

Cassowary Coast Regional Council

Reef Guardian Council Action Plan



Reef Guardian Council program

The Reef Guardian Council program is a partnership between local government and the Reef Authority which recognises that local and regional approaches are central to protecting and managing the Reef and the communities it supports.

Local governments are key management partners as many of the threats to the Reef and heritage values arise outside of the Marine Park boundaries and the Reef Authority's jurisdiction.

Councils are directly involved in a myriad of both statutory and non-statutory activities that minimise impacts, improve values and support the resilience of the Reef, contributing to the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan and the objectives of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

The Reef Guardian Council program recognises this and celebrates and supports the important role of local government in the protection and management of the Reef catchment region.

Action plans

This Action Plan records the diversity of council actions and projects that help address the key threats to the Reef. It aligns with Queensland and Australian Government objectives to improve the long-term outlook for the Reef. It may also be used to record potential future priority projects or actions that may benefit the Reef but may only be possible through funding or capacity building.

Examples of actions are provided in Table 1 of the Reef Guardian Council program Terms of Reference, however the program empowers councils to drive change and deliver innovative solutions to help the Reef by identifying other actions beyond those provided.

Endorsement

The council recognises the importance of the Reef Guardian Council partnership and values the contributions made by elected members, staff and the community in the protection and management of the Reef catchment region.

Period of Action Plan:

Endorsed: /..... /.....

Council signatory



Climate change

(Reef 2050 Work Area 1: Limit the impacts of climate change)

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible Department/Position	Project Status
Climate Change Strategy development	This strategy and associated policy will outline Cassowary Coasts Council's response to climate change	Operational	FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee	Development and Environment Services	Initial draft policy developed and being workshopped through ELT/SLT
Baseline Emission inventory	Assess Cassowary Coast Regional Council baseline emissions to determine best forward approach to reduce or offset emissions	Council Budget	FNQROC Climate Change Resiliency Project	Development and Environment Services	Developed for 2023/24
Solar Power for Infrastructure	Continued installation of Solar power systems on council's major buildings, public facilities and depots and sewerage treatment plants.	Operational Budget Grant funding DCCEW	QLD and Federal Government programs	Infrastructure Services	Cardwell STP, Innisfail Shire Hall and other installs by facilities underway \$260,000
EV Fleet Transition	Installation of EV charging facilities to enable transition to electric and hybrid fleet vehicles	DCCEW funded	QLD and Federal Government	Commercial Services	\$40,000 Budget allocation for charging facilities

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible Department/Position	Project Status
Energy Storage solutions	Investigate community battery storage options	Council Budget and Grant funding	ARENA	Development and Environment Services	Seeking funding opportunities aligning new infrastructure to be battery ready
Climate Resilience Technical Committee membership	Contribute to regional climate action through collaboration and participation in FNQROC Climate Resilient Technical Committee	Council budget	FNQROC	Development and Environment Services	Council is a member of CRTC
Low Carbon Procurement Strategy	Development of a low Carbon Procurement Strategy to reduce Scope 2 and 3 emissions	Council budget	FNQROC	Corporate and Community Services	Alignment with FNQROC
Improved understanding of corporate and climate risk	Review and update corporate climate risk strategy	Council budget		Office of the CEO	Review underway
Support Active travel to reduce vehicle usage across the region	Continued installation of shared pathways, bike racks and supporting infrastructure	Council Budget and Grant funding		Infrastructure Services	Ongoing projects, South Mission shared pathway completed

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible Department/Position	Project Status
Coastal Hazard Assessment Strategy	Implementing key actions from Coastal Hazard Assessments to mitigate and address risks of coastal hazards	QCoast 2100 Implementation packages	LGAQ	Development and Environment Services Infrastructure Services	Quarterly implementation working group established
Community nurseries and Tree Give away	To continue to provide advice and support through CCRC nurseries outlets and conduct 4 by Free Tree giveaway events annually	Council Budget		Infrastructure Services	4 x tree giveaways a year programmed
Landfill reduction of compostable materials	Reduction in organic waste buried into landfill, \$20 rebate for the purchase of recycling system including compost bins, worm-farm, indoor recycling systems	Council Budget		Commercial Services	Ongoing
Restoration of nearshore Coastal Assets	Continue to Partner with JCU and Traditional Owners on Mourilyan Harbour and other potential Seagrass restoration projects	GBRF funding \$75,000	JCU, Mandubarra, Goondoi and rangers	Development and Environment Services	GBRF project underway assessing restoration potential of various seagrass site with JCU, Mandubarra, Goondoi and Girringun
Adapting to Urban Heat	Assess Urban heat island effect in local communities with aim of developing a long term rectification plan	Council Budget and Grant funding	FNQROC	Development and Environment Services	2026/27 Operational Plan
Wet Tropics Drought Resilience Plan	Support Implementation of regional drought and heat resilience projects i.e. water security plans	Council Budget and Grant funding	FNQROC	Commercial Services Development and Environment Services	

Coastal development (including head water catchments)

(Reef 2050 Work Area 2: Reduce the impacts from land-based activities and Work Area 5: Protect, rehabilitate and restore)

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible Department/Position	Project Status
Parks and Open Space Improvement Planning	To assess local park network in order to improve level of service and rationalize underutilized assets	Council Budget		Infrastructure Services	Open Space Improvement Plan adopted October 23 and under implementation
Revegetation of public land	Revegetation of underutilized council open spaces to improve water quality, carbon sequestration, environmental and urban greening outcomes	Council Budget and Grant funding	Traditional Owners and Community Groups	Development and Environment Services	Community Tree days established
Explore market mechanisms for revegetation projects	Establish Carbon and Cassowary Credit demonstration sites	Council Budget	Terrain NRM	Development and Environment Services	Cassowary and Carbon credits trial sites established
Coastal Partnerships	Continue working with Local Marine Advisory Committee and other forums to promote responsible fishing and litter disposal through a variety of projects across the region	Council Budget and Grant funding	Cassowary Coast Local Marine advisory committee	Development and Environment Services	Ongoing – Line bins still being managed by community volunteers across the region
Foreshore Management Planning	Ongoing development of Foreshore management foreshore areas to guide future management in these locations	Council Budget	Traditional Owners, Community and relevant agencies	Development and Environment Services	Kurrimine and Cowley Foreshore plan developed and adopted 24/25

Land-based run-off

(Reef 2050 Work Area 2: Reduce the impacts from land-based activities and Work Area 5: Protect, rehabilitate and restore)

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible department/position	Project Status
Clean Up Australia day and Coastal Cleanup activities	Lead and support a variety of coastal and town cleanup activities across the region to reduce litter entering our oceans	Council Budget and Volunteers	Community Groups Tangaroa Blue Parley CCLMAC	Development and Environment Services	Free dumping process for organised events in place
Vegetation management policies and procedures	Implement Vegetation management policy and associated procedures to support improved vegetation management cognizant of natural values in our region.	Council Budget		Development and Environment Services	Tree Policy and Bushland Reserve Policy in place
Road hotspot mapping and treatment	Address worst performing sections of road with improved maintenance and change of treatment to reduce ongoing erosion issues.	Council Budget and grant funding, LGAQ	LGAQ	Infrastructure services	Granadilla Road transition stabilisation funded and implemented
Illegal Dumping campaign	Promote issue of illegal dumping through awareness raising campaign and community engagement	Council Budget State Government	DETSI	Development and Environment Services	1 x Illegal dumping officer employed

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible department/position	Project Status
Address rubber crumb loss from public infrastructure	Continued removal of failing rubber crumb playground and exercise node surfaces and prevention of new introductions of this product.	Council Budget		Infrastructure Services	Ongoing removal program in progress
Feral Animal Control	Reduce direct (turtle predation) and indirect impact (erosion and carbon release) impacts from Feral Pigs	Council Budget and Grant funding	Biosecurity QLD National Feral Pig Action Plan	Development and Environment Services	EOG refreshed and feral pig coordinator employed
Landfill leachate treatment improvements	Infrastructure improvements for improved monitoring and management of leachate produced at landfills, reduction in active landfill areas and tarping for further leachate reduction at primary landfill sites in region.	Council Budget		Commercial Services	Ongoing
Sewerage Treatment Plant resource recovery and water treatment	Investigation of Bio-solid remediation and disposal options and development of water recycling and treatment facilities.	Council Budget and Grant Funding		Commercial Services	Regional discussions are being held within FNQROC.

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible department/position	Project Status
Improved road maintenance procedures through Cleaner Road Runoff Project	Review to standardise and improve management and response to road related erosion and management issues	Council Budget, 300k DCCEW contribution to sealing and stabilization component	LGAQ	Infrastructure Services	Underway – Unsealed roads improvement plan, cleaner roads runoff and Blackman road stabilisation and lowering project
Address erosion hotspots to reduce impacts of roads and carparks on nearshore environments	Prevent public carparks at Etty Bay, Narragon Beach and Bicton Hill from generating pollutants directly into Marine Park and World Heritage areas	Council Budget and Grant funding		Infrastructure Services	Bicton Hill coastal carpark stabilised at Bingil Bay
Wetland and Riparian Restoration to improve Water Quality outcomes	Construction wetland at Warrina Lakes to improve Water Quality and Environmental outcomes	Council Budget OPEX 2024, and Grant funding (\$320,000 DCEEW)	Cassowary Coast River Improvement Trust JRCMA Traditional Owners	Development and Environment Services Infrastructure Services	Masterplan Outcome Project underway to develop plan for construction 2025/26 f/y
Urban Water quality improvements	Installation of Litter socks and storm water treatment devices to prevent gross pollutant escape into local waterways from urban storm water systems	Council Budget and Grant funding		Development and Environment Services Infrastructure Services	Investigation of debris load in stormwater pits

Direct use

Project Name	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible department/position	Project Status
Recycling Program	Supporting reduction of waste entering landfill and illegal dumping;	Council Budget		Commercial Services	Kerbside recycling services have begun in March 2025 Recycling of up to 23 waste products at Waste Transfer Stations
Resource Recovery	Trial waste separation at source to reduce waste to landfill and associated transport requirements	Council Budget and Grant funding		Commercial Services	Transfer station actively encouraging resource separation at collection points
Battery Recycling	Improved access for battery recycling at Waste Transfer Stations and Customer Service outlets including libraries	Council Budget		Commercial Services Development and Environment Services	Battery recycling available across region
Improved waste separation from public space bins	Trail recycled bottle and con collector baskets on public space bins	Grant Funding		Commercial Services Development and Environment Services	Externally funded trail

Reef heritage and social values

Action	Description	Financial/Resource Commitment	Partnerships	Responsible department/position	Project Status
Eco Destination certification	Maintain ongoing Eco Destination certification for the Cassowary Coast Local Government Area	Council Budget		Development and Environment Services	Eco certification achieved 2025
Coastal Catchment partnerships	Continue working with local partners on coordinated land and sea management activities that help in protecting and managing coastal ecosystems.	Council budget and community organisations	Traditional Owners, State and Federal Agencies and Community	Development and Environment Services Infrastructure Services	Ongoing partnerships undertaking seagrass, shorebird and turtle monitoring in the region
Fish Way Remediation	Retrofit existing high priority fish barriers as identified in Fish Barrier assessment of Murray River Catchment	Council Budget and Grant funding	Terrain NRM	Infrastructure Services	Terrain completed various local projects, priority report developed
Celebrate 50 years of the GBR Marine Park	Commemorate the Celebration of the Birthplace of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	Council Budget and Grant funding	Reef Authority, Cassowary Coast Tourism, C4, Mission Beach Historical Society, Mission Arts	Development and Environment Services	Initial planning in place for Mission Beach based event