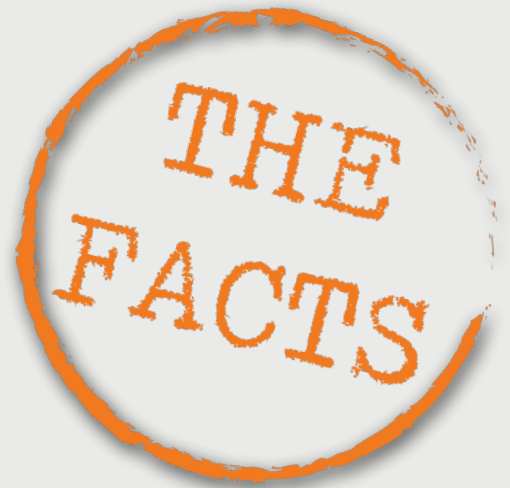


Coastal & Marine



Coastal and marine ecosystems include the coastline, estuaries, coral reefs and seagrasses. These ecosystems regulate water flow and quality, transport and deposit sediment and other materials, and cycle energy and nutrients. Commercial and recreational fishing industries, tourism, ports and shipping all rely on coastal and marine resources.

The region's coastal and marine ecosystems include significant coastal wetlands, the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and incredibly diverse plants and animals.

Pressures

In recent years an unusual number of large floods have affected the Fitzroy River. Floods transport large amounts of sediment and nutrients to the coastal environment. Smaller floods are important in the life cycle of fish such as barramundi, but large floods can be very destructive.

Sediment reduces light for coral reefs and seagrasses, while high nutrient levels stimulate algal growth. Pollutants such as pesticides are also carried into the water column.



The region's coastal and marine assets are highly connected to the Fitzroy catchment through freshwater flows.

Many saltmarshes have been converted to pastures, with impacts on fish migration and breeding. Ports, coastal development and infrastructure all contribute to the removal of coastal habitat. Excavation and dredging can disturb acid sulfate soils, which must be carefully managed to avoid acid leachate. Shipping poses a risk of accidents and spills, can introduce pests, and contributes to pollution and disturbance.

CQSS2030

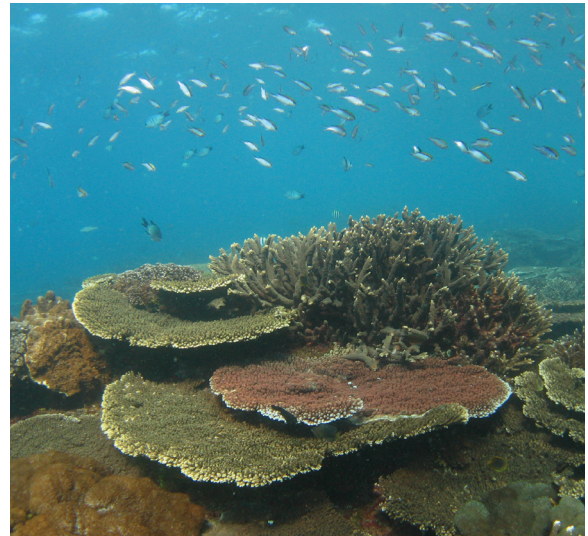
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND
Sustainability Strategy 2030

Trends

Recent assessments have found the overall health of the coastal and marine environment in central Queensland to be poor. This reflects the water quality impacts of recent flood events, and the associated impacts on coral and seagrasses.

Water quality impacts from upstream land use will continue to be a challenge. Pressures from ports, shipping and coastal development are increasing.

Central Queensland's climate is getting hotter and the variability in extreme weather events may increase. Rising sea levels are causing coastal erosion, which can affect infrastructure. Ocean waters are becoming warmer and more acidic, impacting corals and other organisms.



Regional objectives

Coastal and marine ecosystems support high value industries and significant biodiversity values.

We need to protect estuaries, shorelines and marine ecosystems.

We need to manage water flows and water quality that link catchments and the coast.

We need to manage the coastal shoreline to buffer the impacts of sea level rise and extreme weather events.

The growth of calcareous marine biota, such as corals, may be stunted by the increasing acidification of the ocean.

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