ShapingSEQ technical note

Identifying and mapping regional biodiversity values

Purpose

This technical note explains how regional biodiversity values have been identified in SEQ and shown in *ShapingSEQ*.

Scope

ShapingSEQ identifies a regional biodiversity network that includes Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES), regional biodiversity values and regional biodiversity corridors.

The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) has identified and mapped regional biodiversity values based on the latest terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity assessments produced for the update of the SEQ Biodiversity Planning Assessment (BPA). The full report describing the method for mapping landscape scale priorities including regional biodiversity values is available at www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/biodiversity/assessing.

Context

Regional biodiversity values are critical at a regional scale for supporting biodiversity and the supply of ecosystem services (benefits) to society, the economy and the environment. The protection of these values will contribute to an ecologically sound and resilient regional network of habitats and corridors. The recognition of these areas addresses the heightened need to enhance the management of landscapes in SEQ to ease the pressures of land use and climate change in such a populous region.

Regional waterways and wetlands also form a network which connects landscapes across local government areas. These natural assets are recognised as MSES and regional biodiversity values. ShapingSEQ Background Paper 4 – Sustain discusses in more detail the important role regional biodiversity values play as a component of the regional biodiversity network in achieving the vision for the region.

The regional biodiversity values

Regional biodiversity values for SEQ include:

- large tracts of vegetation
- terrestrial connectivity
- aquatic connectivity
- species richness, diversity and refugia
- ecosystem representation and uniqueness
- climate resilience areas.

Details of the individual values are in Attachment 1.

Approach and application

The mapping of regional biodiversity values for *ShapingSEQ* includes some important modifications to avoid uncertainty about the intent of regional land use classifications and management of the regional biodiversity network. To be clear, regional biodiversity values are not identified in the Urban Footprint in *ShapingSEQ* but are mapped in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area and Rural Living Area for consideration as matters of local environmental significance (MLES).

The state provides indicative mapping of regional biodiversity values, however these are to be investigated and locally refined for planning scheme mapping. Guidance on incorporating regional biodiversity values into local planning is available in the State Planning Policy Guidance: Biodiversity at https://planning.dilgp.qld.gov.au/planning/resources.

Access to mapping and data

The regional biodiversity values and regional biodiversity corridors are spatially represented through two GIS systems administered by Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DILGP): the State Planning Policy Interactive Mapping System (SPP IMS) and the Development Assessment Mapping System (DMS). These can be accessed from the department's website at: https://planning.dilgp.qld.gov.au/maps.

The layers for the regional biodiversity values and regional biodiversity corridors are available from QSpatial at http://qldspatial.information.qld.gov.au/catalogue/custom/index.page.
Further information on the process and mapping methodology for identifying regional biodiversity values is available from EHP and can be contacted at planning.support@ehp.qld.gov.au.

Further mapping notes and disclaimers

- *ShapingSEQ* adopts modified regional biodiversity corridors for regional planning purposes i.e. where regional corridors such as the D'Aguilar to Hays Inlet corridor traverse the urban footprint, the corridor is aligned to the dominant natural feature of the corridor e.g. the Pine River. This modified data set is administered and managed by DILGP based on data from EHP.
- Regional biodiversity values mapping incorporates areas of non-remnant woody vegetation, applying a similar BPA assessment, to achieve whole-of-landscape biodiversity conservation outcomes. An example of non-remnant vegetation benefits includes its role in maintaining networks of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
- Some of the source datasets used in regional biodiversity values mapping are in draft including but not limited to the SEQ BPA and may change without notice.
- Certain mapped values are not visible on Map 5b in *ShapingSEQ* because of the resolution at which these areas are mapped. These areas are MSES that are less than 100 hectares and regional biodiversity values that are less than 1000 hectares. These areas should be considered for regional planning purposes.
- The woody non-remnant data represented in this data is based on an EHP derived product for the purpose of Queensland offsets and will differ from other non-remnant vegetation products such as those used under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.
- While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this product, the Queensland Government makes no representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability for any particular purpose and disclaim all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which might be incurred as a consequence of reliance on the product, or as a result of the product being inaccurate or incomplete in any way and for any reason.

Attachment 1: Regional biodiversity values descriptions

Values	Description
Large tracts of vegetation	**Large intact areas of high ecological integrity which contain many ecosystem functions contributing to the region's ongoing biodiversity.** Fragmentation or removal of these 'biodiversity hotspots' would result in major adverse impacts to the overall biodiversity of the region.
Terrestrial connectivity	**Vegetation that allows for the interaction between large intact areas.** This supporting vegetation allows for movement, breeding opportunities and genetic diversity of the fauna and flora within the large intact areas. Includes proximity and stepping stone vegetation.
Aquatic connectivity	**Aquatic areas that have appropriate connectivity between other wetlands**. These areas support ecosystem functions of the wetland including maintaining water quality and the movement and genetic diversity of aquatic fauna and flora.
Species richness, diversity and refugia	**Areas that support a broad range and large populations of the region's species.** Includes 'last remaining' critical habitats for endangered species and areas of refugia which persist during extreme drought periods.
Ecosystem representation and uniqueness	**A broad representation of the region's ecosystems, all with their own different set of functions that contribute to the overall biodiversity.** Includes unique features identified in the landscape that once they are lost, they are lost forever.
Climate resilience areas	**Areas that are adaptable and resilient to the changing climate.** Ideal for conserving and protecting long term as areas which biodiversity will persist.