



South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020–2025

2020–2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Partnering to restore koala habitat and manage key threats



**Queensland
Government**

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Acknowledgements

The Queensland Government respectfully acknowledges the dedication, effort and collective expertise of our partners, whose contributions are reflected in the Annual Report 2020–2021 of the South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020–2025. This includes members of the Koala Advisory Council, local governments in South East Queensland, natural resource managers, conservation organisations, researchers, wildlife care groups and communities. We acknowledge that without the immense effort of these groups, many of our outcomes we report on today would not be possible.

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Environment and Science acknowledges the Country and people of First Nations. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the continuous living culture of First Nations peoples—their diverse languages, customs and traditions, knowledges and systems.

We acknowledge the deep relationship, connection and responsibility to land, sea and sky Country as an integral element of First Nations’ identity and culture.

This Country is sacred. Everything on the land has meaning and all people are one with it. We acknowledge First Nations people’s sacred connection as central to culture and being.

First Nations people speak to Country, listen to Country, sing up Country, dance up Country, understand Country and long for Country.

We acknowledge and thank First Nations people for the enduring relationship connecting people, Country and ancestors—an unbreakable bond that safely stewarded and protected the land, waters and sky for thousands of generations.



Introduction

The South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020–2025 (the Strategy) sets out our vision to ‘halt the decline of koala populations in the wild in South East Queensland (SEQ) and secure their long-term survival.’

To track the achievement of this vision, four targets have been established in the Strategy:

1. Populations—stabilise koala population numbers in SEQ.
2. Koala habitat—to achieve a net gain in the total core koala habitat area.*
3. Koala habitat restoration—commence rehabilitation to restore 10,000 hectares of koala habitat.
4. Threat reduction—commence ten programs in threat priority areas to support at least a 25 per cent reduction in disease, injury and mortality rates in those locations.

* Net gain consists of actual on-ground changes to koala habitat extent since the amendments to the Queensland land use planning framework took effect in February 2020. This includes regrowth reaching 15-year maturity, restored habitat and cleared habitat, but excludes corrections to the mapping or transfer of locally refined koala habitat areas to core habitat.

Over many years, State and local governments, First Nations peoples, the conservation sector, landholders, non-government organisations and others have worked hard to conserve koalas in SEQ. Collaboration with a variety of partners and the community is a cornerstone of the Strategy, and is key to the future survival of koalas in SEQ.

To support the delivery of the Strategy and evaluation of progress a monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) framework has been prepared. The MERI framework identifies indicators for each target and is driving important foundational work to assist in measuring and reporting against the targets. The MERI framework also identifies key activities needed to effectively monitor targets including monitoring koala populations, tracking changes to core koala habitat, tracking active restoration initiatives, and analysing trends in koala injuries and mortality to identify threats.

This first Annual Report 2020–2021 uses the MERI framework to track the progress made in achieving the actions of the Strategy. The reporting period covers the commencement of the amendments to the Queensland land use planning framework in February 2020, and the release of the Strategy in August 2020 and its implementation to the end of the 2021 calendar year. It provides an opportunity to transparently report on progress, identify areas for improvement and highlight the koala conservation achievements collectively made with our partners.



The implementation of actions are well underway, with 32 of the 46 actions started and three actions completed. In this first reporting period, there has been a significant focus on foundational activities (see Figure 1). These include establishing policy settings, developing science-based methodologies, building partnerships, and formalising governance, project planning and reporting arrangements.

These foundations are critical for the successful delivery of the Strategy actions over the coming years. They set the groundwork for important koala conservation outcomes including contributing to the achievement of the four targets by the Strategy’s conclusion.

As implementation of the actions progresses throughout 2022 and beyond, more detailed reporting on targets and outcomes will be provided.

The MERI framework also measures the success of individual actions within the Strategy, including activities that are already underway, and identifies how each contributes towards the targets and vision.

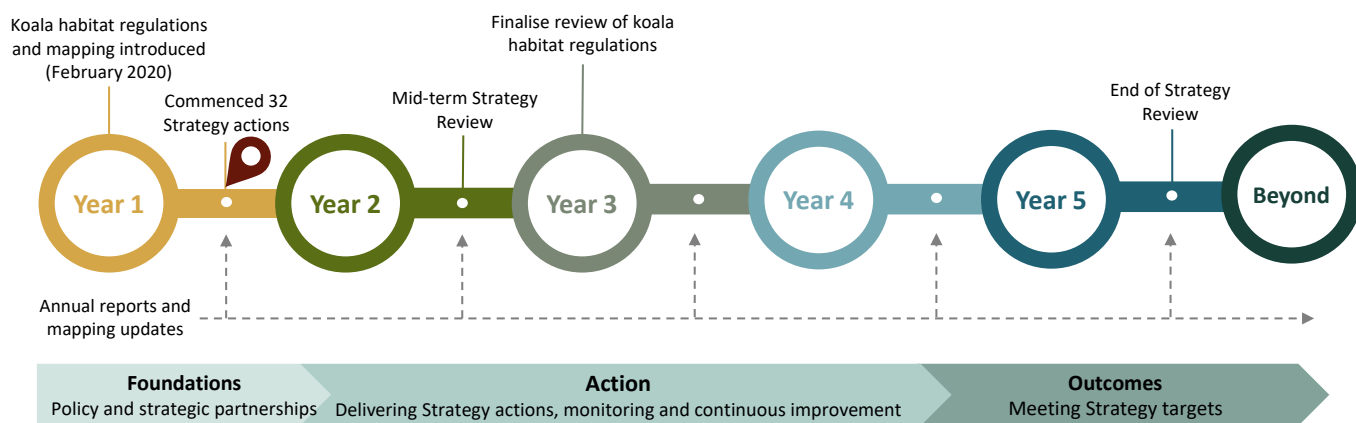


Figure 1: South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy Delivery Themes



Koala conservation highlights 2020 and 2021

- Improved habitat protections: Koala Habitat Areas now cover 714,040 hectares of land across SEQ. The total core Koala Habitat Area (KHA) within Koala Priority Areas (KPA) increased by almost four per cent, so now the greatest level of planning protections apply to over 332,000 hectares of koala habitat.
- Investment continued in habitat restoration, koala hospitals, research, and community engagement:
 - \$4.48 million to the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program in collaboration with the Queensland Trust for Nature (QTFN). 255 hectares of habitat recovery was started within Koala Priority Areas, contributing to the 10,000 hectares restoration target.
 - \$1.5 million in three South East Queensland wildlife hospitals; Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, RSPCA Queensland and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, to support operating expenses related to the care and rehabilitation of sick or injured koalas.
 - More than \$600,000 for seven practical and applied research projects to support the conservation of koalas, including the Chlamydia vaccination trial with the University of the Sunshine Coast to vaccinate 500 koalas.
 - More than \$600,000 for Griffith University to facilitate the co-design and implementation of community engagement and threat mitigation initiatives in partnership with local governments to support koala conservation in SEQ.
 - Leading experts and partners raised awareness of the ongoing work in koala conservation with around 470 community members at the new KoalaCollab Conference Series 2021.
- The Koala Research and Monitoring Program continued to provide valuable data with 130 individual koalas detected over 62 sites (1,871 hectares) surveyed between August 2020 and July 2021.
- Workshops to facilitate the co-design of a First Nations SEQ Koala Conservation Action Plan and Engagement Strategy were held in June and November 2021. This important work has identified partnership opportunities across key themes: acknowledgement, partnerships and funding, and caring for Country.



Case study

Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program with QTFN

In its first year, the program has delivered:

- revegetation of 108 hectares of new koala habitat
- regeneration of 147 hectares of existing vegetation
- planting of 169,935 trees
- community engagement through local tree planting events and habitat recovery monitoring.




Over the course of this five-year project, an additional 15,000 free koala food trees will be provided to communities and landholders to plant in their local area.





Target reporting



TARGET	PRIMARY INDICATOR	RESULT TO DATE	TARGET STATUS
<p>Target 1 POPULATIONS</p> <p>Stabilise* koala population numbers in SEQ</p> <p>* Able to be maintained at current population levels with no long-term decline.</p>	Annual koala survey result	<p>Surveys underway</p> <p>To assess whether koala population numbers are stable in SEQ a baseline for the koala population will be determined from data collected in 2022. This baseline will be informed by findings from the SEQ-wide koala research and monitoring program that is currently underway. Population surveys are on track and all survey site locations will be surveyed at least once by end of 2022. These surveys will inform a population trend analysis to assess whether koala population numbers are stable. Reports on the status of populations will be provided as data becomes available.</p>	
<p>Target 2 KOALA HABITAT</p> <p>A net gain* in the total core** koala habitat area</p> <p>* Net gain consists of actual on-ground changes to koala habitat extent since February 2020 but excludes corrections to the mapping or transfer of locally refined koala habitat areas to core habitat.</p> <p>** For this Annual Report, koala habitat includes core and the interim provision of locally refined koala habitat areas.</p>	Area mapped as core koala habitat area	<p>Baseline establishment underway</p> <p>Trends toward net gain will be determined in 2022 when data becomes available. As of August 2021, the total area of koala habitat is 714,040 hectares, comprising 652,476 hectares of core Koala Habitat Area (KHA) and a further 61,564 hectares of Locally Refined Koala Habitat Area (LRKHA).</p> <p>332,278 hectares of koala habitat are protected within Koala Priority Areas under the strongest protections.</p> <p>Mapping refinements have resulted in changes to the area of koala habitat from August 2020, which primarily reflect changes to the regional ecosystem and high value regrowth mapping.</p>	
<p>Target 3 KOALA HABITAT RESTORATION</p> <p>Commence rehabilitation to restore 10,000 hectares of koala habitat</p>	Area of rehabilitation commenced	<p>535 hectares of restoration commenced by the Queensland Government, Queensland Trust for Nature and partners</p> <p>The Queensland Government's Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program started the restoration on 108 hectares and a further 147 hectares of assisted regeneration. 169,935 trees have been planted across seven properties. Planting survival rates will be reported in future annual reports.</p> <p>The Land Restoration Fund (LRF) has invested in projects that have specific koala habitat restoration benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a pilot project in collaboration with Seqwater and CO2 Australia has planted over 150,000 trees across 170 hectares around Lake Wivenhoe a pilot project on the Aroona cattle station to commence in early 2022 including riparian plantings and assisted regeneration across 2,000 hectares. <p>The Department of Environment and Science is supporting Healthy Land and Water (in-kind) to deliver the Protecting Koalas Project which aims to protect, restore, and increase koala habitat by over 110 hectares in Flinders Peak. This project is part of an Australian Government funded Environment Restoration Fund (ERF) project supporting koala conservation across SEQ and Northern New South Wales.</p>	



TARGET	PRIMARY INDICATOR	RESULT TO DATE	TARGET STATUS
<p>Target 4 THREAT REDUCTION</p> <p>Commence ten programs in threat priority areas to support at least a 25 per cent reduction in disease, injury and mortality rates in these locations</p>	<p>Number of programs commenced and per cent reduction in disease, injury, mortality</p>	<p>Foundational work on threat area identification is complete, and best-practice policy principles have been established</p> <p>Progress has been made to develop a scientifically-robust method to identify koala threat priority areas across SEQ. Once complete in early 2022, ten priorities areas will be selected for targeted threat reduction programs.</p> <p>Other relevant activities include the expansion of the ‘Leave it’ program across SEQ, which aims to raise wildlife awareness among dog owners and provide wildlife aversion training to dogs. The Queensland Government’s <i>Fauna Sensitive Road Design Manual</i> and <i>Koala Sensitive Design Guidelines</i> are also being updated. The manual outlines how the Department of Transport and Main Roads can design, construct and maintain roads that better accommodate the needs of native fauna, including koalas, using various methods. These include the installation of fauna exclusion and connectivity infrastructure.</p> <p>Two independent reviews of the State’s koala rehabilitation and translocation policies have been completed and will be used to update the policy for koala translocation.</p>	





Habitat protection activities

The koala habitat protections introduced in February 2020 have increased both the extent and level of protections for koala habitat areas across SEQ.

Under new regulations, over 714,040 hectares is now mapped as koala habitat including 332,278 hectares within Koala Priority Areas. Annual habitat mapping updates were made in August 2020 and in September 2021, to ensure consistency with the latest available regional ecosystem, high value regrowth and essential habitat mapping.

Prior to the February 2020 commencement of the amended koala habitat protection regulations, the extent of koala habitat protections was only 93,570 hectares across SEQ.

A new SEQ koala habitat planning code was developed to ensure that development in the region maintains or improves koala habitat connectivity and does not increase the risk of injury to or death of koalas. The State Code 25: Development in SEQ Koala Habitat Areas will ensure development in SEQ results in no net loss of koala habitat areas, does not contribute to fragmentation of koala habitat areas, maintains or improves connectivity to ensure koala safe movement, is constructed and undertaken in a way that does not increase the risk of injury to koalas, and avoids impacts on matters of State environmental significance.

A post-implementation review of the koala habitat protections in SEQ has commenced, to evaluate whether the regulations are meeting their intended purpose. The review is in the data collection phase and public consultation with partners, community and stakeholders will be completed in 2022.

The General Guide to the Environmental Offsets Framework was revised in 2020 to improve guidance on offsets, including for koala habitat offsets. A review of Queensland's Environmental Offsets Framework is also underway, which will improve how environmental offsets are undertaken in the State. Public consultation is due to commence in 2022.

The Queensland Government is leading the assessment of the clearing of koala habitat areas across SEQ, with local government playing a vital role in providing for koala-safe development and compliance. The Department of Environment and Science provided advice to the State Assessment Referral Agency on over 380 development applications.

A review of Queensland's State Supported Infrastructure Koala Conservation Policy is underway in collaboration with other Queensland Government departments including the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR). This review will ensure that the planning, design and construction of government supported infrastructure in SEQ reduces adverse impacts on koalas and koala habitat.

Local governments in SEQ continue to actively conserve koalas in their areas through their own planning schemes, managing reserves and council land, implementing conservation strategies and undertaking extensive community engagement and education. Proposed developments that don't involve clearing koala habitat areas, but are within koala priority areas, are assessed by local governments against new assessment benchmarks that support consideration of koala conservation within project proposals.



Habitat restoration activities

Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program (KHRPP)

The Queensland Government has committed \$4.48 million over the five-year Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program (the program) in collaboration with the Queensland Trust for Nature (QTFN). QTFN has leveraged an additional \$970,000 through funding partnerships with multiple independent organisations.

The additional funding seeks to increase the target area to be restored to a minimum 180 hectares of restored koala habitat, and a further 250 hectares of assisted Koala Habitat regeneration within the mapped Koala Priority Areas. The development of a communication plan will outline the communication activities over the life of the contract for projects and koala initiatives aligning to mapped Koala Priority Areas set in the Strategy.

In its first year, 108 hectares of new koala habitat have been revegetated and a further 147 hectares of existing vegetation assisted regenerated through assisted ecosystem recovery. Over 169,935 trees have been planted, with the community engaged through local tree planting events and habitat recovery monitoring.

Throughout the duration of the program, it is expected that an additional 15,000 free koala food trees will be provided to communities and landholders to plant in their local areas.

The process for identifying restoration areas has been rigorous. In the initial stages of the program, QTFN conducted a desktop analysis of existing koala habitat datasets. 71 project proposals were subject to landscape and connectivity modelling to determine which projects demonstrated the highest koala conservation potential.

Under the program’s assessment framework, 31 project proposals with significant potential were subject to a site assessment. Potential projects were rated for their koala habitat gain potential and feasibility. After an intensive analysis, seven projects were selected under the program (Figure 2). These projects are being actively managed through ongoing monitoring of tree planting, assisted regeneration and koala presence to inform future project design.

The extension of the program, announced in June 2021, includes a specific allocation of funding from the Land Restoration Fund to pilot the delivery of carbon outcomes through the restoration of koala habitat in SEQ.



Program highlights




-  169,935 plants in revegetation areas
-  105+ hectares of revegetation
-  145+ hectares of assisted regeneration

Figure 2: KHRPP project sites are spread across SEQ achieving significant reach across the region



The Land Restoration Fund’s koala habitat restoration activities

The Queensland Government’s Land Restoration Fund (LRF) has allocated funding to a pilot project on the Aroona cattle station that will include riparian habitat restoration works and assisted regeneration across 2,000 hectares, including 1,782 hectares of ironbark-dominated woodlands and 180 hectares of blue gum alluvial flats. The five-year project involves restoring riparian areas, regenerating habitat, and managing weeds.

In addition, the LRF has partnered with Seqwater and CO2 Australia to restore koala habitat on a site near the Wivenhoe Dam. More than 150,000 trees have been planted over 170 hectares. The plantings will be surveyed for survivorship, and any required replanting will be done in 2022.

Other habitat restoration activities

The Queensland Government has continued to maintain and enhance koala habitat plantings on nine Koala Habitat Restoration properties purchased between 2011 and 2018. Planning is well progressed to protect these properties via a declaration as nature refuges and to transfer long-term management of the properties to a non-government conservation organisation.

The Queensland Government is supporting Healthy Land and Water to deliver the Protecting Koalas Project which aims to protect, restore, and increase koala habitat in Flinders Peak. The three-year project is part of an Australian Government funded ERF project supporting koala conservation across SEQ and Northern New South Wales. It seeks to restore over 110 hectares of koala habitat, reduce fire threats through land manager training and build conservation outcomes through collaboration with local governments, community, Traditional Owners and researchers.

The Queensland Government in partnership with Noosa Shire Council and HQ Plantations is increasing koala habitat on State land as part of the Yurol-Ringtail State Forest Conservation Project. The project is investing in replanting of habitat in areas previously supporting pine plantations.

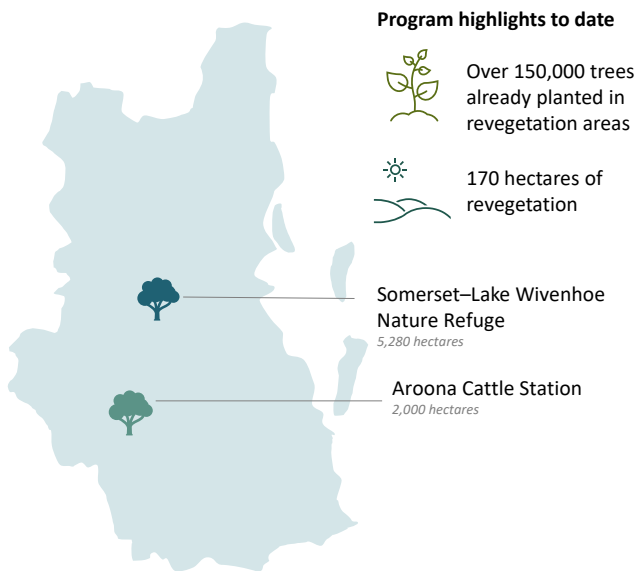


Figure 3: LRF SEQ Koala Conservation project site





Partnerships and strategic coordination

Successful koala conservation relies on a collaborative approach across all sectors, and for communities to play a role in protecting local koalas.

The Queensland Government has also established strategic partnerships including:

- with the Queensland Trust for Nature to deliver habitat restoration
- the Local Government Working Group to improve the coordination of actions and to resolve koala management issues
- with local government to co-design and implement community engagement and threat mitigation initiatives to support koala conservation in SEQ
- extending support for the operations of the SEQ Wildlife Hospital Network to support the rescue, treatment, rehabilitation and release of sick, injured and orphaned koalas
- encouraging local government and landholders to register advanced offset areas in strategic locations (to date advanced offsets are registered over 76 hectares of koala habitat in SEQ)
- with communities through koala targeted funding under the Community Sustainability Action grant program.

The Queensland Government is also working with the Australian Government to progress a strategic assessment for SEQ. The assessment will be conducted at landscape scale and consider a broader set of actions than a project-by-project assessment.

The Koala Advisory Council

The Koala Advisory Council (KAC) were instrumental in developing the Strategy and guiding the development of the koala habitat protections. The KAC have an ongoing role throughout the delivery of the Strategy, which includes:

- helping deliver the Strategy and overseeing its implementation
- evaluating the effectiveness of the Strategy and providing advice to government
- reviewing the Queensland Government's koala monitoring and evaluation program to ensure targets are met
- ensuring transparency and public reporting on koala programs and changes to habitat
- establishing stakeholder networks
- ensuring the long-term agenda for koala conservation is maintained.

The KAC meets regularly to provide feedback and advice to the Queensland Government on the implementation of the Strategy. KAC continues to review progress against the targets and guide improvements to koala management in SEQ.

Local Government Working Group

Local governments play a key role in koala conservation and management in SEQ through the delivery of important local koala conservation initiatives. The Local Government Working Group provides advice on coordinating and guiding relevant actions of the Strategy. This working group also coordinates the involvement of SEQ local governments in Strategy implementation and facilitates collaboration and innovation between the Queensland Government and local governments.

Partnerships with First Nations people

The Koala Conservation Strategy includes a commitment that the Queensland Government will continue to seek out new stories and partnerships to co-design initiatives and practical strategies that respect traditional practices and reflect First Nations peoples' deep knowledge of Country.

A group of SEQ First Nations peoples are contributing to a program that uses traditional knowledge and science to identify partnerships to better manage koalas in SEQ.

In 2021, a partnership program was established to identify partnerships to better manage koalas in SEQ—utilising traditional knowledge and robust science, which included two formal workshops led by First Nations peoples. This collaborative approach will also lead to the co-design of a First Nations Koala Management Action Plan which focuses on three key themes and will continue over the life of the Strategy—acknowledge, caring for Country and partner and build capacity. The Plan actively recognises that First Nations people in SEQ are key contributors to outcomes for the action areas and key targets of the Strategy.

Feedback from the workshops included multiple recommendations:

- The Draft SEQ First Nations Koala Engagement and Action Plan themes were considered appropriate and need to continue to be refined to reflect both the

common themes and diverse issues of each First Nation within SEQ.

- Department of Environment and Science to facilitate connections between First Nations groups, local governments and Queensland Government departments for better cultural outcomes such as acknowledgement and support for cultural uses of koalas.
- Connections between the SEQ First Nations groups and national koala conservation projects (like the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)) to be increased and supported.

At the workshops, CSIRO provided an overview of work on partnerships and pathways for koala monitoring and knowledge systems with First Nations peoples.

The Department will continue to work with CSIRO as the action plan for koala conservation and First Nations peoples is developed.

A First Nations Engagement Plan was developed to realise this commitment, with implementation across three key themes over the life of the Strategy: Acknowledge, Caring for Country and Partner and Build capacity. The Plan actively recognises that First Nations people in SEQ are key contributors to outcomes for the action areas and key targets of the Strategy.





Case study

Partnerships with First Nations peoples

Koalas are particularly important in customary lore, stories and songs for Queensland’s First Nations peoples.

The Queensland Government is delivering a project that is building innovative partnerships with First Nations people for koala conservation. This project focuses on the co-design of actions to achieve koala conservation outcomes. As part of this project the Department has engaged a First Nations person (Mr Cameron Costello) to facilitate discussions with relevant Traditional Owner groups across SEQ about how they would like to be involved in koala conservation outcomes.



Workshop participants, June 2021, Daisy Hill Koala Centre





Threat management activities

Significant progress has been made to develop a scientifically-robust method of identifying koala threat priority areas across SEQ. Once complete, ten priority areas with high threat abatement opportunities will be selected.

The Queensland Government has invested over \$7.5 million in the SEQ Wildlife Hospital Network since its establishment in 2016 and committed annual ongoing funding of \$1.5 million as part of the Strategy. The investment continues existing arrangements with the SEQ Wildlife Hospital Network (Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, RSPCA Queensland and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital), which maintains a coordinated wildlife care network to respond to natural and human induced factors impacting on koala health.

The SEQ Wildlife Hospital Network is also progressing the development of training and information products for koala carers and veterinarians, in partnership with the Queensland Government.

Griffith University has expanded the 'Leave it' educational program across SEQ, raising awareness among dog owners and providing wildlife aversion training to dogs to avoid koalas. The project will also advance the co-design and implementation of a range of community engagement and threat mitigation initiatives in partnership with local governments to support koala conservation across SEQ.

Griffith University were also commissioned to undertake a comprehensive and critical independent review of contemporary knowledge, policy and practices related to the use of translocation as an intervention for wildlife conservation and management in Queensland. This review examined relevant national and international literature and jurisdictional policy and procedural documents that guide the appropriate use of translocation for wildlife management.

To better guide infrastructure design and placement, updating the *Fauna-sensitive Road Design Manual* and the *Koala-sensitive Design Guideline* are currently being revised.

The Queensland Government, in partnership with the SEQ Wildlife Hospital Network is progressing the development of training and information products for koala carers and veterinarians.

The Queensland Government has also extended its contractual arrangements with the University of Queensland to host the KoalaBASE online database to support the capture, collation and reporting of data on koala disease, injuries and mortality in conjunction with wildlife hospitals and carers.

The Koala Sighting App, currently under development, will significantly enhance the processes for capture and quality control of data to complement the data collated in KoalaBASE.

During 2020 and 2021, TMR delivered, or commenced delivery of, koala exclusion and connectivity infrastructure in SEQ. This includes sites on Brisbane Road at Arundel, Deception Bay Road and on the Caloundra to Sunshine Motorway.

TMR has committed to deliver a further \$4.5 million worth of fauna infrastructure, including koala infrastructure, in collaboration with Moreton Bay Regional Council over the next ten years. The construction of this infrastructure will add to the already significant volume of koala infrastructure in SEQ currently maintained by TMR. Current estimates indicate that TMR already maintains approximately 60 kilometres of koala exclusion fencing across the State-controlled road network of SEQ.



Case study

Leave It

Behavioural change researchers from Social Marketing at Griffith University have been working with Redland City Council to deliver a training program that helps dog owners teach their dogs basic obedience skills, such as not to bark at or chase wildlife, including koalas.

The first stage of the program involved two expert dog trainers, Steve Austin and Ryan Tate, working with local dog trainers to incorporate the Leave It program into normal training sessions. Community seminars were also provided to the public.

The Queensland Government has contracted Griffith to deliver threat abatement activities across SEQ in collaboration with local governments, including an expansion of the Leave It program across other SEQ local government areas.

40% increase in dogs coming back when called
From 38.1% (2017) to 63.8% (2020)





Improved mapping, monitoring, research and reporting

Protecting koala habitat depends on high-quality and accurate koala habitat mapping.

On 7 February 2020, the Queensland Government released new regulatory koala habitat maps for SEQ. The maps support the implementation of the Strategy and amended koala conservation protections within the planning framework.

The new mapping was produced using state-of-the-art methodology that was independently reviewed and endorsed by the CSIRO, which described it as a 'significant step forward in koala mapping'. A key feature of the new mapping is the strategic identification of koala priority areas. These areas help to direct effort and investment in habitat protection, restoration and threat mitigation into large, connected areas with the highest likelihood of achieving the best conservation outcomes for koalas.

Koala habitat mapping is updated annually to reflect the best available science. Since the Strategy's commencement, the map has been updated in August 2020 and September 2021.

Non-regulatory koala habitat restoration areas identify land that could be restored and established as koala habitat areas. These areas feature low threats or constraints, and high conservation opportunities which are used to support decisions around environmental offsets and conservation opportunities.

Non-regulatory threat mapping will help to target efforts to better manage investments in critical koala conservation interventions. In 2021, progress was made in developing a scientifically-robust method to identify koala threat priority areas. Once complete, ten priorities areas will be selected for targeted programs.

In addition to high-quality regulatory koala habitat and non-regulatory threat maps, monitoring and research programs can help measure changes in koala populations and threats over time. This information informs management decision making and helps communicate

outcomes in improving the conservation of koalas. Effective monitoring is critical in applying adaptive management practices to koala conservation.

Matters of environmental significance represent special categories of biodiversity that are regulated in some cases required to be offset. Under the framework, matters of environmental significance are defined at national, State and local level. At the national level under the framework, matters of national environmental significance (MNES) are defined in the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

At the State level, matters of State environmental significance (MSES) are currently defined in both the State Planning Policy (SPP) for planning purposes and the Environmental Offsets Regulation 2014 for offsets purposes. Koala Habitat is a Matter of State Environmental Significance.

In 2021, work continued to develop a baseline for the koala population as part of the Queensland Government's region-wide koala research and monitoring program. Under this program, a new methodology was developed and field surveys commenced. Surveys are on track and all survey site locations will be surveyed at least once by mid 2023.

The Queensland Government will review koala habitat assessment methods to inform and integrate existing koala monitoring frameworks under the Strategy.

A new QKoala App is under development which will provide a streamlined platform for collecting koala sightings data.

The Department continued to engage with landholders and local governments to address issues associated with the koala habitat area mapping on private land to ensure the accuracy of mapping and resolve any concerns.



Community engagement

The community is passionate about koala conservation and ensuring their survival. Two community volunteer tree planting events involving more than 100 volunteers were held under the KHRRP, with four more scheduled across 2022–24.

A citizen science koala population and habitat recovery monitoring program under the KHRRP was also launched in spring 2021, including a ‘free trees’ program which will give away 5,000 koala food trees between 2021–2023.

Between October–November 2021, the Department hosted the KoalaCollab virtual conference, where partners and scientists showcased projects and challenges. The conference was highly successful, with 283 people from the broader community, partner organisations and government registering to attend online. Recordings of the sessions are available on the Department of Environment and Science website.

Community awareness surveys were completed across all SEQ local government areas to gauge the level of community awareness, engagement, support of and participation in threat mitigation activities. Led by Griffith University in conjunction with local governments, this project will progress co-design and implement community engagement and threat mitigation initiatives to support koala conservation across SEQ.

The Queensland Government in partnership with local governments has implemented a koala breeding season social media campaign across SEQ based on the successful ‘Bachoala’ campaign developed by Griffith University Marketing School and Redland City Council. The campaign promotes a range of actions community members can take to reduce the risks to koalas during the breeding season. The campaign focusses on driver behaviour, management of domestic dogs and the creation of safe koala neighbourhoods. TMR has also contributed to breeding season community engagement activities through trialling koala awareness messaging on select variable message boards on the State-controlled road network.

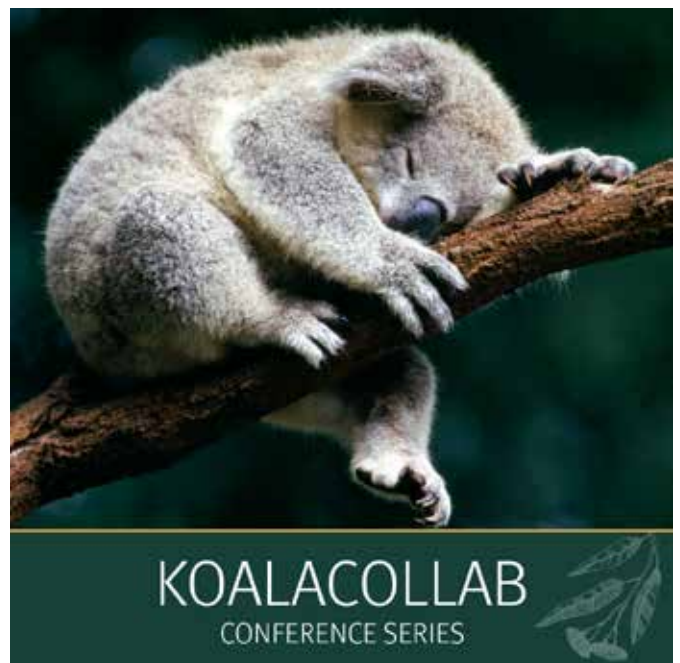
Despite COVID-19 restrictions, Daisy Hill Koala Centre recorded 63,225 visitors in the reporting period. \$205,000 was allocated to upgrade the Daisy Hill facilities to install air-conditioning, as well as new digital interactive and interpretive displays to encourage community engagement.

The Queensland Government is developing a way to provide the community and local governments with the opportunity to input data and information to inform the annual revision of koala habitat area mapping.

The Community and Local Government Pathway (pathway) will be supported by the establishment of a Koala Technical Advisory Committee, which will be established in early 2022.

The pathway is in addition to the map amendment request function that allows landholders, or persons acting on a landholder’s behalf to request to make, amend or revoke a koala habitat area determination.

The level of community engagement is expected to increase throughout the life of the Strategy as more programs are developed.



Case study

KoalaCollab

Quick stats:

- 28 speakers, including presenters, MCs and Welcome to Country
- Opening address by Meaghan Scanlan, MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Youth Affairs
- 472 attendees
- Six days of events between 13 October to 17 November 2021
- 22 topics, with 236 questions asked of presenters

Topics included:

- Koala mapping, remote sensing and habitat modelling
- Koala conservation, planning legislation and policy
- Koala threats and mitigation programs
- Securing, protecting and restoring koala habitat
- Rescue, rehabilitation, relocation and release of koalas
- Koala survey and monitoring techniques

Attendee feedback:

Over 75% of participants would recommend KoalaCollab to a friend or colleague.

‘It’s great. Make it a regular event.’

‘The platform was great! Very easy to use.’

‘I liked that it was spread out over a number of days.’

Reasons for attending:

‘Would like to be involved and express my opinion and learn from others.’

‘I would like to know how I can contribute to koala habitats and identification.’

Looking ahead to 2022

Considerable progress has been made in first year of the Strategy and ongoing koala conservation programs across SEQ. Major deliverables for the second year (2022) will include:

- Restoring habitat on State land, including the protected area estate, in partnership with non-government organisations.
- Finalising the koala habitat threat mapping to identify priority areas for threat reduction.
- Delivering threat abatement programs in partnership with local governments.
- Continuing to work with Griffith University to deliver the ‘Leave it’ program.
- Using citizen-science to support koala conservation programs.
- Determining trends toward net gain of koala habitat when data becomes available in 2022.
- Measuring koala population trends across SEQ as part of ongoing work.
- Launching the Koala Sighting App on the QWildlife Platform.
- Aligning the environmental offsets framework with the Strategy to better support koala conservation.
- Progressing the Post-Implementation Review of koala habitat clearing regulations.
- Establishing baseline koala population numbers.



How to get involved in helping koalas

At home

- Keep native vegetation on your land or plant koala food trees.
- Consider koala-friendly fencing options, this may be as simple as adding a couple of extra posts to allow koalas to climb over your fence safely.
- Look at ways to ensure koalas can't drown in your pool, there are some easy solutions like floating a sturdy rope for koalas to pull themselves out.

Out and about

- Contact the koala ambulance on **1300 ANIMAL** (1300 264 625) if you suspect a koala is unhealthy, injured, sick, or trapped and in need of assistance.
- Participate in community habitat restoration work by joining a local catchment or conservation group.
- Participate in citizen science activities to monitor koala populations and habitat.
- Drive carefully and look out for koala crossing signs.
- Report koala sightings via Wildnet and Atlas of Living Australia.
- Volunteer or support your local koala care service such as the Moggill Koala Rehabilitation Centre, Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, Currumbin Wildlife Hospital or RSPCA Queensland.
- Provide input to the annual koala map update by participating in citizen science programs or making a formal submission.

Visit environment.des.qld.gov.au/wildlife/animals/living-with/koalas/threats for more information about helping koalas.



Detailed target reporting

2021 progress update

Legend



Complete
Item is complete.



On-track
Implementation of item is progressing in line with the implementation plan and is expected to be delivered on time. Nothing in the available data indicates that progress will deviate from implementation plan.



Monitor
Implementation of item is progressing however there may be delay in the delivery of the item within anticipated timeframes.



Action required
Delivery of the item is experiencing major delays which may require a review of the project scope or timeline.




Data deficient
It is not yet known whether delivery of the desired outcome or target is feasible within timeframe.



Not started
The item is not yet due to commence.

Table 1. Populations

Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Koala Research and Monitoring Program	4.8		2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the commencement of the SEQ Koala Conservation Strategy, the Koala Research and Monitoring Program has conducted population surveys at 62 sites ranging in size from 8 to 635 hectares. • Sites surveyed included North Coast genetic koala population (Brisbane = 12, Moreton Bay = 18 and Sunshine Coast = 7), the Gold Coast genetic koala population (12 sites), the Noosa genetic population (9 sites) and the North-West genetic population (3 = Somerset and 1 = Lockyer Valley). • All sites will have been visited at least once by the end of 2022 (establishing the baseline) and visited twice by the start of 2024. • In total, 130 koalas were directly sighted within sampled areas. Koala density across all sampled areas was estimated at 0.069 koalas per hectare (95 per cent confidence interval: 0.053-0.097). • A total of 127 days were spent in the field, resulting in 324.05 kilometres of sampling effort and 1,871.11 hectares of sampled area. • Assessment of historic survey data successfully determined that the program is capable of detecting trends in koala populations. DES is currently working with university partners to explore and develop baseline metrics and conduct trend analyses. 			

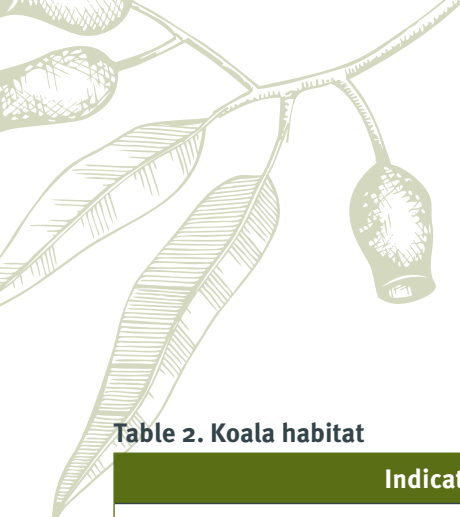










Table 2. Koala habitat

Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Baseline total koala habitat area	1.1, 4.2		Baseline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interim baseline mapped area of koala habitat area is 714,040 hectares as of September 2021. Of this total 332,278 hectares is in KPAs. A core element to achieving the vision of the Strategy is meeting the target of a net gain in core koala habitat area (KHA). To accurately measure the progress against this target, it is essential to consider the impacts of shifting baselines for the total amount of KHA, which change each year as mapping refinements are progressed through the annual KHA map update process. These refinements may include the removal of areas that were previously mapped as KHA but have since been determined to not meet the criteria of koala habitat. For example, improved satellite imagery or on-ground surveys have shown that these areas do not have any native woody vegetation or koala habitat regional ecosystems present. The removal of these areas must be factored into any calculation to assess progress, or lack of progress, toward the net gain target, by re-establishing baseline amount of KHA each year. To account for Locally Refined Koala Habitat Areas (LRKHAs) as an interim provision, the transition of LRKHA areas into core KHA will not be counted as a ‘gain’. Similarly, LRKHAs which do not meet the criteria for transitioning into core KHA will not be counted as a ‘loss’. A gain in koala habitat area is achieved through the inclusion of areas not previously mapped as KHA, which now meet the criteria of koala habitat. This is determined through the annual map update process. Examples of koala habitat gains might include advanced-stage koala habitat restoration areas, passively restored regrowth areas identified in the latest regional ecosystem mapping data, as well as any previously unidentified patches of koala habitat which landholders or local governments may have requested protection of. 			
Baseline core koala habitat area	1.1, 4.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interim baseline mapped area of core koala habitat area is 652,476 hectares as of September 2021. This is an increase of 23,354 hectares compared to the previous mapping updates of both August 2020 and February 2020, which both reported 629,122. Baseline mapping will be updated based on the latest available State-wide Landcover and Trees Study (SLATS), regional ecosystems, high value regrowth and koala sightings. 			
Baseline locally refined koala habitat areas (LRKHA)	1.1, 4.3		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interim baseline mapped area of locally refined koala habitat area is 61,564 hectares as of September 2021. This is a decrease of 25,580 hectares compared to the previous mapping update of September 2020 which reported 87,144 hectares. The change is primarily the result of ongoing refinements to the regional ecosystems and high-value regrowth (HVR) mapping. 			

Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Core koala habitat extent (remnant vegetation and high-value growth)	1.1, 4.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of September 2021, the extent of core koala habitat area that is remnant vegetation is 513,114 hectares. The extent that is high-value regrowth (HVR) vegetation is 138,362 hectares. Baseline mapping will be updated based on the latest available State-wide Landcover and Trees Study (SLATS), regional ecosystems, high value regrowth and koala sightings. 			
Koala habitat areas removed Note that map changes including LRKHA transition are reported separately. * The koala survey methodology is updated annually and is available on the DES website.	1.1, 4.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2021 KHA map update sees an apparent reduction in total habitat area in SEQ from 716,266 hectares to 714,040 hectares, however, the total area of KHA within KPAs has increased. This means that 332,278 hectares now attracts the strongest planning restrictions, up from 330,660 hectares. The apparent reduction in total habitat is primarily the result of continuing refinements to the regional ecosystem and high value regrowth mapping, not necessarily clearing. Over time, it is expected that the development restrictions imposed under the new planning framework will result in reductions to clearing as well as allowing areas to regenerate and become new koala habitat. However, due to clearing exemptions and those allowed under pre-existing development approvals, it may take a while for this shift to occur. As an example, this update includes a reduction of 247 hectares of koala habitat due to processing of outstanding property maps of assessable vegetation (PMAVs). The next annual KHA map update is scheduled for mid-2022. 			
Requests to amend core koala habitat area map	1.1, 4.2, 5.7		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 map amendment requests resulted in the removal of 49 hectares of incorrectly mapped core habitat. The cut-off for map amendment requests was 1 March 2021 prior to the production of the 2021 (version 12) remnant extent map and the high value regrowth (HVR) map. Results of map amendment requests are available on the Department of Environment and Science website. 			
Core koala habitat area exempted from clearing regulations	4.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,542 hectares of koala habitat area overlaps with priority development areas and State development areas. The area of koala habitat which has been cleared under other exemptions, such as clearing for firebreaks and/or fencing will be reviewed as part of the post-implementation review of the koala regulations. 			
Koala habitat areas added Note that map changes and actual new habitat (HVR) are reported separately	1.1, 1.6, 4.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2021 core KHA map updates included negligible new areas of HVR as not enough time has elapsed for new areas of HVR to have established. 			





Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Rate of clearing in core koala habitat areas	4.2		2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to the introduction of the regulations 264 hectares KHA (remnant) was cleared between 2017–19. • An annual rate of clearing after the introduction of the regulation will be reported when available. 			
Area of impacted koala habitat requiring offsets under the <i>Environmental Offsets Act 2014</i> (since the regulations were introduced in February 2020)	1.5, 1.10		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Queensland Government offsets register shows that as of November 2021, 15 hectares of koala habitat in SEQ triggered an offset requirement under the regulations introduced in February 2020. • To date, 100 per cent of developments impacting koala habitat have used financial settlements to offset impacts. • Local governments were responsible for administering the koala protection framework on behalf of the Queensland Government in South East Queensland and in conjunction with this were able to require offsets for impacts assessed prior to February 2020. 			
Financial settlement offsets received and unspent (under the <i>Environmental Offsets Act 2014</i>)	1.5, 2.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of November 2021, \$203,342 of financial offsets for SEQ koala habitat is available to deliver offsets under the <i>Environmental Offsets Act 2014</i>. • Significant progress has occurred in securing contracts to deliver on these offsets. • Work is underway to increase the registration of advanced offset sites in SEQ to assist in streamlined delivery of offsets in strategic locations. 			
Area of impacted koala habitat requiring offsets under other legislation	1.5, 1.10		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area of impacted koala habitat required to be offset under the Commonwealth <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> and the Queensland Government Supported Infrastructure Koala Conservation Policy July 2017 (SI Policy) is being sought and is expected to be reported in the next annual report. • The Queensland Government led offsets register improvement project is looking into ways to provide flexibility to enable data from other programs to be entered. 			



Table 3. Koala habitat restoration




Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Extent revegetation contracted/commenced	1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Koala Habitat Restoration Partnerships Program will support at least 180 hectares of revegetation over the life of the program (to June 2024). 170 hectares of revegetation has commenced under the Land Restoration Fund Lake Wivenhoe Pilot Project (in collaboration with Seqwater and CO2 Australia). An additional pilot project on the Aroona cattle station commenced in early 2022 including riparian plantings and assisted regeneration. Over 110 hectares of revegetation in the Flinders Peak will be delivered as part of an Australian Government funded Environment Restoration Fund (ERF) project. 			
Extent assisted regeneration contracted/commenced	1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Koala Habitat Restoration Partnerships Program will support at least 250 hectares of assisted natural regeneration over the life of the program (to June 2024). 			
Extent revegetation completed	1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 108 hectares under the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program. 			
Extent assisted regeneration completed	1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 147 hectares under the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program. Land Restoration Fund assisted regeneration statistics to be reported in 2022. 			
Number of koala habitat trees planted	1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 169,935 koala habitat trees planted under the KHRRP. Over 153,000 koala habitat trees planted under LRF Wivenhoe pilot project. 			
Value of restoration contracts signed	1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$4.48 million to the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program in cooperation with Queensland Trust for Nature. Over \$1 million to the Land Restoration Fund Lake Wivenhoe pilot project \$668,850 to the LRF and QTFN pilot project at Aroona cattle station. 			



Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Number of restoration partnerships with landholders	1.8		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local governments in SEQ, the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program and the offsets fund are seeking partnerships with landholders to deliver restoration. 			
Proportion/number of regenerated sites subsequently occupied by koalas	4.8		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline koala surveys were conducted on the Queensland Government-owned koala habitat restoration properties and will provide an important baseline to monitor the future establishment and use of the sites by koalas. A new method of surveying is being rolled out. The Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program will not report on the presence/absence of koalas in revegetated areas under the program as the trees may not be mature enough for koala occupation during the life of the Strategy. Assisted regeneration sites will be monitored for presence/absence of Koalas. 			
Koala habitat area with long-term security within and outside KPA	1.2		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landholders participating in the KHRPP are required to enter into nature refuge agreements to secure the investments in rehabilitating habitat on private land. Investigations are underway with partners to explore suitable mechanisms. The post implementation review will consider the effectiveness of the regulations in protecting koala habitat. 			



Table 4. Threat reduction

Indicator/measure	Relevant actions	Status	Timing
Threat mapping completed	3.1		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The threat mapping project is underway. • Datasets that are applicable for strategic threat abatement actions across the SEQ study area have been identified. • Refinements to the existing mapping and data for individual threats have also been recommended. 			
Number of programs commenced in threat priority areas—these are generally in addition to individual partner actions	3.2		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline koala surveys were conducted on the Queensland Government-owned koala habitat restoration properties and will provide an important baseline to monitor the future establishment and use of the sites by koalas. • A new method of surveying is being rolled out. • The Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program will not report on the presence/absence of koalas in revegetated areas under the program as the trees may not be mature enough for koala occupation during the life of the Strategy. • Assisted regeneration sites will be monitored for presence/absence of koalas. 			
Injury and mortality at site relative to baseline	3.2, 3.5		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on the rates of disease, injury and mortality in koalas are being collated from KoalaBASE and other databases to inform the establishment of baseline mortality rates and enable temporal and spatial trends in koala mortality to be analysed. • Fauna Sensitive Road Design Manual update underway. 			



Outcome reporting

2021 update

Legend



Complete
Item is complete.



On-track
Implementation of item is progressing in line with the implementation plan and is expected to be delivered on time. Nothing in the available data indicates that progress will deviate from implementation plan.



Monitor
Implementation of item is progressing however there may be delay in the delivery of the item within anticipated timeframes.



Action required
Delivery of the item is experiencing major delays which may require a review of the project scope or timeline.





Data deficient
It is not yet known whether delivery of the desired outcome or target is feasible within timeframe.



Not started
The item is not yet due to commence.




Action area 1: Habitat protection

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Rate of loss of total core koala habitat areas is reduced		
Rate of loss in areas mapped as core habitat relative to the previous regulatory scheme.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Queensland Herbarium is reviewing mechanisms to measure the rate of loss of core koala habitat. Pre-regulation baseline core habitat will be available in 2022. Case studies are being assessed as key indicators of the rate of loss of core koala habitat. 		
Outcome: The total area and quality of koala habitat with long-term security in SEQ is increased		
Number and area of revegetation programs on privately-owned, local government and State lands including nature refuges, covenants, environmental offset protection areas, and planning scheme biodiversity corridors in koala priority areas.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 145 hectares of assisted regeneration has commenced with Koala Priority Areas. Koala Habitat Area within Koala Priority Areas has increased by over 12,874 hectares. Other partners will be able to report on this outcome in subsequent annual reports. 		
Outcome: Application of the mitigation hierarchy minimises unavoidable losses of habitat		
Guidance on the environmental offsets framework clearly guides decisions to ensure that unavoidable losses are minimised and properly compensated.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The General Guide to the Environmental Offsets Framework was revised in 2020 to improve guidance on offsets, including for koala habitat offsets. A review of Queensland's Environmental Offsets Framework is also underway, which will improve how environmental offsets are undertaken in the State. Public consultation is due to commence in early 2022. Work has started on improving guidance for assessment of impacts on koala habitat under koala regulations. 		

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Total Koala Habitat gain exceeds Total Koala Habitat loss		
<p>The rate of loss is reversed through habitat protections, revegetation, and offsets counterbalancing habitat losses.</p>		<p>2025</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat gain is occurring through revegetation programs but more needs to be reported to enable this outcome to be determined, both for revegetation activity and allowing habitat to reach a reportable level of maturity. • 150 hectares of revegetation has occurred under the KHRPP. • Habitat loss can be measured using SLATS when the next koala habitat map is released in mid-2022. • Losses through exemptions could be reported and this is being considered in the Post-Implementation Review. 		
Outcome: Net gain in core koala habitat in SEQ		
<p>Maturing habitat restoration—net gain consists of actual on-ground changes to koala habitat extent since 2020, e.g. through regrowth reach 15-year maturity, restored habitat and cleared habitat, but excludes correction to the mapping or transfer of locally refined koala habitat areas to core habitat.</p>		<p>2025</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can be reported once a baseline is set and the lag time due to approvals under old regulations is accounted for. 		



Action area 2: Habitat restoration for koalas

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Increasing areas of land are under revegetation or assisted regeneration		
An increase in the habitat area (regional ecosystems) through restoration, revegetation, and regeneration.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 108 hectares under revegetation and 147 hectares under assisted regeneration is underway. 		
Outcome: Koalas use restored habitat		
Koalas are present on the property (as determined by pellets, acoustics, or direct sightings).		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are anecdotal records of koalas accessing and using areas of restored koala habitat but no consistent and robust monitoring techniques have been enacted across the restoration sites. As such this measure is not yet reportable. 		
Outcome: Increased core koala habitat extent in pre-cleared areas		
Increased restored core koala habitat extent		post 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet reportable. 		




Action area 3: Threat management

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Improved understanding of distribution of koala threats		
Koala threat mapping and identification of koala threat priority areas.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress has been made on developing a scientifically robust method to identify koala threat priority areas across SEQ. Following completion, ten priorities areas with high-threat abatement potential will be selected. 		
Outcome: Koala injury and mortality rates decline in areas with threat-management responses in place		
Koala surveys associated with threat programs identify an overall increase in koala density, distribution, and health as a result of threat mitigation programs. Partners engaged in each program.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground-breaking koala safety shields trialled at David Fleay Wildlife Park and installed on the M1 motorway. \$1.5 million per annum provided to continue existing arrangements with the SEQ Wildlife Hospital Network to maintain a coordinated wildlife care network to respond to natural and human-induced factors impacting on wildlife health. 		
Outcome: Communities are willing to implement and maintain long-term koala-safe places		
Communities are aware of their options to implement koala-safe movement through their localities and adopt locally appropriate solutions. Communities comply with koala safe speed zones.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Koala sighting app on the QWildlife Platform is being developed. Griffith University have expanded the 'Leave It' educational program to other areas in Brisbane and SEQ, raising awareness among dog owners and providing wildlife aversion training to dogs to avoid koalas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> community awareness surveys have progressed consultation has occurred with the 12 SEQ councils on the preferred rollout strategy for the threat abatement program, by tailoring to local requirements. 		
Outcome: Disease injury and mortality rates decline across the SEQ region		
KoalaBASE entries decrease over time relative to regional koala numbers.		Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is underway to collate KoalaBASE injury and mortality rates. 		






Action area 4: Improved mapping, monitoring, research and reporting

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Koala habitat mapping identifies the best koala habitat		
Annual updates to koala habitat mapping.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koala Habitat annual update released in September 2021. 		
Outcome: Improved understanding of koala threat distribution and priorities for action		
Updated koala threat map.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress—threat mapping being developed. 		
Outcome: Koala conservation research program informs future action plans		
A program of priority research to support koala conservation is developed and implemented in partnership with research organisations, State and local government authorities and the community.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of research projects funded. • Value of research funded. • Number of research reports approved and finalised. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffith University translocation study is underway. • Research into genetics underway. • Community Sustainability Action Round 4 Koala Applied Research SEQ Grants have funded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — seven research projects — \$636,311 of research — no research reports approved and finalised yet. 		
Outcome: Best practice survey design and standardised methods are used to collect quality koala population data		
The Koala Monitoring Program is designed with consistent effort, methods, and data collection protocols.		2025
Templates and procedures are in place to ensure standardised and quality data collection.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Koala Research and Monitoring Program consulted statisticians in 2020 to optimise the monitoring program’s design and align with the population monitoring target in the Strategy. Their recommendations were implemented in 2021. • The Koala Research and Monitoring Program’s design and methodology is documented in a technical report that will be approved and published by mid-2022. • Since the implementation of the Strategy, the Koala Research and Monitoring Program has conducted population surveys at 62 sites ranging in size from eight to 635 hectares. 1,871 hectares were surveyed in total in SEQ, and 130 koalas were detected within sampled areas. 		

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Improved understanding of koala population distribution and trends over time		
Successive surveys from baseline do not indicate decline in numbers.		Future state
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey results are being added to databases for analysis and improved understanding of koala populations. • Work is needed to set baselines from which to measure the indicator. • Successive surveys need to be sensitive enough to pick up any changes, whether area declines or increases. • In 2021, a sensitivity analysis was delivered to assist with this work. 		



Action area 5: Community engagement

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Improved community awareness and action regarding koala conservation and management opportunities		
Communities are more aware of their options for engaging in koala conservation activity, including habitat management, local threat management solutions, citizen science through State and local governments and other partner activities.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KoalaCollab Conference Series 2021 was delivered including six 2.5 hour online sessions. • Community awareness surveys as part of the Griffith University’s ‘Leave it’ campaign have progressed. A follow up survey will occur in 12 months to measures changes. • Two community volunteer tree planting events involving more than 100 volunteers have already been held under the KHRRP, with four more scheduled across 2022–24. • A citizen science koala population and habitat recovery monitoring program under the KHRRP was also launched in spring 2021, including a ‘free trees’ program to give away 15,000 koala food trees between 2021–2023. • Development of the koala sightings app is in progress which will provide a platform for citizen science. 		
Outcome: Community behaviour change reduces threat drivers		
Communities are more aware of and take action to reduce behaviours that cause threats to koalas, including control of dogs, driving speed, yard management, etc.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring community awareness via surveys will be implemented. 		
Outcome: Communities increasingly adopt koala-safe design		
Communities are more aware of their options to implement koala-safe movement through their localities and adopt locally appropriate solutions		2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring the community’s adoption of koala safe design will be investigated. 		



Action area 6: Partnerships and strategic coordination

Indicator/measure	Progress	Expected date
Outcome: Strategy partners understand roles, responsibilities and opportunities in implementing the Strategy		
Partners actively engage in coordination and collaboration to deliver koala conservation projects and provide data and information for monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and improvement purposes.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reporting on progress delivering koala conservation activities will assist collaboration and data sharing—assisting in monitoring progress and evaluating the strategy outcomes. • The Local Government Working Group has been established and held five meetings. The group provides advice on coordinating relevant actions of the Strategy. • First Nations groups in SEQ are supporting the development of an action plan that will deliver a mutually beneficial and innovative partnership with First Nations peoples for the management and conservation of koalas in SEQ. 		
Outcome: Transparent, timely reporting of strategy outputs, outcomes and targets		
The MERI drives regular and consistent reporting against strategy actions, outcomes, and targets.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual report will improve information and outcomes sharing to enable effective monitoring and evaluation of the strategy outcomes. 		
Outcome: Implementation and investment in phase 2 of the Strategy responds to phase 1 learnings		
The mid-term Strategy review provides clear evidence of successes and weaknesses of the current implementation program and drives improvement into Phase 2.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The post implementation review is underway. • Key data collection and analysis of successes and weaknesses will follow. 		
Outcome: Consistent consideration of koala conservation across Commonwealth, State, and local government policies and programs		
The Strategy provides the central direction for consistent and complementary conservation action across all levels of government.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a longer-term measure. An evaluation of the Strategy effectiveness at providing consistent and complementary conservation action across all levels of government will occur in 2025. The evaluation will include completion of partner initiatives across Queensland Government, and working with the Commonwealth Government on aligning the National Koala Recovery Plan with Queensland interests. 		
Outcome: Positive outcomes attract private investment or philanthropic opportunities		
Demonstrated collaboration and positive outcomes for koalas lead to increasing investment opportunities and willingness to invest in koala conservation.		2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a longer-term measure. The evaluation collaboration and positive outcomes for koalas lead to increasing investment opportunities will occur in 2025. 		

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