

From: Darling Downs Environment Council info@ddec.org.au
Subject: DDEC's September Newsletter
Date: 2 September 2025 at 11:11 am
To:



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Protecting and promoting the environment in our region.
Unite. Advocate. Innovate.

Spring is in the air! With Carnival of Flowers just around the corner, it's the perfect time to get outside, connect with nature, and celebrate all that our region has to offer.

A quick personal update to start: over the next six months I'll be on placement for my Master of Social Work, so I'll be in the DDEC office **Mondays and Tuesdays only but answering emails as much as I can on other days**. Thank you for your patience as I balance both roles – I'm committed to keeping the important work of DDEC moving forward with your support.

Welcome to Our New Committee Members

We are delighted to welcome three new faces to the DDEC Committee:

- **Michelle Berkhout** (Protect Trees Toowoomba campaigner)
- **Moon Jazmine** (Sea Shepherd Toowoomba)
- **Tiffany Gesler** (Aboriginal Perspectives representative)

Their energy and expertise will strengthen our collective efforts as we grow our campaigns and community presence.

Thank You & Transitions

- A big thank you to Jenny Withnall, Eakraj Adhikari, Scot Mcphie and Joshua Waters who are our outgoing committee members for all their contributions.
- A big thank you to **Dharee** for her time as our Volunteer Support Coordinator. We are now [advertising for a new volunteer support coordinator – please spread the word if you know someone who would love to help!](#)
- Thank you also to **Moon and Miranda** for their excellent contributions during their student placements.
- A warm welcome to **Emmanuel**, who has just started his placement with us.

Upcoming Events

- 🍕 **Kitchen Table Conversations Pizza Night – TONIGHT!**
[Join us at the Eco Hut \(1a Heller St, Rangeville\) from 6–8pm for a relaxed evening of](#)

[food and conversation.](#)

-  **Connecting Culture to Country Forum – Sept 16**
An evening of wisdom, reflection, and dialogue with three First Nations leaders on how we bring culture and country together.
 Tuesday Sept 16 |  6–8pm |  Toowoomba City Library |  \$10 (snacks provided) [Tickets available here.](#)

Celebrating Our AGM Award Winners

At our AGM on 28 August, we proudly presented our **inaugural DDEC Annual Awards**:

- **Ms Aileen Harrison** – *Local Legend of the Land Court*
- **Gomaren & Doctors Creek Catchment Landcare Group** – *Koala Crusaders*
- **Mrs Sandra McKay** – *The Koala Whisperer*

These champions inspire us with their tireless dedication to protecting land, water, and wildlife in the Darling Downs. You can read the full announcement in our [Annual Report](#) (link).

Other Updates

- **Koala Campaigns:** Thanks to everyone supporting the petition after the heartbreaking koala road strikes recently. Together, we are pushing for stronger protections across the Downs. More details in the newsletter.
- **Eco Hut Gardening Bees:** Our next bee is **Thursday 4 September, 9–11am**. Come along and help grow our community space

As always, thank you for your ongoing support. With spring's renewal, it's a wonderful time to remember why we fight for the trees, wildlife, and landscapes of the Darling Downs. I look forward to seeing many of you at our events this month.

For land we live on and love.

Ahri Tallon,
Coordinator, DDEC

DDEC Updates

DDEC's 2025 AGM Award Winners!

During this year's AGM held on August 28th, we proudly announced the winners of our 2025 Annual Awards. Each of these remarkable recipients embodies the spirit of grassroots action, resilience, and deep care for the land, water, and wildlife of the Darling Downs.

Ms Aileen Harrison - Local Legend of the Land Court

Mrs Aileen Harrison - Local Legend of the Land Court



For more than a decade, Aileen Harrison led the Oakey Coal Action Alliance in a landmark fight to protect prime agricultural and strategic cropping land from coal mining. Standing firm against political shifts, legal challenges, and intense pressure, Aileen has defended water resources and farmland that feed our communities, embodying courage and tenacity in the face of enormous odds.

Gomaren & Doctors Creek Catchment Landcare Group - Koala Krusaders



For over 24 years, this Landcare group has brought landholders together to care for their catchment. Their ambitious “Bring Back Koalas” project has already planted more than 6,000 koala food trees, linked vital wildlife corridors, and engaged hundreds of residents in habitat restoration and environmental education. Their work ensures future generations might still see koalas in the wild.

Mrs Sandra McKay - The Koala Whisperer



From the quiet streets of Crows Nest, Sandra “Sandie” McKay has become a tireless protector of our local koalas. Through the High Country Koala Action Group Inc, she rescues injured wildlife at all hours, organises habitat restoration plantings, and inspires her community through education and events. Her dedication proves that one person’s passion can mobilise an entire community for conservation.

A big thank you to all recipients who continue to inspire us with their efforts. Your work is invaluable, and these awards are our way of recognising your incredible efforts to protect and restore our local environment.

[Read our full media release here](#)

Koalas Need Your Voice!

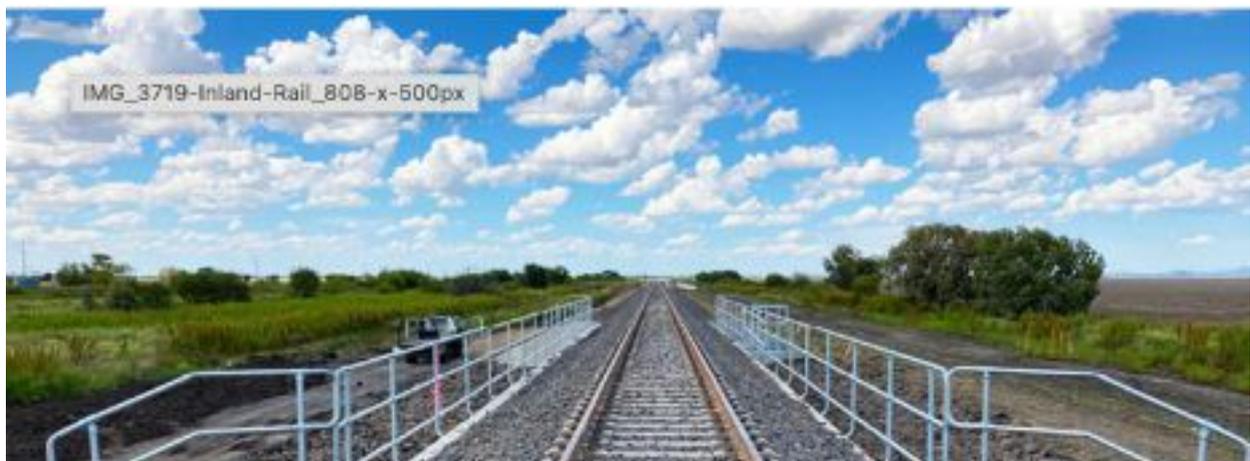
DDEC raises alarm on Inland Rail: Border to Gowrie project



The Darling Downs Environment Council (DDEC) has flagged major concerns about the Inland Rail project:

- **Koala populations may be undercounted:** Current data underestimates the number of koalas in key areas.
- **Habitat offsets lack transparency:** Proposed compensation sites don't provide enough detail on vegetation or management plans.
- **Food tree diversity is being overlooked:** Not all cleared areas are replaced with suitable koala habitat.

Without stronger protections, these iconic animals and their ecosystems could suffer irreversible damage.





HOW YOU CAN HELP:

[Read DDEC's Full Submission](#)

[See Local Coverage](#)

Most Importantly: Raise your voice! Share, comment, and let decision-makers know protecting koalas and the Darling Downs environment matters.

**Together, we can make a difference.
Stand up for koalas today!**

Heartbreak in Highfields: Petition Launched After Koala Orphaned by Road Strike



The death of a mother koala in Highfields leaving her joey, Hazel, orphaned, has sparked a community petition calling for urgent wildlife protection measures across the Downs and Lockyer regions.

Local wildlife carers say the incident is part of a disturbing trend of preventable road deaths in known koala habitat areas. Rapid development, habitat loss, and increased traffic are pushing wildlife into dangerous territory, yet councils and state agencies have not

implemented the targeted protection strategies already in place in other parts of Queensland.

While the Queensland Government's South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy has delivered positive results in coastal regions, it does not currently extend to much of the Darling Downs or Lockyer Valley, despite the presence of vulnerable koala populations.

The petition, "Protect Koalas and Wildlife in the Downs - Act Now!" calls on local councils and state agencies to develop koala conservation strategies, install wildlife warning systems, include wildlife-safe infrastructure, provide funding for wildlife rescue services, increase public awareness, and implement a statewide strategy expansion.

To keep in the loop with DDEC's koala protection efforts, email us at info@ddec.org or request to join our google group [here](#).

[SIGN THE PETITION](#)

[Read our Media Release](#)

[Watch 7News Clip](#)

DDEC Eco Hut Gardening Bees





We have been making progress towards improving the gardens around the DDEC building. If you would like to be notified about upcoming gardening bees please send us an email back and we will put you on the update list.

The next Gardening Bee will be Thursday 4th of September 9am-11pm. 1a Heller St Rangeville.

Help DDEC Earn When You Return!



When taking your eligible recyclable containers to a container refund point you can donate the proceeds to DDEC by using our member number (**C10571344**)– that’s twice the impact for the environment!

Glass wine and spirit bottles from 150ml to 3L are now accepted for a 10-cent refund at container refund points across Queensland.

Protect Trees Toowoomba Updates and Events

No Fauna Spotters Present during Tree Clearing at Walamere

Development



Community concern is rising in Toowoomba after the Protect Trees Toowoomba campaign reported that mature, hollow-bearing trees were cleared at the Walamere development site in Highfields without wildlife spotters present. Witnesses say no fauna specialists were on-site during the removal of trees known to provide critical habitat for native species like owls, gliders, and koalas.

DDEC coordinator criticised the Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) for not imposing wildlife protection conditions, despite legal requirements under the Nature Conservation Act. Although the site isn't in a mapped koala habitat area, recent koala sightings and prior TRC practices suggest spotters should have been required.

We are urging council to:

- Investigate whether spotter-catchers were required and present on-site,
- Implement conditions requiring wildlife protections for all future developments involving mature or hollow-bearing trees,
- Review protections for habitat trees across the region.

[Read Full Media Release](#)

[Watch 7News Clip](#)

Order a 'Tree Keeper' sign for your front fence





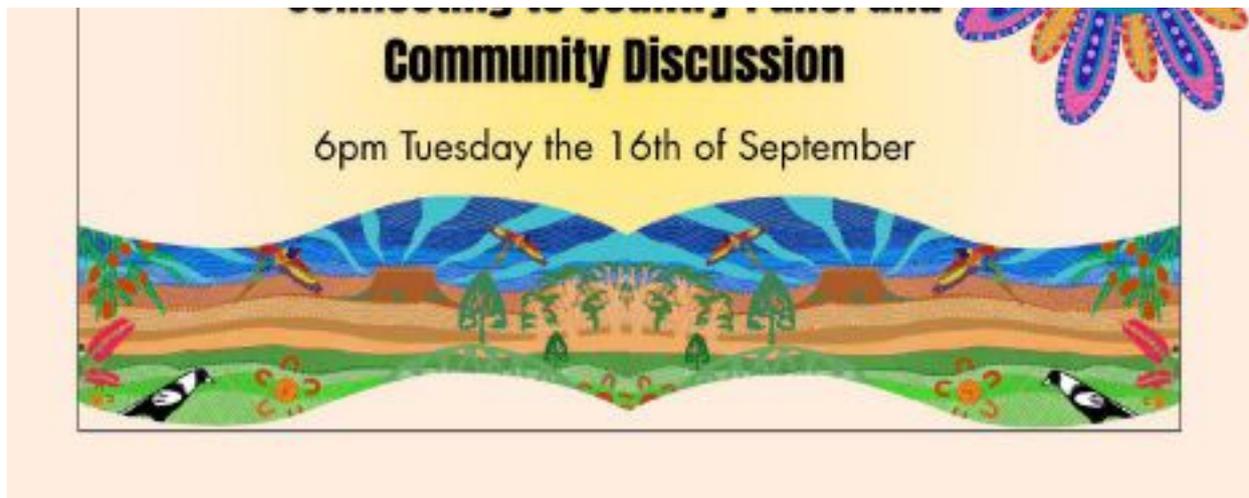
Show your support for tree protections and get a Tree Keeper Community sign for your front fence. You can pick them up in Highfields or Toowoomba or opt to have them delivered to your house if you live in town.

['Tree Keeper' Sign Order Form](#)

DDEC Events

Connecting Culture to Country Forum





Please join us for an evening of discussion about how we bring our societies culture in closer connection to the land we live on.

-  Date: Tuesday, September 16
-  Time: 6pm - 8pm
-  Where: Toowoomba City Library

We will be blessed to have three insightful and inspiring First Nations leaders joining us to share with us their wisdom and ideas. Snacks will be provided. Tickets \$10 to cover costs.

[Buy tickets here](#)

Community Events

2025 Toowoomba Birding Festival

A poster for the 2025 Toowoomba Birding Festival. The background is a vibrant green with a white cockatoo in flight. Text on the left lists event details: 'Part of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers', 'Featuring:', 'Guided bird walks', 'Talks on birds', 'Activities for children', and 'Bird photographic display'. It also states 'September 13th, 21st and 27th' and 'Various locations around Toowoomba'. The website 'birdingfestival.com.au' is listed. At the bottom left is a small graphic with the text 'DID YOU SPOT IT?' and at the bottom right is a QR code.



Well - time to let the cat out of the bag!

There's going to be a birding festival in Toowoomba next month as part of the Carnival of Flowers. This is our first year running it, and it is a combined effort of Birdlife Southern Queensland Darling Downs and the Toowoomba Bird Observers Club.

The festival features guided bird walks, talks on birds and bird topics, a puppet show for kids and a rolling slide show of bird photos from local photographers.

All the events are free but do require booking - hope to see you there!

[Find Out More and Reserve a Spot](#)

Geography Matters Webinar: Ecocide, Earth Laws and the Future of Environmental Law in Australia



Date: 9 September August 2025

Time: 7:30 - 8:30pm

Place: ZOOM only

Join to hear from two speakers:

Dr Michelle Maloney (AELA): Co-Founder and National Convenor of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA), Adjunct Senior Fellow, Law Futures Centre, Griffith University; and Director of the New Economy Network Australia (NENA) and Future Dreaming Australia. Michelle's work focuses on creating systems change (across law, economics, education and ethics) to shift industrialised societies towards regenerative, Earth-centred governance.

Professor Rob White (University of Tasmania): Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Criminology at the University of Tasmania. He has written extensively in the areas of criminology, youth studies and eco-justice. Among his recent books are *Theorising Green Criminology* (Routledge, 2022), *Advanced Introduction to Applied Green Criminology* (Edward Elgar, 2023) and *Elgar Encyclopedia of Environmental Crime* (Edward Elgar, 2025). He has

particular interests in the concept of ecocide, the rights of nature, and the impacts and ramifications of climate harms.

[Register Here](#)

AELA's Kinship Webinar: Exploring Multi-Species Justice



Date: September 17

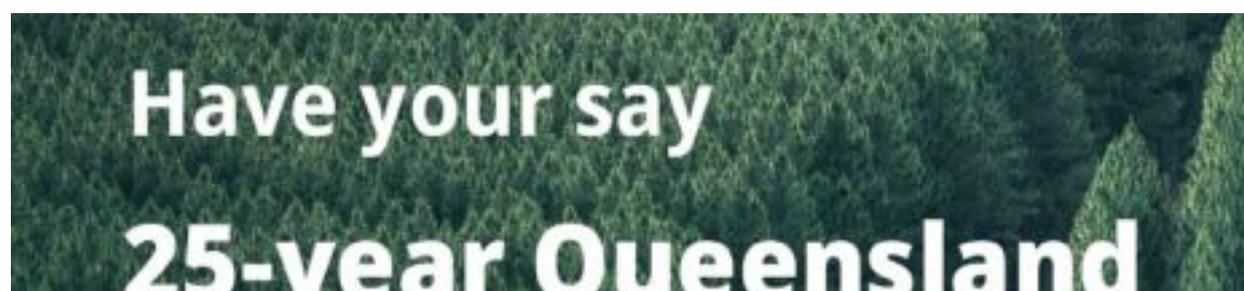
Time: 12pm

Where: Online

Join AELA's September "Kinship" Webinar, where you'll be joined by Danielle Celermajer and Christine Winter, who will share insights into 'multi-species justice'.

[Find out more and book your spot!](#)

Queensland Future Timber Plan – Public Consultation



Future Timber Plan

The public consultation on the draft Queensland Future Timber Plan is now open via the DPI Engagement Hub. The Department of Primary Industries(DPI) will be hosting public webinars where you can learn more about the plan and share your views. Submissions close at 5:00 pm on 3 September 2025. Please use the links below to read more on the media statement, to rsvp for the webinar or make a submission.

Have your say!

[Media Statement](#)

[RSVP/Submission](#)

Regional Leaders Renewables Post-Summit Webinar



The inaugural Regional Leaders Summit took place on 5–6 August 2025 at Newcastle City Hall, NSW, bringing together rural and regional leaders to share experiences on the renewable energy transition. Leaders highlighted challenges such as limited local government and community capacity, unclear responsibility for infrastructure upgrades, and the need for stronger collaboration.

To continue the conversation, a post-Summit report back webinar will be held:

 Wednesday 3 September 2025

 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM AEST

RSVP

Redwood Park Madeira Weed Challenge



Volunteers are needed to help clear half an acre of invasive Madeira Vine threatening biodiversity at Redwood Park.

 What to bring/wear:

- Hat, gloves, long pants, and long-sleeved shirt
- Water and morning tea

 **Date:** Saturday, 6 September 2025

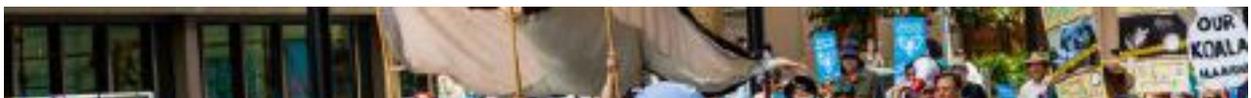
 **Time:** 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM (UTC+10)

 **Location:** Redwood Park, Warrego Highway (Picnic Area – turn left just past the 100km sign descending from Toowoomba to Withcott)

Registration is essential.

RSVP

March to Save our Threatened Plants and Animals





Join the 2025 march to save our threatened plants and animals with the Quenelsnad Conservation Council!

Queensland has over 1000 species threatened with extinction, including our precious koalas and greater gliders. Wildlife are losing their homes to deforestation and climate change and we desperately need our governments to stand up for nature and protect their homes.

Date: Saturday 11 October 2025

Location: Brisbane CBD

[RSVP to the march](#)

The 2025 Big Butt Hunt



This World Cleanup Day, join the Sea Shepherd Toowoomba and the No More Butts organisation for the 2025 Big Butt Hunt - a cleanup dedicated to removing thousands of cigarette butts from our beaches, creek beds, parks and roads.

 Date: Saturday 20 September 2025

 Location: Toowoomba City Centre

 Time: 8:30 am - event starts with safety briefing

[Head to the Facebook Event page for more details](#)

Tools for Fauna Monitoring



Want to know what wildlife shares your property or what pest animals are present but not sure how to go about it?

Join Joe Joseph, nocturnal bird surveyor at Lockyer Uplands Catchment Inc (LUCI) to learn about when and how to use a remote sensing camera, a bioacoustic field recorder and a GPS device for monitoring fauna on your property.

Date: Saturday 13 September 2025

Time: 9:30am - 12:30pm

Private property location provided upon registering by emailing:
info@lockyeruplandscatchmentsinc.org.au

Numbers will be limited and LUCI members free, non-LUCI members \$10/person. Morning tea provided.

[Register by email](#)

AlterCOP 30 is coming to Australia





People for Nature are bringing AlterCOP 30 to Australia! This powerful, citizen-led climate conference is designed to run in parallel with COP 30, amplifying community voices and solutions. Independent, free, and inclusive, AlterCOP 30 brings together youth, First Nations leaders, local communities, and grassroots changemakers - amplifying their voices to ensure climate action reflects the diversity of those it impacts.

 17 - 20 November 2025

[Find out more](#)

Stewardship Webinar Series



SMART ENERGY COUNCIL

Webinar Title	Date & Time	Description
SOLAR RECYCLING & MATERIAL END MARKETS	26 August 2025 10.30am	Jobs, economy and resource security - Solar recycling can deliver it all. Insights from the Queensland Solar PV Recovery Pilots.
RENEWABLE SECTOR STEWARDSHIP ENABLERS	2 September 2025 10.30am	Renewable sector stewardship enablers - we can't do it alone. Downstream activations uplifting solar social license.
SOLAR REUSE	11 September 2025 10.30am	Seizing the perfect PV solar solution! A bonus charge of kWh available with solar reuse.

The Smart Energy Council is excited to launch Stewardship Webinar Series - exploring the economic opportunities of solar PV recycling and reuse through real-world learnings from our Queensland Solar Stewardship Pilots.

Webinar Dates:

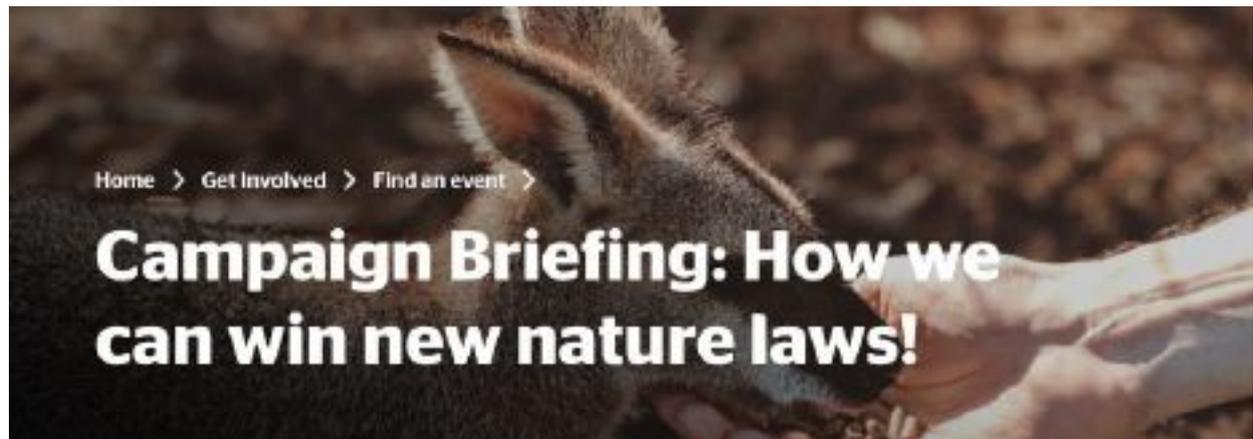
-  26 August – Solar Recycling & Material End Markets
-  2 September – Renewable Sector Stewardship Enablers
-  11 September – Solar Panel Reuse

 10:30am AEST |  Live on Zoom

 Free to attend

[Register now](#)

Australian Conservation Foundation - Campaign Briefing: How We Can Win New Nature Laws!



Environment Minister Murray Watt has announced he'll table new nature laws by the end of *this year!* This is a huge leap in our hard-fought campaign to get nature laws in this country that actually protect nature. Laws that stop extinctions, support healthy communities and jobs and safeguard our air, water, and climate. It's now a sprint to get Labor to beef-up its plan so it delivers for Australia and our beautiful big backyard for generations to come.

Join Australian Conservation Foundation for their online campaign briefing on their plan to win generational, national nature laws for people and planet.

When: Wednesday 10 September 6:30pm (AEST)

Where: Online via zoom



Find out more and RSVP

International Street Fiesta

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 3-8PM | FREE ENTRY
QUEENS PARK, TOOWOOMBA



INTERNATIONAL FOOD | CULTURAL PERFORMANCES
KIDS RIDES & ACTIVITIES | INTERNATIONAL MARKET
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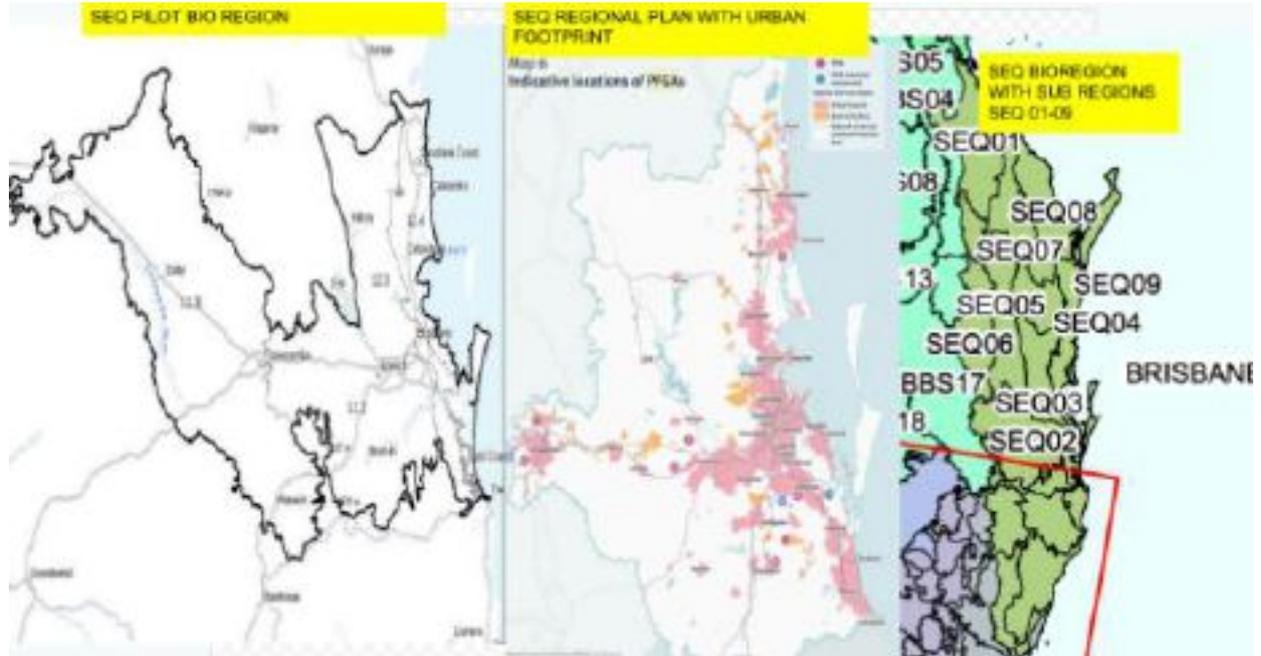
Supported by



Community Updates

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Bioregional Planning Process Needs a Shake Up!



DDEC, Mackay Conservation Group, Gecko Environment Council (Gold Coast), and Capricorn Conservation Council are calling for urgent improvements to Queensland's bioregional planning process following the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation's (DETSI) briefing last week on pilot plans for regional development and conservation.

Bioregional planning was envisioned as an important way to protect important habitat and agricultural land from the consequences of an inadequate EPBC Act, rapid urban development and ongoing land use conflicts with the mining and energy industries.

While we support the creation of "go" and "no-go" zones to protect areas of high biodiversity and important farmland, the lack of comprehensive ecological data backing current proposals is alarming. The Darling Downs, part of the Eastern Brigalow Belt, is a key area identified for renewable energy and infrastructure growth under bioregional planning. But it's also home to some of the state's most fertile farmland and unique remnant ecosystems.

A document has been prepared as a further effort to gain reasonable access to relevant information regarding the Bioregional Pilot Project for SEQ. Please see below.

[Read Our Full Media Release Here](#)

[Document Outlining Further Information Needs](#)

Wondering what's going on with your latest Ergon bill?



Why Electricity Rates Have Fallen While Network Charges Rise

From July 2025, households across regional Queensland noticed a shift in their electricity bills. On one hand, the cost of each unit of electricity (Tariff 11) fell slightly, but on the other, the daily supply charge increased. At the same time, solar households saw their feed-in tariff drop significantly.

For most households on Tariff 11 — the standard residential electricity tariff in regional Queensland — the price per kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity fell from **34.07c** to **32.97c** from 1 July 2025. This is the result of falling wholesale electricity prices.

While the cost of electricity has dropped, the **cost of delivering it** has gone up. Network charges — recovered through your fixed daily supply charge — rose from about **\$1.37** to **\$1.69 per day**.

Head to our recent media release for more information on these changes, plus:

- What it means for households
- Why a home battery makes more sense than ever
- Why Virtual Power Plants (VPPs) are the missing piece
- How these changes reflect the energy transition in action, and why enduring the transition is fair remains a critical issue

[Find our Media Release here](#)

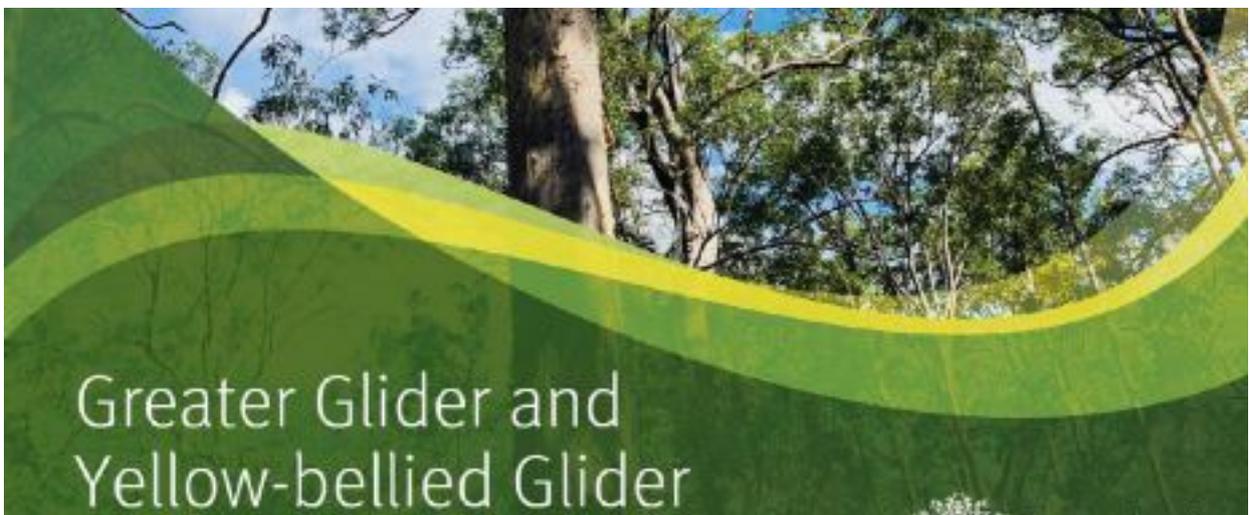
Council to inspect properties in search for invasive weeds



Toowoomba Regional Council will run a Biosecurity Surveillance Program from September 2025 to August 2026, inspecting properties for invasive weeds and animals. Priority areas include Elphinstone, Brookstead, Back Plains, Quinalow, Glenaven and Boodua. The focus is on pests such as Chilean needle grass, prickly pears, honey locusts and giant rat's tail grass. Landholders are required to manage biosecurity risks, and inspections will be carried out with owner cooperation.

[Read Article](#)

Greater Glider and Yellow-bellied Glider Protection Measures



The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is seeking feedback on protections covering almost 3 million hectares of State forest habitat in Queensland. The government wants community input on forest management to ensure the conservation and long-term survival of these species.

Steps to make a submission:

1. Watch the DPI presentation
2. Draft a submission letter using the sample letter and supporting materials (available via Google Drive).
3. Save your submission as a PDF, DOC, DOCX, JPEG, or PNG file.
4. Submit via the DPI engagement hub

[Click to assess Google Drive](#)

Stand up for strong new nature laws: sign QCC's petition



**Stand up for strong
new nature laws**

Australia's federal nature law, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) is currently being reformed for the first time since its inception in 1999. This is a once in a generation opportunity to get things right for nature.

Sign the petition to demand that our national environment laws work for nature and communities.

[Sign the petition](#)

Strengthening drought resilience on Country program



The Australian Government has committed \$12 million under the Future Drought Fund for the new Strengthening Drought Resilience on Country Program, supporting First Nations-led, place-based projects to build resilience to dry times and climate impacts.

 Applications open: 12 August 2025

 Close: 9:00 PM AEDT, 16 December 2025

[Find out more](#)

The Make Big Polluters Pay!





The Make Big Polluters Pay campaign has soft-launched. The campaign calls for coal, oil, and gas corporations most responsible for climate change, to pay a Climate Pollution Levy into a Climate Compensation Fund. This fund would cover the costs of climate disasters and help ease rising living costs, like higher insurance bills.

[Read Policy Report](#)

[Read Media Release](#)

Stand with QCC and email your MP



The Queensland Government is reviewing its 75% by 2035 emissions reduction target and drafting a 5-Year Energy Roadmap, with signals it may extend coal use. The Queensland

Productivity Commission is reviewing energy and emissions policy, but without guaranteed consultation or public reporting, which raises serious transparency concerns. Supporters are urged to email their MP to defend strong climate action and push for a transition from coal and gas.

Email Your MP

Senate inquiry and submission invitation



The Senate Select Committee on Information Integrity on Climate Change and Energy is conducting an inquiry into the prevalence and impacts of misinformation and disinformation relating to climate change and energy. Submissions are invited from individuals or organisations.

- Submission deadline: 12 September 2025
- Submit via email: climateintegrity.sen@aph.gov.au
- Post (PO Box 6100, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600)

More Info

Click here for online submissions.

At Cobb+Co now: Insect Agency





An interactive exhibition at Cobb+Co Museum is giving adults and kids alike the chance to bug out over some creepy-crawlies. Featuring more than 1000 insect specimens, the Insect Agency exhibition is a chance to explore the impact the miniature creatures have on our environment.

The temporary exhibition will be at Queensland Museum Cobb+Co until February 1, 2026.

[Get tickets](#)

NSW overtakes Queensland as top clean investment destination

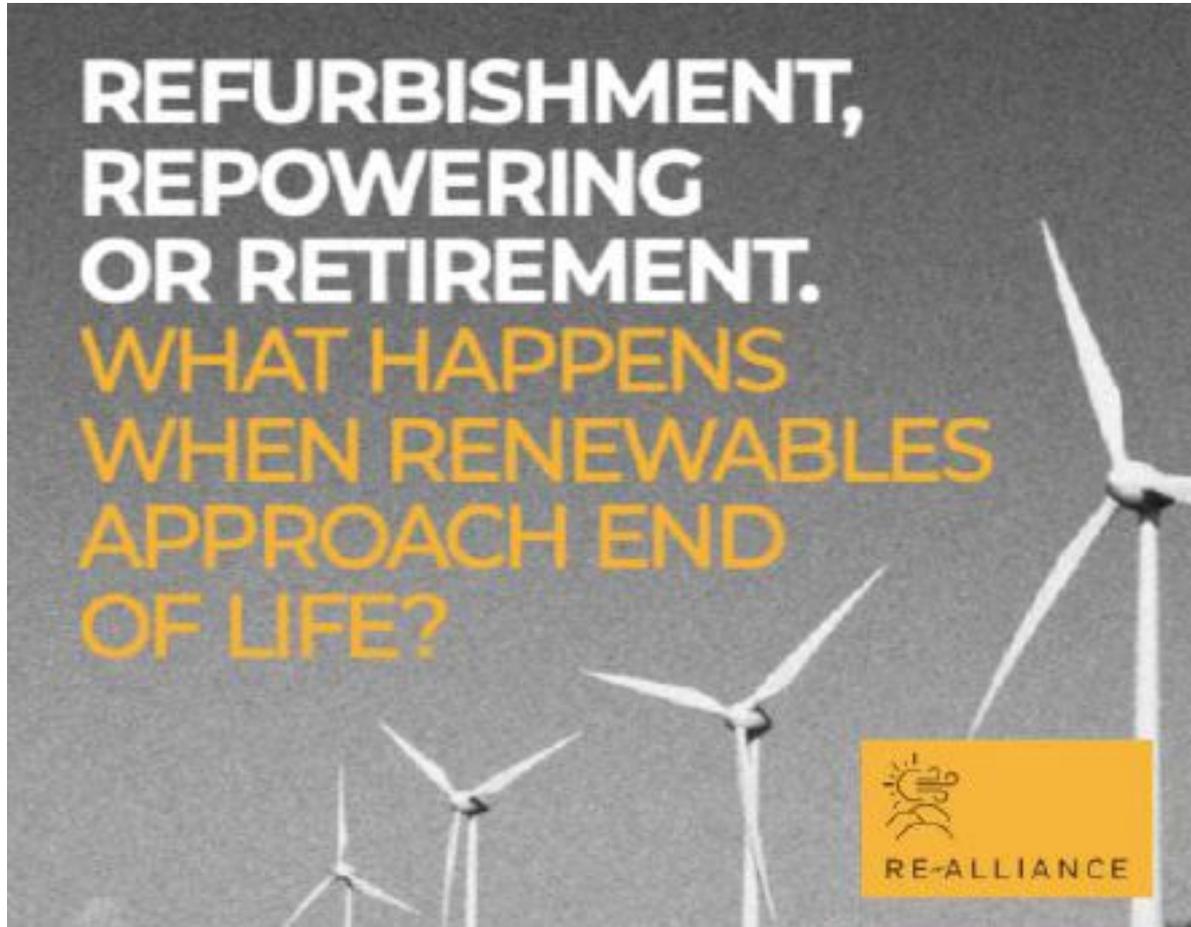


A new survey from the Clean Energy Investor Group finds that Queensland is no longer the most attractive destination for clean energy investment, with NSW now coming on top. Investors point to planning and policy uncertainty, and government intervention as key challenges undermining confidence in Queensland.



[Read more](#)

Answering your questions on renewables retirement



What are the options when wind, solar and battery projects reach retirement? Who's responsible, and what rights and protections exist for landholders? How recyclable are renewable energy materials?

Re-Alliance has developed a toolkit to answer these questions: 'Refurbishment, repowering or retirement. What happens when renewables approach end of life?'

[Access the toolkit](#)

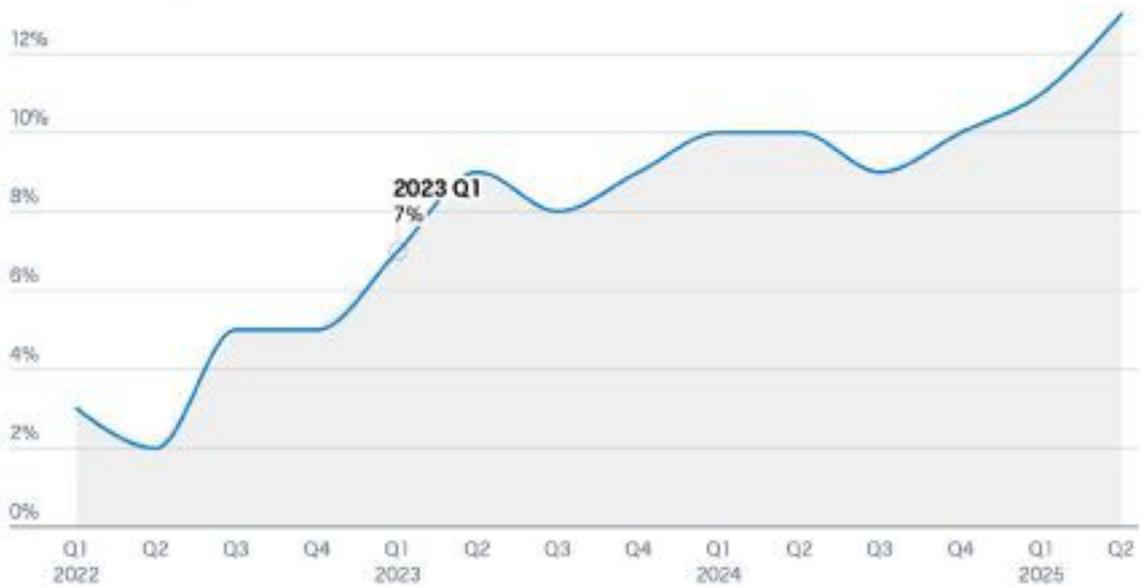
Plug-in Hybrid Vehicles on the Rise

Plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHEVs) are rapidly growing in popularity across Australia. They now make up around one in four EV sales, with more than 12,000 units sold in the past year alone.

Advocates see PHEVs as a useful bridge for drivers not yet ready to commit to fully electric

cars. Critics warn they risk slowing progress on emissions reduction, as many owners continue to rely heavily on petrol.

EVs are 13 per cent of new car sales



ABC Science / Source: FCAI, EVC, AAA / [Get the data](#)

- Battery-only EV sales have levelled off, but PHEV uptake is accelerating.
- New plug-in models are entering the market, including the Toyota RAV4 PHEV in 2026.
- PHEVs are reshaping Australia's path to low-emission transport.



Looking Ahead:

Whether PHEVs are a temporary solution or a lasting feature of Australia's car market will depend on the availability of affordable, fully electric utes and SUVs. For now, their role in the transition to cleaner transport is only growing.

[Read Full Article](#)

Approved! The 2025 People's Blockade of the World's Coal Port event



Rising Tide have secured approval from Newcastle for the 2025 People's Blockade of the World's Coal Port event application — giving the green light to use council parklands for the 2025 People's Blockade!

This is a historic victory for climate, for community power, and for the right to protest.

Planning is underway, as the approval grants permission for Rising Tide to:

- Set up a Protest Camp on council parklands from 27 Nov - 2 Dec
- Host a Protestival in Camp Shortland on 29-30 November

[Donate to the 2025 People's Blockade](#)

Save your solar energy with Cheaper Home Batteries



The new Cheaper Home Batteries Program is offering Australian households, businesses and community organisations a discount of around 30% on the upfront cost of installing small-scale battery systems (5 kWh to 100 kWh).

The program is:

- ☀️ helping participating households, businesses and community organisations reduce electricity bills by making the most of cheap and clean solar power by storing it for when it is needed
- ☀️ lowering costs for everyone - not just those who install a battery – by reducing peak demand and creating a more stable electricity grid
- ☀️ communicating responsibilities for retailers, installers and consumers to ensure batteries are bought and installed legally, safely and for permanent use.

[Read more](#)

An eligible battery system could include:

- ✓ a single battery unit
- ✓ a system of modular battery cells connected to serve as one battery unit.

Additional capacity added to an existing battery system is eligible if:

- ✓ the battery system has not previously received a discount under the program
- ✓ the additional capacity is at least 5 kilowatt-hours (kWh), and
- ✓ the total upgraded capacity of the battery does not exceed 100 kWh in nominal capacity

[See the full eligibility requirements](#)

Five Leaf Eco-Awards



The Five Leaf Eco-Awards are an Australian ecumenical environmental change program specifically designed for churches and religious organisations. Using a series of non-competitive awards the program assists, inspires and rewards faith communities for taking environmental action and becoming more sustainable in response to God's call to care for creation. The Five Leaf Eco-Awards encourage holistic environmental action environment covering five areas: Buildings, Worship, Congregation, Outreach, & Community Leadership.

[Find out more and sign up here](#)

Deputy Premier Kills Another Renewable Energy Project



**PROTECT
CONSERVE**

The Queensland Conservation Council has raised serious concerns about the Crisafulli Government's continued attacks on climate action and renewable energy, as the Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie axed another wind project.

The Forest Wind farm is proposed in a pine plantation between Gympie and Maryborough. The Deputy Premier said the Government would repeal the Forest Wind Farm Development Act 2020, effectively stopping the project from proceeding.

QCC Director Dave Copeman said:

"We want to see renewable energy projects built in the right locations where there is minimal impact on the environment. Pine plantations are key areas we should look to build projects because the local biodiversity has already been severely impacted."

"The Crisafulli Government's move to prematurely axe Forest Wind is just another indication that they're putting ideology over the practical need to build renewable energy to get down emissions and power bills."

[See ABC's Release](#)

Australian Conservation Foundation's Food Open Letter: Getting Big Beef Buyers to Stop Bulldozing Nature



Hundreds of thousands of hectares of forests and woodlands, home to animals like koalas

Hundreds of thousands of hectares of forests and woodlands - home to animals like koalas and gang-gang cockatoos - are bulldozed every year to make room for more beef.

Much of this forest-flattening beef ends up in burgers and pies sold by fast food giants like Hungry Jack's, McDonald's and Patties – makers of Four'N Twenty pies.

If we can push these companies to match Woolworths and Aldi by pledging to only sell deforestation-free beef from the end of this year, we can change the prospect of nature overnight.

[Find Out More and Sign the Open Letter](#)

Smart Water Meter Project Reaches New Milestone



Toowoomba Regional Council's (TRC) smart water meter project has recently reached a new milestone having successfully installed 50,000 water meters across the Toowoomba Region.

This marks 77% completion of the project, which aims to improve water efficiency and detect leaks early. The project is set to finish by September next year, with 15,000 meters remaining. Deputy Mayor Cr Rebecca Vonhoff highlighted the benefits, including real-time monitoring through the Toowoomba Water app. However, only 16.4% of residents with new meters have downloaded the app so far.

[Read More on the Smart Water Meter Project](#)

[Download the Toowoomba Water Mobile App](#)

Have your say: Private protected areas



Private protected areas, like special wildlife reserves and nature refuges, make up 34 per cent of the Queensland's protected area system.

[*A Fresh Start for Private Protected Areas - Discussion Paper*](#) has been released marking the first step in developing a better strategy for protected area expansion in Queensland. The paper explains how private protected areas currently work in Queensland, and asks for ideas on how to grow them across the state.

Your invited to have your say. Public consultation on the discussion paper is open until Friday 12 September 2025.

Your feedback will help create a new approach to expand protected areas and achieve better environmental outcomes for the future.

[Access the public consultation](#)

Wild at Art Kids Competition





Do you know any budding young artists or nature lovers who are obsessed with creatures and critters of all shapes and sizes? We've got just the thing for you!

Australia's largest threatened species art competition for kids is back for 2025, with **entries open from Sunday 7 September to Friday 24 October.**

Some quick facts:

- Wild At Art is open to kids aged 5-12 with winners chosen in each age category.
- All artworks must be of an **animal or plant threatened with extinction within Australia**. You can find a list of [animals](#) and [plants](#) on the Species Profile and Threats Database.
- Alongside the artwork, children also submit a short piece of writing reflecting on the animal they chose and why. Reading these entries is perhaps the best job in the world!
- There are plenty of koala-ty prizes to be won!

[Find out more and sign up here](#)

Community, Church Leaders: Climate Targets Vital to Reduce Costs, Emissions



**PROTECT
CONSERVE
SUSTAIN**

The impacts of extreme weather events in Queensland over the last three years have cost upwards of \$24 billion, according to an analysis by the Queensland Conservation Council (QCC).

This is one of the key figures included in a joint submission to the Queensland Productivity

This is one of the key figures included in a joint submission to the Queensland Resource Commission (QRC), which calls on the Queensland Government to maintain the State's 75% by 2035 emissions reduction target and support the roll out of clean technology, like energy efficiency and renewable energy, to address climate change while reducing power bills.

The submission is supported by groups including QCC, the Queensland Council of Social Service and Uniting Church Queensland Synod.

The Queensland Government is currently developing a 5-year Energy Roadmap and reviewing the State's 75 per cent by 2035 emissions reduction target. They have tasked the QRC to provide energy and emissions policy advice as a part of this process. No formal consultation is being undertaken by the QRC and the State Government will decide if the advice is made public.

QRC is due to provide advice to the Queensland Government by September 1st. Energy Minister David Janetzki will release the Crisafulli Government's Energy Roadmap at a speech on October 10.

[View the Joint Submission to the QRC](#)

Barracks Rd Clearing & a Need for Nest Boxes



Sadly, the wattle on the corner of Barracks Rd has been cleared.

This loss is a stark reminder of how quickly important habitat can disappear as they provide vital shelter and food for many forms of wildlife including native birds and gliders.

As more clearing is expected in the area, we are calling on the community to take action.

We're inviting locals to help build and install nest boxes in the nearby trees to provide replacement habitat for the wildlife that relied on this vegetation.

If you've got tools or time - we'd love your help. Wildlife Preservation Society of Qld created a brilliant resource with information about about how to built nest boxes, which you can find [here](#).

Send us an email to info@ddec.org if you're interested in helping out - let's work together to give displaced animals a safe place to go.



Darling Downs Environment Council

DDEC acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, people of the Wakka Speaking Nation, the "Bunya Burra".

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