



Healthy Water Forums Synthesis Report

A summary of key messages and actions from
the 2022 and 2023 Healthy Water Forums

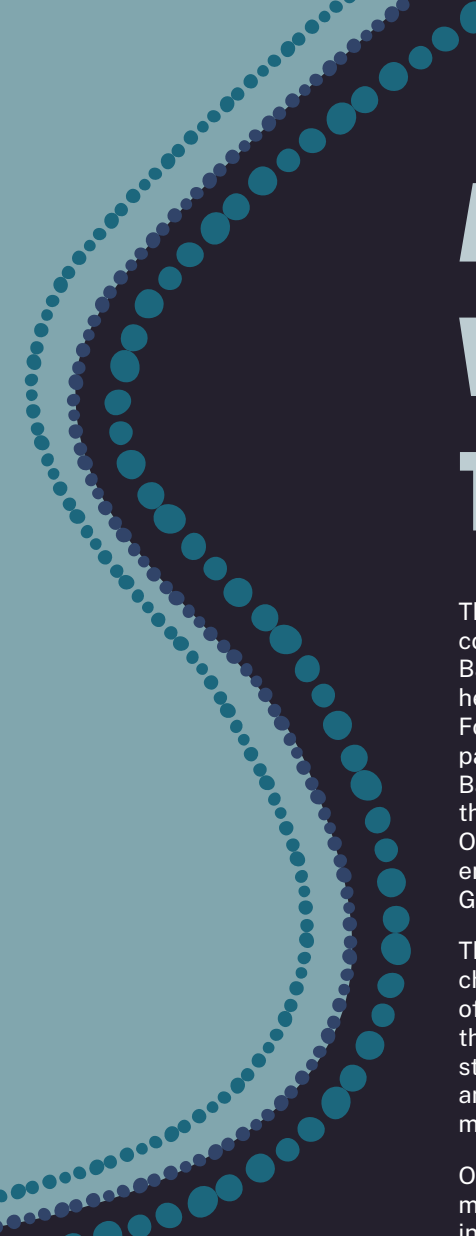


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Great Barrier
Reef Foundation



A word from the Healthy Water Traditional Owner Technical Working Group

This report is our opportunity to highlight our leadership, make calls for action and share concerns from Traditional Owners around improving water quality on Country in the Great Barrier Reef and its catchments. It is a summary of Traditional Owner voices which were heard at two Healthy Water Forums, hosted by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (the Foundation) for Healthy Water Grant Program recipients in 2022 and 2023. Funded by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust Partnership and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation through the Foundation's Traditional Owner Partnerships program, the Healthy Water program has been co-designed with us, the Healthy Water Traditional Owner Technical Working group, to address severe under representation and under engagement of Traditional Owners in efforts to improve water quality flowing to the Great Barrier Reef.

This document is an important part of the holistic approach needed to drive the systems change we're looking for, because it directly uplifts the voices, learnings and experiences of Traditional Owners working to improve the health of Country. These voices highlight the different way that we as Traditional Owners tackle the problems and their solutions, strengthen benefits to people and Country from Traditional Owner-led delivery on Country, and are courageous in breaking down the structural barriers we continue to face in mainstream processes restricting us from leading our own work.

Our hope is this report can help increase understanding among Traditional Owners, policy makers, multiple levels of government, researchers, landholders, conservation groups, industry and any other relevant stakeholders about the multiple benefits that are generated through Traditional Owner-led water quality improvement activities, and future action required to progress transformational system change. The structure of the report is shaped by the most important messages that came from the two healthy water forums: Traditional Owner concerns for Healthy Water, how Traditional Owner-led activities have made a difference for Country and people, and key actions required to improve the health of Country through Traditional Owner-led activities.

This report synthesises messages into a more consolidated format than the much larger and more detailed report for each Forum. If you'd like more information about the Forums, how they were designed and run, and details of discussions that took place, please contact the Foundation at: traditionalownerpartnerships@barrierreef.org for a copy of the 2022 and 2023 Forum reports, which are not publicly available.

Signed by Healthy Water Technical Working Group members:



Dr Cass Hunter (Chair)



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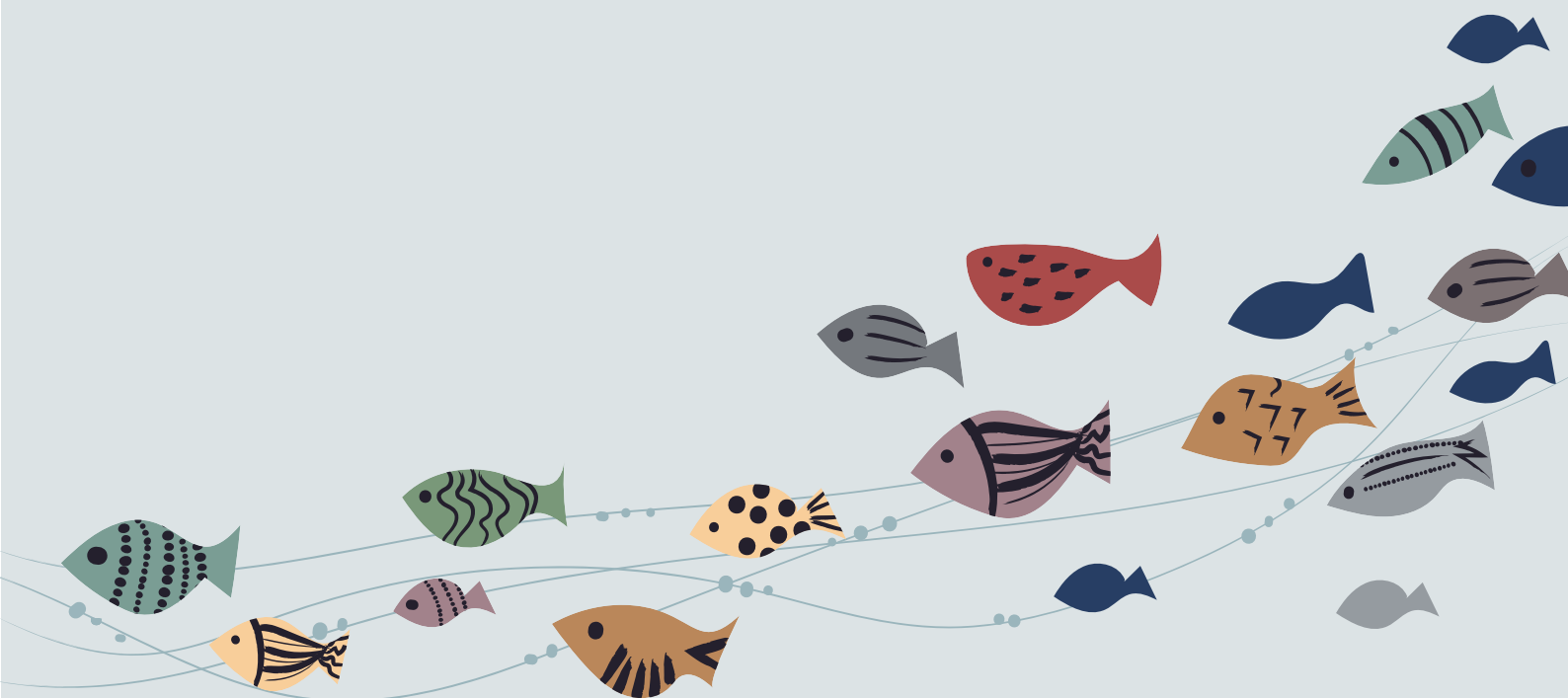
Jade Gould

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation's Traditional Owner Partnerships Program is funded by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.



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Background and Context

Protecting and caring for water is a custodial and intergenerational responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners have been caring for their land, sea Country and associated waters since before the Reef existed. Country and culture are inherently linked and poor health of land and sea Country negatively impacts the cultural, social, spiritual, physical and economic well-being of Traditional Owners. Correspondingly, it has been well documented from cases in Australia and across the globe that Indigenous-led on-Country programs deliver important outcomes not only for the environment but also for the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of Indigenous people.

In recent decades the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) and its catchments have come under increasing pressures from human activities, and significant investment has been directed to research, policies, programs and on-ground interventions to reduce these threats and their impacts. A significant focus of these efforts is on improving water quality flowing to the Reef. However, while the goals of contemporary reef protection and water quality improvement efforts are broadly aligned with Traditional Owner goals to look after Country, Traditional Owners have been calling for the removal of significant barriers that prevent their involvement in GBR management efforts.

Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) investigations into GBR water quality improvement projects prior to the Reef Trust Partnership (RTP) found that only 0.85% of the previous \$516M investment in water quality improvement went to Traditional Owner-led projects – three out of 116 projects, two of which were to the same Indigenous organisation.

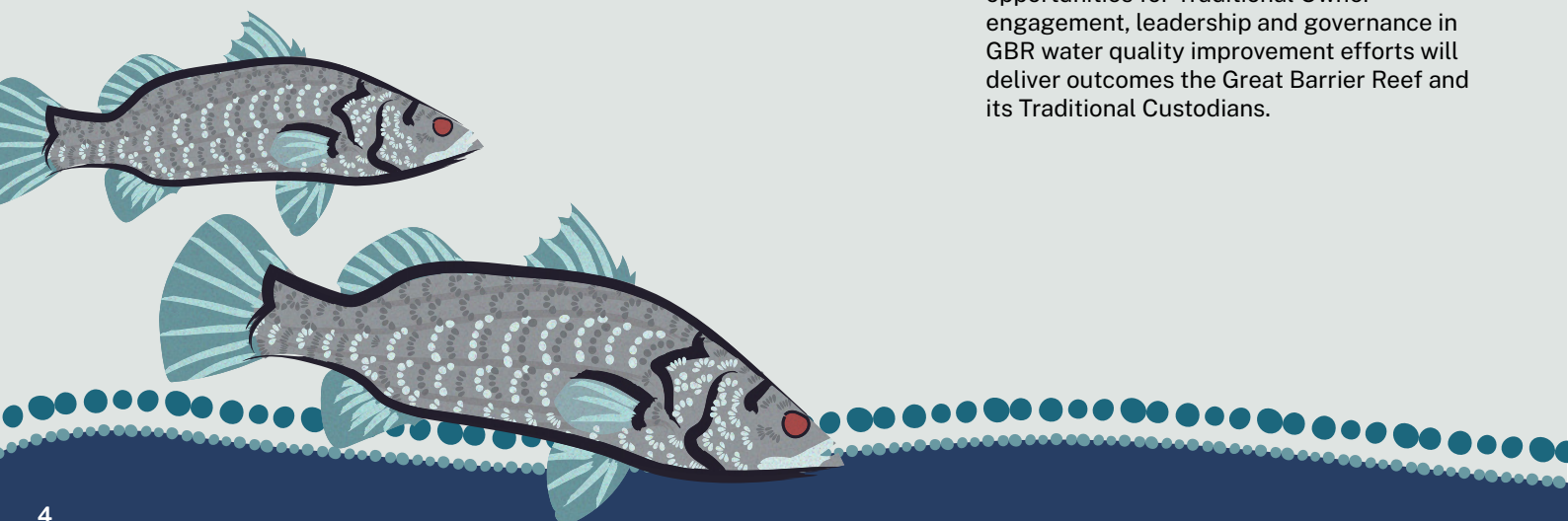
0.85% OF THE PREVIOUS
\$516M

3/116
PROJECTS

Barriers for Traditional Owners engaging in and leading water quality improvement projects on their Country are manifold:

- Western science informed approaches have focused on dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN), pesticide and sediment reduction, leading to investment in farmer practice-change thereby bypassing opportunities for Traditional Owner involvement and a more holistic approach to water quality improvement.
- Key policy documents including the Scientific Consensus Statement and GBR Water Quality Improvement Plan drive funding decisions, yet haven't appropriately included Traditional Owner knowledges, perspectives, concerns and capabilities for addressing water quality challenges. Exclusion of Traditional Owners in the drafting and by extension content of these documents has resulted in a lack of incentives and opportunities for Traditional Owners to be involved in water quality improvement efforts.
- A lack of Traditional Owner-specific funding opportunities to circumvent the barriers to involvement already mentioned means there are few examples of Traditional Owner-led projects to exemplify the benefits generated from Traditional Owner-led water quality improvement efforts to government, researchers and other stakeholders.

While these long-term trends are slowly changing, significant opportunities remain for these barriers to be removed. Increased opportunities for Traditional Owner engagement, leadership and governance in GBR water quality improvement efforts will deliver outcomes the Great Barrier Reef and its Traditional Custodians.



2.

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation's Traditional Owner Healthy Water Program

The Reef Trust Partnership has facilitated the largest ever single investment in Traditional Owner Reef Protection (\$51.8M). To ensure this investment delivers the outcomes needed for Traditional Owners and drives transformational systems change, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation co-designed the program and its sub-components with three Traditional Owner co-design groups (Technical Working Groups). The Healthy Water Technical Working Group, convened in 2020, has identified three priority areas to focus on:

1. Fund Traditional Owner-led water quality improvement projects through a Healthy Water grant program.
2. Foster increased engagement and leadership of Traditional Owners in the GBR water quality space through development of a 'Healthy Water Toolkit', comprising resources to support improved Traditional Owner Healthy Water literacy and capabilities, Traditional Owner-led water quality management planning and implementation and development of key partnerships.
3. Provide Traditional Owners with a 'seat at the table' through opportunities to contribute to key policies, including the Scientific Consensus Statement and Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan.



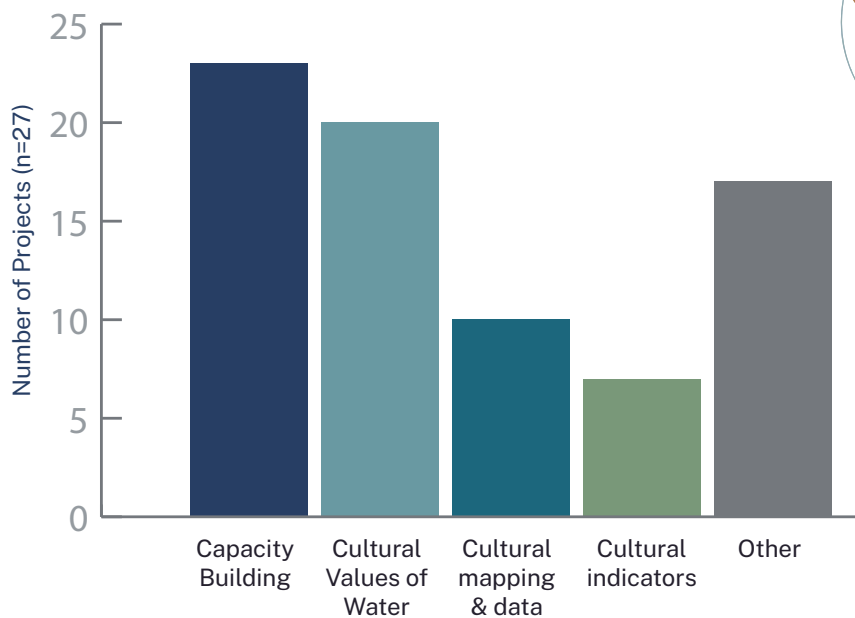
Healthy Water Grant Program

The Healthy Water Technical Working group identified a need to fund Traditional Owner-led water quality projects. The Healthy Water grant rounds were designed to remove barriers to access and to support successful outcomes from Traditional Owner-led projects through allowing auspicing arrangements, providing funding at three-levels to meet varying capacity levels (meeting Traditional Owners where they are) and providing support and guidance through due diligence checks and reporting processes. The three funding levels were:

- **Funding Level 1 (up to \$25k):** Getting Ready Grants – to help get started.
- **Funding Level 2 (\$25k-\$150-K):** Project Ready Grants – to work on planned projects.
- **Funding Level 3 (up to \$500K):** Complex grants – to deliver large multi-year projects with partnerships in place.

A core assessment criterion was that applications needed to demonstrate how their proposed project aligned with Traditional Owner priorities and aspirations in order to be successful. Two Healthy Water grant rounds were run, one each in 2021 and 2022. In total 27 projects worth \$5.9m were contracted to 22 Traditional Owner organisations who represented 34 Traditional Owner groups (five organisations applied and were successful under both rounds; see the [Appendix](#) for a map showing grant project locations). As these grants were the first opportunity specifically for Traditional Owner-led water quality projects, the projects highlighted priority focus areas for Traditional Owners in the water quality space. These include: training and capacity building; understanding, documenting and monitoring cultural values of water; cultural mapping and data management; water quality surveys, assessments and monitoring; erosion and sediment control; water quality management plans and planning; restoration and rehabilitation; and weed management.

HW Grant Project Social and Cultural Objectives



HW Grant Project Water Quality Objectives

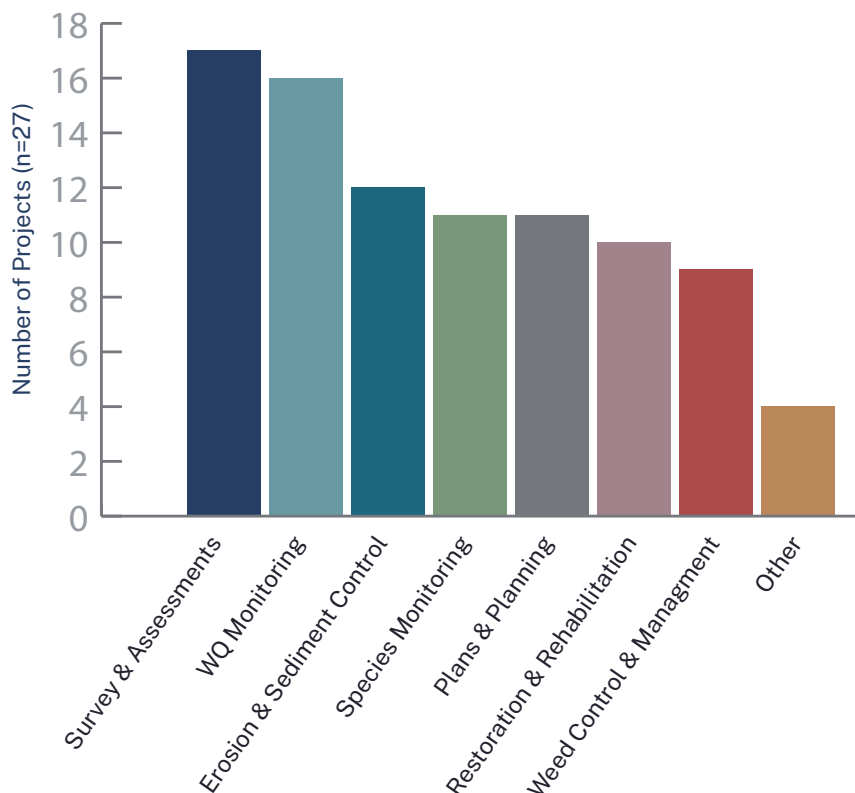


Figure 1. Healthy Water grant project social and cultural objectives (above) and water quality objectives (below).



2.2 Healthy Water Forums

The need for a Healthy Water Forum was identified by the Traditional Owner Healthy Water Technical Working Group to provide a peer-to-peer learning opportunity for Healthy Water grant recipients to share their projects, learnings and outcomes with the wider Traditional Owner community. In addition, the Forums provided an invaluable opportunity to learn about the experiences of Traditional Owners leading water quality projects, the achievements and outcomes from those projects as well as challenges and lessons learned. This information provides an important evidence base to drive systemic change in policy and decision-making spaces required to remove barriers for Traditional Owner engagement, leadership and governance in GBR water quality improvement efforts. Two Healthy Water Forums were held in 2022 and 2023, see Table 1 for details on each.

Table 1. Details of the 2022 and 2023 Healthy Water Forums

Healthy Water Forum	2022	2023
Date	17-20 August 2022	10-12 October 2023
Location	Cairns	Port Douglas
Format	2 days Conference, 1 day entry and presentations at iFNQ Eco Festival	2 days Conference, 1 day on-Country field trip with grant recipients Dawul Wuru Aboriginal Corporation and Jabalbina Aboriginal Corporation
Objectives	● Peer to peer learning ● Discuss priorities, concerns and future aspirations for Traditional Owners in the Healthy Water space	● Learning and exchange ● Understanding why the grant projects are important to Traditional Owners ● Understand if and how the funding has changed the waterscape for Traditional Owners ● Discuss priority future directions for Traditional Owner water actions ● Shaping the Healthy Water Toolkit
No. Traditional Owner attendees	30 Traditional Owners from Grant recipient organisations	41 Traditional Owners from Grant recipient organisations
No. Traditional Owner Organisations	11	18
No. Projects represented	12	21



Figure 2. Attendees at the 2022 (bottom) and 2023 (top) Healthy Water Forums.

3.

Healthy Water Forums: Key Messages from Traditional Owners





Figure 3. Participants sharing at the 2022 Healthy Water Forum.

3.1 Traditional Owner concerns for Healthy Water

2022 Forum

At the 2022 Healthy Water Forum participants were asked ‘How is your water going, what’s impacting water quality on your Country?’ The most common responses to this question were:

- Feral animals (pigs, cattle, horses)
- weeds
- sediment, erosion, pesticides and herbicides (in runoff) and
- coastal development.

Other responses included: farming, land clearing, extraction of coral and marine life for research, tourism, over extraction from bores affecting ground water, boats (pollution), changing seasons and increasingly unpredictable rainfall, lack of access to Country, aquaculture.

.....
*Everyone is affecting our Country except us;
we’ve got no part in it*
.....

In an open mic session conversation turned to water rights, relationships and cultural competency among partners. It was raised that mining in particular is impacting water quality and cultural values of water, as well as quantity of water in some circumstances (Cape York). Participants shared concerns about water allocations and ownership, wanting to understand how they can access (their) water rights and assert ownership over water in a similar way to other users of water (e.g. mining, agriculture and industry).

.....
*Water is very important to us.
Water is our life.*
.....

Areas for attention regarding relationships and cultural competency took three angles:

1. Partners and other stakeholders need to improve their cultural competency and understand Free, Prior and Informed Consent processes. Partners need to use clear language that can be understood to ensure Traditional Owners have full comprehension of the outcomes or consequences of the discussion.
2. Traditional Owners need to be involved in the identification of problems, solutions and opportunities. Examples were cited of Traditional Owner concerns about impacts of activities on waterways being ignored, and of being excluded from planning processes and agreements that would have enabled opportunities for Traditional Owners to be involved via employment and economic activities.
3. A need was identified for partners to help advocate for Traditional Owner priorities.



Figure 4. Participants in discussion about their concerns for Country, culture and community at the 2023 Forum.

2023 Forum

Forum participants were asked to discuss what their Healthy Water grant had contributed towards their Country, culture and community, and what concerns and challenges remain for each. For Country, the challenges that remain included:

- managing feral animals
- invasive weeds
- erosion
- flooding and
- management of tourists (the impacts of tourism).

.....

What happens in the catchment flows through to sea Country

.....

Because the question was focused on Country rather than water specifically, many responses related more to socio-cultural effects including: lack of access to Country (Country not knowing its people) and ability to heal, connect to and care for Country. Additional concerns included threats from outside industries and commercialisation of Country, lack of cultural competence among partners, partners not working well with Traditional Owners, community push back and internal politics, lack of sustained funding for activities, connecting with Stakeholders and landowners, use of Country by different partners and need for improved FPIC processes and permitting systems.

Key concerns and challenges that remain for culture and community include:

- loss of cultural sites and access to cultural sites
- lack of access to Country to practice culture
- lack of engagement in the community and youth
- disrespectful tourists
- funding to be on Country more permanently
- land holders blocking access and destroying cultural sites
- lack of understanding and disrespect of culture and lore among non-Indigenous people
- lack of role models, lack of support and funding, loss of knowledge and a need for improved opportunities for intergenerational knowledge transfer.



Figure 5. Participants in a discussion session at the 2022 Forum.

3.2

How Traditional Owner-led projects have made a difference

2022 Forum

Participants at the 2022 were asked what was good about their water 'If your water is good, why is it good?', most responses referred to the actions of Traditional Owners looking after Country as having important impacts on Country. Common responses included: increased Traditional Owner capacity and involvement in the water space, more Traditional Owners on Country, more resources through these grants, and increased numbers of birds on Country that has been rehabilitated. The remainder of responses referred to Country being in good condition: water quality at the top of the catchments is good, healthy forests and mangroves are cleaning and filtering the water, seagrass and mangroves are good, water is generally healthy.

Country needs people and people need Country

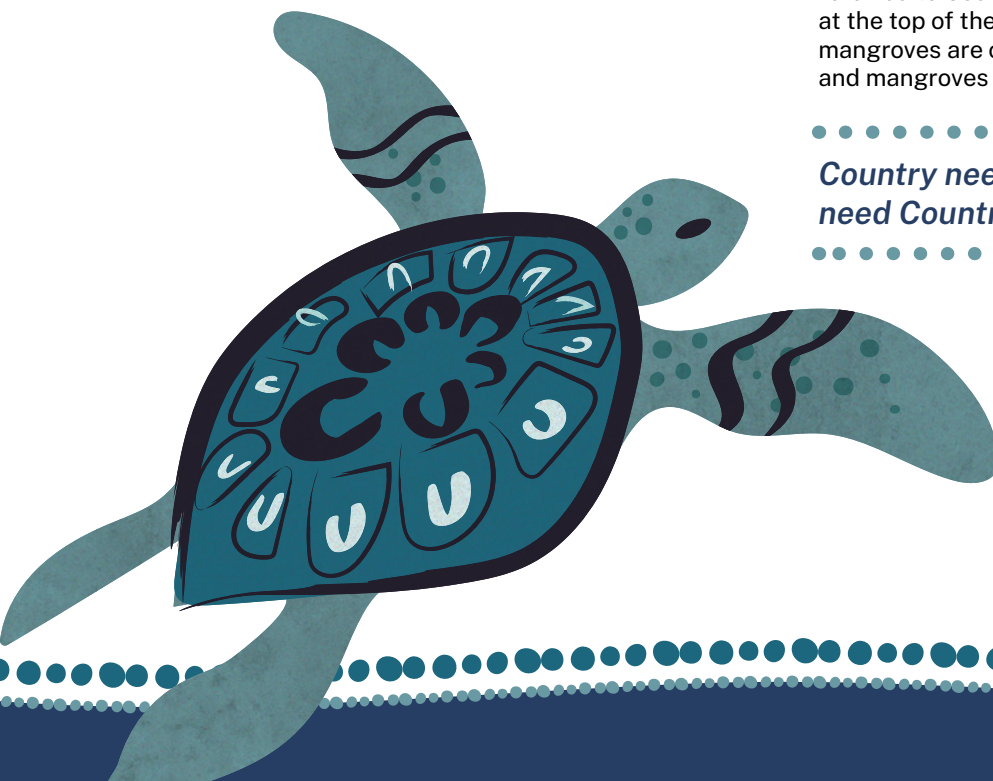




Figure 6. Participants discussing the difference their project has made for Country, culture and community.

2023 Forum

At the 2023 Forum, participants were asked what difference their Healthy Water project had made for Country, culture and community. The top four themes for each were distilled and participants were then asked to identify which of those resonated most strongly with them (see Forum report for more details on this exercise).

Comments about what the grant project did for Country were focused on:

- Opportunities for increased connection to Country, work on Country, learning from Country how to heal it and learning about culture and cultural indicators of Country health in the process.
- Healing both Country and people through on-Country activities.
- Healing Country activities brought back native wildlife, controlled weeds and feral animals, managed erosion and sedimentation; and brought people back together, got younger generations back on Country, protected cultural sites, created jobs, and developed partnerships.

If you look after Country, Country will look after you

The themes most selected as making the biggest difference for Country were 'Restoring and healing Country' followed by 'jobs and working on Country'.

Comments about what the grant projects did for culture focused on:

- bringing people together, bringing Elders and youth back to Country, sharing, recording and documenting stories, knowledge, culture and cultural sites.
- Reviving, preserving and keeping alive cultural practices and traditions including hunting, camping, fishing, storytelling, cultural obligations, language and fire practices.
- Learning to respect culture, share culture and knowledge across generations, and share appropriately with non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples.

The themes most selected as making the biggest difference for culture were 'opportunity to keep culture and language alive' followed by 'sharing and nurturing of culture between generations' and 'identifying opportunities for youth'.

Comments about the difference grant projects made for community were focused on:

- Engagement: connecting, building partnerships and bringing cultural awareness to community, local stakeholders, schools, landowners, businesses and government agencies, development of business opportunities.
- Bringing families together, sharing with Traditional Owners, connecting with community, community events, helping community connect with us and culture, getting community involved in our projects.
- Building capacity and skills, training, passing on culture and knowledge, mentoring and leadership.

The themes most selected as making the biggest difference for community were 'connectedness and bringing people together', followed by 'mentoring and leadership' and 'business opportunities on Country'.



Figure 7. Participants presenting on their projects at the 2023 (left) and 2022 (right) Forums.

Project Presentations from both Forums

During project presentations participants highlighted the many varied activities being undertaken in the projects and their benefits for people and Country.

Training, skills development and capacity building were identified as key for building Traditional Owner capabilities to lead water quality projects across nearly all projects and all types of activities, including: ecological surveys and monitoring; documenting, mapping, recording and storing and managing data on cultural values; water quality and species monitoring; erosion and sediment control; and restoration and rehabilitation activities. In turn, these activities were all cited as increasing biodiversity, cleaning up waterways, preventing erosion and sedimentation as well as providing knowledge sharing opportunities, giving cultural renewal and getting people back on Country.

Most projects focused on the development of skills and capacities in ecosystem survey and monitoring techniques. There was a strong focus on ensuring surveys and monitoring activities were culturally informed to broaden the foci of existing activities with partners and stakeholders, for example, QPWS and NRMs, to include culturally important locations, species and qualities of waterways in assessment and monitoring activities.

The best thing about this work is doing good for Country and doing the best you can

Several organisations used their grants to invest in developing governance and administration skills and systems, to move away from auspicing arrangements by investing in their leadership for long-term sustainability. Importantly, many organisations leveraged their projects, building partnerships through the grants that have led to deeper relationships and more opportunities. Some have since been successful at receiving first time funding for rangers and/or establishing a TUMRA. The development of equitable partnerships was identified as essential – one participant stated, ‘don’t walk in front of me, don’t walk behind me, walk beside me.’ Overall, participants demonstrated enormous pride in their work and achievements through the projects.

These projects are our projects. Don’t walk in front of me to tell me what I should do, don’t walk behind me, walk beside me.



Figure 8. Forum participant at the 2022 Forum.



Figure 9. Forum participant discussing their project with TWG Chair Dr Cass Hunter.

3.3

Actions identified by Forum participants

Both Forums included opportunities for participants to discuss actions required to improve the health of water on Country through Traditional Owner-led activities. While the activities through which actions were identified differed between the two Forums, the actions identified, and issues raised were highly consistent and are reported on concurrently here.

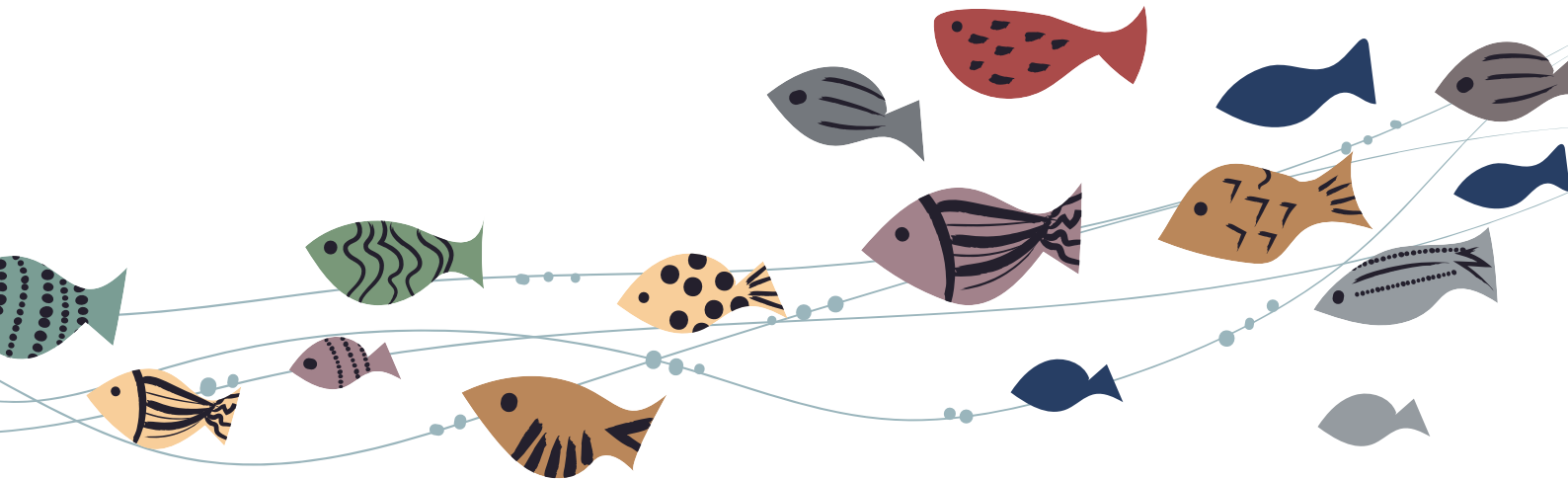
Participants identified a core need for more Country to come under the stewardship and custodianship of Traditional Owners to keep places healthy and well managed, because ‘Country needs people and people need Country’. This means having more Indigenous rangers on Country working in culturally informed ways: continuing culture, language and traditional knowledge systems, planning and doing projects that are based on cultural values, ensuring younger generations are learning and doing on Country, and monitoring Country using culturally informed indicators. Funding was in turn identified as essential for enabling these activities, including to develop necessary infrastructure. The development of strong partnerships was identified as being critical to success.



We need meaningful partnerships which lead to having a real voice, so we can be heard.



Current barriers to the realisation of this vision were focused on inequities in land management and governance arrangements with partners and stakeholders. It was identified that partners and other stakeholders need to improve their cultural competency and understand and implement robust Free, Prior and Informed consent processes. This requires the use of language that Traditional Owners understand to ensure that consent is properly informed and that Traditional Owners properly understand the outcomes or consequences of discussions and any related decisions. Language was identified as a powerful



tool and use of appropriate language is essential for partnerships to be equitable – ‘putting our language in reports’, ‘talk our level, speak our way’. A key aspect of using the right language is also listening well. It’s important for partners to demonstrate that they have listened, and that what’s been heard is reflected in discussions and decisions.

.....
When people come back to mob, they need to talk our way; it’s all going over people’s heads.
.....

Related inequities were identified in co-management arrangements whereby, despite the ‘co-management’ title, funding comes through the partner organisation (e.g. QPWS) creating inequity in decision-making authority. This was reported to lead to a focus on partner priorities rather than issues important to Traditional Owners, such as caring for important water places.

At the 2022 Forum, discussions were held on what needs to happen to ensure that Traditional Owners are at the forefront of water management. Co-design, co-management and co-delivery of on-Country activities were identified as being essential for delivering the actions identified above. Traditional Owners called for a seat at the decision-making table to help drive priorities in water. This includes involvement and input into both the governance and drafting of key policy documents including the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan and Scientific Consensus Statement. These plans drive funding allocation decisions and Traditional Owners have been largely absent within them. Traditional Owner and western science understandings of Country together can help drive innovative solutions ‘Current science is missing out on 60,000 years of information and we need to put importance on our knowledge systems. We have to explain what’s in it for them.’

.....
We’ve been managing Country for millennia. It doesn’t matter if its drone or western technology it’s in our DNA.
.....

Actions:

Increased Traditional Owner stewardship and custodianship of Country

- Increase the number of Indigenous rangers on Country
- Provide more opportunities for culturally informed caring for Country activities
- Enable continuation of culture, language and traditional knowledge systems through intergenerational connection and providing opportunities for youth to work on Country
- Funding for on-Country programs and associated infrastructure

More strong partnerships

- Improve cultural competency among partners
- Understand and implement robust FPIC processes
- Learn and use appropriate language for clear communication and to foster shared understanding and vision
- Fund Traditional Owners directly for their work
- Ensure equity in decision making and prioritisation of on-Country activities in co-management arrangements

Increased Traditional Owner governance and input into policy and decision-making processes

- Traditional Owners need a seat at the decision-making table to be heard
- Traditional Owner perspectives need to be elevated in key policy documents through effective and appropriate engagement in drafting processes
- Strong partnerships are needed to drive true co-design, co-management and co-implementation of water quality management and improvement activities
- Investment in strong governance and administration of Traditional Owner organisations is required for direct funding and the realisation of long-term outcomes

Discussion of key learnings and conclusion

Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners are experiencing compounding threats and risks to their Country. As Traditional Owners regain rights and management of Country, they are taking on responsibility for Country that has been damaged by poor environmental practices, affecting water quality to the Great Barrier Reef.

The Healthy Water grant program has provided the opportunity for Traditional Owners to lead water quality improvement projects, according to their own priorities and aspirations for Country and people – Traditional Owner priorities for water are revealed in grant project focus areas. The Healthy Water Forums were instrumental in developing a deeper understanding of the experiences of Traditional Owners implementing their own projects on the ground, the achievements and outcomes from those projects, as well as challenges and lessons learned along the way.

The rest need to know what good stuff Traditional Owners are doing on Country. I don't think any other group around us can do what we can do on Country.

Discussions at the Forums emphasised the strong interconnectedness between Country, culture and people. Traditional Owners see their presence working on Country and fulfilling their obligations to care for Country as being essential for healing both Country and people. At the same time, they are seeing themselves being excluded from opportunities to work on Country, which causes distress and frustration.

The Healthy Water grants have provided a much-needed opportunity for Traditional Owners to drive their own projects, with many benefits and outcomes for Country and people, including employment, training and capacity building, physical, spiritual, cultural and socioeconomic wellbeing, cultural revitalization, development of partnerships and restoration of Country.

There is a strong need to address language and cultural gaps for equitable partnerships based on shared authority, and to ensure Free, Prior and Informed Consent processes are robust.

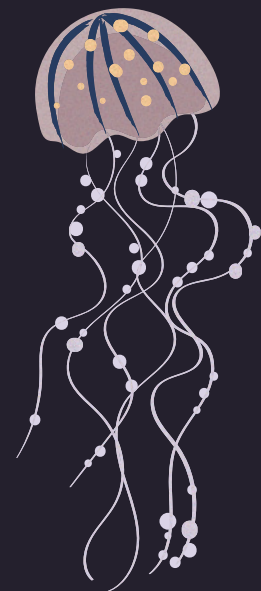
Many funding models outside of those offered by the GBRF exclude Traditional Owners because they are aimed at addressing objectives identified through western science driven prioritisation processes. Forum discussions showed that Traditional Owner priorities, grounded in a holistic perspective, differ from the mainstream. For example, the key threats to Country identified by Traditional Owners were feral animals, weeds and sediment and erosion, in contrast to the key threats focused on in mainstream water quality improvement efforts (dissolved inorganic nitrogen, sediment, contaminants). This emphasises the need for Traditional Owners to have a seat at the table so that multiple perspectives and knowledges of Country can contribute to decision-making.

The GBRF funding is great because it helps us to get our Elders involved; women and men in women and men areas, following our protocols. It's great that the funding is culturally appropriate – it lets us abide by our culture. Other funding focuses on results and data, this allows us to focus on culture and implement that into our workplace.

Removal of barriers for Traditional Owner engagement, leadership and governance in water quality improvement and management is becoming urgent due to the ongoing loss of culture and knowledge. It will require Traditional Owner engagement in governance, development of key policies including in the Water Quality Improvement plan and in program design. The gathering of information from Traditional Owners working on the ground through the Healthy Water Forums is essential for informing policy and future funding opportunities that meet the needs of Traditional Owners, driving opportunities for people and Country to heal together.



Key Learnings from the design and delivery of the Healthy Water Forums



To the best knowledge of the organisers, the 2022 Healthy Water Forum was the first Traditional Owner forum focused on Traditional Owner perspectives of water and water quality in Australia.

The Forums created a unique opportunity to bring Traditional Owners together to share their experiences, aspirations, concerns and hopes for healthy water on their Country. Co-design of the Forums with the Healthy Water Technical Working Group was essential for achieving the objectives, by creating a space and environment that was culturally safe, enabling participants to feel relaxed and comfortable to speak openly and freely:

.....

It created a safe space to share knowledge, provide feedback and free-flowing advice

.....

Several planning meetings were held with the Healthy Water Technical Working Group in the lead up to both Forums. All ideas were welcome to be aired and discussed in Forum co-design sessions. Many fantastic ideas were brought forward and assessed using loose criteria: contribution towards achieving the objectives, time available in the program, budget, and value for money.

A brief description of the co-design process is as follows:

1. Agree on Forum objectives; what do we want participants to get out of it, what do we want to get out of it (see Table 1 for objectives of each Forum).
2. Identify key elements for achieving the objectives, these were:
 - Traditional Owner-led team
 - Indigenous facilitation
 - Non-Traditional Owner attendance kept to a minimum (no external partners)
 - Participants project presentations for sharing
 - Celebration of achievements through the projects
 - Ceremony
 - Time to mingle and network
 - Mixing up thinking and brain work with activities that require movement
 - Resources to deliver the forum (staffing, funds etc)

Much of the Forums' success can be credited to two things:

1. The inviting, open and honest environment created by the Traditional Owner-led team. It set the foundation for trust to be built, active engagement and interaction where everyone felt free to be themselves and to be heard and appreciated by their peers.
2. The resourcing and effort of the Traditional Owner Partnerships team at the GBRF.

Figure 10. Scenes from the 2022 (left) and 2023 (right) Forums





Figure 11. Healthy Water TWG members at the time of the 2022 & 2023 Healthy Water Forums. Left to Right: Dr Cass Hunter (chair), Malachi Johnson, Samarla Deshong, Jade Gould and Ben Gertz. Not pictured: foundational member Dennis Ah Kee and new members Jacob Cassady and Allira Alvoen.

6.

Supplementary Resources

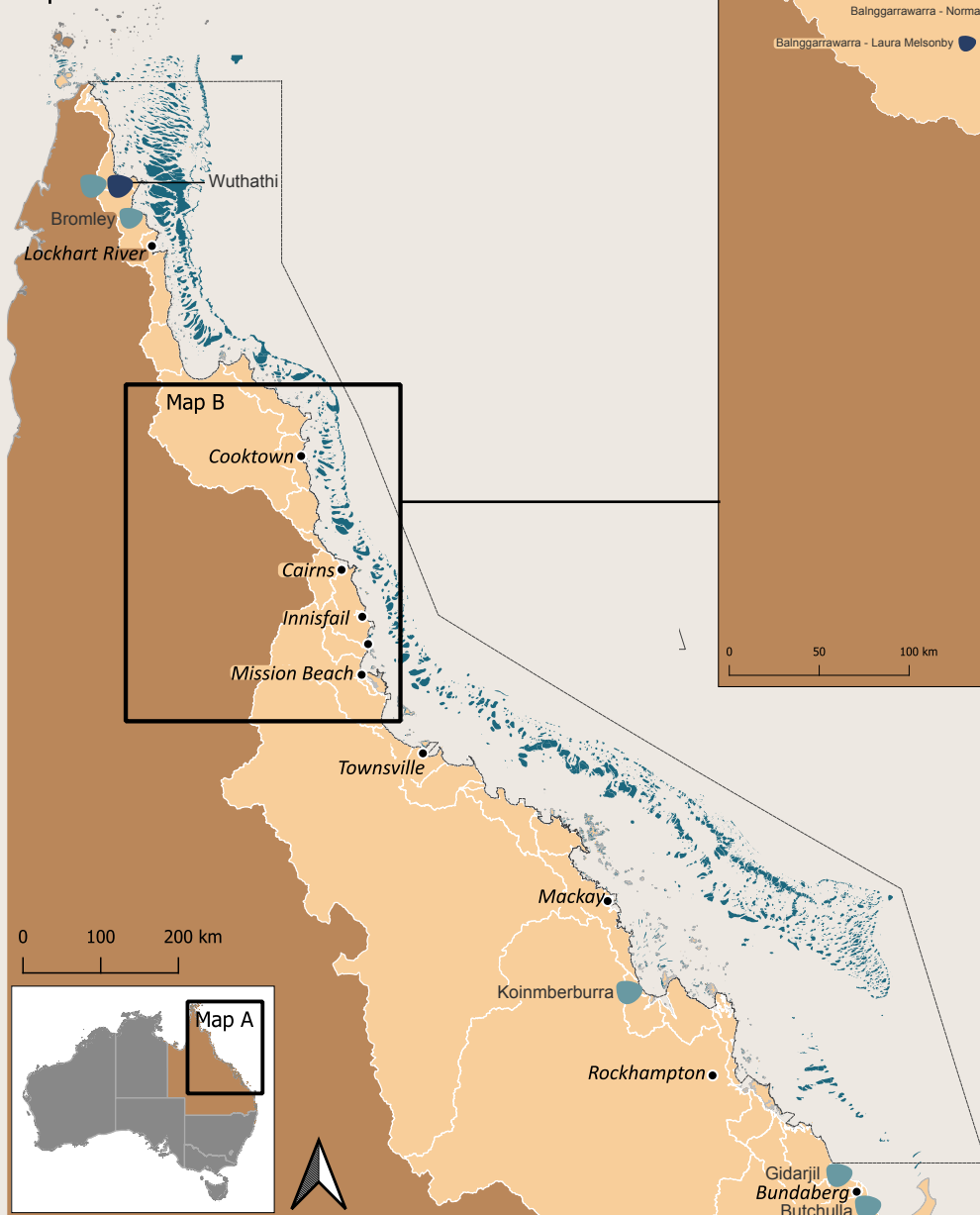
Please see <https://www.ourreefstories.com.au/story-category/story-of-the-healthy-water-program/> for more information on the Healthy Water Program overall, individual Healthy Water grant projects, and outcomes of program co-design and evaluation from the broader Traditional Owner Partnerships

Appendix – Map of Healthy Water Grant projects

Healthy Water Grant Recipients

- Healthy Water Round 1
- Healthy Water Round 2
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park WHA Boundary
- Reefs
- Great Barrier Reef Main Catchments
- Rest of Queensland

Map A



* Grant recipient locations are representative and not exact



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