

## R-CM 15: Remnant Protection and Enhancement

Conduct management activities within priority areas of remnant vegetation to improve the health, resilience and function of our region's existing forests.

This strategy delivers on these Regional Themes	Biodiversity	Biosecurity	Coastal Systems	Sustainable Industries	Water
	✓	✓			
This strategy delivers on these Strategic Outcomes	Supportive, policies, plans and regulations	Collaborative, adaptive planning and action	Traditional Owner Benefits	Sustained and diverse resourcing	Community stewardship, values and action
		✓			

Outcome	<p>By managing and protecting the significant vegetation we already have in our landscape, we will see a range of benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An almost immediate return on investment, with good biodiversity results.</li> <li>▪ A cost effective way to achieve positive outcomes for biodiversity and landscape connectivity.</li> <li>▪ Smaller-scale, less labour-intensive approaches than revegetation, with opportunities for community involvement.</li> </ul>
Justification	<p>Improving the health of the region's existing forests provides a cost-effective way of maintaining vegetative cover across the landscape. Many remnant patches are at risk of reduced ecosystem function through a death by 1000 cuts approach. Without appropriate management, the cumulative effect of weeds, pests, diseases, natural disturbances, grazing, poor fire management, etc can all gradually erode the health and function of these patches. Existing forests are already contributing to the high biodiversity values of the region – ensuring these areas remain healthy can improve resilience within the landscape and provide immediate biodiversity returns.</p>
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Using information from projects like R-CM 4 Biodiversity Connectivity Strategy, and accessing appropriate mapping and science, develop a process for identifying and prioritising remnant areas which are at risk from poor management. It will be important to include areas which are likely to be self-sustaining in the long term to minimise future inputs required eg. remnants in close proximity to larger, protected areas.</li> <li>2) In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, particularly community groups and landholders, develop plans of action to improve the health of strategic, priority remnants.</li> <li>3) Establish links with projects like R-CV 10 Initiatives for Protecting Habitat to investigate options for long term protection of significant remnants.</li> </ol>
Feasibility considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Many community groups and individual landholders have the capacity and skills to make a big difference to the health of remnants in their local area.</li> <li>✓ Managing existing remnants can be a more cost-effective approach than starting from scratch and revegetating areas.</li> <li>✗ Areas of existing vegetation may not be in good locations for broader, more strategic purposes, like habitat connectivity, landscape resilience, etc.</li> </ul>

Local Landscape Projects	Local Landscape Project	Location
	DT1 Targeted Weed Control	Targeted populated areas
	DG2 Vines Are Us!	Priority remnants
	NC13 Improved Fire Management to Protect Remnants	All of Cassowary Coast Regional Council area
	SC14 Rehabilitation of Remnants	Wongaling Ck, Granadilla, Smith's Gap