

NRM REGIONS QUEENSLAND 2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT



NRM
REGIONS
QUEENSLAND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Queensland's regional NRM organisations recognise First Nations People as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work.

We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the ongoing connection to Country and more than 60,000 years of stewardship of our natural resources by Indigenous Australians.

We acknowledge and value the contribution that First Nations People continue to make to the sustainable management of our natural assets as well as the value that Traditional Knowledge brings to our sector.



WHAT IS NRM?

Natural Resource Management is the protection and improvement of the natural assets that underpin our quality of life – our soil and water, the climate, landscapes and biodiversity.

NRM Regions Queensland is the peak body for natural resource management in the state, supporting and promoting its members – the 12 regional natural resource management organisations of Queensland.

Cover photo: Desert Channels Queensland



CONTENTS

About NRM Regions Queensland	4
Chair's Report	6
CEO's Report	7

SECTION 1: VALUE 8

NRM Regions Queensland Strategic Plan	8
Using data to tell a compelling state-wide story	10
NRM Expansion Program	12
On-ground highlights from across the state	13

SECTION 2: PARTNERSHIPS 16

Global Nature Positive Summit	17
Regional Delivery Partners	17
National Koala Recovery Team Board	18
Queensland Decarbonisation Hub	18
DETSI Offsets Project Management Committee	19
Powerlink agreement to optimise environmental offsets	19
Queensland Farmers' Federation	19
Supporting the National Soil Monitoring Program	20
Investing in soil science	20
Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy	21
Backing \$250 million pledge for nature protection	21
Queensland Wetlands Program Governance Group	22
Paddock to Reef	23

SECTION 3: CAPACITY 24

Leadership Framework	25
Communities of Practice review	25
Creating the NRM sector's first dedicated mentoring program	26
Lunch & Lead	28
Capability Cards	28
NRM Leadership Framework: Building our capacity to lead	29

2024-2025 FINANCIALS 30

NRM REGIONS QUEENSLAND IS SUPPORTED BY:



Queensland Government



Australian Government

*A fishway constructed for the Woogaroo riverine restoration project.
Photo: Healthy Land & Water.*

ABOUT NRM REGIONS QUEENSLAND

There are 12 regional natural resource management (NRM) organisations in Queensland, each working with their local communities to protect and enhance the state's natural assets – land and soil, water, and biodiversity – across our iconic landscapes.

NRM Regions Queensland is the peak body for NRM in the state, established more than 20 years ago by the sector. Our goal is to amplify our members' voices to influence policy, and to support and promote their work.

We are passionate about the sustainable management of Queensland's natural resources and support our members to work with their communities to develop place-based Regional NRM Plans underpinned by science, data and local knowledge.

Once these plans are in place, we work together as a sector to secure investment for on-ground action – to mitigate threats to the environment and economy and improve the condition of our natural assets.

Partnerships underpin all our work. We've built important strategic state-wide alliances and maintain strong relationships with government

to contribute to policy and secure investment. While regional NRM organisations work closely with communities on the ground, collaborating with land managers, Traditional Owners and community groups to take action where it's needed most.

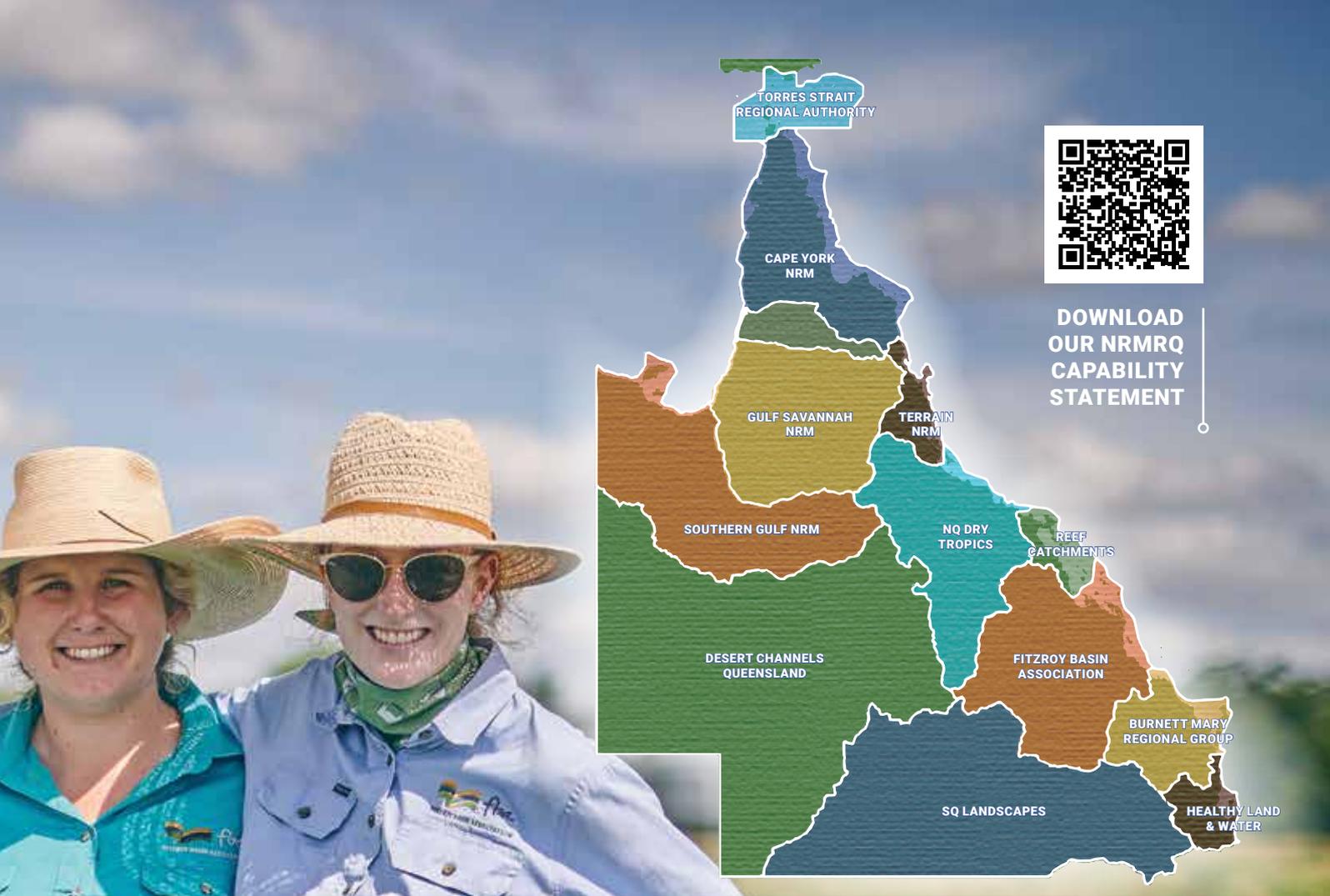
We also help our members to deliver nature positive outcomes through workforce development programs that increase leadership capacity at all locations, at all levels and at all times.

Guided by the NRM Regions Queensland 2023–26 Strategic Plan, we are committed to delivering positive environmental and social change at the regional level, across the whole of Queensland.

NRM Regions Queensland is a Company Limited by Guarantee, governed by a Board comprising nominations from 11 regional NRM organisations and one associate member.

In total, there are 54 regional NRM organisations across Australia. Our national peak body is NRM Regions Australia.





DOWNLOAD
OUR NRM
CAPABILITY
STATEMENT

Queensland's NRM sector is the state's largest on-ground professional conservation network – with deep connections to First Nations communities.

Every \$1 invested in regional NRM in Queensland generates an additional \$4.20 in cash and in-kind support.

More than 300 full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff work across 27 regional offices, with a further 420 FTEs indirectly employed through projects.

NRM projects stimulate regional economies – strengthening supply chains, supporting local businesses and generating local revenue.

We are experts in community engagement – working with thousands of land managers every year.

We are independent and often bridge the gap between policy and practice.

We bring 25 years of experience delivering outcomes on the ground.



CHAIR'S REPORT

**Julie Boyd, Chair
NRM Regions Queensland**

This year, Queensland's NRM sector has demonstrated its expertise, on-ground capability, and determination – resulting in the Queensland Government committing to its largest-ever single investment in NRM: the \$117.84 million NRM Expansion Program (NRMEP).

Collaboration was key to this success.

It was the coordinated efforts of NRMQR CEO Chris Norman, the NRMQR Board, and the CEOs of the state's regional NRM organisations that underpinned a successful election campaign and helped secure this milestone funding – to deliver projects aligned with state priorities to improve land condition, enhance biodiversity, and support healthy coasts and waterways.

This collaboration has continued with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development, as we have worked together to co-design the NRMEP. In fact, Chris and I have visited their offices so often that we now know most of the security guards by name – a light-hearted reminder of the sustained effort involved!

Now the focus turns to delivery.

This is a significant opportunity to demonstrate the impact of NRM projects across Queensland. Our next focus is the 2028 state election, where we aim to showcase the results of this investment – and continue to expand NRM services across the state.

The depth of talent and experience in our sector is increasingly recognised by government. This has helped to build strong relationships with Ministers and senior staff, and is expanding the sector's influence in areas such as policy development and planning for ecosystem and species recovery, sustainable agriculture, and decarbonisation.

Our collective investment to grow leadership capacity across all regional NRM organisations is paying dividends. I commend all NRM staff members who have taken part in these Leadership Framework initiatives – from the mentoring program to presenting at one of the monthly Lunch & Lead webinars – especially while balancing already busy workloads.

NRMQR CEO Chris Norman's drive and commitment over the past

year have been unmatched, and the value he brings to the sector is evident to all who work with him. His standout quality is his ability to build productive, meaningful relationships, especially with regional NRM CEOs, and I believe that is a key reason why the sector is in its strongest position for a number of years.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow directors – the Chairs of Queensland's regional NRM organisations, for their leadership and passion for guiding NRMQR and the wider Queensland NRM sector towards a sustainable and impactful future. I also want to sincerely thank those whose directorships concluded this year and have contributed much to our sector over many years, namely Bruce Scott AM, Megan Munchenberg and Sally Gray. I also equally want to warmly welcome the new members who have joined the NRMQR Board in Iain Gordon, Jim Turnour and Kimberley Swords.

CEO'S REPORT

Chris Norman, CEO NRM Regions Queensland

The past 12 months have been transformative for the Queensland NRM sector.

We built partnerships, strengthened our workforce, and secured one of the largest funding commitments ever made to natural resource management in Queensland.

Last year, I wrote about our Nurturing Nature: Cultivating Culture election campaign, which aimed to build a stronger relationship with the state government, and better position the sector for the 2028 election.

The campaign, developed with our Election Working Group, surpassed all expectations.

A high-quality strategic prospectus and launch, a program of costed projects targeting state priorities, and advocacy – including 250 meetings – led to election pledges from both Labor and the LNP.

The LNP's \$117.84 million commitment was formalised by an MOU signed in January 2025, and since then, we have worked with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development to develop the framework for the NRM Expansion Program (NRMEP). We will begin rolling out impactful on-ground projects in 2025–26.

This success has the potential for long-lasting productive relationships with government and to grow our sector's influence. We are already seeing that change.

Queensland's NRM sector has never before been included in a Ministerial Charter letter. Following this election

commitment, we have been included in three. This means these Ministers are committed to expanding and working in partnership with the sector until at least 2028 – an outstanding outcome.

We have many people to thank for this result from all sides of government, not the least being Sam O'Connor, former Shadow Environment Minister, for championing our campaign, and Minister Dale Last for his support and dedication in developing the NRMEP.

One of my aims is to ensure our sector has a seat at the table, and this recent success is deepening partnerships across a range of initiatives.

We continue to build our influence as part of the renewable energy transition and are supporting the development of both state and federal government policy on environmental offsets.

In July 2024, we signed a strategic agreement with Powerlink Queensland to improve outcomes delivered through environmental offsets. We are also working collaboratively with organisations including the Queensland Renewable Energy Council and Eco-Markets Australia, and I represented the sector in the last 12 months as a member of both the DETSI Offsets Project Management Committee and the Queensland Decarbonisation Hub.

I am also proud of the sector's involvement in the National Soil Monitoring Program across the country where we have worked with CSIRO to be the delivery agent for this critical project, and which is complementary to my membership



on the National Soil Strategy Implementation Steering Committee.

The Queensland NRM sector has continued to invest significantly in building leadership capacity and this year saw the second round of our mentoring program launched with 23 mentor-mentee pairs taking part. This means more than 20% of our state-wide workforce have now participated in the initiative.

Our Leadership Working Group has also developed Capability Cards to extend our Leadership Capabilities throughout the sector and a comprehensive review of our Communities of Practice is close to concluding, with recommendations to be implemented over the next 12 months.

Finally, I would like to commend the CEOs of Queensland's regional NRM organisations for their commitment to driving our sector forward. This collaborative group, alongside the NRMQR Board and Chair Julie Boyd, ensures we deliver big outcomes for communities and for Country.

And a special thanks to the NRM Regions Queensland team for their commitment and hard work. My staff Lee Blacklock and Belinda 'Billy' Thomson, alongside contractors Janelle Mohr, Samantha Morris, Stephen Berkeley, Penny Scott, and Steve Titman, work to maximise the success of NRM Regions Queensland and to amplify the voices of our members – Queensland's regional NRM organisations.



In January 2025, the Queensland Government and NRM Queensland signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the NRM Expansion Program.

NRM Regions Queensland Strategic Plan

The 2023-26 Strategic Plan guides NRM Queensland in how it influences, supports and promotes the work of its 12 member organisations.

**THE PLAN HAS THREE KEY DELIVERY AREAS:
VALUE, PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITY.**



VIEW OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

1 VALUE

the NRM sector knows its value and so do others

- 1.1 Strong and clear value proposition for the NRM sector
- 1.2 Resilient regional NRM organisations
- 1.3 Strong and identifiable brand for the NRM sector
- 1.4 Regional NRM Plans have the appropriate profile
- 1.5 Collective impact is measured and promoted

2 PARTNERSHIPS

the NRM sector has a solid reputation and influences where it matters

- 2.1 Strong strategic state-wide partnerships that support regional collaboration
- 2.2 First Nations knowledge is valued
- 2.3 Government policy is influenced
- 2.4 Alliances with the private-sector are built

3 CAPACITY

the NRM sector is innovative and forward-looking

- 3.1 Capable Boards leading the sector
- 3.2 Collective knowledge and experiences are shared between regional NRM organisations
- 3.3 Co-delivery of strategic projects across regions
- 3.4 Strong business acumen across the NRM sector
- 3.5 Courageous leadership at all levels
- 3.6 New investment covers the true cost of delivering projects

A VegCAT training session
in Far North Queensland.



Using data to tell a compelling state-wide story

The State-wide Indicators Framework (SWIF) provides organisations delivering natural resource management projects in Queensland with consistent methods and tools for collecting project impact data.

The first of its kind in Australia, SWIF includes systems for analysing and combining this data to tell a whole-of-Queensland story. It was developed by ex-Terrain NRM employee and now consultant Penny Scott and NRM Regions Queensland's Lee Blacklock.

The Queensland Government's Natural Resources Recovery Program (NRRP) funded the development of SWIF and now uses it to track the impact of all organisations receiving funding from that program. NRM Regions Queensland provides

face-to-face and online training for all organisations using SWIF, supported by a suite of interactive resources.

The SWIF toolkit includes a range of methods for monitoring ecological condition – commonly referred to as Condition Assessment Tools (CATs). One of these is the Vegetation Condition Assessment Tool (VegCAT), a rapid ecological monitoring method that tracks changes in native vegetation condition.

The method involves establishing a monitoring plot and collecting data including ground cover, vegetation regeneration, weeds and the structure of trees and shrubs. Gathering this information through the VegCAT app automatically

generates a condition score.

Other methods in the SWIF toolkit include the Wetlands Condition Assessment Tool (WetCAT) and the Land Condition Assessment Tool (LCAT), both with companion data collection apps. The data gathered through the apps is analysed using custom-built computer script and combined into a state-wide dataset that feeds an online SWIF dashboard.

New SWIF methods and tools are also being developed in response to identified need.

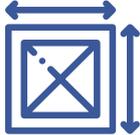
FireCAT – a method to assess the effectiveness of improved burning regimes – has moved forward this year with the first version developed and presented to an expert panel in



MEASURING OUR IMPACT THROUGH SWIF

The following data shows the state-wide impact of Queensland's regional NRM organisations for projects delivered as part of the Natural Resources Investment Program and Natural Resources Recovery Program (July 2018–June 2025)

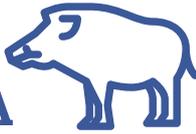
CONDITION IMPROVED ACROSS

799,783 HA 

SUPPORTING IMPROVED PRACTICES OVER

 **593,006** HA

MANAGING THREATS TO

197,110 HA 

1,148

HECTARES OF GULLY REPAIR AND RIPARIAN RESTORATION



1,277

WATERING POINTS INSTALLED

READ HOW WE'RE BUILDING SKILLS ACROSS THE STATE

March. Pilot testing is expected to begin in the next 12 months.

Development is also underway on a Riparian Condition Assessment Tool (RipCAT), and companion app, to assess the impact of streambank restoration projects.

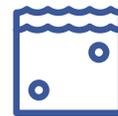
To help NRRP delivery partners collect consistent data on events and activities, an Event Capture app was also launched this year and has received positive reviews from participants. SWIF will also be used to quantify the impact of the new \$117.84 million NRM Expansion Program (see page 12).

This project is funded by the Queensland Government's Natural Resources Recovery Program.



99,311 TREES PLANTED

33,271



TONNES OF SEDIMENT SAVED FROM ENTERING REEF CATCHMENTS ANNUALLY

1,301 KM

OF FENCING CONSTRUCTED



NRM Expansion Program

The Queensland Government has committed to its largest-ever single investment in natural resource management.

The \$117.84 million NRM Expansion Program will deliver a state-wide program of on-ground works over the next three years – delivering significant land, water and biodiversity projects.

The investment acknowledges the NRM sector’s vital role in managing natural resources across the state.

“You’re doing fantastic work. We need you in Queensland. And the Department is right behind you,” said Dale Last, Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development.

The funding, to be distributed across 11 regional NRM organisations and NRMRQ, was one of the LNP’s 2024 election commitments. In January, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Queensland Government in Townsville delivering on the LNP’s 100-day election pledge.

This unprecedented commitment was the result of a two-year, ground-up campaign – Nurturing Nature: Cultivating Culture. It combined market research, and collaborative project design, with sustained advocacy and engagement with politicians, advisers, peak bodies and community partners.

With on-ground projects scheduled to start in 2025–26, Queensland’s regional NRM organisations have been working together to lay the groundwork for success. All projects are aligned with state priorities for improved land condition and soil health, protected and enhanced biodiversity, and healthy waterways and coasts.

NRMRQ CEO Chris Norman said the investment recognises the value of regional partnerships and local delivery.

“Together, we are ensuring the protection and enhancement of Queensland’s natural resources for generations to come. Queensland’s NRM sector is ready to deliver impact at scale through the NRMEP – supporting local jobs and economies, safeguarding biodiversity, and protecting land and water natural assets.”



Minister Dale Last, NRMRQ Chair Julie Boyd and NRMRQ CEO Chris Norman.

FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The NRM sector’s Federal Election campaign began in March, with NRMRQ joining with NRM Regions Australia and regional NRM organisations across the country.

The Ready to Tackle the Crisis campaign asked for additional funding to tackle the nature and climate crises – including a 10-year increase in essential NRM services funding alongside investment in energy transition and disaster preparedness projects.

The campaign was supported through engagement with key stakeholders and a two-month #NRMisReady communications campaign.

ON-GROUND HIGHLIGHTS FROM ACROSS THE STATE



Regional coordinators and Minister for Primary Industries Tony Perrett (3rd from right) at the National Feral Pig Conference in March 2025.

QUEENSLAND COORDINATES FIGHT AGAINST FERAL THREAT

Queensland welcomed five new regional Feral Pig Coordinators to strengthen control programs across six key regions.

Supported by funding from the Queensland and Australian governments through the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative, the project is being delivered in partnership with six regional NRM organisations: Desert Channels Queensland, Cape York NRM, Gulf

Savannah NRM, NQ Dry Tropics, Terrain NRM and Southern Gulf NRM.

The initiative has boosted landscape-scale feral pig control through activities such as monitoring, baiting, trapping and shooting.

Based in Cairns, Longreach, Mareeba, Townsville and Mount Isa, the coordinators are working closely with local government, graziers, Traditional Owners, Indigenous ranger teams, and farmers.



Desert Channels Queensland works with landholders to control prickly acacia.



THOUSANDS OF PRICKLY ACACIAS 'NO MORE'

Desert Channels Queensland has seen incredible success in controlling one of Australia's most notorious invasive weeds – prickly acacia.

Prickly acacia infestations were rife following the 2019 Queensland floods, which created perfect conditions for rapid spread and germination of weed seeds.

Since receiving funding in 2020, DCQ has worked alongside landowners to provide direct,

on-farm treatment across 215,000 hectares of infestation.

The Disaster Recovery-funded project has also enabled new innovations, including using machine learning with drone mapping to detect prickly acacia and partnering with industry to trial a new herbicide.

LEADING THE WAY ON ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE MARKETS

Cassowary Credits

Cassowary Credits is a biodiversity credit scheme developed by Terrain NRM to increase investment in habitat protection and restoration across Queensland's Wet Tropics region.

The scheme enables landholders and land managers to undertake approved projects that deliver measurable rainforest habitat condition outcomes, earning diversified income through the generation and sale of credits. It is administered independently by Eco-Markets Australia.

In a landmark development for environmental markets in Australia, Cassowary Credits projects are eligible to be stacked with Australian

Carbon Credit Unit projects under the Clean Energy Regulator's framework.



ENvestor launched in SEQ

Another major step forward in financing nature restoration is underway in Southeast Queensland, with the launch of a new partnership that includes Healthy Land & Water, the region's NRM organisation.

ENvestor unites government, private sector, industry and community partners to drive large-scale investment in the repair and restoration of the region's land, forests and waterways.

[HEAD TO THE CASSOWARY CREDITS WEBSITE](#)

QUEENSLAND'S NRM SECTOR IMPROVING GREAT BARRIER REEF WATER QUALITY

The \$200 million Landscape Repair Program is underway, supporting large-scale projects to improve Reef water quality.

Poor water quality is one of the most significant threats to the health of the Reef, with sediment run-off from land a key contributor.

Six regional NRM organisations are now working on projects to reduce sediment run-off by restoring eroded gully systems, rehabilitating streambanks, and improving groundcover through better grazing land management.

Funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust, the program is being delivered by Fitzroy Basin Association, Terrain NRM, Reef Catchments, Burnett Mary Regional Group, Cape York NRM, and NQ Dry Tropics.





REDUCING DISASTER IMPACT ON NATURAL CAPITAL

Queensland's regional NRM organisations have each developed an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan to safeguard biodiversity and agricultural natural capital assets.

Funded by the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust, the plans establish proactive strategies to reduce the impact of disasters on vulnerable species, ecosystems and agricultural resources.

KEEPING NATIVE FISH IN THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Significant numbers of native fish are lost from Murray-Darling Basin rivers every year after being sucked into irrigation pumps and diverted into on-farm channels.

This impacts the sustainability of native fish populations and can cause damage to irrigation infrastructure.

Southern Queensland Landscapes' Fish-Friendly Water Extraction project, supported by a \$6.8 million

investment from the Australian Government, is transforming water management through the installation of cutting-edge fish screens on irrigation pumps and other water extraction infrastructure.

The screens can reduce fish loss to water extraction by over 90%, while farmers benefit from cleaner water, reduced blockages and lower maintenance costs.

READ QUEENSLAND'S NATURAL CAPITAL EMERGENCY PLANS



HELPING GRAZIERS GROW STRONGER

In 2024–25, Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA) engaged 63 landholders, finalised 37 Land Management Plans and completed 23 projects resulting in 188,580 hectares of managed land through their Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions Program (GRASS) program.

FBA helps graziers develop and implement tailored action plans for land management aimed at increasing productivity, improving ground cover, and reducing soil loss to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Their experienced extension officers provide one-on-one support to graziers to access the tools, strategies, and funding needed to achieve their land management goals.



Photo: FBA

■ PARTNERSHIPS

SECTION 2



Reef Catchments is supporting a community-driven seagrass restoration project.

Global Nature Positive Summit

Australia hosted the first Global Nature Positive Summit in October 2024.

Regional NRM organisations had a strong presence at the event, promoting the sector's ability to deliver nature positive projects and highlighting the unique national regional NRM model to attendees from around the world.

NRM ran a promotional campaign alongside the summit, featuring a series of postcards with iconic Queensland imagery, and engagement with politicians and other stakeholders.



Regional Delivery Partners

As part of the Australian Government's \$1.1 billion commitment under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT), a national network of Regional Delivery Partners (RDP) was established.

In Queensland, the RDP panel is made up of the 11 mainland regional NRM organisations as part of a broader national network of 52 Regional Delivery Partners delivering vital environmental protection, sustainable climate-smart agriculture, and natural resource management outcomes across Australia.

The RDP panel plays a key role in implementing government commitments under the NHT through impactful on-ground NRM projects. Regional Delivery Partners have also been allocated funding to support operational functions, including delivering a Regional NRM Plan, and ensuring appropriate governance.



READ QUEENSLAND'S REGIONAL NRM PLANS

A Healthy Land & Water koala habitat restoration project.



National Koala Recovery Team Board

Through its CEO, NRM Regions Queensland represents the state's NRM sector on the National Koala Recovery Team Board, which works to stop the decline in koala populations through a coordinated national recovery plan.

At the April 2025 meeting in Adelaide, the Board heard from WWF Australia on a successful fundraising

initiative, and from Western Sydney University researchers on koala genome sequencing.

Members also visited Belair National Park, where Flinders University shared insights into koala diseases and population dynamics – and several koalas were spotted in the wild!



Photo: Charley Geddes

Queensland Decarbonisation Hub

The Queensland Decarbonisation Hub is a partnership between the Queensland Government and the state's leading universities, designed to bring together people, knowledge and innovation to co-create solutions for a clean growth future.

Funded through the Queensland Climate Action Plan, the Hub

supports coordinated action to help Queensland transition to a decarbonised economy.

NRMQR's CEO sits on the Hub's Advisory Committee, which acts as a reference group to ensure activities are aligned with issues that stakeholders across Queensland are facing during the transformation to a decarbonised

economy. The committee also sets the Hub's research agenda.

The committee has representatives from government, industry, the Queensland Conservation Council, trade unions and the Queensland Renewable Energy Council.

DETSI Offsets Project Management Committee

NRM Queensland CEO Chris Norman was appointed to the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation's (DETSI) Offsets Project Management Committee in July 2024.

The committee advises the department on the delivery of environmental offsets to achieve positive conservation outcomes for areas of environmental significance impacted by development.

An environmental offset compensates for unavoidable impacts on significant environmental values on one site – such as valuable species or ecosystems – by securing land at another site, and managing that land over a period of time, to replace those values which were lost.

Queensland Farmers' Federation



CEO Chris Norman at the QFF Annual National Agriculture Day Breakfast in Brisbane in November. NRM Queensland and QFF have a long-standing relationship and work together on a range of projects and initiatives, including co-sponsoring the Queensland NRM sector's Natural Capital Markets Community of Practice.



Powerlink agreement to optimise environmental offsets

NRM Queensland has entered into an agreement to improve outcomes achieved through environmental offsets being delivered by Powerlink Queensland.

The Strategic Relationship Agreement has led to the organisations working together to optimise the location and management of offsets to ensure economic, social and environmental outcomes which benefit communities, landscapes and future generations.

The agreement also sees Powerlink involve the NRM sector in the strategic planning for new infrastructure and the maintenance of existing infrastructure.

"Partnerships like this allow us to make meaningful contributions to enhancing Queensland's natural resources," said Powerlink's Stewart Bell. "This is not just a way to offset environmental impacts but also to understand how we can do more to ensure future generations can benefit from the rich environment Queensland has to offer."



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR
WORK WITH POWERLINK
QUEENSLAND**

Supporting the National Soil Monitoring Program

Queensland's regional NRM organisations are playing a key role in one of Australia's most ambitious soil health projects – the National Soil Monitoring Program (NSMP).

Over the next three years, the NSMP will sample approximately 3,000 sites across the country, collecting vital data to improve soil health and productivity, delivering long-term economic, environmental, and social benefits.

Australia's NRM sector is supporting the soil sampling initiative, which is funded by the Australian Government through the Natural Heritage Trust and led by CSIRO.

Queensland's regional NRM organisations – drawing on decades of field experience – are preparing to sample hundreds of sites as part of the project, with a strong focus on key agricultural zones.

The data collected will support evidence-based decisions by land managers to improve land condition and help policy makers to make strategic, landscape-scale decisions to support climate-smart, sustainable, and productive agriculture well into the future.

NRM Regions Queensland CEO Chris Norman is the National NRM Lead for the NSMP and is a member of the National Soil Strategy Implementation Steering Committee. He said the initiative will help to grow the sector's expertise in soils, build relationships with partner organisations and aligns with other existing soil projects.

"Regional NRM organisations are trusted partners in their communities. Our involvement in the monitoring program will strengthen our long-standing role in helping farmers improve the health and productivity of their land," he said.



Investing in soil science

Through the Queensland Soil Science Graduate Program, the state's regional NRM organisations are also helping to cultivate the next generation of soil scientists by hosting graduates over a 12-month development program that offers participants experience in the lab, the field, and through professional networks.

The initiative is a partnership between the Queensland Government (through the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation) and the state's NRM sector, coordinated by Burnett Mary Regional Group, with three graduates working at both a government department and a regional NRM organisation.



Chris Norman at a multi-agency workshop in April 2025 which helped to define roles and responsibilities of key partners within Queensland's biosecurity system.



Backing \$250 million pledge for nature protection

In March, the Federal Government committed to protecting and conserving an additional 30 million hectares of bushland – advancing Australia's progress toward the national 30 by 30 target.

NRM Regions Queensland welcomed the announcement of the \$250 million Australian Bushland Program, which will be delivered over five years to support this goal.

NRMRQ is also a member of Protect Beautiful Queensland – an alliance campaigning to double the state's protected area estate by 2030.

Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy

Queensland is a global biodiversity hotspot – home to more than half of Australia's native species. However, these species are under threat from invasive plants and animals.

Regional NRM organisations supported the development of the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2025-2030 through submissions during an extensive consultation process. This strategy provides a state-wide framework with actions to guide the management and prevention of invasive species.

As a member of the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Committee run by the Department of Primary Industries, NRMRQ CEO Chris Norman helped to review the strategy. The committee – made up of representatives from conservation, agriculture, state and local governments, industry, NRM and community – will play an important role in monitoring the strategy's effectiveness.

CEO Chris Norman meeting with Andrew Picone, Queensland Manager for Pew Charitable Trusts, and co-founder of Protect Beautiful Queensland.





*Unitywater Yandina Creek Wetlands
Maintenance Project.
Photo: Healthy Land & Water.*

Queensland Wetlands Program Governance Group

Established in 2003, the Queensland Wetlands Program (QWP) works to protect wetlands across the state.

NRM Regions Queensland's CEO represents the sector on the QWP Governance Group, advising the Queensland Government on strategic direction and opportunities to strengthen wetland management. The group sets an annual work schedule, which includes supporting the updated Reef 2050 Wetlands Strategy.

Regional NRM organisations support QWP through delivery of on-ground works and participation in the Wetlands Network – a forum for operational managers.

Queensland is home to the most diverse range of wetlands in Australia, covering around 4.1% of the state and supporting a wide variety of landscapes.

Paddock to Reef

NRM Regions Queensland plays a central role in supporting the six Reef regional NRM organisations to evaluate and communicate progress towards Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) targets.

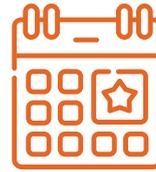
This work is part of the Paddock to Reef Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program (P2R), a collaboration between 20 organisations – including regional NRM organisations, agricultural industry bodies, government agencies, and research organisations – from the Burnett Mary region to Cape York.

Together, these partners monitor water quality factors that affect the Great Barrier Reef, with results reported through the Reef Water Quality Report Card.

Over the past 12 months, the Paddock to Reef program has supported the review of the Reef 2050 WQIP, including hosting community workshops across all Reef regions during both the listening and drafting phases.

To raise awareness and improve land management practices, the Reef regional NRM organisations also hold annual integrated science forums, produce tailored communications, and deliver training. The program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



7 P2R EVENTS

318



TOTAL PEOPLE ATTENDING



130

ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED



CAPACITY

*A revegetation project
by NQ Dry Tropics.*



Leadership Framework

Providing leadership in managing Queensland's natural resources is one of the NRM sector's most important responsibilities.

To support this, the NRM Leadership Framework was launched in 2023 to build leadership capability at all locations, at all levels and at all times.

Directed by the CEOs and co-designed by the NRMQ Leadership Working Group through extensive consultation with staff, the Framework outlines five core NRM Leadership Capabilities (see page 29) and provides a consistent, sector-wide approach to leadership development.

It also underpins a range of initiatives – including a mentoring program and monthly Lunch & Lead webinars – designed to support career progression.

The Working Group, with representatives from across the regions, meets regularly to review and improve leadership initiatives.



**FIND OUT
MORE ABOUT
OUR NRM
LEADERSHIP
FRAMEWORK**



Communities of Practice review

For nearly two decades, Queensland's NRM sector has used Communities of Practice (CoPs) to support professional development and sharing of knowledge.

Each CoP brings together regional NRM staff with shared areas of expertise to focus on skill-building, leadership development, and subject-matter priorities.

NRM Regions Queensland currently supports seven Communities of Practice:

- Indigenous Partnership
- Communications
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement
- Business Managers
- GIS
- Natural Capital Markets
- Human Resources

Collectively, the CoPs have more than 150 members, with each group meeting three to four times per year. The Queensland NRM CEOs Group sponsors the CoPs and receives updates as part of its regular meetings.

A new Communities of Practice Blueprint will be launched in 2025–26 to guide and support the evolution of the CoPs – capturing efficiencies where they exist and driving increased effectiveness.

To develop the Blueprint, NRM Regions Queensland engaged Stephen Berkeley of Flyntrock Consulting to conduct a comprehensive review of the CoPs. The review aimed to identify best practice ways of working, build the capabilities of CoP members, and establish clear success indicators.

The process began with a diagnostic health check, which included one-on-one interviews and a survey of more than 120 CoP members. Survey feedback informed a set of recommended improvements, which were then discussed with CoP members and CEOs in workshops and used to finalise the Blueprint.

Creating the NRM sector's first dedicated mentoring program



Mentoring is a powerful tool for professional growth and leadership development. However, in many sectors, including natural resource management, structured mentoring programs have been rare.

Recognising the need for stronger career development pathways, NRM Regions Queensland, through its Leadership Working Group, took a bold step in creating a dedicated mentoring program for the sector that aimed to lift leadership capability, at all locations, at all levels and at all times.

Before this program, no formal mentoring initiative existed in the NRM sector, leaving many professionals without structured guidance for career and leadership growth.

To design the Queensland NRM Sector Mentoring Program, we partnered with mentoring specialist Brancher, and developed a six-month mentoring initiative, carefully mapped to our NRM Leadership Capabilities, industry needs, and organisational structures. The program has clear objectives to support individual careers and the broader NRM sector:

Effective mentor-mentee matching:

Using a science-based approach to create meaningful connections.

Leadership and coaching

development: Providing mentors with the skills to guide and inspire others.

Increased networking and

collaboration: Encouraging professionals to share knowledge across organisations.

Career progression support:

Helping mentees gain confidence, skills, and opportunities for growth.

“Loved it! My mentor helped me with both work and life challenges, providing resources, example situations, and practice run-throughs.”

THE RESULTS

97% 
**MENTOR-MENTEE
 MATCHING SATISFACTION**

80% 
**MENTORS
 ENHANCED
 THEIR
 COACHING
 SKILLS**

80% 
**MENTEES FELT
 BETTER EQUIPPED
 TO PURSUE CAREER
 OPPORTUNITIES**

90% 
**PARTICIPANTS
 MET REGULARLY**

The program includes launch webinars and workshops to set expectations, mid-point and end-point workshops to track progress and support participants, and bite-sized training sessions to develop key skills. Regular check-ins, admin support, and ongoing program management ensures that participants remain engaged throughout the process.

In total, the first round of the mentoring program, which launched in early 2024, had 24 mentor-mentee pairings complete the initiative.

Building on this success, the Leadership Working Group – which has been guiding the program – aims to expand and refine the initiative, ensuring mentorship becomes a lasting part of our culture.

A second round of the program, involving 23 mentoring pairs, began in early 2025 and concludes in September. A new mentoring cohort will take part in the 2026 round, where hopefully we will expand this initiative across the national NRM sector in all states.

“The mentoring program has been an outstanding success for the 20% of our state-wide workforce who have participated. The feedback has exceeded our expectations and the reputation of the NRM sector in Queensland has without doubt been enhanced by the initiative.” said NRMQR CEO Chris Norman.

The Queensland NRM Sector Mentoring Program forms a key component of the NRM Leadership Framework.



**READ OUR
 MENTORING
 PROGRAM
 CASE STUDY**

“This program assisted me in thinking outside the box and improved my confidence in leading and managing my team.”

“It was great to have someone outside my organisation provide an unbiased perspective on my career.”

Lunch & Lead

As part of the NRM Leadership Framework initiatives, Queensland's NRM sector participates in a monthly program of Lunch & Lead webinars. Typically held on the first Monday of the month, each session is hosted by a different regional NRM organisation and focuses on a technical topic or a project with state-wide relevance.

In 2024–25, ten Lunch & Lead events attracted hundreds of attendees from across regional NRM organisations. Topics included NRM beyond the shoreline, the role of regional report card partnerships, NRM in the Torres Strait, the Global Nature Positive Summit, fire preparedness planning, Queensland's election commitment to regional NRM, and Queensland's NRM sector delivering on the National Soil Strategy.

Each webinar also features a facilitated discussion on the application of the NRM Leadership Capabilities.

The program is evaluated annually, with improvements considered by the Leadership Working Group. Over the past year, the vast majority of NRM staff rated the sessions positively.



Capability Cards

The five NRM Leadership Capabilities are recognised as key factors for delivering natural resource management across Queensland.

These capabilities (see opposite page) define what good leadership looks like in the NRM sector, provide a common language, and guide the development of emerging leaders at all levels.

Over the past 12 months, a set of Capability Cards has been developed to help NRM staff assess their current leadership capabilities and identify ways to grow as leaders.

The card sort tool begins with self-assessment, encouraging individuals to reflect on their leadership capabilities, career aspirations and areas for development. This information is

then used to create a plan that turns goals into achievable actions – supported by accompanying *How To Develop Further* worksheets.

Capability Cards have now been rolled out across Queensland's regional NRM organisations, with physical sets available in every office. The launch was also supported by a series of online webinars, attended by more than 80 NRM staff from across the state.

Congratulations to Leadership Working Group member, Ali McNiven, Executive Manager – People & Culture at Healthy Land & Water, for leading the development and rollout of the card sort tool. The next step is to embed the NRM Leadership Capabilities more broadly across the sector, including their use in position descriptions and personal development plans.

NRM LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK



Building our capacity to lead

These five core Capabilities (and associated descriptors) are considered key success factors for delivering natural resource management across Queensland and have been sourced from those developed for public sector organisations/Not-for-Profits (and relevant commercial organisations) across Australia and the UK capturing contemporary thinking and approaches to leadership capability appropriate to the NRM sector.

Their purpose is to:

- Define what leadership should look like in the NRM sector so we have common language.
- Create a tool used to assess (benchmark) our current capabilities and identify areas for improvement/development.
- Provide a framework to shape discussions and guide the development of future leadership initiatives across the NRM sector.

THINKS STRATEGICALLY

- Set a clear sense of purpose that connects and inspires others.
- Realises organisational goals by setting direction that considers the big picture.
- Identifies data to inform strategic decisions and measures impact.
- Builds capacity, including commercial acumen, and systems to meet the future needs of the organisation.
- Anticipates and responds to future trends and challenges.
- Encourages innovation and divergent thinking.

BUILDS PRODUCTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- Creates and supports a safe workplace where views and opinions can be openly shared.
- Forms diverse teams with a mix of styles, perspectives and experiences to achieve organisational goals.
- Fosters a positive team environment that builds trust, shares ideas and recognises everyone's contribution.
- Facilitates effective networks and partnerships, bringing stakeholders together at all levels to achieve organisational goals.
- Applies sound engagement principles when working with stakeholders.

ACHIEVES RESULTS

- Recognises the importance of data and information and uses this to support day to day decision making.
- Develops initiatives to deliver on strategic objectives that create new opportunities.
- Selects and utilises relevant resources to do the job.
- Evaluates and reviews systems and processes to ensure continuous improvement.
- Invests in and supports the development of individual and team capacity through education, experience and exposure to achieve organisational goals.
- Seeks to achieve multiple benefits from work activities.

DISPLAYS PERSONAL DRIVE & INTEGRITY

- Leads by example through continuous self-awareness and modifies behaviour through reflection and feedback.
- Keeps perspective, maintains composure and focus whilst adapting to change.
- Is accountable and takes responsibility.
- Shows initiative and takes on challenges.

COMMUNICATES WITH INFLUENCE

- Practices self-awareness in the moment, observes responses to communication and adapts accordingly.
- Respects diversity, tailors communication style and delivers clear and consistent messages.
- Enters negotiations with a clear understanding of key issues and listens to different perspectives and explores solutions.



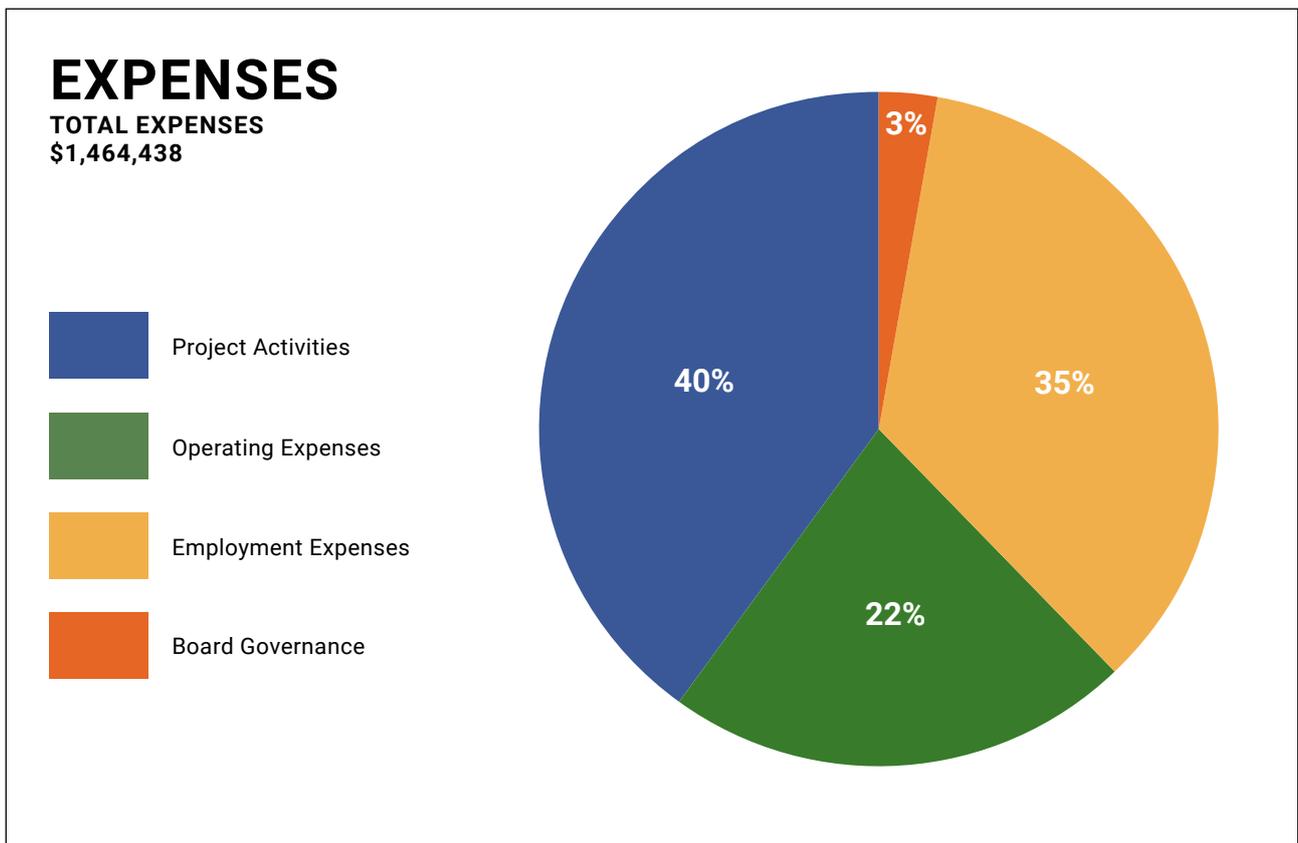
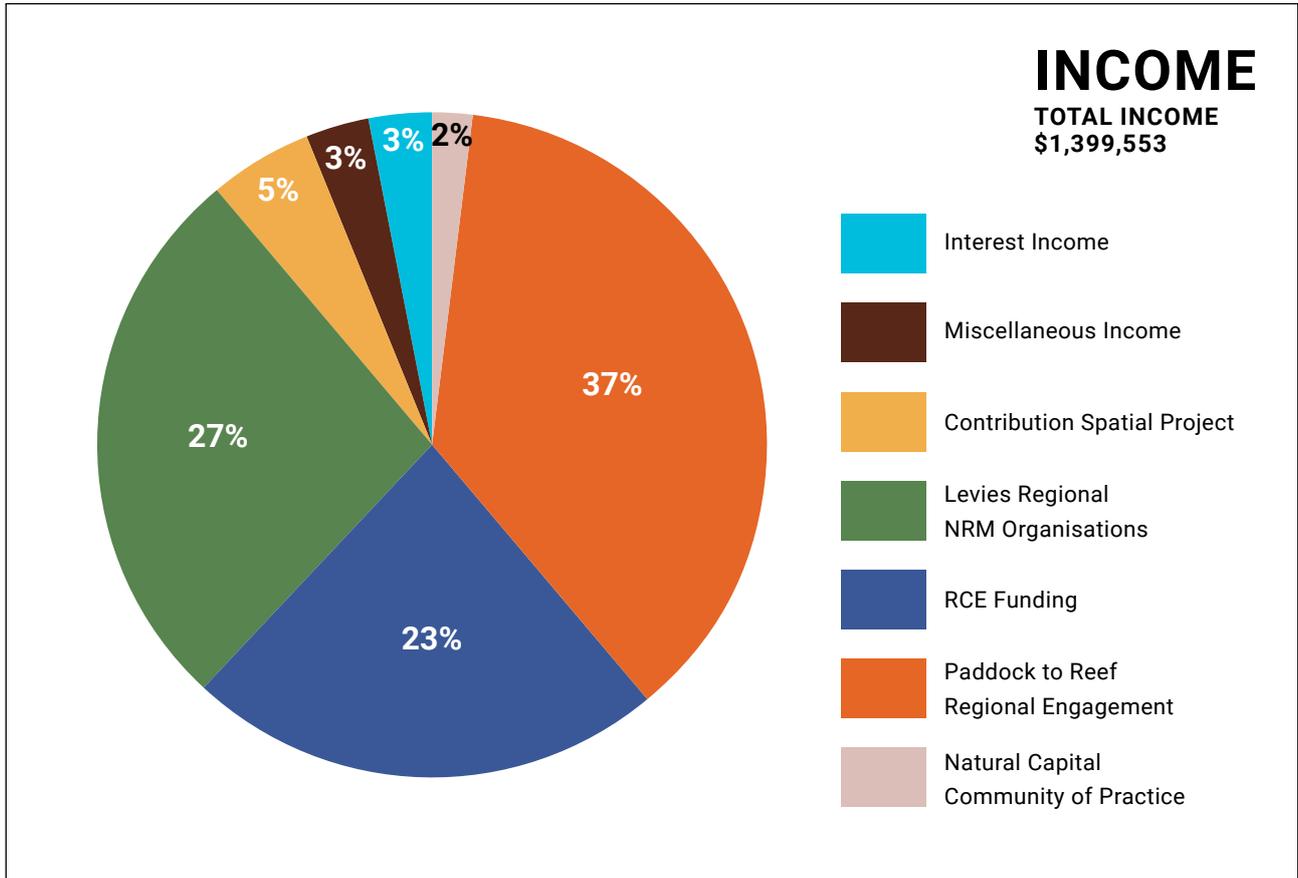
FINANCIALS

*Burning for Outcomes workshop.
Photo: NQ Dry Tropics.*

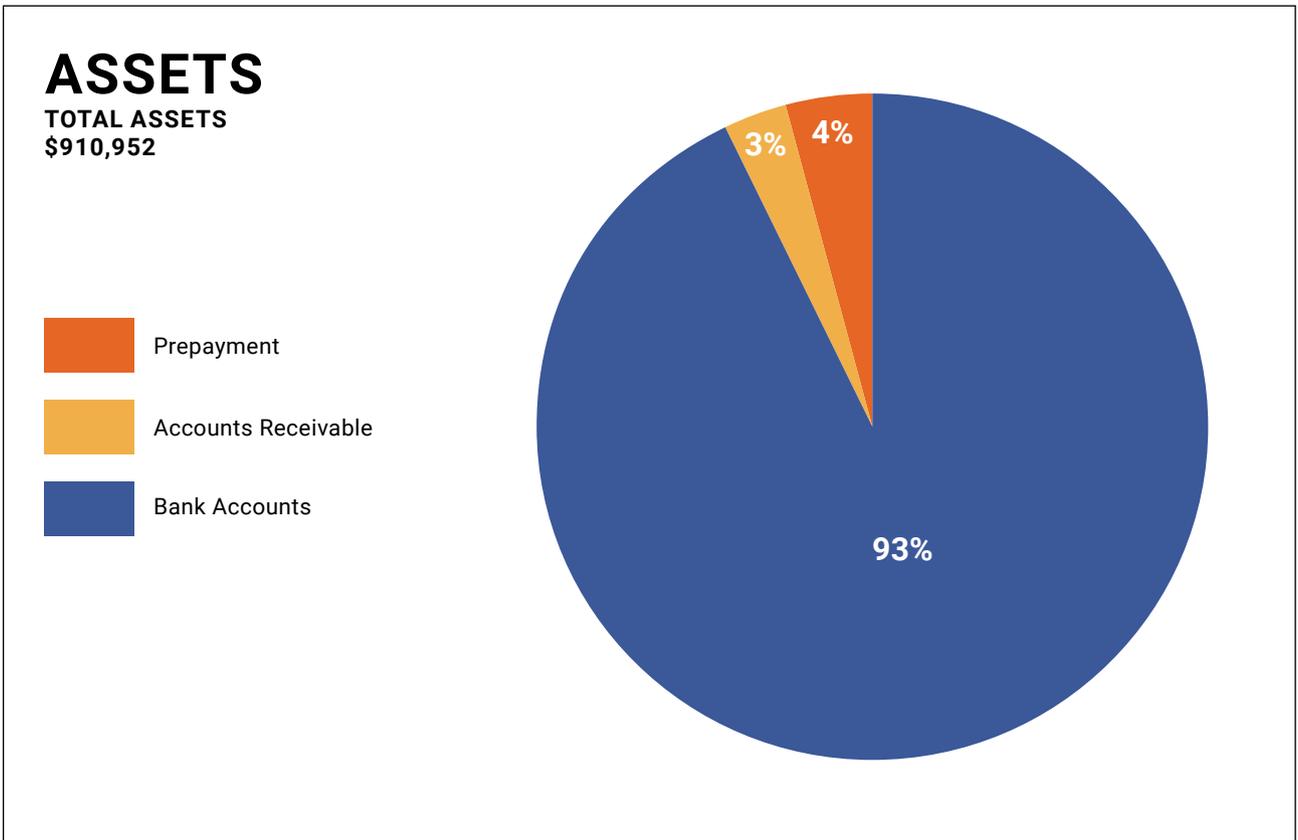
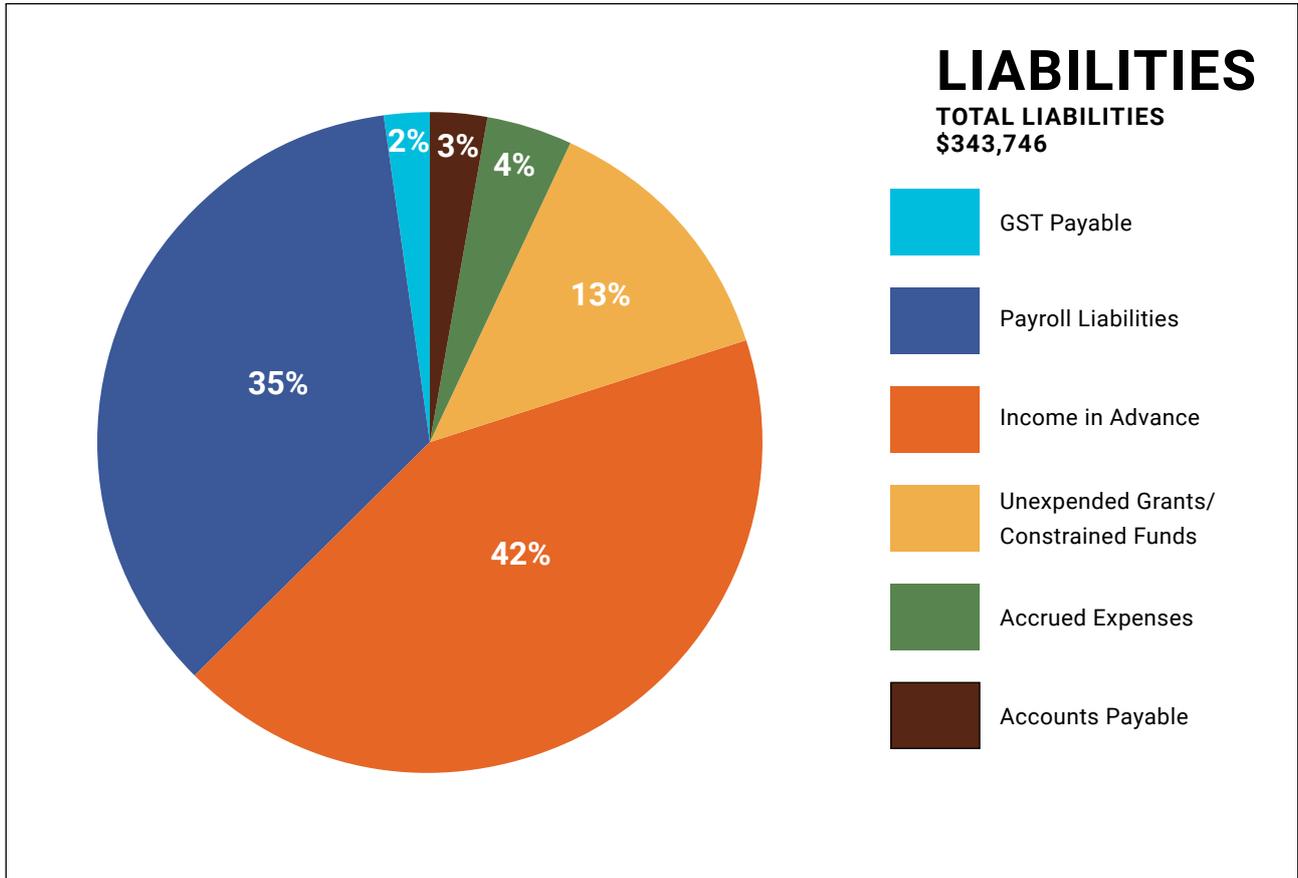




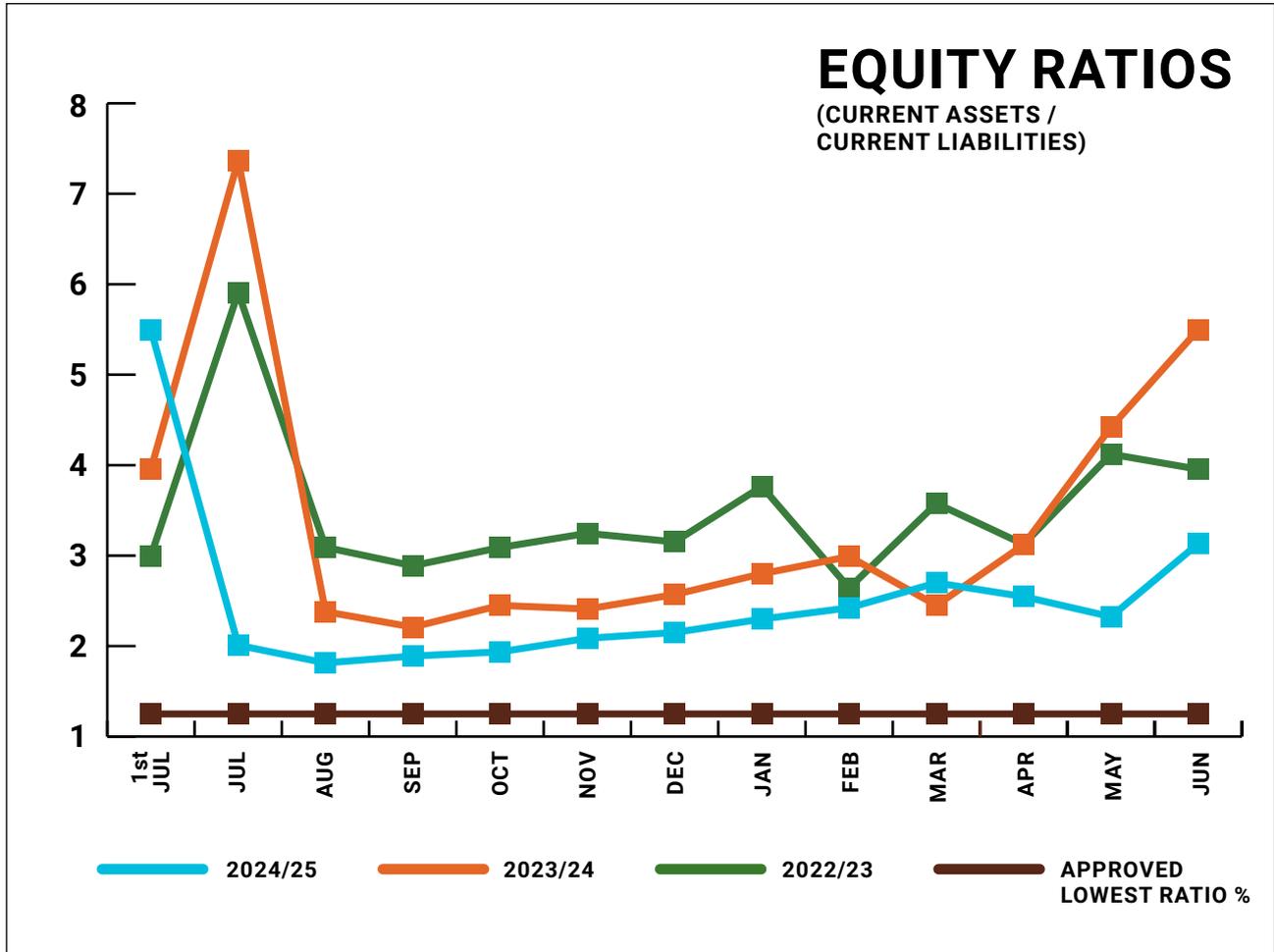
FINANCIALS 2024-2025



FINANCIALS 2024-2025



FINANCIALS 2024-2025



Golden-shouldered Parrots, a priority threatened species, nest in termite mounds. Cape York NRM is working with partners to support their recovery. Photo: Braydon Moloney, Conservation Partners





PO Box 4608 Toowoomba East QLD 4350
nrmrq.org.au