

Coordinator's Report to the Capricorn Coast Conservation Council Committee January 2021

Headline news

Happy New Year everyone! Let's hope that 2021 is a great year for each of us and our environment.

Some aspects of the coordinator role have been a bit quieter since my last report in early December. This has given me a good chance to find my feet and to start thinking about how I can best contribute to the excellent work that CCC is renowned for.

I think there are two items that make it to the headline news section of this coordinator report:

- **Topic of Capricorn.** This was my first effort at putting together a CCC newsletter for our members. The response to the December 2020 edition was very positive. It was sent to 55 members and we received a response from 15 of them – that is an amazing response rate and a good indication that the newsletter is valued and a worthwhile task to keep on the 'to do' list. All responses were positive feedback and/or thank you messages. A few people commented that it had been a long time since getting news from CCC and many commented that it was a good read. There was even a request to contribute an article to the next edition. It will be much easier to pull together if we can share the writing load! My special thanks go to Doug and Tarquin for checking through the draft and suggesting edits and changes. 😊
- **'Bushfire in a changing climate'.** This project was discussed at our last informal meeting triggered by a small window of opportunity to submit a funding application to the Bendigo/Adelaide Bank's Bushfire Community Recovery Grant Program. In just a few days, we managed to pull together an application and get letters of support from FBA, CCDA and CCLC to submit with the application. Here is an extract from the application which summarises the project and the request for \$13,350 to support the project: 

Climate change is the talking point in nearly all sectors of our Capricornia community and unites us all in finding ways to prepare for what's ahead. The science is clear - worsening fire weather conditions are ahead and we need to get prepared.

In November-December 2018, 1250 bushfires hit Queensland – 140 of these were in Central Queensland. These were touted as being 'unprecedented' and the largest in Queensland's history with 1.4 million hectares of land burnt. Then came the 2019 bushfire season, and more than 7 million hectares of land burnt across the state. Our Capricorn Region was hit hard with over 11,500ha burnt in the Cobraball / Lake Mary area. People's homes and livelihoods were lost, and the habitat of our local wildlife was devastated. The 2019 fires were classed as 'catastrophic'.

Capricorn Conservation Council is planning to bring our community together in April 2021 for an information symposium themed around 'Climate Change in Central Queensland'. The symposium will be the first opportunity to bring the different sectors of our community together on a topic that unites us - Climate Change.

We are planning to have a key-note address along the lines of "What the science models are predicting for weather changes in Capricornia and the likely impacts we will need to be prepared for". This will be followed by speakers focussing on the impacts, and mitigation ideas and recommendations under the headings of:

1. Human health
2. Bushfire preparedness
3. Natural areas and wildlife, including threatened communities and species.

The final session will focus on actions the community can take to halt or at least slow the rate of climate change.

Capricorn Conservation Council is seeking funding to provide an event coordinator, travel and accommodation for expert key-note speakers, venue hire, production of promotional material, light refreshments on the day, and the purchase of some native and fire-resistant plant species to give away as an educational tool in the role vegetation has in carbon sequestration and that large scale clearing is not the best answer to managing the threat of bushfire.

Project updates

This update section includes projects that CCC has an interest in **and** there is something new to report.

Rockhampton Ring Road – A resident of Alexandra Street is concerned about a new bridge being constructed as part of the ring road near her. Her mum has spent 30 years planting trees in the area and there are platypus in the river where the bridge is going. I will be meeting with her to discuss options – she is keen to volunteer and would like to start with this project.

Citizen Science Fungi Project and Fungi Bioremediation Honours Project – There has been some confusion about these two separate projects which are both being managed by Sherie:

- The Citizen Science project is a CCC project funded by RRC. Most of the funding has been spent on equipment which Sherie now has. The citizen science roll out of the project has yet to commence. Doug and Bob are following up with Sherie to progress and complete the project by September 2021 when the project acquittal is due.
- The Bioremediation project is Sherie's honours project which looks at whether fungi can be used to break down cigarette butts and toxins within. The committee discussed supporting this project at the June 2020 meeting but no outcome was recorded in the minutes. Sherie has advised that the support which she had requested at that time has now changed. Doug and Bob are following up with Sherie to secure a new support request for the committee's review and potential request to the trustees for funding support.

Meetings

Queensland Conservation Council. AGM and general meeting. Sherie Bruce is CCC's representative for QCC. I attended out of interest and to show my face as the new CCC coordinator.

- Sherie was re-elected as vice-chair of QCC. It will be handy to have Sherie on the executive, particularly when we have local environmental issues that need QCC support.

CCC – ACF meeting. I met with an ACF rep to discuss the MOU between ACF and CCC and also the proposed climate change symposium planned for April 2021. ACF will assist with funding the symposium day – details to be worked through early in the new year. Indicatively, ACF would consider requests that meet their guidelines.

Coordinator-WPSQ. I met with a WPSQ rep to talk about Bukkulla Conservation Park, its history and its management (or lack there-of). I have indicated that I will take a trip out there sometime next year to have a look and discuss specific issues.

Also had a phone meeting with Wildlife Capricornia in relation to a potential platypus watch project in the region. This potential project is to be discussed further in general business at the January 2021 CCC Committee meeting.

Coordinator – Sherie Bruce. I had another brief meeting with Sherie at which we covered mostly administrative topics and attempted some trouble-shooting to get the printer and scanner working.

Even after vacuuming the hairy grubs out, giving it a good clean, replacing the ink cartridges and setting the print quality as high as possible, it still produces a low-quality print document. Also, the feed for multiple page scanning or copying doesn't work, and the printer jams up completely if I try to do double sided.

Issues

I think we need a new printer! Alternatively, I can try and find somewhere that services/repairs them. For direction from the Committee please.



Other meetings attended by a CCC representative

Capricornia Catchments AGM. Maryanne Smith represented CCC. All positions were filled without the need for a ballot. Of interest, the president's report lists and acknowledges the partnership and support of their many member groups. CCC is not included in this list.

Port of Rockhampton Sustainable Sediment Management Project Forum. Michael McCabe represented CCC. Michael reports that there will be a further meeting in January 2021 and he will provide outcomes of these meetings after this.

Activities

Geoesglobe skillshare training. This was an entry level training session on using Geoesglobe. A useful GIS-like tool for delving into proposed resources developments and getting an overview of environmental matters likely to be impacted.

WebPress learning. I've been fitting in a bit of time to teach myself how to manage the CCC website. It is another language and I'm keen to find a volunteer that is better than techno stuff than I am to take over, but.... In the interim, I do need to be able to keep it up to date and manage the forms (memberships, enquiries, donations, bequests, volunteers) that come through the site. So far, I have managed to start getting the current and historic newsletters on the site, have managed to edit the membership form and have updated the info about the new Minister. There is lots of work that could be done on the website and some decisions on what we are trying to achieve from the website will need to be discussed some time.

Gastric brooding frog webinar. Mackay Conservation Group hosted an interesting session on the status of frogs from the genera *Rheobatrachus* and *Taudactylus*. Short summary – Chytrid fungus is very detrimental to frogs in otherwise pristine rainforest habitats. Cloning of gastric brooding frogs is ready to roll. Dolly the frog is not far away.

Policy and position statements

I've made a start in developing templates for working up information into policy documents or position statements. The policy documents are generally for internal CCC use to provide the framework, or set of 'rules' for our operations in line with the constitution. The position statements are more like a 'Fact sheet' on a topic but with the added extra of providing CCC's position (thinking) on the topic. You'll see one of the draft policy documents during the January meeting 'Quiet Achiever' award agenda item.

Media

Only internal media with 6 Facebook posts since the last meeting covering:

Subject	Reach	Engagement	
		Click	React
State government election commitments as they relate to CQ	76	0	5
Shared Torres Straight sea level rise webinar	38	1	1
CCC committee meeting	179	10	19
Topic of Capricorn Link	424	32	42
Merry Christmas	83	0	6
Plastic waste	251	14	17

CCC Facebook site statistics (as at 4 Jan 2021)

Likes 757 (up 7 from previous month)

Followers 768 (up 8 from previous month)

Until next month....

Coral Rowston, Coordinator