



Little Liverpool Range Initiative Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027



TURNER FAMILY FOUNDATION
Preserving Australian Land & Wildlife



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Vision

The Little Liverpool Range is embraced and enhanced through **collaborative partnerships** between landholders, the community, non-profit organisations and government bodies to conserve its natural beauty, wildlife and landscapes.

Role

The purpose of the Little Liverpool Range Initiative (LLRI) is to **connect people, landscapes and ecosystems** to conserve local and regional biodiversity for future generations.

Background

The Little Liverpool Range (LLR) includes a combination of unique native habitat and production land in South-East Queensland.

With large areas of intact remnant vegetation primarily occurring on private land, the LLR is home to a variety of species of national, state and local significance including koala, brush-tailed rock-wallaby, powerful owl, glossy black cockatoo, and swamp tea tree.

The diverse and stable vegetation communities found across the Little Liverpool Range supports habitat connectivity to Main Range National Park and the Great Eastern Ranges, providing wildlife with an important corridor for dispersal and a refuge from threats associated with urban development.

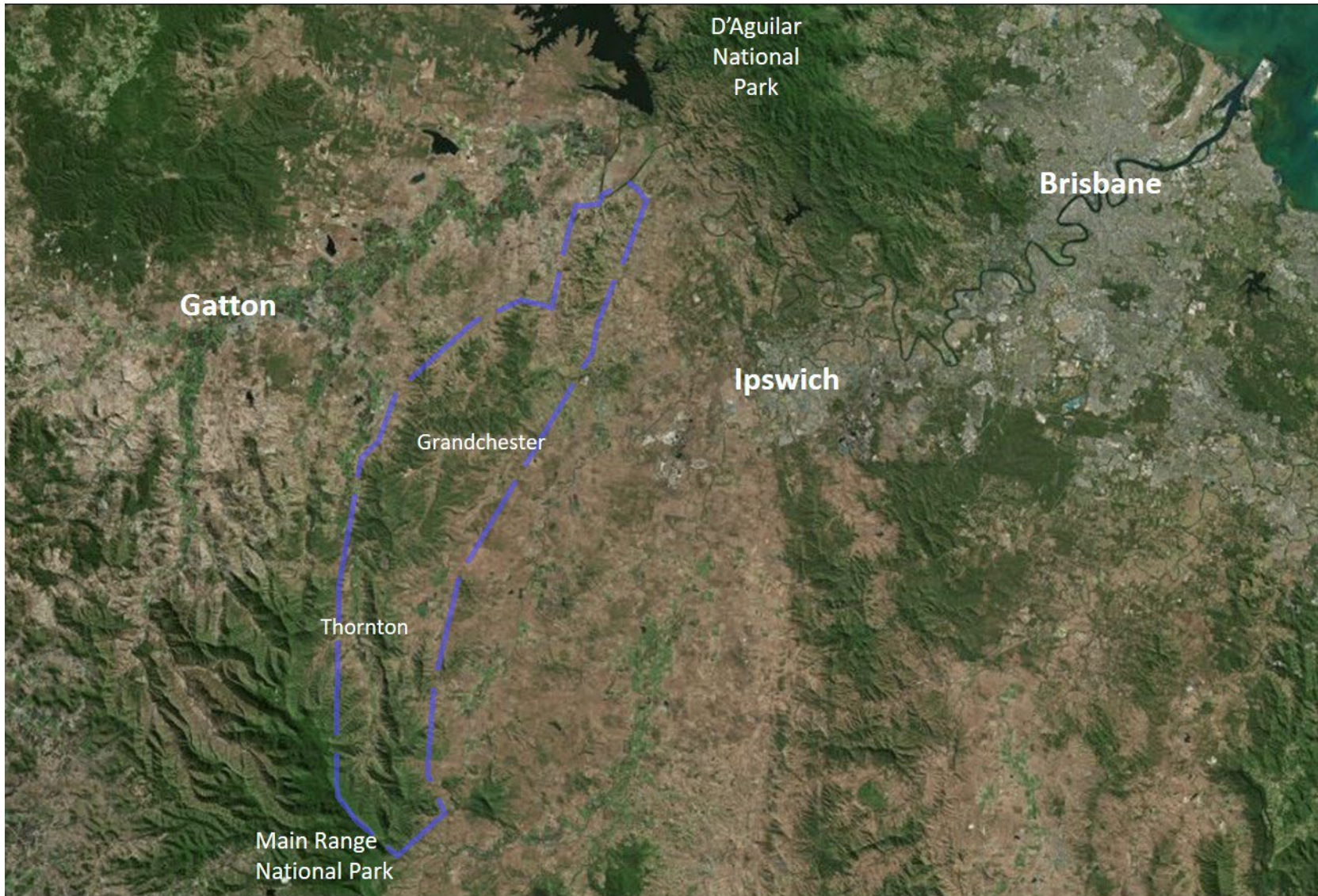
Preserving the health, connectivity, size, and resilience of this habitat will provide species with an improved opportunity to adapt to changing climatic conditions and ensure the continuation of ecosystem services that are vital for agricultural productivity including pollination, disease control, water quality, and soil stability.

Recognising the importance of this landscape, the Little Liverpool Range Initiative (LLRI) was formed in July 2016.

The Initiative is comprised of landholder and community representatives, local councils, natural resource management groups and conservation organisations.

The long-term aspiration of the Initiative is to support sustainable land management and the connection of habitat between Main Range National Park, located in the Scenic Rim local government area, and the D'Aguiar National Park located in the Somerset local government area. This focal area reflects the broader vision identified in the South-East Queensland Regional Plan for improved landscape connectivity and the formation of strategic biodiversity corridors.





Little Liverpool Range Biodiversity Corridor

The background image shows a natural landscape with several trees and a field of dry, golden-brown grass. The trees have green foliage, and the grass is tall and dense. A semi-transparent grey text box is centered over the image, containing the title 'Aims' and a paragraph of text.

Aims

To achieve our vision of protecting the natural beauty, wildlife and landscapes of the Little Liverpool Range, the Little Liverpool Range Initiative will work collaboratively with stakeholders to protect existing habitat (A1), facilitate positive land stewardship (A2), restore degraded habitat (A3) and support locally rare and threatened species (A4). Collectively, stakeholders also aim to increase community awareness of the Little Liverpool Range's ecological and cultural significance (A5) and promote organisation health and wellbeing (A6).

A1. Protect habitat

Objective: *Encourage and provide support for habitat retention in the range by scoping for incentives to protect existing habitat, increasing the quantity of land protected through Conservation Agreements, and demonstrating mix-purpose land management approaches.*

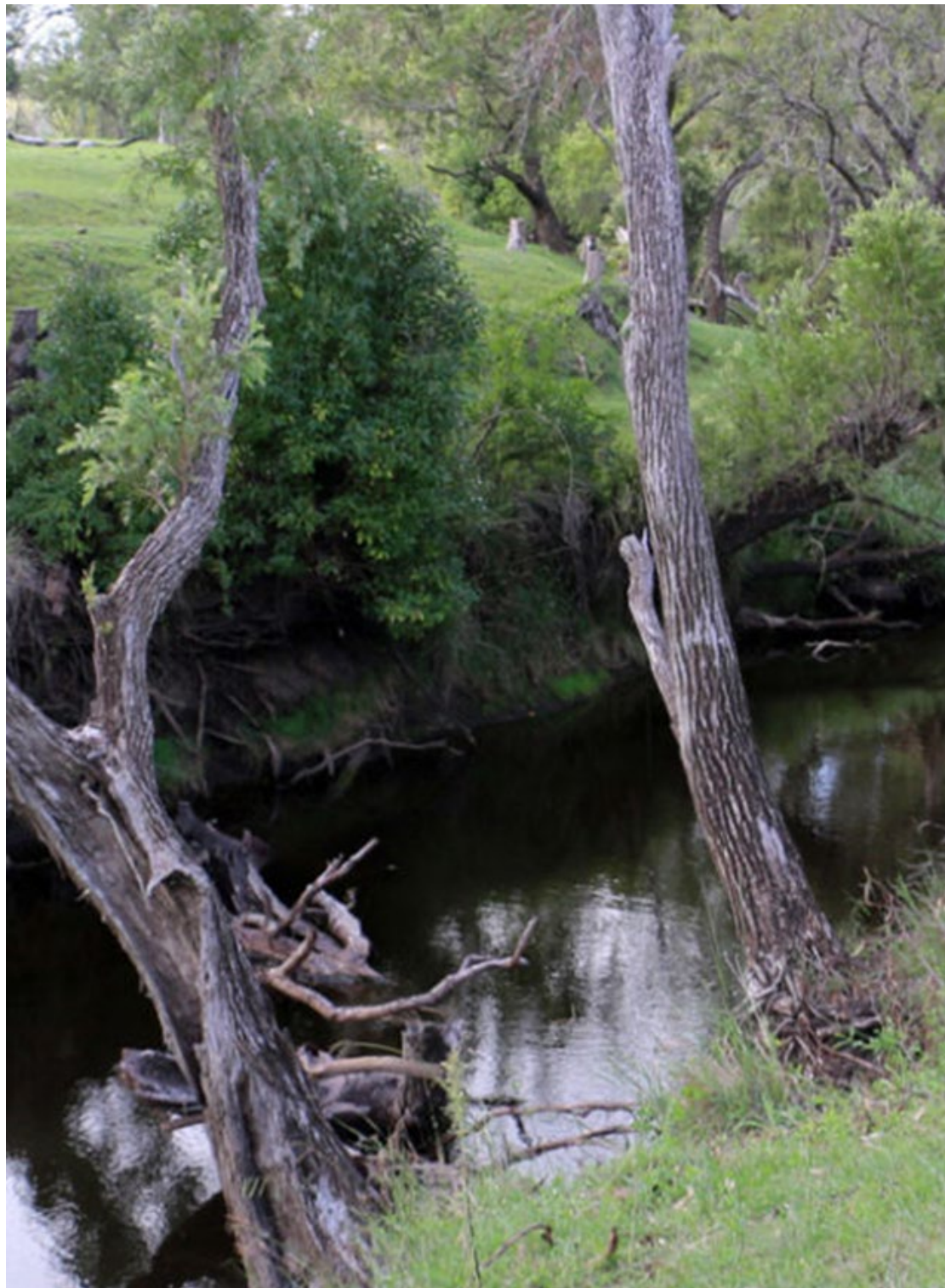
The Little Liverpool Range retains extensive and continuous tracts of remnant vegetation, providing refuge and dispersal corridors for wildlife. Across the range, a large portion of this habitat exists on private land. Rural land use designation combined with the topography of the area has historically meant that the Little Liverpool Range has been protected from many of the threatening processes associated with urban development.

Today, over 6400 hectares of this wilderness is preserved in regional parks, conservation estates and through voluntary conservation agreements between landholders and local governments, with scope for additional voluntary land acquisition through private or public acquisitions such as Ipswich council's Enviroplan levy² and Scenic Rim Regional Council's Habitat Protection Program³.

Actions:

The primary aim of the LLRI is to protect, restore and manage this valuable habitat corridor. To achieve this we recognise the need for balance between social, economic and environmental requirements. To assist landholders in balancing these competing needs, the Initiative will provide support through the identification of potential incentive schemes and the demonstration of a range of mixed purpose land-use strategies that offer opportunities for diversification and improved resilience to changing climatic, social and economic environments. Members of the Initiative including Queensland Trust for Nature and the Turner Family Foundation will be instrumental in trialling and demonstrating a range of mixed purpose land-use strategies including sustainable grazing, eco-tourism, land for wildlife, biodiversity offsets and carbon farming.





A2: Facilitate Land Stewardship

Objective: *Connect owners with opportunities and capacity for sustainable land and water management.*

Invasive species, inappropriate fire regimes and erosion are considered to be the major threats to native species and overall environmental health across the Little Liverpool Range^{4, 5, 6}. The direct and indirect impacts of unsustainable land practices not only affect native flora and fauna but also adversely affect the productivity and profitability of agricultural landscapes.

To prevent these negative impacts, landholder's frequently engage in programs to eradicate and control pest animals such as wild dog (*Canis familiaris*), fox (*Vulpes Vulpes*) and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and weed species such as Lantana (*L. camara* and *L. montevidensis*), Cat's claw creeper (*Dolichandra unguis-cati*) and Broad-leafed pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*). Whilst it is understood that these pest plants and animals are pervasive throughout the region, little is known about the effectiveness of eradication methods, particularly as programs are often administered at an individual property level.

Actions:

The Little Liverpool Range Initiative aims to support landholders in the adoption of sustainable land management activities including but not limited to; pest management and eradication, fire management, riparian management and erosion control.

To achieve this, the LLRI will consult with landholders to identify property attributes and management challenges for the purpose of developing and delivering tailored workshops and resources that support land stewardship. The initiative will also provide a platform to assist landholders with information sharing and activity coordination to facilitate a landscape-level approach to natural resource management.

A3: Restore degraded habitat

Objective: *Identify remnant habitat fragments and develop management plans for monitoring and improving habitat health.*

175 km² of remnant vegetation has been identified across the Little Liverpool Range, providing an important refuge for locally rare and threatened species. Remnant vegetation includes endangered regional ecosystems such as *Eucalyptus tereticornis* woodland (12.3.3), *Acacia harpophylla* (12.9 – 10.6), Semi-evergreen vine thicket (SEVT) (12.8.21) and *Melaleuca irbyana* forest (12.9 – 10.11). Threats to these ecosystems include timber harvesting, grazing, invasion by weed species and feral animals as well as inappropriate fire regimes.

Eucalyptus tereticornis (Blue Gum) woodlands are an endangered regional ecosystem with few intact stands remaining. Blue gums are an important food source for Koala and hollows formed in large old trees provide shelter to a range of other fauna species including powerful owls, glossy black cockatoos and squirrel gliders. Approximately 0.4km² of Blue Gum woodland can be found across the Little Liverpool Range.

Semi-evergreen vine thickets (SEVT) are an extreme form of dry seasonal subtropical rainforest. The ecological community is considered as endangered with only 13% of its original extent remaining. Approximately 1 km² of SEVT occurs in the Little Liverpool Range, primarily within the Lockyer Valley Regional Council Local Government area.

Melaleuca irbyana, or Swamp Tea-tree Forests are listed as critically endangered under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. At present, less than 10% of the original extent of *M. irbyana* remains with no representation in reserves. More than 3% of this ecosystem is found within the Little Liverpool Range and subsequently has been identified as a priority concern for the Initiative.

Actions:

The LLRI aims to equip landholders with educational resources and knowledge sharing opportunities for habitat restoration, with a focus on threatened ecosystems in the Range (12.3.3, 12.8.21 and 12.9-10.11). Through workshops/ educational events and resources the LLRI will communicate ways in which habitat restoration can assist agricultural production and environmental benefits. Through various funding opportunities, LLRI landholders will be provisioned with land restoration tools and resources such as free plants, weed management tools etc. to assist them with achieving their conservation goals.



A4: Support locally rare and threatened species

Objective: *Landholders, community members, conservation organisations and government bodies work collaboratively to record and share data on the presence and distribution of significant species.*

Little Liverpool Range is home to a wide variety of native species of Commonwealth, State and local significance, including koala, brush-tailed rock wallaby, glossy black cockatoo, powerful owl, little pied bat, Fleay's barred frog, Bailey's cypress-pine and Lloyd's olive.

In recent years, native species that were previously common throughout the range, such as the spotted tail quoll, have not been sighted. Threats including invasive species, road mortalities, 1080 baiting and habitat loss have reduced many populations of the area's iconic wildlife.

Actions:

To protect native flora and fauna across the range, more information is needed on the presence and distribution of species. The LLRI aims to improve landholder identification skills, increase engagement with citizen science activities and provide a platform for stakeholders to share information on the region's threatened fauna, flora and pest predator species. This will be achieved by working collaboratively with a range of scientific organisations to deliver community information sessions and skill development workshops.

Improved data availability and sharing will assist in the identification of critical habitat, facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the impacts of threats, and provide land managers with additional guidance for the strategic deployment of management actions such as pest eradication and burning regimes. This data will also be used to measure program performance and inform future strategies.



A5: Increase awareness of the Little Liverpool Range's ecological and cultural significance

Objective: *Promote and celebrate the Little Liverpool Range with the wider community and highlight landholder's conservation efforts.*

The Little Liverpool Range is a valuable component of South-East Queensland's habitat network. As well as providing a valuable corridor from North to South, the Range is also where headwaters for the Bremer and Brisbane River are located and as such, is the source of an important freshwater corridor linking habitats and communities from the ranges in the West, to Moreton Bay in the East.

In addition to the area's ecological importance and natural beauty, Little Liverpool is rich in cultural heritage. The land has been continuously occupied by Indigenous people for at least 40,000 years. European settlement and leaseholds for sheep and cattle grazing date back to 1829 with the naming of the Laidley Plains and the establishment of Franklin Vale Station in 1843. The area's rich history is encapsulated by heritage-listed buildings such as Grandchester Railway Station and the Exchange hotel. Today, the Little Liverpool Range is home to a diverse community of farmers, custodians, entrepreneurs, and innovators.

Actions:

A lack of community awareness and engagement has been identified as a key threat to the natural environment in the region⁵. The LLRI aims to increase community engagement and promote the beauty, utility and ecological significance of the range with the broader South-East Queensland community by hosting and attending a range of formal and informal community events and excursions. Utilising a range of written and online communication channels, the Initiative also aims to showcase sustainable land management practices undertaken by landholders in the region.





A6: Organisational Health and Wellbeing

Objective: *Achieve sustainable governance practices and strive for financial sustainability.*

The Little Liverpool Range Initiative runs off the contribution of funding partners working alongside a working group who conduct conservation work across the Little Liverpool Range. To ensure the sustainability and longevity of the LLRI, governance of the initiative must be maintained. To achieve the LLRI strategic plan goals, financial income needs to be secured.

Actions:

The Little Liverpool Range Initiative aims to support landholders, however securing ongoing support requires a functional governing team and structure.

To achieve this, the LLRI funding and working group partners will continue to be governed by a terms of reference document and will strive to apply for and receive funding opportunities including but not limited to, grants and further funding partners.

Evaluation

Aim	Outcome	Performance indicator	2022 Status	2027 Aspiration
A1 – Protect existing habitat	Conservation Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of LLR focal area covered by voluntary conservation agreements (VCAs) including Land for Wildlife 	<p>Approximately 21% of freehold land within the LLR focal area was covered by VCAs.</p> <p>21% of the Ipswich City Council LLRI focal area, 24% of the LVRC focal area and 6% of the LLRI focal area in Scenic Rim Regional Council is covered by VCAs and LFW.</p>	<p>LLR is a targeted area for proactive promotion of Private Landholder Partnerships programs with various levels of government, such as Nature Refuges, Land for Wildlife, Voluntary Conservation Agreements and Voluntary Conservation Covenants and for other council initiatives.</p> <p>Observe a 5% increase in the number of partners in the LLR owning freehold land who share values and natural assets consistent with the LLRI and Local government partnerships program</p>
A2 – Facilitate positive land stewardship	Adoption of sustainable land management practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced clearing in the LLR - Reduced number of feral pest animals - Improved natural water quality - Cultural burning practices conducted on private land 	<p>Limited information available on density, distribution and effectiveness of pest control methods.</p> <p>Franklin Vale Creek Catchment restoration project underway.</p> <p>Developing partnerships with Traditional Owner groups to promote the use of Cultural Burning techniques in ongoing land management.</p> <p>27 Properties currently part of the LLRI</p>	<p>Engage a diverse landholder group including lifestyle property owners and agricultural landholders to promote the adoption of sustainable land management practices. Interact with landholders who are both new to the area and historical families across the LLR.</p> <p>Improved understanding of threats in the landscape and how to address them by seeking landholder/member feedback on a range of natural resource management topics.</p> <p>Upskilling and investing in community champions. Champions to be showcased to encourage engagement and create connections between landholders who share similar problems or successes.</p> <p>Enabling landholders to understand the value of the ecosystems and natural assets on their land and best management techniques through the delivery of focus workshops including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulated land clearing • Introduced pests (weeds and animals) • Land restoration (erosion control, revegetation, improving habitat) • Water quality • Fire management • <p>Provide resources and information that assist in mitigating conservation threats across the range.</p> <p>Observe a trend towards the inclusion of conservation values in land use across the LLR through a 50% increase in the number of landholders participating in the LLRI.</p>
A3 – Restore degraded habitat	Exclusion fencing and planting of key species Implementation of restorative land management and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved health of regional ecosystems of concern including 12.3.3, 12.8.21 and 12.9 - 10.11. 	<p>175km2 of remnant habitat has been identified in the LLR focal area including 0.4km2 of 12.3.3,</p>	<p>Equip landholders with educational resources and knowledge sharing opportunities for habitat restoration, with a focus on threatened ecosystems in the Range (12.3.3, 12.8.21 and 12.9-10.11).</p> <p>Communicate ways in which habitat restoration can assist agricultural production and environmental benefits through a suite of educational resources.</p>

	threat mitigation actions. Management of key threatening processes to ecosystems.		0.8km2 of 12.8.21 and 1.88km2 of 12.9 – 10.11.	Provision of land restoration tools and resources such as free plants, weed management tools etc. to support landholder with their conservation outcomes.
A4 – Support locally rare and threatened species	Engagement in Education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of community outreach activities and resources - Increased participation in community outreach events - Improved species records 	Bi-annual community events including workshops, information evenings and excursions.	<p>Bi-annual community events including workshops, information evenings and excursions focused on species, their requirements or providing opportunities to document information about the species in the LLR.</p> <p>Landholder resource library developed to support monitoring efforts, participation in citizen science projects and offer partnerships with university research projects.</p> <p>Number of species documented will increase across all native taxa. Populations of rare & threatened species maintained or enhanced.</p>
A5 – Increased awareness of cultural and ecological significance	Improved community knowledge about the LLR and opportunities to maintain habitat on private land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater community awareness of the LLR - Social media engagement 	Social Media followers: Facebook 487 Instagram 175	<p>See an increase in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media followers: • Facebook 1000 • Instagram 500 <p>Good relations and collaborations formed with 10 community groups</p> <p>Little Liverpool profiled in 5 community newsletters.</p> <p>Develop a partnership with Traditional Owner groups to promote the Cultural importance of the LLR.</p>
A6 – Organisational Health and Wellbeing	LLRI practices good governance and strives for financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance health checks demonstrate positive governance status - Financial income secured 	Quarterly working group meetings conducted.	<p>Have minimum of 4 Funding Partners meetings for the year.</p> <p>Achieve a 5-year guaranteed financial contribution by all funding partners.</p> <p>Continue to research and find potential funding methods to access additional resources to support landholders in achieving their conservation goals and the strategic plan aims.</p>

Opportunities



Land for Wildlife

Land for Wildlife is a voluntary program administered with support from local councils that encourages and assists landholders manage wildlife and habitats on their properties. The program has been available in SEQ since 1998. Across the Little Liverpool Range, the program is administered by SRRC, LVRC, ICC and SRC. Extension officers provide landholders with information, resources and incentives to protect habitat and manage threats such as pests. SEQ's Land for Wildlife program is the fastest-growing network of landholders involved in private land conservation with nearly 7,000 members.



Hidden Vale Wildlife Centre

The Hidden Vale wildlife centre was established in 2017 as a joint venture between the University of Queensland and the Turner Family Foundation. The centre is involved in wildlife research and teaching, offering a valuable opportunity for students and researchers to engage in hands-on wildlife management experience. The overarching goal of the Hidden Vale Project is to develop innovative and globally significant solutions for wildlife management and conservation, using the Hidden Vale Wildlife Centre and surrounding ecosystems as a model.



Aroona Station

Aroona station has been a working cattle farm for over 50 years. The property was donated to Queensland Trust for Nature (QTFN) in 2015 who have since established a nature reserve on the property. QTFN is working with research institutions to understand and demonstrate how grazing and agricultural land management can deliver economic and environmental benefits. Aroona station presents an opportunity to undertake research and development for optimizing mix-purpose land use and demonstrate coexistence between cattle grazing and the conservation of flora and fauna.

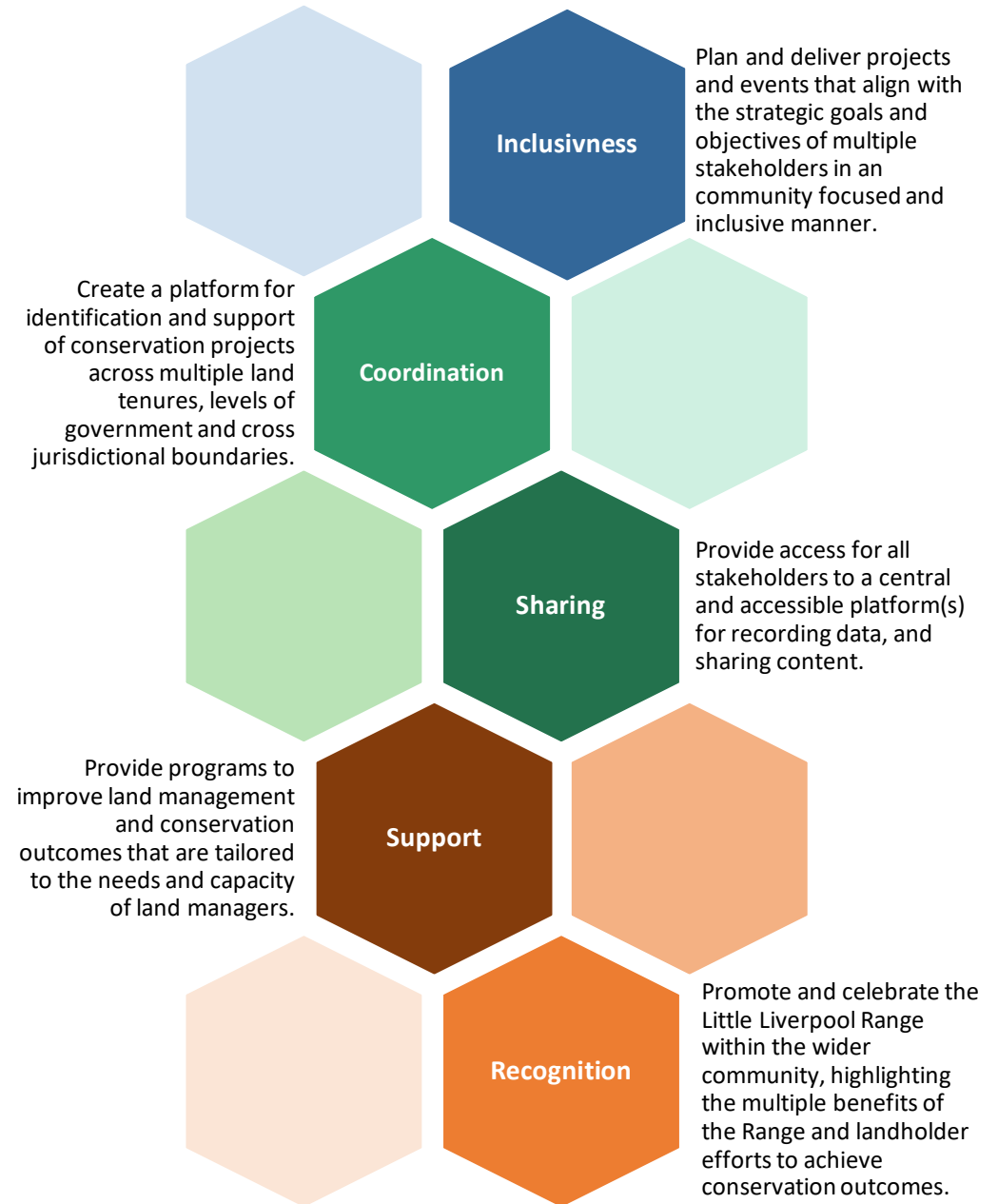


Resilient Rivers

The resilient rivers initiative aims to collaboratively improve the health and resilience of South East Queensland's catchments. The Mid-Brisbane, Lockyer Valley and Bremer catchments have been identified as a priority project areas. Action plans have been developed for these projects with focus given to improving water security, water quality, climate resilience and preventing soil and bank erosion along Franklin Vale and Western Creek in the Ipswich LGA, Laidley Creek in the Lockyer Valley LGA and Black Snake Creek in the Somerset LGA⁷.



Key Principles



An aerial photograph of a mountainous landscape. The foreground shows a dense forest of green trees. In the middle ground, a prominent, flat-topped mountain range (a mesa or plateau) is visible, with a steep, rocky cliff face on its right side. The background consists of more rolling hills and valleys covered in forest, extending towards the horizon under a clear blue sky with a few scattered white clouds.

References

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