



Queensland Conservation Programs

Introduction

EDO has developed a 4-part series of fact sheets on voluntary conservation pathways for private land in Queensland. The voluntary programs place environmental covenants or other protections over private land which will bind landholders into the future. The protections are negotiated between landholders and the Queensland, Commonwealth, or local government to achieve conservation outcomes. Each pathway has positive and negative aspects to consider when deciding whether a conservation pathway is the right fit for your land. We have summarised the pros and cons of each pathway in the table below.

Comparative Table

	<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
<i>Nature Refuges</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Protects environmental values + Negotiated with DES + Allows compatible and sustainable land uses + Binds future owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Targeted through DES led priority programs – No formal process outside priority programs – Not protected from mining, grazing or forestry
<i>Special Wildlife Reserves</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + National park level protection + No mining, grazing or forestry + Negotiated with DES + DES support to implement best practice management + Binds future owners + May only be revoke by resolution of Parliament 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – All interests must be resolved including mining permits, agistments, mortgages etc.
<i>Statutory Covenants</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + May restrict, permit or require activities to preserve native plants and animals or physical features + Binds future owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Survey and legal costs for drafting the covenant – Relies on local government or state agency to enforce

Voluntary Declarations	+ Negotiated with local government or state agency	– Requires consent from all affected right holders including mining permit holders, mortgagees etc.
	+ Can be amended on agreement	
	+ Incentives may be available	
	+ May permit or restrict activities	– Does not protect non-existent vegetation
	+ Protects existing high value vegetation	– Unsuited for early stage rehabilitation
Commonwealth Conservation Agreements	+ Binds future owners	– Exemptions allowing clearing still available
	+ Imposes state assessment for clearing outside exemptions and management plan	
	+ Protects biodiversity or commonwealth environmental matters	– Commonwealth rarely enters into these agreements
	+ Negotiated with Australian Department of Environment	
	+ May provide for monitoring and compliance	
Co-operative Management Agreements	+ Binds future owners	
	+ Incentives may be available	
	+ Manages impacts on Wet Tropics World Heritage Area	– Only available within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
	+ Allows activities to be carried out while achieving primary conservation goal	
	+ Enforcement mechanism covered within the agreement	
	+ Open to landholders and Rainforest Aboriginal people	

Please refer to our fact sheet series for more detailed information on each pathway:

1. [Nature refuges and special wildlife reserves](#)
2. [Statutory covenants](#)
3. [Voluntary declarations](#)
4. [Commonwealth conservation agreements and co-operative management agreements](#)