



Tarong National Park

Management Plan

2011



South East Queensland Bioregion

Prepared by:

Planning Services Unit, Department of Environment and Science (DES)

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The Tarong National Park Management Plan 2011 has been extended in 2023 in line with the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (s120G). Minor amendments have been made. There has been no change to the plan's original management intent and direction.

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Front cover photograph: *Sericulus chrysocephalus* regent bowerbird. Photo: (DES).

Turnix melanogaster black-breasted button-quail male feeding chick. Photo: Hogan, L. (DES).

Pellaea paradoxa heart fern. Photo: Bostock, P. (DES).

Capparis arborea brush caper berry. Photo: Fensham, R. (DES).

Vision statement

Tarong National Park will be managed to conserve the Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest found throughout much of the park. Maintaining and protecting the natural values of the park, including conserving its vegetation communities, will be the key focus for management.

Some plant communities and animal species of conservation significance occur in the area. The park conserves two endangered and four of concern regional ecosystems. Significant species in the park include the vulnerable black-breasted button-quail *Turnix melanogaster* and the near threatened grey goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae*. Special emphasis will be placed on the conservation management of these communities and associated species of plants and animals.

Tarong National Park will continue to be managed for low impact nature-based recreation at a sustainable level, relative to the small size of the park.

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1. Management intent

Tarong National Park will be managed as a representative sample of Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest. The primary purpose of management for the park will be to:

- identify and conserve the diversity of natural plant and animal communities, including maintaining the extent and distribution of Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest and associated vegetation types
- conserve plant and animal species of conservation significance through specific management strategies, where appropriate
- adopt appropriate fire management regimes to maintain and protect plant and animal communities and protect life and property
- implement appropriate pest plant and animal controls to protect native animal and plant communities
- provide opportunities for neighbours, local government, Traditional Owners and other interested parties to be involved in the process of managing the park, where appropriate.

2. Basis for management

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is responsible for the day-to-day management of Tarong National Park. The park is primarily managed in accordance with the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and associated regulations to protect land, wildlife and cultural values.

Indigenous people have affiliations with this park and involving Traditional Owner groups forms an important part of management. Tarong National Park is included in an area subject to native title claim by the Wakka Wakka people (#2QC99/033). This plan does not affect this claim.

Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems are described under the Department of Environment and Science's (DES) biodiversity status and endangered and vulnerable species are listed under the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006. QPWS has a responsibility under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* to control declared pests and animals in protected areas.

The park supports migratory species listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (that is, those species listed under the Bonn Convention and Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement).

3. Location and regional context

Tarong National Park, between Maidenwell and Nanango, in the South Burnett Regional Council was dedicated in 1995. The park preserves 1520 hectares of Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest and narrow-leaf ironbark open forest typical of the south-east Queensland biogeographic region (refer to Appendix A, Map 1).

The park has no visitor facilities, directional signage, or on-park or off-park interpretation. Tarong National Park provides a natural setting with few roads and gives visitors opportunities for nature-based activities, such as bird watching. The nearby Yarraman and Benarkin State forests provide visitors with facilities and recreation opportunities.

Access to Tarong National Park is along the Maidenwell–Nanango Road, which can also be used to access Bunya Mountains National Park. Adjoining land uses include stock grazing, forestry (including timber and seed production of hoop pine) and a coal mine that supplies the nearby Tarong Power Station.

4. Protecting and presenting the park's values

4.1 Landscape

The soils and geology of the park have an underlying value as they determine the type and distribution of plant and animal communities across the park.

Deeply weathered basalt-derived red (krasnozems) soils support Araucarian complex microphyll rainforest.

Hard-setting shallow to moderately deep sand and loam soils with yellow clayey subsoils support open forests dominated by narrow-leaved ironbark *Eucalyptus crebra*.

Tarong National Park is in the Burnett River catchment with Meandu Creek flowing into the Burnett River. Little to no erosion or siltation appears to occur in the park.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>Maintain the park's catchment and aesthetic values.</p> <p>Protect and conserve soils and landforms.</p> <p>Potential linkages from the park to other natural areas are identified and protected, where possible.</p>	<p>A1. QPWS will continue to represent the interests of the park and liaise with relevant catchment management, Landcare and other organisations as appropriate.</p> <p>A2. Investigate opportunities to add areas of conservation value to the park. Priority will be given to securing linking areas that allow for species to move in response to climate change.</p>

4.2 Native plants and animals

4.2.1 Native plants

The vegetation of Tarong National Park is of significant conservation value, containing two major plant community groups that are poorly represented in protected area estate.

Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest has been largely cleared in the area for agriculture and hoop pine plantations. This community was once widespread on moderate to highly fertile soils throughout the region.

Such remnants often have highly endemic species of limited distribution.

This community is classified as of concern with only 10 to 30 per cent of its original extent remaining, little of which occurs in protected areas.

The narrow-leaved ironbark communities on Tarong National Park contain dogwood *Jacksonia* sp, acacias, hoveas and boronias in the understorey. Nine regional ecosystems are conserved within the park. Two of these are endangered and four are of concern (Appendix C).

While no comprehensive vegetation surveys have been conducted on the park, vegetation mapping has been carried out for some areas of the park. The endangered blotched sarcochilus orchid *Sarcochilus weinthalii* has been recorded on the park.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>The diversity of vegetation communities is maintained, while allowing for ecological processes of succession to occur.</p> <p>Plant species of conservation significance are conserved and a more thorough understanding of their abundance and distribution is developed.</p>	<p>A3. Identify through comprehensive surveys the range and composition of plant communities in the park including communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of conservation significance • that provide habitats for animals of conservation significance. <p>A4. Produce vegetation maps of the park from the above surveys.</p> <p>A5. Implement management actions for priority species (Back on Track, DES 2010).</p>

4.2.2 Native animals

While no comprehensive surveys have been carried out on Tarong National Park, fauna surveys carried out on neighbouring Tarong State Forest and on Tarong Coal lands have identified many native species occurring in the area.

To date, nine animal species of conservation significance have been observed in the park, but their distribution is unknown: black-breasted button-quail *Turnix melanogaster*, grey goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae*, swift parrot *Lathamus discolor*, green thighed frog *Litoria brevipalmata* and golden-tipped bat *Kerivoula papuensis*.

The vulnerable Dunmall's snake *Furina dunmalli* and collared delma *Delma torquata* has also been found in the park (Appendix D).

The park also has a maternity colony of cave-dwelling little bent-wing bats. This species is classified as low risk (near threatened) by the Australian Government, under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) status. Other species closely associated with the rainforest areas are the regent bowerbird *Sericulus chrysocephalus* and noisy pitta *Pitta versicolor*.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>Species of conservation significance are conserved and a more thorough understanding of their abundance and distribution within the park is developed.</p> <p>Fire and visitor management regimes are implemented that are conducive to protecting the national park's wildlife.</p>	<p>A6. Conduct systematic surveys to obtain information about wildlife occurring within the park, with specific searches for species of conservation significance.</p> <p>A7. Monitor the distribution, abundance and habitat condition of animal species of conservation significance.</p> <p>A8. Discourage visits to the bat colony and monitor visitor levels. If visitor impacts are found to increase, then consideration should be given to declaring the cave as a restricted area.</p> <p>A9. Implement actions from recovery plans or conservation plans for conservation significance.</p> <p>A10. Implement management actions for priority species (Back on Track, DES 2010).</p>

4.3 Indigenous culture

Although no Indigenous sites have yet to be identified within Tarong National Park, the area has important cultural and landscape values to Traditional Owners.

The Bunya Mountains area has cultural value to several Traditional Owner groups, particularly the Wakka Wakka people to the north of the Bunyas and the Bujiebara (people of the carpet snake) to the South Burnett area.

The Bunya Mountains area was where many different Aboriginal groups travelled to the 'bonye bonye' festival every three years and as such may have cultural significance to these groups. No park surveys have been conducted to locate specific sites of cultural significance.

Traditional Owners from the Cherbourg community have expressed interest in the area and own an adjacent block of land containing an art site.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
Traditional Owners are involved in managing the national park.	A11. Encourage Traditional Owners to help identify, document and protect Indigenous cultural heritage places in the park and provide advice on other cultural interests and concerns.

4.4 Shared-history culture

The Tarong area was settled by Europeans around 1850. Although some non-Indigenous heritage sites occur within the Tarong area, Tarong National Park has no known non-Indigenous heritage values. No park surveys have been conducted to locate specific sites of cultural significance.

4.5 Tourism and visitor opportunities

Visitation to the park is limited and park visitors are primarily dedicated naturalists. The park provides for nature-based activities, such as bird and wildlife watching. The ephemeral creek that runs through part of the park supports dense vegetation, a focus for wildlife during wetter times.

The park has no camping, visitor facilities or walking tracks. Access to the park is via the Maidenwell–Nanango Road, with access around the park by gravel roads. Current visitor levels are low.

State forests nearby contain visitor facilities. Yarraman State Forest has picnic and barbeque facilities at the Rogers Park day-use area.

Benarkin State Forest also offers visitor opportunities, such as picnicking, camping, a forest drive and a section of the Bicentennial National Trail.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
A sustainable level of visitation, relative to the small park size and lack of facilities provided, is maintained.	A12. Continue to manage Tarong National Park for low-impact nature-based recreation. No infrastructure will be provided and visitors will be encouraged to be self-sufficient.

4.6 Education and science

Tarong National Park has significant scientific values with softwood scrub (Araucarian complex microphyll rainforest) containing plants and animal species of conservation significance. It is an important refuge for wildlife, as softwood scrub elsewhere in the area has been largely cleared.

Potential education values could focus on ecological processes, such as succession of ironbark communities with rainforest species and the effects of fire on these communities. The park has no on-park interpretation.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>Knowledge of the animals and vegetation communities that occur at Tarong National Park is increased to guide management.</p> <p>Available knowledge of plant ecology is enhanced and used as the basis for future management decisions.</p>	<p>A13. Encourage research and investment in priority data deficient species (DES 2010).</p> <p>A14. Continue to monitor and research plant communities' response to different burning regimes.</p> <p>A15. Encourage tertiary institutions to research animal species of conservation significance.</p>

4.7 Partnerships

Tarong National Park is close to private and public lands used for a variety of purposes, including stock grazing, forestry (including timber and seed production of hoop pine) and a coal mine that supplies the nearby Tarong Power Station. Effective management of the park requires cooperation with local government, regional natural resource management groups and neighbours to address issues of common concern, such as managing fires, pest animals and controlling pest plants.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>Neighbours, stakeholders, local government, Indigenous groups and other interested parties are made aware of park management issues and have the opportunity to be involved in the process of managing the park, where appropriate.</p>	<p>A16. Park staff will liaise with stakeholders, neighbours, local government, natural resource management groups and Traditional Owners, to develop and implement cooperative stock, feral animal, weed and fire programs, where appropriate.</p>

5. Other key issues and responses

5.1 Fire management

A Fire Management System has been adopted statewide by QPWS, which is the primary agency for fire management on protected areas. Fire strategies provide the overall framework and direction for fire management and are the foundation from which planned burn programs are developed.

A Level 2 Fire Strategy and a wildfire response procedure have been developed in accordance with the Fire Management System.

Reagon and Ryans roads (both on road reserve) provide limited access for fire management.

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>Park visitors, infrastructure and adjacent properties are protected from the impacts of fire.</p> <p>Environmental and cultural values protected from damaging wildfire impacts.</p> <p>Fire is managed to promote the biological diversity and integrity of native plant and animal communities and ecosystems, particularly species and ecosystems of conservation significance.</p>	<p>A17. Continue to implement and review the Level 2 Fire Strategy for the park, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> undertaking prescribed burning with regard for any prescriptions in recovery plans. <p>A18. Investigate building further tracks or control lines within the park to help manage fires and document in the Fire Management Strategy.</p>

5.2 Pest management

QPWS has a responsibility under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* to control declared pests on protected areas, and has developed a Pest Management System to guide on-ground pest management activities.

Pest plants are growing in a cleared area of the park. These plants generally only occur along roadsides and other disturbed areas, and some control of groundsel bush, mother-of-millions, tree pear and lantana has been carried out in the past.

Pest animals include cats, feral pigs, wild dogs, deer and foxes, and an approved Level 2 Pest Management Strategy has been developed. Feral cats are known predators of black-breasted button-quail *Turnix melanogaster* (DES 2010; Mathieson and Smith 2009).

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
The natural and cultural values of Tarong National Park, including species of conservation significance and threatened ecosystems, are protected by eradicating pests or significantly reducing their impacts.	<p>A19. Ensure a Level 2 Pest Management Strategy is developed under the QPWS Pest Management System, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring and controlling pest plant species that have the potential to spread rapidly and have an impact on natural values • giving priority to areas with species and communities of conservation significance, and the control of mother-of-millions and tree pear.

5.3 Resource use

Damaged boundary fences have allowed stock to enter the park at times.

Some internal fencing exists and there is a cleared area of predominately kikuyu grass *Pennisetum clandestinum* in the park. Stock grazing and replacement of native grass with exotic can have a detrimental impact on conservation significant species, such as the collared delma *Delma torquata* (DES 2010).

Desired outcomes 2021	Actions and guidelines
<p>The national park is kept free of stock.</p> <p>Introduced pasture grasses are replaced with native vegetation.</p>	<p>A20. Install or repair fences as resources permit and share costs with neighbours as set out in QPWS's Good Neighbour Policy.</p> <p>A21. Rehabilitate the cleared area of the park as funding and resources permit.</p>

6. References

- Commonwealth of Australia (1999) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- Cogger, H.G., Cameron, E.E., Sadler, R.A. and Egger, P. 1993. *The Action Plan for Australian Reptiles*. Australian Nature Conservation Agency, Canberra.
- Department of Environment and Science (2010). *Burnett Mary Natural Resource Management Region Back on Track Actions for Biodiversity*. Department of Environment and Science, Brisbane
- Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (2009). *Turnix melanogaster* in Species Profile and Threats Database, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Canberra.
- Mathieson, M.T. and Smith, G.C. 2009. *National recovery plan for the black-breasted button-quail* *Turnix melanogaster*. Report to the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Canberra. Department of Environment and Resource Management, Brisbane.
- State of Queensland (1992), *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel, Brisbane
- State of Queensland, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2001), *Master Plan for Queensland's Parks System*, State of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland.
- Duncan, A., Baker, G.B. and Montgomery, N. (Eds.). (1999) *The Action Plan for Australian Bats*. Environment Australia, Canberra.

7. Hyperlinks

- Back on Track species prioritisation framework <www.des.qld.gov.au>
- Bonn Convention <www.cms.int>
- Disaster Management Act 2003* <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and Regulations 2000 <www.environment.gov.au>
- Environmental Protection Act 1994* <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- DES website <www.des.qld.gov.au>
- Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement <www.austlii.edu.au>
- Key threatening process <www.environment.gov.au>
- Nature Conservation Act 1992* <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Regulation 1994 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- QPWS Pest Management Plan: Areas managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service 2003–2008 <www.des.qld.gov.au>
- Queensland Heritage Act 1992* <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>
- Regional ecosystems <www.des.qld.gov.au>

8. Appendixes

Appendix A – Map

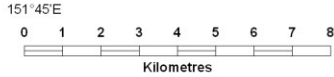
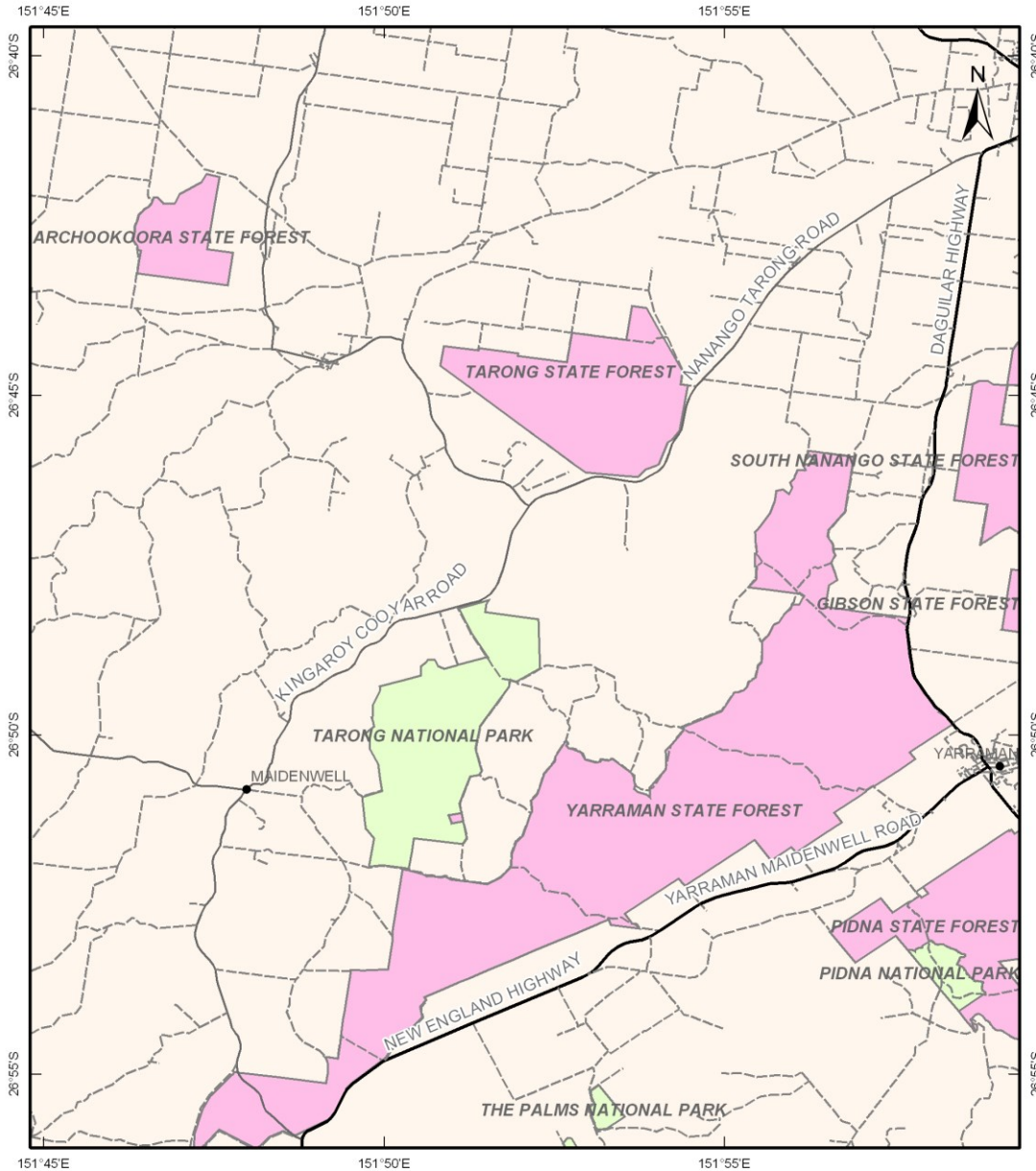
Appendix B – Definitions

Appendix C – Regional ecosystems

Appendix D – Species of conservation significance

Appendix A – Map

Map 1 Access roads and locality



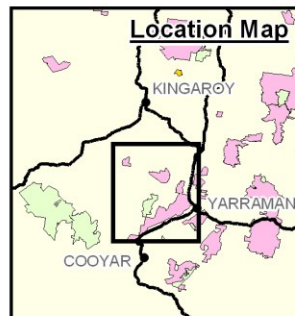
Map Projection:
 Universal Transverse Mercator (MGA) zone 56
 Horizontal Datum:
 Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94)
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Legend	
●	Towns
—	Major Road
—	Minor Road
—	Local Road
□	National park
□	Forest reserve
□	State forest

Source Material:
 Towns - DERM, November 2008
 SDRN Roads - Pitney Bowes MapInfo, September 2010
 Protected Areas of Queensland - DERM, 30th June 2010



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Appendix B – Definitions

Back on Track

The Back on Track framework prioritises Queensland native species of flora and fauna to guide conservation, management and recovery, focusing on high and critical priority species for future investment.

Cultural heritage

The values that people place on the landscape and their experience of it, including their knowledge and traditions, stories, songs, dances and relationships as well as specific places, structures and objects.

Endangered wildlife

The Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 sets out parameters to manage species of plants and animals declared by schedule as endangered wildlife. Endangered wildlife are listed under schedule 2 of the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006.

Endangered (regional ecosystems)

A regional ecosystem is listed with a DES biodiversity status of endangered if:

- less than 10 per cent of its pre-clearing extent remains unaffected by severe degradation and/or biodiversity loss*; or
- 10–30 per cent of its pre-clearing extent remains unaffected by severe degradation and/or biodiversity loss and the remnant vegetation is less than 10 000 hectares; or
- it is a rare* regional ecosystem subject to a threatening process.

* Refer to Hyperlinks – Regional ecosystems for further information.

Near threatened wildlife

The Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 sets out parameters to manage species of plants and animals declared by schedule as near threatened. Near threatened wildlife are listed under schedule 5 of the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006.

Of concern (regional ecosystems)

A regional ecosystem is assigned a DES biodiversity status of concern if 10–30 per cent of its pre-clearing extent remains unaffected by moderate degradation and/or biodiversity loss. Moderate degradation and/or biodiversity loss is defined as floristic and/or faunal diversity that is greatly reduced but unlikely to recover within the next 20 years even with the removal of threatening processes; or soil surface is moderately degraded.

Species of conservation significance

Species of conservation significance refers to those species that are threatened (that is, endangered, vulnerable or near threatened species), and may also refer to other species that are subject to threats at a regional or local level including Back on Track priority species

Vulnerable

The Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 sets out parameters to manage species of plants and animals declared by schedule as vulnerable. Vulnerable wildlife are listed under schedule 3 of the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006.

Appendix C – Regional ecosystems

Table 1: Of concern or endangered regional ecosystems in Tarong National Park.

Regional ecosystem number	Regional ecosystem description	DES biodiversity status
12.3.3	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> woodland to open forest on alluvial plains	Endangered
12.5.13	Microphyll to notophyll vine forest ± <i>Araucaria cunninghamii</i> on remnant Tertiary surfaces	Endangered
12.8.13	Araucarian complex microphyll vine forest on Cainozoic igneous rocks	Of concern
12.9–10.18	<i>Angophora leiocarpa</i> , <i>Eucalyptus crebra</i> woodland on sedimentary rocks	Of concern
12.9–10.16	Araucarian microphyll to notophyll vine forest on sedimentary rocks	Endangered
12.12.28	<i>Eucalyptus moluccana</i> open forest on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks	Of concern
12.12.24	<i>Angophora leiocarpa</i> , <i>Eucalyptus crebra</i> woodland on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks	Of concern

Biodiversity status – as defined by DES it is based on an assessment of the condition of remnant vegetation in addition to the pre-clearing and remnant extent of a regional ecosystem. The current biodiversity status is given on the Regional Ecosystem Description Database; refer to [Hyperlinks – Regional ecosystems](#) for further information.

Source: Queensland Herbarium (2009) Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD). Version 6.0b Updated November 2009, (November 2009) (Department of Environment and Science: Brisbane).

Appendix D – Species of conservation significance

Table 1: Vulnerable, endangered or near threatened native animals and plants for Tarong National Park.

Scientific name	Common name	NCA	EPBC	BoT
<i>Turnix melanogaster</i>	black-breasted button-quail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Critical
<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>	grey goshawk	Near threatened		Low
<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	swift parrot [#]	Endangered	Endangered	Medium
<i>Litoria brevipalmata</i>	green thighed frog	Near threatened		Medium
<i>Delma torquata</i>	collared delma ^{###}	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	High
<i>Kerivoula papuensis</i>	golden-tipped bat ^{##}	Near threatened		Medium
<i>Furina dunmalli</i>	Dunmall's snake	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium
<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> (SouthEast Queensland bioregion)	koala (South East Queensland bioregion)	Vulnerable		Low
<i>Sarcochilus weinthalii</i>	blotched sarcochilus	Endangered	Vulnerable	Critical

NCA Status under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*

EPBC Status under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

BoT Back on Track

[#] The Action Plan for Australian Birds 2000

^{##} The Action Plan for Australian Bats 1999

^{###} The Action Plan for Australian Reptiles 1993

* Ranking under the Back on Track species prioritisation framework. This framework prioritises Queensland native species of flora and fauna to guide conservation, management and recovery, focusing on High and Critical priority species for future investment.

Source: DES WildNet, 8 November 2010

Incidental fauna survey, including inspection of bat roost in cave, northern section of Tarong National Park Compiled by Martin Schulz 1998.

