



Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,
Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

Our Ref: CTS 06127/20
Your Ref: A541015

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16 April 2020

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 18 March 2020 regarding Parliamentary Petition No. 3188-19 concerning the establishment of a new portfolio and coordinated framework for the protection, conservation and maintenance of Queensland's native animals, plants and habitat (water and land based).

I can assure the petitioners that the Queensland Government is committed to protecting our extraordinary biodiversity values and is taking the necessary steps to deliver a comprehensive biodiversity conservation framework that protects, conserves and manages our native species, habitats and ecosystems for future generations. The existing portfolio of Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef already encompasses the protection of Queensland's unique biodiversity, including native animals, plants and habitats.

Queensland is home to over 72% of Australia's native bird species, over 50% of our native frog and reptile species, and 85% of its mammals; and the Queensland Government is committed to ensuring the suite of plants, animals and habitat can survive and thrive, now and into the future.

To achieve these outcomes, the Government is currently developing a Queensland Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (the Strategy) that will provide the overarching vision for biodiversity conservation in the State. This Strategy will include a series of principles, goals and objectives, and collectively identify the work the Queensland Government is already undertaking, as well as outlining new initiatives.

The Strategy will be supported by several key programs and partnerships including, but not limited to:

- The \$500 million Land Restoration Fund, which supports carbon-farming projects that deliver environmental, social and economic co-benefits.
- Expanding our protected area system and developing a Protected Area Strategy to establish the future strategic direction for Queensland's terrestrial protected areas, which play a key role in protecting the State's biodiversity values.
- Implementing the Queensland Threatened Species Program that includes identifying species most in need of recovery and delivery of conservation actions.
- In March 2017, Queensland signed on to use the Common Assessment Methodology that standardises the assessment of the conservation status of species, using the internationally agreed criteria from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.
- Since 2015, the Queensland Government has updated the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) regulation to raise the conservation status of 79 fauna and 95 plant species. Five plant species have been down-listed during that same period.

- Finalising and implementing the South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy and associated regulatory framework to protect priority areas of koala habitat and restore cleared areas, while also addressing other key threats such as dogs, cars and disease.
- Implementing the Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan and the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan in partnership with the Commonwealth Government and others to improve the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

I thank the petitioners for their advocacy for the protection of Queensland's unique environment and I trust that this information has been of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Leeanne Enoch', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leeanne Enoch MP

**Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,
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