

FNQROC Regional Waste Management Plan (RWMP) Implementation Technical Committee

Minutes

Meeting No	13
Meeting Name	FNQROC Regional Waste Management Plan (RWMP) Technical Committee
Date	27 th August 2026
Time	9.00 am- 1 pm
Venue	McKenzie Room, 119-145 Spence St Office of Cairns Regional Council

ATTENDANCE

Name	Organisation
Steve Cosatto	Cairns Regional Council
Timothy Harding	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Emma Egel	Douglas Shire Council
Daniel Dixon	Croydon Shire Council
Bianca Roccella	Mareeba Shire Council
Gary Wedel	Tablelands Regional Council
Bhakti Devi (Meeting Convenor & Facilitator)	FNQROC

APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Kristina Davidson	Cook Shire Council
Nigel Crumpton	Cairns Regional Council
Chris Johnston	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Daniel Dixon	Croydon Shire Council
Alan Clark	Etheridge Shire Council
Onesimo Mukodi	Hope Vale Shire Council
Kiley Hounslow	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Sam Bann	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

1. FNQROC GHG EMISSIONS REDUCTION ACTION PLAN

Presentation

Maria Helena Anselmo presented findings from the FNQROC Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reduction Action Plan. Landfill emissions were identified as the second largest contributor to council corporate emissions, accounting for 34% of total emissions across the FNQROC region.

Discussion

- Councils discussed the availability and quality of waste data used for emissions reporting.
- Councils with weighbridges are generally able to provide more reliable waste tonnage data.
- Smaller councils noted difficulties obtaining accurate waste quantities and often rely on estimates or landfill volume surveys.
- Opportunities discussed included:
 - Improved landfill data collection.
 - Diversion of organics from landfill.
 - Landfill gas capture and flaring projects.
 - Potential carbon credit opportunities.

Organics Diversion

Councils discussed barriers and opportunities relating to organics recovery, including:

- Cost of implementing FOGO services.
- Community willingness to pay.
- Limited infrastructure in regional and remote areas.
- Opportunities for:
 - Home composting.
 - Worm farms.
 - Food waste avoidance education.
 - Alternative organics processing options.

Actions

Action	Responsibility
1.1 Continue investigation of landfill gas capture and flaring opportunities.	FNQROC and interested councils
1.2 Explore funding opportunities relating to waste data collection and emissions reduction initiatives.	FNQROC
1.3 Investigate grants and programs supporting organics diversion activities.	FNQROC

Endorsement & Commitment

Regional Waste Management Plan (RWMP) Technical Committee members endorsed the FNQROC GHG Emissions Mitigation Action Plan and are committed to work with FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee to support developing funding applications to deliver waste related actions.

2. UPDATES FROM COUNCILS & FNQROC

Council Updates

Croydon Shire Council

- Waste Strategy currently being updated.
- Recent landfill and stockpile surveys completed through Northwest Queensland regional arrangements.
- Survey outcomes intended to inform future waste planning and strategy development.

Mareeba Shire Council

- Veolia contract has concluded.
- Waste is now transported directly to Springmount.
- Assessment undertaken regarding reopening the Mareeba landfill, however continued transport to Springmount was considered the preferred option.

Regional Milk Run Quotation

Discussion

Councils discussed the potential establishment of a regional "Milk Run" arrangement to improve resource recovery and reduce transport costs through coordinated regional collections.

Materials discussed included:

- Mattresses
- Concrete
- Other problematic waste streams

Council Feedback

Tablelands Regional Council

- Currently progressing procurement arrangements for mattress processing.
- Existing mattress stockpiles remain a challenge.

Mareeba Shire Council

- Expressed interest in participating.
- Identified regional economies of scale as an important benefit.

Croydon Shire Council

- No current budget allocation.
- Potential future participation if funding becomes available.

Cassowary Coast Regional Council

- Expressed interest in participating for C&D waste

Actions

Action	Responsibility
2.1 Introducing Tablelands (TRC) Tender Team to FNQROC	Gary Wedel (TRC)
2.2 Following up with TRC Tender Team on progress	Bhakti Devi (FNQROC)

Waste Education & Behaviour Change Activities

Update from FNQROC

Bhakti Devi provided an update on development of the Regional Waste Education & Behaviour Change Toolkit.

Participating Councils for whom the toolkit has been developed include:

- Cassowary Coast Regional Council (CCRC)
- Cook Shire Council (CSC)
- Croydon Shire Council (CrSC)
- Etheridge Shire Council (ESC)
- Mareeba Shire Council (MSC)
- Tablelands Regional Council (TRC)

Toolkit components include:

- Council-specific action plans.
- Education resources.
- Behaviour change tools.
- Communications and social media templates.
- Australian case studies.
- Issue-specific campaign resources

Council Discussion

Tablelands Regional Council

- Reported contamination rates of approximately 13-15%.
- Positive outcomes from:
 - Targeted communications.
 - Bin tagging initiatives.
 - Ongoing community education efforts.

Emerging Initiatives

- Discussion on AI-assisted contamination monitoring technologies.
- Sharing of successful education approaches between councils.

Actions

Action	Responsibility
2.3 Distribute toolkit resources and council-specific action plans. 1. Go to Link - FNQROC Regional Waste Management Portal 2. Login using the following credentials Username : Your email address Password: rwmp1234	Bhakti Devi
2.4 Review toolkit resources & action plans 2.5 Identify & convey to FNQROC additional education resource needs.	All participating councils

3. CURRENT WASTE MANAGEMENT & RESOURCE RECOVERY CHALLENGES

Landfill Gas Flaring and Carbon Opportunities

Councils discussed opportunities and challenges associated with landfill gas capture and flaring projects.

Key considerations raised included:

- Availability of three-phase power.
- Regulatory monitoring requirements.
- Environmental Authority obligations.
- Groundwater monitoring costs.
- Air quality monitoring requirements.
- Long-term compliance costs.

Feedback from Councils

Daniel Dixon highlighted that carbon credit projects may involve ongoing compliance and monitoring costs that should be carefully assessed before councils commit to projects.

Battery Recycling and Transport Costs

Councils discussed:

- Continued success of the EcoBatt battery collection program.
- Concerns regarding long-term transport funding.
- Challenges associated with transporting batteries from remote and regional locations.

Solar Panel Waste Management

FNQROC provided an update regarding the regional solar panel waste forecast report prepared by Second Life Solar.

Discussion focused on:

- Projected future volumes.
- Storage requirements.
- Collection logistics.
- Potential business case assumptions.
- Recovery and recycling pathways.

Challenges Identified

- Transport costs for recovered materials.
- Lack of regional processing infrastructure.
- Data collection limitations.
- Compliance costs for landfill emissions projects.
- Funding uncertainty for recovery programs.

Actions

Action	Responsibility
3.1 Circulate solar panel forecast report to councils.	Bhakti Devi
3.2 Councils to review report and provide comments/questions.	All councils
3.3 Share information on landfill gas flaring opportunities with interested councils.	FNQROC

4. RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Battery Stewardship / EcoBatt Program

- Councils reported positive participation in battery collection programs.
- Regional collaboration has improved access to battery recycling services.

Waste Education Toolkit Development

- Completion of substantial regional toolkit resources.
- Development of council-specific action plans and campaign materials.

Garage Sale Trail

- Several councils continued participation.
- Mareeba Shire Council participated for the first time.
- Program recognised as supporting reuse and circular economy outcomes.

Regional Collaboration

- Continued sharing of knowledge and experiences across councils.
- Strengthened collaboration on waste planning, education and resource recovery initiatives.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Regional Waste Strategy and Planning

- Discussion regarding differing regional coordination models.
- Benefits and challenges of contractor-supported regional waste coordination arrangements were considered.

Future Collaboration Opportunities

Councils expressed interest in ongoing information sharing regarding:

- Organics diversion.
- Landfill gas projects.
- Resource recovery initiatives.
- Funding opportunities.