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13 July 2026

**Queensland Productivity Commission Impact of
2025 EPBC Act Reforms on Queensland Inquiry**

Dear Commissioners,

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland - Sunshine Coast & Hinterland Inc (WPSQ) is one of the oldest environmental groups in Queensland. The branch was established in 1963 by Kathleen McArthur, one of the four founders of Wildlife Queensland. For over 60 years, we have been working to protect and conserve at-risk species and habitats.

It is not just our members who want to see the protection of biodiversity and the environment. Sunshine Coast community sentiment reported from the 2023 consultation program for the *Draft 'Shaping SEQ' South East Queensland Regional Plan 2023 Update* conducted by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council showed **96%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that ***Natural habitat areas should be protected and restored.***

WPSQ strongly supports the themes, evidence and recommendations presented in Wildlife Queensland's (WQ) submission to the Inquiry into the impacts of the Australian Government's 2025 reforms to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). As a regional branch working at the frontline of conservation, we see daily how healthy landscapes, functioning ecosystems and intact habitat underpin the Sunshine Coast and the Hinterland's productivity, liveability and long-term economic resilience.

The Sunshine Coast and Hinterland's prosperity relies on clean waterways, resilient catchments, thriving wildlife populations, nature-based tourism, and the ecological services provided by remnant bushland, riparian areas, wetlands and coastal systems. Once these assets are degraded, they are expensive or impossible to replace.

Protecting the area's core values from inappropriate development remains a priority for council and our local community, particularly as the region's population continues to grow.

We strongly endorse the submission's argument that uncertainty, conflict and delay in project approvals are most often caused by unclear standards, inadequate early environmental assessment and late identification of constraints — not by strong environmental laws themselves. Clear, enforceable national standards and a well-resourced federal EPA will improve investment confidence and reduce ambiguity for proponents, communities and regulators. This is essential for a fast-growing region like ours, where development pressure is high and ecological values are both significant and vulnerable.

We also support WQ's position that some habitat cannot be offset. In the Sunshine Coast and Hinterland, critical koala habitat, riparian vegetation, wildlife corridors, climate refugia and mature hollow-bearing trees are irreplaceable.

We also endorse the call for robust cumulative impact assessment and stronger intergovernmental cooperation. The Sunshine Coast is experiencing rapid growth, and cumulative pressures — clearing, fragmentation, roads, light, noise and climate impacts — are already eroding ecological resilience. Effective regulation must consider past, present and foreseeable impacts across landscapes, not just project-by-project assessments.

Finally, we support WQ's recommendation for clear, transparent and accountable principles governing Queensland's offset funds, including the more than \$100 million currently held. These funds must deliver measurable, additional outcomes directly linked to the impacts for which they were collected.

In summary, WPSQ strongly supports Wildlife Queensland's submission. The 2025 EPBC reforms — if implemented with clear standards, strong avoidance requirements, credible offsets, cumulative impact assessment and transparent governance — will strengthen environmental protection while improving long-term productivity for Queensland and our region.

We encourage the Commission to adopt a broad, future-focused approach that recognises the essential role and the value of nature in Queensland's economic stability and community wellbeing.

Yours sincerely,

Yours sincerely,

Claire Brown - President

Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland - Sunshine Coast and Hinterland Inc

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