

CAPRICORN CONSERVATION COUNCIL

A voice for the environment



2018 | ISSUE 01 | VOL 01

ABOUT US

CQ is experiencing unprecedented growth in the resources sector: coal mines, CSG/LNG industry, mineral processing, and associated rail, dams, pipelines, and ports. Urban expansion is also strong. The cumulative impacts of this growth and development create a great need for environmental advocacy in the region. This is CCC's core business.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- To promote the natural environment and work towards ecological sustainability.
- To protect the ecological integrity, environmental values, and biodiversity of CQ region.
- To prevent over-exploitation and destruction of our environment, natural resources and biota.
- To facilitate and encourage community engagement in environmental protection and conservation work.

OUR GOALS

- Protect**
Biodiversity & Ecological Resilience
- Promote**
Ecologically Sustainable Development
- Ensure**
The environmental voice is heard
- Develop**
Partnerships for nature conservation



Biodiversity - your life depends on it

HOT TOPICS

- Broadscale Tree Clearing.
- Draft QLD Solar Farm Guidelines.
- Great Keppel Island Resort.
- Flying Foxes.
- Farmers for Climate Change Action.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

Tue 1st May

- CCC Community Forum, Yeppoon

Wed 2nd May

- Draft QLD Govt Solar Farm Guidelines Community Forum, Mackay.

Thur 3rd May

- CCC webinar with 350.org founder and world-renowned climate defender Bill McKibben.
- Draft QLD Govt Solar Farm Guidelines Community Forum, Townsville.

- **Marine** - Sun and sand, our local wonderland (Flatback turtle)
- **Coastal wetlands** - Where water and wildlife converge (Capricorn Yellow Chat)
- **Coastal communities** - Nature's buffer behind our beaches (Byfield fern)
- **Estuaries and deltas** - Lifestyle and wildlife converge (Snubfin dolphin)
- **Wetlands and aquifers** - The elixir of life (Boggomoss snail)
- **Capricorn serpentinites** — Scarce and fascinating (Gecko Strophurus sp.)
- **Riparian zones** - Giving life to our landscapes (Fitzroy River Turtle)
- **Brigalow Belt** - A biodiversity hotspot (Bridled nail-tailed wallaby)
- **Highlands** - High havens with hidden stories (Kroombit Tinker frog)

We need your helping hand, to save water, trees, sky and land.

BROADSCALE TREE CLEARING IN QLD

In 2018, Queensland's Labor government tabled a bill to re-tighten the regulation of land clearing. QLD is by far the worst offender in this area, following the reversals of vegetation protection by the LNP Newman government during its 2012-2015 term. During this time, close to 400,000 hectares of vegetation was cleared, that's more than twice the area of Brisbane and seven times the size of Rockhampton.

If the current clearing rate continues, it will push native wildlife to extinction, put jobs reliant on the Great Barrier Reef at risk, drive up Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, and prevent Australia from meeting its international climate commitments.

QLD again underwent a dramatic surge in tree clearing, with the heaviest losses in Great Barrier Reef catchments, as the Palaszczuk government attempted to restore protections. This attempt was blocked at the last minute when its former MP turned crossbencher Billy Gordon sided with the LNP. The resurgence of clearing suggested "panic clearing" by rural landholders, primarily graziers, in anticipation of Labor's latest changes going through.

Dr. Anthony Lynham, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy said: "These laws will protect our climate, our wildlife and our Great Barrier Reef, and the tens of thousands of jobs that depend on the Reef,".

"The changes proposed in this legislation are backed by science and have been expertly prepared by the Queensland Herbarium and peer-reviewed by the CSIRO," Ms. Enoch, Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts said.

Capricorn Conservation Council CCC made a submission on March 21 to Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. CCC nominated as being willing to be a witness at any public hearings. A late email, Monday, March 26, 2018, 5:51 PM advised CCC of a 15-minute slot for a verbal presentation at 9:00 AM Tuesday, March 27. Due to late notice CCC was unable to attend the State Development, Natural Resources, and Agricultural Industry Development Committee hearing at Gracemere.

You can see our submission here: [CCC Submission](#)



This is what land clearing in Queensland looks like: (Left: Clearing at Olive Vale, Cape York. Right: Clearing at Strathmore Station, North Queensland.)
Image courtesy The Wilderness Society.

DRAFT QUEENSLAND SOLAR FARM GUIDELINES

Have your say on the Queensland Solar Farm Guidelines. Queensland's solar industry will undergo significant expansion over the next few years. While this is great news for Queensland, some of the best solar resources lie in the same regions as a diverse range of other industries.

Solar projects must be developed in harmony with other land uses, and that the growth of projects happens in a way that balances the interests of all stakeholders and is supported by the community.

The guidelines will inform local councils, project proponents, and members of the community about consistent and sustainable planning practices, and proactive community engagement. Additionally they should support local councils in planning for and assessing solar projects under the Queensland Planning Framework, and educate local communities and project developers about good standards of development practice.

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy are seeking feedback on both draft guidelines. This includes feedback from landholders, community groups, project developers, and local councils.



Picture by John Brisbin <http://www.normantonsolarfarm.com.au/photo-gallery-3/>



<https://reneweconomy.com.au/australias-first-large-scale-solar-farm-to-quadruple-in-size-20618/>



<https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/portal/news/uq-forefront-solar-pv-research>

Have your say on the draft "Queensland solar farm guidelines: Practical guidance for communities, landowners, and project proponents"- by:

Providing feedback in a written submission
Attending one of the upcoming community forums:

Mackay - 2 May 2018

Townsville - 3 May 2018

Please read the draft guideline below before providing your submission:-

[Qld Solar Farm Guidelines - Practical guidance for communities, landowners & project proponents \(PDF, 6 MB\)](#)

GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND FIASCO FACTS



This year presents the best opportunity to achieve a positive outcome following a decade of uncertainty and dispute over the future of Great Keppel Island (Wop-pa).

CCC met with Tower Holdings (GKI Resort Pty Ltd) in 2010 and provided constructive comments on how best the resort could be re-developed while protecting the natural values of Great Keppel. These were based largely on the

2009 (Lot 21) Land Evaluation by the Department of Natural Resources. The study included detailed scientific input with widespread community engagement with a recommendation that: The Most Appropriate Use is conservation based on the significant natural and cultural values as identified by the Environmental Protection Agency and other organisations. Conservation values are best protected by maintaining the land in its current non-urban state.

The islands of Keppel Bay are great representatives within the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) World Heritage Area of accessible continental islands still largely in their natural condition. Their unique coral communities have evolved and adapted to flourish despite being within the flood plume of the Fitzroy, the largest river system entering the GBR lagoon. GKI and nearby Peak Island, a GBR Marine Park 'preservation zone' provide critical nesting sites for 'vulnerable' Flatback Turtles.

Throughout the drawn-out environmental assessment and approval process, CCC has continued to hold the firm view, firstly, that a smaller scale resort within the existing footprint, west of the steep erodible ridge from Mt Wyndham and Putney Point was the most ecologically sustainable outcome.

Secondly that a jetty with safe moorings for commercial ferries and associated landing facilities for recreational craft would be less environmentally hazardous than a dredged, sand-bagged marina enclosing the tidal entrance to Putney Creek. The current dilemma to 'defend or retreat' at the other end of Putney and Fishermans Beach spit, reinforces our concerns about interfering with natural sand and wave actions by placing a 250 berth marina right beside the wonderful coral community on Putney Point and over healthy intertidal sea-grass beds.

Thirdly, CCC insists that the 2009 DNR recommendations to protect remaining GKI public lands (Tower's 'Clam Bay precinct' - 1100 villas & apartments plus golf course) as National Park, should be expedited.

GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND FIASCO FACTS CONTINUED



The community is frustrated and disillusioned with the developer's promises and the failure by the Queensland and Australian governments to enforce requirements of leases, marine permits (Middle Island Underwater Observatory) and so-called 'strict major project' approval conditions and deadlines."

The declaration of the Balban Dara Guya (Leekes Creek) Fish Habitat Area 2 in 2016 was recognition of the importance of Wop-pa (GKI) as a fish (and Manta Ray) nursery and, especially the need for true and respectful involvement of the major island landholder, the Woppaburra Land Trust."

Queensland Labour's election promise of \$25 million to improve island facilities creates a unique opportunity for community engagement and assessment of environmentally sustainable energy and water possibilities, especially if the proposed 12-15 kilometres dredged trench to the mainland can be avoided.

CCC welcomes the opportunity to re-open communication about any revised plans by Tower Holdings, and with the government agencies who seems to have sat on their hands since project signed off in 2012.

FLYING FOXES, NO ME - NO TREE

Assistant Coordinator Sherie spent time with the Westwood Community in February, listening to their concerns over living with Flying Foxes, helping them understand the importance of Flying Foxes and attended the Westwood School to present a talk with the Staff, Parents and Children. The lovely Michelle Kratz a Flying Fox Wildlife Carer also attended to talk about her unique interactions with these beautiful creatures.



Did you know? No Flying Foxes equals No Koalas!

Fifty percent of the trees koalas depend on are pollinated by bats. Without Flying Foxes, there would be no forests, no forests = no koalas. Flying Foxes are vital to our environment, regenerating forests by pollinating flowers and dispersing seeds as they forage on the nectar and pollen of eucalypts, melaleucas, and banksias and on the fruits of rainforest trees and vines.

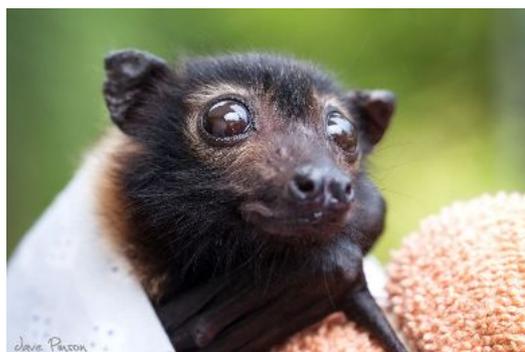
Flying foxes are not 'disease-ridden'. You cannot catch anything from them unless you are scratched, bitten or their saliva enters your mouth or eyes. Australian bat lyssavirus is rare in bats, less than 0.5% of the entire population of bats are carriers. There is a vaccine to prevent you getting sick.

In the twenty years since the discovery of Lyssavirus, there have been three deaths. Four people died from Hendra virus and all were not wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment necessary while they were in contact with biological fluids of Hendra virus infected horses.

In comparison, 337 Australians died whilst riding a horse and 2,400 people died from food poisoning. There has not been one report of anyone getting Lyssa or Hendra virus from drinking rainwater.

Many people call for the killing of Flying Foxes. Queensland's native wildlife is protected by legislation that aims to conserve biodiversity by protecting native plants and animals and their habitat. Two Flying Fox species are also protected by Commonwealth legislation as they are on the way to extinction.

It is time we humans learned to live alongside our amazing wildlife, instead of destroying anything that gets in our way. Humans can't live without wildlife, but they sure can live without us.



© all 3 photos Dave Pinson

AUSTRALIAN FARMERS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION



Gracemere AFCCA Forum attendees



Speaker: Tom Crothers

Several members of the CCC Committee and Staff attended the Australian Farmers for Climate Change Action (AFCCA) community forum held at Gracemere Saleyards on the 12th April 2018, with many local farmers and graziers attending the public forum to call for the protection of groundwater resources.

The forum highlighted the potential groundwater impacts of the development of nine mega-mines in the Galilee Basin, including the Adani project. Keynote speaker, former general manager of water allocation and planning with the Queensland Government, Tom Crothers told the crowd "In the last 5 years of my career I worked in the public service as the leader in the development of Queensland's policy for water allocation. I am extremely disappointed at the policy framework the Queensland and Commonwealth governments have used to progress the approvals for the Adani Mine."

Mr Crothers warned the industry that proposed developments in the Galilee Basin posed serious potential long-term risks to water security in central and western Queensland.

"There is a lack of transparency, engagement and integrity in governments dealings with primary producers who will be impacted by these 9 proposed mines. They haven't treated those landholders with any respect at all."

Farmers for Climate Action Queensland Coordinator, Michael Kane said, "Central Queensland is sending a very clear message to our politicians. It's time to stand up for the long-term future of sustainable agriculture and protect our precious groundwater"

The meeting unanimously supported the following motion:

AFCCA call on Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, the Minister for the Environment Leeanne Enoch MP and Minister for Mines Dr Anthony Lynham to cancel Adani's water license to protect our fragile water resources for future generations.

<https://www.farmersforclimateaction.org.au/>



CAPRICORN CONSERVATION COUNCIL

COMMUNITY FORUM

TUESDAY • 1 MAY, 2018 • 6:00 PM

Please come along to the CCC members forum to discuss CQ and local conservation matters and help set CCC priorities and actions.

New Members Very Welcome

YEPPOON COMMUNITY CENTRE
ROOMS A & B (TOP FLOOR),
80 JOHN ST, YEPPOON

rsvp email: ccc@cccqld.org.au or phone 4927 8644



We need to accelerate climate action.

350.org founder and world-renowned climate activist Bill McKibben is coming to Australia to talk to people about what we need to do to accelerate our response to climate change, move money and influence from the fossil fuel industry, and create a 100% renewable energy future.

For more information visit www.350.org.au



ACCELERATE CLIMATE ACTION



350.org founder Bill McKibben tour

Join your local live stream event:

DATE: Thursday May 3rd

TIME: 6:00PM for 7:00PM

LOCATION: Environment Centre Haigh Park
off Livermore Street Wandal QLD 4700



The future is **FOSSIL FREE**

Capricorn Conservation Council

Environment Centre, Haigh Park, Livermore Street, Rockhampton

PO Box 4011, Rockhampton QLD 4700

Phone/fax: (07) 4927 8644 | Email: ccc@cqnet.com.au | Web: www.cccqld.org.au