

# Reef Trust Partnership

**Water Quality Regional Programs**

**Mackay Whitsunday Water  
Quality Program (MWWQP)**

**COMMUNICATIONS &  
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN**



Australian Government



Great Barrier  
Reef Foundation

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### 1. Introduction and background

In close consultation with Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) through the Reef Trust Partnership (RTP) with the Australian Government, Reef Catchments Limited (RCL) is engaged to deliver the Mackay Whitsunday Water Quality Program 2020-2024 (MWWQP).

The MWWQP aims to achieve an enduring reduction in the long-term end-of-catchment pesticide and nutrient loads from the priority Plane and Pioneer catchments.

The program also aims to achieve improved land management practices and stewardship, to provide a basis for sustaining these reductions. This plan aims to present an innovative approach towards strengthening community cohesion and custodianship of long-term legacy values resulting from the investment in the MWWQP.

The MWWQP communication and engagement approach parallels the GBRF RTP's communication and engagement plan with a focus on building understanding, trust and community ownership of the regional program.

This Communication and Engagement Plan (the plan) supports the aims of the MWWQP by providing a range of opportunities to amplify voices and stories of change while building communications and positive messaging into existing networks.

The plan nests under the MWWQP regional plan (as an appendix) and should be read in the context of the other plans associated with the RTP and the MWWQP, including the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan and work plan.

The plan specifically relates and links to, actions and information discussed in Section 9 of the Mackay Whitsunday Water Quality Program Regional Plan.

The plan is a living iterative document that will be reviewed and updated as the program and its projects mature.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to incorporate the fundamental drivers of RCL's vision which are to Dream, Develop, Deliver and Design innovative approaches for the execution of programmes aimed at boosting industry sustainability both on an environmental, resource sustainability and a profitable farm business basis.

This plan will add to established methodologies around communications and engagement which harness a far wider reaching acknowledgement of land manager success within the holistic communities in which they operate.

By virtue of that wider community acknowledgement of land manager success and custodianship, this plan will also develop the benefit analysis and dissemination of that analysis as proof of how the actions of one section of the community will benefit the entire community.

Ultimately by demonstrating that benefit across the wider community, this plan will then be able to present a strong business case for external stakeholders to provide incentives and rewards to those land managers who achieve practice change in monetary, environmental and social value context and within their immediate community or catchment.

The end goal is to develop long-term stewardship and legacy values from land management practice changes.

### 3. Goals

There are six primary communication and engagement goals (Table 2) specifically linked to achieve an enduring reduction in the long-term end-of-catchment pesticide and nutrient loads of the MWWQP.

Table 2 discusses **why** the set of communication goals are important and align with the program logic and provide context and broad strategies on **how** they may be achieved.

Table 2: MWWQP specific communication goals

<p>Communication goals</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Strategies to achieve the goals</p> <p>How.</p>
<p><b>1. Enhance and accelerate the adoption and retention of practice change by cane growers</b></p>	
<p>The program aims to increase landholder engagement in, and ownership of, water quality within the catchments.</p> <p>In the past, the lack of support provided to growers has impeded the uptake of improved equipment or practices or has led to dis-adoption.</p> <p>To reduce the likelihood of this occurring, grower support within each MWWQP project is high. Capacity of delivery providers to provide the required level of support was a core evaluation metric in the assessment process.</p>	<p>Promote the value of improved farm practices across the sugar cane industry in the region with regular communication updates around yield and cost-effective measures.</p> <p>Showcase practice changes and how they relate to water quality improvements in the region.</p> <p>Create awareness and provide opportunity and invite stakeholders to attend water quality related events.</p> <p>Promote and communicate demonstration and trial sites and provide extension support.</p> <p>Pinpoint emerging influencers/champions and promote their achievements across the region.</p>
<p><b>2. Develop a better understanding of the communication barriers inhibiting change</b></p>	
<p>“Growers are consistently saying that they just seem to be giving over what they have done without anything in return or any feedback from what they have done” (Phillip Trendell, DAF).</p> <p>Growers require a strong demonstration that their efforts to effect change and achieve higher levels of land and resource custodianship are acknowledged by the broader community and that the value of that change is recognised and remitted back to those growers who achieve change for the benefit of the whole community and the environment.</p> <p>Growers respond to being a part of a strong local community of change based on their local catchment, friends and families.</p>	<p>This plan can be used to disseminate gains achieved and the value of those gains to the entire community, then we can engage external stakeholders such as local government, financiers and insurers to offer monetary incentives via reduced rates, land charges, interest and premium values which reflect value outcomes across amenity, reduced cost of providing services such as water treatment costs due to cleaner water inputs for treatment, reduced financial risk from poor practices and reduced risks against crop loss and environmental damage from poor practices. Ultimately this could extend to state and federal imposts such as land taxes, and or tax incentives such as investment allowances for practice change outcomes. Rates, Interest and Premiums – the RIP strategy.</p> <p>Reef Catchments’ Janes Creek project very successfully addressed grower concerns. Some, but not all, of the communication approach included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating the Janes Creek Catchment Group.</li> <li>• Providing the group with regular relevant newsletters.</li> <li>• Reporting back to landholders one on one and in groups, through shed meetings.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing and explaining water quality results</li> <li>• Final wrap up celebrating successes.</li> </ul> <p>Growers responded positively by allowing Reef Catchments to provide the Queensland Government with more sensitive catchment water quality trends. This project has been extended.</p> <p>Reef Catchments, through the MWWQP (and with GBRF approval), will continue to communicate with growers throughout the catchments and broader region and provide regular feedback. This strategy will be extended to develop local area sub catchment groups based on social media and reporting. This will also develop friendly competition between sub catchments.</p>
<p><b>3. Overcome barriers, concerns and misconceptions</b></p>	
<p>Delivery providers report grower concerns and misconceptions regarding loss of productivity and profitability when modifying nutrient and pesticide management practices.</p> <p>Growers may not trust science or be fully aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the availability of new technology</li> <li>• the importance of calibrating equipment correctly</li> <li>• which particular project they have signed up with.</li> </ul> <p>Growers are not fully trusting of science and that practice change will not adversely impact profitability and productivity.</p>	<p>Promote new ideas and technologies.</p> <p>Promote the success of practice changes. Apply a coordinated approach to regional events, demonstrations sites, shed meetings and workshops.</p> <p>Invite stakeholders to events.</p> <p>Promote the Reef Catchments-hosted MWWQP webpage and GBRF MWWQP web page to address grower confusion and to highlight water quality improvement.</p> <p>Communicate cost effective methods to growers.</p> <p>Communicate results demonstrating that practice change maintains or increases yields.</p> <p>Promote grower champions.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the science of reef impacts and water quality has been dragged into the general media and political arenas. Peter Ridd with calls for quality assurance, aspiring candidates fuelling dissent and industry organisations fighting to gain or retain membership have all clouded the reality of the necessity of sustainability and resource improvement. This plan will engage all of these issues by supporting the need to gather data for use in quality assurance and scientific review, remove the fundamental need for practice change from the political arena by promoting industry wide cost benefit as the clear agenda and by forcing advocacy based agendas to put up either sound counter arguments based on science or accept the need to work toward their members' critical social licence needs.</p>

4. Improve regional capacity and skills	
<p>The enduring acceptance of new technology, alternative practices and water quality data collection within the region will be an indicator of an increase in regional capacity and skills.</p> <p>The MWWQP has for the first time engaged with commercial rural supply business which are adopting extension delivery as a service.</p> <p>Provide alternate community values which support practice change reward. The RIP strategy</p>	<p>Highlight the introduction/adoption of new technologies or alternative practices. Upskill sugar cane growers via extension and training.</p> <p>Upskill delivery providers via training on technical advancements, improvements in practice change management practices and behavioural science outcomes and barriers relevant to the industry and region.</p> <p>Provide growers support to increase the adoption and maintenance of new methods.</p> <p>Foster a greater acceptance of extension delivery as a service from commercial farm supply businesses. E.g. Liquaforce and Nutrien involvement will attract the interest of other commercial rural supply business and be seen as a competitive advantage to them.</p> <p>By implementing the broader community of change as discussed in Section 2, a new incentive which drives greater uptake of practice change will support the economic success and expansion of service providers and suppliers interested in assisting growers to meet the accreditations required to enjoy the social benefit of change.</p>
5. Communicate key success and learnings from the MWWQP across the region	
<p>Humanity is competitive by nature. “From little things big things grow”</p> <p>Past projects, such as Sandy Creek (shed meetings) has identified that grower competition and curiosity within and between catchments is strong.</p> <p>Competition can thus be used to leverage and link growers across the region.</p> <p>Catchment and cross catchment communication identifying and promoting success of early adopters/champions across the program will lead to an increased level of trust and support for water quality projects from late adopters.</p> <p>Promotion of success stories under the social benefit values under the RIP strategy.</p>	<p>Positive, informative and engaging communications will increase the footprint of the MWWQP and the awareness of water quality issues affecting the Great Barrier Reef and the significant investment allocated to address targeted issues beyond regional boundaries.</p> <p>Develop a high level of data/information sharing and confidence among landholders, industry, NRM organisations, community, local government, industry related businesses and other interested parties.</p> <p>Develop and enhance cross-industry and regional communication to support involvement in water quality improvements.</p> <p>Promote grower/sub catchment champions.</p> <p>Raise awareness and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• current pollutant levels and water quality issues within the region</li> <li>• improved water quality management practices and activities currently being undertaken.</li> </ul>

	Neighbours will quickly recognise their peers' advantage from change and want to enjoy the same social benefit.
<b>6. Increase Traditional Owner involvement in water quality</b>	
<p>Traditional Owners are able to play an important role in natural resource management due to their unique connection to and understanding of the land, sea and water.</p> <p>Past regional water quality programs have had little Traditional Owner involvement. The MWWQP will look for strategies to support traditional owners getting involved in water quality projects.</p>	<p>Reef Catchments meets with the TORG regularly and will continue to communicate and identify emerging influencers and potential linkages for the MWWQP.</p> <p>The TORG was represented at the inaugural Regional stakeholder forum 5 March 2020.</p> <p>The program encourages indigenous procurement and engagement for the life of the program by addressing the primary needs of traditional owners for incentives around purpose, pride, recognition, and employment (reward). We have identified the concurrent Reef Ranger programme from the Queensland Government as being a significant vehicle for driving TO engagement. RCL can mentor and support the Reef Ranger adoption by the Mackay regional groups and expand that programme into caring for country, water quality monitoring, riparian restoration and protection and commercial services for land holders such as woody weed control and vegetative rehabilitation. By linking the MWWQP and the Reef Ranger programmes we achieve significant cross programme linkages and efficiencies. The four-year term of the MWWQP lends itself to providing adequate support and establishment of a new TO organisation able to continue for the long term. This further supports the goals of improving regional capacity and skills.</p>

For the MWWQP, and the Reef 2050 Plan to be successful in the region, it needs to integrate with previous water quality programs, growers, community, industry and Traditional Owners groups in order to gain “buy in” or “ownership” of the programme by these groups. A key role of the Partnership Coordinator is to develop and facilitate the expansion of the communication and engagement network for the life of the MWWQP.

Throughout the program, regular in/formal meetings with stakeholders individually or grouped, will be held to ensure progress towards MWWQP communication and engagement goals are tracking according to plan.

#### 4. Key messages

Key to the success of the MWWQP is for growers adopting practices having improved water quality outcomes which also increase productivity and/or profitability. To gain the greatest improvement in water quality requires the greatest number of growers adopting an improved practice which needs an excellent communications platform. The GBRF is developing a Communication Strategy for the RTP Water Quality Component in order to provide further guidance on key messages and language used as a means of delivering communication but also as a mechanism of maximising its influence. The Communication Strategy for key messages will be applied to the 6 goals of the communications plan which facilitate grower adoption by providing extension support, overcoming barriers, increasing skills and having community engagement. Improved productivity and profitability will ensure that the practice change and subsequent improvement in water quality will be sustainable and lead to healthier waterways

in the long term. Having improved water quality outcomes in local waterways will reduce the end of catchment loads of pesticide and DIN and lead to improving the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

The approach to delivering key messages is therefore to demonstrate the gains/values across a holistic social catchment from growers making that practice change which leads to improved water quality. In short, gains on farm = gains in reduced cost of services such as water treatment = gains in amenity = gains in liveability = gains in environmental values (land and reef) = good news = improved tourism. With the assistance of the Communication Strategy, it will ensure the best communication approaches will be applied to key messages to gain the best outcomes.

### 5. Stakeholders

Cross-community forums, industry partners, the science and research community, stewardship and conservation groups, and Traditional Owners all play key roles in conserving the Great Barrier Reef and delivery of activities related to the Partnership.

The target audience for achieving the six key communication messages (outlined in Section 7 Communication and engagement activities) linked to the MWWQP includes:

- Cane Regional Working Group
- Cane Productivity Boards
- Traditional Owner Reference Group (TORG)
- Mackay and Isaac Regional Councils
- Funding bodies
- Banks and insurers in line with their ESG (environmental social governance) values
- Sugar cane growers/ landholders
- Community
- NRM organisations, e.g. Landcare
- Resellers e.g. Incitec-Pivot
- Delivery service providers (MAPS, Farmacist, Catchment Solutions, SRA, LiquaForce, CANEGROWERS, Reef Catchments Ltd, GreenCollar)
- Government Departments e.g. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Department of Environment and Science (DES), and Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME).

In the Mackay-Whitsunday region, Reef Catchments facilitates the Traditional Owner Reference Group (TORG) which includes representatives from Yuwibara, Koinmerburra, Barada Barna, Wiri, Ngaro, Gia and Juru groups. The TORG plays a role in supporting Indigenous people and organisations to participate in the delivery of NRM activities.

The TORG regularly convenes meetings to provide an opportunity to work together with stakeholders and the broader community to improve knowledge of cultural heritage values and NRM issues within the region. Importantly, the group provides guidance on what projects should be made a priority. Their involvement is producing real outcomes for the benefit of their lands and the wider community. The TORG aims to make the MWI region a proactive leader in cultural heritage and environmental management, recently releasing the [MWI TORG Strategic Plan 2017 – 2027](#).

Reef Catchments continues discussions with the TORG regarding potential linkages with the MWWQP. The TORG was represented at the inaugural regional stakeholder forum 5 March 2020. The MWWQP will continue to engage and communicate opportunities to the TORG and encourage indigenous procurement for the life of the program.

The Yuwibara received Native Title determination in February 2020, the native title area is across the Mackay Regional Council area. Reef Catchments will ensure appropriate engagement with the Yuwi Aboriginal Corporation regarding Traditional Owner input and involvement in the MWWQP. No other Native Title is across the priority sub-catchments.

There are nine projects under the MWWQP (Table 2) and each project has a project specific Communications Plan, appended to this plan, each of which also informs the plan.

Table 2: Contracted delivery providers and project titles.

Delivery provider	Water Quality project title
Farmacist Pty Ltd	Point of Difference
LiquaForce Pty Ltd	Local Area Nutrient Datahub (LAND)
Catchment Solutions Pty Ltd	Project Catalyst
Farmacist Pty Ltd	Project Bluewater 2 (pesticides)
Mackay Area Productivity Services Ltd (MAPS)	Nutrient Management Plans and Agtrix® farming Software Support
Sugar Research Australia Ltd (SRA)	Cane to creek
GreenCollar	Reef Credits
CANEGROWERS Mackay	Mackay Irrigation Project
Reef Catchments Ltd	Major Grants - Incentives for growers

## 6. Communication / Engagement approach, channels and audience

All communication and engagement activities are conducted in accordance with RTP GBRF communications protocols.

The communication/engagement approach will:

- maintain engagement for the life of the program
- promote the continuation of the sub-catchments group(s) after the program
- develop long term strategic programmes (RIP) which continue the legacy value for years to come
- ensure that communications protocols for the program are endorsed
- deliver regular events to engage the community and provide on the ground communication about the program.
- avoid unnecessary duplication and grower fatigue by identifying synergies with other workshops and developing annual events in the region. The development of an annual events program, with input from the Delivery Providers will be an annual process throughout the program.

**MWWQP Forum:** An important component of this plan is the annual MWWQP Forum which provides a communication and engagement platform to enable regional stakeholders to contribute to regional program planning. Annual forums will enable all groups to come together to reinforce the co-designed message of the inaugural forum and identify any shortfalls to be overcome within the next 12 months through inclusiveness and collaboration.

**Reef Catchments MWWQP web page:** Progress and outcome information will be placed on the RCL website (<https://reefcatchments.com.au>) which is the primary method by which program progress and outcome updates are regularly made publicly available. The website will also be the host platform for any video productions throughout the project.

**Plane/ Pioneer sub-catchment group(s) newsletter:** A relevant, informative newsletter will be produced three times per year for the life of the project. The newsletters will be distributed to catchments stakeholders via a mailing list and made available on the respective Facebook groups.

**Natural State E-Newsletter:** Updates will also be circulated via the Reef Catchments bi-monthly e-newsletter, which has approximately 1500 subscribers throughout the region.

**Reef Catchments' Facebook page:** Updates and outcomes will also be posted to Facebook.

**Facebook groups:** Each sub-catchment group will have its own closed Facebook group. Membership to the groups will be available to landholders within a localised area. Membership will initially be limited to cane growers but may be offered to other primary producers or non-commercial producers e.g. hobby farmers, who have shown a genuine interest and willingness to support the local community, provided there is a focus on water quality improvement.

**Calendar of events:** To be produced bi-annually to promote activities in the region and minimise duplication and grower fatigue

**Suite of registers:** Reef Catchments internal living registers will track activities for the life of the project. Registers include risk management, activity tracking, participants/attendees and the like.

**News/media:** Updates and outcomes which are expected to be of interest to news organisations will be compiled into a press release format and circulated throughout the local media, such as the Daily Mercury (the local News Corp owned online newspaper), Channel 7 News Mackay, and ABC Tropical North radio station and to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, in accordance with GBRF protocols.

**Online engagement platforms:** Opportunities for the community to be engaged, participate and be involved in the program will be communicated through standard channels. Invitations to field days, workshops, seminars and any other events where communities are able to be involved are created on events invitation and booking management website Eventbrite and notifications to potentially interested parties sent through email list management website Mailchimp to the appropriate list of subscribed individuals. These lists are compiled and maintained by Reef Catchments. Flyers for such events are designed and posted to the Reef Catchments Facebook page along with a link to the Eventbrite listing.

**Recognising champions:** Partner organisations and communities will be recognised for their participation and contribution through their inclusion in the publicly available outcome information outlined above. This will take the form of written acknowledgement included in any relevant documents, inclusion of logos on documents, if there is a video being made, partner organisations and communities may either appear, be mentioned, or have their logo placed within the video. Social media posts such as Facebook will include relevant tags to the partner organisation/community's respective page, group, or website.

**Regular in/formal meetings:** Grouped and personal. As required.

**Email updates and phone conversations:** As required.

All projects under the MWWQP have the ultimate common goal of improving water quality, however, each project has its own different approach, timeline, stakeholders, communication imperatives and audience which require tailored communication activities and support tools. The appendix to this plan captures this information for each project under the program. This information will be used to develop a Gantt chart to:

- identify synergies between Projects communication activities
- maximise coordinated outputs
- minimise duplication and grower fatigue.

However, at a program level, this plan considers the audience for communication under the MWWQP to be an inseparable whole. As such, the audience is not listed in Table 4 as it is considered a given that communications are appealing to all audiences.

The plan acknowledges that this approach will have varying levels of importance, within and between audiences, however the plan targets the audience as a whole in order to maximise awareness and achieve the best possible water quality outcomes.

The plan also acknowledges that some aspects of communication will simply be for high level tracking and reporting purposes, whereas other information is available to everyone but may also additionally target a specific audience where relevant. For example, Reef Catchments will lead the distribution of the sub-catchment group newsletters to specific sub-catchment groups and selected elements of those newsletters will be given wider circulation through other channels such as press releases or the Natural State e-newsletter.

Given the magnitude and number of projects under the MWWQP, this method provides a collaborative approach to the distribution and dissemination of information throughout the life of the MWWQP.

Regular MWWQP progress updates, including outcomes of individual projects under the program, will be publicly communicated through the range of indicative activities and channels detailed above.

The MWWQP and RTP partner projects adhere to RTP Communication protocols and comply with the RTP Partnership Projects Checklist.

Links to both documents can be found here:

- RTP Partners Communication Protocols

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RtrXmNA\\_FZ6F3mRssXer7ihhPVhY4vMA/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RtrXmNA_FZ6F3mRssXer7ihhPVhY4vMA/view?usp=sharing)

- RTP Partners Communication Protocols Checklist

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Nn4DngcYPjRDP210dcgKpJzEV\\_PtCbjl/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Nn4DngcYPjRDP210dcgKpJzEV_PtCbjl/view?usp=sharing)

7. Communication and engagement activities

This section describes the ways to measure if the communications/engagement activities for the MWWQP are successful. It is expected that by implementing the plan below, the program can proactively identify emerging issues and effectively communicate and engage with the key partners and stakeholders.

**Goal 1: Enhance and accelerate the adoption and retention of practice change.**

Audience	Key message	Purpose	Method and or activity	Channels	Frequency	Indicator or measure of success	Target
Cane growers	Practice change can increase productivity and profitability	Understand and offset growers' concerns that practice change will lead to lower productivity and profitability	Promote the value of improved farm practices through: demonstrations showcasing practice change; identify emerging influencers/champions and promote their achievements across the region	Demonstrations/field days/workshops	Throughout life of the project	Attendance numbers at events	80% of available places
				Case studies/promotional material/fact sheets	Throughout life of the project	Feedback from audience	Positive feedback
				Multi-media networking	Throughout life of the project	Feedback from audience	Positive feedback
				Media articles	Throughout life of the project	Media uptake	Total two media agencies running with the story
				Conference presentations	Throughout life of the project	Feedback from audience and attendance numbers at events	Positive feedback
				Shed meetings	Throughout life of the project	Attendance numbers at events	80% of available places
				Annual MWWQP Forum	Annually	Feedback from audience and attendance numbers at events	80% of available places, positive feedback
<b>Notes</b>							

**Goal 2: Develop a better understanding of the communication barriers inhibiting change**

Audience	Key message	Purpose	Method and or activity	Channels	Frequency	Indicators or measure of success	Target
Cane farmers and the general public	We need to overcome unidirectional communication to remove barriers	Promoting communications between landholders, researchers and government groups in regular updates, water quality results. Face-to-face interaction	Behavioural Science engagement (i.e. tapping into other events and opportunities)	Workshops	Throughout life of the project	Attendance numbers at events	80% of available places
				Shed meetings		Attendance numbers at events	80% of available places
				Feedback forms		Feedback from audience	Positive feedback
<b>Notes</b>							

**Goal 3: Overcoming the barriers, concerns and misconceptions**

Audience	Key message	Purpose	Method and or activity	Channels	Frequency	Indicators or measure of success	Target
Cane farmers	Promote new ideas and technologies	Encourage delivery providers (and growers) to report grower concerns and profitability	One on one engagement with growers - on farm audits / assessments	In-person meetings	Throughout life of the project	Feedback from growers	Positive feedback
			One on one engagement with growers – Economic outcomes and improvements for irrigation				
<b>Notes</b>							

Goal 4: Improve regional capacity and skills

Audience	Key message	Purpose	Method and or activity	Channels	Frequency	Indicators or measure of success	Target
Cane farmers	Growers are encouraged to continually engage in order to keep up with current farming best practice	The enduring acceptance of new technology, alternative practices and water quality data collection within the region	Upskilling sugar cane growers via extension and training, increasing growers access to information	Farming apps	Throughout life of the project	Feedback from growers	Positive feedback
				Information apps			
				Updated websites			
Notes							

Goal 5: Communicate key success and learnings from the MWWQP across the region

Audience	Key message	Purpose	Method and or activity	Channels	Frequency	Indicators or measure of success	Target
Cane farmers, all other farmers, and the general public	“From little things big things grower”. Expanding findings beyond growers engaged in the MWWQP	Positive information and engaging communications to target issues beyond regional boundaries	Identify and promote grower champions	Media articles	Throughout life of the project	Media uptake	Total two media agencies running with the story
				Newsletters		Open rate for electronically distributed newsletters	20% of distribution list
				Social media posts		Reach numbers	500 people reached per post
Notes							

Goal 6: Increase Traditional Owner involvement in water quality

Audience	Key message	Purpose	Method and or activity	Channels	Frequency	Indicators or measure of success	Target
Traditional Owners within the region	To encourage Traditional owner involvement and participation in water quality improvement	Traditional owners are able to play an important role in natural resource management due to their unique connection to and understanding of the land, sea and water	Reef Catchments meets with the TORG regularly and will continue to communicate and identify emerging influencers and potential linkages for the MWWQP	Reef Catchments developing links to TORG through multiple projects	Throughout life of the project	As links develop and opportunities arise delivery providers will be notified	Increase in TORG involvement with water quality improvement
<b>Notes</b>							

\*Indicators of success may include:

- **Effectiveness** – Did the program deliver the communications and engagement products committed?
- **Efficiency** – Did the program deliver these on time and within budget?
- **Appropriateness** – Were the messages to stakeholders clear, digestible, and suitable for target audiences?
- **Impact** – What difference did it make? (eg, did people come to the events?)
- **Legacy** – Did the program learn valuable lessons from the communications and engagement activities (eg what worked and what didn't) that could be applied/change to future projects?

## 8. Risk and Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Program developments overlooked by local media	Ensure press releases are developed and distributed in a timely manner. Follow up press releases with calls to reporters to make sure they are supported in story development.
Lack of attendance by stakeholders at meetings	Ensure invitations are sent out in a timely fashion and everybody is kept informed. Keep contact details up to date. Take into account the schedule of growers and don't arrange meetings during harvest when they are unlikely to be able to attend.
Newsletters lacking in useful information	Ensure that all delivery providers understand that they are required to contribute to the regular newsletters and have them assign somebody to prepare a contribution by the agreed deadline for each newsletter.

## 9. Annexures

### Annual Forum

The MWWQP Forum is an event held annually for the life of the program and is driven by the Regional Partnership Coordinator.

On 5 March 2020 stakeholders were invited to attend the inaugural Reef Trust Partnership MWWQP forum. The forum provided an early communication and engagement platform to enable regional stakeholders to contribute to the Regional Program Plan. Multi-stakeholder input included a region-wide need for:

- providing a clear message and common understanding of targets
- broader engagement through sharing of relevant and quality information
- positive messaging leading to acknowledgement by the broader community
- promotion of Traditional Owner participation
- cost effectiveness through delivery providers undertaking joint presentations to grower meetings
- recognising and capitalising upon the value of grower peer to peer activities, such as shed meetings
- value adding to other events and forums in the region where practical
- recognising champions
- improving social licence for the industry

- integrated presentation of program projects to growers, for example delivery providers giving joint presentations at shed meetings.

This input has informed this plan's communication goals, whereas multi stakeholder experience and learnings from past regional projects helped guide the strategies used to achieve those goals.

More information about the Forum is found in MWWQP Regional Plan and the Forum Summary Report which was distributed to forum participants.

This Forum Summary report can also be sourced by contacting Reef Catchments' office (Email: [reception@reefcatchments.com](mailto:reception@reefcatchments.com); Phone 4968 4200).

Communication of information from these stakeholder forums will continue to inform and update the program's key living documents under the MWWQP (Regional Plan, M&E, Communications and Engagement plan and Work Plan.

### The collaborative approach for MWWQP Delivery Provider communications

#### 1. Background

The majority of the delivery providers involved in the MWWQP are well established, knowledgeable, experienced in water quality programs and have developed a high level of trust with growers and industry groups within the region. As they have operated for many years, they have also formed strong working networks with most delivery providers which provides a high level of certainty across the program and enables it to further develop the synergies already existing between providers.

Although the delivery providers may provide similar support services within the cane industry, they differ in their company structure (commercial or not-for-profit organisations), size and capacity (number of staff) and clientele which greatly increases the diversity in the communications strategies applied. This in turn, greatly enhances the audience base and maximises communications within the MWWQP.

Embracing, the communications and engagement plan, using a collaborative approach, will foster creativity and enable the delivery providers to come together throughout the MWWQP on a common platform to leverage their unique characteristics to ensure consistent messaging, efficiencies and synergies.

#### 2. Common Goals

Communications goals common to delivery providers include:

- sharing water quality improvement practices and opportunities with industry, governments and growers
- promoting best management practice to non-engaged growers through leading by example
- informing the industry and growers about interaction between irrigation, soils, nutrients and management strategies
- creating awareness of the overall MWWQP to the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac region
- developing and distributing communications materials including fact sheets and case studies which promote water quality best practice
- using selected grower champions as examples promoting the successes of adopting practices which maximise retention of inputs on farm, improve water quality and demonstrate the potential gains in productivity or profitability

- raising awareness of tailored precision agriculture extension activity (primarily extension-focused providers).

### **3. Communication/engagement approach and audience**

There will be multiple approaches to engagement which will primarily depend on audience. The ideal message is one tailored to the intended audience and this is recognised through a multi-faceted approach:

- Growers can be reached through established grower relationships held by stakeholders, both directly and through professional networks. This audience includes both engaged and non-engaged growers.
- “Growers” does not stop at those who are directly engaged, it includes all growers throughout the region. Engagement approach is the same as the above point.
- The wider public can be reached through connecting with local media outlets, this can be achieved through press releases and pre-arranged interviews.
- Existing social media contacts will be valuable to spread information about the project as social media posts from individual providers can be shared on all other providers’ platforms, thus greatly extending their reach.
- Traditional Owner networks will be included by way of the Reef Catchments Traditional Owner Reference Group.
- Information brochures will be developed targeted at growers.
- Shed meetings will be arranged to increase, facilitate and maintain grower engagement.
- Discuss barriers to practice change and goals regarding how barriers might be overcome. This can be done through word of mouth (e.g. shed meetings), through newsletters and via social media.
- Arrange training sessions where opportunities for collaboration among delivery providers and growers will be facilitated.
- Communications surrounding the project need to be of a positive, encouraging nature, this approach will be embedded in all communications products.
- Information will be included in established newsletters, which will reach audiences who have opted in to hear about issues in the water quality space: Reef Catchments’ Natural State e-newsletter and CANEGROWERS’ The Billet.
- Information will be included in delivery providers’ communications channels, e.g. organisation websites, social media and newsletters.

Specific plans for each individual delivery provider are provided separately.