

HEALTHY RIVERS TO

REEF PARTNERSHIP

THE MACKAY - WHITSUNDAY - ISAAC 2020 REPORT CARD

Reporting on waterway health data collected between July 2019 and June 2020





WHAT GOES INTO A GRADE?

Waterway condition is graded from A to E. Final grades are determined by a combination of water quality (sediment, nutrients and pesticides), habitat and fish community indicators. This report card assesses the condition of freshwater, estuarine and marine waters in the region based on data collected between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020.

Habitat and Hydrology This index reports on the condition of important aquatic and streambank habitat types, waterway connectivity and streamflow characteristics. Want to learn more about an index or grade?

Water

Grade

Mabitat and

Ovdrolog

Fish

Scan me!



LITTER METRIC 💥

Data from the Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDI) Database is being included in the Report Card, at a site level for the first time thanks to our new partner, Tangaroa Blue Foundation. The AMDI enables volunteers and organisations to collect and share litter clean-up data on a nationally accessible database.

> AUSTRALIAN MARINE DEBRIS INITIATIVE





CARMILA

CITIZEN SCIENCE TO CONTINUE IN THE WHITSUNDAYS

The Whitsunday Water Quality Monitoring Blueprint for Tourism Operators project will continue for another six months until January 2022, thanks to additional funding from North Queensland Bulk Ports. The citizen science project is increasing community understanding of water quality and reef health in the Whitsundays. Researchers from James Cook University (JCU) have trained 17 crew members from four tourism operator businesses to collect marine data from key sites at Cairn Beach (in the Hook passage) and Tongue Bay.



A number of report cards are produced in relation to the environmental condition of the Great Barrier Reef, including this one, with different purposes and coverage. The **Reef Water Quality Report Card**, jointly produced by the Queensland and Australian governments focuses on tracking towards the **Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan** targets (<u>www.reefplan.qld.gov.au</u>). The regional partnerships produce regionally focused report cards, providing an annual snapshot of ecosystem health and water quality condition of local waterways. For more details see the **Report Card Explainer** in the report card section of our website and the report cards for **Dry Tropics**, **Wet Tropics**, **Fitzroy Basin** and **Gladstone Harbour** to find out how waterways in other regions have fared.

OUR STORY SO FAR...

2014

Partnership launched in October 2014.

21 Partners signed a memorandum of understanding demonstrating their support for waterway health in the region.



2021

125

on-ground sites monitored in the marine zones (including litter)

on-ground sites monitored in freshwater basins and estuaries

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Citizen science data integration has increased confidence and community connection to the Report Card

> THE MACKAY - W 2019 REPORT

CARD



COMING SOON

LATER IN 2021

Look out for our 2021 Stewardship Report for news on how the region's industries and local communities are responding to the challenge of improving waterway health in the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region.

IN THE NEXT REPORT CARD

• Pesticide risk in the Northern Inshore Zone will be reported for the first time, using data from North Queensland Bulk Ports Abbot Point water quality monitoring program.

2018 REPORT

CARD

- Seagrass condition in the Southern Inshore Zone will be reported for the first time due to Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal and Dalrymple Bay Infrastructure funding of the Southern Inshore Monitoring Program for the last five years.
- The Partnership collaborated with local councils to look at urban water management in the region, which will be showcased for the first time.
- Cultural Heritage assessments, led by the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac Traditional Owner Reference Group, will be updated.

ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

Our diverse and resilient industries are an integral part of the region's economy. Highlighted below are changes in our regional economy across the three years leading into and including the data reporting for this report card. From March 2020, effects resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the region, predominantly the hospitality and tourism sectors. Temporary and casual workers were significantly impacted.

Environmental Indicators

HEALTHY RIVER



OUR VISION

Launched in October 2014, the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership has come together with a shared vision for healthy rivers and Reef contributing to a prosperous and iconic region where people visit, live, work and play. The Partnership is a collaboration between community, Traditional Owners, farmers and fishers, industry, science, tourism and government who recognise that more can be achieved by working together.

JOIN US

Is your organisation interested in becoming a partner? Contact us to find out how to join a leading group of organisations helping to build and shape our community's understanding of waterway health and how we respond.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT **OF COUNTRY**

The Partnership

acknowledges the continuing land and sea country management of the Traditional Owner groups within the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region and Great Barrier Reef whose rich cultures, heritage values, enduring connections and shared efforts protect the land and Reef for future generations.

OUR PARTNERS





The Partnership acknowledges the extensive input into the science behind the report card from the Regional Report Card Technical Working Group, the Reef 2050 Plan Independent Science Panel, and our scientific friends, including; Australian Institute of Marine Science, Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, Central Queensland University, Department of Environment and Science, Department of Resources, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, James Cook University, The University of Queensland and the

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