

R-CV 10: Initiatives for Protecting Habitat

Implement education, incentive and stewardship schemes to ensure long term protection of high value habitat – protecting what we already have.

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>Using a range of initiatives to protect existing habitat will bring many positive outcomes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good conservation returns on investment. ▪ Improved condition and extent of high value habitat, now and into the future. ▪ Opportunities to protect areas of high value habitat on private land, contributing to the network of protected areas in the Wet Tropics. ▪ A network of committed landholders contributing to management and protection of high value habitat. ▪ Immediate ecological benefits.
Justification	<p>There are significant areas of high value habitat on private land which are not currently protected. Investigating positive and innovative ways to protect what is already there provides a cost effective way of achieving good conservation outcomes, while encouraging support from landholders. ‘Least effort’ approaches, such as protecting what we already have or encouraging natural regeneration, combined with education / incentives programs, provide a range of mechanisms to achieve protection of significant areas of high value habitat. Incentives could include payments for environmental services, buy-back programs or other innovative approaches.</p>
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Collate existing vegetation, biodiversity and habitat mapping (eg. through mapping portal in Wet Tropics Plan), particularly data which incorporates climate change impacts. 2) Using this mapping, design decision support tools to guide the development of a prioritisation framework. 3) Establish collaborative stakeholder groups to analyse the above information and identify priority areas to target through this project. 4) Investigate a range of mechanisms, including innovative approaches and techniques which have been used successfully in other areas, which encourage good management and protection of high value habitat.
Feasibility considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are many supportive landholders within the Wet Tropics who would be keen to be involved in stewardship-type programs to protect habitat. ✓ Positive incentive and stewardship schemes can be well supported by the community. ✓ Financial incentives can encourage involvement by people not traditionally involved in NRM. ✗ Voluntary processes may not achieve protection of strategic high value habitat if landholders choose not to be involved.

Local Landscape Projects	Local Landscape Project	Location
	NT5 Protecting Habitat	Kuranda-Speewah
	NT7 Habitat Incentives	Jumrum, Warril, Owens, Dismal, Queens Creeks
	CN17 Planning for Protection	Between Wooroonooran NP and coast to Grey Peaks NP, urban development areas like Mount Peter.
	CN18 Incentives for Protection	Stratford, Freshwater
	NC10 Protect High Value Habitat	Cassowary Coast
	SC17 Habitat Buy-Back Program	Mission Beach
	ST12 & ST15 Protecting Habitat for Connectivity	Southern Tablelands, Boonjie-Topaz Valley, Malanda-Millaa Millaa-Ravenshoe-Jaggan outlier, Russell Pocket Rd-Tinaroo