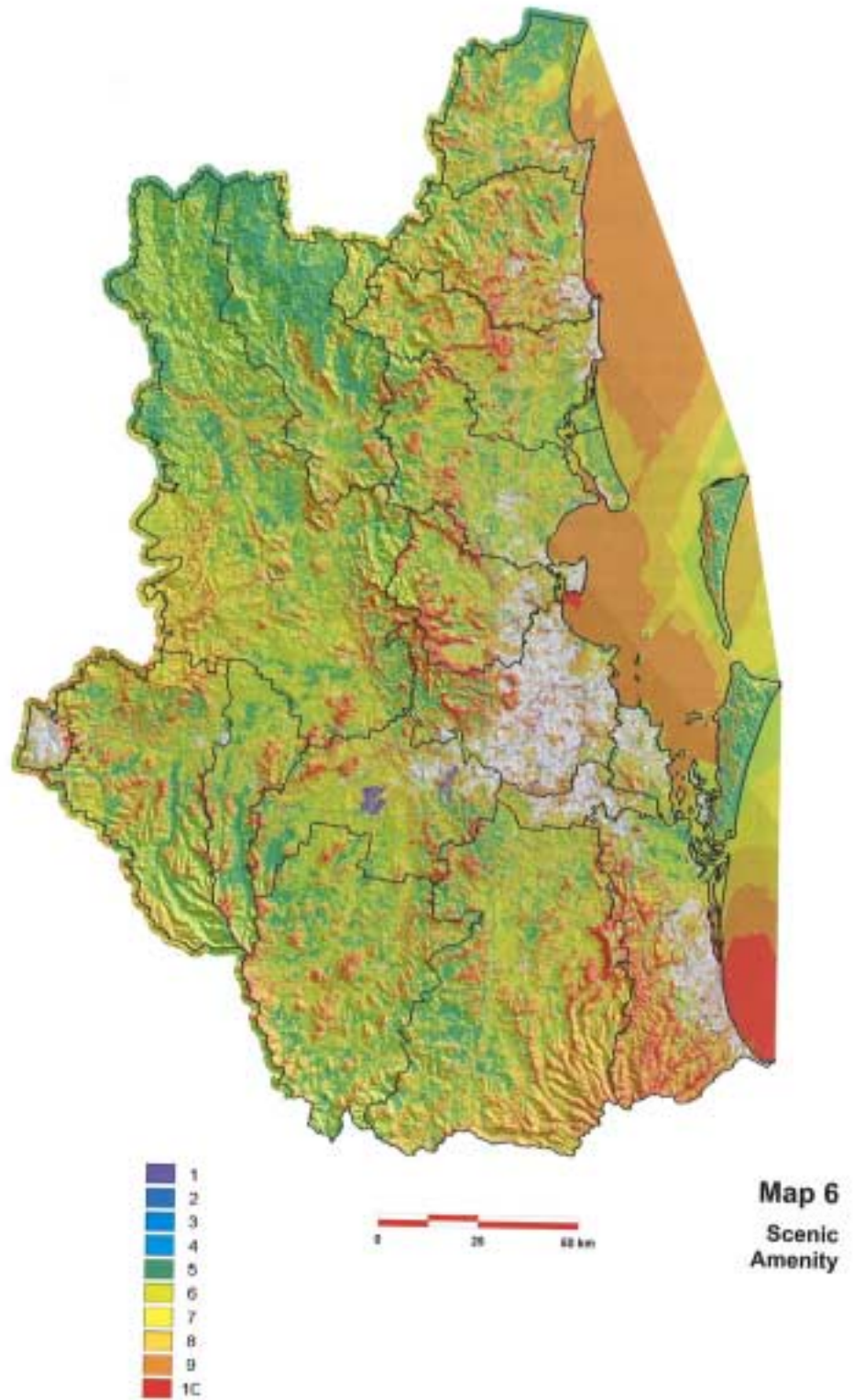
The work undertaken so far in defining this value does not provide an adequate explanation for its protection. By focusing on gateways and the experience one has upon entering these 'urban breaks', it is possible to place the value on the need for 'non-urban' experiences between 'urban' settings. Further clarification of this concept and definition of the criteria to test regional significance is required. The suggestions at this stage include the distance or span of the 'non-urban break'; the number of residents/visitors that encounter this experience; and passes by a major non-urban regional feature (eg. waterbody, hills, distinctive vegetation). Initial ideas on mapping this value include identifying the 'visual catchment area' or the view to the horizon from major transport corridors such as roads and rail.

3.2.6 Open Space Linkages

This is a questionable value given that the major linkages being wildlife corridors and regional trails are picked up in the values of Nature Conservation, Inter-urban Breaks, and Outdoor Recreation. If there are other 'linkage' values then this definition requires further clarification and definition and valid criteria for testing regional significance.

Figure 4 Map of SEQ Region Scenic Amenity Values

Source: SEQROC et al, 2004



3.2.7 Outdoor Recreation

Work has been undertaken by a Regional Trails Working Group stemming from the RLSAC in identifying regionally significant trails in SEQ. The information behind this project is currently being transferred from the possession of the EPA to the OUM and it is necessary to review the work undertaken and identify how this information can be captured in a revised SEQ Regional Plan.

Work is also being undertaken by the Department of Sport and Recreation on mapping these values. An update is required on the progress of this work. If the mapping is close to completion it may be suitable for inclusion into the map for regionally significant open space.

3.2.8 Natural Economic Resources

This value is currently not contained in the list contained in the SEQ RFGM 2000, however it has been an issue in the past, and one discussed by the RLSAC at great length, but has not been resolved. Elements that may be contained in this value include good quality agricultural land, extractive industry resources, and State forests. *Rural Futures SEQ 2021- Regional Strategy for Rural Communities and Agriculture* it was identified that as well as protection of existing rural lands, there needed to an additional 45 000ha of land dedicated to agricultural production over the next 25 years to accommodate for the growth in population. There is a need to discuss where the protection of these assets should be addressed within a revised SEQ Regional Plan. These lands do contribute to the economic value of regional landscapes and open spaces. If they are to be included, further clarification of their relationship to landscape and open space values is necessary. The majority of these assets have been mapped in the SEQ RFGM 2000, and this mapping would need to be updated to reflect current data collection.

3.3 Working Towards October 2004

Given all of the information presented above the following table presents an outline of a Work Program to get a plan together for inclusion into the revised SEQ Regional Plan.

4 Critical Regionally Significant Landscapes in SEQ

4.1 Options for Mapping Regionally Significant Landscapes

4.2 Opportunities for Displaying Information

5.1 Definition

The current definition for regionally significant landscapes is a complex one. The definition utilised by the RLSAC is below:-

The one identifying characteristic shared by all Regionally Significant Landscapes is their "open space", non-urban quality. Open Spaces, according to RLSAC are

"All land and water areas of any size or type, which are characterised by having no or very few built structures. ... Open Space can include wetlands, steep slopes, bushland, wildlife habitat, beaches, lakes, dams, agricultural land, forests, scenic views, culturally significant places, outdoor recreation areas, buffers and linkages."

Typically, the values attributed to Regionally Significant Landscapes have been separated into the following categories:

- Nature conservation
- "High land" and water conservation
- Scenic amenity
- Indigenous, historic, and/or cultural significance
- Urban separation and buffering
- Linkage between non-urban spaces
- Outdoor recreation
- Agricultural value.

Characteristics that might make a landscape "significant" include:

- An *elevated* degree of environmental value
- Straddling of local governmental boundaries
- Part of a *major* waterway or water body
- Part of a *major* non-urban space corridor
- Separation or buffering of a *major* urban area
- An *elevated* degree of Indigenous, historical and/or cultural value
- Importance to both the local and wider community
- Use by a large number of people
- Influential or recognised beyond the local arena
- Unique qualities
- Abnormally threatened.

It is considered that there is a need to define regionally significant landscapes and open space in a clear and concise manner to ensure that all stakeholders are able to understand the values that the State government is trying to protect in devising the Regional Landscapes and Open Spaces map.

5.2 Principles/ Objectives

A regional plan for Southeast Queensland must do more than simply list identifying characteristics of Regionally Significant Landscapes. A space warrants protection not only because of its individual degree of value but also for its value within the network of Regionally Significant Landscapes and Open Spaces across the region.

The location of protected Regionally Significant Landscapes must also take into account proximity to urban development. Because the market price of land does not reflect the benefits it can provide for the community as a whole, land development's true costs are easily ignored or overlooked. In the end, they are also irrevocable; once a Regionally Significant Landscape is developed past its sustainable capacity its former values are lost forever. The landscapes closest to urban areas are, typically, the ones most in danger of being overrun by insensitive or destructive development.

Additionally, the farther a Regionally Significant Landscape is located from an urban area, the more transportation infrastructure is required and the more environmentally adverse effects are created.

5.3 Reviewing the List of Values of Regionally Significant Landscapes and Open Spaces

5.4 Descriptions of the Values of Regionally Significant Landscapes

6 Protecting SEQ Regionally Significant Landscapes

References

- Department of Local Government and Planning (2003) *Issues and Options for Regional Landscape* prepared with the assistance of the Regional Landscape Strategy Advisory Committee
- Department of Natural Resources and Mines and Environmental Protection Agency (2001) *Regional Landscape Values – Guidelines for their protection in local government planning schemes in south east Queensland* prepared by the Regional Landscape Strategy Advisory Committee – Statutory Planning Working Group
- SEQROC, Queensland Government, SEQWater and Moreton Bar Waterways and Catchments Partnerships (2004) *Draft Interim Scenic Amenity Maps and Management Guidelines*

Appendix 1 – RLSAC Report on Progress of Priority Actions

| RFGM Priority Action | Progress |
|--|---|
| Develop policy and an operational plan to define, identify and protect regionally significant open space within SEQ. | Not finalised, emphasis has been on identifying regional landscape values and protecting through existing planning processes. |
| Continue a Regional Landscape Strategy Advisory Committee (RLSAC) to assist with the development and implementation of policy and the operational plan | RLSAC status not determined beyond June 2003. |
| Ensure there is appropriate public consultation in the coordination, development, and implementation, of the Regional Landscape Strategy. | Broad consultation through the RLSAC, conferences and projects. |
| Develop and provide planning advice and information to assist Local Governments identify and protect areas of regionally significant open space within SEQ. | Draft guidelines circulated to assist protection of regional landscape values. |
| Ensure areas referred to in Principle 5.5 are identified and protected in planning schemes. | Most progress in conservation and scenic amenity values. |
| Develop and apply an agreed common terminology, with clear definitions and criteria, in implementing the Regional Landscape Strategy. | Progress through conferences, steering groups and discussion papers. |
| Develop options for funding, incentives, research and marketing to ensure equitable protection of regionally significant open space in SEQ. | Options are being developed for joint State and local Government funding. |
| Develop planning and management arrangements, which coordinate across tenures and agencies, for regionally significant open space areas. These arrangements, for land in public ownership and private land by voluntary agreement should be transparent and optimise the delivery of open space outcomes for the community. These outcomes will include nature conservation, economic production, cultural heritage protection, outdoor recreation opportunities, scenic amenity and water catchment management. | Community-based multiple-use management planning has been demonstrated at Glen Rock Regional Park. Pilot projects are proposed that coordinate across tenures and landholders. Proposed networks for regional trails and regional parks will need to operate across tenures and jurisdictions |

| RFGM Priority Action | Progress |
|--|--|
| <p>Protect and enhance appropriate public access to regionally significant open space areas, rivers and water bodies, consistent with the principal purpose of these areas, through the planning and development process.</p> | <p>More RLS coordination would improve outcomes. RLS lands provide multiple use recreation access. Glen Rock Regional Park is operating and a draft management plan prepared for The Settlement. The land at Mt Maroon does not have a plan in place.</p> |
| <p>Develop policy guidelines for outdoor recreation in relation to the planning and management of regionally significant open space, consistent with the principal purpose of these areas.</p> | <p>Projects are under way to coordinate Regional Parks and Regional Trails. These projects will lead to guidelines.</p> |
| <p>In planning and managing regionally significant open space, provide for the broadest diversity of ecologically sustainable outdoor recreation to cater for the existing and future needs of SEQ residents and visitors to the region.</p> | <p>The Management Plan for Glen Rock Regional Park demonstrates how diverse recreational needs can be managed in a context of stewardship. The Settlement at Springbrook has a draft management plan and planning has yet to start for the RLS property at Mt Maroon. There are also initiatives to coordinate Regional Parks and Regional Trails.</p> |
| <p>Promote the development of a regional trails network in SEQ, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linking regionally significant open space areas; • considering the economic and social benefits and cultural opportunities of trails; • considering the cultural and environmental impacts of trails; and • building community awareness of open space issues. | <p>The Regional Trails Coordination Committee is established with stakeholders funding a discussion paper and a regional trails strategy by the end of 2004.</p> |

RLSAC (2003) *Discussion Paper Regional Landscape* p.10- 11

Glossary of Terms

RLSAC – Regional Landscape Strategy Advisory Committee
UGB – Urban Growth Boundary
RLS – Regional Landscape Strategy
OUM – Office of Urban Management
EPA – Environment Protection Agency
ROSS – Regional Open Space System
SEQ – South East Queensland
DLGP – Department of Local Government and Planning
DRO – Desired Regional Outcome
RCC – Regional Coordination Committee
NCS – Nature Conservation Strategy for South East Queensland
DATSIP – Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy