

Terms of Reference

Biodiversity Plan Engagement Program
Biodiversity Stakeholder Reference Group



Bushcare volunteers

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Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference define the role of the Biodiversity Stakeholder Reference Group (BSRG) for the Moreton Bay Regional Council (Council) Biodiversity Plan engagement program and provide a framework for its establishment and operation. All members of the BSRG will be asked to agree to the terms set out in this document before participating in the BSRG.

Aim of the BSRG

Ensure the development and implementation of the Biodiversity Plan is influenced by meaningful community stakeholder input. This will be achieved through knowledge sharing and partnership building, to ensure a shared direction, ownership and advocacy of the Biodiversity Plan's desired biodiversity outcomes and actions. The BSRG will share diverse perspectives and knowledge sources, including technical expertise and where appropriate and agreed, Indigenous knowledge, captured during the planning process, and provide a vehicle for sharing local community stakeholder interests.

About the project

The project aims to develop a Biodiversity Plan that:

- Supports the aspirations of our community as articulated through the Moreton Bay Regional Council Corporate Plan 2022 - 2027 (Corporate Plan), draft Environment and Sustainability Strategy (ESS) and other relevant compliance obligations.
- Sets a shared strategic direction for Moreton Bay's biodiversity to guide decision-making and identify desired biodiversity outcomes and actions that Council, our community, and other stakeholders such as government agencies, business partners and community groups can work on together to achieve the goal of a healthy natural environment.

It's all part of our commitment to keep Moreton Bay "green as we grow".

Our Biodiversity Plan will identify biodiversity values in the Moreton Bay Region, the threats to and pressures on them, including the resilience of species, ecosystems, and ecological processes, impacts of a changing climate and other human-induced pressures, with consideration of future growth scenarios and associated losses to biodiversity values.



The Biodiversity Plan will include an action plan that identifies a suite of measures required to deliver on and monitor targets, with consideration of the land use settings within the region, and a focus on development requirements and guidance, community engagement and education, land management programs and other on-ground conservation activities, partnerships, and advocacy.

Connecting, protecting, and enhancing the natural environment needs all of us to work together, so the Biodiversity Plan will include actions that Council, our community, and other stakeholders such as government agencies, business partners and community groups can work on together.

Although the Biodiversity Plan is a medium-term plan under Council's Integrated Planning & Performance Framework it is anticipated that it will develop a long-term direction with review within five years.

Objectives of the BSRG

The BSRG exists to ensure the voices of diverse community stakeholder representatives are heard and considered in the development and implementation of the Biodiversity Plan. The BSRG will foster a collaborative and transparent approach to achieving Council's goal of a healthy natural environment and associated desired biodiversity outcomes in our region. Council aims to achieve the following objectives through the BSRG:

- a. Provide genuine opportunities for community stakeholder members to meaningfully inform the development and implementation of the Biodiversity Plan
- b. Build understanding of opportunities and constraints through knowledge sharing including technical, Indigenous (where appropriate and agreed) and local knowledge sources
- c. Build a shared ownership of Biodiversity Plan outcomes and actions through a partnership approach to developing and implementing the plan.

Role of the BSRG

As part of the BSRG, its members will:

- a. attend up to three workshops and complete any requested pre-reading of project documents
- b. be a partner in the project and build awareness across local networks.

At the workshops, members will work with other group members to gather and present community insights into biodiversity conservation issues. The BSRG will play an important role in providing input to inform the development and implementation of the Biodiversity Plan.

BSRG workshops may be facilitated by an independent consultant in partnership with or by Council officers.

Members of the BSRG may also be invited to participate in other Council engagement activities related to implementation of Council's Environment and Sustainability Strategy. Participation is at the members discretion and is not an expectation of membership.



Draft schedule

Term

This Terms of Reference is effective from 1 June 2023 and will be ongoing until endorsement by Council of the Biodiversity Plan, anticipated around June/July 2024.

Activities

The following table outlines key BSRG activity points. BSRG members will be provided with relevant information before workshops and will be asked to read and be familiar with the content. Members will also be encouraged to provide additional feedback after workshops through emails, surveys or other tools.

Biodiversity Stakeholder Reference Group activity	Timeframe (All dates to be confirmed)
BSRG Meeting #1 <i>Purpose:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce Biodiversity Plan program and scope• Understand community priorities and concerns• Share knowledge on the diverse biodiversity of the Moreton Bay region.	August 2023
BSRG Meeting #2 <i>Purpose:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss and share feedback on Council's Biodiversity Directions paper• Identify opportunities for improvement to meet community priorities and concerns• Identify appropriate 'tools' to address biodiversity issues and identify opportunities for government - community - stakeholder collaboration.	October/November 2023
BSRG Meeting #3 <i>Purpose:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share feedback on draft Biodiversity Plan• Discuss priority actions and opportunities• Identify opportunities for ongoing involvement by BSRG members in implementation of Biodiversity Plan	May/June 2024

Membership

To gain a holistic understanding of the community stakeholders, Council is keen to engage a diverse group. Up to 20 participants will be selected as part of the BSRG. This could include people that identify within the following groups:

- a. Traditional Custodians - Turrbal, Kabi Kabi and Jinibara Peoples
- b. Local environmental groups, volunteers or professionals actively involved in biodiversity science, conservation, or climate change action as it relates to biodiversity conservation
- c. Residents and non-resident property owners of the Moreton Bay Region interested in biodiversity planning and conservation

Member selection

Interested community stakeholders are required to complete the application form provided and return to Council by the application closing date. Participation is voluntary and open to community members who identify with the above groups and are aged 18 years or over.

Council officers will assess all applications received by the closing date and select members based on the following criteria:

1. **Representation:** A demonstrated connection to community stakeholders through employment, networks or participation in community groups.
2. **Diversity:** Inclusivity of diverse geographic areas in the region, demographic characteristics, and community interests.
3. **Capacity:** A demonstrated, genuine interest in the region's biodiversity and an ability and willingness to participate in all aspects of the BSRG's role (essential).
4. **Engagement:** A demonstrated willingness to engage with other BSRG members and to share their knowledge and insights.

Council is committed to inclusive engagement. If you require any adjustments or support to participate in the BSRG (for example large print materials, interpreter), please advise when you submit your application.

Replacing CRG members

Any inappropriate conduct may result in permanent expulsion from the group. Any member of the group who does not attend two consecutive meetings without providing a reason to Moreton Bay Regional Council will be assumed to have left the group. Moreton Bay Regional Council will select replacement members who represent similar community interests. Existing applications to join the group will be considered first and if no suitable replacement is found then applications will be sought for new members.

Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest arises where Council's interests are actually, potentially, or perceived to be in conflict with your private interest and where these may be seen to influence your actions while participating in the BSRG – for example, if a company you work for is bidding on work associated with the Biodiversity Plan project. If an actual or potential conflict of interest arises in relation to any subject related to the Biodiversity Plan engagement program, group members will be required to declare their conflict to Council's primary contact officer and the rest of the BSRG as soon as practicable.

Differing views and consensus

The membership of the BSRG will include different stakeholder interests and represent a diversity of viewpoints. Individuals in the BSRG may not always agree on every subject raised. Where group members hold differing positions on a topic, the differing viewpoints will be noted and taken into consideration. All viewpoints will be considered valid, and all members must be always treated with respect.



Complaints

Complaints should be documented in writing and sent to mbrc@moretonbay.qld.gov.au . Council's complaints process is available on the website at www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/Council/Governance/Complaints-Process

Protocols

All BSRG members agree to:

- Treat other group members with respect. Allow other people to be heard, listen respectfully, and do not speak over others.
- Consider other people's perspectives and points of view, particularly if it is different from your own.
- Attend meetings and events or advise Council officers if you are not available.
- Effectively contribute and actively participate in discussions.
- Protect other group members' privacy and treat them with respect when discussing the project with other community members.
- Information about the project and related activities, other than Confidential information, should be shared with other community members. Feedback from the community should be raised with the group.
- Act reasonably, with honesty and in good faith.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any information provided or discussions held that are identified as sensitive or confidential.
- Undertake any agreed actions within the timeframes specified.
- Provide considered feedback on the effectiveness of the BSRG format and decision-making processes.

Council officers will:

- Plan and organise BSRG meetings and activities with at least 2 weeks' notice to members.
- Provide sufficient information for members to meaningfully participate in discussions.
- Ensure workshops are run in an unbiased manner.
- Genuinely consider and respond to all feedback and suggestions raised in the group.

Media

BSRG members must not speak to the media on behalf of the group or in relation to the business of the group without written authorisation from Council. This does not restrict individual rights to speak to the media as a private citizen on matters not subject of the BSRG deliberations.



Confidentiality

BSRG members may be provided with information of a confidential nature to support participation in workshops.

BSRG members agree to keep confidential any information:

- connected to the Project that is labelled 'Confidential' or
- that includes personal information of other Committee Members such as their name, address, contact details, and views and opinions to the extent those views and opinions could reasonably be attributed to them, (collectively, 'Confidential Information').

However, you may disclose Confidential Information:

- to other Committee Members
- with the written consent of Council or
- which you are legally required to disclose to your legal and accounting advisors for the purpose of obtaining advice in relation to the Project or any matter arising from the Project.

BSRG members are free to discuss the outcomes of meetings with other people, excluding any information that is explicitly identified as confidential when it is provided to the group. The views and opinions expressed by other individual members of the group are confidential and must not be shared outside the group without that person's permission.

Privacy

Council, and the independent facilitator on behalf of Council, will collect your contact information and views (your 'Personal Information') to facilitate your participation in the Project and to use your views to inform the outcome of the Project. Council will also use your Personal Information to update Council's customer information records and to contact you about other functions and services of Council.

Moreton Bay Regional Council will not provide your contact information to any other party without your consent. Council may publish the following information on its website and in other Council media such as newsletters:

- first names of the CRG members
- the terms of reference
- agendas and minutes of each meeting
- profile of the reference group including demographic summary
- authorised photos from CRG meetings

For more information, see Council's Information Privacy Plan:

www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/files/assets/public/council/governance/information-privacy-plan.pdf

Intellectual Property

CRG members agree that Intellectual Property Rights in any material provided by you in connection with the Project that is created, written or otherwise brought into existence by or on behalf of you in the course of your participation in the Project will legally belong to Council. "Intellectual Property Rights" means all copyright, patents and all rights in relation to inventions, trademarks and designs or any rights to registration of such rights, whether created before, on or after the date of the Terms.



For more information on our new Corporate Plan and Pillars
scan the QR code or visit moretonbay.qld.gov.au