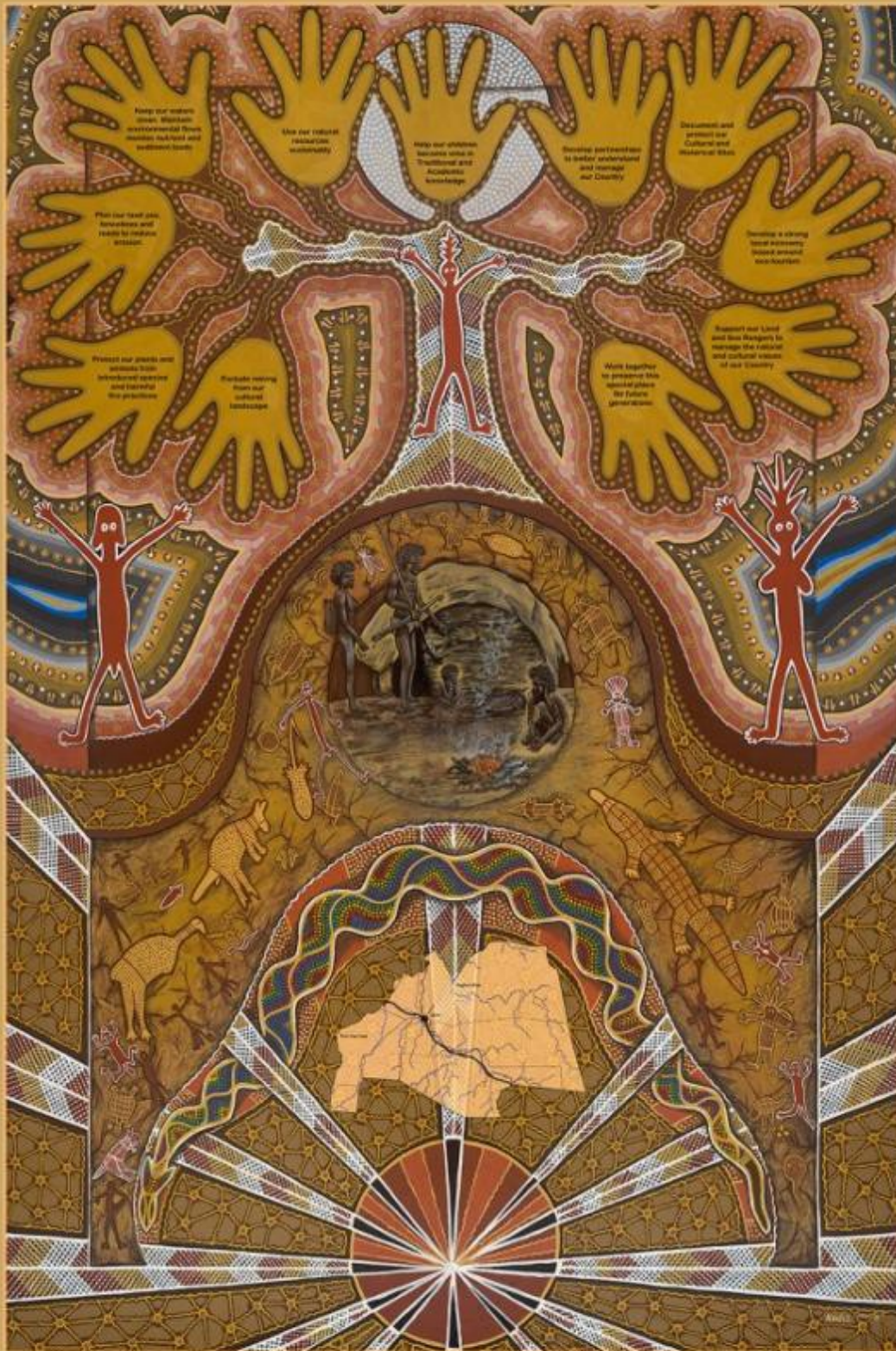


Laura River Dreaming



A PLAN FOR COUNTRY



This report was prepared for the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection as part of Queensland Government's Country Based Planning program.

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Executive Summary

This country plan has been prepared in consultation with Traditional Owners identifying with the Laura River catchment and expresses their management concerns and aspirations for their country. Funding was provided through the Department of Environment and Resource Management Planning for Country initiative.

The country surrounding Laura addressed by this plan covers approximately 1,500 km² with a population of less than 200 people (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). The basalt soils surrounding Lakeland, with an estimated area of 35 km², support a farming community producing bananas, passionfruit, stock fodder and hybrid seeds. The remainder of the region is largely undeveloped; the major industries are commercial beef cattle production and tourism associated with the Quinkan Rock Art. The region has extremely high cultural values and the local Indigenous community continues to utilise Traditional knowledge and practices in their daily lives.

The overwhelming issue identified by Traditional Owners and historical people was the threat posed by mining to the cultural and natural values of the region; in particular the potential impact of mining on their sacred sites, cultural landscape and developing tourism industry. The community strongly supported a nomination for World Heritage listing for their country to exclude potential mineral and coal exploration and exploitation.

Other priority concerns were: continuation of the Laura Land and Sea Ranger program, protection of sacred sites, preservation of traditional knowledge and practices, water quality and allocation, appropriate fire regimes, conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of country, and the development of a sustainable local economy based around eco-tourism.

The community would like to see funding allocated to support on-ground works for cultural and natural resource management and to support the growing tourism industry.

Implementation of the strategies identified in this Plan will require cooperation between Traditional Owners, stakeholders of the Laura Basin, the Lakeland agricultural community, cultural heritage and environmental interest groups, Cook Shire Council and QPWS. Continued support, through State and Federal Government funding initiatives, for the Laura Land and Sea Ranger program is considered essential to undertake the on ground work identified in this Plan.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Plan

In recent decades, the value of Traditional Knowledge held by Indigenous peoples for the management of natural resources has received increasing recognition from the wider community. This plan, through extensive consultation with Traditional owners and historical people, reflects the knowledge and concerns of the Indigenous groups identifying with the area surrounding Laura.

Most of the concerns explored in this document are cross-cultural, varying only in relative importance depending on their relevance to specific interest groups.

Indigenous peoples' view of country is holistic; the welfare of the community reflects how well they have discharged their duty to country and tradition. This document conveys the Laura Mob's perspective and priorities for the management of their country; and proposes culturally appropriate, actionable strategies to address resource management issues. Where possible, strategies have been developed which are within the current capacity of the Laura Land and Sea Rangers, in partnership with other organisations and individuals, to undertake.

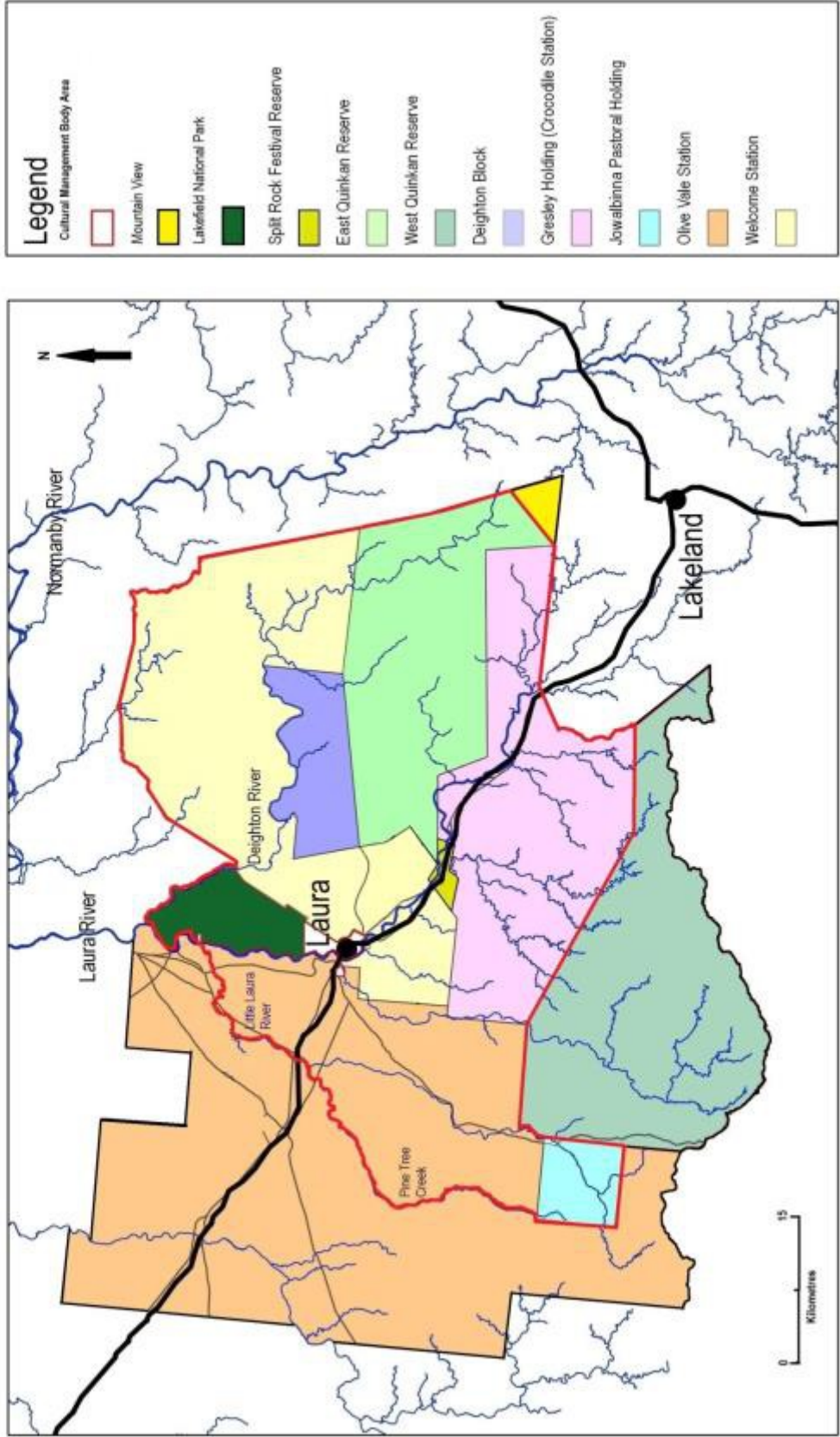
1.2 Laura Area

The Laura subregion has been loosely defined as central southern Cape York Peninsula between the 15th and 16th parallel comprising the upper catchment for the Laura, Palmer and Alice Rivers. Horticulture, grazing, mining and a developing recreational and tourism industry provide the major economic base for the area.

The focus of this plan is the area of the Laura River catchment west of Little Laura Creek and its tributary Pine Tree Creek and east of Carroll's Crossing on the Laura River between latitude 15° 21" and 15° 50" and longitude 144° 48" and 144° 51". The land tenures within the consultation area are the Agayrra Timara Aboriginal Freehold, Welcome, Crocodile, Jowalbinna and the eastern portion of Olive Vale pastoral leases and Deighton River occupational lease. The Wulbarjulbar Aboriginal Freehold country is managed by the Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation and is not included in this plan.



LAURA COUNTRY BASED PLANNING AREA



1.3 Traditional Owners

Historically tribal groups associated with the Laura Basin and surrounding ranges include speakers of Kuku Thaypan, Koko Warra, Koko Yalanji, Koko Minni, Olkola and Guugu Yimidhirr languages. These groups came together in the vicinity of Laura Township for ceremony, social interaction and trade. Due to the complexity of these associations the area currently has no Native Title claim pending. As a result sixteen families recognised as having connection to country were consulted in developing this document. Recognition by other Traditional Owners of a claim to country was used to identify the groups to be consulted. Anthropological studies undertaken by Emeritus Professor Bruce Rigsby were used to support local perceptions. No attempt to validate, dismiss or resolve conflicting claims was undertaken.



1.4 Values of Country

The escarpments surrounding Laura Township lie within the Dalrymple Sandstones, an area which has been identified as one of the ten most significant bodies of Rock Art in the world (Jean Clottes, President of UNESCO'S International Committee on Rock Art, letter to Ang-Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation 1999). Excavations conducted between 1989 and 1991 established a minimum continual occupation period of 34,400 years (Morwood, M.J. and Hobbs, D.R. 1995). Additionally the area is rich in European and Chinese history associated with the discovery of the Palmer River Goldfield in the 1870's.

The savannah landscape of the Laura Basin has been identified as containing distinctive grassland mosaics which are recommended for inclusion in a World Heritage nomination (The natural attributes for World Heritage nomination of Cape York Peninsula, Australia 2013). The escarpment country is extremely rugged and, due to its inaccessibility, remains largely unmodified except by European fire regimes. While studies are currently underway, a biodiversity baseline for the area has yet to be established. Three species, the Laura Apple (*Syzygium rubrimolle*), the Jowalbinna Gecko (*Oedura jowalbinna*), and the Quinkan Skink (*Ctenotus Quinkan*) are endemic to the area.

For Traditional Owners whose Clan estates lie wholly or partially within the area, the country provides physical and spiritual succour. Hunting and gathering of bush foods and medicines provide physical exercise, a source of supplementary nutrition and the opportunity to educate their children in traditional knowledge and skills. The landscape and rock art is an unbroken connection to the old people whose spirits stay on country to guide the living; and to the Quinkans, powerful beings inhabit the sandstone escarpments. The current Traditional Owners see themselves as stewards obligated to care for country through traditional practices and ceremonies for past and future generations.

1.5 Infrastructure

Completion of the upstream bridge over the Laura River in late 2012 provided all weather access between Laura and Lakeland. Access beyond Lakeland will remain limited due to closures of the Little Annan and McCloud causeways. Reliable access to major urban centres and medical facilities would significantly improve the quality of life for Laura residents and communities further north and increase the viability of existing primary industry.

Large sections of the Peninsula Development Road and the area around Laura lie outside current mobile phone coverage. Improving communications in the area would dramatically reduce response times in emergencies and improve everyday life for people in the Cape.

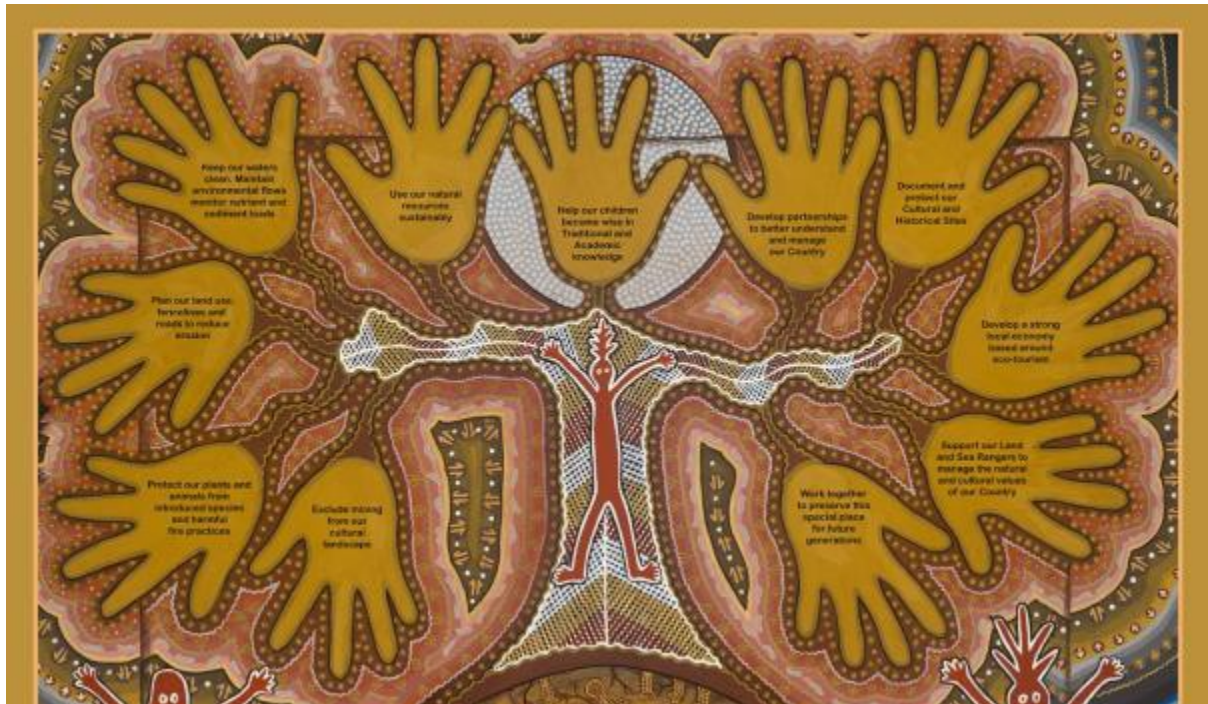
1.6 Methodology

Country Based Planning commenced in February 2012 funded by the Department of Environment and Resource Management. The Plan was developed over eighteen months in consultation with Traditional Owners and Historical people with connection to country. 71 individuals were consulted, either in small groups or individually, and eight community meetings were held to discuss Indigenous aspirations for country.

Laura Elder Thomas George, and the Laura Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers assisted in the ranking of threats and the development of strategies to combat them. Once developed, the draft plan was presented to the community for comment.

Priority issues identified by the community were ranked as follows:

Rank	Issue
1	Exclusion of mining
2	Continuation of the Land and Sea Ranger program
3	Protection of Cultural Heritage
4	Correct use of fire
5	Water quality and allocation
6	Tourism
7	Nature conservation/biodiversity
8	Grazing
9	Weed and feral animal control



2.0 Priority Planning Issues

2.1 Mining

The threat posed by mining interests to the area was the priority concern of all the Clan groups. The area contains many significant cultural sites which the Traditional Owners feel they are charged to protect. Mining activity is excluded within 500 metres of the Declared Landscape Area (DLA 002) boundary; however the majority of the area only has protection under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act; which permits mining activity within 100 meters of a cultural site.

The consensus was that mining would damage the cultural landscape and be incompatible with the protection of cultural sites, development of an eco-tourism industry and preservation of traditional knowledge; identified as Country Based Planning goals. Additionally the benefits to the community from a tourism industry spanning thousands of years would far outweigh the compensation and employment generated by allowing mining activity to proceed.

Of particular concern are the coal exploration applications currently under consideration. The Laura Normanby Basin has been identified for potential mining projects, but the Traditional Owners are totally opposed to open cut or coal seam methane extraction on any of the country they speak for. The risk of subsidence, pollution of groundwater and environmental problems associated with containment of saline water extracted during the CSM process is considered unacceptable. Connectivity of aquifers in the Laura Normanby

catchment has not been established, nor is the geology of the area sufficiently understood to predict the likely effect of methane extraction on the fragile escarpment country.

The mudstone/sandstone/conglomerate layers comprising the escarpment country are intrinsically unstable; use of impact equipment and particularly the use of explosives is likely to have unpredictable impacts over large areas.

World Heritage listing was considered the best protection from proposed coal and mineral exploration of the area. While State and Federal legislation provides a level of protection for cultural sites; World Heritage listing is the only level of protection able to survive changes of Australian Government parties and policies. The community felt an independent international body to support protection of the country's cultural values was an asset.

2.2 Laura Land and Sea Rangers

The Laura Land and Sea Rangers undertake on ground management of cultural and natural resources in the vicinity of Laura. Continued support of the ranger program is seen as essential for the development and implementation of management plans.

The Laura Rangers currently employ five members of the local community who are engaged in systematically documenting cultural sites and lodging the records with the DATSIMA Cultural Heritage Unit. The majority of the estimated 10,000 Quinkan art sites have never been recorded. Natural attrition will eventually destroy these sites and, if no attempt is made to document them, they will be lost entirely. These recordings will also provide a baseline for future assessment of site condition and the development of management plans.

In conjunction with site recording, the Rangers undertake site management and conservation work as is within their training and capacity. Installation of signage, construction of animal exclusion fencing, vegetation removal, hazard reduction burns and the positioning of dust suppression matting is undertaken as and where required.

In addition to documenting cultural sites the Rangers facilitate on country Traditional knowledge excursions with the Laura School and local community. They are currently involved in monitoring 30 sites to establish the long term influence of fire patterns on biodiversity.

The Rangers and have been credited with generating a growing sense of community optimism and solidarity and have consistently delivered high quality outcomes for the

community and the funding bodies supporting them. Strongly supported by the community and the Ang Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation, a Ranger Office is currently being set up to provide a building where databases can be securely held and from which the Ranger group can operate.

2.3 Traditional Knowledge

The Aboriginal people of the Laura Basin continue to implement many of their cultural practices. Due to the appeal of modern entertainment, the Elders feel strategies are required to ensure that transfer of Traditional Knowledge between generations continues. The ability of speak Language is central to ceremony, only the older members of the community are fluent speakers and, as a result, Laura currently does not have an apprentice Songman. The Laura Rangers facilitate an excursion to a cultural site each school term. While this allows the children to connect to the tangible aspects of their culture, the Elders would like to see Language and Story taught as part of the Laura State School curriculum.

Traditional land management practices have been sustainable over tens of thousands of years and have been a significant factor in shaping the current ecology of the area. The timing of Traditional burns is dependent on the season and the vegetation of the location. The Laura Rangers in partnership with the ILC properties are implementing traditional burning practices on Crocodile and Welcome Stations and the Agyarra Timara Freehold country.

The Laura community draws on traditional resources to supplement their dietary and medicinal requirements. The ability to distinguish local plants and knowledge of their traditional use and preparation is essential if this practice is to continue. The development of the Junior Ranger Program will allow the children to go on country with the Laura Rangers to learn traditional land management and sustainable use skills.



2.4 Cultural Heritage

The sandstone escarpments surrounding Laura contain a significant portion of the estimated 10,000 Quinkan Aboriginal rock art sites, and are internationally recognised as possessing outstanding cultural values of World Heritage standard. Apart from the art sites, the area contains occupation sites, Story Places and artefact scatters. Mushroom Rock, 15 km from Laura Township, has a proven continuous occupation period of 34,400 years; making it the oldest continually occupied site in Australia.

Traditional Owners respect the escarpments as the home of spiritual beings that protect and guide them. Traditional law prohibits removal of material from the area and enforces strict protocols when entering or moving through the area. Historically the Laura Basin has been an area where surrounding clans gathered to trade and fulfil ceremonial and social obligations; a tradition still observed by the semi-annual Laura Dance Festival.

A small number of galleries have been opened to visitation to support the local tourist industry, provide cultural education, or allow research projects to be conducted. The region also contains numerous historical sites associated with the Palmer River gold field, which have significance for Aboriginal, European and Chinese cultures.

The unique culture, geology and ecology of the Quinkan Reserves offer an opportunity to develop educational programs incorporating field excursions on country. Programs ranging from Primary to Tertiary education could be designed and research projects operating in the area supported. Apart from the financial benefits, the Laura children would profit from the

opportunity to interact with people from outside the community. As Laura has no Secondary school, early exposure to larger groups of children and unfamiliar teaching techniques would ease the transition to secondary schooling in larger centres.

The Traditional Owners have unanimously and emphatically expressed a desire to see the cultural sites of the area protected. They feel they have an obligation to both the old people who occupied the area for over 30,000 years and to future generations. The community supports the development of tourism provided access is managed to minimise visitor impacts.



2.5 Fire

Implementation of Traditional fire practices is regarded as central to healing the country and conserving the biodiversity of the region. Inappropriate European burning regimes have resulted in the area being subjected to frequent late season wildfires leading to changes in the ecology of the area.

A fire management plan which integrates traditional burning with best practice European methods has been prepared for the Quinkan Reserves. In consultation with Laura Elders,

adjoining land holders and Laura Rural Fire Brigade, the Laura Rangers implement controlled burns to heal country and to protect cultural sites and infrastructure. In 2012 the Rangers and a CSIRO team undertook a limited biodiversity study which will form the baseline for monitoring changes in the ecosystem in response to differing fire regimes. As environmental response will be slow, this study will need to be conducted over several decades before trends can be accurately assessed.



2.6 Water

Traditionally the Laura River and Lakefield lagoons have provided a reliable food source for the Indigenous population. Fishing is still a major recreational activity and dietary supplement for the community. Concern exists that if the 2013 Lakeland Surface Water Management Proposal is ratified, the unregulated impoundment of tributary water and issuing of extraction licenses for the Laura River will adversely affect the quality and quantity of water in the downstream reaches.

The Traditional owners would like an environmental water allocation for the Laura River sufficient to protect the ecological health of the system.

In recent decades the community has observed increased sediment loads in the Laura River leading to siltation of water holes, some that are Story Places, which they attribute to reduced flow and increased soil mobility caused by clearing of fence lines, road construction and gully erosion. Ongoing research into sediment mobility and gully erosion in the area is being conducted by Griffith University but data is currently incomplete. Further data on locations and rate of deposition would enhance understanding of the processes involved and assist in developing an accurate model for the system.

Cape York Marine Advisory Group has undertaken ambient monitoring of the water quality in the Laura and Normanby Rivers for the past seven years. While overall the water quality is good, flood water sampling of the Laura and Normanby Rivers during the 2012/13 wet season has identified higher than expected nutrient levels from an unknown source.

Traditional Owner's believe the use of motorboats and fish nets in the Laura River and Lakefield NP lagoons should be banned. These practices are damaging the banks, harming juvenile fish stocks and disrupting the ecology of the river. Sawfish (*Pristis spp*), which feature in the rock art of the region have not been seen in the Laura River near the Township for approximately three decades, stingrays (*dasyatid spp*) are now uncommon and cherabin (*Cherax quadricarinatus*) stocks may be declining.



2.7 Tourism

Tourism is regarded as the future economic base for Laura Township. The cultural assets of the region are seen as a medium for domestic and overseas visitors to develop an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture. Proximity of the township to the Quinkan Art sites and Lakefield National Park, two iconic sites in Cape York Peninsula, indicate high tourism potential.

Guided tours are currently being run by the Quinkan Regional Cultural Centre (QRCC) providing casual and seasonal employment for three to four people. Formation of a Ranger group who could act as tour guides during the season and undertake site assessment and maintenance during the off season would provide permanent positions leading to financial stability. The Laura Land and Sea Rangers open the site access roads and Split Rock walking tracks after the wet; but, as exploitation of these sites is a commercial venture, they are not in a position to undertake required maintenance on the trails. Expert advice regarding site development and conservation would be engaged as and when it is needed.

The QRCC is not in a financial position to provide employment beyond current levels. A lease agreement with Ang- Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation is still to be finalised limiting the capacity of QRCC to attract outside funding. This organisation will require support to undertake training pertinent to their activities, and to purchase required equipment and materials, until income from tourism becomes sufficiently robust to support them. The Land and Sea Rangers are increasing community capacity to meet the demand for Indigenous guides through the provision of tour guiding workshops and manuals.

Surveys undertaken at the self-guided Split Rock galleries determined that visitation has decreased since the 1980's. The honesty box system used to collect entry fees is being abused. At current visitation levels it is not economically viable to man the site, or to adequately maintain the existing infrastructure. Rubbish collection from the site has been discontinued and theft of components has disabled the toilet. Canvassing of visitors identified a need for increased signage to identify the location of the site and a desire for interpretive signage in the rest area. The majority of visitors did not support increased signage at the galleries or the opening of a kiosk at the rest area. Targeted advertising may increase visitor numbers to a point where the site could be economically manned, but would also necessitate improved management of the sites and tracks.

Lack of accommodation has been identified as a major limitation to the development of tourism in Laura. It is felt that the town requires motel accommodation and upgraded camping facilities to support growth in the industry. It is anticipated employment in hospitality and service industries will be generated once this issue has been addressed. Currently the tourism industry is operating at well under its potential. While the rock art will always be the main attraction, possibilities for farm stays, walking tracks, horse riding trails and day tours to Lakefield National Park and surrounding cattle stations also exist.

Due to the quantity of cultural sites and in situ artefacts, unguided access needs to be carefully managed to ensure site preservation and culturally appropriate visitation. Inaccurate information contained in camping guides and the sharing of GPS tracks amongst travellers, particularly Grey Nomads, has led to unauthorised camping in restricted areas. Designated camping areas need to be established and restricted areas monitored until a new ethos is established among the travelling public.

2.8 Grazing

The pastoral holdings surrounding Laura provide employment opportunities for the community who historically have worked as stockmen and domestic help on cattle stations. The larger holdings also provide stock for the Laura Rodeo, a major event on the local social calendar.

Welcome and Crocodile Stations are pastoral leases currently held by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC), for commercial beef production and to train Indigenous rural workers. Both these properties are to be returned to the Traditional owners, however, the timing of the handover is yet to be determined. It is intended that these grazing leases will continue to run commercial beef herds and provide training for Indigenous stockmen. The community would like to see more flexibility in the conditions of the grazing leases to allow the development of tourism opportunities. Potential exists for farm stay accommodation, working cattle station and cultural tours, hiking trails and hunting/fishing excursions.



2.9 Biodiversity

The Laura Apple (*Syzygium rubrimolle*), the Quinkan skink (*Ctenotus Quinkan*) and the Jowalbinna Gecko (*Oedura jowalbinna*) are endemic to Quinkan Country; however, the flora and fauna of the escarpments has only been opportunistically documented due the rugged nature of the terrain. Detailed knowledge of the escarpments gained during cultural site recording now provides quad bike access to previously inaccessible areas; as a result, an opening for research into the ecology of the escarpments now exists. If the area is to be appropriately managed this research needs to be undertaken.

Feral pigs are present but not in large numbers. They are hunted for food and are not considered a problem except when they camp in rock art galleries. Reintroduction of a bounty on feral pigs would provide incentive for the taking of greater numbers than are required for consumption, however the community does not support large scale feral pig trapping or baiting. Dingoes are a totemic animal, consequently trapping or baiting is culturally inappropriate.

A large feral cat population exists in the area, particularly in the escarpment country. There is concern over their impact on the small mammal and reptile populations requiring a targeted approach to reduce numbers. Cane toads are found across the area but the presence of Northern Quoll and goanna populations suggest the native animals are adapting to their presence.

Twenty seven species of the plants considered weeds in Cook Shire are present in the area. As major infestations of all these weeds exist upwind and upstream, use of fire, control of access and good weed hygiene are considered the most feasible methods of control. Of these weeds, Sicklepod (*Senna obtusifolia*) is of greatest concern. This plant is rapidly forming a monoculture in riparian areas; producing dense shade cover and exuding a chemical toxic to other species; this plant has the potential to radically alter the ecology of the catchment. Sicklepod produces large quantities of seed which remains viable for in excess of fourteen years. These attributes, coupled with the size and nature of the area currently infested, indicate a bio-control agent is the only likely method of mitigating the problem.

Calotrope (*Calotropis procera*) is becoming a major problem in the Lakeland area. While not yet present around Laura, due to its method of seed dispersal it is likely colonise the area in the very near future.

3.0 Local Management Bodies

Ang Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation will continue to manage the Laura Township, taking responsibility for the development of infrastructure, housing, health and employment for the community.

Quinkan Regional Cultural Centre will develop the tourism industry, providing employment for guides and promoting the area to attract visitors.

The need for a cultural heritage body to control the impacts of tourism and development, negotiate agreements with outside interests and provide a governance structure should heritage listing be obtained is becoming increasingly urgent. It is envisaged this body will consist of representatives from Traditional Owner groups, the local community and local landholders and provide structure to the traditional deliberations held by Laura Elders to address concerns regarding cultural heritage management. Without a recognised Native Title claim for the area, the body will operate under a memorandum of understanding between the clan groups.

An application to have the Laura Cultural Heritage Body formally recognised has been submitted and is currently under review by the DATSIMA Cultural Heritage Unit.

4.0 National Heritage Listing

An application for National Heritage listing for the area covered by this plan was submitted in March 2013 to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and is currently under assessment. While not excluding mining activity in the area it is hoped a National Heritage listing will assist Traditional Owners to better manage the impacts of mining activity.

5.0 World Heritage Listing

The community would like increased protection for the Quinkan Reserves, and leans towards supporting a World Heritage Cultural Landscape nomination for the area. The expectation is that if listed, mining will be excluded from the area. The prospect of being able to appeal to a body outside the Australian Government should national economic self-interest outweigh commitment to conservation also has attraction.

Traditional Owners have grave concerns regarding how management of the area would be structured under World Heritage listing. Under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003, they currently have control of what happens when and where on the Quinkan Reserves. They will not support a nomination if their ability to manage the country is compromised by directives from outside interests. They have a deep understanding of the natural and cultural values of the landscape; and a vested interest in conserving this landscape for their economic and cultural future. There is a fear that traditional knowledge lacks the recognition of scientific data and, should the Traditional Owners fail to keep control of what happens on country, a management proposal may be adopted on the ability to advance a scientific

argument and manipulate the English language; rather than on its cultural appropriateness. While recognising that in specific situations professional advice will be required, they would like outside input restricted to an advisory roles only. The Traditional Owners plan to form a cultural management body drawn from the community to oversee current activities and direct future development in the area.

The Laura Rangers are trained in recording and site assessment. Further training in these areas will see them in a position to competently address site management issues not requiring expert conservation skills. Continued support of the current Ranger program will produce skilled Traditional Owners with the capacity to maintain the natural and cultural values of the area.



Target: Protection of country from of Mineral and Coal exploration			
	Attribute	Strategy	Actions
M1	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act	Raise Indigenous awareness of cultural heritage legislative protection. Raise wider community awareness of Aboriginal heritage protocols and obligations for on ground work.	Arrange for presentations and extension material by DATSIMA Cultural Heritage Unit for Indigenous community and local landholders.
		Raise mining industry awareness of Aboriginal heritage protocols and obligations for on ground work.	Partnership with Dept. Mines and Energy to ensure all exploration applicants are aware of the cultural significance and Heritage protocols of the area.
		Continue recording and mapping Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.	Maintain community and government support for Laura Land and Sea Rangers.
		Form a Cultural Heritage Body.	Submit an application for formation of a Laura Cultural Heritage Body.
M2	Declared Landscape Area (002)	Raise mining industry awareness of mining exclusion within 500 metres of DLA boundary	Partnership with Dept. Mines and Energy to ensure all exploration applicants are aware of the DLA area.
		Ensure DLA is not downgraded	Continue media coverage of the area's significance Form partnerships with environmental groups, research organisations and government departments
M3	National Heritage Listing	Secure a National Heritage listing for the Quinkan Reserves	Submit application for National Heritage listing
			Resubmit if initial application unsuccessful
M4	World Heritage Listing	Pursue a World Heritage listing for area	Continue Traditional Owner support for listing through consultation
			Gain Landholder support for listing through consultation
			Define the area for listing
			Develop management /governance protocols
			Gain State party support for listing

Target: Traditional Knowledge			
	Attribute	Strategy	Actions
TK 1	Speaking of language	Encourage use of language in the community	Identify Elders who speak, and are willing to teach, language
			Partnership with Laura State School to provide language lessons
			Develop English/Language translation booklet for the community
			Support speaking of language in the community
TK 2	Oral traditions	Transfer stories across generations	Identify Elders who know, and are willing to share stories
			Partnership with Laura State School to teach appropriate stories
			Identify story places
			Facilitate community visitation of story places
TK 3	Ceremony	Transfer of ceremonial knowledge	Record Elder knowledge of ceremony
			Support education of next generation song men
TK 4	Cultural sites	Traditional Owner access to and knowledge of cultural sites	Facilitate community visitation of cultural sites
TK 5	Traditional skills	Improve tracking skills of young people	Incorporate tracking contests in on country community events
		Improve implement making skills of young people	Provide training in traditional tool and implement construction

		Incorporate implement use contests in community events
	Recognition and preparation of bush tucker and medicines	Facilitate on country educational excursions with Rangers and Elders for Laura children
	Transfer of Traditional land management practices across generations	Support the Junior Ranger program

Target: Cultural Heritage			
	Attribute	Strategy	Actions
C H 1	Protection of sacred sites	Raise Indigenous awareness of cultural heritage legislative protection. Raise wider community awareness of Aboriginal heritage protocols and obligations for on ground work.	Arrange for presentations and extension material by DATSIMA Cultural Heritage Unit for Indigenous community and local landholders.
		Raise wider community awareness of Aboriginal heritage protocols and obligations for on ground work.	As above
		Exclude mining from culturally significant areas.	Monitor and respond to all mining applications in the Laura area.
		Form a Cultural Heritage Body.	Submit application for formation of a Laura Cultural Heritage Body.
			Identify core and shared areas for clans with connection to country.
		Pursue National Heritage and World Heritage listings.	Facilitate discussions with State parties on heritage listings.
		Control unauthorised access	Provide observation training for Rangers. Develop Ranger patrols.
	Install signage.		

			Address inaccurate entries in touring guide books.
			Develop access protocols with local landholders and traditional and historical peoples.
C H 2	Site Identification	Continue recording and mapping cultural heritage sites of all ethnic groups.	Maintain community and government support for Laura Land and Sea Rangers.
			Provide mapping training for Rangers
		Develop and maintain a secure database of all recorded sites in Laura.	Develop a Ranger Base with secure storage for culturally sensitive material.

Target: Appropriate Fire Patterns			
	Attribute	Strategy	Actions
FP 1	Efficient effective fire plan	Review fire plan	Elicit feedback from Elders and stakeholders regarding effectiveness of fire regime
			Incorporate suggestions into fire plan to reflect expectations of community and stakeholders
			Implement fire plan
FP 2	Wildfire mitigation	Reduce fire connectivity of landscape	Identify features which may be used as firebreaks. Implement early mosaic burns
		Efficient response to wildfire	Secure funding for capacity building
			Ensure equipment is serviced and functional prior to fire season
			Provide foreground training for local community

			Develop wildfire action plans with local landholders
FP 3	Hazard reduction	Reduce fuel loads	Identify areas which have not been burnt for several years and implement burns
			Provide NAFI site training for Rangers
			Implement winter burns/reduce fuel loads at tourist sites and significant cultural sites
FP 4	Biodiversity	Identify endemic flora and Fauna	Complete biodiversity baseline study
		Identify appropriate fire regimes for different ecosystems	Ranger training in appropriate fire regimes for local fauna and flora
			Assess biodiversity at study sites intervals do be determined
FP 5	Bush tucker	Implement traditional burning practices to regenerate bush tucker	Consult with Elders regarding traditional burning practices
FP 6	Monitor land condition	Photo monitoring	Photo monitoring of study sites 2-3 x annually, post wet season, end of dry season and after a fire event.

Target: Water Quality			
	Attribute	Strategy	Actions
WQ 1	Nutrient levels in surface water	Monitor nutrient levels in Laura River catchment	Maintain partnerships with CSIRO/DPI/JCU and Griffith Uni. Collect water samples as requested. Support initiatives to reduce nutrient runoff from farming areas.
WQ 2	Sediment deposition	Monitor sediment loads in the Laura	Maintain partnerships with CSIRO/DPI/JCU

		River	and Griffith Uni. Collect water samples as requested. Support initiatives to reduce sediment movement from farming areas and grazing properties
		Monitor sediment deposition in Laura River	Record sediment level in 3x waterholes late dry season
		Reduce erosion from fence lines, roads and degraded areas	Support erosion control and sustainable land use initiatives
WQ 3	Quantity of water in streams	limit quantity of water impounded by Lakeland farming community	Provide input into regional water allocation plans. Support initiatives for efficient water use.
		Identify and maintain environmental allocation for the Laura River	Form partnerships with environmental groups, research organisations and government departments to determine environmental flow requirements
			Record water level in 3 x waterholes late dry season

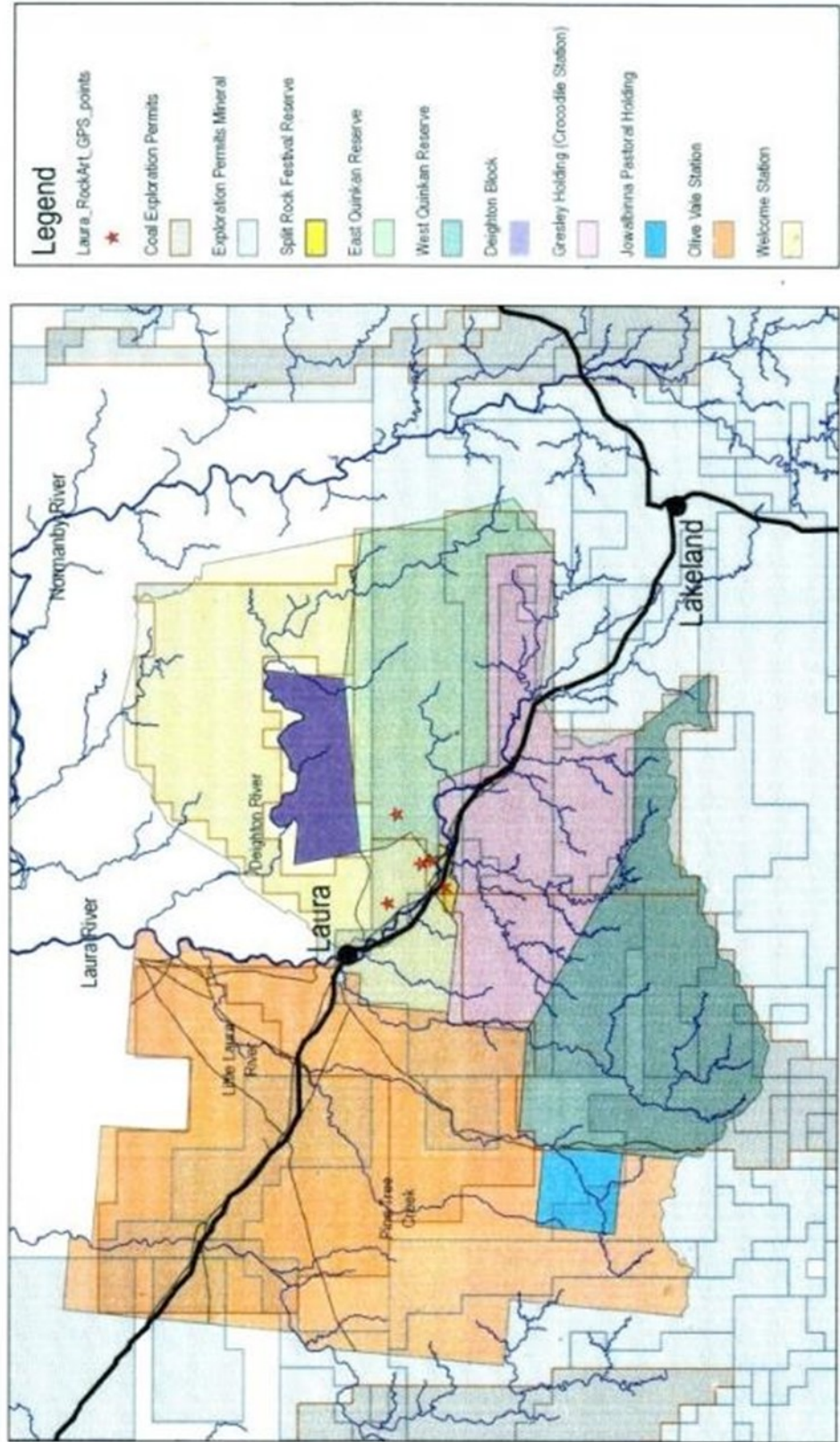
Target: Water Quality			
WQ 4	Aquatic biodiversity	Identify baseline aquatic biodiversity	Develop partnership with research organisation to undertake baseline study

			Consult with local community regarding number and species of animals caught
WQ 5	Identify connectivity of ground water reserves	Develop hydrological maps for the catchment	Form partnerships with environmental groups, research organisations and government departments
WQ 6	groundwater reserves	Identify groundwater recharge rates and keep drawdown within recharge levels	As above

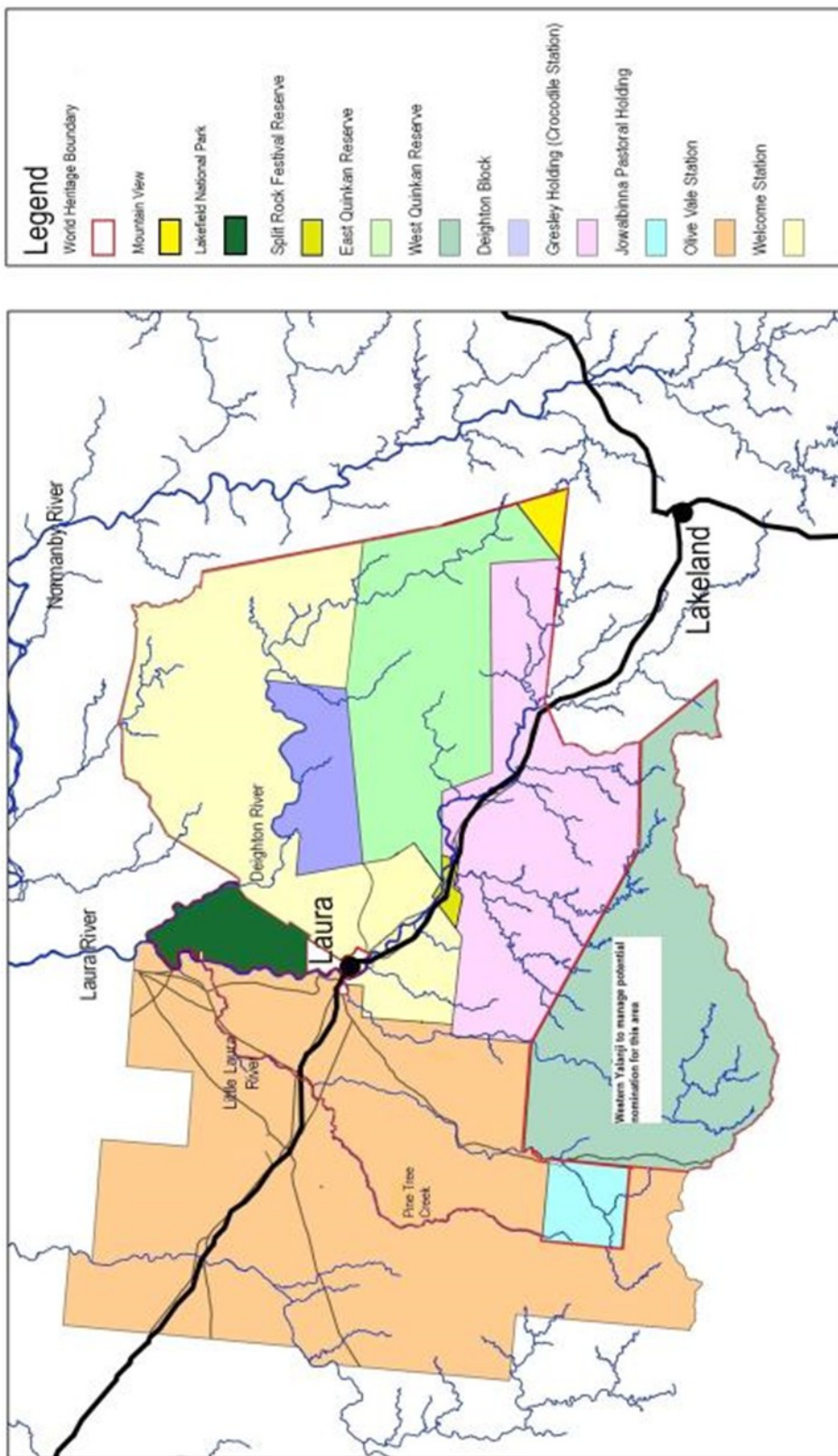
Target: Biodiversity Conservation

	Attribute	Strategy	Actions
BC 1	Remnant ecosystems	Identify and map of concern ecosystems	Train Rangers in mapping skills
			Secure funding for Rangers to map of concern ecosystems
		Protect of concern ecosystems	Identify and prioritise threats stress factors for remnant ecosystems
			Develop strategies to minimise stress factors
BC 2	Right fire	Implement fire regimes appropriate for country	Include fire management in Ranger work program
			Consult Elders regarding timing and location of traditional burning implementation
		Monitor changes to country	Establish photo monitoring points to track changes to vegetation and land condition
BC 3	Protect at risk species	Develop biodiversity baseline	Continue vertebrate biodiversity baseline studies with CSIRO
			Record fauna of isolated ecosystems using wildlife cameras
			Form partnership with research organisation to develop aquatic biodiversity baseline
			Develop Ranger local flora and fauna database
		Protect wildlife corridors/refuges	Identify and protect wildlife corridors
		Community engagement	Develop a monitoring and evaluation program for local wildlife sightings

Laura Rock Art and Exploration Permits for Coal and Minerals



Proposed World Heritage Area Boundary



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