

AGENDA		
FNQROC BOARD MEETING NO. 148		
Monday 14 June 2021 at 10:30 AM		
Croydon Shire Council, Doris Casey Hall, Croydon		
1	Welcome & Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners	Chair
2	Apologies noted	
3	Board Presentations	
	3.1 Queensland Treasury (QTC) QTC Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Mark Girard, Managing Director, Client Division Ms Diana Lollato, Executive Director, Client Division Ms Katherine Livanis, Analyst, Client Division 	20 Mins
	3.2 LGAQ Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Robert Ferguson, LGAQ 	10 Mins
	3.3 Protocol between LGAQ and FNQROC	Attachment
4	Confirmation of Previous Minutes	
	4.1 Minutes of Meeting held on 12 April 2021	Pages 1 – 10
5	Business Arising from Previous Minutes: 12 April 2021	

Minute Number	Action	Responsible Person(s)	Status
2857	Follow-up on request that QTC provide statistics/drill down to economic areas for FNQ. This will be forwarded to board members. Data in presentation was grouped as Outback Australia Only.	FNQROC P Power	Complete – sent to Board Members 19 April 2021
2863a	D Irvine to work with RDA on the contents of an MOU with final signoff to occur at the next available FNQROC Board meeting.	FNQROC D Irvine	Ongoing
2863b	D Irvine to meet with the FNQROC planners and seek their advice regarding reviewing the FNQ Regional Plan	FNQROC D Irvine	Complete

Minute Number	Action	Responsible Person(s)	Status
The Planners group recommendation to the FNQROC Board is:			
<i>That the FNQROC Board write to the Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning requesting that:</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. A review of the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009/2031 be commenced.</i> <i>b. Given the emerging trends regarding population growth and the impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic on the economic prosperity of the region, the review be commenced as a priority.</i> <i>c. The review be undertaken concurrently with those local governments in the region who intent to progress the preparation of a new Planning Scheme; and</i> <i>d. A collaborative delivery model be adopted, acknowledging many of the local governments in the region and FNQROC have existing background studies and research that should be used to inform the region plan review.</i> 			
2865	W Hughes and D Irvine to develop a public release strategy for the Dam Study to be supported by the Board prior to public release.	FNQROC D Irvine W Hughes	Complete released 12 May 2021
2875	Follow-up with Aboriginal Shire Councils, Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale to seek nominations for representatives on the First Nations Tourism Action Plan steering committee.	FNQROC P Power	Complete Mayor Andrews nominated.
2876	D Irvine to seek advice from Mark Olsen regarding the apparently sudden restrictive travel of hire cars to Georgetown.	FNQROC D Irvine	Complete On-going
2877	Send CSIRO Transit contact details to Mark Crawley.	FNQROC D Irvine	Complete

6	Advocacy	
	6.1 Advocacy update from FNQROC 6.1.1 Dam Study release (puns intended) 6.1.2 Mayoral Delegation Canberra – 30 Aug to 2 Sept 2021 6.1.3 Advocacy support to continue Yellow Crazy Ant funding 6.1.4 Water update	Verbal
	6.2 Advocacy update from FNQROC Council members	Verbal
7	Strategic Operational Plan	
	7.1 B84 - FNQROC Development of a Regional Strategic Waste Framework.	Pages 11 – 15 Pages 16 - 22

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation - Terms of Reference - Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group. 	
8	Discussion Topics	
	8.1 Draft amended FNQROC Strategic Goals	Pages 23 - 41
9	Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence	
	9.1 Incoming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from Queensland Premier – acknowledging receipt of Dam Study/examine report’s findings – 19 May 2021 • Letter from Mr Shane Knuth MP to Minister Butcher–highlighting the Dam Study Report – 18 May 2021. • Speech tabled in parliament 27 May 2021 by Stephen Knuth MP addressing Minister Butcher on the Dam Study Report. 	Pages 42 - 46
	9.2 Outgoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters to Federal and State Ministers advising of change of Board Dates from Monday’s to Thursday’s • Letters to Federal and State Ministers – release of Dam Study. • Letters to Federal and Shadow Ministers and Queensland Senator’s advising of Mayoral Delegation to Canberra 30 August 2021 to 2 September 2021. 	
10	FNQROC Policy Review	
	10.1 Nil	
11	FNQROC Reports and MOUs	
	11.1 B83 – FNQ Regional Roads Investment Strategy	Pages 47 - 49
	11.2 QRA Resilience Plan Terms of Reference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wet Tropics, and b. Hinterland to Gulf 	Pages 50 – 68 Pages 69 -87
12	Financial Statements	
	12.1 Profit & Loss Statement: Current FY to 31 May 2021	Pages 88 - 90
	12.2 Balance Sheet: Current FY to 31 May 2021	Page 91
13	Meetings attended by FNQROC Executive Officer	Page 92
14	LGAQ Policy Executive Discussion	
15	Minutes of FNQROC Advisory Committees	

	15.1 Planners meeting – 19 April 2021	On FNQROC website
	15.2 FNQROC Sewer Relining Meeting # 7 - 20 May 2021	Available upon request (not on web)
	15.3 FNQROC Waste Management Committee/Strategic Planning Workshop - 19 May 2021	On FNQROC website
	15.4 FNQROC Regional Water Alliance Group - 10 May 2021	On FNQROC website
	15.4 FNQROC RRTG Technical Group - 28 May 2021	On FNQROC website
16	Confidential Meeting Minutes	
	16.1 FNQROC Regional Procurement Advisory Committee – - 27 May 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Procurement Advisory Committee intend to develop a Regional Procurement Strategy. 	Available upon request (not on web)
17	FNQROC Western Council Meeting Minutes & Resolutions	
	17.1 Next meeting to be advised	
18	General Business	
	18.1 Unsustainability in Councils	Verbal
	18.2 Regional Queensland Council of Mayors	Pages 93 - 95
19	Next Meeting Date	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 August 2021 – Martyn Street Depot (CRC), Cairns 	



MINUTES OF THE 147TH BOARD MEETING

Monday 12 April 2021 @ 10:00am
Port Douglas Community Hall, 13-29 Mowbray Street, Port Douglas

REPRESENTATIVES

	Cr Bob Manning, Mayor	Cairns Regional Council
	Cr Jack Bawden	Carpentaria Shire Council
	Cr Mark Nolan, Mayor	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
	Cr Peter Scott, Mayor	Cook Shire Council
	Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor	Croydon Shire Council
CHAIR	Cr Michael Kerr, Mayor	Douglas Shire Council
	Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor	Etheridge Shire Council
	Cr Jason Woibo	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
DEPUTY CHAIR	Cr Angela Toppin, Mayor	Mareeba Shire Council
	Cr Kevin Cardew, Deputy Mayor	Tablelands Regional Council
	Cr Bradley Creek, Mayor	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
	Cr Ross Andrews, Mayor	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

CEO'S

Ms Mica Martin, CEO	Cairns Regional Council
Mr Mark Crawley, CEO	Carpentaria Shire Council
Ms Linda Cardew, CEO	Cook Shire Council
Mr Mark Stoermer, CEO	Douglas Shire Council
Mr Ken Timms, CEO	Etheridge Shire Council
Mr Mark Kelleher, CEO	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Mr Gary Rinehart, Interim CEO	Tablelands Regional Council
Mr Peter Franks, CEO	Mareeba Shire Council
Mr Leon Yeatman, CEO	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

OBSERVERS

Cr Jono Evans, Councillor	Croydon Shire Council
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INVITED GUESTS

Mr Robert Ferguson	LGAQ
Ms Sharon Ryan	Local Buy
Mr Glen Duff	Local Buy
Ms Sarah Webster	QTC
Mr Trent Saunders	QTC

FNQROC STAFF

Ms Darlene Irvine	Executive Officer
Mr Travis Sydes	Natural Asset Management & Sustainability
Ms Wendy Hughes	Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator
Ms Amanda Hancock	Procurement Coordinator
Ms Paula Power	Executive Support Officer

APOLOGIES

Cr Raymond Jayo, Mayor	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Mr James Gott	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Cr Mary Brown	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Mr Kevin Tytherleigh, CEO	Hinchinbrook Shire Council

2856 Chair's Welcome & Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The meeting commenced at 10.04am.

The Chair opened the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, paying respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

2857 Apologies

Apologies as noted.

2858 BOARD PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Queensland Treasury (QTC)

Ms Sarah Webster, Director, Client Division and Trent Saunders, Economist, QTC provided an Economic update.

Key presentation points included:

- No ongoing effect on Chinese economy
- Domestically – Australian unemployment rate – formed sharply since peak and could continue over the next few months.
- RBA wasn't expecting unemployment to be where it is today – year ahead of where RBA was expecting it to be. Ideally wanting it to reach 4%.
- GDP where it is expected to be. Fair amount of recovery.
- QTC – cash rate unchanged through to 2024. 2026 - target 4.5%
- Low interest rates to remain in place for extended period.
- Cash rate not going change until inflation goes up.
- Expected no change to interest rates until 2026. To achieve this unemployment needs to be down to 4%. Evidence in support of RBA's commentary – will remain low for extended period.
- Labour market in Queensland slightly weaker than nationally.
- Bond Yields market will be taken into account - has diverged a bit.
- QTC loans – under 2% fixed for 10, 15, 20 years. If you borrow at today's rates the interest rate will remain the same for the duration of term.
- Agriculture – region as a whole highly specialised in agriculture – growth area for economy, otherwise economy diversified.
- Tourism which is the largest sector has been hit hardest and left the region more exposed.
- Tropical North Queensland – intrastate travel 50% visitor numbers for region. Interstate and international - remaining share of 50%. Only reflecting slight recovery.
- Domestic tourism industry. Demand for tourism currently and domestic tourism set to improve.
- Google search on Cairns and Port Douglas – up since this time last year. Worldwide searches remain subdued.
- International Travel – biggest factor is opening up borders and each country to reach herd immunity. United States and United Kingdom expected to reach herd immunity this year. Australia vaccination rate around 2023. Not a positive if we don't achieve a 70% vaccination rate until 2023. Could be sometime before international travel returns where it was previously.
- Holiday maker package and tourist package – unless sitting in regions hard to tell what the regions need.
- Infrastructure – unprecedented money for roads etc. Long lead times – decisions made on a project by project basis.
- Spending higher than years before – big stimulus. Queensland carrying large debt. At some point Government needs to focus on paying back the debt. Will create industries that are economic drivers for Queensland and Australia. Hopefully there has been enough stimulus in the region to sustain in future years.

The Chair asked for feedback/comments from the floor:

- Nil raised

ACTION: P Power to follow-up on request that QTC provide statistics/drill down to economic areas for FNQ. This will be forwarded to board members. Data in presentation was grouped as outback Australia only.

3.2 Local Buy

Ms Sharon Ryan and Glen Duff, Local Buy provided an overview of Next Gen procurement ecosystem. The procurement ecosystem will support councils to maximise the value of dollars spent in community and with suppliers.

Key presentation points included:

- Feasibility study – looking at impacts. Organisational structures, policy and procedures are councils own.
- Next gen eco-system is able to integrate and collaborate.
- Fully funded eco-system. Currently no cost to Councils. Provides majority of technology and implementation.
- 3 components in Next Gen. Procurement hub, intranet system and document management system. Allows for fully customised brand.
- Extract data to bring together a series of dashboards. Does data cleansing so can see from a regional perspective the impacts.
- Process of block chain – probity. Procurement process end to end.
- REMPLAN – economic data. Pull economic data with procurement showing up local community and region.
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- Procurement Hub – regionally collaborative system.
- Community conversation – internally can collaborate on topics and to engage local suppliers effectively.
- Collaboration piece – regionally focused. Dedicated communities of practice.
- Analytics and reporting
- Drives circular economy
- Councils can embark on market depth. Geo-spend. Supply capability piece.
- Insights report – high level reporting in council. Amount of spend at council level.
- REMPLAN – local economic data piece.
- Connected procurement hub – centralised point to facilitate procurement and purchasing activities
- Line to council's procurement policies
- Public tenders, ready to buy section - analytics reporting.
- 6 councils have had demonstrations. For other councils – will have demonstrations shortly.
- No charge to suppliers, but a simple way to access and be consistent.
- Looking at RAPAD and FNQROC Procurement team.

The Chair asked for feedback/comments from the floor:**Amanda Hancock – FNQROC Procurement**

- The platform provides a solution to our long-term operational plan. There is a potential for procurement to make big differences. Concerns around longer term costs. Currently free for 10 years.

3.3 LGAQ Policy Executive Update

Mr Robert Ferguson provided an overview of LGAQ recent activities per the briefing note as previously circulated.

Key presentation points included:

- State Budget - \$400 million over 6 years.
- COI Legislation update – Letter to Minister Miles on 23 March 2021. 27 responses from Queensland Councils.
- LGAC policy and board director presented Local Government Act. Senate committee due on 28 April 2021
- LGAQ 2021 Advocacy Action Plan now available. Link through LGAQ progress report.

- Rural and Remote Councils Compact. Establishing working group and workshop to be held in April and finalised by end of June 2021.
- 2021 ROC Assembly – ROC protocol developing. Building stronger advocacy with ROCS.

2859 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of Meeting held Monday 8 February 2021

MOVED: Cr Toppin
SECOND: Cr Manning

That the minutes of the 146th FNQROC Board Meeting held 8 February 2021 be confirmed and adopted.

CARRIED

2859 BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES

2854 Minute – FNQROC to provide feedback to QRA so workshops dates and format can be drafted.

Complete. Big Maps sessions being held today and tomorrow.

ADVOCACY

2860 Advocacy Update from FNQROC

D Irvine discussed potential dates for FNQROC Delegation to visit State and Federal Government Ministers based on 2021 sitting dates. At this stage, the federal delegation will be held 30th August to 2nd September 2021

2861 Advocacy Update from FNQROC Council Members

Nil updates.

2862 STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

D Irvine provided a brief overview of the revised Agenda for the Strategic Planning Day, Tuesday 13 April 2021.

2863 DISCUSSION TOPICS

8.1 Letter – Regional Development Australia Tropical North – Dated 31 March 2021

D Irvine referred to the letter from RDA and their request to have an MOU or agreement between them and FNQROC.

- The board established that given the RDA is a product of the Federal Government we should be working with them where are priorities align. There was no issue with signing an MOU however the devil is in the detail and FNQROC is to maintain its core priority directions and autonomy.

RESOLVED:

In principle support is given to developing an MOU with RDA Tropical North with D Irvine to work with RDA in developing this with final adoption to be by the FNQROC Board.

ACTION: D Irvine to work with RDA on the contents of an MOU with final signoff to occur at the next available FNQROC Board meeting.

8.2 Review Regional Plan

Cr Nolan provided an overview of his request to review the regional plan. He advised some of the issues included:

- council wished to intensify and go up rather than out which the regional plan did not allow them to do.
- They are being flooded with migration and the regional plan is preventing them from accommodating this, and
- They are doing a new planning scheme and the regional plan does not accommodate the ability for waste to energy initiatives.

Cr Nolan provided D Irvine with a more detailed summary of the issues they are facing.

There was discussion between members on what a new regional plan should look like and questioned another plan being developed.

ACTION: D Irvine to meet with the FNQROC planners and seek their advice regarding reviewing the FNQ Regional Plan.

2864 CORRESPONDENCE

D Irvine provided an update.

- Submission to National Water Reform – Parameters for Dams and cost pricing. D Irvine advised she provided a submission to this inquiry which included a draft copy of the Dam Study which was due 24 March 2021

FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

Nil

2865 FNQROC REPORTS & MOU'S

11.1 Operations Plan and Budget (B80)

MOVED: Cr Scott
SECOND: Cr Pickering

That the FNQROC Board adopts:

1. *FNQROC Operational Budget with:*

a. *Member Council base contribution for the 2021/2022 financial year being:*

- i. *Cairns Regional Council - \$118,700*
- ii. *Carpentaria Shire Council - \$23,124*
- iii. *Cassowary Coast Regional Council - \$86,925*
- iv. *Cook Shire Council - \$51,853*
- v. *Croydon Shire Council - \$20,763*
- vi. *Douglas Shire Council - \$62,520*
- vii. *Etheridge Shire Council - \$21,486*
- viii. *Hinchinbrook Shire Council - \$35,487*
- ix. *Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council - \$21,873*
- x. *Mareeba Shire Council - \$76,884*
- xi. *Tablelands Regional Council - \$81,117*
- xii. *Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council - \$20,788*
- xiii. *Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council - \$24,347*

b. *Regional Road and Transport contribution remaining at 2.75% of council funding received, and*

c. *Croydon Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council contribute 20% of any direct savings realised through their involvement in regional procurement activities (capped at \$25,000), and*

d. *Councils outside the FNQROC boundary contribute 30% of direct savings realised through their involvement in FNQROC procurement activities.*

CARRIED

11.2 Regional Road Investment Strategy (B81)

D Irvine advised that:

- over Easter it was identified that there was an error in 4% of the dataset which needs to be rectified.
- the wording within the technical documents would remain the same however the value and priority listing may change as a result
- As a result of the 4% error the Strategy document was not included in the report.

D Irvine recommended that the technical documents be received subject to the amendments being made to the data set and that the Strategy be sent out separated for adoption at a future date.

D Irvine also advised that the data is at this point in time and as roads are improved it would change. She also advised that the priority listing is purely on a BCA basis and that funding priorities would pull the lever to bring different roads to the front i.e. funding focussed on safety or beef Roads etc.

D Irvine advised that generally, the FNQROC doesn't advocate for specific projects (unless for targeted funding sources) and that the advocacy is for the region as a whole. Local governments individually advocate for their priorities and can use the study to support their case.

MOVED: Cr Scott

SECOND: Cr Pickering

That FNQROC:

- a. FNQROC receive the three technical reports subject to amendments to 4% of the dataset being rectified, and
- b. FNQROC request the FNQRRTG representatives to review the Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS) road set to ensure alignment with the technical documents.

CARRIED

11.3 Dam Study (B82)

D Irvine provided a brief overview of the Dam Study.

The Mayors advised they did not want this study simply released given how important the information was. They requested a release plan be developed to ensure it was their message accompanying the release of the document.

MOVED: Cr Hughes
SECOND: Cr Manning

That the FNQROC Board receive the Dam study to use as part of its advocacy efforts and that a release plan be developed and supported by the board before going public.

CARRIED

ACTION: W Hughes and D Irvine to develop a release strategy for the Dam Study to be supported by the Board prior to public release.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2866 Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet Financials YTD

MOVED: Cr Toppin
SECOND: Cr Scott

That the Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet Reports for the period 1 July 2020 to 01 April 2021 be adopted and accepted.

CARRIED

ATTENDANCE & MINUTES OF MEETINGS

2868 Meetings Attended by Executive Officer

As noted

2869 FNQROC Advisory Committee Minutes (09 Feb to 31 March 2021)

As noted

2870 Confidential Meeting Minutes (01 Feb 2021 – 31 March 2021)

As noted

2871 FNQROC Western Council Meeting Minutes & Agreed Actions

No meeting currently scheduled.

2872 LGAQ Policy Executive Discussion

Discussion held as part of LGAQ presentation.

GENERAL BUSINESS

2873 FNQROC Delegation Dates

D Irvine and the board discussed the federal sitting dates end of August early September as the most appropriate.

2874 FNQROC Meeting days

D Irvine raised the issue that having our board meetings on a Monday precluded any State Minister or member being able to attend our meetings due to cabinet sitting at the same time.

RESOLVED:

That the FNQROC board meetings be held on the first Thursday of the meeting month, commencing in the new financial year.

2875 First Nations Tourism Action Plan (FNTAP) Steering Committee and Governance

- TTNQ seeking support from FNQROC to recommend suitable representatives to join the First Nations Tourism Action Plan Steering Committee or a process to support our Expression of Interest process.

ACTION: P Power to follow-up with Aboriginal Shire Councils, Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale to seek nominations for representatives on the First Nations Tourism Action Plan steering committee.

2876 Hire Car Restrictions

- Cr Hughes raised that Car hire companies (Budget and Avis identified) are refusing to hire cars travelling to Georgetown or Cobbald Gorge. They can go to Mt Surprise and Undara.

ACTION: D Irvine to seek advice from Mark Olsen regarding the apparently sudden restrictive travel of hire cars to Georgetown.

2877 Dixie Road

Carpentaria Shire Council advised that they have engaged Cummings Economics to undertake an economic analysis of Dixie Road. They are not requesting any funding towards it but wanted to make members aware just in case Bill Cummings makes contact to provide feedback.

ACTION: D Irvine to send CSIRO Transit contact details to Mark Crawley.

NEXT MEETING

2878 Next Meeting

The Chair advised the next meeting is scheduled for 14 June in Croydon. Logistical details regarding bus and accommodation etc will commence shortly.

ACTION ITEMS: 12 April 2021

<i>Minute Number</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible Person(s)</i>	<i>Status</i>
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2863a	D Irvine to work with RDA on the contents of an MOU with final signoff to occur at the next available FNQROC Board meeting.	FNQROC D Irvine	
2863b	D Irvine to meet with the FNQROC planners and seek their advice regarding reviewing the FNQ Regional Plan	FNQROC D Irvine	
2865	W Hughes and D Irvine to develop a public release strategy for the Dam Study to be supported by the Board prior to public release.	FNQROC D Irvine W Hughes	
2875	Follow-up with Aboriginal Shire Councils, Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale to seek nominations for representatives on the First Nations Tourism Action Plan steering committee.	FNQROC P Power	
2876	D Irvine to seek advice from Mark Olsen regarding the apparently sudden restrictive travel of hire cars to Georgetown.	FNQROC D Irvine	
2877	Send CSIRO Transit contact details to Mark Crawley.	FNQROC D Irvine	

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Cr Michael Kerr, FNQROC Chair

	FNQROC MEETING 14 JUNE 2021	B84
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FNQROC – DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC WASTE FRAMEWORK

Wendy Hughes: #6669259

Recommendation:

That FNQROC:

- a) Supports the progression to develop a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework in partnership with QTC and DES.
- b) Supports the progression being driven by an Advisory Group consisting of one elected member and a senior manager from each participating Council, and representatives from both QTC and DES.
- c) Adopts the Terms of Reference for the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group and formally invites QTC and DES to participate as members.
- d) That x takes on the role of Chair of the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group commencing at the meeting on 23 July 2021.
- e) Request member Councils to advise their elected member and senior manager representatives on the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group.

INTRODUCTION:

Waste (/resource) management in the region has been a costly exercise for member Councils given historic restrictions on landfills within the Wet Tropics, the distance to disposal and recovery centres and the recent waste levy imposed by State Legislation. With future increased costs and Federal and State legislative requirements, the cost and risk will escalate into the future:

- The State government has set waste reduction and materials recovery targets for 2025 and beyond which won't be met by FNQROC Councils.
- Waste levy rebate payments are currently due to expire in June 2022 which, combined with an expected increase in the waste levy itself, will directly impact on waste management costs and therefore increase the cost of service provision to ratepayers.
- Member Councils remain vulnerable to and reliant on external markets for reprocessing of materials and face increasing year on year costs associated with transport.

With regional collaboration, benefits could be obtained through:

- Utilising current infrastructure to minimise lost income through contaminated waste streams.
- Minimising the cost of managing our waste streams.
- Maximising our opportunities to protect our environment.
- Investment attraction to the region

To mitigate costs, manage risks and drive resilience planning and investment attraction, the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group has proposed to develop a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework and would like it identified as a strategic Board project to highlight its importance for the region. It is envisaged this framework will be developed with the support of QTC and the Department of Environment and Science.

It is envisioned that the Advisory Group be chaired by a member of the FNQROC Board, with the first meeting scheduled for Friday 23 July 2021.

BACKGROUND

Far North Queensland faces a set of unique challenges in delivering cost effective and sustainable waste services. All Councils in the region struggle with issues such as access to secondary markets, transport costs, and increasing costs and difficulties in developing new waste infrastructure. This impacts on the ability of Councils to achieve strategic ambitions, and to deliver and operate viable networks of resource recovery facilities.

National and State Government strategies, legislation and policies introduced in recent years have provided a roadmap for the future actions required by FNQROC Councils in managing the waste streams generated in the region.

National Legislation

The *National Waste Policy: Less Waste, More Resources (2018)* sets the direction for Australia's waste management and resource recovery activities up to 2030. The policy is mapped to a circular economy framework and identifies five overarching principles which underpin national waste management goals. These include:

1. Avoid waste;
2. Improve resource recovery;
3. Increase use of recycled material and build demand and markets for recycled products;
4. Better manage material flows to benefit human health, the environment and the economy; and
5. Improve information to support innovation, guide investment and enable informed consumer decisions.

The *National Waste Policy Action Plan (2019)* details the targets and actions required to implement the National Waste Policy and these now guide Federal investment in the waste management sector. The targets and actions include:

- ban the export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres (commenced 2020)
- reduce total waste generated in Australia by 10% per person by 2030
- 80% average recovery rate from all waste streams by 2030
- significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry
- phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025
- halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030
- make comprehensive, economy-wide and timely data publicly available to support better consumer, investment and policy decisions.

State Legislation

In response to the national framework, in 2019 the Queensland Government released its *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* (Queensland Waste Strategy), outlining a vision for a zero-waste society where waste is avoided, reused and recycled to the greatest extent possible.

The strategy is underpinned by the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act (2011)*, which promotes waste avoidance and reduction through resource recovery and efficiency, and the *Waste Reduction and Recycling (Waste Levy) Amendment Act 2019*, which commenced 1 July 2019 and allowed the re-introduction of a waste levy in Queensland.

Under the Act each local government must prepare and maintain a waste management plan known as Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan (WRRP). A WRRP needs to set out actions for managing waste in local government areas in a way that best achieves the objects of the Act.

The *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act (2011)* allows multiple local governments to combine as a single entity to prepare a regional plan for the management of some or all aspects of waste management for the local governments.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FNQROC

Through the *FNQROC Strategic Operational Plan 2018-2022*, the FNQROC Executive has identified the development a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework as a project of strategic importance.

The framework will provide for the ongoing development of (and investment in) the waste and recycling infrastructure required for the region to contribute to the State's long-term ambition of a zero-waste society.

The current approach to regional waste management limits our ability to achieve a circular system within FNQ. In addition to the negative effect this has on the environment, the region is losing opportunities for economic growth which can be achieved through more efficient waste management.

Achieving circular economy principles in line with State plans requires an innovative, collective approach from FNQROC Councils, who individually face challenges such as limited resources, remote locations and conflicting priorities around waste management issues such as asset management and procurement.

The development of a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework provides the opportunity to move the region from its current 'risk management and mitigation' approach to resilience planning and investment attraction around waste management.

Factors that underpin the need for the framework include:

- The Cairns Bedminster facility is due to be decommissioned in 2026 – this directly impacts on Cairns Regional Council, Douglas Shire Council and Mareeba Shire Council in the short-term, and has long-term implications for contributing to the State's *waste diversion from landfill* targets (65% by 2025 and 80% by 2030). A regional approach to feedstock supply will aid in securing the right solution for an organics processing replacement.
- The region is faced with significant decisions around the management of residual waste as for a number of FNQROC Councils, only one putrescible landfill will remain operational by the end of 2021. This facility is privately owned and operated.

- To improve waste management efficiencies, there is a need to collectively consider emerging technologies, emerging trends in packaging, and legislation around single use plastics and contaminants.
- To minimise impacts on soil organics, waterways and the Great Barrier Reef, there is a need to collectively consider how best to engage with the agriculture and civil construction sectors to achieve the best outcomes for materials recovery.
- National and State procurement policies are moving towards a mandate to source and use recycled materials in the delivery of funded projects.
- State and federal policies will continue to accelerate toward a transition to circular economy principles.

RECOMMENDATION:

That FNQROC:

- a) Supports the progression to develop a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework in partnership with QTC and DES.**
- b) Supports the progression being driven by an Advisory Group consisting of one elected member and a senior manager from each participating Council, and representatives from both QTC and DES.**
- c) Adopts the Terms of Reference for the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group and formally invites QTC and DES to participate as members.**
- d) That x takes on the role of Chair of the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group commencing at the meeting on 23 July 2021.**
- e) Request member Councils to advise their elected member and senior manager representatives on the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group.**

CONSIDERATIONS:

Proposed approach to deliver the framework

- The formation of a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group that reports to the FNQROC Board specifically on the development of the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework.
- To convey official and strategic regional project status, it is proposed that the Advisory Group be chaired by an FNQROC Board member.

What the approach aims to achieve

- A unified position on what waste levy funds should be used for by the State to facilitate public and private investment
- A plan to manage the removal or reduction of waste levy rebates from June 2022.
- A fundamental shift in how we view and manage waste across the region.
- Regional alignment to achieve economies of scale for resource recovery investments.

- Clear line of sight on how targets will be achieved across the region.
- Collaborative and transparent sharing of planned infrastructure around the region.
- A unified approach on procurement targets in relation to recycled materials.
- Reduced exposure to commodity price hikes and supply chain issues for recovered materials.

Why we need to develop a regional framework

- To ensure there are genuine opportunities for regional alignment.
- To create a stable environment to attract investment through aligned decision making at Mayoral/CEO level across the region.
- To identify how the region will contribute to state targets for waste diversion from landfill.
- To ensure financial sustainability and appropriate economic development for the region.
- To identify links into the asset management plans, land use plans and procurement plans held by individual Councils.
- Maps when it makes sense for Councils to align and when it doesn't.
- To clarify the problem and identifies levers instead of just identifying solutions.

Implications if we don't act

- The region remains vulnerable to and reliant on external markets for reprocessing.
- Increased costs associated with transport, lost efficiencies in existing infrastructure, waste levy increases and the removal of advance payments (rebates).
- Lost income through contaminated waste streams.
- Increased illegal dumping activity and stockpiling.
- Reliance on poor evidence base to make critical decisions (e.g. value of loss of recoverable materials unknown).
- Increased challenges around food security through increased climate change impacts.

ATTACHMENTS

- #6669257 Terms of Reference – Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group

Wendy Hughes

FNQROC Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

Darlene Irvine

FNQROC Executive Officer



REGIONAL STRATEGIC WASTE FRAMEWORK ADVISORY GROUP

Terms of Reference – Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group

Current as at Wednesday 2 June 2021

Purpose

To guide the development of a strategic waste management and materials recovery framework for Far North Queensland that is appropriate for servicing the needs of the regional, rural and remote communities governed by FNQROC member Councils.

Role

The Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group (Advisory Group) will guide the development of a long term (20+ years) strategic waste framework to ensure the FNQROC region has the infrastructure and services required to contribute to achieving state and national obligations around resource recovery targets.

The role of the Advisory Group is therefore to:

- Identify emerging issues of strategic importance that will impact member Councils;
- Provide advice to the FNQROC Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator regarding the development (and subsequent implementation) of the regional framework; and
- Make recommendations on strategic framework priorities to the FNQROC Board.

Deliverables

The Advisory Group will:

- Provide recommendations to the FNQROC Board on the preferred approach for developing the strategic waste management and materials recovery framework;
- Guide the development of a report detailing recommendations for the waste management and materials recovery framework;
- Provide recommendations in relation to the implementation of the waste management and materials recovery framework;
- Provide recommendations in relation to the formation of Advisory Group technical sub-committees if and when deemed necessary to further inform the process (for example regional procurement, organics);
- Contribute to compiling documentation regarding options considered for the waste management and materials recovery framework;
- Contribute to compiling documentation of consumer research and community consultation activities; and
- Participate in communication activities associated with the awareness, education, engagement and communication phases of the project.

Meetings

This Advisory Group will form in July 2021 and will deliver the final report to the FNQROC Board by December 2022. To achieve its objectives, the Advisory Group will meet at approximately six-week intervals throughout this period.

The first Advisory Group meeting is scheduled for 23 July 2021 in accordance with the attached Preliminary Program of Meetings.

It should be noted that the Preliminary Program of Meetings is subject to change. The Program may alter based on unforeseen constraints and/or changes to the scope of the project that may occur throughout the process.

The Chair shall determine meeting agendas in conjunction with FNQROC staff. FNQROC officers will compile and circulate the agenda to Advisory Group members prior to each meeting and attend to all meeting arrangements.

The location and duration of the meetings will be dependent on the agenda.

Minutes will be recorded by FNQROC and, with the exception of confidential information, be posted to the FNQROC website.

Membership

The Advisory Group will comprise:

- one elected member and one senior manager from each participating council;
- FNQROC representative;
- QTC representative; and
- Department of Environment and Science representative

Council officer members should hold a senior position within their Council and have technical expertise in the areas of waste management and resource recovery.

Each State Agency member may nominate one professional officer and up to one observer as delegates. Professional officer members should be at a Principal, Director or Executive Director level.

Chair

The Chair of the Advisory Group will be drawn from the Board of FNQROC with the position to be held for the duration of the project. This representative may also be the council elected representative.

Reporting Structure

The Advisory Group Chair will report to the FNQROC Board and is responsible for the effective facilitation of the Group's discussions. The Chair will be supported in this role by the FNQROC Executive Officer and Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator.

The Advisory Group will provide advice and recommendations to the FNQROC Board through the Chair. As such, the Advisory Group has no decision-making authority and must respect and abide by any subsequent decisions made by the Board.

Appointment and Term of Membership

The FNQROC Executive Officer, in consultation with the Advisory Group Chair, will make the final decision on the membership of the Advisory Group, including appointments to vacancies that may emerge during the term of the project.

Where a position becomes vacant, FNQROC will work with the relevant Council to fill that position for the remainder of the term.

If a member leaves their current position during their term, that member is automatically considered to have resigned their membership from the Advisory Group. However, this member may submit an Expression of Interest in continuing to be a member of the Advisory Group if they take up a new position with another member council.

Role of Advisory Group members

To ensure the benefits can be realised and information is shared, the role of members is to:

- Act impartially and represent the interest of the broader FNQ community. While members have a role in providing specific sector or interest group opinions, members must on balance strive to meet the needs and aspirations of the whole community.
- All parties shall ensure they act in Good Faith and apply principles of Reasonableness and Fairness with regard to the presentation of issues and/or concerns, solutions, and suggestions within the Advisory Group forum.
- Complete tasks and actions identified.
- Be the point of contact for their councils/department
- Disseminate information within their individual councils/departments to appropriate officers and elected members.

Quorum and voting

A quorum is defined as 50% +1 of Advisory Group members.

The Advisory Group will work towards a consensus decision-making style. When decisions are required, the motion shall be decided by a majority of votes of the members represented at that meeting. In the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Conflicts of Interest

All members of the Advisory Group are required to always declare any conflicts of interest that arise during their term. All conflicts of interest must be declared to the Chair prior to any discussion and/or involvement in the issue for which the conflict arises.

Where a conflict of interest exists, the member will withdraw from the discussion as required or act as directed by the Chair.

Proxies

Where required, proxies must come from within the same organisation and must be of an equivalent standing (e.g. an elected member must be replaced with an elected member).

Observers

In some instances, the work of an Advisory Group may be enhanced by the contribution of observers from organisations that are not Advisory Group members. For example, additional State government agencies, sister organisations (such as TCICA or RDA) professional service providers or industry knowledge experts.

Such organisations may be invited to attend specific meetings to participate as an observer. Nominees must be at a Board, CEO, General Manager or Operations Manager level.

The FNQROC Executive Officer, in consultation with the Advisory Group Chair, will make the final decision on participation of observers in an Advisory Group.

Confidentiality

During Advisory Group membership, the member will not reveal any confidential or proprietary information entrusted in the course of their duties and may not use or attempt to use any such information, documents or data, other than for the fulfilment of their duties with the Group.

Upon cessation of Advisory Group membership, and thereafter, the member shall not reveal any confidential or proprietary information, which they obtained while a member of the Group, and may not use or retain, or attempt to use or retain, any such information, documents or data.

Expenses

Members of the Advisory Group will be required to cover their own expenses, including travel expenses to and from meetings. To accommodate working lunch meeting, meals will be provided at the discretion of FNQROC.

Dispute resolution

Where a dispute cannot be resolved at the committee, it is to be escalated to the FNQROC Executive Officer. If it cannot be resolved by the FNQROC Executive Officer, it will be escalated to the FNQROC Board.

Preliminary Program of Meetings

Date	Workshop Theme
Friday 23 July 2021	Scoping the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile and review existing plans to identify key themes (local, state, federal) • Bring Councillors up to speed • Define project scope for RFQ documents • <i>NB: project scope to go to FNQROC Board meeting in August</i>
Friday 17 September 2021	Preferred supplier selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise recommendation on appointment of consultant • Review funding options • <i>NB: Preferred supplier and funding options to FNQROC Board meeting in October</i>
Friday 22 October 2021	Defining success and decision-making foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align on problem definition • Revisit themes from initial work • Understand the inputs informing the development of the plan • Proposed guiding principles
Friday 26 November 2021	Understanding current state and levers to improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish common understanding of foundational facts • Playback feedback from initial stakeholder consultation to date
Friday 18 February 2022	Defining a path forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on process so far • Early view on findings / recommendations
Friday 1 April 2022	Aligning the Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on progress so far • Review / discuss recommendations tabled to date • Discuss support required from the State the deliver recommendations

We the undersigned agree to be bound by the Terms of Reference for the FNQROC Regional Strategic Waste Management and Materials Recovery Advisory Group.

Signed for and on behalf of the member Councils at the meeting on Friday 23 July 2021.

.....
Elected Official
Cairns Regional Council

.....
Council Officer
Cairns Regional Council

.....
Elected Official
Carpentaria Shire Council

.....
Council Officer
Carpentaria Shire Council

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Elected Official
Cassowary Coast Regional Council

.....
Council Officer
Cassowary Coast Regional Council

.....
Elected Official
Cook Shire Council

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Council Officer
Cook Shire Council

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Elected Official
Croydon Shire Council

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Council Officer
Croydon Shire Council

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Elected Official
Douglas Shire Council

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Council Officer
Douglas Shire Council

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Elected Official
Etheridge Shire Council

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Council Officer
Etheridge Shire Council

Elected Official
Hinchinbrook Shire Council

Council Officer
Hinchinbrook Shire Council

Elected Official
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

Council Officer
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

Elected Official
Mareeba Shire Council

Council Officer
Mareeba Shire Council

Elected Official
Tablelands Regional Council

Council Officer
Tablelands Regional Council

Elected Official
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

Council Officer
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

Elected Official
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Council Officer
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Professional Officer
Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC)

Professional Officer
Department of Environment and Science (DES)



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2021

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4. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

5. COMMUNICATION

1 | Develop resilient transport infrastructure and connectivity

Preamble:

Resilient transport infrastructure to ensure connectivity across the region is essential if FNQ is to have sustainable economic growth and development. The current situation however, is far from satisfactory and the state of roads and ports is an inhibitor to further realise the vast untapped potential that Far North Queensland offers.

Roads

Over 80% of Cape York cannot be accessed by land-based transport during the wet season due to the unsealed nature of large parts of the Peninsula Development Road (PDR) and the numerous low-level river crossings. Equally the east-west linkages are poor and simply cannot cope with any increased level of heavy transport. The current transport network is exacerbated with the National Highway ending south of Cairns. Our region has a large Indigenous population and their attempts to achieve economic growth and prosperity is thwarted by the poor transport infrastructure.

A resilient transport infrastructure is expected to support a diversity of road users from agriculture and the resource industries to a growing tourism industry. The state of our roads is a major safety concern impacting tourism development across the region as the growth of visitors from Asia fly in through Cairns to explore northern Australia.

It is estimated that global food production needs to increase by 70% by 2050 to keep pace with population growth. FNQ has vast untapped potential for the development of an array of 'Agri

Businesses'. The Mitchell River catchment, for example, receives almost as much water annually as the Murray Darling Basin (96%) and yet this resource is essentially untapped due to the lack of suitable water and transport infrastructure. Land that could be used for high earning crops is being used for grazing and even this use is inhibited by the lack suitable transport infrastructure. Properly constructed, all weather, north-south and east-west road linkages are essential for the growth of the region. Without resilient infrastructure the economic potential of FNQ cannot be realised.

Ports

The FNQ region has four major ports with the capacity to connect the resource and agricultural industries, including live export of cattle, to international markets. Tropical North Queensland is the second-fastest growing tourism destination in Australia and Cairns Port serves as a significant tourism gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and a rapidly growing cruise ship market. The lack of investment inhibits development of these ports.

- Cairns: Whilst Cairns has developed as a major tourism port, it has far more potential to attract major marine industries; both domestic and military. Dredging of the port would allow for visitation of much larger vessels. The limitations of the Kuranda Range Road and the railway line to the Tablelands means it currently has little potential to service export markets.





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1. Cont...

- Mourilyan: Mourilyan Harbour is a protected deep water harbour with potential for the conduct of export operations; currently utilised for iron ore, timber, livestock, raw sugar and molasses. Land surrounding the port has been protected to support the potential for further mid-sized bulk exports from this region; more particularly to the Pacific Islands and Papua and New Guinea.
- Weipa: A major deep water port on the western side of Cape York Peninsula. With the development of the new bauxite export facility, Weipa now emerges as an excellent opportunity to develop this port for live cattle export, minerals and ultimately, perishable goods. It also has the potential to be a home port for the Pacific Fleet. Long term connectivity by rail would guarantee Weipa to be our most important access point for the container trade.
- Karumba: Karumba has excellent potential for the live cattle trade, seafood and mineral exports. Also for the import of supplies and services for agricultural industry and the export of grain and other agricultural commodities in the future.

Due to the poor interconnectivity of our road and rail network, each of these ports is limited in its potential to support export markets.

The FNQROC region now encompasses the third largest production area of fruit and vegetables in

Queensland and is situated several thousand kilometres from major markets by both coastal (Bruce Highway) and inland routes. The completion of the inland route from Lakeland Downs to Melbourne will provide an all-weather, efficient transport alternative.

High priorities for a resilient transport network in FNQ include:

- 1.Extension of the National Highway to Smithfield to connect the Cairns International Airport and strategic highway links to the Peninsula Development Road (north), Burke Development Road (West) and Kennedy Highway (South west).
- 2.The development of a Cairns urban and regional heavy vehicle road network within the region.
- 3.Integrated development of the Innisfail transport hub which includes road connection, development of Mundoo Airport and Mourilyn Port.
- 4.Investment in the ports of Weipa and Karumba.
- 5.Investment in Cairns Port to cater for the existing needs and potential growth.
- 6.Pacific Fleet home port at Weipa and long-term development of a rail linkage to Weipa.

History tells us that investment in transport infrastructure is a vital precursor to the economic growth and development of a region and the nation. Until this investment is made the FNQ region will fail to deliver on its vast potential.



2 | Provide reliable and affordable water and energy

Preamble:

Reliable and affordable water and energy is essential for the FNQ region if it is to have sustainable economic growth and development. COAG policies including Northern Australia White Paper, Regionalisation, Asian Market Access and Indigenous Advancement have identified the strategic importance of FNQ to economic and social development.

FNQ has seasonal over and under water supply. Bulk storage and control via new and enlarged dams is a key solution and offers the collateral benefits of hydroelectric power, tourism and lifestyle opportunities.

There are potential opportunities within:

- CSIRO's recent resource assessment of the Flinders Gilbert catchments found that the area could add up to 50,000 hectares of irrigation with a combination of in-stream and on-farm dams. The Gilbert offers the possibility of irrigation developments exceeding the scale of the current Ord River irrigation area. The private sector is already showing strong interest in investing in new infrastructure to support agricultural growth

in this area.²

- The Mitchell river catchment. This catchment receives almost as much water as the Murray Darling Basin (96%) and yet is essentially untapped largely due to the lack of water and transport infrastructure.
- Lakeland for increased agricultural productivity.
- Southern Tablelands (upper Herbert) for irrigation & flood mitigation;
- Nullinga for urban and agricultural expansion, and
- Tully Millstream Hydroelectric Scheme.

Affordable water pricing is essential for:

- Agricultural industry viability. Sunwater, a government owned company (GOC), has control in the Tablelands and Mareeba districts with the Department of Natural Resources controlling the volumetric approval and pricing of on-farm dams and bores;
- The livability and affordability of communities via Council operation and maintenance of domestic, business and industrial supply.



2. Cont...

Energy costs are escalating unsustainably due to a combination of:

- Inflated energy market prices set by GOCs with a regulatory cartel on the national grid. Price benchmarks – even for renewable energy system buy-ins are now set at unaffordable levels – even with the Queensland Governments “tariff equalization” subsidy.
- Off-grid and mini-grid users of wind / solar/ generator / battery hybrid systems are realizing cheaper systems than being on the main grid network.

Energy reliability is being enhanced by installation of renewable utility scale green energy production and

battery storage at remote and fringe off grid locations such as:

- Kidston, Lakeland and Weipa Solar Farms;
- Winton Geothermal Plant (pilot for other western shires);
- Ravenshoe and Mt Emerald Wind farms; and
- Potentially, hydro at Nullinga, Lakeland, Gilbert and Herbert dams.

Reduction in capital and operational costs could see prices kept at existing levels. It is more likely, however, that price constraint will only come from government policy changes or consumers installing independent, off-grid systems.





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3 | Respect and manage our natural assets and environment

Preamble:

Our region's world renowned natural assets, natural resources and environment are key factors in the economic success of the region. The region includes two World Heritage listed areas, the rainforests of the Wet Tropics and the reefs and waters of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR). To the west we have the Gulf Rivers Strategic areas and to the north Cape York Peninsula.

The economic success of our natural assets is evidenced by the growth in our largest industry, tourism, which is valued at over \$3.1 billion dollars. This is in addition to the contributions from the region's growing global reputation in primary industries, education, health, marine and aviation.

Respecting our natural assets and upholding the integrity of the areas unique bioregions is important for the sustainable economic growth and development of FNQ. A changing climate and land use impacts on water quality are recognised as major threats to the region's natural assets.

The diverse FNQ environment faces a range of pressures including invasive species, changes in climate, land-clearing and fragmentation. This includes the world-renowned GBR, with our changing climate considered to be one of the greatest threats to its health, along with poor water

quality from land-based practices. Long term monitoring by the Australian Institute of Marine Science shows the GBR has lost half its coral cover in the past 27 years. Recent media releases highlighting wide spread bleaching of the GBR have already had some negative implications on the tourism industry. Other examples include the threatened mangrove communities of the Gulf of Carpentaria and the decline of endemic and key-stone species, such as the Wet Tropics cassowary, an icon of several destinations in the region. Further deterioration of the region's natural assets will threaten the tourism industry and the economic prosperity of the region.

Councils recognise that healthy, resilient ecosystems are essential for sustainable economic growth and healthy communities. A collaborative approach between local government, the State and Federal governments and industry is essential in ensuring the value of our natural assets and environment is retained now and into the future to support ongoing economic growth. Successful examples include the Healthy Waterways Partnership which helps to identify target areas to address, the Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef Program to promote tourism and the Reef Guardian Councils Program.





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3. Cont...

The FNQ region is well positioned to supply local and global markets with innovative emerging industries which harness the region's natural assets, knowledge and partnerships including renewable energy, environmental management and Indigenous knowledge.

Respecting and managing the region's natural assets and the environment will assist sustainable economic growth and development in the region. Improving the water quality and managing the effects of a changing climate will offer some protection to the estimated 69,000 related (tourism, recreation, commercial fishing and scientific research) jobs which depend on a healthy waters in a sustainable ecosystem.

By deploying a combination of strategies to protect natural assets the region will be able to prosper and grow. Strategies such as:

- Investing in renewable energy which will stimulate employment, innovation and offer a sustainable energy source for future generations; and
- Reducing excess nutrients, sediments and pesticides and other pollutants will improve water quality. This could be achieved by upgrading sewerage treatment plants and encouraging the agricultural industry to reduce run-off through sustainable farming practices.





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4 | Develop equitable social infrastructure

Preamble:

There is universal agreement that strong, resilient and healthy individuals, families and community play a vital role in building the ongoing prosperity, wellbeing and economic development of a region. It has been demonstrated that long term economic growth in the regions occurs through investment in human capital development.

The population of FNQ is currently 273,000 persons which represents approximately 5.6% per cent of the state population³. The population is expected to grow to over 363,000 by the year 2036⁴.

The region covers a large area of 319,063 square kilometres, encompassing over 17% of the state. Approximately half of the population lives in urban areas, while the rest are distributed over rural and remote locations. Most of FNQ is in fact rural and remote with only few centres with populations over 25,000 people.

The connection between disadvantage, demography and geography are well established. The Socio-economic Indicators for Areas (SEIFA) – an overall measure of disadvantage – shows that FNQ has a larger proportion of its population in the most disadvantaged quintile. The majority of locations in FNQ are below the Australian average of 1000 points. Some examples include Cairns 975,

Carpentaria 865, Hope Vale 678, Tablelands 932, and Yarrabah 554. The Indigenous local government areas in FNQ have the lowest SEIFA indexes in Australia.

There is long list of social issues that have been identified in FNQ including lower levels of income, high unemployment, lower levels of school completion, higher levels of domestic and family violence, mental health issues, just to name a few. The *Counting the Homeless Queensland*⁵, shows that FNQ has a higher proportion of homeless people per 10,000 population than Queensland as a whole, with 11.6% of Queensland's homeless people where the state average is 6.3%.

There is also ample evidence to show that health and human service investment is not equitable in FNQ. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has identified that health expenditures in Queensland generally and even more so in FNQ were below the national average. Additionally, the non-government funding was one of the lowest nationally at \$815 per person in 2011-12⁶, demonstrating the significance of public funding in health and welfare.



³Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Regional Profiles: Resident Profile for FNQROC Region

⁴JACOBS - Regional Transport Plan: Far North Region Part A, Far North Region – Technical Working Group (TWG) Regional Transport Plan, Working Paper draft.

⁵Chamberlain C, MacKenzie D2009. Counting the homeless 2006: Queensland. Cat. No. HOU 205. Canberra: AIHW

⁶<http://www.aihw.gov.au/expenditure-data/>



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4. Cont...

A number of factors influence welfare spending including population growth, the cost of providing services and rates of service use, and the capacity to pay, which in FNQ is limited (CSSA 2014) reflected by the relatively small private sector in human service delivery. It is well established that investments in people yield multiple returns to society in both social and economic terms. As noted by the Minerals Council of Australia, in its submission to a Parliamentary Inquiry into Northern Australia⁷ “research suggests that communities that do not have sufficient infrastructure, social amenity and economic diversity will not attract new residents and this will in turn constrain the industry's recruitment capacity”.

FNQROC will work towards developing strong communities and social infrastructure to deliver equitable outcomes. Key focus areas are:

- Building an Evidence Base: Supporting the development of disaggregated data and developing social profiles of FNQROC areas and undertaking research into social inequity and disadvantage;
- Integrated service planning: Working cooperatively to develop regional approaches to common social issues and seeking to coordinate health and human services planning efforts;
- Service Development: coordinated regional efforts for building social infrastructure and service delivery. Addressing issues of underfunding, service gaps, physical infrastructure and sector fragmentation. Forging partnerships for new models of service delivery for rural and remote communities.
- Support Workforce Development: Support a cohesive regional effort to attract and retain health and human service professionals; support training and education efforts of the health and human services workforce and provide support for professional development
- Advocacy: Advocating to State and Federal government Departments and Ministers and other relevant agencies to address priority issues, policy development or projects.

⁷Submission No. 122

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Former_Committees/Northern_Australia/Inquiry_into_the_Development_of_Northern_Australia/Submissions



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5 | Provide equitable communication network

Preamble:

An equitable communication network for the region is essential if FNQ is to have sustainable growth and development. The size of FNQ means we are reliant on our communication networks whether this is mobile, broadband, fixed Wi-Fi or satellite. To be competitive in current marketplaces (national and international) and drive increased productivity and access to greater economic opportunities through a global marketplace our communication network is essential. FNQ has vast untapped potential for the development of an array of 'Agri Business', tropical expertise and tourism products which can be exported from the region. An equitable communication network will also support efficient and effective employment, government service delivery, education, health, workplace health and safety and social wellbeing.

In terms of fixed broadband quality, quality level A (where at least 80% of the premises have access to high quality fibre to the premise (FTTP) services), this currently applies to only 34,000 premises in northern Australia. This represents 5% of premises in North Queensland. In terms of quality level D and E (the lowest), 90% of premises in North Queensland fall into this category⁸. Australia's internet services are currently supported by an ageing copper network which requires considerable maintenance and provides for inferior service to that

provided in much of the rest of the world. The NBN will significantly reduce download times for content with high bandwidth requirements and will offer speeds much faster than is currently possible. There is also considerable concern that, while satellite services will deliver broadband to many areas that currently don't have it, and that it should improve speeds significantly, the network will remain far inferior to that covered by the fibre footprint.

Infrastructure Australia's Infrastructure Plan⁹ identifies that in terms of mobile coverage, services in regional Australia are not as accessible as in our capital cities. Without better mobile services, regional Australia will not fully benefit from new technologies and the associated business opportunities and better service delivery. For example, mobiles (and other technology) enable remote control of agricultural tasks including monitoring soil moisture, supplying water to drinking troughs for cattle and opening and closing gates.

Mobile coverage also means a quicker response to car accidents and greatly assists in fighting bushfires, floods and other natural disasters. Mobile access is important for regional tourism because visitors expect to have mobile services wherever they go.



⁸Infrastructure Australia. (2015). Northern Australia Audit - Infrastructure for a Developing North Report. Canberra: Australian Government
⁹Infrastructure Australia. (February 2016). Australian Infrastructure Plan - Priorities and reforms for our nation's future Report. Canberra: Australian Government.



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5. Cont...

More people are choosing to forego fixed voice services and rely on mobile services alone. Only 16 per cent of people have a preference for fixed-line telephone.

The cost of backhaul is directly related to the capacity required to supply mobile services and the distance of the backhaul link. The cost of this capital is enough to discourage providers from building their own network, thereby denying services to some regions or limiting consumer choice. The NBN is investing in backhaul infrastructure as part of delivering broadband infrastructure in the region. This infrastructure could also be used by mobile network providers, to expand their coverage in more regional areas.

As Infrastructure Australia aptly puts it, technological improvements and innovation can transform industries and open up opportunities for regional business. Providing equitable communication networks will create innovations that will help overcome geographic challenges and are particularly relevant to FNQ. This will also greatly assist in closing the gap on access to health, education, training and employment opportunities for many socially disadvantaged groups, including people in indigenous communities and people with disabilities.



Develop Resilient Transport Infrastructure and Connectivity

Resilient transport infrastructure to ensure connectivity across the region is essential if FNQ is to have sustainable economic growth and development. To realise the vast known and untapped economic potential, we need to enhance the existing road and port infrastructure within the region.

Roads

Over 80% of Cape York cannot be accessed by land-based transport during the wet season due to the unsealed nature of large parts of the Peninsula Development Road (PDR) and the numerous low-level river crossings. Equally the east-west linkages are poor and simply cannot cope with any increased level of heavy transport. The current transport network is exacerbated with the National Highway ending just north of Cairns City. Our region has a large Indigenous population and their attempts to achieve economic growth and prosperity is thwarted by the poor transport infrastructure.

A resilient transport infrastructure is expected to support a diversity of road users from agriculture and the resource industries to a growing tourism industry. The state of our roads is a major safety concern impacting tourism development across the region as the growth of visitors from Asia fly in through Cairns to explore northern Australia.

It is estimated that global food production needs to increase by 70% by 2050 to keep pace with population growth. FNQ has vast untapped potential for the development of an array of 'Agri Businesses'. The Mitchell River catchment, for example, receives almost as much water annually as the Murray Darling Basin (96%) and yet this resource is essentially untapped due to the lack of suitable water and transport infrastructure. Land that could be used for high earning crops is being used for grazing and even this use is inhibited by the lack of suitable transport infrastructure. Properly constructed, all weather, north-south and east-west road linkages are essential for the growth of the region. Without resilient infrastructure the economic potential of FNQ is thwarted.

Ports

The FNQ region has four major ports with the capacity to connect the resource and agricultural industries, including live export of cattle, to international markets. Tropical North Queensland is the second-fastest growing tourism destination in Australia and Cairns Port serves as a significant tourism gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and a rapidly growing cruise ship market. The lack of investment inhibits development of these ports.

- Cairns: Whilst Cairns has developed as a major tourism port, it has far more potential to attract major marine industries; both domestic and military. Dredging of the port has been undertaken which will allow for visitation of much larger vessels. The limitations of the Kuranda Range Road and the railway line to the Tablelands means it currently has little potential to service export markets. As a matter of urgency, the Service requirements of the four range roads need to be completed and solutions implemented.
- Mourilyan: Mourilyan Harbour is a protected deep water harbour with potential for the conduct of export operations; currently utilised for iron ore, timber, livestock, raw sugar and molasses. Land surrounding the port has been

protected to support the potential for further mid-sized bulk exports from this region; more particularly to the Pacific Islands and Papua and New Guinea.

- Weipa: A major deep water port on the western side of Cape York Peninsula. With the development of the new bauxite export facility, Weipa now emerges as an excellent opportunity to develop this port for live cattle export, minerals and ultimately, perishable goods. It also has the potential to be a home port for the Pacific Fleet. Long term connectivity by rail would guarantee Weipa to be our most important access point for the container trade.
- Karumba: Karumba has excellent potential for the live cattle trade, seafood and mineral exports. Also for the import of supplies and services for agricultural industry and the export of grain and other agricultural commodities in the future.

Due to the poor interconnectivity of our road and rail network, each of these ports is limited in its potential to support export markets.

The FNQROC region now encompasses the third largest production area of fruit and vegetables in Queensland and is situated several thousand kilometres from major markets by both coastal (Bruce Highway) and inland routes. The completion of the inland route from Lakeland Downs to Melbourne will provide an all-weather, efficient transport alternative.

High priorities for a resilient transport network in FNQ include:

1. Consistent and reliable connection between the coast and the Tablelands, Cape York Peninsula and the Gulf of Carpentaria
2. The development of a Cairns urban and regional heavy vehicle road network within the region.
3. Identified high productivity network improvements
4. Integrated development of the Innisfail transport hub which includes road connection, development of Mundoo Airport and Mourilyn Port.
5. Investment in the ports of Weipa and Karumba.
6. Investment in Cairns Port to cater for the existing needs and potential growth to leverage the findings of the Ports North Masterplan, which is due for release and the RAN's plans to upgrade and expand the Cairns naval base (Regional Maintenance Centre North East).
7. Pacific Fleet home port at Weipa and long-term development of a rail linkage to Weipa.

History tells us that investment in transport infrastructure is a vital precursor to the economic growth and development of a region and the nation. Until this investment is made the FNQ region will fail to deliver on its vast potential.

Water Security

Reliable and affordable water and energy is essential for the FNQ region if it is to have sustainable economic growth and development. COAG policies including Northern Australia White Paper, Regionalisation, International Market Access and Indigenous Advancement have identified the strategic importance of FNQ to economic and social development.

FNQ has seasonal over and under water supply with current bulk storage fully allocated. Bulk storage and control via new and enlarged dams is a key solution and offers the collateral benefits of hydroelectric power, lifestyle, resilience and economic growth opportunities.

It has been demonstrated¹ that regions with Dams have benefited significantly compared to regions without a dam:

- ✓ The Population growth is 2-3 times higher
- ✓ Additional public and private sector investment in infrastructure
- ✓ Agricultural production growth has been 60-80% compared to 0—10%
- ✓ Maturation of supply chains and technology providing new markets for higher value produce resulting in higher value of return
- ✓ Economic and community resilience to changes of markets, policy and conditions.

There are potential opportunities within:

- CSIRO's recent resource assessment of the Flinders Gilbert catchments found that the area could add up to 50,000 hectares of irrigation with a combination of in-stream and on-farm dams.
- The Gilbert offers the possibility of irrigation developments exceeding the scale of the current Ord River irrigation area. The private sector is already showing strong interest in investing in new infrastructure to support agricultural growth in this area.²
- The Mitchell river catchment. This catchment receives almost as much water as the Murray Darling Basin (96%) and yet is essentially untapped largely due to the lack of water and transport infrastructure.
- Lakeland for increased agricultural productivity.
- Southern Tablelands (upper Herbert) for irrigation & flood mitigation;
- A number of possibilities for urban and agricultural expansion, and
- Cardstone Hydroelectric Scheme.

The reticulation networks supporting our communities are just as vital. Much of this infrastructure was placed in the 50's and 60's by central governments to mitigate the economic effects of the depression; this infrastructure is reaching the end of useful life and beyond the capacity of many local governments and their communities to replace while also catering for population and economic growth.

Water security is essential for:

- Economic resilience,
- Agricultural industry diversification, viability and growth, and
- Regional population and economic growth

¹ https://www.fnqroc.qld.gov.au/files/media/original/005/1bf/1bf/168/LIVE--6638388-v1-FNQROC_DAM_Study_-_final_20210319_FNQROC_LowRes.pdf

Energy

Energy costs are escalating unsustainably due to a combination of:

- Inflated energy market prices set by GOCs with a regulatory cartel on the national grid. Price benchmarks – even for renewable energy system buy-ins are now set at unaffordable levels – even with the Queensland Governments “tariff equalization” subsidy.
- Off-grid and mini-grid users of wind / solar/ generator / battery hybrid systems are realizing cheaper systems than being on the main grid network.
- An increase in heatwave and heat stress events which will continue to trend incrementally into the future

Energy reliability is being enhanced by installation of renewable utility scale green energy production and battery storage at remote and fringe off grid locations such as:

- Kidston, Lakeland and Weipa Solar Farms;
- Winton Geothermal Plant (pilot for other western shires);
- Ravenshoe and Mt Emerald Wind farms; and
- Potentially, hydro at Cardstone, Lakeland, Gilbert and Herbert dams.

Reduction in capital and operational costs could see prices kept at existing levels. It is more likely, however, that price constraint will only come from government policy changes or consumers installing independent, off-grid systems.

Uptake of small scale solar energy generation/storage facilities by individual households has accelerated in response to the high energy prices. Consideration needs to be given to policy settings that support the sustainability/upgrading of existing ergon networks to cater for reverse power flow into the grid.

Respect and manage our natural assets and environment

Our region's world-renowned natural assets, natural resources and environment are key factors in the economic success of the region. The region includes two World Heritage listed areas, the rainforests of the Wet Tropics and the reefs and waters of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR). To the west we have the Gulf Rivers Strategic areas and to the north Cape York Peninsula.

As a region we are the custodians of two international assets. As a result, our communities face higher human resource and infrastructure costs to protect these assets, on the contrary the economic success of our natural assets is evidenced by the growth in our largest industry, tourism, which is valued at over \$3.2 billion dollars. This is in addition to the contributions from the region's growing global reputation in primary industries, education, health, marine and aviation.

Respecting our natural assets and upholding the integrity of the areas unique bioregions is important for the sustainable economic growth and development of FNQ. A changing climate and land use impacts on water quality are recognised as major threats to the region's natural assets.

The diverse FNQ environment faces a range of pressures including invasive species, changes in climate, land-clearing and fragmentation. This includes the world-renowned GBR, with our changing climate considered to be one of the greatest threats to its health. Further deterioration of the region's natural assets will threaten the tourism industry and the economic prosperity of the region.

Councils recognise that healthy, resilient ecosystems are essential for sustainable economic growth and healthy communities. Post COVID-19 there is a greater public appreciation of and demand for green spaces. A collaborative approach between local government, the State and Federal governments and industry is essential in ensuring the value of our natural assets and environment is retained now and into the future to support ongoing economic growth.

The FNQ region is well positioned to supply local and global markets with innovative emerging industries which harness the region's natural assets, knowledge and partnerships including renewable energy, environmental management and Indigenous knowledge.

Respecting and managing the region's natural assets and the environment will assist sustainable economic growth and development in the region. Improving the water quality and managing the effects of a changing climate will offer some protection to the estimated 69,000 related (tourism, recreation, commercial fishing and scientific research) jobs which depend on healthy waters in a sustainable ecosystem.

By deploying and implementing a combination of strategies to protect natural assets the region will be able to prosper and grow. Strategies such as:

- Investing in renewable energy which will stimulate employment, innovation and offer a sustainable energy source for future generations.
- Reducing excess nutrients, sediments and pesticides and other pollutants will improve water quality.
- Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategies, and
- Concept refinement and development of the Smart Green Economy

Develop equitable social infrastructure

There is universal agreement that strong, resilient and healthy individuals, families and community play a vital role in building the ongoing prosperity, wellbeing and economic development of a region. It has been demonstrated that long term economic growth in the regions occurs through investment in human capital development.

The population of FNQ is currently 282,300 persons which represents approximately 5.6% per cent of the state population³. The population is expected to grow to over 363,000 by the year 2036⁴.

The region covers a large area of 316,663 square kilometres, encompassing over 17% of the state. Approximately half of the population lives in urban areas, while the rest are distributed over rural and remote locations. Most of FNQ is in fact rural and remote with only few centres with populations over 25,000 people.

The connection between disadvantage, demography and geography are well established. The Socio-economic Indicators for Areas (SEIFA) – an overall measure of disadvantage – shows that FNQ has a larger proportion of its population in the most disadvantaged quintile. The majority of locations in FNQ are below the Australian average of 1000 points. Some examples include Cairns 980, Carpentaria 858, Hope Vale 621, Tablelands 949, and Yarrabah 518. The Indigenous local government areas in FNQ have the lowest SEIFA indexes in Australia and have slid further in the last 5 years.

There is long list of social issues that have been identified in FNQ including lower levels of income, high unemployment, lower levels of school completion, higher levels of domestic and family violence, mental health issues, just to name a few. The *Counting the Homeless Queensland*⁵, shows that FNQ has a higher proportion of homeless people per 10,000 population than Queensland as a whole, with 11.6% of Queensland's homeless people where the state average is 6.3%.

The accelerated movement of people into the region following COVID-19 has seen considerable pressure being put on the housing market. The availability of rental accommodation and the increase in residential property prices has created numerous issues; the socially disadvantaged are being forced to move to more remote locations to source housing, these locations in turn have less of the critical services these individuals require.

A number of factors influence welfare spending including population growth, the cost of providing services and rates of service use, and the capacity to pay, which in FNQ is limited (CSSA 2014) reflected by the relatively small private sector in human service delivery. It is well established that investments in people yield multiple returns to society in both social and economic terms. As noted by the Minerals Council of Australia, in its submission to a Parliamentary Inquiry into Northern Australia⁷ “research suggests that communities that do not have sufficient infrastructure, social amenity and economic diversity will not attract new residents and this will in turn constrain the industry's recruitment capacity”.

FNQROC will work towards developing strong communities and social infrastructure to deliver equitable outcomes. Key focus areas are:

- Building an Evidence Base: Supporting the development of disaggregated data and developing social profiles of FNQROC areas and undertaking research into social inequity and disadvantage.
- Integrated Service Planning: Working cooperatively to develop regional approaches to common social issues and seeking to coordinate health and human services planning efforts.
- Service Development: coordinated regional efforts for building social infrastructure and service delivery. Addressing issues of underfunding, service gaps, physical infrastructure and sector fragmentation. Forging partnerships for new models of service delivery for rural and remote communities.
- Support Workforce Development: Support a cohesive regional effort to attract and retain health and human service professionals; support training and education efforts of the health and human services workforce and provide support for professional development
- Advocacy: Advocating to State and Federal government Departments and Ministers and other relevant agencies to address priority issues, policy development or projects.

Provide equitable communication network

An equitable communication network for the region is essential if FNQ is to have sustainable growth and development. The size of FNQ means we are reliant on our communication networks whether this is mobile, broadband, fixed Wi-Fi or satellite. To be competitive in current marketplaces (national and international) and drive increased productivity and access to greater economic opportunities through a global marketplace our communication network is essential. FNQ has vast untapped potential for the development of an array of 'Agri Business', tropical expertise and tourism products which can be exported from the region. An equitable communication network will also support efficient and effective employment, government service delivery, education, health, workplace health and safety and social wellbeing.

In terms of fixed broadband quality, quality level A (where at least 80% of the premises have access to high quality fibre to the premise (FTTP) services), this currently applies to only 34,000 premises in northern Australia. This represents 5% of premises in North Queensland. In terms of quality level D and E (the lowest), 90% of premises in North Queensland fall into this category⁸. Australia's internet services are currently supported by an ageing copper network which requires considerable maintenance and provides for inferior service to that provided in much of the rest of the world. The NBN was expected to significantly reduce download times for content with high bandwidth requirements and will offer speeds much faster than is currently possible. There is also considerable concern that, while satellite services will deliver broadband to many areas that currently don't have it, and that it should improve speeds significantly, the network will remain far inferior to that covered by the fibre footprint.

This has been exacerbated by COVID-19, which accelerated the move towards online service provision for health, education and other government support services. Residents in areas with poor or no connectivity or limited access to computers are even more disadvantaged due to expectation they can access services remotely/digitally.

Infrastructure Australia's Infrastructure Plan⁹ identifies that in terms of mobile coverage, services in regional Australia are not as accessible as in our capital cities. Without better mobile services, regional Australia will not fully benefit from new technologies and the associated business opportunities and better service delivery. For example, mobiles (and other technology) enable remote control of agricultural tasks including monitoring soil moisture, supplying water to drinking troughs for cattle and opening and closing gates.

Mobile coverage also means a quicker response to car accidents and greatly assists in fighting bushfires, floods and other natural disasters. Mobile access is important for regional tourism because visitors expect to have mobile services wherever they go.

More people are choosing to forego fixed voice services and rely on mobile services alone.

The cost of backhaul is directly related to the capacity required to supply mobile services and the distance of the backhaul link. The cost of this capital is enough to discourage providers from building their own network, thereby denying services to some regions or limiting consumer choice. The NBN is investing in backhaul infrastructure as part of delivering broadband infrastructure in the region. This

infrastructure could also be used by mobile network providers, to expand their coverage in more regional areas.

As Infrastructure Australia aptly puts it, technological improvements and innovation can transform industries and open up opportunities for regional business. Providing equitable communication networks will create innovations that will help overcome geographic challenges particularly relevant to FNQ. This will also greatly assist in closing the gap on access to health, education, training and employment opportunities for many socially disadvantaged groups, including people in indigenous communities and people with disabilities.



Serving the people of Hill

SHANE KNUTH MP

18th May 2021

Hon Glenn Butcher
Minister for Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water
William Street
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Glenn,

I have been forwarded a copy of a media release and recently completed study conducted by the thirteen-member councils of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisations of Councils (FNQROC) that interrogates the process used to assess significant dam infrastructure in the State.

If you have not yet received a copy of the release and study I have attached for your reference.

The resulting report, *Long Term Analysis of the Role of Dams*, analyses the long-term economic importance of dams in regional areas, and aims to understand how decisions to allocate capital to water investments are being made.

It is believed to be the first study of its kind in Australia and the findings demonstrate that in Queensland, current assessment models used for dam infrastructure projects are not fit for purpose.

The failings uncovered are largely linked to the 'full cost recovery' approach taken by the State whereby for projects to be deemed viable, the full costs of dam construction and operation must be fully recovered from water users within 30 years of the build.

This results in extremely high-water licence fees and skews any business case findings toward a strongly negative result.

As you can understand the results of the study are deeply concerning to me in light of the recently announced \$3million funding towards a Regional Water Assessment plan to my electorate of Hill.

The finding of the study should be carefully considered by the State Government and relevant department considering our lack of new dam infrastructure over the past 30 years.

I hold grave fears that the methodology currently used by the state government is severely flawed to the point that any new water infrastructure project proposed will be doomed to fail.

I ask you to clarify if the current “full cost recovery” approach will be used as part of the water assessment plan when determining the viability of water infrastructure projects in the Hill electorate.

If so, I urge you to urgently review the 30-year assessment timeframe, move away from full cost recovery, include both direct and indirect economic benefits, and fundamentally change how capital investments in significant dam projects are assessed.

If this is not reviewed and altered, I fear the \$3million investment will be wasted and the tablelands region will be waiting another 30 years before desperately needed water infrastructure projects will ever be built.

I look forward to your reply to this important matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Knuth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shane Knuth MP
Member for Hill

From: Brad Tassell
To: [Power Paula](#)
Cc: [Hill Electorate Office](#)
Subject: Fw: Correspondence from the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water - Our Ref : CTS 10421/21
Date: Tuesday, 1 June 2021 11:02:43 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[Letter to Mr Shane Knuth MP.pdf](#)
[18th May 2021 Hon Glenn Butcher - URGENT.pdf](#)

[External Email] This email was sent from outside or a non-trusted organisation - be cautious, particularly with links and attachments.

Hi Paula,

Please see attached for yours and FNQROC members reference the response from Minister Butcher in relation to Shane's letter (also attached) regarding the "*Long Term Analysis of the Role of Dams*" report.

Shane also spoke in parliament last week on the report (see below extract) and tabled the document, so it is on record in Queensland Parliament.

The Minister was in the house during the speech and spoke to Shane afterwards confirming he is in the process of reading the report.

Thought you may want to table this at the next meeting of FNQROC.

Thursday 27th May 2021

Water Security

Mr KNUTH (Hill—KAP) (2.50 pm):

I was shocked when I read the *Long term analysis of the role of dams* report commissioned by 13 members of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, known as FNQROC. I now table the report, which cost \$110,000 to produce and took 16 months to complete.

Tabled paper: Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils report, dated March 2021, titled 'Long term analysis of the role of the dams'.

These councils are extremely concerned about the lack of water storage infrastructure being constructed which is holding back economic growth and opportunities in regional Queensland. This study is believed to be the first of its kind in Australia, and the findings show that in Queensland current assessment models used for dam infrastructure projects are flawed. That is why only one dam has been built in Queensland in the last 35 years. Dam and water infrastructure business cases are doomed to fail because of a flawed government assessment model.

We build dams to provide water security to meet future population increases and stimulate economic growth. This is very important information that I am going to read out. Studies show that significant dam infrastructure sees population grow at two to three times the rate of other regions that do not have water security, while agricultural production grows at 60 to 80 per cent.

However, the report demonstrates that this government is more concerned with insisting that water licence holders foot the bill for water infrastructure when instead we should be supplying more than enough water to meet demands at an affordable cost.

We are constantly hearing the term 'the market dictates the price'. That is absolute rubbish. Large national and international conglomerates are snapping up water licences, driving up prices and holding our farmers to ransom which is forcing many out of business and limiting the growth of

agriculture in the regions.

Every single Queenslander should be deeply concerned by this report. I have stood in this House and delivered numerous speeches and lobbied ministers from both sides of the House for 17 years, in desperation, on the urgency of building water infrastructure for regional communities.

We are running out of water.

Regional communities cannot be sustained or grow and agricultural opportunities are being wasted because no-one in government has the guts to build what is needed.

The government has recently announced \$3 million in funding to each of three regions in the state to develop an assessment plan—and this is good news.

One of the regions is in my electorate.

I urge the minister to acknowledge the importance of this report and review the government's assessment model immediately. Otherwise,

I fear that I could be standing here in 10 years-time delivering the same speech.

Kind regards

Brad Tassell

Electorate Officer

Office of Shane Knuth MP

Member for Hill

M: 0476 072 306 | P: 07 3553 6860

E: hill@parliament.qld.gov.au

From: Corro RDMW Water Minister and DG

<RDMWWaterMinisterandDG.Corro@rdmw.qld.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 28 May 2021 3:38 PM

To: Hill Electorate Office <hill@parliament.qld.gov.au>

Subject: Correspondence from the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water - Our Ref : CTS 10421/21

Good afternoon

Please find attached correspondence from the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water.

Please do not reply to this email. All future communications should be addressed to the contact details shown below.

Office of the Hon. Glenn Butcher MP

Minister for Regional Development
and Manufacturing and Minister for Water

P 07 3035 6170 **E** regionaldevelopment@ministerial.qld.gov.au

1 William Street Brisbane Qld 4000

PO Box 15009 City East Qld 4002

The information in this email together with any attachments is intended only for the person or



Office of the
Premier of Queensland
Minister for Trade

For reply please quote: ENV/CM – TF/21/8484 – DOC/21/94852
Your reference: DM6654761

19 May 2021

Councillor Michael Kerr
Chair
Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
p.power@fnqroc.qld.gov.au

1 William Street Brisbane
PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7000
Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

Dear Councillor Kerr

Thank you for your letter of 12 May 2021 regarding State assessment models for significant dams. I have been requested to reply to you on behalf of the Premier and Minister for Trade.

The Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils' report, *Long Term Analysis of the Role of Dams*, is noted. The Queensland Government understands the important contribution that water infrastructure makes to regional economies and communities. That is why almost \$1.9 billion has been committed to water infrastructure projects since 2015.

Infrastructure built today should be an asset, not a liability, for future generations. That means making careful and considered investment decisions based on the best available knowledge and financial modelling. The long-term financial viability and sustainability of major infrastructure projects also continues to be a key consideration in decision-making.

All Australian states and territories are signed up to the Federal Government's National Water Initiative, which includes cost recovery as a key factor in assessing infrastructure. In Queensland, the government also considers a full range of economic, environmental, social, and cultural factors when making decisions on whether to take projects forward.

The Queensland Government will closely examine the report's findings for potential opportunities to improve how it considers and funds bulk water infrastructure in future.

Again, thank you for taking the time to raise this important matter with the Premier.

Yours sincerely

T. LINLEY
DIRECTOR ECONOMIC POLICY



FNQROC MEETING

14 JUNE 2021

B83

FNQROC – FNQ REGIONAL ROAD INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Darlene Irvine: 6665476

Recommendation:

It is recommended that FNQROC adopted the FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy for our advocacy efforts

INTRODUCTION:

As a region all councils have a focus on our road network. We wanted an assessment that looked at our region road tenure blind to support industries using roads within the region. As a region, we wanted to have evidence to:

- a. Support our advocacy efforts (what is the value of the gaps in our network supporting our industries)
- b. Identify where, with limited funding, our best investment options were to support economic development,
- c. Identify the value of our tourism networks and understand the value of sealing unsealed tourist routes (this would be the first report in Australia which would identify a potential methodology for valuing tourism as a commercial vehicle)
- d. Identify 'sleeper' roads which would support efficiencies for the heavy vehicle network i.e. connector roads, first and last mile roads

As a result of an FNQ RRTG motion 9 October 2017 *"That a Regional Road Investment Strategy is developed reflecting the FNQROC Strategic Goals and the FNQ Regional Transport Plan is developed"*. On the 23rd October 2018 the FNQROC Board engaged Jacobs to undertake an in depth assessment of our regional road network.

Jacobs were engaged to:

1. Profile the regional Road Network
 - a. Collect and prepare datasets
 - b. Develop a Web-based spatial database
 - c. Validate the datasets, and
 - d. Assess the strategic Outlook.
2. Assess the Tourism Network (Technical Document)
 - a. Assess tourism datasets
 - b. Engage with the Tourism Industry, and
 - c. Assess economic benefits of current and future demand

3. Assess the Heavy Vehicle Network (Technical Document)
 - a. Assess the network capability
 - b. Assess opportunities for network optimisation,
 - c. Undertake infrastructure deficiency analysis, and
 - d. Undertake economic analysis
4. Assess First/Last Mile Opportunities (Technical Document)
 - a. Industry engagement
 - b. Undertake Infrastructure deficiency analysis
 - c. Estimate economic benefits
5. Prioritisation of projects (infrastructure deficiencies)
 - a. Utilising FNQROC project prioritisation tool
6. Develop Regional Investment Strategy (Executive Summary for advocacy)

COMMENT

It should be noted up front that Kuranda Range Road, Palmerstone Highway, Rex Highway and Gillies Highway have been excluded from the Heavy Vehicle Freight Network and Heavy Vehicle Productivity Improvements. The reasoning for this is that these roads require a more detailed assessment which TMR is progressing as part of the Cairns to Northern Tablelands Access Strategy.

The three technical documents have all been received by the FNQROC board (12 April 2021):

1. Tourism
2. Heavy Vehicle Freight Network , and
3. Heavy Vehicle Productivity Improvements

FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy

The FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy brings together all three of these technical documents into a strategy for advocacy with evidence sitting behind it.

It identifies that:

- \$839m is required over the next 20 years (excluding the four range roads)
- \$522mil (\$416mil State and \$106mil local government) is required to address immediate priority route deficiencies
- Around 48% of the existing high productivity vehicle network has width deficiencies.
- 33% of local roads gazetted for high productivity vehicles have width deficiencies
- Around 10% of the state-controlled network and 56% of local government roads will require rehabilitation or reconstruction over the next 20 years.
- Around 97% of the assessed local roads are not permanently gazetted for high-productivity vehicles. Road network conditions and restrictions limit their use, impacting freight costs, eroding profits and impacting the viability of business ventures.
- Up to 80% of the region is inaccessible during the annual wet season
- Unsealed roads and the resilience of the road network limits where tourists can travel and when they can access attractions.

While there is a prioritised list based on the technical documents and road asset data, this does not preclude us/councils from amending the priorities to match the funding bucket available i.e. road safety – when looking at existing killed or serious injured (KSI) figures roads like Captain Cook Highway and Gulf Developmental Road would come to the top as their figures are above the State and Federal averages. If the funding was based on Beef roads, another road set would rise to the top.

It is recommended that FNQROC adopted the FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy for our advocacy efforts

OPTIONS

1. Endorse the recommendation,
2. Alter the recommendation,
3. Not to accept the reports and provide further direction.

CONSULTATION

Over the period of the project, consultation has occurred with:

- Local Tourism Organisations
- Transport Industry
- FNQROC Board meetings, and
- Local Government Engineers on the FNQ Regional Road and Transport Group.

Transport and Main Road representatives were also invited to participate with the Local Government Engineers however they preferred to provide no comments to the discussions.

CONSIDERATIONS

Statutory:

Under the Local Government Act 2009, Council has jurisdiction to ensure good government in its area.

Financial:

Funding for this project was committed 12 February 2018 and is to be funded from FNQROC reserves.

ATTACHMENTS

Due to the size of the document a link is provided to the Technical Documents and Strategy

- Jacobs – FNQ Regional Roads Investment Strategy [link](#)

Darlene Irvine
FNQROC Executive Officer

Resilient Queensland Implementation

Terms of Reference and Project Brief

for a

Wet Tropics Regional Resilience Strategy and Action Plans

between:

Queensland Reconstruction Authority

and

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils



MAY 2021

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Cover Image Palm Cove, Credit J.Brook

1 Recommendation

That the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC):

- **Endorse** the following Terms of Reference, which form the basis for the delivery of the Wet Tropics Regional Resilience Strategy and Action Plans by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) and its project partners.
 - **Note** the intent for continued collaboration with the FNQROC and the relevant individual councils and other relevant stakeholders to advance this work in accordance with the timeframes herein.
-

2 Project Overview

Resilient Queensland 2018 – 2021: Delivering the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience (Resilient Queensland) is the engagement and implementation plan to support the objectives of the *Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience* (QSDR). It is the roadmap for achieving the Queensland Government's goal of making Queensland the most disaster resilient state in Australia.

A core part of Resilient Queensland is the delivery of regional resilience strategies following on from the successful completion of [four pilot projects](#) which tested methodologies and approaches. These pilots have shaped a delivery model that is being rolled out across Queensland's communities in the Resilient Queensland Implementation project. The project works together with regional governance bodies, local councils and other stakeholders to deliver the regional resilience strategies and action plans.

The resilience team conducted initial introductory discussions with individual councils in October to December 2020. In 2021, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) hosted a Big Map workshop in Port Douglas to coincide with the FNQROC meeting on Monday and Tuesday 12 and 13 April. The feedback from these initial meetings constitutes the co-design process and shapes the basis of this Terms of Reference document.

A locally led and regionally coordinated approach will be undertaken with support of state resources, to find pragmatic ways to improve regional resilience over time. The project will seek to establish a proactive approach to sustaining resilience into the future. This means applying local voices, local knowledge and local resilience lessons to identify and explore core resilience issues unique to the region.

Resilient Queensland implementation provides an opportunity to work in partnership across government to develop a prioritised plan of actions and program of delivery, matched to possible funding avenues that can be implemented over time. The key objectives of the program are to:

1. Use a community-led, risk-informed process to identify disaster resilience opportunities;
2. Facilitate collaboration and develop resilience strategies and action plans as business as usual, including linking to existing funding and policy pathways; and
3. Deliver strategies and action plans for implementation regionally and locally.

This Terms of Reference is an agreement between the parties listed in the recommendation above. It outlines the scope of the strategy and the action plans, a methodology for delivery unique to this region, the broad engagement process and strategy development steps, governance arrangements for ongoing work and stakeholder involvement.

The purpose of this work is to identify tangible actions, projects and initiatives that can be mapped against possible funding opportunities to meet identified disaster resilience needs either locally or regionally.

This includes infrastructure, human and social, economic, and environmental initiatives that help to deliver upon the QSDR in the region.

3 Scope

The resilience strategy delivery involves both tangible and intangible actions and outcomes:

- practical support and facilitation to councils in identifying and addressing local resilience needs;
- a state-wide picture of risk-informed projects needed to build resilience eligible for support via Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) efficiencies funds, future category C and D funding submissions, and other state government funding programs; and
- clear strategic pathways and policy linkages in a 'line of sight' between local actions, regional imperatives, state strategy and policy, and global disaster risk reduction objectives.

Resilient Queensland implementation program will not duplicate or alter existing policy programs or initiatives. The project is a vehicle to support the coherent delivery in a nested approach by local government, regional groups, and other local entities as needed in a **locally led, regionally coordinated and state facilitated approach**.

The outcomes are strongly aligned to the objectives of the QSDR, with a focus on building capacity and relationships, understanding risk, exploring the meaning of resilience in place, and linking actions to funding as a pathway to resilience.

The project outcomes build upon, enhance, or construct a framework for local and regional bodies to work together to embed resilience thinking into future plans, strategies and decision-making, and identify suitable projects for funding and delivery 'on the ground'. The project will draw together state level delivery partners with common policy objectives to lighten the load on local government.

The geographic extent of the Wet Tropics Regional Resilience Strategy is the combined area of the six local governments of the FNQROC member councils: Douglas, Tablelands and Cassowary Coast Shires, Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire, and Cairns and Hinchinbrook Regional Councils.

Core elements of the work undertaken in partnership with FNQROC will include:

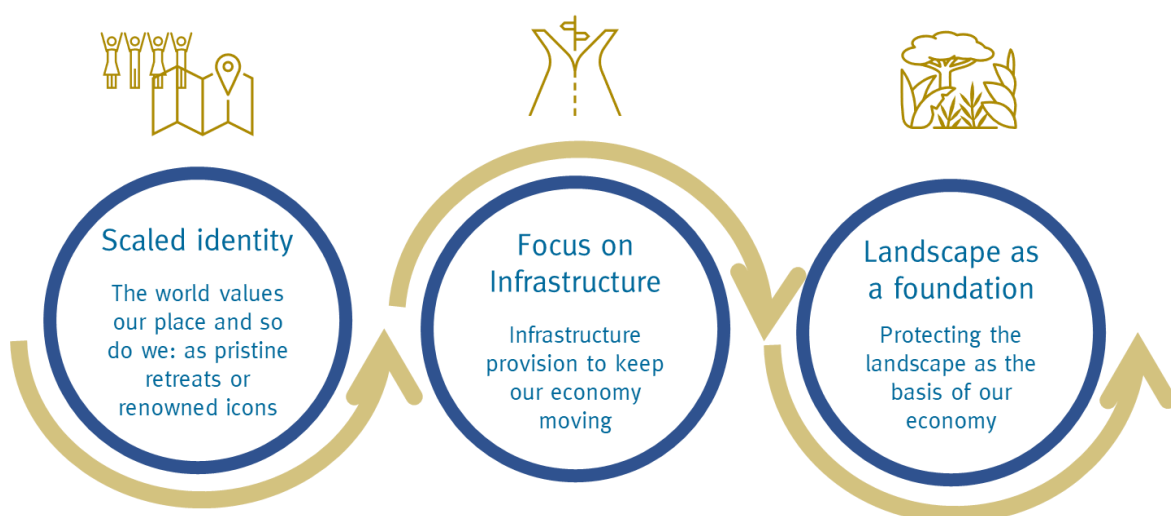


Figure 1: The three core focus areas

Scaled Identity stems from the world view of this region: its place on the international stage as a tourism destination as well as the region's status as a world heritage listed place both on land and the ocean. In contrast to the enduring attention on a *world* environmental and tourism scale is the *local* value and deep connection to the pristine and untouched rainforest areas which support living in isolation and remote settlements. These settlements identify strongly with the surrounding natural environment.

Focus on Infrastructure is about right-sizing infrastructure for a region which is dominated by exceptional and valued topography. The region needs infrastructure which can support a prosperous future and allow communities to invest and improve while simultaneously protecting the valued landscape. The strategy work can clearly identify the disaster resilience dimensions of infrastructure need in the region, and:

- map these to disaster resilience funding opportunities such as the DRFA efficiencies funds, resilience and risk reduction funding, or other aligned state government funding programs; and
- communicate the disaster resilience dimensions of infrastructure need to the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDILGP) as they develop the relevant Regional Infrastructure Plan for the Wet Tropics pursuant to the State Infrastructure Strategy.

Landscape as a foundation acknowledges that the communities and economy are built on the resources of the unique landscape and topography from the reef to the ranges. The region's geology, ecosystems, flora and fauna, and the fertile soils are the foundations of the economy and the Wet Tropics status locally, nationally and internationally. The strategy work can support initiatives in the natural environment which will in turn support the environmental foundations of the region. Other stakeholders can be brought into the conversation to explore regional solutions to foundational landscape issues.

4 Project Deliverables

The Regional Resilience Strategy deliverables for each region are not templated and will be bespoke for each region focussing on local and regional need and priorities. This enables the local voice to emerge through the strategy to relay resilience issues unique to the region.

Resilient Queensland is targeted for completion by June 2022; however, it is anticipated that all regional resilience strategies will be complete in draft format prior to December 2021. The core deliverables comprise a number of components:

4.1.1 A Community Profile

The team will use desktop activities to complete a range of preliminary tasks for efficiency in engagement. The initial preparation will include a community profile, which at a minimum will explore and provide:

- a modified literature review and narrative including economic, social, environmental, infrastructure, corporate and strategic stakeholders, plans and visions across the strategy landscape; and
- issues synthesis and analysis throughout; and
- demographic and profile data from open sources; and
- climatic observations, past and future from government sources with hazard and risk insights; and
- Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) workbook (completion of Process 1 of the QERMF only).

Much of the data and information to develop these outputs can be gained through open data, except the QERMF work which is developed by the project team.

This information will require appropriate synthesis and examination to draw out common threads and add value to the profile building. Baseline data across all lines of resilience is essential for a systems' view of resilience and effective development of a resilience strategy.

The information will be used to construct and inform engagement activities, so that engagement with regional stakeholders is well-informed and issues-based. Information is analysed for comparison to other regions, gaps and outstanding attributes as relevant to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and underpins engagement and strategy development as a robust evidence base.

The community profiles are prepared on a strategy boundary basis and potentially with chapters or appendices which deal with Local Government Area (LGA) level data as required. The final document will be provided to the strategy stakeholders at the conclusion of the project. The community profiles are not intended to be made available for public consumption.

4.1.2 A Multi Hazard, Multi Sector Approach

Resilient Queensland will prepare resilience strategies which address the effects of five natural hazards for communities:

- flood;
- heatwave;
- extreme wind and severe storms;
- bushfire; and
- earthquake;

The focus for the Wet Tropics Regional Resilience Strategy will be on aligning current collaborative and individual council work in recovery and enhancing resilience, and matters such as biosecurity, landscape sustainability and multi-hazard management, mitigation and resilience. Often solutions for one hazard are common to others of in this region, there are regional solutions for a common landscape.

Tropical cyclones are considered locally to be the greatest risk for the predominantly coastal communities. The region is also especially vulnerable in a general sense due to its geography and topography which promotes isolation. During the co-design workshop the isolation was not expressed as a vulnerability, but those residents were both resilient and harboured a deep understanding of severe storm behaviours, fire and flood and the response of the surrounding environment.

The threat of coastal inundation is a further hazard for people who identify strongly with coastal waters, habitat and shorelines. The Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy (CHAS) program through QCoast 2100 seeks to address coastal hazards. Projects or initiatives arising from the CHAS program can be incorporated into the action plans developed as part of this Resilient Queensland work.

These hazards will be examined across the interconnecting sector which bind the community of transport, economy, environment, human and social, and the built environment. This will enable a broad array of actions to be contemplated.

Hazards are prioritised for the region through the process with significant energy to be focussed on the impacts of **cyclone and severe storm**, and the potential for **bushfires**. Figure two below provides the five hazards and the five lines of resilience.

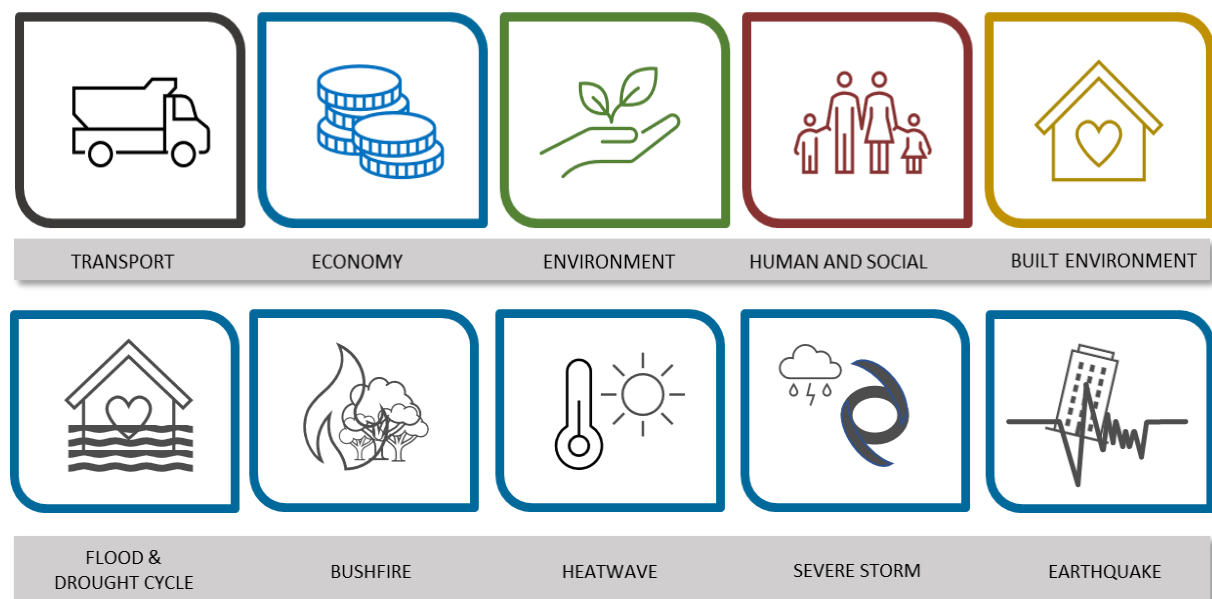


Figure 2: The Resilient Queensland work is multi hazard and across the five lines of resilience

In exploring the five lines of resilience, the Wet Tropics region is clearly shaped by its geography, coastal attachment, topography of peaks and dominance or the rainforest ecosystems visible from any vantage point. This in turn makes the region dependent upon roads and associated critical infrastructure for supply chains which have limited options for access. This connectivity powers the economy.

The region supports a diverse community from isolated rainforest settlements to the bustle of international visitors in Cairns and surrounds. This economic activity is driven by the environment which ultimately underpins all aspects of the community functionality. Figure 3 outlines the five lines of resilience in the context of the Wet Tropics region.



HUMAN AND SOCIAL

Diverse communities from long-term locals with deep place connection to short term visitors who come to enjoy, explore and wonder. We embrace living in our region as part of our identity on a local, national and international scale



BUILT ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Our communities, our businesses and our youth will thrive on equitable, reliable and facilitating infrastructure to support our unique topography and economy



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The land is our lifeblood from the pristine and isolated world heritage listed rainforest and reef to the coastal connections. We protect the environment which sustains our livelihood



ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Our roads are the critical network that keeps our people connected, our economy moving, our visitors coming and our prompt recovery. Connectivity despite our topography is critical



ECONOMY

From tourism to tropical cropping our economy is underpinned by the landscape. Our economy must transition to endure natural hazards.

4.1.3 The Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework – Process 1

The project will incorporate the QERMF risk identification process (using Process 1 only of the [QERMF](#)) to deliver a common, risk-informed technical basis for the project and to support councils to advance their QERMF using state resources. The QERMF is a scalable process that allows for generalised and detailed risk assessment and treatment while resilience strategies are more strategic in nature.

It is noted several Councils have already completed or are well advanced in undertaking the QERMF locally. It is proposed that the Regional Resilience Strategy be informed by and not duplicate any work already completed but rather utilise that local work.

The strategy development process is able to support those Councils that have not commenced the QERMF through completion of Process 1 only of the QERMF by the QRA project team.

The primary outcome of the alignment with the QERMF is to achieve:

- the stated objective of the roll out program being risk-informed, drawn from the prevailing emergency risk assessment methodology deployed in Queensland; and
- advancements in the QERMF process and council capacity building by providing the initial Process 1 outputs for further delivery of Process 2 by councils and QFES.

At completion, the methodology above will provide two primary deliverables to each LGA:

- commencement of QERMF risk assessment workbooks for the natural hazards noted above, containing hazard exposure and associated vulnerability in the area; and
- maps per LGA (both as pdf maps and Geospatial layers for each LGA at appropriate scale) demonstrating the vulnerable assets and issues for further interrogation through Process 2 of the QERMF; and
- a strategic vulnerability assessment for each hazard which highlights the outcomes of the QERMF in a consumable fashion with accompanying strategic insights.

The above deliverables are intended to represent completion of Process 1 of the QERMF only.

4.1.4 Department of Environment and Science - Sector Adaptation Plans

The QRA and Department of Environment and Science (DES) have explored opportunities to utilise the RQ project as a policy delivery vehicle for both resilience building and to advance climate adaptation objectives of the Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy and its subordinate programs regionally.

Climate risk considerations will be built into the project through the contextualisation of the Sector Adaptation Plans (SAPs) to regions and the application of the regional climate change impact summaries to regional context. The regional climate change impact summaries aim to help Queenslanders understand and adapt to our changing climate by providing a snapshot of the climate risks, impacts and responses in each region through climate change projections for the years 2030 and 2070.

SAPs are highly strategic and policy focused plans and currently are not spatially based. As a result, alignment of the visions and direction set out in the SAPs can be incorporated into the place-based narrative of the regional resilience strategies and manifest aligned outcomes in the action plans. Issues arising from the impact summaries can be applied to action plans as appropriate.

4.1.5 A Regional Resilience Strategy

The regional resilience strategies are a short, concise narrative outlining the context, issues and challenges for the region. It is essential that the strategy style and content is bespoke, fit-for-purpose and responds to the context of regional resilience meaning. The regional strategies will provide some minimum elements including:

- a regional narrative with a vision and objectives (or similar) for the region;

- the context of the regional resilience issues and natural hazards and how they manifest in that community(s);
- what resilience means to that region and some place-based examples or case studies;
- an outline of place-based resilient outcomes;
- opportunities for regional collaboration, stakeholders and capacity building as appropriate;
- identification of risk across the five events informed by the QERMF;
- strategic pathways demonstrating links back to RQ and the QSDR; and
- an implementation strategy or steps with some regional roles articulated.

The format will be dependent upon the scope and scale of natural hazards in the region, the supported approach, context, and the extent of regional co-ordination required and the like. The regional strategies will be public facing and have a QRA approved graphic design and brand.

4.1.6 A Local Action Plan per LGA

It is essential that local action plans connect local councils to funding opportunities and suit council's implementation options in the context of the capacity and capabilities of the LGA, noting enabling infrastructure delivered by other agencies which contribute to local resilience and essential elements include:

- detailed actions capable of being executed or merged into other council business such as capital works programs, the planning scheme, corporate or operational plans;
- reiteration or demonstration of risk as identified through the QERMF;
- roles and responsibilities for each action;
- a measure of prioritisation, timing or expected implementation;
- a suggested implementation pathway into local government workflow;
- opportunities for participation in collaborative actions, potential stakeholders for local skill and capacity building; and
- potential and suggested funding streams and opportunities with each action mapping to an internal or external (i.e. state or federal) funding program.

The local plans do not need to repeat the regional narrative and pathways approach of the regional strategies but can include narrative style information if desired to set the scene for the local context and how it differs from regional.

5 Stakeholders

The process of preparing a regional strategy and local action plan is locally led. This means that stakeholder engagement underpins the quality and quantity of information and deliverables. Engagement will occur at regional governance level at regional stakeholder and executive level and at the local leadership and officer level across various forums including big map workshops or testing and discussion forums on specific topics, challenges or draft documents both in person and on-line. Section 5.1 outlines the potential stakeholders for the Wet Tropics engagement activities at local government discretion.

5.1 Stakeholder Mapping

The regional resilience strategies will be formulated through information gathering from stakeholders who have the ability to contribute knowledge skills and actions towards resilience improvement. The QRA resilience team will consult with local government on participation by stakeholders outside their organisations. For this region, the stakeholders may comprise:

Federal Stakeholders:

- [National Recovery and Resilience Agency](#)
- [Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment](#)
- [Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications](#)
- [Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority](#)

State Stakeholders:

- Representatives from local or regional branches of state agencies such as the Department of State Development Infrastructure Local Government and Planning;
- Representatives from local or regional jurisdictions of state agencies such as Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Queensland Police Service (QPS), or Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) and Queensland Health
- Representatives from local or regional jurisdictions of state-wide asset owners or providers such as Aurizon, Telstra, Ergon Energy
- Representatives from local government bodies such as the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ); or
- Invited representatives with special expertise such as Department of Environment and Science, regional Land and Sea Rangers or University experts

Regional Stakeholders:

- Representatives from the Terrain (Wet Tropics) Natural Resource Management (NRM); and
- Allocated representatives from QRA – Regional Liaison or Recovery Officers
- Representatives from local government bodies such as the broader FNQROC members
- Representatives from regional industry bodies such as Tourism Tropical North Queensland and Tropical Coast Tourism, Canegrowers and the like.

Local Stakeholders:

- All local government staff with responsibilities across the lines of resilience and at various levels of seniority
- Business and Landowners at local level
- Community groups
- Local and regional traditional owner groups; and
- Local and regional disaster management professionals

The quantum, location, attendees and scope of stakeholders will be discussed with the local government prior to arranging any forums with attendees outside the region's local government. It is anticipated that this stakeholder interaction will be for the purpose of strategy and local action plan development in an information gathering capacity to acutely understand regional and local resilience issues.

6 The Regional Resilience Strategy and Action Plans

Significant collaborative effort across the region provides the foundation for the Regional Resilience Strategy. This work will complement, rather than duplicate, existing efforts in recovery and other processes and planning exercises underway across the region.

The core focus of this work is to continue to advance the identification of projects, actions and activities to enhance multi-hazard resilience, and the connection of these to funding opportunities – both present and future.

6.1 Interface with Regional Priorities

The Wet Tropics councils confirmed their regional priorities through the initial big map co-design workshop. The Regional Resilience Strategy will identify and amplify the importance of these regional priorities. Regional priorities described to the project team by the Wet Tropics councils include:

- community messaging of disaster risk across the diverse and different communities in the region – short and long term residents, visitor, across language and isolation;
- infrastructure provision and resilience - particularly [water security and](#) roads, as supply chains and the limited options for access on the coast and ranges;
- diversifying the economy when conditions impact tourism;
- protecting and enhancing the environment; and
- disaster management resources – to enable and support enhanced capability for response and recovery in community.

Notwithstanding the above list, the project team has learned through preparing other regional resilience strategies that regional priorities often stem from circumstances of geography and revolve around capacity and capability building, regulatory interface, and fit-for-purpose responses considering inherent local resilience.

The aim of the strategy and the local action plans is to connect the regions' priorities to funding opportunities. The work will unpack these priorities disseminating them into local actions to form a continuous line of sight from local funding and actions to regional priorities, to state and national disaster risk reduction and resilience policy objectives.

6.2 Principles

The RQ delivery principles underpin and shape techniques and measures of success. The principles which underpin the delivery of this Regional Resilience Strategy are shown below. From a regional perspective, the strategy work will be further defined by the following principles:

- strategy and action plan development will be underpinned by a complementary approach to adopt existing effort and work undertaken by Wet Tropics councils and stakeholders, avoiding any duplication of effort;
- the regional resilience strategy and local action plans will work to identified regional goals (including those COVID recovery or impacts, biosecurity, natural resource management, and others that may be identified), but will adopt a 'bottom up' approach;

Program Principles

- use a systems approach
- use existing governance processes
- use as a policy delivery mechanism
- flexible and adaptable delivery mechanisms
- lightening the load on local government
- bridging the gap to a new model of policy delivery

Delivery Principles

- relationship and trust-building engagement
- co-design
- place-based strategies
- locally led solutions
- integrated responses

- the approach will help to solidify local gaps and achieve local wins;
- the work will provide 'arms and legs' support to position the region for funding;
- maintain a strong focus on support for local government implementation.

The regional resilience strategy will support the region, individual councils and stakeholders to continue to achieve outcomes which support multi-objective resilience outcomes through:

Improving baseline
conditions



Mitigating and building
resilience to future events

6.3 Issue Identification

On the basis of discussion and direction to date, the proposed approach to the formulation of the Wet Tropics Resilience Strategy and local action plans will be based on the core resilience issues shown in Figure 3, which is a local resilience map, borne from the five lines of resilience. These were articulated to the QRA resilience team during the April workshop.

The resilience team will unpack these pathways and draw down the threads of resilience into localised actions which connect to funding opportunity. This includes an approach which integrates the following existing bodies of work, as a minimum:

- Far North Queensland Economic Recovery Plan;
- current local and regional climate change, sustainability and transformational strategies;
- regional planning documents from state and regional agencies such as tourism and governance bodies; and
- local corporate plans, economic development and tourism plans; Wet Tropics NRM regional resilience work; local and district disaster management plans and biosecurity plans.

The strategy pathways will also consider regional responses and collaborative solutions to building capability and meeting administrative and operational aspects of resilience and disaster management. This includes exploration of regulatory frameworks and jurisdictional or cross agency collaboration to enable localised and fit-for-purpose responses to the frequent

and expected minor flooding events which isolate communities regularly and require flexible approaches.

The final local action plans will provide a clear link from detailed local actions which can be funded and contribute to regional resilience in line with priorities and state policy objectives.

6.4 Regional Strategy Program

The following section provides an outline of the intended phasing which will guide project delivery. The agreement of these Terms of Reference signifies the completion of step two. Figure four below shows the broad steps of the project. This step sets the groundwork for the balance stages through the project scoping and focus. Step three in the region will be more active and detailed and this important stage will explore people and values and connecting them to place and resilience. It will involve engagement targeted at:

- local relationship building;
- developing mutual understanding of place-based issues;
- developing mutual understanding of resilience meanings;
- exploring challenges and priorities in more detail to define the regional strategy fundamentals.

The team will be able to craft the beginnings of a regional resilience strategy to test during step three and further engage with stakeholders to ensure rigour and completeness. The outcome of step three is an initial draft Wet Tropics councils Regional Resilience Strategy.

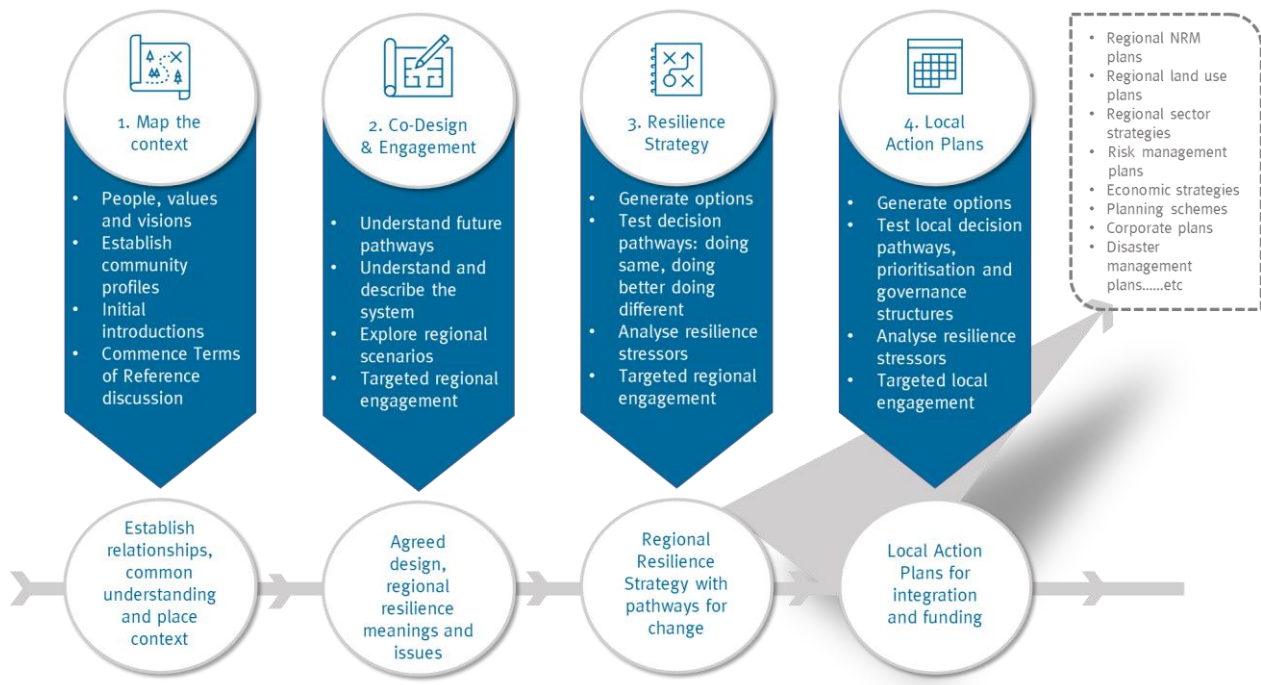


Figure 3: Resilient Queensland Broad Project Steps

Step four moves on to the local action planning process and engagement at local levels. From the regional input local variances will have emerged and the team will have some drafted ideas of appropriate local resilience actions across the lines of resilience.

Steps three and four are somewhat similar cycles where engagement is undertaken then tested, refined and finalised. Progress through the cycle progresses from understanding people and place to understanding and describing the systems in which resilience acts and influences to commencing exploring scenarios for improvement. A picture of systems workings, cause and effect, cascading links and feedback loops will emerge from this engagement.

The 'doing same, doing better and doing differently' pathways will be actively explored now in plotting adaptive pathways for the system in a local context. This stage will finalise the loop process in generating local options for action, sequencing pathways for doing better or doing differently and implementing those pathways. The engagement sessions will further test these ideas, likely against the skills and capacity, existing risk management frameworks and strategies of the local government to develop a final local action plan for acceptance.

Resilient Queensland is targeted for completion by June 2022, however it is anticipated that all regional resilience strategies will be complete in draft format prior to December 2021.

6.5 Governance and Communications

Interaction between the FNQROC and the QRA for engagement and strategy development purposes be primarily through the Resilience Team Leader for the region, Ms Julie Brook or the project Director Mr Stephen Dredge using the contact methods below:

<p>Julie Brook Resilience Projects</p> <p>Queensland Reconstruction Authority</p> <hr/> <p>E julie.brook@gra.qld.gov.au M 0406 783 197</p> <p>Level 11, 400 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000 PO Box 15428, City East QLD 4002</p>	<p>Stephen Dredge Resilience Projects</p> <p>Queensland Reconstruction Authority</p> <hr/> <p>E stephen.dredge@gra.qld.gov.au M 0448 755 435</p> <p>Level 11, 400 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000 PO Box 15428, City East QLD 4002</p>
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The QRA resilience team will make direct contact with LGAs using the contact point nominated by the respective local governments.

6.5.7 Deliverables and implementation

The final strategies and action plans will be provided to governance bodies and local government for comment, review and finalisation prior to strategy graphic design. The final strategy is a public facing QRA branded document, displaying the governance body and LGA logos. It will be provided to governance bodies for formal endorsement or adoption prior to public release.

Local action plans will be given to local governments to implement in accordance with their internal processes. The local action plans may be implemented in ways suitable for the operational parameters of participating councils. The Community Profiles and QERMF workbooks will also be given directly to LGAs.

The regional resilience strategies will benefit the region by providing new pathways and strategic direction to enhance resilience. The local action plans will provide direct connections

between resilience actions, across the five lines of resilience ready to apply to funding opportunities.

The strategies and action plans will be bespoke and fit-for-purpose for each region and local government and be drafted in a way that suits governance structures, skills and capacity. The regional resilience strategies may be implemented through informing future editions of corporate plans, regional level strategic work for the benefit of the member councils.

6.5.8 Endorsement and Adoption

The Wet Tropics Regional Resilience Strategy will be provided in draft to the FNQROC for active comment and feedback by the relevant councils. Once a final document text is compiled, endorsement by the FNQROC will be sought prior to preparing for publication.

~~The responsible body for forwarding resilience work with regional implications or which will benefit from combined funding is the FNQROC. In essence, the FNQROC will become the custodians of the strategy.~~

The regional resilience strategy is a document produced as part of the Resilient Queensland program, and is intended for use by Councils and ROCs for demonstrating how local and regional needs and priorities meet the state and federal resilience policy environment. The document can then be thought of as a regionally 'owned' document but there is no obligation or responsibility implied that FNQROC or member Councils must implement the strategies and actions identified.

The strategy is intended as a document FNQROC can utilise to communicate known priorities and existing needs of member Councils, where these priorities/needs have disaster resilience dimensions. Councils and/or FNQROC can then reference the strategy when preparing funding applications to demonstrate how those proposed projects/initiatives meet state and federal policy imperatives.

In the same way, the local action plans will be tested and provided to individual local governments for comment and active feedback. Adoption at a council ordinary meeting will be sought prior to compiling all the handover documents to each local government.

The resilience strategies will be prepared showing the participating local government logos and the Queensland Government coat of arms and will be public documents available in print and on the QRA website as is currently the case of the completed pilot projects.

7 Out of Scope

The following items are identified as out of scope elements and will not form part of the Regional Resilience Strategy work or the development of local action plans:

- preparation of funding applications;
- provision of physical resources;
- hazard modelling of any kind;
- fit-for-purpose risk assessments for hazards; and
- extended parts of QERMF.

Resilient Queensland Implementation

Terms of Reference and Project Brief

for a

Hinterland to Gulf Regional Resilience Strategy and Action Plans

between:

Queensland Reconstruction Authority

and

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

MAY 2021

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1 Recommendation

That the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC):

- **Endorse** the following Terms of Reference, which form the basis for the delivery of the Hinterland to Gulf Regional Resilience Strategy and Action Plans by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) and its project partners.
 - **Note** the intent for continued collaboration with the FNQROC and the relevant individual councils and other relevant stakeholders to advance this work in accordance with the timeframes herein.
-

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Resilient Queensland implementation program will not duplicate or alter existing policy programs or initiatives. The project is a vehicle to support the coherent delivery in a nested approach by local government, regional groups, and other local entities as needed in a **locally led, regionally coordinated and state facilitated approach**.

The outcomes are strongly aligned to the objectives of the QSDR, with a focus on building capacity and relationships, understanding risk, exploring the meaning of resilience in place, and linking actions to funding as a pathway to resilience.

The project outcomes build upon, enhance, or construct a framework for local and regional bodies to work together to embed resilience thinking into future plans, strategies and decision-making, and identify suitable projects for funding and delivery 'on the ground'. The project will draw together state level delivery partners with common policy objectives to lighten the load on local government.

The geographic extent of the Hinterland to Gulf Regional Resilience Strategy is the combined area of the four local governments of the FNQROC member councils: Mareeba, Etheridge, Croydon and Carpentaria Shire Councils

NB, Carpentaria has a principal role in the North West Regional Resilience Strategy. Participation is welcome by Carpentaria in the Hinterland to Gulf strategy if desired.

Core elements of the work undertaken in partnership with FNQROC will include:

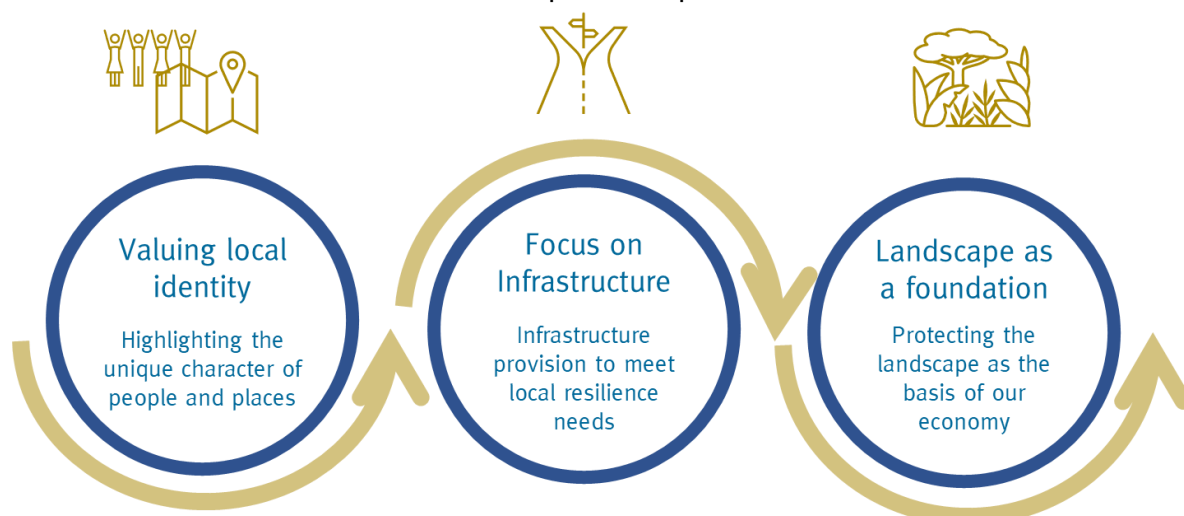


Figure 1: The three core focus areas

Valuing local identity stems from the regional desire to be independent of larger centres while simultaneously celebrating their unique lifestyle from the Morning Glory to Mareeba of which they are intensely proud. Rich cultural heritage and frontier themes support an inherent resilience to be maintained and enhanced. The strategy work will bring the value of local decision making, autonomy and local knowledge to the fore.

Focus on Infrastructure is about right-sizing infrastructure provision for the resilience needs of people of remoter regions. The region needs infrastructure which can support a prosperous future and allow communities to invest and improve. The strategy work can clearly identify the disaster resilience dimensions of infrastructure need in the region, and:

- map these to disaster resilience funding opportunities such as the DRFA efficiencies funds, resilience and risk reduction funding, or other aligned state government funding programs; and
- communicate the disaster resilience dimensions of infrastructure need to the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDILGP) as they develop the relevant Regional Infrastructure Plan for the Hinterland to Gulf pursuant to the State Infrastructure Strategy.

Landscape as a foundation acknowledges that the communities and economy are built on the resources of the vast and diverse landscape from the Tablelands to the flood plains. The geology and the fertile soils are the foundations of agriculture, mining, grazing and tourism. The strategy work can support initiatives in the natural environment which will in turn bolster the environmental foundations of the region. Other stakeholders can be brought into the conversation to explore regional solutions to foundational landscape issues.

4 Project Deliverables

The Regional Resilience Strategy deliverables for each region are not templated and will be bespoke for each region focussing on local and regional need and priorities. This enables the local voice to emerge through the strategy to relay resilience issues unique to the region.

Resilient Queensland is targeted for completion by June 2022, however it is anticipated that all regional resilience strategies will be complete in draft format prior to December 2021. The core deliverables comprise a number of components:

4.1.1 A Community Profile

The team will use desktop activities to complete a range of preliminary tasks for efficiency in engagement. The initial preparation will include a community profile, which at a minimum will explore and provide:

- a modified literature review and narrative including economic, social, environmental, infrastructure, corporate and strategic stakeholders, plans and visions across the strategy landscape; and
- issues synthesis and analysis throughout; and
- demographic and profile data from open sources; and
- climatic observations, past and future from government sources with hazard and risk insights; and
- Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) workbook (completion of Process 1 of the QERMF only).

Much of the data and information to develop these outputs can be gained through open data, except the QERMF work which is developed by the project team.

This information will require appropriate synthesis and examination to draw out common threads and add value to the profile building. Baseline data across all lines of resilience is essential for a systems' view of resilience and effective development of a resilience strategy.

The information will be used to construct and inform engagement activities, so that engagement with regional stakeholders is well-informed and issues-based. Information is analysed for comparison to other regions, gaps and outstanding attributes as relevant to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and underpins engagement and strategy development as a robust evidence base.

The community profiles are prepared on a strategy boundary basis and potentially with chapters or appendices which deal with Local Government Area (LGA) level data as required. The final document will be provided to the strategy stakeholders at the conclusion of the project. The community profiles are not intended to be made available for public consumption.

4.1.2 A Multi Hazard, Multi Sector Approach

Resilient Queensland will prepare resilience strategies which address the effects of five natural hazards for communities:

- flood;
- heatwave;
- extreme wind and severe storms;
- bushfire; and
- earthquake;

The focus for the Hinterland to Gulf Regional Resilience Strategy will be on aligning current collaborative and individual council work in recovery and enhancing resilience, and matters such as biosecurity, landscape sustainability, community cohesion, infrastructure gaps and multi-hazard management, mitigation and resilience.

~~Often solutions for one hazard are common to others. It is noted that drought is not listed below, however the impacts and solutions for drought resilience are similar to other hazards and are inherently included.~~

The work will focus on five primary hazards. These hazards will be examined across the interconnecting sectors which bind the community of transport, economy, environment, human and social, and the built environment. ~~While drought is not listed the symptoms and solutions are often similar to other hazards and will be included in strategy narrative and themes. This will enable a broad array of actions to be contemplated.~~ Figure two below provides the five hazards and the five lines of resilience.

In the Hinterland to Gulf Region, drought will also be considered given it is part of the natural weather and climatic cycle of the landscape. Local communities are accustomed to this cycle which manifests in diverse understanding of risk and the need for flexible localised responses to reoccurring events. Many of the socio-economic impacts of and actions to address drought are similar to other hazards and therefore will be included in the strategy.

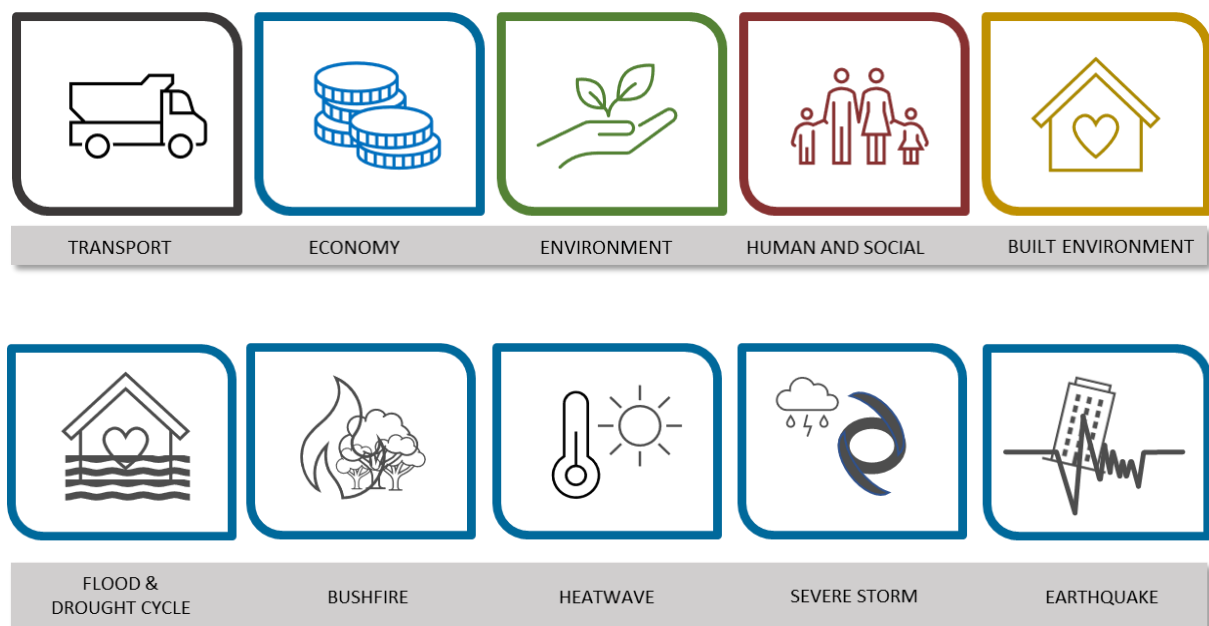


Figure 2: The Resilient Queensland work is multi hazard and across the five lines of resilience

In exploring the five lines of resilience, the Hinterland to Gulf region is dependent upon **roads** and associated critical infrastructure for supply chains, connectivity, economy and transport. The road network is principally state controlled and is often the only link between communities, supply and relief. Similarly, communications and energy networks are also operated by third parties. Mitigation or 'betterment' works for critical **infrastructure** is a first priority for the region, a goal which relies upon building understanding across stakeholders.

The **environment** is diverse from fertile uplands, world heritage rainforest to productive black soil plans and supports the principal **economy** of agriculture and tourism. This is held together

by a **people** who love their region, the country and their heritage. Figure 3 outlines the five lines of resilience in the context of the Hinterland to Gulf region.

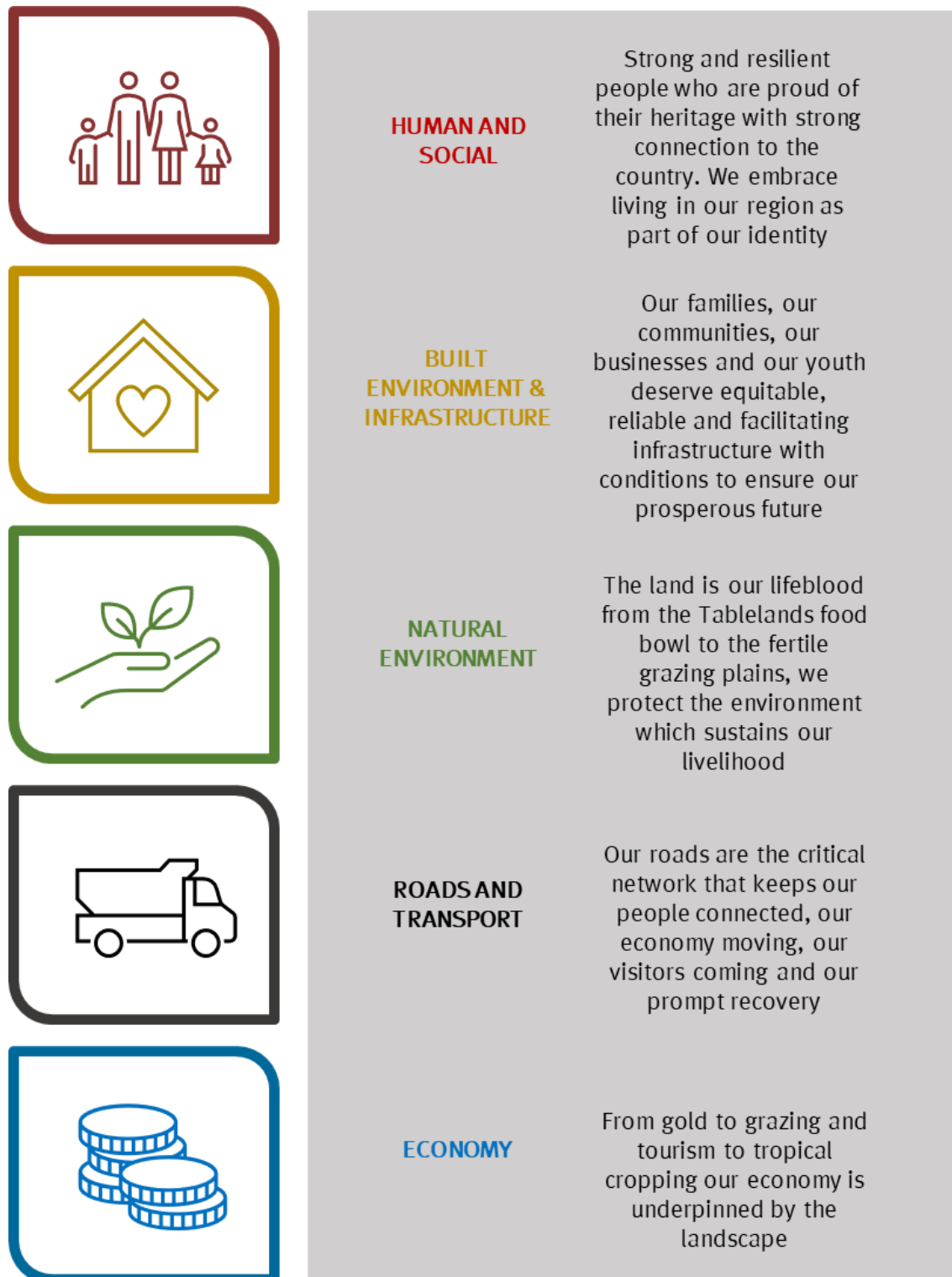


Figure 3: The Five lines of resilience in the context of the Hinterland to Gulf region

4.1.3 The Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework – Process 1

The project will incorporate the QERMF risk identification process (using Process 1 only of the [QERMF](#)) to deliver a common, risk-informed technical basis for the project and to support councils to advance their QERMF using state resources. The QERMF is a scalable process that allows for generalised and detailed risk assessment and treatment while resilience strategies are more strategic in nature. The primary outcome of the alignment with the QERMF is to achieve:

- the stated objective of the roll out program being risk-informed, drawn from the prevailing emergency risk assessment methodology deployed in Queensland; and
- advancements in the QERMF process and council capacity building by providing the initial Process 1 outputs for further delivery of Process 2 by councils and QFES.

At completion, the methodology above will provide two primary deliverables to each LGA:

- commencement of QERMF risk assessment workbooks for the natural hazards noted above, containing hazard exposure and associated vulnerability in the area; and
- maps per LGA (both as pdf maps and Geospatial layers for each LGA at appropriate scale) demonstrating the vulnerable assets and issues for further interrogation through Process 2 of the QERMF; and
- a strategic vulnerability assessment for each hazard which highlights the outcomes of the QERMF in a consumable fashion with accompanying strategic insights.

The above deliverables are intended to represent completion of Process 1 of the QERMF only.

4.1.4 Department of Environment and Science - Sector Adaptation Plans

The QRA and DES have explored opportunities to utilise the RQ project as a policy delivery vehicle for both resilience building and to advance climate adaptation objectives of the Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy and its subordinate programs regionally.

Climate risk considerations will be built into the project through the contextualisation of the Sector Adaptation Plans (SAPs) to regions and the application of the regional climate change impact summaries to regional context. The regional climate change impact summaries aim to help Queenslanders understand and adapt to our changing climate by providing a snapshot of the climate risks, impacts and responses in each region through climate change projections for the years 2030 and 2070.

SAPs are highly strategic and policy focused plans and currently are not spatially based. As a result, alignment of the visions and direction set out in the SAPs can be incorporated into the place-based narrative of the regional resilience strategies and manifest aligned outcomes in the action plans. Issues arising from the impact summaries can be applied to action plans as appropriate.

4.1.5 A Regional Resilience Strategy

The regional resilience strategies are a short, concise narrative outlining the context, issues and challenges for the region. It is essential that the strategy style and content is bespoke, fit-for-purpose and responds to the context of regional resilience meaning. The regional strategies will provide some minimum elements including:

- a regional narrative with a vision and objectives (or similar) for the region;
- the context of the regional resilience issues and natural hazards and how they manifest in that community(s);

- what resilience means to that region and some place-based examples or case studies;
- an outline of place-based resilient outcomes;
- opportunities for regional collaboration, stakeholders and capacity building as appropriate;
- identification of risk across the five events informed by the QERMF;
- strategic pathways demonstrating links back to RQ and the QSDR; and
- an implementation strategy or steps with some regional roles articulated.

The format will be dependent upon the scope and scale of natural hazards in the region, the supported approach, context, and the extent of regional co-ordination required and the like. The regional strategies will be public facing and have a QRA approved graphic design and brand.

4.1.6 A Local Action Plan per LGA

It is essential that local action plans connect local councils to funding opportunities and suit council's implementation options in the context of the capacity and capabilities of the LGA [and noting enabling infrastructure delivered by other agencies which contribute to local resilience](#) and essential elements include:

- detailed actions capable of being executed or merged into other council business such as capital works programs, the planning scheme, corporate or operational plans;
- reiteration or demonstration of risk as identified through the QERMF;
- roles and responsibilities for each action;
- a measure of prioritisation, timing or expected implementation;
- a suggested implementation pathway into local government workflow;
- opportunities for participation in collaborative actions, potential stakeholders for local skill and capacity building; and
- potential and suggested funding streams and opportunities with each action mapping to an internal or external (i.e. state or federal) funding program.

The local plans do not need to repeat the regional narrative and pathways approach of the regional strategies but can include narrative style information if desired to set the scene for the local context and how it differs from regional.

5 Stakeholders

The process of preparing a regional strategy and local action plan is locally led. This means that stakeholder engagement underpins the quality and quantity of information and deliverables. Engagement will occur at regional governance level at regional stakeholder and executive level and at the local leadership and officer level across various forums including big map workshops or testing and discussion forums on specific topics, challenges or draft documents both in person and on-line. Section 5.1 outlines the potential stakeholders for the Hinterland to Gulf engagement activities at local government discretion.

5.1 Stakeholder Mapping

The regional resilience strategies will be formulated through information gathering from stakeholders who have the ability to contribute knowledge skills and actions towards resilience improvement. The QRA resilience team will consult with local government on participation by stakeholders outside their organisations. For this region, the stakeholders may comprise:

Federal Stakeholders:

- National Recovery and Resilience Agency
- [Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment](#)
- [Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications](#)

State Stakeholders:

- Representatives from local or regional branches of state agencies such as the Department of State Development Infrastructure Local Government and Planning;
- Representatives from local or regional jurisdictions of state agencies such as Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Queensland Police Service (QPS), or Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) and Queensland Health;
- Representatives from local or regional jurisdictions of state-wide asset owners or providers such as Aurizon, Telstra, Ergon Energy;
- Representatives from local government bodies such as the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ); or
- Invited representatives with special expertise such as Department of Environment and Science, regional Land and Sea Rangers or University experts.

Regional Stakeholders:

- Representatives from the Northern Gulf Natural Resource Management (NRM);
- Allocated representatives from QRA – Regional Liaison or Recovery Officers;
- Representatives from local government bodies such as the broader FNQROC members; and
- Representatives from regional industry bodies such as Queensland Farmers Federation or similar.

Local Stakeholders:

- All local government staff with responsibilities across the lines of resilience and at various levels of seniority;
- Business and Landowners at local level ;
- Community groups;

- Local and regional traditional owner groups; and
- Local and regional disaster management professionals.

The quantum, location, attendees and scope of stakeholders will be discussed with the local government prior to arranging any forums with attendees outside the region's local government. It is anticipated that this stakeholder interaction will be for the purpose of strategy and local action plan development in an information gathering capacity to acutely understand regional and local resilience issues.

6 The Regional Resilience Strategy and Action Plans

Significant collaborative effort across the region provides the foundation for the regional resilience strategy. This work will complement, rather than duplicate, existing efforts in recovery and other processes and planning exercises underway across the region.

The core focus of this work is to continue to advance the identification of projects, actions and activities to enhance multi-hazard resilience, and the connection of these to funding opportunities – both present and future.

6.1 Interface with Regional Priorities

The Hinterland to Gulf councils confirmed their regional priorities through the initial big map co-design workshop. The Regional Resilience Strategy will identify and amplify the importance of these regional priorities. Regional priorities described to the project team by the Hinterland to Gulf councils include:

- inclusive communities
- fit-for-purpose infrastructure - particularly roads, telecommunications and water
- diversifying the economy particularly through tourism
- protecting quality agricultural land from development
- protecting the environment from biosecurity matters; and
- disaster management resources – to enable and support enhanced capability for response and recovery in community.

Notwithstanding the above list, the project team has learned during the pilot projects that regional priorities often stem from circumstances of geography and revolve around capacity and capability building, regulatory interface, fit-for-purpose responses considering inherent local resilience.

The aim of the strategy and the local action plans is to connect the region's priorities to funding opportunities. The work will unpack these priorities disseminating them into local actions to form a continuous line of sight from local funding and actions to regional priorities, to state and national disaster risk reduction and resilience policy objectives.

6.2 Principles

The RQ delivery principles underpin and shape techniques and measures of success. The principles which underpin the delivery of this Regional Resilience Strategy are shown below. From a regional perspective, the strategy work will be further defined by the following principles:

- strategy and action plan development will be underpinned by a complementary approach to adopt existing effort and work undertaken by Hinterland to Gulf councils and stakeholders, avoiding any duplication of effort;
- the regional resilience strategy and local action plans will work to identified regional goals (including those COVID recovery or impacts, biosecurity, natural resource management, and others that may be identified), but will adopt a 'bottom up' approach;

Program Principles

- use a systems approach
- use existing governance processes
- use as a policy delivery mechanism
- flexible and adaptable delivery mechanisms
- lightening the load on local government
- bridging the gap to a new model of policy delivery

Delivery Principles

- relationship and trust-building engagement
- co-design
- place-based strategies
- locally led solutions
- integrated responses

- the approach will help to solidify local gaps and achieve local wins;
- the work will provide ‘arms and legs’ support to position the region for funding;
- maintain a strong focus on support for local government implementation.

The regional resilience strategy will support the region, individual councils and stakeholders to continue to achieve outcomes which support multi-objective resilience outcomes through:

Improving baseline
conditions



Mitigating and building
resilience to future events

6.3 Issue Identification

On the basis of discussion and direction to date, the proposed approach to the formulation of the Hinterland to Gulf Resilience Strategy and local action plans will be based on the core resilience issues shown in Figure three, which is a local resilience map, borne from the five lines of resilience. These were articulated to the QRA resilience team during the April workshop.

The resilience team will unpack these pathways and draw down the threads of resilience into localised actions which connect to funding opportunity. This includes an approach which integrates existing bodies of work, as a minimum such as the Outback Queensland Economic Recovery Plan; the “After the Flood: A Strategy for Long Term Recovery” (where relevant); local corporate plans, economic development and tourism plans; NRM regional resilience work; local and district disaster management plans and biosecurity plans.

The strategy pathways will also consider regional responses and collaborative solutions to building capability and meeting administrative and operational aspects of resilience and disaster management. This includes exploration of regulatory frameworks and jurisdictional or cross agency collaboration to enable localised and fit-for-purpose responses to the frequent and expected minor flooding events which isolate communities regularly and require flexible approaches.

The final local action plans will provide a clear link from detailed local actions which can be funded and contribute to regional resilience in line with priorities and state policy objectives.

6.4 Regional Strategy Program

The following section provides an outline of the intended phasing which will guide project delivery. The agreement of these Terms of Reference signifies the completion of step two. Figure four below shows the broad steps of the project. This step sets the groundwork for the balance stages through the project scoping and focus. Step three in the region will be more active and detailed and this important stage will explore people and values and connecting them to place and resilience. It will involve engagement targeted at:

- local relationship building;
- developing mutual understanding of place-based issues;
- developing mutual understanding of resilience meanings;
- exploring challenges and priorities in more detail to define the regional strategy fundamentals.

The team will be able to craft the beginnings of a regional resilience strategy to test during step three and further engage with stakeholders to ensure rigour and completeness. The outcome of step three is an initial draft Hinterland to Gulf councils Regional Resilience Strategy.

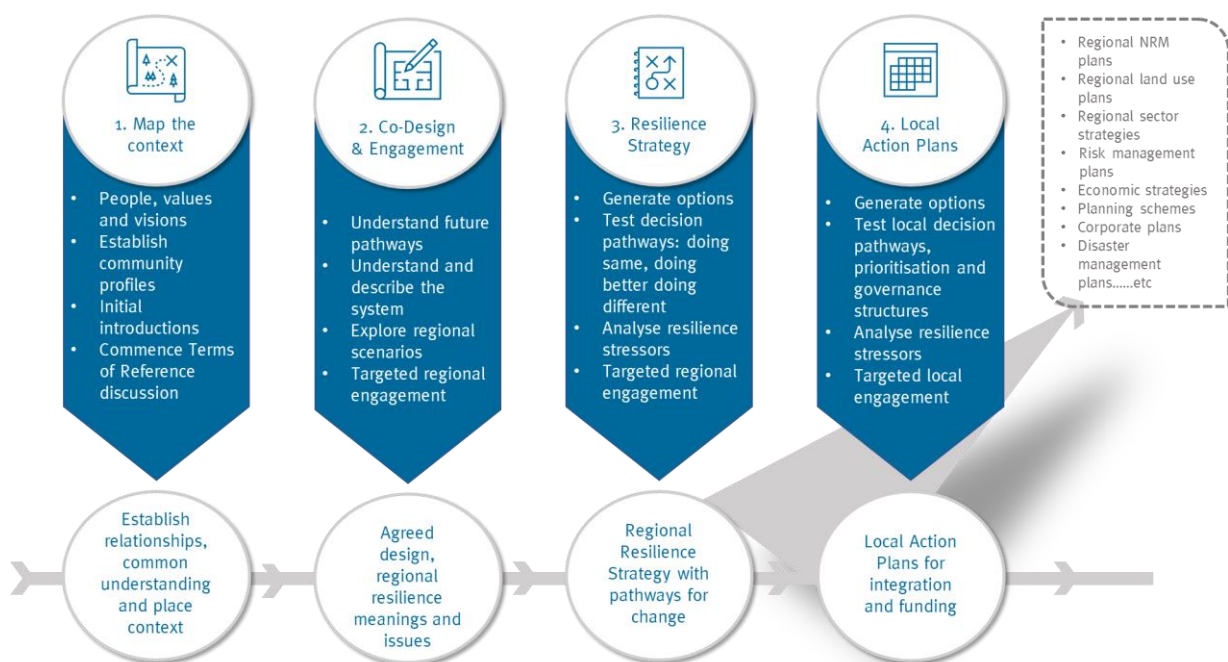


Figure 4: Resilient Queensland Broad Project Steps

Step four moves on to the local action planning process and engagement at local levels. From the regional input local variances will have emerged and the team will have some drafted ideas of appropriate local resilience actions across the lines of resilience.

Steps three and four are somewhat similar cycles where engagement is undertaken then tested, refined and finalised. Progress through the cycle progresses from understanding people and place to understanding and describing the systems in which resilience acts and

influences to commencing exploring scenarios for improvement. A picture of systems workings, cause and effect, cascading links and feedback loops will emerge from this engagement.

The 'doing same, doing better and doing differently' pathways will be actively explored now in plotting adaptive pathways for the system in a local context. This stage will finalise the loop process in generating local options for action, sequencing pathways for doing better or doing differently and implementing those pathways. The engagement sessions will further test these ideas, likely against the skills and capacity, existing risk management frameworks and strategies of the local government to develop a final local action plan for acceptance.

Resilient Queensland is targeted for completion by June 2022, however it is anticipated that all regional resilience strategies will be complete in draft format prior to December 2021.

6.5 Governance and Communications

Interaction between the FNQROC and the QRA for engagement and strategy development purposes be primarily through the Resilience Team Leader for the region, Ms Julie Brook or the project Director Mr Stephen Dredge using the contact methods below:

<p>Julie Brook Resilience Projects</p> <p>Queensland Reconstruction Authority</p> <hr/> <p>E julie.brook@qra.qld.gov.au M 0406 783 197</p> <p>Level 11, 400 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000 PO Box 15428, City East QLD 4002</p>	<p>Stephen Dredge Resilience Projects</p> <p>Queensland Reconstruction Authority</p> <hr/> <p>E stephen.dredge@qra.qld.gov.au M 0448 755 435</p> <p>Level 11, 400 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000 PO Box 15428, City East QLD 4002</p>
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The QRA resilience team will make direct contact with LGAs using the contact point nominated by the respective local governments.

6.5.7 Deliverables and implementation

The final strategies and action plans will be provided to governance bodies and local government for comment, review and finalisation prior to strategy graphic design. The final strategy is a public facing QRA branded document, displaying the governance body and LGA logos. It will be provided to governance bodies for formal endorsement or adoption prior to public release.

Local action plans will be given to local governments to implement in accordance with their internal processes. The local action plans may be implemented in ways suitable for the operational parameters of participating councils. The Community Profiles and QERMF workbooks will also be given directly to LGAs.

The regional resilience strategies will benefit the region by providing new pathways and strategic direction to enhance resilience. The local action plans will provide direct connections between resilience actions, across the five lines of resilience ready to apply to funding opportunities.

The strategies and action plans will be bespoke and fit-for-purpose for each region and local government and be drafted in a way that suits governance structures, skills and capacity. The

regional resilience strategies may be implemented through informing future editions of corporate plans, regional level strategic work for the benefit of the member councils.

6.5.8 Endorsement and Adoption

The Hinterland to Gulf councils Regional Resilience Strategy will be provided in draft to the FNQROC for active comment and feedback by the relevant councils. Once a final document text is compiled, endorsement by the FNQROC will be sought prior to preparing for publication.

~~The responsible body for forwarding resilience work with regional implications or which will benefit from combined funding is the FNQROC. In essence, the FNQROC will become the custodians of the strategy.~~

The regional resilience strategy is a document produced as part of the Resilient Queensland program, and is intended for use by Councils and ROCs for demonstrating how local and regional needs and priorities meet the state and federal resilience policy environment. The document can then be thought of as a regionally 'owned' document but there is no obligation or responsibility implied that FNQROC or member Councils must implement the strategies and actions identified.

The strategy is intended as a document FNQROC can utilise to communicate known priorities and existing needs of member Councils, where these priorities/needs have disaster resilience dimensions. Councils and/or FNQROC can then reference the strategy when preparing funding applications to demonstrate how those proposed projects/initiatives meet state and federal policy imperatives.

In the same way, the local action plans will be tested and provided to individual local governments for comment and active feedback. Adoption at a council ordinary meeting will be sought prior to compiling all the handover documents to each local government.

The resilience strategies will be prepared showing the participating local government logos and the Queensland Government coat of arms and will be public documents available in print and on the QRA website as is currently the case of the completed pilot projects.

7 Out of Scope

The following items are identified as out of scope elements and will not form part of the Regional Resilience Strategy work or the development of local action plans:

- preparation of funding applications;
- provision of physical resources;
- hazard modelling of any kind;
- fit-for-purpose risk assessments for hazards; and
- extended parts of QERMF.

Profit and Loss

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241 For the 11 months ended 31 May 2021

JUL 2020-MAY 2021

Trading Income

FNQROC

FNQROC: Annual Contribution	495,867.00
Total FNQROC	495,867.00

Regional Roads & Transport

RRTG: Annual 2.75% contribution	145,510.32
RRTG: Funding/Subsidies	142,866.00
Total Regional Roads & Transport	288,376.32

Regional Procurement Group

Regional Procurement: Annual Procurement Contribution	150,000.00
Regional Procurement: Regional Scrap Metal Project 20% savings	3,768.56
Total Regional Procurement Group	153,768.56

Water: Short Term Projects: DWQMP Audit	89,391.82
Water: Short Term Projects: QWrap Funding	8,866.36
FNQROC Island Arks Project	7,700.00
FNQROC Local Planning Project	10,250.00
QWRAP Short Term Project - Sewer Relining	19,530.00
QRA Reimbursement for Flood Resilience Program Coordinator	27,540.00
Total Trading Income	1,101,290.06

Gross Profit	1,101,290.06
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Other Income

Interest Income	1,363.95
Total Other Income	1,363.95

Operating Expenses

Audit & Accounting Fees	(100.00)
Bank Service Charges	578.54

FNQROC

FNQROC: Subscription/membership	15,307.73
FNQROC: Chairs Honorarium	6,000.00
FNQROC: Mayoral delegations - accommodation, meals, travel expenses	12,186.40
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	1,363.01
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	4,317.99
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Miscellaneous	721.03
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Western Councils Forum	134.12
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	1,878.91
FNQROC Expenses: Miscellaneous: Staff Christmas Party	473.87
FNQROC: Mobile Phone Expenses	839.03
FNQROC: Salaries	180,296.36
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses	4,975.64

JUL 2020-MAY 2021

FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses:Website	1,139.81
FNQROC: Training	1,869.45
FNQROC: Arranged Training expenses	1,100.00
FNQROC: Vehicle Expenses	15,311.94
FNQROC: Reimburse for FNQROC Dinner & Accom	2,127.86
FNQROC: Miscellaneous expenses	827.19
Total FNQROC	250,870.34
Infrastructure	
Infrastructure: Salaries	89,840.49
Infrastructure: Mobile Phone Expenses	454.50
Total Infrastructure	90,294.99
Regional Roads & Transport	
RRTG: External Meetings: Registration Fees	1,700.00
RRTG: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	5,426.70
RRTG: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	998.19
Total Regional Roads & Transport	8,124.89
Regional Urban Water	
Water: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	90.91
Total Regional Urban Water	90.91
Regional Waste & Recycling	
Waste: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	175.45
Total Regional Waste & Recycling	175.45
Regional Natural Asset Management	
Nat Asset: Vehicle Expense	5,926.61
Nat Asset: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	917.79
Nat Asset: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	707.28
Nat Asset: Mobile Phone Expenses	454.50
Nat Asset: Salaries	93,125.48
Nat Asset: Stationery & Office Expenses	311.88
Total Regional Natural Asset Management	101,443.54
Regional Planning & Economic Development	
Reg Planner/economic development: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	484.83
Reg Planner/economic development: Mobile Phone Expenses	454.50
Reg Planner/economic development: Salaries	42,280.22
Total Regional Planning & Economic Development	43,219.55
Regional Procurement	
Regional Procurement: Bitumen Reseal Project:Project Coordinator Fees	48,000.00
Regional Procurement: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	119.05
Regional Procurement: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	1,033.00
Regional Procurement: Internal Meeting Expenses: Miscellaneous	61.70
Regional Procurement: Mobile Phone Expenses	454.50

JUL 2020-MAY 2021

Regional Procurement: Salaries	91,903.71
Total Regional Procurement	141,571.96
Regional Development Manual	
Regional Development Manual: Stationery & Office Expenses	214.06
Total Regional Development Manual	214.06
Asset Management	
Asset Management: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	220.91
Total Asset Management	220.91
Asset Management: External Meetings Expenses: Registration	300.00
Asset: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	292.51
FNQROC: PPE Equipment	621.82
Infrastructure: Miscellaneous	330.00
Infrastructure: Stationery & Office Expenses	1,683.53
Nat Asset: GIS Software	1,090.00
Nat Asset: Miscellaneous	1,320.00
Nat Asset: Subscription/membership fees	1,500.00
Regional Procurement: Training	(21,204.01)
Regional Procurement: Bitumen Reseal Project	5.91
Waste: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	670.48
Regional Road Investment Strategy	82,849.85
FNQROC Advocacy / Emergent Delegations	2,342.00
Regional Procurement: Standardised Procurement documentation	298.64
FNQROC Advocacy Consultant	32,000.00
Short Term Project - Dam Study	62,910.00
Regional Flood Warning Infrastructure: Program Coordinator	25,500.00
Sundry Expense	147.27
Regional Procurement: Sewer Relining - Consultant Fees	91,326.82
Total Operating Expenses	920,689.96
Net Profit	181,964.05

Balance Sheet

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241

As at 31 May 2021

31 MAY 2021

Assets

Bank

Cheque Account	1,529,915.72
Total Bank	1,529,915.72

Current Assets

Accounts Receivable New	76,650.68
Accrued Interest Receivable	39.35
Total Current Assets	76,690.03

Total Assets	1,606,605.75
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Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	14,824.50
ANZ Credit Card:FNQROC	6,026.20
GST	12,270.64
Payroll Liabilities:AL Payable Current	55,121.00
Payroll Liabilities:AL Payable Non Current	3,456.00
Payroll Liabilities:LSL Payable Current	8,831.00
Payroll Liabilities:LSL Payable Non-Current	103,454.00
Rounding	0.04
Total Current Liabilities	203,983.38

Total Liabilities	203,983.38
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Net Assets	1,402,622.37
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Equity

Current Year Earnings	181,964.05
Opening Bal Equity	293,928.07
Retained Earnings	926,730.25
Total Equity	1,402,622.37

Regional Queensland Council of Mayors

Key Communication Points

- Presentation of video
- Creation of Regional Queensland Council of Mayors from the previous Northern Alliance of Councils, is a refocus and a realisation that Regional Queensland needs its own representation and a chance to fight for a fair share of representation and funding
- 43 Councils together are a strong voice with similar issues/concerns
- What is most important is actual membership. Financial contribution would also be appreciated, however membership is more critical, so if making a financial contribution causes issues please still be a member and consideration will be given to what can be done about contributing
- Financial contribution has been estimated in line with population, however this is only an indicator of split at this stage and the Executive is open to suggestions on how to distribute. It does however at least give an indication of the possible cost, as we know this will be one of the key queries in considerations
- It is planned to take 2 years to fully ramp up
- There has been very strong initial support and interest, so please consider agreeing to be a member, even if assistance with financial contributions is needed
- Confirmation of interest can be given either to your key contact, or directly to Mackay Regional Council who are currently supporting the establishment

Regional Queensland Council of Mayors

Communications Strategy and Contact Points

Lead Executive Member/Key Contact	Council
Mayor Williamson	Mackay
	Whitsunday
	Isaac
Mayor Hill/Mayor Beveridge	Townsville
	Burdekin
	Charters Towers
	Hinchinbrook
	Palm Island
Mayor Scott	Cook
	Torres Strait Island
	Torres
	Northern Peninsula
	Aurukun
	Hope Vale
	Napranum
	Kowanyama
	Pormpuraaw
	Lockhart River
	Mapoon
Mayor Manning/Mayor Kerr	Cairns
	Cassowary Coast
	Tablelands
	Mareeba
	Douglas
	Yarrabah
	Etheridge
	Wujal Wujal
Mayor Tony Williams - CQROC	Rockhampton
	Gladstone
	Livingstone
	Central Highlands
	Banana
	Woorabinda
Mayor Jack Dempsey - WBBROC	Fraser Coast
	Bundaberg
	Gympie
	South Burnett
	North Burnett
	Cherburg
Mayor Williamson	Southern Downs
	Northern Downs
	Noosa
	Goondiwindi

	<u>Regional QLD Council of Mayors</u>	<u>Population Nos</u>	<u>Indicative Membership Contribution 2021/22</u>	<u>Indicative Membership Contribution 2022/23</u>
1	Townsville	195032	\$ 35,910	\$ 71,821
2	Cairns	166862	\$ 30,723	\$ 61,447
3	Mackay	116763	\$ 21,499	\$ 42,998
4	Fraser Coast	106712	\$ 19,648	\$ 39,297
5	Bundaberg	95856	\$ 17,650	\$ 35,299
6	Rockhampton	81512	\$ 15,008	\$ 30,017
7	Gladstone	63412	\$ 11,676	\$ 23,351
8	Noosa	55873	\$ 10,288	\$ 20,575
9	Gympie	52446	\$ 9,657	\$ 19,313
10	Livingstone	38078	\$ 7,011	\$ 14,022
11	Southern Downs	35452	\$ 6,528	\$ 13,055
12	Whitsunday	35357	\$ 6,510	\$ 13,020
13	Western Downs	34585	\$ 6,368	\$ 12,736
14	South Burnett	32521	\$ 5,988	\$ 11,976
15	Cassowary Coast	29794	\$ 5,486	\$ 10,972
16	Central Highlands	28701	\$ 5,285	\$ 10,569
17	Tabelands	25575	\$ 4,709	\$ 9,418
18	Mareeba	22730	\$ 4,185	\$ 8,370
19	Isaac	20886	\$ 3,846	\$ 7,691
20	Burdekin	16971	\$ 3,125	\$ 6,250
21	Banana	14156	\$ 2,606	\$ 5,213
22	Douglas	12367	\$ 2,277	\$ 4,554
23	Charters Towers	11739	\$ 2,161	\$ 4,323
24	Goondiwindi	10799	\$ 1,988	\$ 3,977
25	Hinchinbrook	10687	\$ 1,968	\$ 3,935
26	North Burnett	10599	\$ 1,952	\$ 3,903
27	Torres Strait Island	5104	\$ 940	\$ 1,880
28	Cook	4557	\$ 839	\$ 1,678
29	Torres	3887	\$ 716	\$ 1,431
30	Northern Peninsula Area	3163	\$ 582	\$ 1,165
31	Yarrabah	2901	\$ 534	\$ 1,068
32	Palm Island	2671	\$ 492	\$ 984
33	Aurukun	1418	\$ 261	\$ 522
34	Cherbourg	1331	\$ 245	\$ 490
35	Hope Vale	1117	\$ 206	\$ 411
36	Napranum	1077	\$ 198	\$ 397
37	Woorabinda	1016	\$ 187	\$ 374
38	Kowanyama	990	\$ 182	\$ 365
39	Pormpuraaw	845	\$ 156	\$ 311
40	Etheridge	793	\$ 146	\$ 292
41	Lockhart River	792	\$ 146	\$ 292
42	Mapoon	333	\$ 61	\$ 123
43	Wujal Wujal	312	\$ 57	\$ 115
	43	1357772	\$ 250,000	\$ 500,000