

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Landholders rewarded

Time is running out for landholders in the southern Brigalow Belt to submit expressions of interest for funding through the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee's (QMDC) Bush Tender 2007.

The competitive Bush Tender, funded through the Australian Government's *Maintaining Australia's Biodiversity Hotspots* programme, will assist landholders to manage high value remnant vegetation for the long-term.

"The Australian Government and QMDC recognise the role that landholders play in protecting and improving native vegetation," said Kate Steel, Regional Biodiversity Officer with QMDC. "So, this programme has invited bids for funding under a stewardship arrangement, with the aim of protecting valuable intact ecosystems - but not at the expense of productive land."

The funding for Bush Tender 2007 covers the southern Brigalow Belt, including most of the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin, as well as some areas of the Fitzroy Basin and Condamine catchments.

Kate said, "The Southern Brigalow Belt is one of Australia's 15 biodiversity hotspots, which are areas rich in native plant and animal species, especially species found nowhere else, and under threat from activities such as land clearing, development pressure, salinity, weeds and feral animals."

Expressions of interest will be open till 14 March, with all bids being assessed in April, 2008.

Interested landholders have been encouraged to act soon as only a few weeks remain to arrange a property visit with a Bush Tender officer and to submit their applications. Funding is expected to be provided by June, 2008.

Emma Taylor, project coordinator, said, "The project will run as a commercial tender, where landholders enter bids based on the costs of managing the area, as well as the value of their vegetation to the overall biodiversity health in that area."

Successful landholders will sign a 10 year agreement and payments will be based on a competitive approach where landholders nominate the amount they need to be paid to adequately look after remnant vegetation, especially where they may decide to forego some production values from the area.

For further information contact Emma Taylor on 07 4623 3478, or visit [www.qmdc.org.au/get-involved/bushtender-2007.html](http://www.qmdc.org.au/get-involved/bushtender-2007.html) and download the brochure.

**ENDS**

### **Media contact/s**

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## Images

**Caption:** A map of the areas eligible for Bush Tender 2007 funding.



For an electronic copy of this image, email Amelia Radford at [ameliar@qmdc.org.au](mailto:ameliar@qmdc.org.au)

**Caption:** The management of valuable areas of vegetation like this has often been the responsibility of landholders. QMDC's Bush Tender 2007 will try to help make conservation more realistic for landholders.



Photo courtesy of Kate Steel, QMDC. For an electronic copy of this photo, email Kate on [kates@qmdc.org.au](mailto:kates@qmdc.org.au)