

Summary of Recommendations on *Draft SEQ Regional Plan*

Use the points below in your submission on the Draft SEQ Regional Plan. The point numbers refer to the Plan's numbered headings. Bullet points summarise WPSQ's submission recommendations.

Best Practise

- Information on SEQ regional plan should be disseminated in plain English to the public to allow informed debate and active community involvement.
- Recognise the maintenance of ecological processes is fundamental to achieving ESD and modify the Regional Plan accordingly.
- Investigate the ecological carrying capacity of the region including potential impacts on resources and quality of life for population levels
- SEQ regional plan must be based on best practise and an appropriate adoption of Ecological Sustainable Development. Current IPA definition is inadequate. The definition in National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development should be used.

Part C. Regional land use pattern

Regional land use categories

The plan allocates all SEQ land into only 3 land use categories which result in conflicts of use.

- Addition of a land use category for areas of conservation value
- Urban development must be restricted to the urban footprint
- Reduce the supply of urban land, fewer Greenfield spaces and an increased concentration of population.
- Encourage low intensity rural production and beneficial recreational uses to continue within the urban footprint.
- Remove and protect areas of high conservation value from the urban footprint.

Part D. Regional policies

1. Sustainability and climate change

Recognising sustainability and climate change as an desired regional outcome (DRO) is to be commended but the draft plan as it is won't achieve the objectives of this DRO. Queensland has one of the highest rates of emissions in the developed world. The Plan doesn't put forward enough adaptation strategies to combat the impact of climate change on biodiversity nor does it make proper provision for wildlife.

1.3 Reducing greenhouse gas emissions

- Mandate the best energy efficiency standards for all new developments.
- Clear regional emission reduction targets must be set out in the principles part of the plan.
- Reduce land clearing in SEQ especially around rivers and wetlands.

- Stop clearing regrowth of endangered or of concern regional ecosystems.

1.4 Climate change adaptation

- Put more emphasis on adaptive and mitigation strategies to address climate change.
- Make better provisions to protect wildlife from the impacts of climate change, e.g. protect wildlife corridors.
- More emphasis on impact of climate change on biodiversity
- All planning schemes and assessments must address climate change-related risks.
- Identify climate-affected regions, prohibit harmful or risky development, and provide adaptation funding and additional specialist support for emergency services in identified high risk areas.

2. Natural environment

Policies in this section clash with policies elsewhere in the Draft Plan e.g. the development of Caloundra southwards will harm the environmental values of Pumicestone Passage.

2.1 Biodiversity

The Plan's protection of SEQ's biodiversity – among the highest in Australia – is inadequate.

- Develop and implement a biodiversity planning policy.
- Prevent further fragmentation of vegetation in SEQ.
- Findings of the State of the Region Report (2008) must be addressed.
- Commit to South East Queensland Regional Nature Conservation Strategy.
- Fully protect endangered and of concern regional ecosystems and areas of high ecological significance.
- Current conservation status of regional ecosystems must not be lowered
- Rehabilitate to re-establish vegetation cover, resilience and connectivity in wildlife areas.
- Limit the expansion of villages located near areas of high biodiversity e.g. Springbrook.
- The biodiversity maps supplied in the Draft Plan's regulatory provisions (Section F) are out dated, inconsistent, inadequate and need to identify all areas of ecological significance, not just reserve areas. The Draft Plan's provisions are based on these maps, so they must be improved for the final version.

2.2 Koala conservation

The conservation status of SEQ koalas has moved from Common to Vulnerable and numbers have dropped by 50% within 7 years. The SEQ koala will be extinct by 2030 without better protection of its habitat.

- Improve regulatory maps to show all legally defined koala habitat.
- List koala habitat as 'essential habitat' under the Vegetation Management Act
- Protect all koala habitat until the maps have been improved.

- Include the Draft SEQ State Koala Regulatory Provisions in the Plan and ask for comments in the public consultation stage.
- Protect koala habitat in the urban footprint.

2.3 Air and noise

Currently SEQ's air quality is adequate, but planned huge population growth will harm this.

- More public transport is needed.
- Reduce the level of urban infill allowed in order to retain backyard trees that mitigate against air and noise pollution.

2.4 Managing the coast

SEQ's coastal ecosystems are under huge pressure from development at the cost of biodiversity and amenity.

- Coastal management must apply best practice principles.
- Coastal wetlands of state and regional significance should be protected by regulation.
- No further canal estates permitted.
- State building lines should be set back 100 metres and aquifers, streams and cultural heritage protected.

3. Regional landscape

The Plan is not specific enough about its targets for making more land specifically available for conservation in SEQ.

- Inter-urban breaks between settlements must be identified as important ecological areas, rehabilitated if necessary and better protected.
- Protect scenic amenity by prohibiting development on hill slopes over 1:4 in urban areas and over 1:6 in the regional landscape and rural production areas.

4. Natural resources

Natural resources are not a limitless asset; the emphasis on growth in the Plan needs more balance in order not to achieve an urban form that damages biodiversity and human health both mental and physical.

- Protect SEQ's prime agricultural land, especially the peri-urban areas.
- Better protection of resources.

4.3 Ecosystem services

- Better recognition of limits to growth and carrying capacity of SEQ
- Amend the Plan's urban form in order not to effectively eradicate suburban trees and the ecosystem services they provide.

5. Rural futures

The impacts of climate change and rising energy costs on food prices can be mitigated by maintaining regional agricultural production close to urban areas.

5.2 Rural planning

- Limit the extent of rural subdivisions to protect high quality agricultural land.
- Establish setbacks and recognise them in the Plan to regulate incompatible uses and agricultural operations on prime agricultural land.

8. Smart growth

Infill and high density residential development have benefits but unless we recognise limits to growth and resources within the region they will have detrimental impacts on SEQ's quality of life.

- More investigation needed into carrying capacities and limits to growth in SEQ.
- Reduce the emphasis on smaller lots and greater density at the expense of trees and their accompanying benefits to avoid negative impacts on our communities and wildlife.

10. Infrastructure

- Need higher infrastructure charges for full cost recovery and more equitable contributions for hard, social and green infrastructure.
- Waste water treatment costs need to be reconsidered.
- Infrastructure planning must include an environmental impact assessment with community input.

10.5 Energy

- Introduce high energy efficiency standards for all new developments.
- Incentives to retrofit existing infrastructure to the same standards where possible.
- Implement and enforce green energy targets.

10.7 Waste

- Implement and enforce waste management targets to reduce our high waste generation rates.

11. Water management

Riparian zones filter out water and maintain the health of local and regional biodiversity.

11.2 Waterway health

- Mandatory buffer distances to protect important riparian zones.
- Better mapping of riparian zones in the Plan to make decisions on a detailed basis.
- Improve water quality flowing to Moreton Bay by reducing pollution and effluent loads.

11.4 Efficient water use

- Agree with the Plan's policy to make new and refurbished buildings comply with water efficiency targets.



12. Integrated transport

The Plan's aims for transit-oriented development is commendable but transport targets are needed.

- Aim for 40% public transport use by 2031 with a capacity of 60%.
- Subsidise public transport.
- Development of interim reports for monitoring progress of transport targets.

PART F. Draft SEQ Regional Plan Regulatory Provisions and Regulatory Maps

The regulatory provisions refer to the significant biodiversity areas of Map 5 and prohibit most types of development in those areas, unless the development is consistent with protection of biodiversity. This is the most powerful legal way to protect these areas but the style of the mapping needs to be improved with larger scale and more accurate maps (see point 2.1). The draft regulatory provisions should specifically identify non-reserve nature conservation areas and riparian areas in this mapping and specifically state that those areas are not to be developed.

The Plan must take a consistent approach to biodiversity mapping across the State.

Rural uses (e.g. feedlots) or tourist development often threaten nature conservation so these areas need to be separately identified and treated within the Regulatory Provision. Amend Table 2B – tourist activity and sport and recreation, Column 1 to state that all development within the RLRPA is impact assessable.

Send your submission by Friday 3 April 2009 by email to seqreview@dip.qld.gov.au, fax (07 3235 4071) or mail to Draft SEQ Regional Plan Submission, Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Reply Paid 15009, City East Qld 4002.