



Bioregional guidance planning

MAY 2026

Background

The Queensland Government is collaborating with the Australian Government to pilot bioregional guidance planning in Queensland.

Bioregional guidance planning is a strategic approach established under Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act) which guides how cumulative impacts to the environment should be managed in an area of economic importance.

Bioregional guidance planning considers cumulative impacts of development on Matters of National Environment Significance (MNES), rather than just project-by-project impacts.

It will give guidance to government regulators, developers and the wider community about:

- areas where significant efforts should be made to avoid environmental impacts
- areas to focus protection and restoration efforts
- effective measures to manage impacts and improve environmental outcomes.

Purpose

Bioregional guidance planning aims to provide greater certainty for industry, facilitate responsible development, and improve outcomes for MNES.

Bioregional guidance planning will provide better environmental outcomes and greater certainty for industries by offering clear guidance on managing development impacts within the context of other threats (such as pests, bushfire and climate change).

Bioregional guidance planning is being piloted in three areas



Minerals mining



Wind farm developments



Urban development

Locations and focus

Bioregional guidance planning is currently being piloted in three areas:

- potential urban growth expansion areas in South Eastern Queensland and Brigalow Belt South bioregions
- wind farm developments in the Collinsville area of the Brigalow Belt North bioregion
- minerals mining in the Julia Creek and Richmond area in the Gulf Plains bioregion.

Timeframes

The draft Brigalow Belt North bioregional guidance plan and the draft Gulf Plains bioregional guidance plan are available for consultation.

The findings from the South Eastern Queensland and Brigalow Belt South bioregional guidance planning will be considered as one of the several inputs into the review of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Regional Plan review rather than a standalone plan at this time.

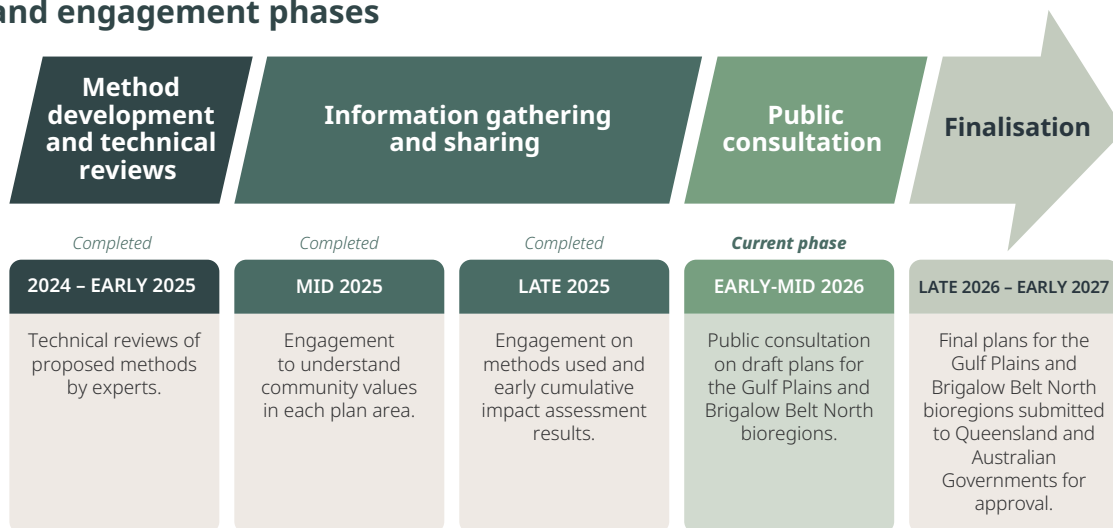
How the bioregional guidance plans are being developed

The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) has been working with stakeholders to understand values, analyse potential impacts, and develop guidance on avoiding and mitigating impacts.

Bioregional guidance planning involves:

- technical reviews of spatial conservation analyses and overall approach to bioregional guidance planning
- understanding the environmental, social, cultural, and economic priorities, or values, in the plan area
- analysing cumulative impacts on MNES, focused on a particular industry in each plan area
- developing better guidance on improving outcomes for MNES in each plan area
- understanding the possible impacts on social, cultural and economic priorities of the guidance provided in each plan
- establishing ongoing governance and monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and improvement frameworks.

Project and engagement phases



How the bioregional guidance plans will take effect

DETSI intends that the pilot bioregional guidance plans will be made by the Australian Government under section 176 of the EPBC Act. This will not remove the requirement for development proposals to be assessed under the EPBC Act; however, the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Water must have regard to the relevant bioregional guidance plan when making a decision under the EPBC Act to which the plan is relevant.

Improvements to the plans may occur after late 2026 – early 2027, using improved data and more detailed analysis methods to inform more specific development controls and advice. Where appropriate, the bioregional guidance plans could be built on in the future to support strategic planning exercises, including measures that change assessment and approval requirements.

Next steps and more information

DETSI is undertaking public consultation on the draft bioregional guidance plans for the Brigalow Belt North bioregion and Gulf Plains bioregion.

Submissions on the draft bioregional guidance plans can be sent to bioregional.planning@detsi.qld.gov.au.

You can also provide feedback via a survey, which can be found here: www.detsi.qld.gov.au/consultation.

For information about bioregional guidance planning in Queensland visit [DETSI](http://detsi.qld.gov.au) website or contact us at bioregional.planning@detsi.qld.gov.au.

For information about Australian Government bioregional planning visit [Bioregional planning: Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water \(DCCEEW\)](http://bioregional.planning: Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)).



Australian Government



Queensland Government