



HEALTHY RIVERS TO  
REEF PARTNERSHIP  
MACKAY-WHITSUNDAY-ISAAC

# 2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

July 2024 - June 2025



*Working together for healthy rivers and Reef*  
in the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac Region

# A message from **CHARLIE MORGAN**

## Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership Chair

In 2024-25, the Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership proudly celebrated ten years of action, collaboration and impact. For a decade, we've been at the heart of our region's journey toward healthier waterways – turning data into decisions and partnerships into progress.

Through science-based insights and locally driven collaboration, we've helped shape how our community understands, protects and values the rivers, estuaries and reef systems that sustain us. Together with our dedicated partners, we continue to champion a shared vision for thriving waterways and a resilient future



for our environment, our people and our region.

The strength of this Partnership lies in its people — the expertise, commitment, and collaboration of our partners makes these programs possible.



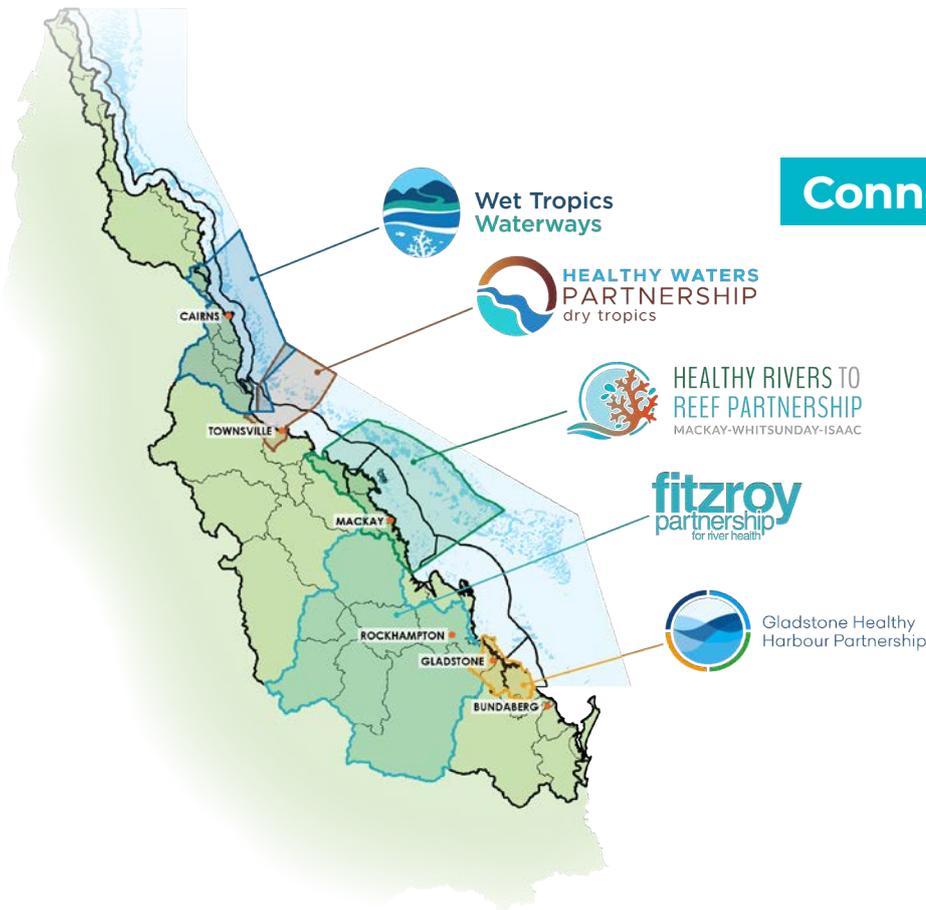
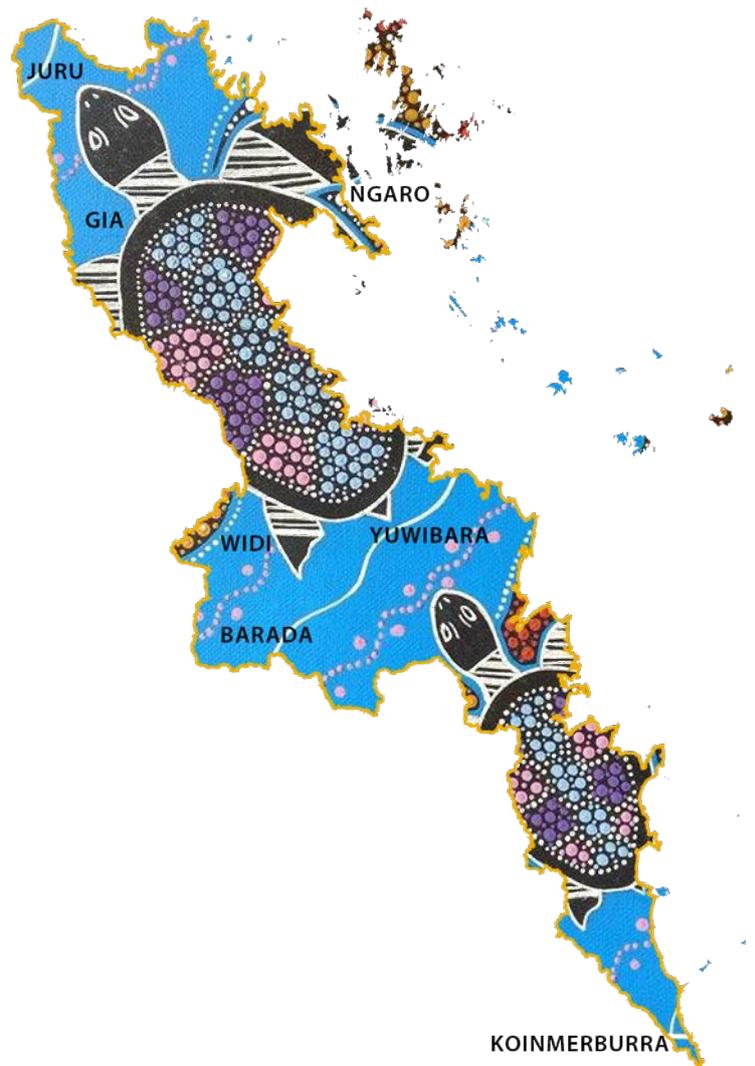
**10 Years of regionally specific  
environmental condition reporting**

*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.

# 2024-25 Achievements

## PARTNERSHIP



# 38

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.

# \$1m

contributed by our partners and investors in waterway health.

### Statement of Expenditure

**Income:** \$1,917,839  
**Expenditure:** \$1,044,071  
**Carry forward funds:** \$873,769

# 2

new organisations, Earthwatch Australia, and Broadstrokes Sustainability joined as partners.



### Science, culture and community

- Expanded Project Blueprint in partnership with Traditional Owners, tourism operators, and industry, gathering unique water quality data for high-priority marine sites.
- Supported the development of the Koinjmal People Plan for Healthy Country 2025-2035 and integration into the Yuwi Healthy Country Plan 2023-2032.

# 2024-25 Achievements

## COLLABORATION & CONNECTION



43

community events attended including workshops, forums and field trips

24

meetings with external stakeholders

4

management committee meetings

4

partnership meetings



Partners came together for a Theory of Change Workshop to inform our new Strategic Plan



Facilitated Round 3 of the Urban Water Stewardship Framework program with 3 council partners

# 2024-25 Achievements

## COMMUNITY

### Submerged in Our Region



Our 10th Report Card release was celebrated through a community focused event, Submerged in Our Region Art Exhibition, opened by Mackay Mayor Greg Williamson.



# 200

plus guests attended the exhibition launch.



# 2024-25 Achievements

# 128

competition entries showcasing the beauty and value of waterways in the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region, and our connection to them, from rivers to Reef.



Artworks included:

# 77

mixed media

# 35

photography

# 8

sculptures

# 6

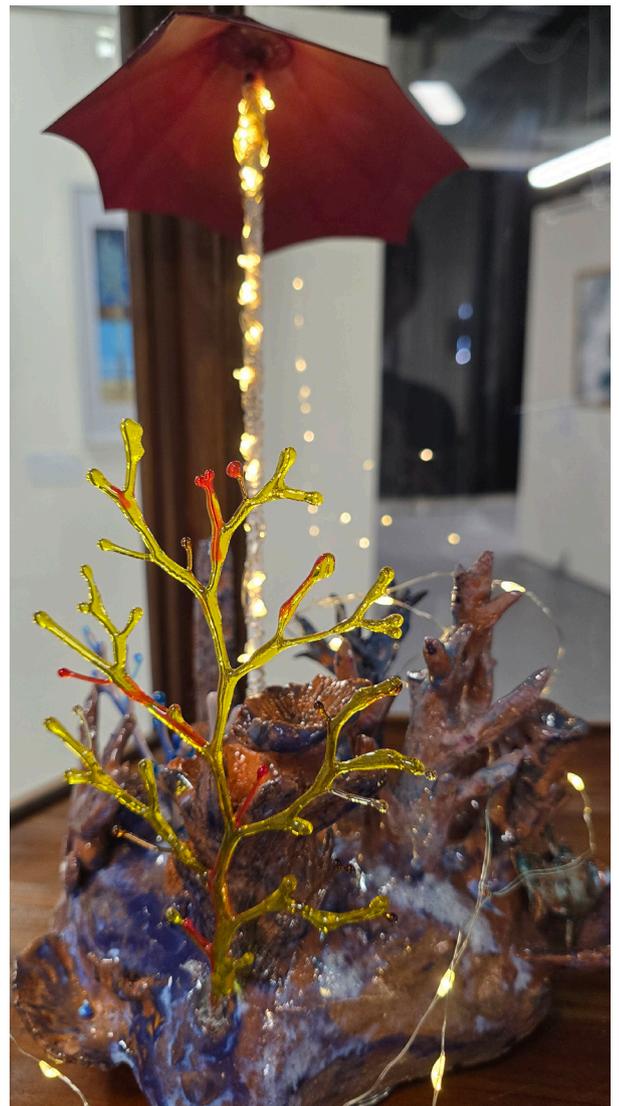
short films

# 4

writing

# 3

installations



# 2024-25 Achievements

## COMMUNITY

### STEM Schools Program

Commencing in July 2024, Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership teamed up with expert educators STEM Punks Education to inspire and engage students in science-related fields, using the Waterway Health Report Card to provide local context and real-world connection.

During full-day workshops, students learn about different waterway pressures and hear from local STEM professionals about their career journey. Students learn coding skills to collect data in real-time, and develop skills in design-thinking, prototyping, problem solving and teamwork to help solve a water quality challenge.



#### PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Mackay North State High School  
Mackay State High School  
Mirani State School  
Whitsunday Anglican School  
Bowen State High School  
Carlisle Christian College  
Mackay West State School  
Proserpine State High School  
Sarina State High School  
Catherine McAuley College



#### PARTNER VOLUNTEERS

Mackay CANEGROWERS  
BMA  
Pioneer Catchment Landcare  
Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal  
Reef Check Australia  
Ark Energy  
Sarina Landcare Catchment  
Management Association  
Reef Catchments

*The Healthy Rivers to Reef STEM Innovator Schools Program 2024 was supported by funding from the Queensland Government Engaging Science Grants.*

# 2024-25 Achievements



## HEALTHY RIVERS TO REEF STEM SCHOOLS PROGRAM 2024-25 IMPACT

10

workshops  
held across 10  
schools

9

STEM  
professionals  
volunteered  
their time

19

school staff  
involved

356

students attended workshops  
across the Mackay and  
Whitsunday region

### Student feedback survey results:

75%

said the workshops  
changed the way  
they thought about  
STEM

77%

would like to attend  
the workshop again

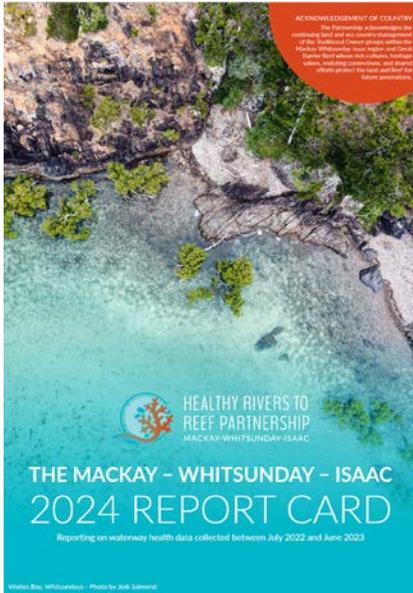
85%

said it was a good  
way to learn about  
STEM



# 2024-25 Achievements

## RESULTS & PUBLICATIONS



# 10<sup>th</sup>

MWI Waterway Health Report Card and technical reports (released July 2024)

# 800

Report Cards printed and distributed

### PARTNERSHIP REACH

# 117,000+

people reached through social media

# 34

LinkedIn posts

# 54

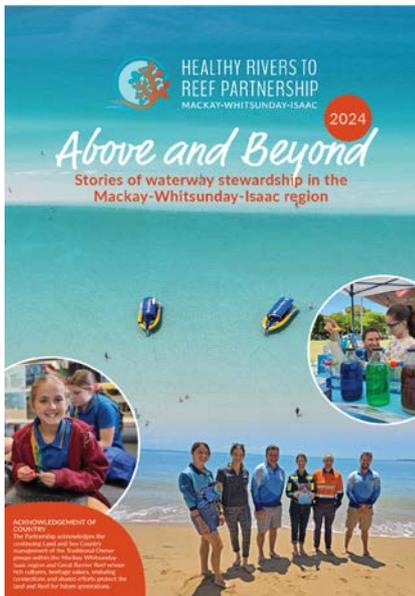
Facebook posts

# 3

online news articles

# 6

media releases



### Make a difference with MACKAY MANGROVE WATCH

Waterwatch Australia has launched a new waterway stewardship program in Mackay to collect baseline data on mangrove and marsh condition and raise awareness of the important ecosystem.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY** The Partnership acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region and pays respect to their Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge the traditional owners and their connection to the land and water and their role in the region's history.

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# 7<sup>th</sup>

Above and Beyond Stewardship Report released online

# 400

Stewardship Reports printed and distributed

# 21

stories of work being done to monitor, maintain and improve waterways

# 23

partner profiles included alongside Stewardship stories

# 2024-25 Achievements



Conducted Human Dimension social surveys with CSIRO to find out local perceptions of waterways in the MWI region.

2 project videos released featuring interviews with Partnership staff, researchers, Traditional Owners and partners



Project Blueprint

Have your say on our local waterways

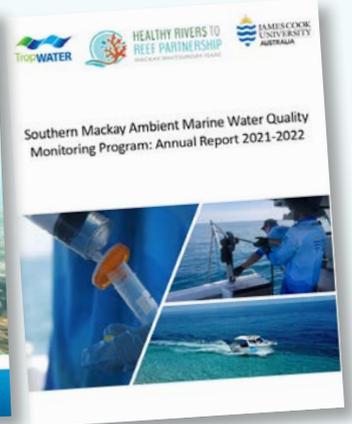
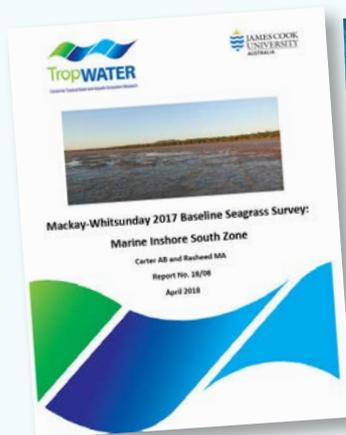
&  
WIN!

Complete our survey and go in the draw to win a new iPhone 15 valued at over \$1,500.



Southern Inshore Monitoring Program

Shared the only publicly available marine data for the Southern Inshore Zone through the leading **Southern Inshore Monitoring Program**, funded by Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal Pty Ltd (DBCT Pty Ltd) and Dalrymple Bay Infrastructure (DBI).



# 2024-25 *Our People*

## Partners

Ark Energy  
Australian Government  
BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA)  
Broadstrokes Sustainability  
CANEGROWERS Mackay Catchment Solutions  
Central Queensland Soil Health Systems  
Conservation Volunteers Australia  
CQUniversity  
CSIRO  
Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal Pty Ltd  
Eco Barge Clean Seas  
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
Isaac Regional Council  
Mackay and District Turtle Watch  
Mackay Conservation Group  
Mackay Isaac Tourism  
Mackay Recreational Fishers Alliance  
Mackay Regional Council  
Earthwatch Australia  
North Queensland Bulk Ports  
NQ Dry Tropics  
Queensland Government  
Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Inc  
Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA)  
Queensland Resources Council  
Queensland Water and Land Carers  
Reef Catchments  
Reef Check Australia  
Regional Development Australia (Greater Whitsundays)  
Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association  
Sugar Research Australia  
Tangaroa Blue Foundation  
Tourism Whitsundays  
Traditional Owner Reference Group (Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac)  
Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Ltd  
Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association  
Whitsunday Regional Council

## Management Committee

**Charlie Morgan**  
*Chair*

**Alisha Stewart**  
*Deputy Chair  
Reef Catchments*

**Donna Jackson**  
*Pioneer Catchment  
Landcare*

**Jeff Stewart-Harris**  
*Mackay Isaac Tourism*

**Kirili Lamb**  
*CANEGROWERS Mackay*

**Nicola Stokes**  
*North Queensland Bulk Ports*

**Rachel D'Arcy**  
*Office of the Great Barrier Reef and World Heritage,  
Department of Environment and Science*

**Robyn Birkett**  
*Mackay Regional Council*

## Staff

**Jaime Newborn**  
*Executive Officer*

**Brie Sherow**  
*Senior Technical Officer*

**Cinzia Cattaneo**  
*Project Officer*

**Rebekah Smith**  
*Communications Officer*



*Thank you to our  
host organisation  
Reef Catchments*



# 2024-25 *Our People*

## Technical Working Group

**Di Tarte**  
*Chair*

**Carlos Bueno**  
*Reef Catchments*

**Dr Alex Carter**  
*James Cook University's  
Centre for Tropical Water  
and Aquatic Ecosystem  
Research (JCU TropWATER)*

**Dr Paula Cartwright**  
*James Cook University's  
Centre for Tropical Water  
and Aquatic Ecosystem  
Research (JCU TropWATER)*

**Dr Jamie Corfield**  
*Office of the Great Barrier  
Reef and World Heritage,  
Department of the  
Environment, Tourism,  
Science and Innovation*

**Dr Nicole Flint**  
*CQUniversity*

**Dr Katie Hillyer**  
*Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**Dr Paulina Kaniewska**  
*Office of the Great Barrier  
Reef and World Heritage,  
Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**Dr Reinier Mann**  
*Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**David Moffatt**  
*Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**Dr Andrew Moss**  
*Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**Glynis Orr**  
*Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**Trent Power**  
*Catchment Solutions*

**Dr Michael Rasheed**  
*James Cook University's Centre  
for Tropical Water and Aquatic  
Ecosystem Research (JCU  
TropWATER)*

**Ken Rhode**  
*Department of the  
Environment, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation*

**Nicola Stokes**  
*North Queensland Bulk Ports*

**Angus Thompson**  
*Australian Institute of Marine  
Science*

**Phil Trendell**  
*Department of Agriculture and  
Fisheries*

## 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  
RiverFoundation*  
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*



## Our Partners



## CONTACT

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