

Climate Resilience Technical Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Number	07
Meeting	Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC)
Date	Friday, January 31, 2025
Time	10:00 am – 2:30 pm
Venue	Cairns Regional Council, 119-145 Spence Street, Cairns.

1. Acknowledgement of Country

Climate Resilience Technical Committee acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands which we are gathering from and the lands we have crossed to be here today. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

2. Attendance, Apologies & Guests

Name	Organisation	Attendance
Annalise Varghese	Local Government Authority Queensland	Present
Bronwyn Opie	Cairns and Far North Environmental Centre	Present
Councillor Maree Baade	Tablelands Regional Council	Present
Damon Sydes	Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Present
Jessie Gray	Bureau of Meteorology	Present
Karen Bettink	Terrain Natural Resource Management	Apologies
Karla Vaughan	Local Government Authority Queensland	Present
Keely Macmillan	Mareeba Regional Council	Apologies
Maria Helena Anselmo	FNQROC	Present
Melissa Mitchell	Douglas Shire Council	Present
Michael Anderson	Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Apologies
Sam Wakeford	Mareeba Shire Council	Apologies
Scott Buchanan	Wet Tropics Management Authority	Apologies
Sean Mcnamara	Wet Tropics Management Authority	Present
Sophie Barrett	Cairns Regional Council	Present
Stephen Frost	Croydon Shire Council	Present
Tudor Tanase	Tablelands Regional Council	Present

3. Previous Minutes & Terms of Reference

Previous minutes accepted.

Terms of Reference adopted.

4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

MINUTE NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	STATUS
5.1	Develop an FNQROC Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Profile.	FNQROC	On-going
5.3	Share LGAQ Facilitated Information Session on GHG Emission Guidelines for EA Applications to CRTC Members.	Attendees to the information session.	Actioned
5.4	Update CRTC on the LGAQ Request for Quotation to assess the impact of environmental compliance for landfills and waste management in Rural and Remote QLD outcomes.	FNQROC	Pending
5.8	Develop a progress report on the Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan.	FNQROC	On-going
5.9	Develop CRTC Report Card: (i) Council Members update the template with relevant data (ii) draft design of the report card for approval (iii) final report card developed (iv) Investigate options for a reporting dashboard.	FNQROC, CRTC Members	On-going
6.1	Determine whether micro-credentials from Griffith University Becoming Climate Ready short course are for individuals or can be awarded to Council organisations.	LGAQ	Actioned
6.2	Strengthen FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.2a: Invite Queensland Health and health practitioners to join as advisory members. • 6.2b: Extend an invitation to Councillors for voluntary nomination to the committee. 6.2c: Request Council CEOs to nominate a Council representative for the committee.	FNQROC	On-going
6.3	Email amended Terms of Reference to Climate Resilience Technical Committee members.	FNQROC	Actioned
6.4	Update the Climate Resilience Technical Committee about the implementation of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan. 6.4a Send a copy of the FNQROC Water Leak Detection Project Plan to CRTC Members.	FNQROC	On-going
6.5	Invite a representative from LGAQ Lab to present their offerings and discuss solutions for streamlining data collection for GHG emission monitoring and developing a regional dashboard.	FNQROC	Actioned
6.6	Deliver a webinar on the role of local councils in supporting residents' transition to electric vehicle charging stations.	FNQROC	Actioned
6.7	Investigate Regional Power Purchasing Agreements. 6.7a Explore examples of revolving funds where savings from Power Purchasing Agreements and other renewable energy projects finance future mitigation projects.	FNQROC	Ongoing

Notes

- Action 5.4 will be removed from the actions list. Updates on this project will be provided to the Climate Resilience Technical Committee during scheduled meetings.
- Action 6.5 – The LGAQ Lab will host an online webinar for local councils to explore the online reporting platforms and discuss their role in supporting council greenhouse gas emissions reporting.

5. Presentations

5.1 The Bureau of Meteorology – Seasonal Outlook Presentation

Dr Jessie Gray - Climatologist/Climate Risk Officer Hazard Preparedness and Response, The Bureau of Meteorology presented the FNQ Weather and *Climate Update*.

Key Climate Messages

- Increased chance of warmer than average day and night-time temperatures for February to April 2025.
- Increased chance of above average rainfall during February to April 2025.
- Warmer than average sea surface temperatures for February to April 2025. Warmer oceans provide increased moisture and energy that can enhance rainfall.
- The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral.
- The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is tending neutral.
- The Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO) is in Phase 4 now. It is forecast to move over the Maritime Continent and Western Pacific (phases 4, 6 and 7) late early February.

6. Climate Resilience Updates

6.1 Climate Policy

Analise Varghese, Senior Policy Officer – Planning, Development and Sustainability, Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), provided an update on Climate Policy.

- Key points from the presentation are outlined in the PowerPoint shared with Climate Resilience Technical Committee members.

Additional Notes

- **Due date for QCEP Survey:** no fixed due date for this at the moment. Additionally, at this stage, the QCEP project isn't planning on running a broader survey for community organisations and NRMS on the energy transition. Hugo is very happy to field any questions at all about QCEP: hugo_vanroermund@lgaq.asn.au
- **Draft Renewables Regulatory Framework:** A question popped up regarding if I could circulate the LGAQ's submission to the Draft Renewables Regulatory Framework to the CRTC members – we have just submitted this one an hour or so ago, however once the Department published it on their website as part of the public submissions register, we will inform everyone and link to the submission on Congruent.
- **Griffith Climate Courses:** As we discussed, from the organisers I received the following info: The digital badge can only be awarded to individuals that partake in the course. In the case where councils put large cohorts through that could mean if X % have been through the course then the council could be awarded the badge. To chat further, here are the details of the organisers;
 - Cheryl Briars: c.briars@griffith.edu.au
 - Amy Lomax: a.lomax@griffith.edu.au

6.2 Queensland Climate Resilient Councils (Q CRC) Program

Karla Vaughan, Q CRC Program Coordinator, LGAQ, provided an update on the program, including:

- The Q CRC Program is open for funding applications until 13 March 2025.
- No co-contribution is required.
- Councils and Alliances can apply for project implementation funding, with up to \$200,000 per application available from a \$1 million funding pool.

- Karla is available to assist Councils and Alliances in reviewing project ideas and ensuring alignment with eligibility criteria before submission.

7. Round Table Updates

Organisation	Current and upcoming project/s
Cairns Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) – The agreement with CleanCo is now finalised, providing renewable energy to 76 key facilities, saving \$1.2M this financial year. Cairns is encouraging businesses to collaborate on a group PPA. • Energy Emissions System – Transitioned to Net Zero Cloud to enhance emissions data capture, update inventory, and automate data collection. Currently focusing on Scope 1 & 2, with plans to include Scope 3. • Energy Performance Standards – Updating minimum energy performance standards for new council construction projects (e.g., air conditioning standards based on whole-of-life costs). These updates will be incorporated into the Sustainability Policy. • Reef Guardian Funding – Secured funding for an electric fleet vehicle. Hosted an EV roadshow to educate fleet staff and council officers, with two more EVs arriving soon. Showcased the Shark Ute Hybrid, which offers up to 800km range, including 100km on electric. • QCEP Officer – A new officer will soon start under QCEP funding, delivering a Renewable Energy-themed Eco-Fiesta and hosting business forums for the Far North Queensland region. • Urban Heat PhD – A three-year PhD project in collaboration with CSIRO, Council, and JCU has been approved.
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Reduction Action Plan – Presented the plan at a Councillor information session, the presentation highlighted gaps in Councillors' understanding of greenhouse gas emissions and the link to Climate. The sustainability team has since held one-on-one discussions with Councillors on the topic. • Climate Policy – Exploring options to develop a standalone Climate Policy. • Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory – Commenced the 2023–24 inventory, with a focus on capturing Scope 3 emissions. • Reef Guardian Funding – Supporting solar projects at the water treatment plant and other council facilities. • Disaster Preparedness Plan – Collaborating with FNQROC to develop a Local Area Natural Environment – Natural Assets Disaster Preparedness Plan. • Cassowary Credits Trial – Preparing to finalise the first trial site, marking a new initiative for the Council.
Croydon Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Panel Maintenance – Croydon Shire Council is experiencing challenges in securing solar panel cleaning services. A cost-benefit analysis may be required. Council members shared their approaches, with many including cleaning in service contracts. Further options will be explored. • Hybrid Fleet Vehicle – Purchased the first hybrid vehicle for the Council fleet. • Regional Precinct Planning – Secured funding for regional precinct planning, including community consultation on green spaces and climate strategy.
Tablelands Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Assets Strategy – Adopted in December, recognising climate change as a major risk to natural assets in the Tablelands region. Now progressing to implementation. • Electrical Vehicle Charging Station Policy – Developing a framework and guidelines for this complex area. • Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory – 2022–23 data validation is near completion, with waste data clarification pending before submission to Council. 2023–24 data collection has commenced, aligning with the budget process. • Q CRC Potential Projects – Tablelands Regional Council is considering:

Organisation	Current and upcoming project/s
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrating climate change principles into the local planning scheme, working with a consultant to establish a methodology for a funding application. - Climate Risk Management Assessment, potentially aligning with the Tablelands Disaster Risk Assessment (funded through Disaster Management). The scope is under development to clarify climate change considerations. • Reef Guardian Funding – Supporting six projects, including revegetation initiatives.
Wet Tropics Management Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilised resources from disaster recovery funding arrangements to fill a position working with the permits team. This role involves collaborating with infrastructure providers and First Nations to develop guidance and protocols for post-event reactions and future processes. Many lessons were learnt. Research and monitoring programs are in place to improve preparation and response to disaster events. • Supporting the climate adaptation plan (2020-2030) in collaboration with JCU and Terrain NRM. • Engaging in the green economy strategy through ongoing sub-catchment engagement. • Focused on climate refugia and connectivity to ensure conservation efforts link to World Heritage areas. • Exploring opportunities to work with private property owners in upland areas. • Conducting a series of workshops to identify key ecosystems, threats, and prioritise areas. Currently, focusing on actions for adaptation to protect key species and ecosystems, with plans to partner with local councils.
Douglas Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory: Started collating data for 2023-24. • Reef Guardian Council projects: Solar installation at the water treatment plant, library, and depot, and adding onto existing installations. • Applying for QCoast2100 to address coastal erosion from King Tides, where some areas experienced over a one-metre drop-off. •
Cairns and Far North Environment Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat and Hazards Campaign – Focused on two key goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocating for state and federal funding to help local governments build resilience to climate risks. 2. Supporting councils in delivering resilience programs. • Advocacy efforts include securing ongoing QCRC funding and establishing a statewide program for heat resilience, similar to QCoast2100. • Nature-Based Solutions – Advocating for nature-based approaches to address heat and hazard risks. • Flood Resilience – Worked with communities in the Barron Floodplain, releasing a report outlining community-identified flood solutions. This year’s focus is on building community capacity to lead advocacy efforts for these solutions. • Renewable Energy Transition – Supporting community engagement by providing accessible information and encouraging local input on the transition. Advocating for local energy hubs to facilitate community involvement. • Water Efficiency – Continuing water-efficiency messaging across Far North Queensland.

8. Climate Resilience Project Planning

Due to new funding opportunities, a project planning workshop was held to decide on projects for the 2025-26 financial year grant funding. The objectives of the workshop were:

- **Identify new actions** for the Rivers to Reef Action Plan 2025-2026.
- **Prioritise new and existing actions** for delivery within 1-2 years.
- **Agree on projects** to apply for funding (Q CRC, DRF & CEUP, etc.).

Due to limited time, the outcomes from the prioritisation exercise will be presented and discussed in an online meeting at a later date.

ACTION 7.1 Complete the project planning workshop online to present project priorities and agree on projects for funding.

9. Project Updates & Upcoming Events

7.1 Regional Drought Resilience Program

- Applications for grant funding submitted on the 12th of December for Wet Tropics and Gulf Hinterland.
- FNQROC Partnering with Terrain NRM and Gulf Savannah NRM
- Awaiting Ministerial Approval of Draft Plans

7.2 Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

- FNQROC collating data from Aboriginal Shire Council's inventories until March 2024.
- Data collection with Ironbark for the 2023.24 financial year commences this quarter.
- Cairns Regional Council continue to collect data in-house.
- Piloting data collection of scope 3 emissions with FNQROC Procurement on upcoming Regional Bitumen reseal contract.

7.3 Local Area Natural Environment Disaster Preparedness Plan – Pilot for Regional Framework

- Piloting development of plan including mapping and SOPs with CCRC NAMAC to identify
 - High-value Environmental Areas and Species
 - High-risk Biosecurity areas
 - Key Disaster Preparedness areas
- Reviewed project delivery timeline.
- Regional framework for Councils to apply in their local area will be developed in consultation with the Climate Resilience Technical Committee members in July-August 2025.

7.4 Upcoming Events

- **Climate Adaptation Conference** July, Perth 2025
 - Abstract submissions close 11:59pm Friday, 14 March 2025.
- **Australian Disaster Resilience Conference** August, Perth 2025
 - Call for abstracts extended to 10th Feb 2025.
- **Public Sector Climate Related Risk and Disclosure Summit**, April 2025
 - Embedding climate risk management in public sector processes, operations & policy.

- Online Conference Ticket from \$1,899

10. Points for noting to the FNQROC Board

- The Climate Resilience Technical Committee has commenced project planning to strategically deliver actions through grant funding programs.
- As part of the strategic planning process, the Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan 2012-2026, (developed with TRC, CRC, MSC & YASC) will expand to include Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Croydon Shire Council, and Douglas Shire Council.
- As we approach the second year of the CRTC:
 - Staff turnover has reduced Council member representation.
 - Councils will receive email invitations to appoint relevant representatives.
 - Representatives sitting on the Technical Committee can collaborate on the design and delivery of regional resilient projects.

11. Next meeting

Following dates for CRTC meetings:

- Friday 11th April 2025, Cairns Regional Council
- Friday 11th July 2025
- Friday 5th September 2025

12. Meeting Closed

The meeting closed at 2.40 pm.

Minutes prepared by FNQOC Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator – Maria Helena Anselmo.

ACTION ITEMS

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