



HEALTHY RIVERS TO  
REEF PARTNERSHIP  
MACKAY-WHITSUNDAY-ISAAC

# 2022-23 *Annual Report*







# A message from **CHARLIE MORGAN**

**Healthy Rivers to Reef  
Partnership Chair**

I am honoured to share with you the remarkable progress and achievements of the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership across FY23. Our Partners represent a wide range of key sectors including resources, agriculture, science, ports, community, conservation, tourism, traditional owners, all tiers of government, and more.

The collective knowledge and insight leveraged when it comes to waterway health, is considerable.

In FY23, the Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership, comprising 34 leading organisations, exerted action, collaboration and influence in the Mackay, Whitsunday and Isaac communities.

Through joint investment, we addressed critical data gaps, forged collaborations that drove on-ground and impactful activity, and engaged with a broad spectrum of stakeholders and communities.

The release of the 2021 Report Card in July 2022 revealed a range of waterway health scores from A to D across the region's 18 key graded areas, reflecting results for 5 freshwater basins, 8 estuary areas and 5 marine zones. Results highlighted where more information is needed, where achievements can be celebrated, and

where more work and investment is needed.

We also celebrated the release of the Above and Beyond Stewardship Report in October 2022, highlighting the many projects being undertaken by our Partners to improve waterway and environmental health, and drive regional sustainability.

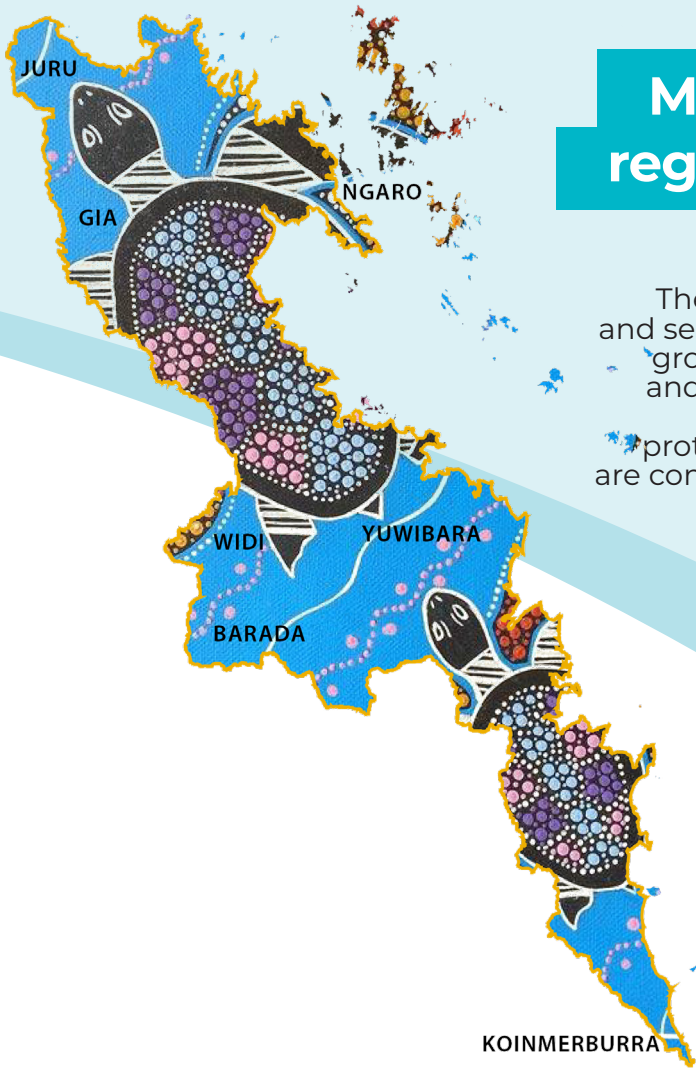
The breadth and variety of activities across our region is worth celebrating as partners continue to draw on their own strengths and join forces with others – all working together for waterway health.

We are proud to work with the Traditional Owners of our region and excitingly in FY23 the Partnership also committed to supporting the development of a Koinmerburra Healthy Country Plan.

Looking forward, our Partnership's strength lies in its diversity, unity, and commitment to a common goal: the wellbeing and longevity of our waterways. We recognise waterways – from rivers to reef – are truly a critical asset, economically, socially and environmentally. I extend my deepest gratitude to each member for their tireless efforts and look forward to another year of shared successes and growth.

Working with

## Mackay, Whitsunday, Isaac region's First Nations people

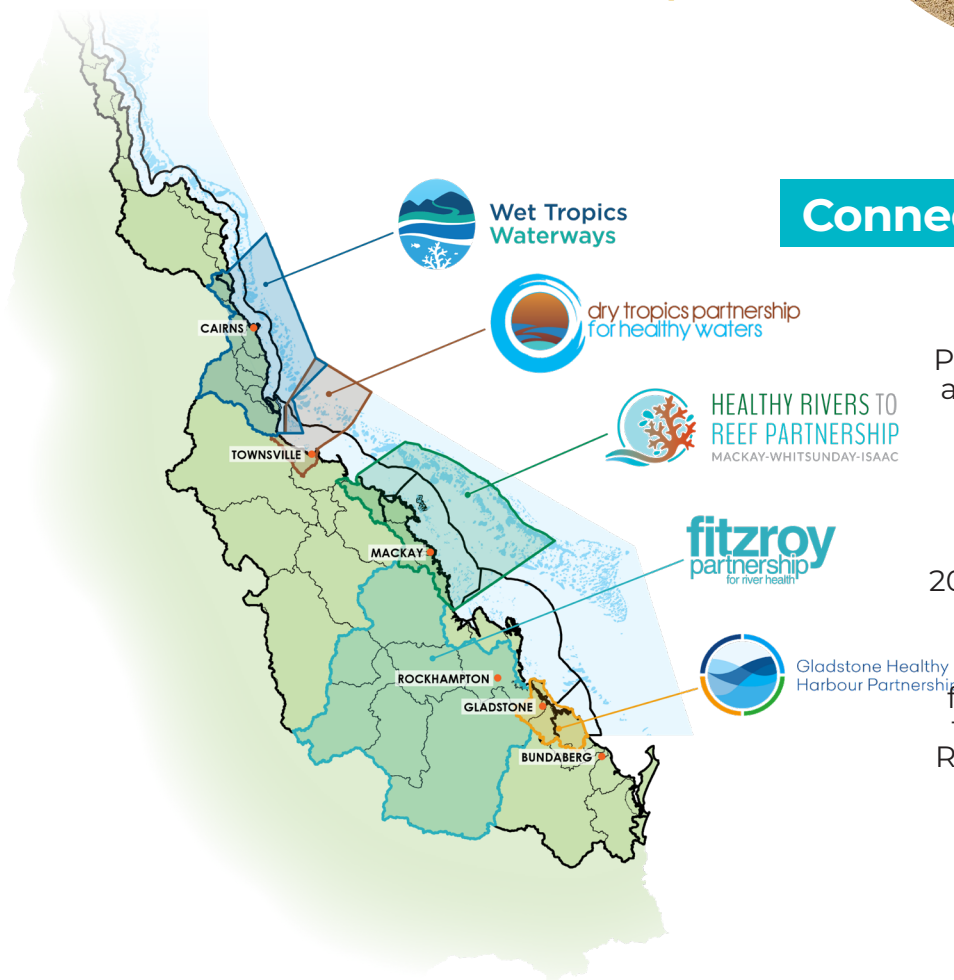


### Acknowledgement of Country

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. We are committed to working together with our Traditional Owners when it comes to waterway health.



## Connecting Queensland



We are proud to be one of five Regional Report Card Partnerships (RRCPs) working across Queensland to provide an annual snapshot of ecosystem health and local waterway health.

RRCPs are one of a number of activities under the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan and are a vital part of a nested approach to wider Reef planning, part of the framework that also includes the wider Reef Water Quality Report Card which focuses on tracking towards Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan targets.

# 2022-23 *Our People*

## Technical Working Group

**Di Tarte**

*Chair*

**David Moffatt**

*Department of Environment and Science*

**Dr Alex Carter**

*James Cook University*

**Dr Andrew Moss**

*Department of Environment and Science*

**Ken Rhode**

*Department of Resources*

**Carlos Bueno**

*Reef Catchments*

**Glynis Orr**

*Department of Resources*

**Dr Michael Newham**

*Department of Environment and Science*

**Angus Thompson**

*Australian Institute of Marine Science*

**Phil Trendell**

*Department of Agriculture and Fisheries*

**Dr Paulina Kaniewska**

*Office of the Great Barrier Reef and World Heritage, Department of Environment and Science*

**Dr Jamie Corfield**

*Office of the Great Barrier Reef and World Heritage, Department of Environment and Science*

**Trent Power**

*Catchment Solutions*

**Dr Nicole Flint**

*CQUniversity*

**Nicola Stokes**

*North Queensland Bulk Ports*

**Michael Holmes**

*Department of Environment and Science*

**Dr Reinier Mann**

*Department of Environment and Science*

**Dr Paula Cartwright**

*James Cook University*

**Dr Michael Rasheed**

*James Cook University*

## Independent Science Panel

**Dr John Rolfe**

*A/Independent Chair,*

*CQ University*

expertise: resource economics

**Dr Peter Doherty**

*formerly Australian Institute of Marine Science*

expertise: marine, ecology and modelling

**Dr Eva Abal**

*International River Foundation*

expertise: water quality and ecosystem health target setting and monitoring, information integration, synthesis, reporting and communication

**Dr Graham Bonnett**

*CSIRO*, expertise: sugarcane production

**Dr Andrew Ash**

*formerly CSIRO*

expertise: grazing land ecology, climate impacts and adaptation

**Mr Hugh Yorkston**

*formerly Great Barrier Reef*

*Marine Park Authority*

expertise: marine monitoring, coastal ecosystems

**Dr Jenny Stauber**

*CSIRO*, expertise:

ecotoxicology, environmental risk assessment, contaminants, water and sediment quality guidelines

**Dr Bill Venables**

*formerly CSIRO*, expertise: mathematics and statistics

## Management Committee

**Charlie Morgan**

*Chair*

**Al Grundy**

*Mackay Isaac Tourism*

**Nancy Pratt**

*Pioneer Catchment Landcare*

**Robyn Birkett**

*Mackay Regional Council*

**Katrina Dent**

*Reef Catchments*

**Kev Kane**

*North Queensland Bulk Ports*

**Kirili Lamb**

*CANEGROWERS Mackay*

**Rachel D'Arcy**

*Office of the Great Barrier Reef and World Heritage, Department of Environment and Science*



# 2022-23 *Our People*

## Staff

**Jaime Newborn**  
*Executive Officer*

**Brie Sherow**  
*Senior Technical Officer*

**Cinzia Cattaneo**  
*Project Officer*

**Rebekah Smith**  
*Communications Officer*



*Thank you*  
to our host

**REEF  
CATCHMENTS**



## Statement of Expenditure

**Income:** \$1,548,200  
**Expenditure:** \$710,200  
**Carry forward funds:** \$838,000



In June 2023, the Partnership said farewell to Julie Boyd after five years as the Partnership's Chair. Julie's exceptional leadership and strong advocacy sees the Partnership well positioned for an exciting next chapter. We welcomed Charlie Morgan as the Partnership's new, incoming Chair in July 2023.

As a former Mayor of Mackay, Julie's strength in advocating for action in protecting and maintaining waterway health was greatly appreciated by the Partners and team, as was her strong connections in the natural resource sector and broader community.

After five years in the role, Julie has seen a lot of changes. Over her tenure, the Partnership grew to 34 members, and in 2019 we published the first Stewardship Report – a compendium of Partner projects showcasing what the Partnership is doing to maintain or improve waterway health.

Julie said she was most proud of seeing the different partner organisations coming together for one common purpose.

"The beauty of the Partnership is the diversity of organisations that are seated around the table, united by the interests of protecting their local environment," Julie said.

"There aren't many situations where you would have these different stakeholders – from all levels of government, agriculture, and industry, working with environmental organisations and community groups in a truly collaborative way for the benefit of the community.

"The Partnership really is unique, and I'm proud to have been a part of it – as should all the Partners."



# 2022-23 Achievements

## PARTNERSHIP PROWESS

# 34

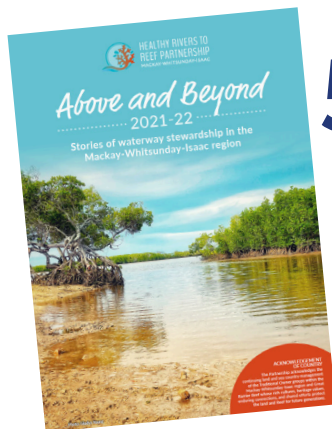
**dedicated partners** working together to improve waterway health  
**representing key sectors**



in the MWI region including resources, agriculture, science, ports, community, conservation, tourism, traditional owners, and all tiers of government.

# 62%

of our Partners are **founding members**, reflecting the high value of the Partnership.



# 5<sup>th</sup>

**Above and Beyond Stewardship Report** released (October 2022)

Sharing **20** partner stories representing significant waterway health & environmental projects in the MWI region

**400** copies printed and distributed

# 8<sup>th</sup>

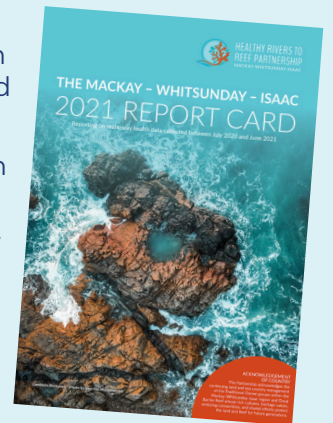
**MWI Waterway Health Report Card** released (August 2022)

Sharing valuable **waterway data** with local community and decision-makers

Providing information to support **strong regional investment**

Accompanying technical reports provide **important information** to our region

**1,000** copies printed and distributed



Media coverage in **7** regional outlets

## COLLABORATION & CONNECTION

# 16

**community events**

workshops and forums attended



# 2

partnership meetings

# 5

management committee meetings held to guide direction of the partnership



# 11

 news articles published

# 68,511

 people reached

on Facebook with **52** posts and **12** paid advertisements

# 9,250

 people reached

on LinkedIn since the page was launched in **August 2022**





# 2022-23 Achievements

## INVESTMENT & ADVOCACY



**\$795,221** contributed by our Partners and investors in waterway health

The Partnership commits to supporting the development of a **Koinmerburra Healthy Country Plan**



**1st** Southern seagrass scores published

in the 2022 Report Card after more than 5 years of seagrass data for the Southern Inshore Marine Zone



**\$415,000** secured for continued monitoring of the **Southern Inshore Marine Zone** over the next three years (FY24 to FY26)



**3** valued council partners

Mackay Regional Council, Whitsunday Regional Council, Isaac Regional Council engaged in the second round of Urban Water Stewardship Framework assessment workshops, contributing to a total UWSF grade.



**Interactive dashboard**

provides access to the results of the region's latest human dimensions survey, reflecting how our community values, views and uses waterways (survey conducted in December 2021)

## LEARNING ABOUT LITTER

### Whitsunday Gross Pollutant Trap Project

completed thanks to funding support from the Queensland Government's Community Sustainability Action grant program, and in partnership with Whitsunday Regional Council and Tangaroa Blue Foundation

Developed a **source reduction plan**

to reduce cigarette butt pollution

**15** stormwater drain traps installed at key sites in Proserpine and the Whitsundays



**22** cigarette 'butt' bins

provided to two key venues in main streets in Airlie Beach and Proserpine as part of a source reduction plan



**17,125** litter items recorded by volunteers, weighing nearly **40kg**

Data collected from the audits was submitted to the **Australian Marine Debris Initiative** (AMDI) Database and included in the **Regional Report Card**





## Our Partners



## CONTACT

Jaime Newborn, Executive Officer  
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[www.healthyriverstoreef.org.au](http://www.healthyriverstoreef.org.au)

