



Newsletter 1 - June 2015

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Message from the Chair: Our commitment to healthy waterways



Welcome to the first edition of the Mackay–Whitsunday Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership e-newsletter. The Partnership was launched in October 2014 as a collaboration between 28 partners from across the community, including Traditional Owners, farmers and fishers, industry, science, tourism and government. The Partnership is founded on a shared vision for the region’s rivers and reef—to

ensure they are healthy and contribute to a prosperous and iconic region where people visit, live, work and play.

One of the Partnership's objectives is to produce an annual report card on the health of the region's waterways, including the catchments and estuaries of the Don, Proserpine, Pioneer, O'Connell and Plane basins, and the inshore and offshore marine and reef areas. The Partnership will release its first pilot report card in late 2015.

To develop the report card, the Partnership is using the best available independent science, including results from a range of regional monitoring programs. The report card will help community, industry, science, tourism and government work together to determine how and where we can do more to look after our waterways. Since the launch of the Partnership, the project team has undertaken a lot of work to develop the report card. I hope you enjoy reading about this important project.

Di Tarte

Chair, Mackay-Whitsunday Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership

New website

We have established a website which will provide the latest information on the work of the Partnership.

To find out more about the Partnership, who the Partners are, and the report card, please visit:

<http://healthyriverstoreef.org.au>

Hay Point Port site visit

Following the second Partnership meeting in March 2015, Ricci Churchill from Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal took a number of Partners on a tour of Hay Point Port. The Partners enjoyed exploring the port, and learning about the environmental management measures in place.



L-R: Bronwyn Story (QRC), Ricci Churchill (DBCT), Chloe Schauble (GBRMPA), Kim Delaney (Reef Catchments), Scott Crawford (NQ Dry Tropics), Simone Voysey (Secretariat, EHP), Kevin Kane (NQBP), Di Tarte (Chair), David Brewer (CSIRO), and Claire Andersen (EHP)

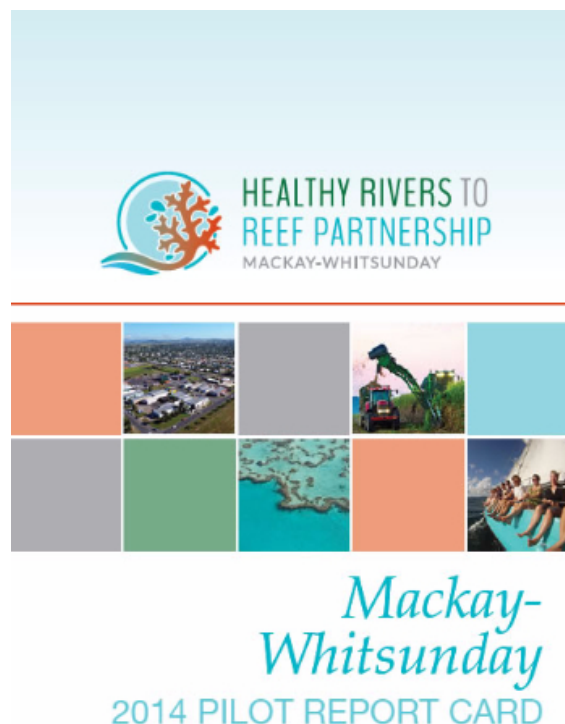
University of Maryland assists with report card design

In February 2015, Partners and members of the Technical Working Group came together for a workshop run by the University of Maryland to develop a mock-up of the report card. The group discussed the layout and key elements to be included.

Heath Kelsey, Program Director (Integration and Application Network) at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, ran the workshop, drawing on his extensive experience to guide the Partners through the process. Participants agreed that the workshop helped them better understand the process of developing a report card. The workshop was profiled in Maryland's newsletter.

<http://ian.umces.edu/blog/2015/03/09/mackay-report-card-workshop-mackay-queensland-australia-24-february-2015/>.





Program design nearing completion

Kim Delaney, Reef Catchments Technical Officer, along with the Technical Working Group, has been working hard to pull together the program design for the pilot report card. This has included developing objectives, and comparing existing report card indicators and scoring methods to provide the most relevant indicators for the Mackay-Whitsunday region.

The Reef Water Quality Protection Plan Independent Science Panel (ISP) reviews all scientific products produced by the Partnership. At its most recent meeting on 17 and 18 June, the ISP reviewed and endorsed the program design for the pilot report card.

For further information on the Program Design and to obtain a copy, please go the website <http://healthyriverstoreef.org.au>

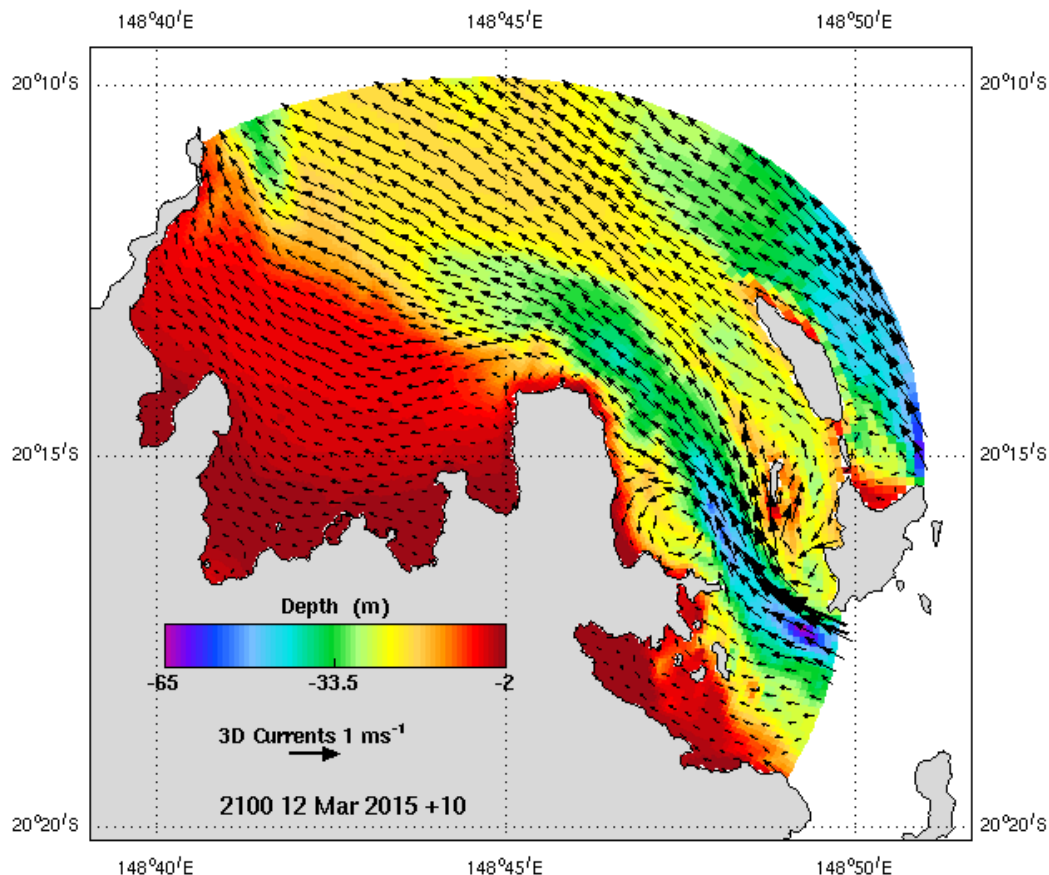


eReefs

eReefs is a collaborative project focused on the Great Barrier Reef which will produce products similar to those that the Bureau of Meteorology provides for weather. This information will benefit government agencies, reef managers, policy makers, researchers, industry and local communities.

eReefs is using the latest technologies to collate data, develop new and integrated modelling, and provide powerful visualisation, communication and reporting tools. The eReefs Project, which commenced in 2012, is a collaboration between the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, Australian Institute of Marine Science, the Queensland Government, supported by funding from the Australian Government, the BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance, and the Science and Industry Endowment Fund.

The project is undertaking modelling across the entire Great Barrier Reef, with a number of finer scale relocatable coastal models in a number of regions, including one in Mackay-Whitsunday, which will help support the Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership. We look forward to working with the eReefs team as the modelling develops.



Proposed RECOM configuration for Mackay-Whitsunday region showing the hydrodynamics for a brief period in March 2015.

Reef2050

The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan Implementation Strategy outlines how the Australian and Queensland governments will implement their overarching framework for protecting and managing the reef from 2015 to 2050. The implementation strategy identifies lead agencies, timeframes, and arrangements for reporting and governance. It also provides a summary of the progress to date and identifies how progress will be monitored and reported.

The Mackay-Whitsunday Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership is identified as a Water Quality action (WQA8) in the Reef 2050 Plan. For more information you can find the Implementation Strategy here: www.environment.gov.au/marine/qbr/publications/reef-2050-implementation-strategy.

2015/16 Partners

We are currently seeking new members for 2015/16 to continue the great work that the Partners have undertaken so far, and to further build on the strong relationships they have developed. For further information on becoming a member or to request a copy of the Value Proposition, please contact Secretariat at info@healthyriverstoreef.org.au or 3330 5792.

How to subscribe

Please help us spread the word about the Partnership and all the great work we are achieving by forwarding this newsletter on to your colleagues and networks. The more people involved the better! You can subscribe here <http://healthyriverstoreef.org.au/contact/>