President's Report

Capricorn Conservation Council Inc.
Annual General Meeting – 2 July 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

I respectfully acknowledge that we meet on Darumbal Country. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today. Capricorn Conservation Council (CCC) recognises that sovereignty was never ceded, and we honour the deep cultural, spiritual, and environmental connection that First Nations peoples have to Country. We remain committed to walking respectfully alongside Traditional Owners in all that we do.

2025 Presidency of Capricorn Conservation Council

This year has seen significant transitions in CCC's governance and leadership. Mick Jones was elected as President at the 2023 AGM and led the organisation through an important period of change. At the 2024 AGM, Graeme Bartrim was elected President but later resigned. Angie Fraser-Parle stepped into the role but also resigned early 2025. I was elected in early 2025 and am honoured to serve as CCC's current President.

I extend our heartfelt thanks to all former Presidents and Committee members for their contributions and leadership. Their guidance during a critical time laid the foundation for the stability and progress we see today.

2024–2025 Strategic Plan Progress Report

Under the leadership of the current Committee and Coordinator, CCC has delivered on all major objectives outlined in the 2024–2025 Strategic Plan, which focused on strengthening governance, building internal capacity, embedding First Nations perspectives, and expanding community outreach. Key achievements include:

1. Governance and Financial Management

- A full suite of governance documents was reviewed, finalised, and formally adopted by the Committee.

- The 2024–2025 budget was approved, and forward projections for 2025–2026 and beyond have been drafted to support strategic planning.

- CCC commenced a financial capability-building initiative to reduce dependence on external financial services and enhance internal accountability.

2. First Nations Leadership and Cultural Integrity

- Cultural awareness training was delivered to the CCC Committee, staff, Youth Sub-Committee, and broader membership.

- Strong and ongoing partnerships were maintained with First Nations organisations, businesses, and cultural leaders, with CCC participating in Indigenous-led events and education activities.

- CCC remains committed to embedding First Nations leadership within our governance structure, particularly within the Executive Committee, to ensure decisions are informed by Indigenous knowledge and cultural authority.

3. Community Engagement and Campaign Delivery

- CCC successfully relaunched its flagship public campaign, *"Biodiversity – your life depends on it"*, in partnership with Thoolbar Designs and the Dreamtime Centre-sponsored by Rockhampton Regional Council.

- Two General Meetings were held alongside community forums focused on biodiversity and regional environmental priorities.

- CCC delivered and supported a range of community conservation events, including:

    - National Tree Day – Caring for Country at Capricorn Caves

    - Clean Up Australia Day

- Konomie Island Caring for Country Adventure Day
- Additional workshops and outreach programs across the region

4. Organisational Capacity and Workforce Development

- CCC secured targeted funding to strengthen its administrative, HR, and payroll functions.
- The Coordinator position was formally promoted to Executive Officer (EO) to reflect the scope of leadership required in CCC's evolving operational environment.
- Two new casual positions were created: Graduate Scientist and Community Engagement Officer, expanding CCC's ability to deliver science-based education and environmental advocacy.

Governance Framework and Policy Development

A core component of the 2024–2025 Strategic Plan was the development of a full governance and policy framework. All documents are available at:
https://cccqld.org.au/policy

These include:

Governance and Operational Framework

- CCC Constitution
- Committee Charter (Version 3, 2024)
- Governance Documentation Strategy and Map (2024)
- Annual Governance Calendar (May–March)
- Delegations Register (2025)

- TOIL Governance Policy (2025)

Organisational Policies

- Code of Conduct (2024)
- Employment Policy (2024)
- Grievance Policy (2024)
- Privacy Policy (2025)
- Public Donations Fund Guidelines
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy (May 2025)
- Social Media Policy (Version 3, May 2025)
- Operating Hours and Right to Disconnect Policy (2024)

Strategic and Operational Planning

- Strategic Plan 2024–2025
- Strategic Plan 2025–2026

Staff and Volunteer Resources

- CCC Coordinator Manual (2024, Version 3)
- Executive Officer Manual and Position Description (2025)
- Terms of Reference – Youth Sub-Committee (2024)
- Photo Consent Form (2025)

These documents provide a transparent and accountable foundation for CCC's day-to-day operations and long-term decision-making.

Promotion of Coordinator to Executive Officer

In 2025, CCC formally transitioned the Coordinator position to that of Coordinator- Executive Officer (EO). This change was driven by the increasing scale and complexity of CCC's operations. The Coordinator now leads all aspects of governance, project coordination, strategic planning, and—importantly—day-to-day financial operations.

To support this expanded role, the Coordinator undertook professional development in financial management and budgeting. This upskilling initiative is part of CCC's commitment to building in-house financial capability and reducing reliance on external bookkeepers. Historically, CCC has experienced repeated transitions between volunteer Treasurers and contractors, leading to inefficiencies and information loss.

Moving forward, the Coordinator- Executive Officer and Treasurer will jointly oversee CCC's internal financial operations. CCC will continue to engage Profitability for payroll, superannuation, and ATO compliance to maintain separation of duties and avoid any conflicts of interest.

Further details on this transition are provided in the Financial Report.

Strategic Plan 2025–2026: Vision and Direction

The Strategic Plan 2025–2026 builds directly on the foundations laid in 2024–2025. CCC's goals for the year ahead include:

- Strengthening First Nations leadership across all levels of governance and program delivery
- Expanding the impact and visibility of environmental campaigns and community engagement

- Securing long-term and diversified funding to support CCC's continued operations and staffing

- Developing responsive, science-based strategies to address regional environmental challenges

These strategic goals will be pursued through the development of a new 12-month **Operational Plan**, supported by the Executive Officer and the Committee elected at this AGM.

Operational Plan (Feb–June 2025): Outcomes and Transition

All actions identified in the Operational Plan for February–June 2025 have been successfully completed. These included the rollout of governance documents, delivery of key public events, staff recruitment, and the internalisation of key administrative functions.

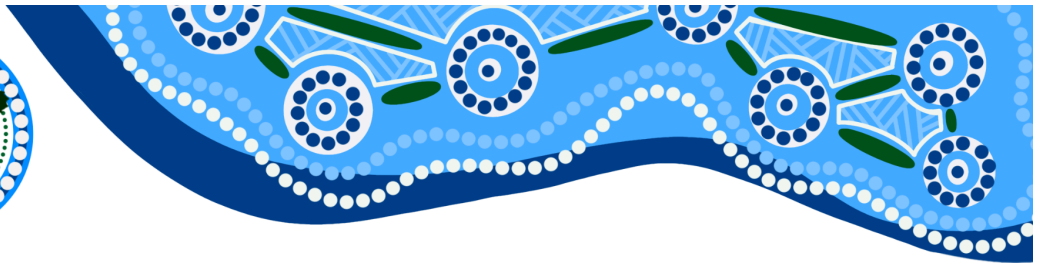
With these foundations now in place, CCC's priority for the remainder of 2025 and into 2026 is to ensure operational sustainability, financial accountability, and strategic continuity. The newly elected Committee will work closely with and support the Coordinator- Executive Officer to guide implementation of the next Operational Plan, aligned with CCC's long-term vision and mission.

Organisational Projection – Looking Ahead

Capricorn Conservation Council enters the 2025–2026 period with a renewed sense of purpose and capacity. All goals set under the 2024–2025 Strategic Plan and short-term Operational Plan have been met, setting the stage for long-term success.

By investing in internal leadership, securing targeted funding, and embedding culturally informed governance, CCC is building an organisation capable of sustaining its mission for decades to come. Our strategic direction is shaped by science, guided by cultural wisdom, and grounded in community action.

With the continued leadership of the Executive Officer and the support of Elders, Indigenous mentors, and our broader network of members and partners, CCC is on a strong path—one that



honours Country, empowers community, and delivers lasting environmental outcomes for Central Queensland.

Loretta George
President
Capricorn Conservation Council Inc.
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