

R-CM 9: Priority Waterways Restoration

Systematically and strategically conduct restoration projects in priority locations to improve the health of our region's waterways, including the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.

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>Systematic and strategic repair and restoration of priority waterways will bring multiple benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved water quality in freshwater river systems, in-shore lagoons and reef systems, including reduced sediment, pesticide and herbicide loads. ▪ Improved adaptability and resilience of our region's waterways to impacts of climate change. ▪ Increased habitat and connectivity, benefiting a range of terrestrial and aquatic species. ▪ Enhanced social and community benefits through involvement in on-ground activities, resulting in strong community stewardship and ownership of projects. ▪ Reduced bank erosion and sediment loads in waterways and coastal systems. ▪ Positive biosecurity outcomes, through long-term management of weeds and removal of pest habitat. ▪ Increased community awareness, particularly for restoration projects in high profile locations. ▪ Increased recreational and tourism opportunities around waterways. ▪ Providing potential for Traditional Owner involvement and benefits. 				
Justification	<p>Community support and involvement in waterway restoration projects is high, based largely on a history of successful projects delivered by well-respected community groups. We can capitalise on this support by building on existing projects and transferring successful methodology to additional areas. A systematic approach to waterway restoration, based on agreed criteria and priorities, will provide extensive benefits to the health of our waterways. The region's waterways have a high significance to Traditional Owners, and waterway restoration projects provide opportunities for Traditional Owner involvement.</p>				
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review existing catchment plans and other relevant data to begin determining priority locations and feasibility, as well as identifying gaps in information. 2) Investigate available decision support tools which take into account a broad range of social, environmental and financial considerations, including possible implications of climate change. 3) Consult with all relevant stakeholders, including landholders, research organisations, industry, Traditional Owners and government, to develop a regional, collaborative prioritisation framework and plan of action. 4) Identify opportunities for funding and implementation, including cash and other contributions. 				

Feasibility considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There is already strong community capacity and support to plan and implement successful waterway restoration projects. ✓ There are many supportive landholders willing to contribute to riparian restoration activities on their properties. ✓ Many catchment areas already have existing plans, which are based on comprehensive consultation and prioritising. ✗ The task can seem overwhelming and riparian restoration projects will require a long-term commitment to ensure success – difficult for many community groups, given short-term funding arrangements and volunteer succession. ✗ Riparian areas can be difficult to work in and often have poor access, steep, uneven terrain, risk of flooding and increased frost risk (Tableland areas). ✗ We need to be realistic – there is only so much that individuals can take on. 	
Local Landscape Projects	Local Landscape Project	Location
	DG15 Strategic Repair of Crees Ck	Crees Ck
	DG16 Whyanbeel Ck Restoration	Whyanbeel Ck
	NT4 Riparian Habitat Restoration	Confluence of Tinaroo Ck and Barron R; Granite Ck
	ST11 Peterson Creek Rehabilitation	Peterson Ck, upstream of Gillies Highway
	RM10 Russell River Restoration	Russell Catchment, with a focus on the Babinda Creek sub-catchment from Double Barrel Ck, to old sugar mill uptake
	RM12 Camp Creek Connectivity	Camp Ck
	RM13 Restoring Mulgrave River Island	Island in Mulgrave R
	RM14 Restoring and Protecting Behana Ck	Behana Ck
	RM15 Restoration of Mulgrave River Feeder Creeks	Feeder creeks between the Mulgrave R and the mountains
	RM16 Restoring the Mulgrave River	Mulgrave R
	SC9 / SC10 Restoration of Waterways	Tully / Murray priority locations
	NC5 Johnstone River Restoration	Locations identified in the Russell R Management Plan
	CN11 Coast to Range Riparian Connections	Freshwater Ck, Thomatis Ck, Barron R, Jum Rum Ck, Kuranda