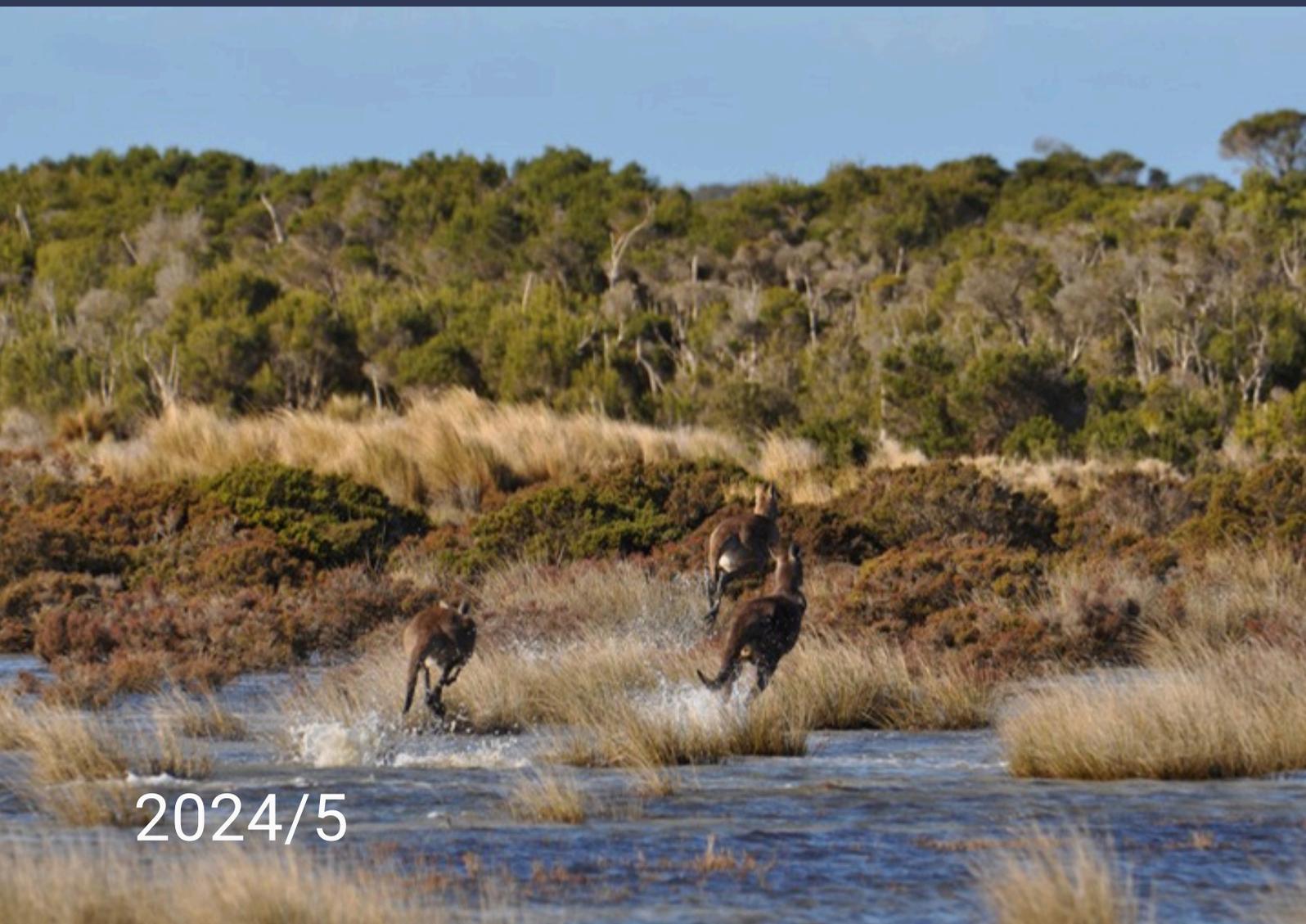




Protecting  
land for good

# BioDiversity Legacy IMPACT REPORT



2024/5



# Table of Contents

Executive Summary	03
5 Pillars of Impact	04
About us	07
Land protection pathways	09
Outcomes and achievements	10
Biolink Coordinator Report	23
Looking ahead	26

# From the Executive Team

## Building trust, enabling impact and supporting community-led conservation

This year, we witnessed not just the growth of our organisation, but the deepening of relationships that sit at the heart of long-term, community-led conservation.

As we reflect on the past year, we see more than milestones — we see momentum.

Across the landscapes we work within, partnerships have strengthened, new community-led initiatives have emerged and enduring conservation outcomes are taking root.

Our team's deep experience and grounded understanding of both people and place underpin the way we work — listening, connecting, facilitating and supporting landholders, communities and partners to enable practical and lasting conservation outcomes.

This approach has allowed us to build trust, unlock opportunities and deliver real, measurable impact across regions and communities.

Through these combined efforts and sustained support, a future is being shaped where communities lead, ecosystems thrive and conservation endures for generations to come.



# Our 5 Pillars of Impact - at a glance



## 01 Land protected and restored

Turning commitment into permanent conservation.

3

Local Landholding Entities supported:

- Nooramunga Land & Sea Ltd
- Connecting Wildlife Ltd
- Nature Recovery Foundation

+

2 land transfers into BioDiversity Legacy and BDL-supported Local Landholding Entities.

\$1M

Over \$1M donated for land conservation

+

Supported conservation covenants, habitat restoration and landscape connectivity projects – from Redgum Woodlands to Wet Tropic rainforests.



## 02 Communities Empowered

Building trust, knowledge and local leadership for lasting stewardship.

4+

Community-led organisations established or supported to secure and manage land.

40+

Active conservation conversations connecting landholders, councils, donors and regional groups.

+

- Strengthened local stewardship networks and biolinks across Victoria, NSW and Far North Queensland.
- Bequest program launched to help supporters leave a lasting biodiversity legacy.

# 5 Pillars of Impact



## 03 Partnerships & Collaboration

- Creating collective impact through connection and shared purpose.
  - Collaboration with 7+ major conservation organisations, including Australian Wildlife Conservancy, Trust for Nature, Bush Heritage and Australian Land Conservation Alliance.
  - Supported Wildlife Unlimited to become a registered not-for-profit, enabling major species recovery programs.
  - Auspiced and mentored projects such as the Spot-tailed Quoll and Glossy Black-Cockatoo recovery initiatives.
  - Facilitated regional forums, presentations and cross-sector collaborations to strengthen the private land conservation movement.
- 



## 04 Policy & Sector Leadership

- Shaping the frameworks that make conservation last.
  - Active contributor to 8+ Local, State and Commonwealth policy processes – from the Nature Repair Act, to NSW planning reforms.
  - Local Landholding Entity model recognised nationally as a practical pathway for private land protection.
  - Australian Land Conservation Alliance membership achieved, affirming our role in the national land conservation movement.
  - Nature Recovery Foundation model influencing local government conservation policy and land management planning.
- 



## 05 Organisational Growth & Legacy

- Building strong foundations for long-term impact.
- Team of 9 (4.8 FTE) working nationally across 3 states.
- Organisational budget doubled from ~\$0.6M to \$1.14M, enabling new capacity and projects.
- Refined governance, operational systems and strategic priorities for 2025/26.
- Mini Strategic Plan formalised, preparing for a full strategic planning process to guide the next phase of growth and impact.
- Established a clear, scalable framework to deliver conservation outcomes through people and partnerships.



## What our partners say

Andrew Cleary, landowner, 'Nuggan Sanctuary'

*"The journey to protect and secure Nuggan has been deeply strengthened by the support of BioDiversity Legacy. Their guidance has been invaluable, not only in navigating the complexity of conservation processes but in helping us make thoughtful, well-informed decisions at each stage.*

*"Just as important has been the network of connections they've opened up, linking us with like-minded landholders, experts and partners who share the same vision for protecting nature.*

*"And through the inevitable challenges and moments of doubt, their encouragement and belief in our mission have been a steady source of motivation. This combination of strategic advice, trusted relationships and genuine moral support has helped turn our vision for Nuggan into a reality – one that will endure far beyond us."*

# Who we are and what we do

This year, BioDiversity Legacy focused on refining our approach – and the results are clear.

We now operate with a confirmed vision, mission and purpose and have identified three core pathways for land protection that span the full spectrum - from areas with no formal protection through to enduring conservation outcomes.

These pathways provide practical and flexible options for landholders and communities to take meaningful steps towards securing biodiversity on their land. Central to this is our facilitation role - listening, connecting, supporting and guiding communities, enabling them to translate commitment into real, lasting conservation outcomes.



## Vision ('Where we are going')

Local people protecting thriving ecosystems for future generations.

---



## Mission ('What we do')

Enabling sustainable, community-led not-for-profits to own and steward land for future generations.

---



## Purpose ('Why we exist')

Australia's biodiversity is globally unique and under threat. Protecting it is vital to sustaining the natural systems that support life and future generations. Lasting conservation happens when communities are empowered to act locally.

BioDiversity Legacy makes that possible. We help communities secure and care for the land through stewardship, covenanting and ownership models, turning unprotected land into protected places that build resilience and connection across Australia.

---



## Values

**Connection, Trust, Community & Respect for Nature**



# Pathways - how we support landholders to protect land for good

## How we do it

- We build local capacity and relationships to connect habitats and people.
- We expand the area of protected, biodiverse land for future generations.
- We create clear pathways for landholders, communities and partners to secure and steward land through enduring, community-based structures — the foundation of our core work.

## Pathways

REFERRAL	TRANSFER TO LOCAL LANDHOLDING ENTITY	TRANSFER TO BIODIVERSITY LEGACY
<p>Refer landowner to a third party to better support their vision - e.g. Bush Heritage, First Nations Land Council, advisor or service provider who can assist in establishing alternate structures (e.g. Family Trust).</p>	<p>Option A: Capacity building for 'DIY' LLE development (without BDL as a supporting member).</p> <p>Option B: Land transfer to LLE in partnership with third party (e.g. Local Government).</p> <p>Option C: Land transfer to LLE (with BDL as a supporting member).</p>	<p><b>Option A:</b> Land transfer to BioDiversity Legacy.</p> <p><b>Option B:</b> Bequest to BioDiversity Legacy (gift in Will).</p>
	<p>Stewardship Program supporting long-term habitat health on protected properties.</p>	
<p><b>OUTCOME</b></p> <p>Land title protected through ownership by a network of responsible, connected environmental organisations.</p>		



# Conservation outcomes and major achievements

## Protecting our coastal saltmarshes - for life Nooramunga Land & Sea

In 2022, BioDiversity Legacy supported the establishment of Nooramunga Land & Sea (NL&S) as a Local Landholding Entity (LLE).

That same year, NL&S took its first step towards the large-scale protection of coastal saltmarsh in South Gippsland by acquiring Little Dog Island in Corner Inlet (60 ha).

In 2025, NL&S reached another major milestone when it acquired the adjacent Bullock Island (72 ha) - a place of striking beauty and rich biodiversity (made possible thanks to a generous contribution from the Upotipotpon Foundation).

BioDiversity Legacy facilitated the acquisition of Bullock Island and has a long-term role to play as a 'Supporting Member' of the LLE, providing governance oversight and holding veto rights on critical matters to ensure each LLE stays true to its charitable purpose and the land remains permanently protected.

## Nooramunga Land & Sea (cont.)

Both Little Dog and Bullock islands are now safeguarded forever – living proof of what’s possible when pioneering governance structures meet dedicated people, purpose and place-based conservation.

On BioDiversity Legacy's support for the project, NL&S Director Dr Steve Enticott says:

*“From the moment we envisioned protecting saltmarsh ecosystems, BioDiversity Legacy has combined vision with practical support to make it real. They helped establish Nooramunga Land & Sea, acquire Little Dog Island and Bullock Island and ensure these lands are permanently protected and managed for biodiversity.*

*“At every stage, from communications to developing our stewardship program, they have worked alongside us. We feel on the crest of a wave. We feel privileged and proud to be part of this growing network.”*

Photo below (left to right): BioDiversity Legacy Head of Science & Environment, Abi Wills, ABC Gippsland Reporter, Madeline Stuchbery, NL&S Director, Dr Steve Enticott, and BioDiversity Legacy South Gippsland Biolink Coordinator, Stuart Inchley, on Bullock Island.



# Pioneering Private Land Protection: Nature Recovery Foundation

This year, BioDiversity Legacy, in collaboration with Bass Coast Shire Council, established the Nature Recovery Foundation - a charitable, not-for-profit company limited by guarantee dedicated to protecting and restoring habitat in the shire.

The Foundation's purpose is to reverse biodiversity decline by preserving existing habitat and accelerating restoration across the landscape.

The Foundation can perpetually own land and appoint stewards to manage it, according to its objectives and standards.

This innovative model secures long-term conservation outcomes and is now being looked to as an example for other local government entities across Australia.

Diana Whittington, Coordinator, Environmental Partnerships:

*"Over the past year, I've had the pleasure of working with Tim Rowe and Christopher Balmford from BioDiversity Legacy to help bring the Nature Recovery Foundation to life.*

*"It has been such a rewarding experience - to be part of something so meaningful, shaping the Foundation's purpose, setting up its governance and laying the groundwork for real, lasting conservation outcomes across the Bass Coast. Tim and Christopher bring so much passion and insight to the table. It has been fantastic learning from them and building something together.*

*"What has made this journey even more special is the genuine trust and collaboration that has grown between us. I've really enjoyed getting to know each board member and working together toward a shared vision for nature recovery.*

*"I'm excited about what's ahead and can't wait to keep building on this momentum as we work toward creating a legacy that future generations will be proud of."*

# Building critical biolinks to the Alpine Wilderness: EcoGipps

## Major land donation for nature and future generations

In June 2025, BioDiversity Legacy received the first stage of a significant land donation from the EcoGipps initiative, led by Jim and Heather Phillipson in Gippsland.

- Property transferred: North Paddock - 105 ha in Maffra West Upper.
- Future transfers: Two properties (253 ha) representing a key biolink to the Avon Wilderness.

This multi-stage donation secures an ecologically important landscape that connects riverine, woodland and agricultural areas - supporting biodiversity, waterway health and long-term climate resilience.

Through EcoGipps, ongoing community-led stewardship of the land will continue under a collaborative model that separates ownership from stewardship (led locally).

This approach demonstrates how conservation ownership can coexist with active community involvement, modelling a new way of caring for Country that fosters shared responsibility and participation.





# Collaboration and Shared Impact

## Partnerships for regional recovery

BioDiversity Legacy supported Wildlife Unlimited (WUL) in its transition to a not-for-profit organisation, meaning that all the work WUL now undertakes contributes to achieving the organisation's principal purpose: *Supporting our natural environment and communities to flourish.*

Over the past year, BioDiversity Legacy partnered with WUL on two of its on-ground programs, supporting efforts to protect threatened species and restore critical habitats.

### Supporting Targeted Species Recovery

#### Spot-tailed Quoll Recovery

To support the recovery of Victoria's endangered Spot-tailed Quoll, this project — a partnership between Wildlife Unlimited and BioDiversity Legacy, supported by the Rendere Environmental Trust and the Victorian Government's Nature Fund — will monitor populations and assess genetic diversity to inform a captive management plan and translocation strategy for repopulating Gippsland with quolls.

#### A Helping Hand for Sheoaks

The Helping Hands for Sheoak project, supported by the Natural Resource Conservation Trust, is a partnership between Wildlife Unlimited, BioDiversity Legacy, landholders, Far East Victoria Landcare, Moogji Aboriginal Council and Friends of Mallacoota to restore Sheoak stands and feed trees for Glossy Black-Cockatoos.

# Threatened species protection

With our partners and wider network, BioDiversity Legacy has also supported:

- Far East Victoria Landcare and landholders on the **Genoa River Correa project** to protect small populations of this endangered shrub.
- Ecologic NRM (a not-for-profit environmental assessment and planning consultancy) in developing the **Gippsland Plains Peregrine Falcon project**.
- Nationally threatened **Gang-gang Cockatoo research** with the Australian National University and Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) for Environmental Research.
- Stewardship support to landholders on the '**Wallaby Run**' to improve the condition of nationally threatened **Gippsland Red Gum Grassy Woodland** through weed control, stewardship assessment and works planning.
- Zoos Victoria, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, ARI and landholders on finding pathways to protect rare populations of the Victorian **Grassland Earless Dragon**.





# Building trust and connection across the conservation sector

## Sharing knowledge, connecting people and advancing conservation

This year, BioDiversity Legacy strengthened its position as a trusted partner within Australia's private land conservation sector, with Local, State and Commonwealth agencies - along with other not-for-profit organisations - increasingly referring work to us.

Collaboration and referral are central to our model, ensuring landholders and communities are supported by the right partners to achieve lasting conservation outcomes.

This year, we engaged with and worked alongside organisations such as Trust for Nature, the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (NSW), Land for Wildlife, the Wildlife Land Trust, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Bush Heritage and Australian Wildlife Conservancy to progress land protection and stewardship outcomes.

This year, we also co-hosted and co-presented at several regional landholder forums and, along with the National Landcare Network, BioDiversity Legacy was announced as the newest member of the Australian Land Conservation Alliance - a milestone that reflects our growing role in Australia's national private land conservation movement.



# Australian Wildlife Conservancy

Yellow-footed antechinus

Through our engagement with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy, BioDiversity Legacy is exploring opportunities for cross-referral and collaboration to enhance conservation outcomes for private protected areas across Australia.

James Hewitt, Chief Strategy Officer of the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC), says:

*"AWC and BioDiversity Legacy share a strong alignment in values and approach, particularly around private land conservation pathways.*

*"Through regular cross-referrals, information sharing and collaboration, our teams have developed an open and constructive working relationship. This approach is strengthening outcomes for communities, landholders and ecosystems and contributes to a more connected approach across the sector.*

*"We are looking forward to continuing to build on this relationship and exploring opportunities to work more closely together in the future."*





# Empowering the next generation

## Pathways for tomorrow's land stewards

This year, BioDiversity Legacy deepened its commitment to nurturing the next generation of conservation leaders.

Through on-ground learning and collaboration with universities and youth environment networks, we're helping young people build knowledge, gain confidence and connect to Country as future land stewards.

One standout initiative was our support for a University of Melbourne Masters field trip to Gippsland as part of their Sustainable Landscapes module.

Students (pictured above) visited active conservation properties, met with local land stewards and explored models of regenerative agriculture, governance and collaborative land care.

These hands-on learning projects are helping grow a new generation of connected, capable conservation leaders and deepening the community roots that lasting stewardship depends upon.



# Community and Grassroots Action

## Connecting People and Landscapes

The community is at the core of BioDiversity Legacy's work.

Across Victoria, New South Wales and Far North Queensland, our Biolink Coordinators are on the ground, engaging in meaningful conversations with landholders, community groups, donors and local councils.

Currently, we have 40 active conversations underway regarding private land conservation projects, including 10 priority projects across Australia.

## Supporting Local Visions for Biodiversity

Landholders and community groups are asking a shared question: "How can we protect this land for future generations?"

Our Biolink Coordinators answer that call by building trusted relationships, facilitating regional biolinks and strengthening ecological networks.

Each coordinator dedicates just one day per week, yet through their guidance, facilitation and connections, they catalyse long-term conservation outcomes. Through this work, they co-design practical pathways for land protection and help communities translate commitment into measurable, lasting impact.

This approach proves that even small investments of time can generate transformative results for landscapes and communities alike.



# Regional Impact: Biolink Coordinator Report

Our Biolink Coordinators translate engagement into tangible outcomes, guiding communities along a progression from connection and learning to agency, active hope and, finally, to positive, lasting conservation pathways. Regions and activities include:

## Northern New South Wales

In Northern NSW, grassroots initiatives have been strengthened into lasting, community-led organisations.

- BDL supported the establishment of **Wildlife Preservation Clarence Valley (WPCV)**, transitioning it from a local group to an incorporated not-for-profit, providing a formal structure for community-led conservation outcomes.

**Impact:** WPCV now serves as a local hub for land conservation, demonstrating how grassroots groups can evolve into sustainable, legally structured organisations that provide the framework needed to protect land forever.

## Southern New South Wales

Southern NSW showcases innovative approaches to land stewardship and long-term protection, supported and facilitated by our team.

- **The Yambulla Project** – managing 1,500 ha, developing equitable and sustainable land-use models (carbon projects, bio-rich forestry) that generate income to finance regeneration and transition the property into a not-for-profit entity.
- **Nuggan Sanctuary** – progressing a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement and succession plan to transition the property into a not-for-profit model, securing ongoing ecological management.

# Regional Impact: Biolink Coordinator Report (cont.)

## Southern New South Wales (cont.)

- **Connecting Wildlife Ltd & Ned's Forest** – establishing a conservation covenant and strengthening local stewardship governance through capacity-building for the Ned's Forest group.
- **Congo Bushland Conservancy (CBC)** – creating a multi-generational stewardship model that separates ownership from land management, connects with neighbouring Ned's Forest and secures habitat across the Eurobodalla Shire.

**Impact:** These projects combine innovative governance, financial sustainability and community engagement, protecting biodiversity while demonstrating scalable models for long-term, intergenerational land stewardship.

## Gippsland, Victoria

In Gippsland, coordination efforts are connecting people, places and projects to build ecological resilience across landscapes. Our Biolink Coordinators:

- Have supported the development of the **Nature Recovery Foundation** with the Bass Coast Shire Council, providing a platform for coordinated regional conservation (see page 12).
- Are developing partnership opportunities with the **Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation** for strategic, landscape-scale biolinks and major funding opportunities.
- Advanced conservation planning at Candlewood, 500 ha of land with significant biodiversity values and landscape-scale biolink potential
- Facilitated covenant support at **Wallaby Run**, securing critical habitats such as Redgum Grassy Woodlands.
- Facilitated connections with **Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation** and engagement with the West Gippsland CMA, integrating cultural, ecological and catchment health priorities.
- Supported **Wildlife Unlimited's** transition to a registered not-for-profit, enabling delivery of threatened species projects.

# Regional impact: Biolink Coordinator Report (cont.)

## Gippsland (cont.)

- Led cross-regional collaboration towards establishing a **South East Biosphere**, linking landscapes across southern NSW and eastern Victoria.

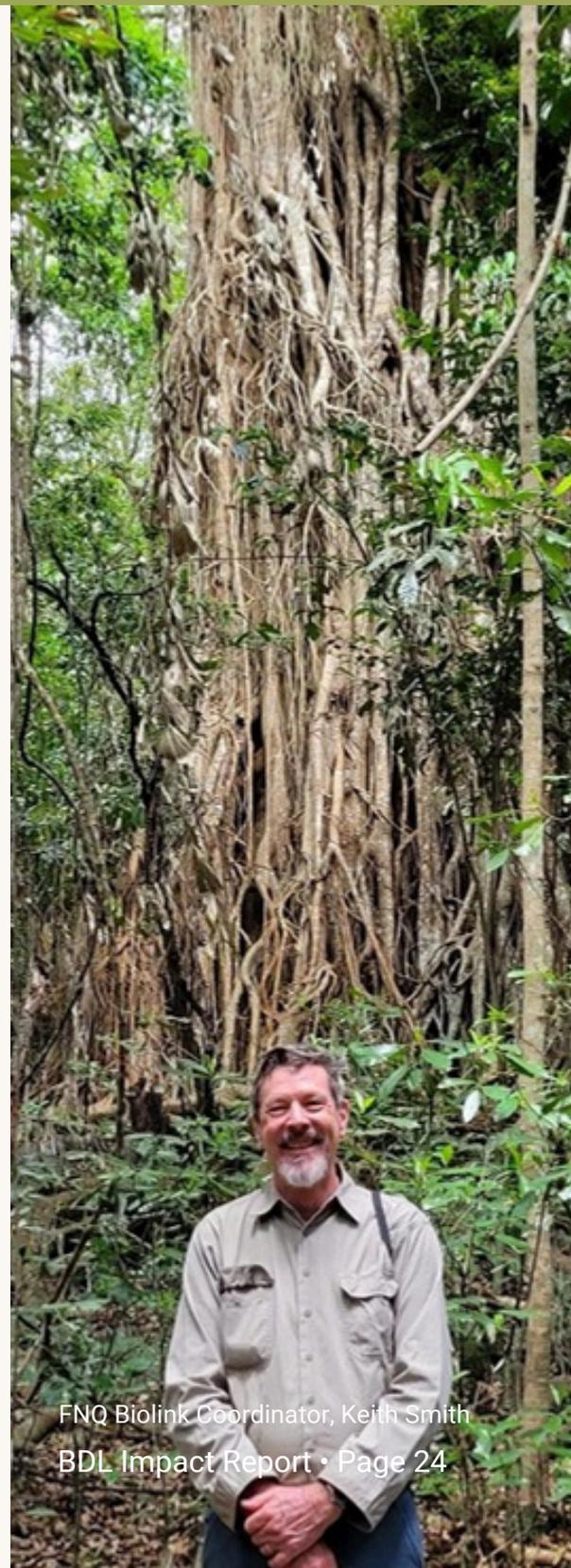
**Impact:** Gippsland's work strengthens local networks, cultural partnerships and community capacity for landscape-scale connectivity and stewardship.

## Far North Queensland

In Far North Queensland, efforts are strengthening regional partnerships and supporting practical actions, including:

- Representation on the **Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance Steering Group**, ensuring BDL's approach is integrated with leading restoration initiatives.
- Support for landholders undertaking succession and stewardship planning, securing ongoing management of high-value properties.
- Connecting with regional conservation leaders to identify landscape-scale opportunities for long-term outcomes.

**Impact:** These activities consolidate regional networks, build local capacity and ensure properties are protected and managed effectively for future generations.



FNQ Biolink Coordinator, Keith Smith  
BDL Impact Report • Page 24



# Looking Ahead

## Building a legacy - together

Over the past year, BioDiversity Legacy has helped protect key landscapes and strengthened ecological networks across Australia.

Behind the scenes, we've consolidated models, refined frameworks and built strong foundations to ensure these outcomes are sustainable and scalable.

Having received a significant and generous donation to support land acquisition along the Great Ocean Road in Victoria, BioDiversity Legacy is equipped to work with local community groups to protect habitats and secure land for long-term conservation in the year ahead.

Together with other major projects highlighted in this report, this contribution adds momentum to the progress we've already made, connecting communities, habitats and partners to turn commitment into lasting conservation outcomes.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on empowering communities to lead conservation, supporting next-generation leaders stepping into this work, strengthening partnerships to extend impact and making our results visible, credible and widely shared.

These efforts build capacity, expand protected, biodiverse land and create clear pathways for communities and partners to secure and steward land through enduring, community-based structures — the foundation of our core work.

**None of this would be possible without your generous support for our core operations. We - and the communities we work alongside - are deeply grateful.**

With your support, we are building a lasting legacy where people, place and purpose come together - for thriving ecosystems and resilient communities.

## Acknowledgments

We wish to specifically acknowledge and thank the following partners and supporters who share in this purpose and make our work possible:

- The **Isaacson Davis Foundation**, whose generosity and belief in what we're building together is helping lay the foundations for our work.
- The **Render Environmental Trust**, for its vital start-up funding and belief in our vision.
- **Maddocks and MinterEllison** for their legal expertise and generous pro bono support, guiding our land conservation pathways.
- **Landholders** who entrust us with their conservation journeys.
- **Community partners**, who lead from the ground up.
- **Donors and supporters**, who invest in long-term change.
- **Peer organisations**, who collaborate in our shared purpose.
- Our team, whose commitment and heart make it all possible.

## How You Can Help

- Donate to support local-led conservation.
- Partner with us to expand our impact.
- Connect others to our network.



*BioDiversity Legacy Ltd respectfully acknowledges First Nations People as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters across the continent with sovereign rights and cultural obligations to Country. We recognise their continuing connection to land, sea and community and pay our respects to the Elders past and present.*

Visit us: [biodiversitylegacy.org.au](http://biodiversitylegacy.org.au)  
Contact us: [info@biodiversitylegacy.org.au](mailto:info@biodiversitylegacy.org.au)

