

# Wet Tropics Biodiversity Planning Assessment (BPA) Version 1.1

## INFORMATION SHEET

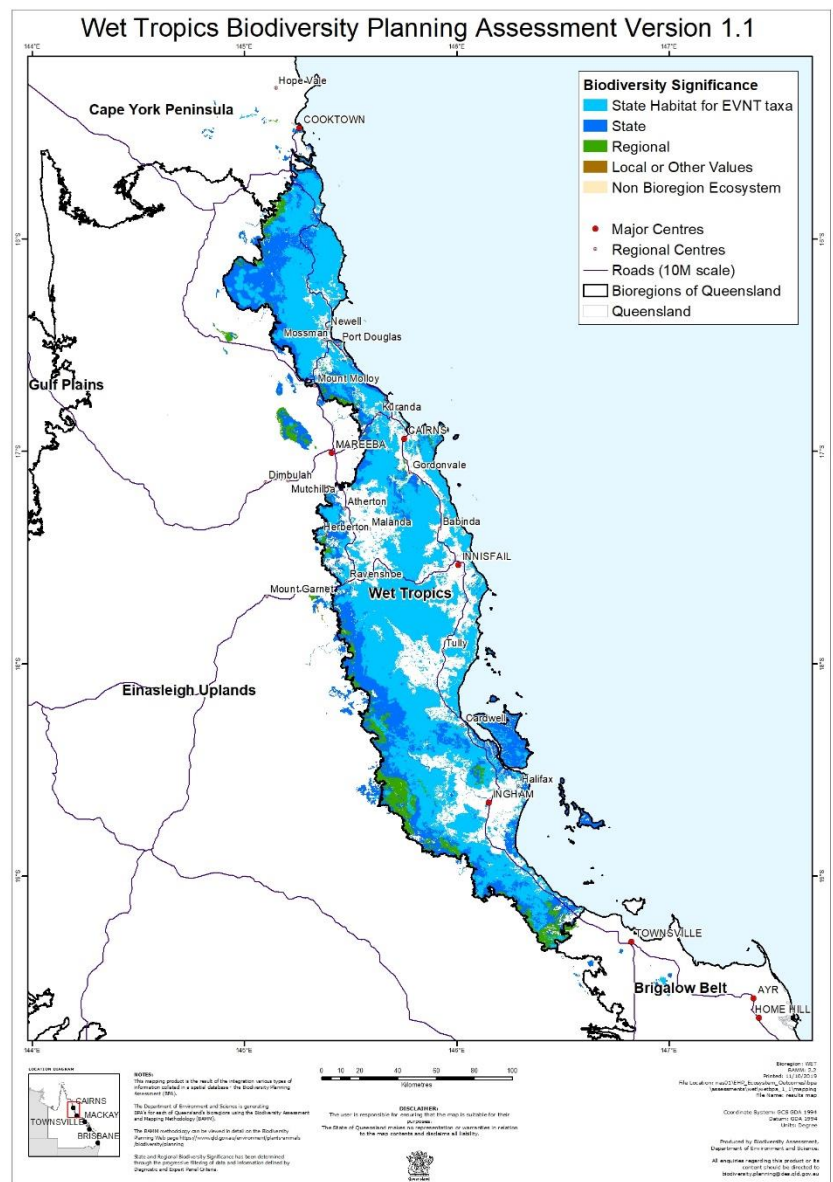
The Queensland Department of Environment and Science (DES) has completed a Biodiversity Planning Assessment (BPA) for the Wet Tropics (WET) bioregion using the Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology (BAMM). This assessment was undertaken in partnership with the Wet Tropic Management Authority (WTMA) and the first time a BPA has been completed for the bioregion.

The Wet Tropics contains numerous ecosystems recognised at a national and international scale, a high number of threatened species, as well as relictual and evolutionary important taxa. Additionally, comparative to other bioregions, a very high proportion of the species present are bioregional endemics.

Results from the assessment indicate that 93% of remnant vegetation within the bioregion is of State bioregional significance. This high proportion is not a surprise given 45% of the bioregion is a World Heritage Area of global significance.

The BAMM Diagnostic criteria (including habitat for threatened taxa, vegetated tract size, ecosystem value, diversity and connectivity) accounted for 87% of the remnant vegetation being assigned of State biodiversity significance. In addition, fauna, flora and landscape ecologists identified 97% of the remnant vegetation as having State or Regionally significant biodiversity values during the BAMM Expert Panel process. Values attributed by the experts included the identification of wildlife refugia, areas containing high species richness and species at their geographic range limit, concentrations of endemic species or important habitat for priority taxa, as well as landscape connections (terrestrial and riparian) and fine scale ecological corridors.

Biodiversity within the bioregion is facing a variety of threatening processes as a result of clearing for agriculture and urbanisation (both in the coastal lowlands and Atherton Tablelands), the invasion of exotic and non-local native plants and animals, as well as impacts arising from climate change. Biodiversity Planning Assessments such as the WET BPA can be used as a decision support tool to aid in land use planning and to prioritise conservation efforts to help manage and protect biodiversity values.



## What is BAMB?

The Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology (BAMB) has been developed to provide an objective and consistent approach for assessing biodiversity values at the landscape scale. The BAMB is being used by DES to generate Biodiversity Planning Assessments (BPAs) for each of Queensland's bioregions.

The BAMB (Figure 2) is used to identify areas with various levels of significance based on Criteria which measure biodiversity values. These Criteria include values like threatened ecosystems or species, large tracts of habitat in good condition, ecosystem diversity, landscape context and connection, and buffers to wetlands or other types of habitat important for the maintenance of biodiversity or ecological processes.

The methodology:

- provides a consistent approach for assessing relative biodiversity values at the landscape scale
- presents raw and synthesised spatial information about biodiversity to a broad range of potential users
- aims to optimise the use of existing data and information
- uses existing Regional Ecosystem (vegetation) mapping created by the Qld Herbarium
- generates BPAs for each bioregion.

## BPA applications

A BPA is the result of applying BAMB to a particular bioregion. Biodiversity Planning Assessments can be used by DES or WTMA staff, other government departments, local governments, NRM bodies or members of the community to inform a range of planning and decision-making processes. For example:

- Matters of State or Local Environmental Significance (MSES/MLES)
- determining priorities for protection, regulation or rehabilitation of terrestrial ecosystems
- development assessment
- local and regional planning processes
- contributing to impact assessment of large-scale development.

## Assessments conducted to date

The BAMB was initially developed in 2002 and has now been used to assess the biodiversity values of all but one of Queensland bioregions (Figure 3).

## Accessing BPA results

Assessment of biodiversity values at the bioregional scale.

<http://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/biodiversity/planning/>

Search for “biodiversity planning assessment” at QSpatial.

<http://qldspatial.information.qld.gov.au>

BPA results can be viewed through the Queensland Globe.

<https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au/>

The results are also available through Biomaps.

<http://qldspatial.information.qld.gov.au/biomaps/>

Summary report for specific locations available from Environmental Reports Online

<https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/report-request/environment/>

Queries to [biodiversity.planning@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:biodiversity.planning@des.qld.gov.au)

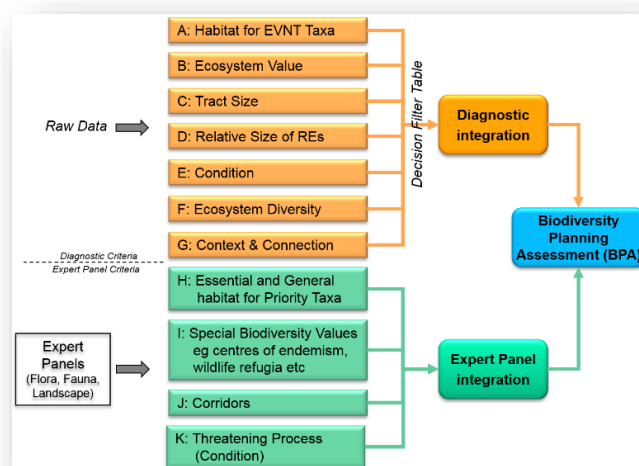


Figure 2 BAMB

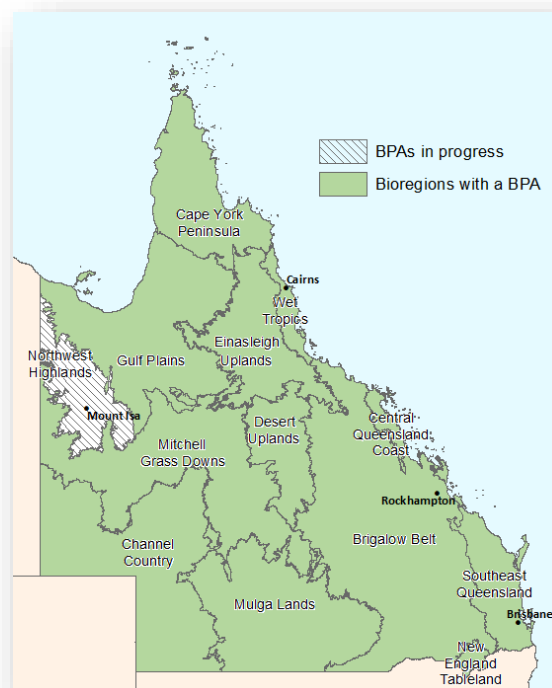


Figure 3 BPA assessment and release status