Capricorn Conservation Council (CCC) Strategic Plan 2026–2028

Acknowledgment of Country

We respectfully acknowledge **all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People** as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia. We recognise their enduring connection to Country, culture, and community, and we pay our deepest respects to **Elders past, present, and emerging**.

We honour the living cultures, languages, and knowledge systems that continue to guide our work in caring for Country.

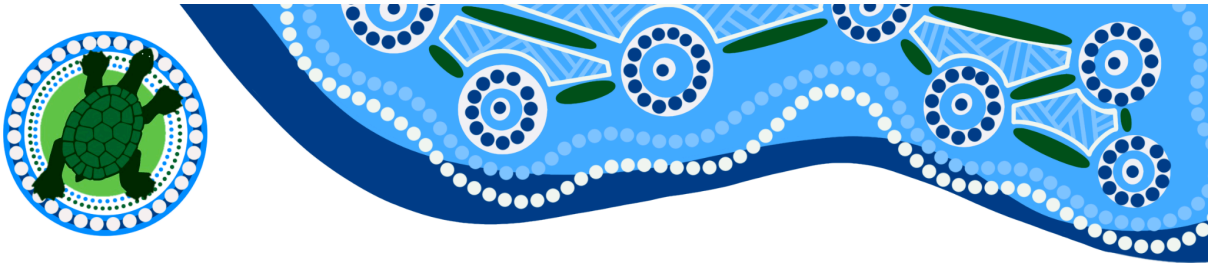
We also acknowledge that the **Capricorn Conservation Council Environment Centre (The HUT)** is located on **Darumbal Country** — land that always was and always will be **Aboriginal Land**.

Introduction

Since 1973, **Capricorn Conservation Council (CCC)** has been the leading voice for the environment across Central Queensland. We are committed to **protecting, conserving, and enhancing biodiversity**, while ensuring environmental advocacy is guided by **Traditional Custodians, Elders, and their cultural authority**.

CCC collaborates with **Queensland Conservation Council (QCC)**, Traditional Owner groups, government, community organisations, schools, universities, and local councils. We are a **non-partisan organisation** that works for environmental justice, sustainability, and reconciliation, ensuring the future of Central Queensland is equitable and biodiverse.

Building upon over fifty years of advocacy, CCC continues to uphold the principles of **truth-telling**, **co-governance**, and **shared stewardship**, guided by Traditional Owners and evidence-based science. Our strategic direction is strengthened by the voices of the **Ghungalu Three Rivers Sub-Committee** and the **Youth Sub-Committee**, ensuring that cultural leadership and intergenerational engagement remain central to our mission.



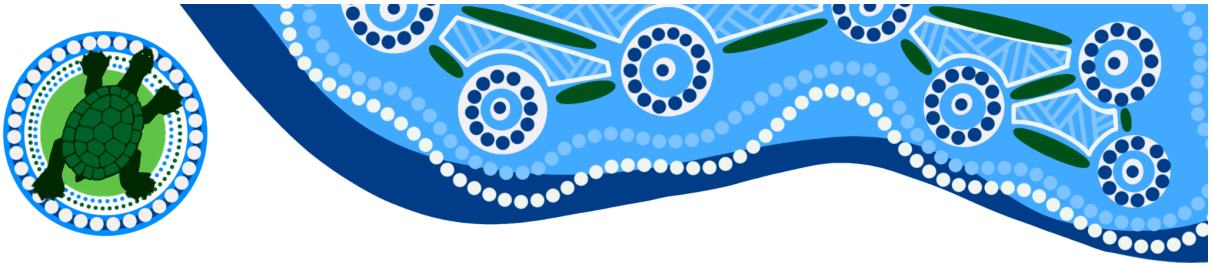
Our Values

CCC is committed to:

- **Biodiversity Protection** – Conserving and enhancing ecosystems of Central Queensland through Indigenous-led conservation and evidence-based science.
- **Indigenous Leadership & Self-Determination** – Embedding cultural authority and ensuring First Nations leadership in all environmental advocacy and decision-making.
- **Science-Based Advocacy** – Grounding our work in research, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and innovation to protect ecosystems and species.
- **Sustainability & Climate Action** – Advocating for renewable energy and a just, ethical, and equitable transition away from coal and gas.
- **Community Engagement** – Elevating Indigenous, youth, and community voices for conservation, reconciliation, and environmental justice.
- **Integrity & Respect** – Upholding transparency, accountability, and deep respect in all partnerships and operations.

Primary Focus Areas

1. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity through Indigenous-led and science-based conservation.
2. Strengthening Indigenous leadership in environmental governance, guided by Elders and Traditional Owners.
3. Collaborating with our members, partners, and regional networks to fulfill our strategic and advocacy goals.
4. Diversifying funding streams to ensure CCC's sustainability, appropriate cultural leadership, and community reach.



Strategic Partnerships & Obligations

1. Obligations to Queensland Conservation Council (QCC)

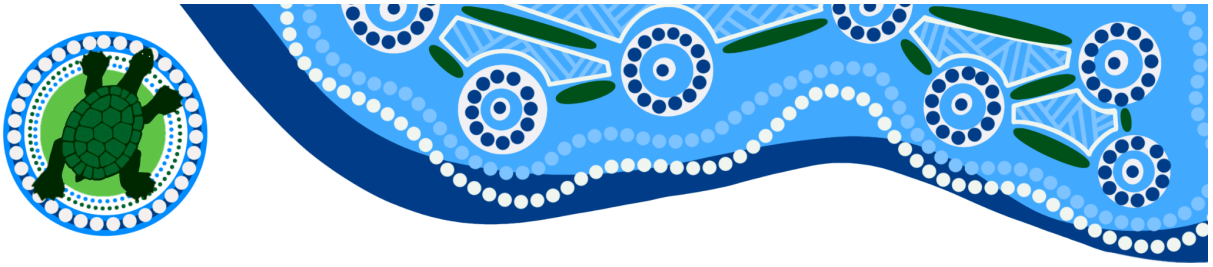
- Participate in QCC campaigns, environmental governance forums, and MERT meetings.
- Collaborate with QCC's **First Nations Protect Country Strategist** to deliver regionally led, culturally informed campaigns.
- Support advocacy for sustainable renewables and climate action in Central Queensland, led by Traditional Custodians and local communities.
- Share regional data, feedback, and local priorities to inform QCC's state-wide advocacy.

2. Commitments to Local Communities

- Provide advocacy, guidance, and support for regional environmental issues across land, water, and sea Country.
- Work with local government, schools, community groups, and businesses to strengthen environmental education and resilience.
- Deliver outreach programs that celebrate biodiversity, culture, and youth leadership.
- Ensure Indigenous voices are central to all CCC campaigns and communications.

Key Goals for 2026–2028

Governance & Organisational Strengthening



- Finalise and implement governance reforms embedding **First Nations co-leadership** within CCC.

- Strengthen and support subcommittees — the **Ghungalu Three Rivers Sub-Committee** and **Youth Sub-Committee** — ensuring active representation and reporting to the main CCC Committee.

- Continue professional development and **compulsory cultural awareness and safety training** for staff, committee members, and volunteers, facilitated by Traditional Owners.

- Secure long-term funding to sustain operations, expand staffing, and employ an **Indigenous-identified Assistant Coordinator** role to enhance cultural governance and on-Country program delivery.

Indigenous Leadership & Reconciliation

- Implement CCC's **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** with measurable, transparent annual outcomes.

- Strengthen Indigenous representation at the Executive Committee level to include roles such as Vice President or Indigenous Programs Advisor.

- Support the **Ghungalu Three Rivers Sub-Committee**, Traditional Owners, and Elders across CQ to lead on-Country programs protecting culture, ecology, and waterways.

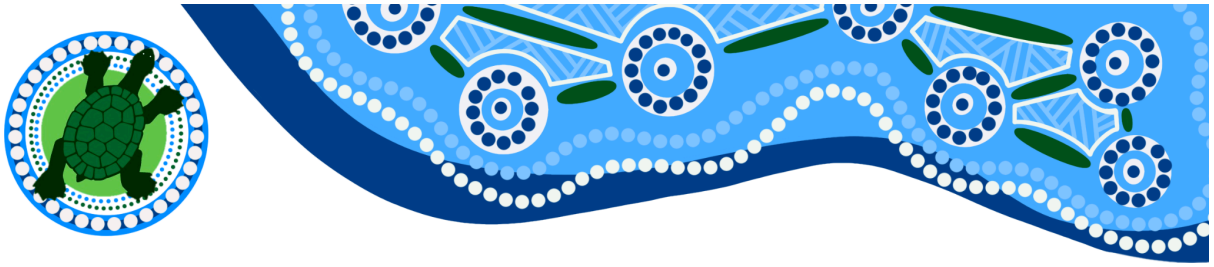
- Formalise **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)** with Traditional Owner groups including Ghungalu, Darumbal, and Woppaburra.

- Continue offering **free CCC membership** to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and ensure equitable recognition of Indigenous knowledge and leadership.

Youth Engagement & Leadership

- Strengthen the **Youth Sub-Committee** as a governance and advocacy platform for emerging leaders.

- Support the Youth Sub-Committee's operational processes in line with its Terms of



Reference — ensuring meetings, quorum, and decision-making processes are youth-led and transparent.

- Develop mentoring programs connecting Traditional Owners, Elders, and youth through **on-Country learning** and intergenerational exchange.

- Deliver environmental education, arts, and science programs in partnership with schools, CQU, and community organisations.

- Facilitate **youth participation in CCC's advocacy and conservation campaigns** to build leadership capacity and future environmental champions.

Biodiversity & Conservation Advocacy

- Continue the **"Biodiversity – Your Life Depends on It"** campaign, integrating Indigenous ecological knowledge and youth perspectives.

- Support Indigenous and community-led restoration projects across **land and sea Country**, including the Fitzroy Basin, Woppaburra (Keppel Islands), and coastal ecosystems.

- Advocate for protection of terrestrial, aquatic, and reef ecosystems, including threatened species such as nesting turtles and shorebirds.

- Campaign for an **end to new coal and gas projects** and advocate for a **just and ethical renewable transition**.

- Support regional initiatives that uphold biodiversity, waterway restoration, and environmental justice.

Community Engagement & Public Awareness

- Host at least **two General Meetings** annually and multiple community engagement events promoting environmental awareness.

- Expand partnerships with universities, schools, and councils to co-deliver environmental education and cultural learning programs.

- Increase CCC's visibility through storytelling, media, and social campaigns, focusing

on community-led and Indigenous-led success stories.

- Deliver campaigns that promote Indigenous leadership, local sustainability, and youth activism.

CCC 2026–2028 Budget & Funding Strategy

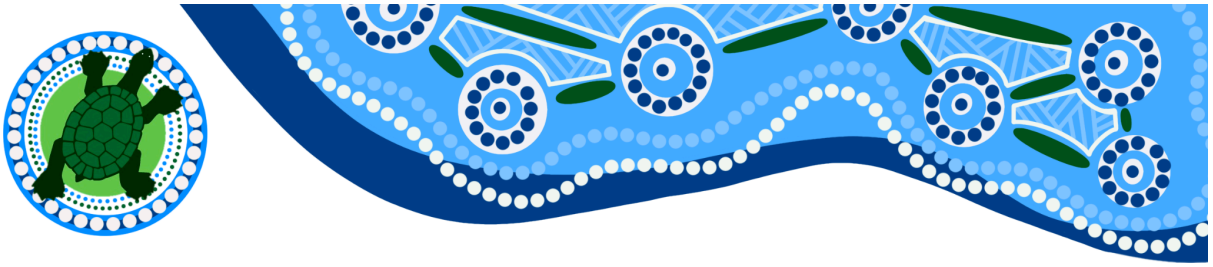
Current Financial Outlook

CCC's financial position remains stable and strategically focused on growth and diversification. Support includes:

- Core operational funding from **DETSI Core Grant ~ $65 000 p.a.** and events **QNVC Grant ~ $19,000 p.a.** (6 events per year).
- Continued partnerships with **local councils** across CQ and Capricornia.
- Project-based support from philanthropic partners and conservation-focused organisations.

Funding Priorities

1. **Securing New Grants** – To support staffing and program delivery aligned with CCC's conservation and reconciliation goals.
2. **Supporting Indigenous-Led Conservation** – Expand *Caring for Country* programs led by Traditional Custodians and Elders.
3. **Diversifying Income Streams** – Introduce fee-for-service environmental workshops, corporate partnerships, and donor programs.
4. **Investing in Education & Engagement** – Develop resources, community workshops, and advocacy campaigns across Central Queensland.



Future Directions & Sustainability Plan

CCC's long-term sustainability will focus on:

- Expanding **Indigenous leadership** in governance, operations, and strategic planning.
- Diversifying funding through philanthropy, partnerships, and service delivery.
- Strengthening cross-sector collaboration with community, academia, and government.
- Promoting **just transition principles**, ensuring climate solutions benefit all communities equitably.
- Building a **culturally safe, inclusive organisation** that empowers Traditional Owners, Elders, youth, and community voices.
- Establishing an **Indigenous Programs Coordinator** position to formalise CCC's long-term commitment to shared leadership and reconciliation.

Conclusion

The **Capricorn Conservation Council Strategic Plan 2026–2028** builds upon our strong legacy as a regional leader in environmental advocacy, cultural respect, and reconciliation. Guided by Traditional Owners, Elders, scientists, and community leaders, CCC stands for a future where **biodiversity, culture, and climate action** are inseparable.

Together, we remain **a voice for the environment — for this generation and the next.**

Acceptance of Agreement

Date: 3rd December 2025

Coordinator
Name: Sophie Louise George

Signature:

Capricorn Conservation Council Committee
Chair: Loretta George

Signature:

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