



Photo supplied by Tim Seelig

# Annual Report 2015/2016

Queensland Conservation Council



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# Report from the Executive

Photo supplied by Tim Seelig



## By QCC Chairperson Dick Copeman

2015-16 was a challenging year for the Queensland environment. The dominance of pro-mining and pro-development agendas and the roll-back of environmental protection legislation and regulation under the Newman LNP government had led to massive new coal mine proposals, grave threats to the Great Barrier Reef and a resurgence in land clearing.

2015-16 was also a challenging year for Queensland Conservation Council. Conflict, funding reductions and resignations had weakened the organisation, and there was a turnover of most of the Executive at the 2015 AGM.

The new Executive undertook a review of the organisation (see below) while the staff worked hard to sustain the core functions and campaigns of QCC. As a result of the review, QCC now has a new Coordinator, Tim Seelig, who is working with our two other staff to develop new work plans and campaign priorities, and to support the work of our member groups. The Executive is working with staff to secure increased funding and to support staff roles and work plans.

In 2015-16, QCC and its member groups were active in fighting for the reef, opposing new coal mines, protecting vegetation and wildlife and raising awareness about climate change.

They were also active in pressuring and supporting the state government to repeal the environmental reversals of the previous government. One highlight of the year was the government's decision to end sand mining on North Stradbroke Island, in which QCC member groups including Friends of Stradbroke Island played an important role.

My sincere thanks to all who have played a role in these endeavours over the past year. I believe that QCC is now back on track to fulfill its historic role of working with its member groups to protect and enhance the Queensland environment and to counter the many threats to it.

# QCC REVIEW

# THANKS TO THE EXECUTIVE



Queensland  
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Due to a variety of reasons outlined elsewhere in this report, the Executive felt that it was important to take stock and do a big picture review to confirm and clarify QCC's role within the Queensland environmental movement.

An important part of this review was to get Member input and as a result a member survey was carried out early in 2016 with questions based on previous input and comment accumulated in various documents and articulated in a range of discussions. A total of 26 responses to the survey were received as well as a number of discussions around the subject and results were consolidated and discussed as part of a Board and Staff, Facilitated Review day held on Sunday 28th February. As well as the Survey results there was a discussion on the changed nature of the Conservation Movement in Australia and Queensland since QCC was originally formed.

As a result of the day's discussions the following priorities were identified  
Government & Member, Liaison, Networking & Engagement  
Campaigning  
Building Staff Capacity  
Fundraising

The survey results were discussed at the General Meeting held on 21st March and the Executive and Staff are working hard to incorporate the outcomes into their planning and work practices.

Executive members of QCC have given a significant amount of time and energy to the organisation since the last AGM. Meetings of the Executive have been held at least monthly, but often on a more regular basis. As well there have been a weekend planning day, and various other sub committee commitments particularly around staff recruitment panels, the QCC review process, and standing in on a number of Consultative Committees.

A special thank you to Tristan Douglas who resigned on taking up an appointment in Government, Brian Clark who retired due to ill health and Todd Harborow, the Treasurer over a number of years, who resigned at the end of the financial year.

## Executive Committee Members

Chair - Dick Copeman  
Secretary - Ellie Smith  
Treasurer - Todd Harborow (resigned)  
Executive Members - Ellie Bock  
Brian Clark (resigned)  
Roger Currie  
Tristan Douglas (resigned)  
Ted Fensom  
Ellen Roberts  
Colin Stewart (acting Treasurer)  
Ellen Weber (filling casual vacancy)



Photo supplied by Tim Seeh

# QCC CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES AND QCC SUBMISSIONS



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## ▼ QCC COMMITTEES

Continuing on the work of the previous Executive there has been more work done on refining the process of appointment of individuals to external Consultative Committees including clearly setting out the requirements of the Representatives and what they can expect in the way of support and backup.

In 2015-2016 QCC was represented on the committees listed below by the following representatives:

- **Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee (BQMAC)**

Representative resigned - Process to replace in progress

- **Lake Eyre Basin Community Advisory Committee**

Matthew Turner – Conservation representative –  
*This is a joint nomination from CCSA, QCC and ALEC.*

- **QDOG - Qld Dog Offensive Group**

Des Boyland – Policies and Campaign Manager –  
Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland

- **QIPAC- Queensland Invasive Plants and Animal Committee**

Dr Bruce Wilson

- **Water Engagement Forum- Department of Natural Resources and Mines**

Roger Currie (WBEC)  
Nigel Parratt – Proxy

- **Resources Community Roundtable**

Jo Bragg (EDO Qld)

- **Regional Landscape and Open Advisory Committee**

Ted Fensom

- **Reef 2050 Advisory Committee**

Darren Kindleysides (CEO of Australian Marine Conservation Society)

- **South East Queensland Regional Plan – Environment and Community Reference Group**

## QCC SUBMISSIONS 2016

*Submission for the Review and replacement of the Water Resource Plan (Great Artesian Basin) 2006 (November 2015)*

*Submission to the draft 2016 Underground Water Impact Report for the Surat Cumulative Management Area (April 2016)*

*Submission on Vegetation Management Reinstatement Bill (April 216)*

*Joint Submission QLD Draft Pests and Weeds Strategy (April 2016)*

*QCC QLD Budget Submission (May 2016)*

*Submission on Climate Mitigation – ‘Advancing Climate Action in Queensland’ (September 2016)*

*Submission to the Inquiry into the Environmental Protection (Underground Water Management) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016*

*Letter to Premier Palaszczuk re Adani project critical infrastructure declaration  
Submission to the Koala Expert Panel on koala protection in SEQ*

*Submission to the Qld Renewable Energy Expert Panel on the 50% renewables by 2030 target*

# STAFF



Photo by Tim Seelig

## ▼ Staffing

At the time of the last AGM a new full time coordinator had been appointed but had not yet taken up the role. This new Coordinator then resigned after only 2 weeks which meant the Organisation had only 2 part time staff, and when Alexandra, our Administrator, found an alternate full time role this left the organisation very stretched leading up to a series of Government Roundtable meetings and other events.

As a result of the staff situation and some work started by members regarding clarifying QCC's role, the Executive decided to embark on a process of reviewing the structure and functionality of QCC (covered elsewhere in this report) with the intent of putting QCC on a firmer footing going forward. In the interim however it was decided to appoint three part time staff on three month contracts to boost capacity while the longer term strategy was developed. These roles of Government and Member Liaison, Community Organiser and Administrator were filled by Libby McAllister, Jackson Turner and Liz Murphy-Forrester respectively who ably assisted Kirsten Macey in the Campaigners role during this time.

As one of the outputs of the QCC Review process, it was decided that QCC's objectives could best be achieved by recruiting and appointing a full time Coordinator position. Around this time Libby's 3 month contract finished and she left to work in her husband's business and Kirsten Macey decided to move on from QCC. Ultimately as a result of the recruitment process for the full time Coordinator role, Tim Seelig was appointed to the position and commenced at QCC in August. A new part time position of Campaigner / Community Organiser was created and Jackson Turner was successful in being appointed to this role at the start of September, which was a great result given that he had the previous 3 months contract experience and has been able to move rapidly into the role.

The staff therefore now consist of Tim as the Coordinator, Jackson as Campaigner / Community Organiser and Liz in Administration and Organisational support. The Executive and staff are working hard to stabilise the team and create opportunities for growth and improved outcomes in the weeks, months and years to come.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Alexandra Lemay, Libby McAllister and particularly Kirsten Macey for their efforts and contribution to the organisation during the time each of them was with QCC (both Kirsten and Libby in return appearances).



Photo by Tim Seelig

# KEY ACTIVITIES

**One of the key focus areas for QCC this year has been around creating greater organisational stability. Along with this QCC has been engaged in a number of other activities that are outlined below.**

## ▼ CLIMATE

QCC was a major contributor to organising the People's Climate March, organised a banner drop and press coverage after the Paris climate talks, held a well attended Reef and Coal forum in the Stafford electorate of Mines Minister Anthony Lynham, worked with local groups opposing the expansion of the Acland coal mine and produced an edition of Spinifex on the environmental impacts of coal mining.

In addition there were various meetings with academics and scientists, the commissioning and release of a report on Just Transitions for coal affected communities and ongoing involvement with the Qld Renewables Group



## ▼ NATURE CONSERVATION

Participated in Invasive Species strategy and policy discussion

Raised community awareness about the Black Throated Finch

Engaged with politicians and scientists about protection of Koalas in Se Qld including representations to the environment Minister, meetings with conservation scientists and the Koala Expert Panel to discuss koala protection in SEQ

Commenced meetings with a range of scientists and other NGOs to discuss terrestrial and freshwater nature conservation with a view to developing strategies for working together in the future

## ▼ Land Clearing

Despite intense policy and political engagement by the conservation sector this year, amendments to current land clearing legislation failed to pass through the Queensland Parliament. Despite this, QCC is determined to ensure that current land clearing practices are addressed.

Other activities that QCC participated in:

The Parliamentary Inquiry into the proposed reforms of Vegetation Management Legislation (submission, presenting at a Hearing)

Convened monthly land clearing campaign phone meetings

Developed a discussion paper on the issues, and prepared notes for groups wishing to make a submission

Met with Queensland MPs to argue the case for amendments

Met with academics and scientists to ensure the campaign was following the latest scientific analysis

Met with other environment groups and developed shared policy asks

Maintained a media presence of the issue

Have convened recent face to face meetings of groups to discuss next stages of the campaign

Conducted a seminar at UQ Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science on 'research, policy and political decision making' using land clearing as an example

Presented at the Network of Environmental Social Scientists conference on environmental conflict, using land clearing as a case study.

## ▼ Reef

This year saw the release of evidence of the worst coral bleaching in the Great Barrier Reef. Maintained engagement with GBR protection campaigners and acted as a conduit for information to QCC members as well as media comment and releases much of which focussed on the negative impacts on the reef caused by the Coal industry.

## ▼ Social Media

Our social media presence has grown by over 200 followers on our Facebook page and will likely reach 3000 likes by the end of this year. Additionally, our Twitter profile has grown to 1,131 followers.

# MINISTER'S ENVIRONMENT ROUNDTABLE



The Minister's Environment Roundtables are important events for the funded regional conservation councils and some other groups. These events involve organisations meeting as the non-government environment sector to discuss current issues and priorities, and how the sector works together, as well as having dedicated meeting and discussion times with the Environment Minister, his staff and senior departmental officials. QCC assisted with the hosting and convening of two Minister's Environment Roundtables over the past year, during which a number of priority environmental issues, including landscape protections, reef protection, mining, climate change

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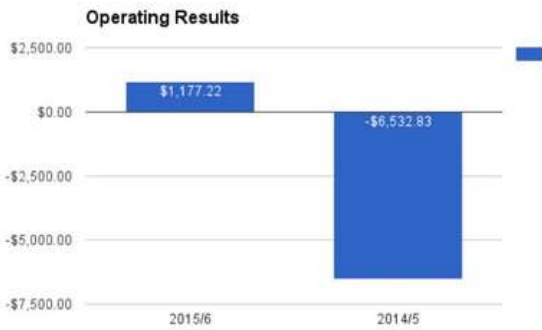
The Minister's Environment Roundtables involve a significant investment of time, energy and effort from QCC itself and the groups who attend and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection in lining up relevant officers for key topics.

QCC's roles have included calling for briefing information from groups, liaison with the department over agendas, schedules, speakers and meeting management, and direct facilitation of discussions and raising specific issues directly. QCC also sought to ensure appropriate follow up of tasks and actions, and evaluating events and learning for future exercises.

QCC has recently been preparing for the next Minister's Environment Roundtable, to be held in mid November.

# TREASURERS REPORT

## OPERATING RESULTS



2015/2016



*Report by Colin Stewart (acting Treasurer)*

Thanks to the generous funding of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and a range of individual donors, QCC is able to carry out its very important work.

At the end of the Financial Year QCC is in a reasonable financial position with a fairly evenly balanced operating budget for the year and some bequest money put aside for the proverbial "rainy day".

The budget as can be seen however is still very dependent on government funding, and while the State Government funding is secure through to June 2018 it is important that we concentrate on new forms of funding going forward. This is particularly true as we are budgeting in the 2016/7 for additional expenditure as we grow the capability and influence of QCC.

## Income

Income 2015/6

