

Delivering on greenspace 2011–12

Green

Protect 50 per cent more land for nature conservation and public recreation.

Context

Greenspace plays an essential role in protecting Queensland's unique biodiversity and helps ensure healthy, vibrant and cohesive communities. With Queensland's population expected to increase by 40 per cent, to 5.6 million by 2026, there is a strong demand for places where Queenslanders can enjoy nature, exercise or relax outdoors – collectively called 'greenspace'.

Achieving the Q2 target to protect 50 per cent more land for nature conservation means increasing Queensland's national parks from 7.6 million hectares in 2008 to 12.9 million hectares by 2020. Since 2008, more than 540,000 hectares has been added to the national park estate reaching 8.14 million hectares in June 2011 (around 4.7 per cent of Queensland). Queensland is also ensuring that it optimises the representation of biodiversity in its national park estate by prioritising new national parks in bioregions with little current protection.

In 2010–11 the Queensland Government added 81,000 hectares to the national park estate, declaring a new national park – Mount Abbot National Park – near Bowen, and expanding Mount Aberdeen and Cape Hillsborough national parks north of Mackay. More than 20 per cent of North Stradbroke Island (5240 hectares) was declared a national park – Naree Budjong Djara (meaning 'my mother earth') – to be jointly managed by the Queensland Government and the Quandamooka people.

Achieving the Q2 target to protect 50 per cent more land for public recreation means increasing park and outdoor recreation spaces across the state from 300,000 hectares in June 2010 to 450,000 hectares by 2020. The land for public recreation target is measuring the amount of greenspace which is available for recreation purposes and ensuring that it is located in areas which are easily accessible by the community.

In 2010–11 approximately 10,000 hectares was added to the Queensland Government's land for public recreation register including riverfront parklands in Indooroopilly, additions to the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, Mt Joyce Recreation Park (Wyaralong Dam), Kangaroo Point Cliffs Park and Fitzgibbon Chase Parklands and Murarrie. The Queensland Government opened a new park at Murarrie under the twin Sir Leo Hielscher Bridges, part of the \$2.5 billion Gateway Upgrade project.

Strategy

The Queensland Government is **protecting more land for nature conservation** by:

- transferring state forests, forest reserves and suitable unallocated state land with high conservation values to national parks
- reviewing leasehold land use under the Delbessie Agreement to purchase national parks in cases where properties are identified as of high strategic importance for the national park estate
- acquiring land for national parks in Cape York through the Cape York Tenure Resolution process

- expanding the national park estate through funding from the Australian Government Caring for Our Country program and Ecofund.
- The Queensland Government is **protecting more land for public recreation** by:
- planning a strategic network of greenspace, including regional parks, regional trails, linear reserves and corridors that link parcels of existing greenspace and pocket parks
 - identifying suitable lands, including unallocated state-owned lands that, by their location, will address gaps in the provision of recreational areas
 - allocating greenspace in major government infrastructure programs with links to existing greenspace networks
 - establishing public recreation opportunities on privately owned lands
 - assessing surplus state-owned land in high growth urban areas for its potential to contribute to a greenspace network.

Key actions for 2011–12

Protecting more land for nature conservation

The Queensland Government aims to add 350,000 hectares to the national park estate by:

- increasing the amount of national park estate in identified locations to ensure adequate representation of biodiversity
- transferring suitable unallocated state land into national parks
- measuring the extent to which biodiversity is protected through Queensland's national parks
- investigating the economic and health outcomes from investment in greenspace (for both conservation and public recreation purposes).

Protecting more land for public recreation

The Queensland Government aims to protect more land for public recreation by:

- releasing the Parks for People website, an online mapping tool for the public to find local parks, provide feedback on the quality of local parks and suggest new parks and other types of greenspace. The website also provides an automated system for state and local governments to check and update all land classified as land for public recreation
- developing the SEQ Community Greenspace Network Plan to help communities identify greenspace including local parks and corridors which link parcels of existing greenspace. These plans will also identify new ways to acquire future greenspace
- developing and extending the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail and the Boonah to Ipswich Trail
- working with private landholders (e.g. scouting groups and universities) to expand the land available for public recreation
- opening up state school ovals for recreational use by the community.