

WTL-JC 7: Practice Change to Protect Wetlands - Moresby

Improving management of drainage systems on agricultural land within this area will have a significant impact on improving the values and function of vital wetlands downstream. Improvements in drainage management in this area will enhance water quality outcomes in the freshwater systems as well as coastal areas and the Great Barrier Reef.

This strategy delivers on these Regional Themes	Biodiversity	Biosecurity	Coastal Systems	Sustainable Industries	Water
	✓		✓	✓	✓
This strategy delivers on these Strategic Outcomes	Supportive, policies, plans and regulations	Collaborative, adaptive planning and action	Traditional Owner Benefits	Sustained and diverse resourcing	Community stewardship, values and action
		✓			✓
Outcome	<p>Promoting practice change, particularly around the management of drainage systems, will provide significant benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved water quality in freshwater river systems, in-shore lagoons and coastal and reef systems, including reduced sediment, pesticide and herbicide loads. ▪ Improved adaptability and resilience of our region's waterways to impacts of climate change. ▪ Improved aquatic habitat for fish breeding and movement. ▪ Enhanced social and community benefits through involvement in on-ground activities, resulting in strong community stewardship and ownership of projects. ▪ Increased community awareness, particularly for projects in high profile locations. 				
Justification	<p>The Moresby area contains the largest extent of mangrove system (type 22a and 22b) in the Wet Tropics, as well as extensive alluvium floodplains, coastal dunes and tidal flats. The existing systems provide a significant water filtering function; it is critical to maintain their health and retain / enhance their ability to filter nutrients and sediments before they enter the coastal system. Mapping has already indicated this area is a very high hotspot for DIN. Extension around improving drainage management will help protect waterways and will provide significant improvements to water quality in both the local freshwater systems and the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.</p>				
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Consult with all relevant stakeholders, including landholders, research organisations, industry, Traditional Owners and government, to clarify issues and develop a collaborative plan of action based on identified priorities. 2) Develop an extension package aimed at improving land management practices for better water quality outcomes. 3) Identify opportunities for funding and implementation, including cash and other contributions and develop a delivery mechanism relevant to the area and issue, which maximises landholder and community involvement and fosters long term stewardship. 4) Develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation plan, to assess the effectiveness of project activities and monitor environmental and capacity building outcomes. 				
Feasibility considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are already existing wetlands providing some level of function within this section of the landscape, which can be enhanced and rehabilitated through project activities. ✓ There are some unique vegetation communities found here (mangroves, swale vegetation), which will benefit from project activities. ✗ Effects of practice change are not always easy to monitor. ✗ Wetland areas can be difficult to work in and often have poor access, steep, uneven terrain, risk of flooding and crocodiles. 				