

# Case Study: The Upper Burdekin Windfarm



The Upper Burdekin/Gawara Baya windfarm is a proposed utility-scale wind farm in northern Queensland, approximately 65 kilometres south-west of Ingham on Gugu Badhun Country.

The original project proposal was for 80 turbines (400 MW) and 150 kilometres of tracks on a pre-existing cattle farm. Notably, the proposed site is located 4.7km from the boundary of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. This is a site of largely tropical rainforests, identified by UNESCO for its historical, cultural, and scientific significance.

Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, the Australian Government has an obligation to protect this World Heritage site. The proposed wind farm will require 769 hectares of land-clearing, which may impinge on the habitat of koalas, Sharman's rock wallaby, the northern greater glider and the red goshawk.

Following an in-depth environmental and social impact assessment, the developer revised their project proposal to 69 turbines. This change ensures that 98% of native vegetation is protected at the project site.

Following this amendment, the project proposal was referred to the Federal Minister for the Environment to assess the proposal in accordance with the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Following a rigorous assessment process, the proposal was approved by the Minister in June 2024.

Construction is expected to commence in 2025, and the project will ultimately generate enough energy to power 240000 Queensland homes. The developer has also committed to a 'net gain' approach to avoiding and minimising environmental harm and undertaking recovery and restoration efforts. There is more information about this [here](#).

This case study shows the intersecting priorities that decision-makers must consider: the urgent need for the clean energy transition and the biodiversity crisis many native species are experiencing. This once again illustrates the need for comprehensive planning frameworks which safeguard biodiversity and the clean energy future.