



Natural Environment and Landscapes

What do we want for our region?

We want our region's natural heritage and landscape to create a strong sense of place for our community. Our rural and urban communities sit beside blue waters and within green spaces, giving our people a strong connection with the natural environment. Our unique environment will be the home playground for our communities and protecting this special place for generations to come is an obligation on all of us.

What is important to us?

We want to:

- > showcase the region's landscape character
- > keep our natural environment healthy
- > use the environment in productive and sustainable ways
- > enjoy the natural environment
- > protect and improve our green spaces for passive and active recreation and leisure
- > protect and improve our landscape character and scenic corridors
- > protect significant natural areas and heritage sites
- > protect the natural habitat and ecological processes in the coastal zone
- > maintain our waterways and ecological corridors
- > maintain and enhance the existing environment and important natural areas.

What will our region look like in 2031?

Our natural environment will be a place where:

- > the character of our landscape is protected and managed.
- > our iconic natural assets are protected for future generations
- > the environment is a cornerstone to the well-being and vitality of the community
- > ecological integrity is maintained through conservation and development management
- > significant landscapes and seascapes are preserved – by everyone
- > we have quality open spaces, air, soil and water
- > access to open spaces and the coast is maintained and improved
- > native biodiversity and ecology is protected
- > vegetation beside our waterways protects natural ecological processes.

Natural Environment and Landscapes: strategies to get us there

To make progress:	Who will contribute to getting there:
We must protect and improve the natural qualities of lakes, streams, waterways, wetlands and coastlines through integrated catchment management planning and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - Landcare stakeholders - State Government agencies - Great Barrier Reef stakeholders - Committees - Conservation Stakeholders - Regional Natural Resource Management stakeholders
We need to recognise, protect and enhance significant natural and cultural heritage sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - State Government agencies - Committees - Traditional owners - Heritage groups
We need to develop compact urban settlement patterns (avoiding urban sprawl) that are sensitive to the need to promote environmental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - State Government agencies
We need to improve air quality by reducing energy consumption, vehicle usage and increasing renewable energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - State Government agencies - Sustainable Futures committees - Private enterprise - Community
We need services and infrastructure that support our region's environmental goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - State Government agencies
We need to develop and maintain an environment that is attractive, sustainable and healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - State Government agencies - Committees - Regional Natural Resource Management stakeholders - Conservation stakeholders - Developers
We must preserve and improve the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - Landcare stakeholders - State Government agencies - Conservation stakeholders - Local Communities
We need to ensure public green spaces are easily accessible and well maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - Volunteer stakeholders - Local Communities
We need to identify landscape character areas, including waterfronts, river precincts (wetland, streams and estuaries), scenic corridors and native bush that should be protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - State Government agencies - Management stakeholders - Conservation stakeholders

Targets

We know we are succeeding when:

- our freshwater and marine ecological indicators show we are looking after our freshwater and marine environments
- important sites of natural and cultural heritage are identified and protected
- we have plans in place that minimise the loss of productive soils and the impact of urban development on sensitive environmental and ecological areas
- we have clean air and our carbon footprint is minimised
- we meet waste disposal and recycling targets to manage the impact of solid waste on the environment
- our community is satisfied with the way our environment is managed.