

R-CM 17: Water Conservation Measures

Develop and deliver programs and initiatives to conserve water on rural and urban land.

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>Water conservation measures will bring a range of benefits to the region, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Healthier waterways, with sufficient environmental flows to sustain the aquatic environments. ▪ More security in water availability for a range of urban and rural purposes. ▪ Reduced reliance on new water infrastructure to maintain access to sufficient water.
Justification	<p>Our water resources are under increasing pressure and competing demands, from urban populations, agricultural use and environmental flows. The uncertainty of a changing climate adds further complexity to water use and management, with predictions of changes in weather patterns and rainfall events and changes in urban and rural water requirements. Initiatives to conserve water could involve education programs and on-ground activities, such as riparian restoration, urban stormwater management and changes to irrigation techniques.</p>
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Strengthen or establish partnerships between key water users and managers in the region eg. local councils, state government, industry, agricultural enterprises and environment groups. 2) Identify areas / sectors of unnecessarily high water use, to identify target audiences and guide the development of water conservation programs. 3) Investigate a range of innovative and conventional approaches to water conservation eg. education programs, incentives for low water use, better soil moisture and water use monitoring equipment. 4) Implement and monitor water conservation programs and, where necessary, adapt the programs.
Feasibility considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Wet Tropics region currently experiences a more stable rainfall pattern than many areas in Australia. ✓ There many innovative farmers in the region, with a good capacity to think outside the square and develop and implement water saving initiatives. ✓ The cost of purchasing agricultural water and infrastructure provides good impetus to implement water saving initiatives. ✗ Because we rarely experience severe water shortages, there is a perception that we don't need to be careful with water use.

Local Landscape Projects	Local Landscape Project	Location
	ST9 Water Saving	Southern Tablelands