BUSINESS PLAN

2025 - 2026

© Isaeagle Photography

Southern Gulf NRM

©Leonie Winks Photography

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT *of country*

Southern Gulf NRM acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and waters across the Southern Gulf region. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and recognise their enduring connection to Country.

FOREWORD

At Southern Gulf NRM, we are dedicated to fostering a sustainable and resilient environment for North West Queensland. Our work is built on strong partnerships with landholders, industry, government, and community groups, ensuring that natural resource management initiatives have lasting impact. This business plan reflects our commitment to innovation, collaboration, and stewardship of the region's unique landscapes and biodiversity.

As we navigate the challenges of climate variability, land degradation, and sustainable development, our strategic priorities remain focused on delivering practical solutions, strengthening community engagement, and securing long-term financial sustainability. This plan serves as a roadmap for our future, guiding our efforts to create a thriving environment for generations to come.

The Board would like to extend their gratitude to our partners, stakeholders, and the broader community for their support in making our vision a reality. Together, we will continue to protect and enhance the natural resources that sustain our region.

Professor Iain Gordon,
Chairperson, Southern Gulf NRM

Our **VISION**

Resilient landscapes. Strong communities.

Our **VALUES**

Collaboration *– We work with landholders, Traditional Owners, communities, and each other.*

Practical *– We focus on actions that deliver real, onground results.*

Respect *– We respect Country, culture and people, and work alongside others to support their long-term health.*

Knowledge *– We use science, experience, and local knowledge to guide our decisions.*

Sustainability *– We make decisions that support long-term outcomes.*

Integrity *– We act with honesty, fairness and accountability.*

© Mel Bethel

REGIONAL *Priorities*

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Protecting and restoring native ecosystems, ensuring survival of threatened species, and enhancing habitat connectivity to maintain ecological balance in the Southern Gulf region.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

Strengthening community engagement by supporting education, capacity building, and citizen science initiatives to empower local stakeholders in natural resource management.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborating with government agencies, research institutions, industry groups, and Traditional Owners to develop innovative and sustainable environmental solutions.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Promoting best management practices in grazing and farming to improve soil health, water efficiency, and carbon sequestration.

WEED AND PEST MANAGEMENT

Implementing proactive and coordinated strategies to control invasive species that threaten native biodiversity, agriculture, and regional ecosystems.

DISASTER RECOVERY

Supporting communities, industries, and landscapes to recover from natural disasters through coordinated planning, resilience-building and targeted recovery initiatives.

Our **PARTNERS**

Southern Gulf NRM collaborates with a diverse network of stakeholders to achieve its mission.

Australian Government

Queensland Government

University of Southern Queensland

GLENCORE

MaxusAI

birdlife NORTHERN QUEENSLAND

JCU | TropWATER Centre for Tropical Water and Aquatic Ecosystem Research

TNQ Drought Hub

CSIRO

Nature North Survey & Monitoring

SOUTH32

Malkarri CULTURE & CONNECTION

NRM REGIONS QUEENSLAND

NWQROC North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

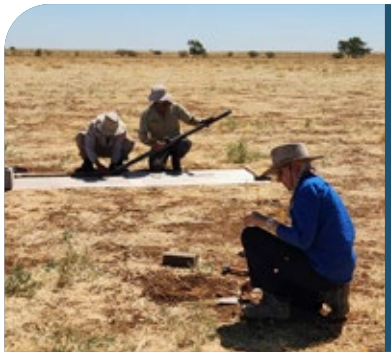
We work closely with landholders, Indigenous groups, researchers, and government agencies to protect and restore ecosystems across the Southern Gulf region. This includes collaborative projects focused on habitat restoration, threatened species protection, and sustainable land management. By leveraging our partners' expertise and resources, we enhance biodiversity outcomes and build resilience against environmental threats.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

We partner with councils, volunteer groups, and industry organisations to deliver education programs, workshops, and on-ground initiatives that empower individuals to care for their environment. Our partnerships help strengthen local capacity, ensuring that communities have the knowledge and tools to drive positive environmental change.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration is key to achieving long-term environmental and agricultural sustainability. We build strategic alliances with government agencies, research institutions, industry bodies, and community organisations to secure funding, share knowledge, and implement impactful programs. These partnerships enable us to align regional priorities with broader state and national strategies, maximising our collective impact. solutions.



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

We support landholders in adopting best-practice agricultural methods through partnerships with industry experts, research organisations, and government programs. By working together, we promote soil health, water efficiency, and regenerative grazing practices that enhance productivity while protecting natural resources. Our collaborative approach ensures that primary producers have access to the latest research, training, and funding opportunities.

WEED AND PEST MANAGEMENT

Managing invasive species requires a coordinated effort. We collaborate with landholders, local governments, biosecurity groups, and Indigenous ranger teams to control and prevent the spread of weeds and feral animals. Through joint monitoring, integrated control programs, and education initiatives, we help protect native ecosystems, improve agricultural productivity, and reduce biosecurity risks across the region.

DISASTER RECOVERY

Recovering from natural disasters requires a coordinated and community-focused approach. We work with landholders, governments, and communities to support recovery efforts following events such as floods and droughts. Through on-ground assistance, capacity building, restoration activities, and resilience planning, we help strengthen communities, protect natural assets and support long-term recovery across the region..

Project ***MILESTONES***

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

CARPENTARIAN GRASSWREN OFFSET. *Funded by Queensland Government through the Queensland Government Environmental Offsets Fund.*

- Prepare a Carpentarian Grasswren Management Plan for submission and approval by the Department of Environment, Science, Tourism, and Innovation (DETSI).
- Deliver on-ground actions outlined in the approved Management Plan.
- Provide an implementation report covering activities undertaken during the 2025/2026 reporting period.

GLENCORE CARPENTARIAN GRASSWREN. *Funded by Glencore Queensland Metals Community Assistance Program.*

- Assess land condition using the State-wide Indicators Framework (SWIF) and Land Condition Assessment Tool (SWIF) at and near the fire sites
- Map fire scars using the geographic information system.
- Conduct landholder surveys at the beginning, during, and end of the project to track changes in fire management, knowledge, skills and practices.
- Review the project every six months to ensure best practices are being followed and improved where needed.

PROTECTION OF THE GULF SNAPPING TURTLE. *Funded by Queensland Government's Natural Resource Management Expansion Program.*

- Identify potential sites for management of threats to the Gulf Snapping Turtle.
- Undertake feral pig baseline survey using monitoring cameras and thermal (heat-sensing) on drones on 8 sites on at least two properties.
- eDNA monitoring to confirm the tangible outcome of tilapia absence/presence data in turtle habitat at 8 sites on at least 2 properties. Data will be shared with Biosecurity Queensland.
- Confirm nesting sites and prepare for installation of 16 protective nesting boxes as per advice from a species specialist and the permit requirement on 8 sites on at least 2 properties.
- Installation of monitoring cameras for camera trapping of 8 potential turtle nesting sites on at least 2 properties.

GRAZING FOR HEALTHY RIVERS AND SAWFISH CONSERVATION. *Funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust.*

- Identify and prioritise the location of potential sites (up to a minimum of 6 sites).
- Collection of data to measure animal density via fauna surveys to estimate population dynamics.
- Design and implement appropriate on-ground land management actions priority locations identified for focus species populations.
- Installation of 36km of riparian fencing to reduce disturbance in riparian zone.
- Installation of 12 off-stream watering sites to improve sustainable grazing practices.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

IMPROVING LAND CONDITION TO INCREASE RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE EXTREMES IN THE SOUTHERN GULF REGION. *Funded by the Queensland Government under the Natural Resources Recovery Program.*

- 15 land managers will have commenced on-ground works or implemented land management practice changes to improve land condition across 15 properties.
- Long-term trend analysis of ground cover and rainfall for the 15 properties involved to be completed with James Cook University's assistance.
- Baseline monitoring will be conducted across the 15 properties, which includes drone surveys to quantify ground cover and land condition, soil sampling to classify soil type and other parameters, the use of the Land Condition Assessment Tool (LCAT), photo monitoring points and installation of rain gauges.
- In June 2026, the team will attend the Richmond Field Days to share the progress on the project and other SGNRM activities with the public.

IMPROVING LAND CONDITION IN NORTHWEST QUEENSLAND TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY, CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND BIODIVERSITY. *Funded by the Australian Government under the Natural Heritage Trust - Climate-Smart Agriculture Program - Partnerships and Innovation Grants.*

- Contour Consulting, with Southern Gulf NRM and Gulf Savannah NRM, will work one-on-one with 18 land managers to develop Climate Smart Farm Management Plans.
- Develop a Farm Sustainability Indicator Framework.
- Land managers will co-invest in on-ground works across 90,000 hectares, tailored to their farm plans.
- Collect and analyse indicator data.
- Training, field days, and extension materials will be delivered throughout the project to build capacity among land managers and NRM staff.

CLIMATE RESILIENT AGRICULTURE IN SOUTHERN GULF: SUPPORTING LANDHOLDERS MANAGING CLIMATIC CHANGE. *Funded by the Australia Government under the National Heritage Trust - Climate Agriculture Program.*

- Target events and activities based on landholders level of knowledge and needs.
- Regular community and stakeholder events to build strong relationships with landholders.
- Targeted communication materials developed to raise the awareness.
- Communication materials developed assist landholders in understanding the importance of adapting practices that improve environmental sustainability while also addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FACILITATOR. *Funded by the Australian Government under The Natural Heritage Trust - Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.*

- Continue the engagement with landholders in the region to support ways to improve the uptake of climate-smart agricultural practices.

NORTHERN AUSTRALIA CLIMATE PROGRAM. *Funded by Meat & Livestock Australia, Australian Government & University of Southern Queensland.*

- Promote the Northern Australia Climate Program (NACP) at a minimum of two events every six months. This includes delivering workshop presentations, displaying posters at events, or engaging directly with landholders to discuss the program.
- Distribute the monthly climate forecast newsletter to interested stakeholders, ensuring regular and timely communication.
- Share seasonal climate forecasts with relevant parties as they become available, ensuring regular and timely communication.
- Support the Northern Australia Climate Program (NACP) by sourcing a suitable producer from the Southern Gulf region for a climate-focused case study.
- Track and report engagement and activity progress in the Northern Australia Climate Program (NACP) Hubspot system.

10 | Southern Gulf NRM Business Plan

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CONTINUED

TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND (TNQ) DROUGHT HUB. *Funded by the Australian Government under the Future Drought Fund.*

- Support community groups to take part in planning regional drought resilience projects.
- Help develop the national Drought Resilience Research and Adoption Investment Plan led by the Commonwealth.
- Attend quarterly meetings with the department and Knowledge Brokers to share learning and align with national priorities.
- Present at the Commonwealth's Drought Resilience Science to Practice Forum.
- Provide annual data to the department as part of the Data Capture Plan.
- Deliver Hub projects that align with agreed Hub priorities.

LEAVING A LASTING LEGACY OF IMPROVED LAND CONDITIONS. *Funded by the Australian Government under the Future Drought Fund.*

- Develop a workplan, including workshop dates arranged by Southern Gulf NRM. The James Cook University (JCU) Program Lead will provide the Drought Resilience Coordinator (DRC) with the proposed training content.
- Coordinate access to industry experts for workshop filming and any additional interviews needed to support development of the training materials.
- JCU Program Lead will develop the training materials and provide drafts to the DRC and industry experts for review and approval.
- DRC will facilitate feedback/review and final approval training materials from the industry experts.

GRAZING FUTURES PREPARE AND PROSPER. *Funded by the Australian Government and the State of Queensland under the Future Drought Fund.*

- Business planning: Accelerate practice changes by embedding a revised business planning process into our engagements, through introducing concise action plans, which will evolve into whole business plans.
- Follow up support: Accelerate producer progress through increased, targeted follow up contact to support the achievement of business improvement goals.
- Diverse delivery pathways: Adopt a refined facilitated learning approach that enables incremental, transitional, and transformational improvements tailored to producer needs.
- Adaptive delivery: Employ a flexible delivery approach to adapt to regional and individual producer needs.
- Network development: Strengthen stakeholder networks (producers and project partners) to enhance learning and build economic, environmental and social resilience.
- Priority groups: Engaging women, young people, First Nations, and remote producers
- Measuring impact: Flexibility to adapt delivery and implement a robust quantitative and qualitative monitoring, with regular reviews of lessons learned to refine project execution.

© KJL Photography

WEED AND PEST MANAGEMENT

SOUTH32 CANNINGTON. *Funded by the South32 Social Investment Program.*

- Targeted management of prickly acacia, parkinsonia, and mesquite - all listed as weeds of National Significance (WoNs) along the Cannington Mine-Yurbi rail loading facility road corridor.

QUEENSLAND FERAL PEST INITIATIVE 8A (QFPI8A) FERAL PIG MANAGEMENT. *Funded by Queensland Government from the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative.*

- Coordinate capacity-building initiatives to enhance local skills, knowledge, and collaboration in feral pig control.
- Leading catchment-level strategic planning for on-ground feral pig control.
- Submit reports on feral pig management activities, ensuring alignment with the key performance indicators (KPIs) set out in the National Feral Pig Action Plan.

INVASIVE BIOSECURITY OUTCOMES FOR THE SOUTHERN GULF REGION. *Funded by Queensland Government's Natural Resource Management Expansion Program.*

- Engage first 6 land managers through expression of interest process via social media and newsletter, followed up by emails, phone calls, and site visits. Treatment sites identified and development of 6 property management plans.
- Conduct weed treatment works on participating properties across 9,600ha in total.
- Complete project plan with CISS for feral pig project. Commence pig collaring, tracking, capture and data analysis as per feral pig project plan.
- Baseline LCATs for treatment sites on 6 properties completed, according to SWIF guidelines subject to land type and size of project area. Baseline drone weed mapping activities conducted on all 6 properties.

FERAL PIG REDUCTION FOR IMPROVED WETLAND HEALTH IN THE SOUTHERN GULF REGION. *Funded by Queensland Government's Natural Resource Management Expansion Program.*

- Design wetland health monitoring program for over 10 sites over 50ha on 10 participating properties and downstream monitoring at a further 10 sites, including identification of appropriate monitoring sites and installation of equipment at these sites.
- Design format of Report Card for landholders and community to communicate results of wetland health monitoring for 10 sites on properties and 10 sites downstream.
- Sign agreements with first 5 properties for feral pig reduction and water quality monitoring.

DISASTER RECOVERY

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (DRFA) RIVERINE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM 2019. *Funded under the Australian and Queensland Government.*

- Undertake monthly monitoring and maintenance inspections at riverine restoration sites established in 2019, including FR1 (Sedan Dip) and FR3 (Hughenden Golf Course), using the Vegetation Condition Assessment Tool (VegCAT).

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (DRFA) RIVERINE RESTORATION PROGRAM 2021-2022. *Funded under the Australian and Queensland Government.*

- Track plant survival rates using the Vegetation Condition Assessment Tool (LCAT).
- Ensure maintenance and monitoring activities continue through to June 2026 as planned.

DISASTER RECOVERY CONTINUED

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (DRFA) 2022-2023 NORTH WEST QUEENSLAND FLOOD RECOVERY. *Funded by Queensland Government's Invasive Species Program.*

Multi Weed Control in Burke Shire

- Project development: land manager discussions (EOI, emails and phone calls), identify weed type, extent and target areas. Site visit to identify treatment areas and development of maps and monitoring points for evaluation of on ground works. Landholder consultation (as required) and contractor liaison.
- Treatment Activities: procure contractors (if applicable), define evidence requirements that activities have been completed: purchase of herbicide/procure contractor services/identify stop points for inspections and receive final sign off for activities delivered against project plan.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: site visits post on ground works completion.

Burke Shire Feral Pig Control and Cloncurry Shire Feral Pig Control

- Project Design - Confirm feral pig activities, including landholder discussions, areas to be targeted, planned control activities, set up of photo monitoring sites, education material content for the on ground works. Site visits, landholder consultation and contractor liaison. Seek all relevant permits required to undertake the works (as required).
- Control Activities - Procure contractors, collect evidence from photo traps to confirm presence of feral pigs, develop feral pig plans and enter into agreements with landholders for delivery of control activities against project design.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Data collection during aerial activities, camera trap data analysed, follow up control activities monitored to ensure 70% humane destruction recognised as best practice in the National Feral Pig Action plan.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR REGIONAL COORDINATION AND EVALUATION IN THE SOUTHERN GULF REGION. *Funded by the Queensland Government under the Natural Resources Recovery Program.*

- Southern Gulf NRM staff will improve their skills in using Land Condition Assessment Tool (LCAT) and Vegetation Condition Assessment Tool (VegCAT) through the State-wide Indicators Framework (SWIF) method.
- Continue to lead projects with North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC) and the Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone (MITEZ).
- Produce four regional Land Condition Report Cards to educate landholders on monitoring and the health of natural assets.

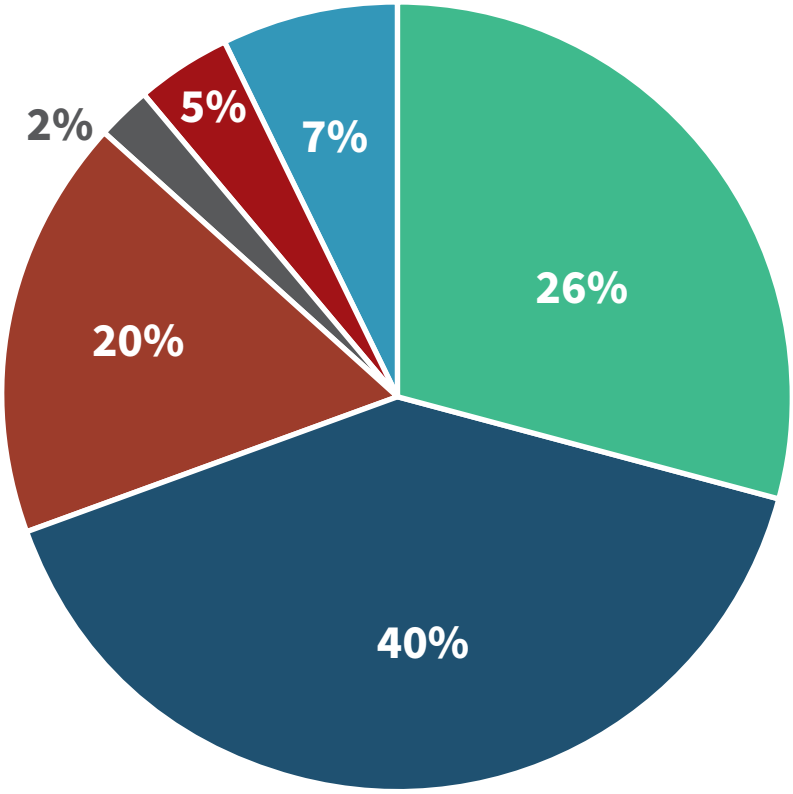
PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

REGIONAL DELIVERY PARTNERS (RDP) REGIONAL CAPACITY SERVICES (CORE SERVICES). *Funded by the Australian Government under the Natural Heritage Trust.*

- Review and update the natural resource management (NRM) plans regularly.
- Engage the community in the planning and delivery of on-ground projects.
- Strengthen and maintain communication capacity to support project delivery and stakeholder engagement.
- Deliver and coordinate projects under the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework, including biodiversity monitoring.
- Foster and maintain a collaborative relationship with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water (DCCEEW).
- Maintain a consistent and active presence within the region.
- Uphold strong governance practices and meet agreed performance standards.
- Ensure compliance with all Work Health and Safety (WHS) obligations.

Project ***EXPENDITURE***

Our funding is strategically allocated to maximize impact across priority areas.



Biodiversity Conservation
Sustainable Agriculture
Weed and Pest Management
Strategic Partnerships
People and Community
Water

GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES 2025 – $8,138,197.69

© JCurley

SGNRM **BOARD** and **STAFF**

Southern Gulf NRM is governed by a Board of Directors under the provisions of the Corporations Act 2001 and the Constitution of Southern Gulf NRM Ltd. The Board consists of eight members with a range of skills and knowledge. Our team consists of 15 FTE's, who are committed to delivering innovative and practical solutions for the region's environmental challenges.

SGNRM **BOARD**

Prof. Iain Gordon
Chairperson

Jane McMillan
Director

Sarah Docherty
Director

Trent McIndoe
Director

Daniel Counsell
Director

Darren Schaeffer
Director

Helen Fisher
Director

Kallum Cotterell
Director

Margot Richardson
Company Secretary

© Leonie Winks Photography

SGNRM **STAFF**

Damian Miley
Chief Executive Officer

Pru Wharton
General Manager

Marina Ferencek
Corporate Services Manager

Maree Berlin
Financial Coordinator

Lyndy Skea
Team Leader (Environment)

Robyn Young
Team Leader (Pest and Weeds)

Lucy Gardner
Team Leader
(Sustainable Agriculture)

Clarissa Felderhof
Project Officer (Grazing)

Emily Turner
Sustainable Agriculture
Facilitator

Ettian van Zyl
Project Officer (Environment)

Lily Shires
Project Officer (Environment)

Elena Balandina
Project Officer (Environment)

Alet van Deventer
Project Officer
(Pest and Weeds)

Anthony Hoyal
Project Officer
(Pest and Weeds)

Charlotte Woods
Project Officer
(Pest and Weeds)

Dario Cubillo
GIS and Information
Management Officer

Nicole Sarmiento
Communications Officer

Nicole Sarmiento
Administration Coordinator

PO Box 2211
112 Camooweal Street,

MOUNT ISA QLD 4825

TELEPHONE: 07 4743 1888

ADMIN@SOUTHERNGULF.COM.AU

SOUTHERNGULF.COM.AU

© Brent Clarke

Southern Gulf NRM