



Unlocking the Gulf Savannah's Potential

Welcome to GSD's 2025-26 update for members and stakeholders!

It has been another big year for GSD - our advocacy, facilitation and project delivery continues to achieve great things. While it has been many years since GSD has regularly communicated with members and the region, we have now implemented a stakeholder relationship system and this is our first use of the newsletter functionality.

Below are the highlights and summary of GSD's achievements for 2025-26. We have made great progress to unlock the Gulf Savannah's potential and deliver our vision to:

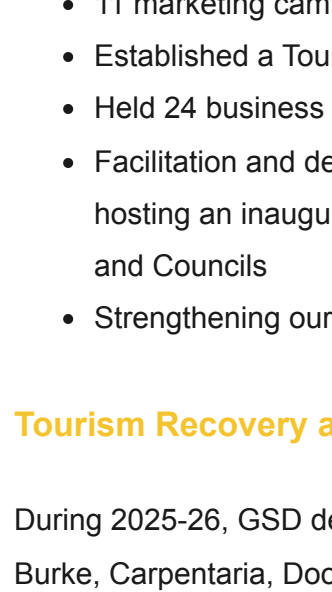
Secure a fairer share of government and industry investment to unlock the Gulf Savannah region's potential and develop more sustainable and prosperous businesses and communities where people want to live, work, play and invest.

GSD is a small member based, not-for-profit organisation that was established 52 years ago to be the Gulf Local Area Development Association. GSD is the only organisation established to only serve the interests of the entire Gulf Savannah region – an area that is 10% of Queensland's land mass and home to 0.01% of the Queensland's population. In the last year, we have continued to re-establish GSD as the body that:

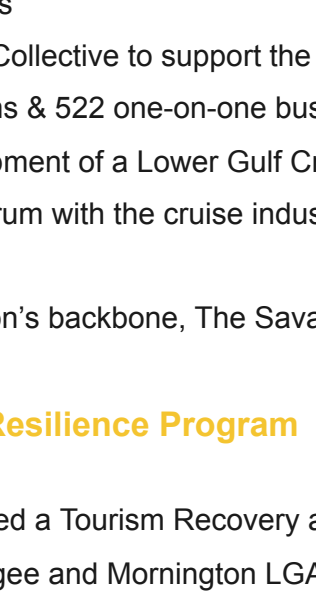
- advocates for better outcomes for the region and amplifies the voice of our member Councils, local industry and community
- facilitates people, ideas and resources to develop plans, strategies and initiatives that supports the region's economic and community development
- attracts investment to deliver projects that grow our region's economic and community development.

We cannot support the region's development without the ongoing support of our members - on behalf of the GSD Board, thank you for your ongoing support!

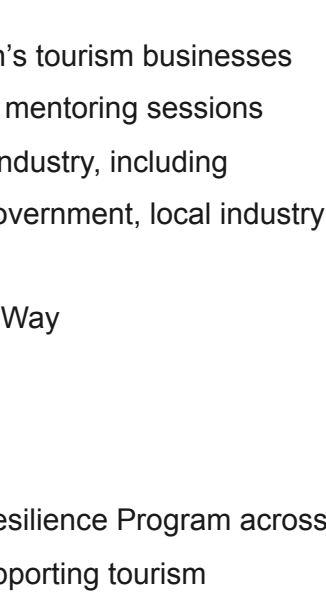
2025-26 GSD's Initiatives at a glance



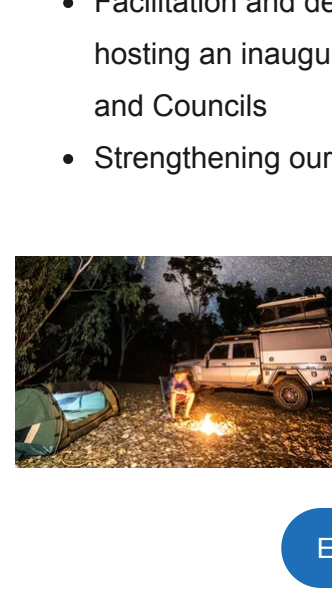
GSD Development & Growth
Building GSD's capacity, reach, finances and membership



Tourism Recovery & Resilience
Strengthening the Gulf Savannah visitor economy



Gulf Farm Stay Guide
Growing agritourism opportunities across the Gulf Savannah



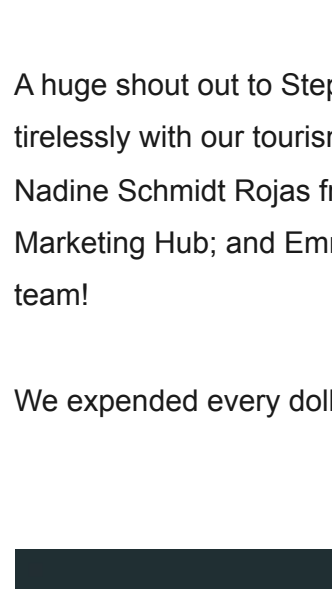
Port of Karumba Sustainable Development
Planning for a stronger sustainable Port future



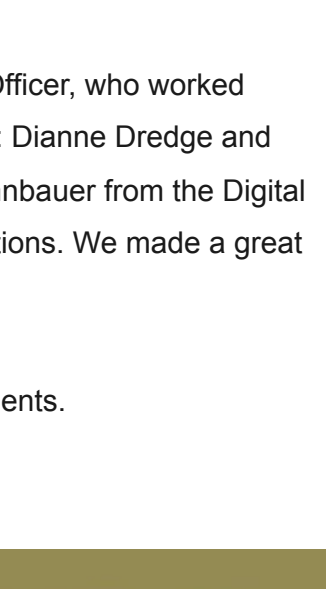
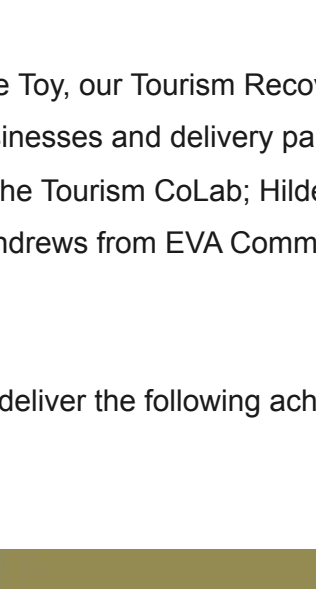
Regional Information & Cropping Hub
Building the evidence base for regional cropping development



Community Recovery & Resilience
Supporting stronger more resilient communities



Advocacy
Championing the Gulf Savannah's regional priorities



Explore GSD's 2025-26 achievements below

A year of organisational growth

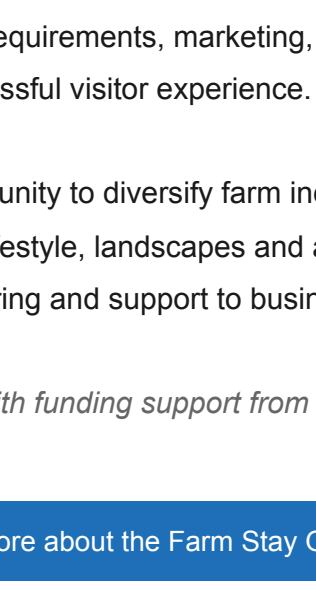
GSD continued to strengthen and grow its organisational capacity throughout 2025-26, with significant growth across operations, staffing, membership and systems. **Program achievements included**

- Employed a Tourism Recovery Officer
- Established a Gulf Savannah tourism business list
- Published a book – [Stories of the Gulf Savannah: Unveiling the heart of resilience](#) to document the stories of 14 tourism operators, tell the Gulf Savannah's story and document key policy insights
- Developed digital capability and capacity with 27 local tourism businesses
- 11 marketing campaigns
- Established a Tourism Collective to support the region's tourism businesses
- Held 24 business forums & 522 one-on-one business mentoring sessions
- Facilitation and development of a Lower Gulf Cruise Industry, including hosting an inaugural forum with the cruise industry, government, local industry and Councils
- Strengthening our region's backbone, The Savannah Way

Tourism Recovery and Resilience Program

During 2025-26, GSD delivered a Tourism Recovery and Resilience Program across Burke, Carpentaria, Doomadgee and Mornington LGAs, supporting tourism businesses and strengthening the region's visitor economy. **Program achievements included**

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Explore more of GSD's Tourism Initiatives

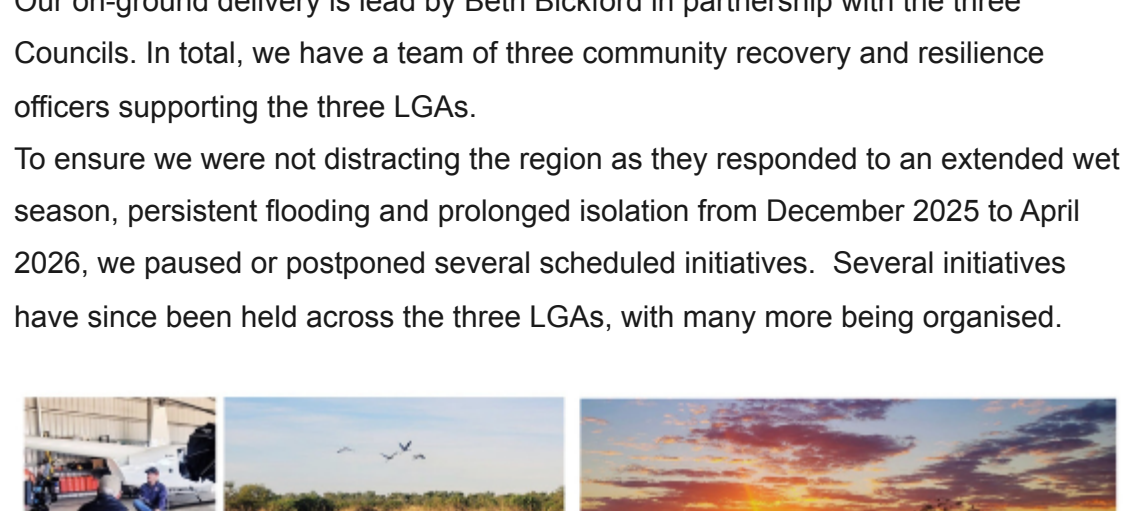
Delivered Tourism Recovery & Resilience Program

Concluded delivery of a \$596,000 joint Australian and Queensland Government funded program under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to strengthen Gulf Savannah's tourism businesses and visitor economy.

I am pleased to say we delivered amazing things and, with government's support, changed the way these programs are delivered. Our approach was deliberately focussed on one-on-one mentoring and delivery of programs to strengthen tourism business development. We have set a new benchmark for delivery for tourism recovery programs.

A huge shout out to Stephanie Toy, our Tourism Recovery Officer, who worked tirelessly with our tourism businesses and delivery partners: Dianne Dredge and Nadine Schmidt Rojas from The Tourism CoLab; Hilde Brunnbauer from the Digital Marketing Hub; and Emma Andrews from EVA Communications. We made a great team!

We expended every dollar to deliver the following achievements.



Check out GSD's website: www.gulfsavannahdevelopment.com.au for links to the [Stories of the Gulf Savannah: Unveiling the heart of resilience](#).

Our focus for 2026-27 includes:

- ongoing tourism development with a focus on GSD's tourism members
- facilitation and development of a lower Gulf cruise industry and FIFO itineraries
- supporting regenerative tourism development
- development of a marketing strategy
- establishing a GSD sub-committee to support our tourism members
- supporting Councils to support tourism businesses, and working within Doomadgee to support their aspirations to develop a local tourism and arts and culture industry
- continued advocacy to improve the roads and bridges along The Savannah Way.

Gulf Farm Stay Guide

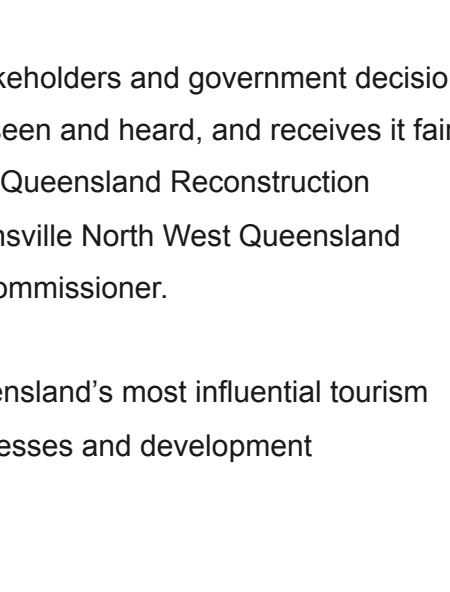
The Gulf Savannah is perfectly positioned to capitalise on the growing demand for agritourism, with its strong agricultural industry, rich historical and cultural connections, and sought-after outback landscapes.

GSD has developed a practical six-step Farm Stay Guide to support landholders and producers interested in diversifying into agritourism. The guide takes prospective operators through the farm stay opportunity, business planning and setup, regulations and local requirements, marketing, and the support available to help turn an idea into a successful visitor experience.

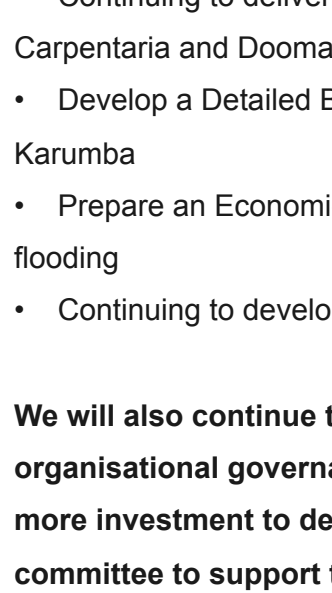
Farm stays provide an opportunity to diversify farm income while sharing the Gulf Savannah's unique country lifestyle, landscapes and agricultural stories with visitors. GSD can also provide mentoring and support to businesses as they work through the process.

This project was delivered with funding support from the Queensland Government.

Learn more about the Farm Stay Guide here



Port of Karumba sustainable development Preliminary Business Case



Over the last two years, GSD has been investigating the sustainable development of the Port of Karumba, a strategic infrastructure priority for the Gulf Savannah region.

- GSD delivered a desktop review of over 120 government and industry reports and feasibility studies, engaged over 1,000 regional stakeholders, and prepared an opportunities analysis report.
- Partnered with Regional Economic Advisory to prepare a Preliminary Business Case: view it online
- Costed 4 key road and bridge developments that are needed to support the region's economic and community development.

Our Port of Karumba focus for 2026-27 includes:

- Continued advocacy for the Port of Karumba development and investment
- Delivering a Detailed Business Case to support investment readiness for infrastructure and industry development
- Supporting industry development of mining, agriculture and tourism projects that can support the sustainable development of the Port of Karumba.

Explore the Port of Karumba Sustainable Development Project

Developed a Regional Information and Cropping Hub and Water Trading Simulator

GSD has developed a Regional Information and Cropping Hub by expanding an existing website to include additional resources such as a water trading simulator, cropping operations, Government and regional resources, and a chat platform. The website brings together a range of resources and information including land use, prime agricultural land, native title, cultural heritage, vegetation management and water trading platform to guide development of cropping by cattle producers and land owners.

A huge thanks to our delivery partners Verterra Ecological Engineering and Water Ledger Australia.

The Regional Information and Cropping Hub - Gulf website is now operational and is being maintained by GSD.

