



Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy



Document Approvals

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Document History

Name	Version	Date
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2 Introduction

2.1 Extension in Queensland's Reef Catchments

The Great Barrier Reef (GBR) is recognised as being one of the greatest, and most splendid natural treasures the world possesses. Bipartisan support to address issues facing the GBR currently exists within the Queensland Government. In 2015, the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce (the Taskforce) was established by the Queensland Government to provide recommendations on actions and policies to protect and improve the health of the GBR. The Taskforce recommended that *the Queensland Government invest in more targeted and coordinated extension to support large-scale land management practice change that will result in improved water quality outcomes for the GBR and accelerate achieving the objectives of the Great Barrier Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (Reef Plan)*.

An independent review of the status of extension and education systems in Reef catchments was undertaken to inform an implementation strategy for the Queensland Government and guide the delivery of funding aligned to the taskforce recommendation. As part of the review, more than 200 stakeholders were consulted, including extension service providers and trainers (government, Natural Resource Management (NRM) bodies, as well as industry and private organisations) and those who accessed the extension services. A draft review was released in April 2017, and workshops, forums and follow-up interviews resulted in the final report: *Practice Change, Education and Extension in Reef Catchments (E&E Review)* being published in June 2017. The full report can be found at <https://reefextension.couttsjr.com.au/>. The Queensland Government has agreed in principle with all recommendations and are investing over \$10 million to implement key recommendations.

The E&E Review identified a range of issues and made 65 recommendations on the education and extension systems to build on extension capacity in GBR catchments under the following three themes:

1. improved coordination and collaboration of extension projects,
2. skills gaps and the need for training and capacity building, and
3. more effective monitoring and evaluation of the extension effort and outcomes.

2.2 Enhanced Extension Coordination in Reef Catchments

A constant theme reported in the E&E Review was the fragmentation of the extension effort (also highlighted in the Water Science Taskforce findings) and the need for better planning of funded programs prior to them being rolled out in the regions. The Queensland Government is addressing this issue through the *Enhanced Extension Coordination project* and the placement of *Regional Extension Coordinators (RECs)* in each of the six GBR NRM regions (Cape York, Wet Tropics, Burdekin, Mackay-Whitsunday, Fitzroy and the Burnett Mary).

Figure 1 outlines how the Queensland Government will implement the recommendations of the E&E Review in partnership with NRM organisations and industry.

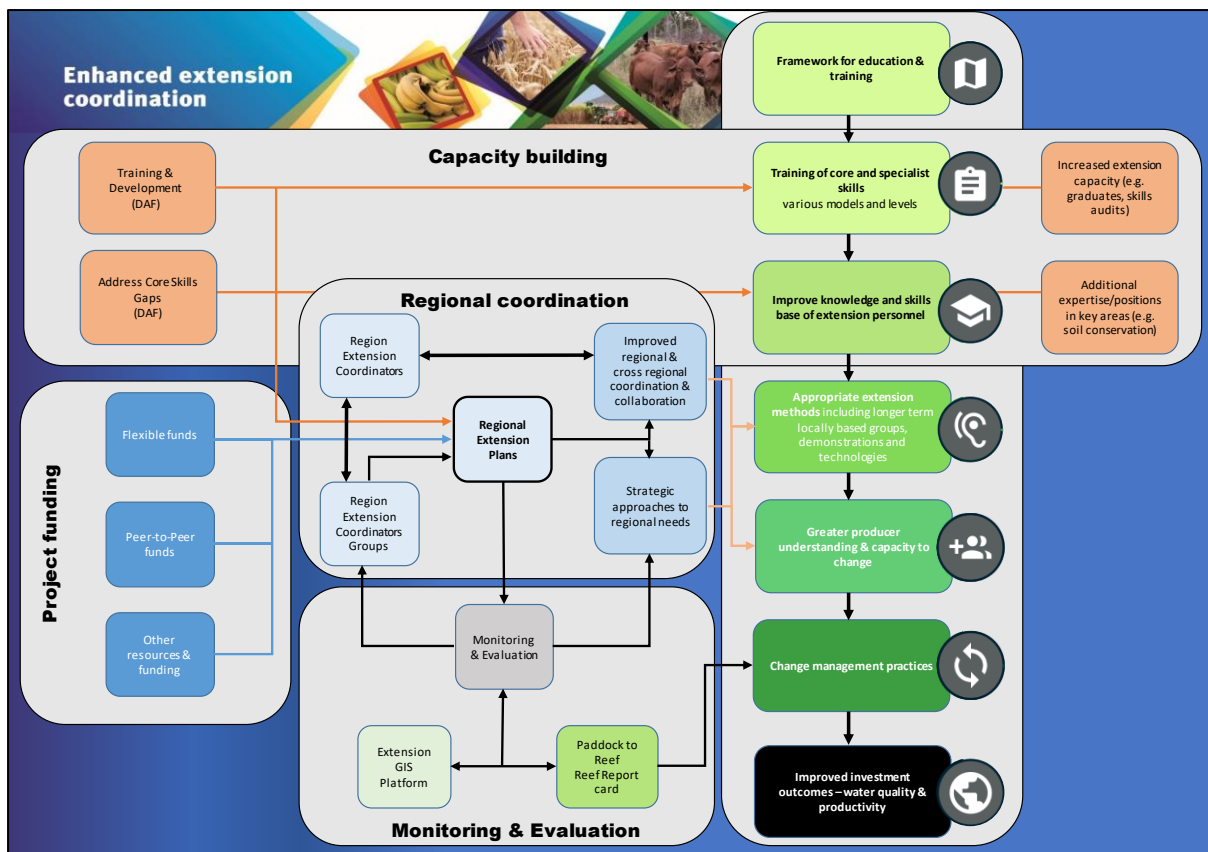


Figure 1. Project logic of the Queensland Governments' implementation of the E&E Review through the Enhanced Extension Coordination project.

Key recommendations from the E&E Review that drive the *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project include:

- An effective *Regional Extension Coordination Group (RECG)*, facilitated by the regional extension coordinator, should be continued/developed in each region for sugar, grazing, grains and horticulture to allow sharing of information and joint decision making; and
- A *Regional Extension Plan* should be developed and updated annually consistent with current programs and regional water quality priorities, with targeting supported by spatial mapping of the layers of extension effort against priority areas. The RECG would initiate and sponsor an annual information exchange of relevant research and delivery organisations; and
- The provision of (regionally directed) flexible funds to allow the development of priority cross-program/organisational activities to add value to current delivery programs, build synergies, address challenges and plug gaps; and
- An increased focus should be on funding longer term, peer-to-peer facilitated group learning - those producers less engaged in other approaches should be encouraged to participate in these groups.

2.3 Coordinated extension in the Burnett Mary Region

The key recommendations from the E&E Review outlined in section 1.2 will be addressed in the Burnett Mary region through the development, implementation and regular review of the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy (BMRESS).

Extension services in the Burnett Mary region are provided by a variety of practitioners including industry, private consultations and agri-businesses, NRM bodies and government agencies. The *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project has initiated several activities to encourage collaboration between extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary in 2019. These include:

- Coordination of 3 Cross Industry Networking (CIN) Forums in Biggenden and Gayndah
- Development of Burnett Mary Regional Collaboration Strategy
- Development of a Burnett Mary Communication and Engagement Plan
- Facilitation of the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee (BMRERC)
- Coordination of the Burnett Mary Flexible and Peer to Peer Funding Program

The BMRESS includes recommendations to further increase collaboration and cooperation between extension providers and foster stronger extension and technical skills to improve the rate of adoption of practices by land managers that will lead to improved water quality in the region.

3 The Burnett Mary region

3.1 Catchment location and description

The Burnett Mary region covers 56,000 km² (5.6 million ha) of land and includes five major river basins (Baffle, Burnett, Burrum, Kolan and Mary). The Baffle, Kolan and the Burnett basins flow to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park whilst the Burrum and Mary flow to the Great Sandy Strait Marine Park.

The climate is sub-tropical with a summer dominant rainfall and with significant variability of timing and intensity across the region due to elevation and distance from the coast. Average rainfall varies from over 2,000 mm/year in the south-east Mary basin to less than 650 mm/year in the far western Burnett. Summer dominant rainfall is influenced by cyclonic weather patterns which can have significant impacts on water quality and sedimentation.

Geographically, the Burnett basin is the largest basin in the region, accounting for 63% of the total region, yet has only relatively small component of the region's population (including Bundaberg). The Mary basin is the second largest basin yet contains 35% of the entire population. The Baffle, Kolan and Burrum basins make up the remaining population (approximately 30%) and land area (19%).

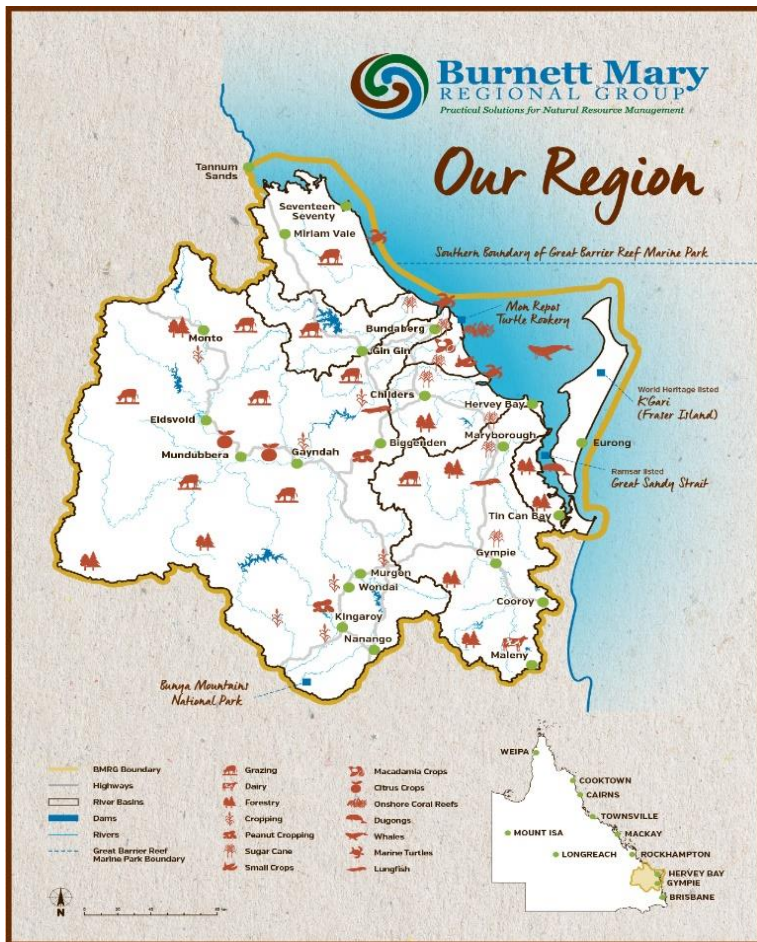


Figure 2. Map of Burnett Mary region.

3.2 Land uses

Grazing and conservation are the dominant land uses throughout the Burnett Mary region. The Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan indicates that there are 2,495 graziers managing 28,618 km² of land and 498 cane growers managing 476 km² of land in the region. In addition to the major primary industries (grazing, sugarcane, horticulture, forestry, commercial fishing and mining) the Burnett Mary region also contains major urban areas, including the cities of Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Gympie and Maryborough and associated peri urban areas.

The upper Burnett is an outback landscape, supporting a variety of pastoral, forestry and mining pursuits. In the Burnett basin horticulture is largely restricted to irrigated orchards in the Gayndah and Mundubbera areas and vegetable and tree crops within the Bundaberg irrigation area. Sugar cane irrigated and dryland cropping are also present in the lower floodplain. Land uses are strongly correlated with soil type and variation in rainfall.

In the Mary basin the dominant land uses are forestry, conservation and grazing, with some horticulture, including macadamias, in the Gympie area (Fentie et al. 2014). Sub-tropical landscapes with both pastoral and horticultural land uses occur in the Mary basin and the adjoining coastal zone supports tourism and fishing activities.

The southern part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area occurs within the Burnett Mary region, as does the UNESCO designated Great Sandy Biosphere, and the Great Sandy Strait, a wetland of international significance. The marine area includes Lady Elliot, Lady Musgrave and other islands of the Capricorn Bunker Group. Fraser Island forms a barrier to the Great Sandy Strait creating unique inshore habitats (Burnett Mary Regional Group 2005a; Burnett Mary Regional Group 2005b).

4 2019 Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy

The Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy (BMRESS) provides a strategic overview of on-ground delivery of extension services based on management priorities, previous and current programs; and identifies needs and gaps that are consistent with regional water quality priorities (identified in the Burnett Mary Water Quality Improvement Plan). It includes recommendations to improve the adoption of practices to improve water quality and extension delivery. The BMRESS will inform decision making on expenditure such as flexible and peer to peer funds allocated to the region and ancillary projects being managed through DAF's Manager (Extension Coordination) and Manager (Training Development).

Implementing the BMRESS will facilitate improved regional coordination, collaboration, networking and outcomes of activities and projects located in Burnett Mary Region, with delivery of better on-ground services for producers. The BMRESS will extend the current approach to extension coordination and aim to build on the current extension efforts and substantially enhance the collaborative arrangements between extension providers. This will improve the quality of extension services, avoid duplication, support whole of farm outcomes and make greater use of smarter and more innovative extension approaches to help achieve GBR water quality targets.

The BMRESS also includes a monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework to track and collate the progress and activities of the extension efforts and outcomes in the region.

4.1 Objectives

The objectives of the BMRESS are to deliver actions that:

- Maintain, enhance and expand regional partnerships around extension coordination and collaboration across major agricultural industries and NRM groups within the GBR catchments to deliver better on-ground services for producers.
- Respond to the relevant areas of need identified in the E&E Review report, incorporating new and innovative approaches to extension and education.
- Enhance and support the increased extension effort being provided through projects such as the Reef Alliance Project and future funding (e.g. Reef Taskforce) and the increased urgency for this to lead to on ground practice change outcomes for GBR water quality.
- Improve evaluation and review of extension effort and impact to identify gaps/opportunities and provide feedback to inform and support future allocation and targeting of on-ground resources.
- Strengthen links and collaboration between extension and other programs (i.e. MIPs, BMP, incentives etc.) to maximise impact and share information across geographic areas and programs.
- Strengthen links, collaboration and leverage product development between researchers/scientists (reef, industry etc.) and extension staff to maximise knowledge transfer.

- Improve the professional capacity of the extension network through undertaking the training needs analysis, identifying professional capacity challenges, and working collaboratively to address them.
- Provide strategic advice on regional gaps, needs and appropriate responses that meet the needs of Reef Plan and the Queensland Government Great Barrier Reef Water Quality program.
- Minimise the duplication of effort across Australian Government, State Government and industry programs which have extension activities associated with them.

4.2 Review of the Regional Extension Services Strategy

The Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy is a dynamic document which provides an overview of extension services in the grazing, cane, cropping and horticulture industries.

The 2018 BMRESS included only the grazing and cane industries in the Burnett and Mary basins that was developed with extensive input from extension practitioners throughout the cane and grazing industries in the Burnett and Mary basins. A situation analysis of the remaining industries and basins has been incorporated into this 2019/2020 BMRESS.

The review of the BMRESS undertaken in 2019 included a strategic overview of extension service providers and on-ground delivery of extension services and identified needs and gaps that are consistent with regional water quality priorities (identified in the Water Quality Improvement Plan for the Burnett Mary Region).

Consultation for the review of the 2018 BMRESS has included the following:

- Facilitated workshops with Cross Industry Networking (CIN) Forums to identify skills and weakness, opportunities for collaboration and discuss options for the use of flexible funds within the Burnett Mary region.
- Facilitated workshop with extension providers in the horticulture industry to identify issues impacting on sustainable production systems, extension needs and opportunities for collaboration in the region.
- 1:1 contact with extension providers in the cane industry (Canegrowers Isis, SRA, Maryborough Sugar Factory, Bundaberg Canegrowers) to identify issues impacting on sustainable production systems, extension needs and opportunities for collaboration in the region.
- 1:1 contact with extension providers servicing the grazing industry (DAF, BCCA, MRCCC) to identify issues impacting on sustainable production systems, extension needs and opportunities for collaboration.
- 1:1 contact with extension providers servicing the cropping industry (DAF, BCCA) to identify issues impacting on sustainable production systems, extension needs and opportunities for collaboration.
- Review of the Southern Region Adoption Strategy and associated work plans for Improved Water Management and Productive Farming Systems G2G (go2groups)

- Ongoing liaison with the Southern Region Adoption Group to identify issues impacting on sustainable production systems, extension needs and opportunities for collaboration within the cane industry.
- Meeting with BMRG, BCCA and MRCCC staff to identify and discuss peer-to-peer learning opportunities within their areas.
- Networking between extension staff and landholders at a range of events to identify opportunities, gaps and needs for peer to peer networks in the Burnett Mary Region.

The revision of the BMRESS included the development of a *Burnett Mary Communication and Engagement Plan* and a *Burnett Mary Collaboration Strategy* to guide the implementation of priority actions to June 2020.

4.3 Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee

Coutts (2017) describes extension as ‘the process of encouraging and supporting voluntary change on farm to improve production, profitability, environmental and/or social outcomes’ and recommended that Regional Extension Coordination Groups be developed to allow sharing of information and joint decision making. Such a group, in combination with the REC, would be responsible for developing, actioning and reviewing the REP.

The Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee (BMRERC) was established in 2019 to provide strategic input to the development and review of the Regional Extension Services Strategy and the allocation of flexible and peer to peer funding in the region.

The BMRERC membership includes representation of the cane, grazing, cropping and horticulture as well as economic development in the Burnett Mary. The BMRERC played a key role in the review of the BMRESS and the development of the assessment criteria and assessment of the applications received for 2019/2020 Flexible and Peer to Peer Funding.



Photo: Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee, Childers

Table 1 includes details of the membership of the BMRERC, including the industry represented.

Table 1: Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee

Name	Organisation (location)	Position	Contact	Industry represented
Katie Muller	Burnett Catchment Care Association BCCA - Monto)	General Manager	0428 753 338	Cropping/Grazing
Cathy Mylrea	BMG (Bundaberg)	Program Manager (Land & Water)	0448 041 282	NRM, General
Roger Sneath	DAF (Toowoomba)	Beef Extension Officer	0429 721 926	Grazing
Angela Williams	Isis CANEGROWERS	Chairman	0427 217 077	Cane
Kristy Frahm	Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation (BIEDO - Murgon)	Chief Executive Officer	0429 683 121	Inland Burnett
Scott Wallace	Growcom	Land and Water Manager	0408 135 002	Horticulture
Neil Halpin	DAF (Bundaberg)	Senior Agronomist	0407 171 335	Cropping/Cane
James Ogden-Brown	Sugar Research Australia (Bundaberg)	Southern Regional Adoption Coordinator	0477 322 620	Cane

4.4 Cross Industry Networking Forum

The Burnett Mary Cross Industry Networking (CIN) forum was instigated in December 2018. Three (3) CIN forums have been held in central locations throughout the region and have been attended by more than 60 extension practitioners from the following organisations:

- Burnett Mary Regional Group
- Burnett Catchment Care Association
- Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation
- Resource Consulting Services
- Private Forestry Service Queensland
- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (grains, horticulture and grazing)
- Isis Productivity Limited
- Canegrowers Isis
- Lifeline Southern Downs
- Wide Bay Burnett Regional Organisation of Councils
- Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority
- Growcom
- Sugar Research Australia

While it was primarily established as a networking opportunity for extension practitioners in the region, the functions of the CIN forum have expanded to include:

- Provide input to the review of the BMRESS and be a point of central contact for extension projects and programs being delivered in the Burnett Mary Region.
- Pilot the establishment and evaluation of the use of a structured 'Community of Practice' approach in agricultural extension in the Burnett Mary NRM region.
- Collate the knowledge and expertise of participants to identify opportunities for professional development and collaboration on regional or industry specific projects
- Assist to coordinate regional projects to avoid overlap and duplication and/or to complement each other for a greater collective benefit.
- Initiate discussions on new funding programs and ideas, and dissemination of information and opportunities to outside extension staff and landholders.
- Build extension provider capacity to deliver services/projects that better meet the needs and concerns of landholders in the region.



Photo: Cross Industry Networking Forum, Biggenden 2019

4.5 Current programs targeting behaviour and practice change to improve water quality in the Burnett Mary region

4.5.1 Horticulture

Delivery Partner	Project Name	Funding Source	Stakeholders
<i>Growcom</i>	Hort360 GBR BMP Program	Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science	All horticulture except bananas
<i>Growcom</i>	Reef Alliance Project: "Growing a GBR"	Australian Government Reef Trust (concludes December 2019)	Individual growers in the Burnett and Mary catchments
<i>Verterra</i>	Burnett-Mary Horticulture 1-on-1 — Delivering Tailored Solutions	Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science	Avocado, macadamia and sweet potato growers in Burnett and Mary catchments

4.5.2 Cropping

Delivery Partner	Project Name	Funding Source	Stakeholders
<i>DAF</i>	Sustainable Grain Practices	Queensland Government	Crop producers, industry groups, NRM groups
<i>BCCA</i>	Reef Alliance Project: Grains	Australian Government Reef Trust	Crop producers, industry groups, NRM groups

4.5.3 Cane

Delivery Partner	Project Name	Funding Source	Stakeholders
<i>Maryborough Sugar Factory</i>	Project Uplift: Supporting canefarmers to move beyond industry best practice	Australian Government Reef Trust	Canegrowers in Maryborough mill area
<i>SRA</i>	Trialling and uptake of enhanced efficiency fertilisers	Queensland Government Australian Government Reef Trust IV	Canegrowers in Burnett Mary region
<i>Canegrowers Isis</i>	Isis 20:20	Industry Self-Funded	Canegrowers in Isis mill area
<i>Bundaberg Canegrowers, Isis Productivity Limited, Maryborough Canegrowers</i>	SmartCane BMP	Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science	Canegrowers in Burnett Mary region
<i>SRA</i>	Water Management (irrigation, energy and drainage)	Largely supported by existing regional resources	Canegrowers in the Southern region
<i>SRA</i>	Productive Farming Systems	Largely supported by existing regional resources	Canegrowers in the Southern region

4.5.4 Grazing

Delivery Partner	Project Name	Funding Source	Stakeholders
<i>DAF, NQDT, FBA, BMRG</i>	Grazing Support Program (GRASS)	Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science	Targeting practice change in C&D Land condition
<i>BMRG</i>	Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator	Australian Government Regional Land Partnerships	Landcare groups in the Burnett Mary region
<i>BMRG</i>	Resilient and Productive Farmers in the Burnett Mary	Australian Government Regional Land Partnerships	Landholders in Inland Burnett, Landcare community
<i>BMRG</i>	Better Beef for the Reef (concludes June 2020)	Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science	Landholders in specific priority areas
<i>Resource Consulting Services</i>	Project Pioneer	Australian Government Reef Trust III	Landholders in the Burnett Mary region
<i>BMRG and MRCCC</i>	Reef Alliance Project 2	Great Barrier Reef Foundation	Landholders in the Mary catchment
<i>MRCCC</i>	Gully Erosion Control in the Mary River Catchment	Reef Trust Partnership	Landholders in the Mary catchment

4.5.5 Across Industry

Delivery Partner	Project Name	Funding Source	Stakeholders
<i>BMRG</i>	Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator	Federal Government	Landcare groups in the Burnett Mary region
<i>BMRG</i>	Resilient and Productive Farmers in the Burnett Mary	Australian Government Regional Land Partnerships	Climate adaptation component region wide
<i>MRCCC</i>	Streambank Erosion Control	Australian Government Reef Trust IV	Landholders in the Mary catchment
<i>WBBROC)</i>	Regional Biosecurity Strategy	Queensland Government, local governments	Local government, all landholders, all industries
<i>WBBROC)</i>	Regional Resilience Strategy	Queensland Government, local governments	Local government, all landholders, all industries
<i>BMRG</i>	Enhanced Extension Coordination	Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science	Extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary region

4.6 Extension delivery in the Burnett Mary region – situation analysis

4.6.1 Adoption of best practice activities

The Paddock to Reef Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program (Paddock to Reef program) provides the framework for evaluating and reporting progress towards Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (Reef 2050 WQIP) targets through the Great Barrier Reef Report Card ([Reef Quality Report Card 2017 and 2018](#)). The Reef Water Quality Report Card 2017 and 2018 assessed the progress results towards the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan targets reported up to June 2018.

For the first time, results are reported at a finer catchment and sub-catchment scale. The information in this report identifies whether further measures need to be taken to address water quality in the Great Barrier Reef.

The 2017-2018 Reef Report Card was not used when determining the priorities for the allocation of flexible and peer to peer funding in the Burnett Mary region in 2019-2020, primarily due to the timing of the release of the Reef Report Card. However, the Reef Report Card highlights gaps in adoption of the improved management practices across horticulture, grains, sugarcane and grazing industries which could be improved by targeted extension programs and allocation of discretionary funding in the future.

Table 2 is a compilation of scores from the 2017-2018 Reef Report Card relating to land management targets in the Burnett Mary catchment. The full description of the land management targets can be found at [Land Management Target Reporting](#). Data sources used to determine the identified scores has come from multiple lines of evidence including surveys, local expert review, soil test records, compliance activities, industry Best Management Practice program data, remote sensing imagery, farm input records, grant records and commercial-in-confidence data provided from local industry.

Very Good/ Target met	Poor
Good	Very Poor
Moderate	No data

Table 2.: Reef Water Quality Report Card 2017-2018 scores for land management targets in the Burnett Mary

Industry	2025 land Management target	Management Practice	2017 2018 Reef Water Quality Report Card Score
Horticulture	90 per cent of land in priority areas under horticulture are managed using best management practice systems for water quality outcomes (soil, nutrient and pesticides).	Nutrient management	Baffle Catchment
			Kolan Catchment
			Burnett Catchment
			Burrum Catchment
			Mary Catchment
		Baffle Catchment	
		Kolan Catchment	
		Burnett Catchment	
		Burrum Catchment	
		Mary Catchment	
Cropping	90 per cent of land in priority areas under broad-acre cropping (grains) are managed using best management practice systems for water quality outcomes (soil, nutrient and pesticides)	Nutrient management	Baffle Catchment
			Kolan Catchment
			Burnett Catchment
			Burrum Catchment
			Mary Catchment
		Baffle Catchment	
		Kolan Catchment	
		Burnett Catchment	
		Burrum Catchment	
		Mary Catchment	
Soil Management	90 per cent of land in priority areas under broad-acre cropping (grains) are managed using best management practice systems for water quality outcomes (soil, nutrient and pesticides)	Nutrient management	Baffle Catchment
			Kolan Catchment
			Burnett Catchment
			Burrum Catchment
			Mary Catchment
		Baffle Catchment	
		Kolan Catchment	
		Burnett Catchment	
		Burrum Catchment	
		Mary Catchment	
Soil Management	90 per cent of land in priority areas under broad-acre cropping (grains) are managed using best management practice systems for water quality outcomes (soil, nutrient and pesticides)	Pesticide management	Burnett Catchment
			Burrum Catchment
			Mary Catchment
			Baffle Catchment
			Kolan Catchment
		Burnett Catchment	
		Burrum Catchment	
		Kolan Catchment	
		Burnett Catchment	
		Burrum Catchment	

				Mary Catchment
			Nutrient management	Baffle Catchment Kolan Catchment Burnett Catchment Burrum Catchment Mary Catchment
			Pesticide management	Baffle Catchment Kolan Catchment Burnett Catchment Burrum Catchment Mary Catchment
			Soil Management	Baffle Catchment Kolan Catchment Burnett Catchment Burrum Catchment Mary Catchment
			Gully erosion management	Baffle Catchment Kolan Catchment Burnett Catchment Burrum Catchment Mary Catchment
			Pasture management	Baffle Catchment Kolan Catchment Burnett Catchment Burrum Catchment Mary Catchment
			Streambank Management	Baffle Catchment Kolan Catchment Burnett Catchment Burrum Catchment Mary Catchment
Sugarcane	90 per cent of land in priority areas under sugarcane are managed using best management practice systems for water quality outcomes (soil, nutrient and pesticides).			
Grazing	90 per cent of land in priority areas under grazing are managed using best management practice systems for water quality outcomes.			

4.6.2 Practice Change, Education and Extension in Reef Catchments (E&E Review)

The E&E highlighted a range of gaps in extension services throughout the GBR catchment. Many of the same gaps in extension services are reflected in the Burnett Mary region and were highlighted in the 2018 BMRESS. These include:

- There is considerable fragmentation of the extension effort and the need for improved integration and planning of funded programs relating to water quality prior to them being rolled out in the region. The fragmentation is exacerbated due to the range of organisations different approaches and mandates providing extension services.
- There is a lack of ongoing extension support in the fields of long-term soil management (conservation, hydrology and health), land management and farm business management/economic management in the catchment
- There is a slow rate of practice change being reported in the region with reasons provided including:
 - Reporting systems do not recognise incremental change or voluntary change
 - A large percentage of landholders not being reached or engaged
 - Lack of suitable resources to facilitate behavioural change
 - Issues relating to extension provider knowledge/training/approaches
 - High staff turnover and lack of long-term follow-up

4.6.3 Extension service providers in the Burnett Mary region

Reef Plan investments are delivered by a diverse suite of partners in the Burnett Mary region with their own objectives, approaches, milestones and resource commitments. These include state and local government agencies, industry peak bodies, community based NRM bodies and private sector consultants and agribusiness.

The key organisations providing advice and extension services targeting water quality improvement throughout the region are identified in both the *Burnett Mary Collaboration Strategy* and *Burnett Mary Communication and Engagement Plan*. The key extension service providers in the Burnett Mary region are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Stakeholders that are part of the Burnett Mary and an indication of the primary extension activities provided

Stakeholder	Location	Industry	Primary Extension Activities
Agforce ▲		grazing, cropping	advocacy, land management advice, manage <i>Enhanced Extension project</i>
AgSolutions	Gympie	all industries	product sales, agronomic advice
Bean Growers Australia	Kingaroy	pulse crops	processing, agronomic advice
BH Rural	Tiaro	all industries	product sales, agronomic advice
Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers ▲	Bundaberg	horticulture	advocacy, land management advice, manage <i>Enhanced Extension project</i>

<i>Bundaberg Sugar</i>	Bundaberg	cane	land management and agronomic advice,
<i>Bundaberg Women in Sugar</i>	Bundaberg	cane	Producer Learning Group
<i>Burnett Catchment Care Association * ▲</i>	Monto	cropping, grazing	NRM group, education, project management and implementation, manage <i>Enhanced Extension</i> project
<i>Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation * ▲</i>	Murgon	all industries	manage <i>Enhanced Extension</i> project
<i>Burnett Mary Regional Group * ▲</i>	Bundaberg, Wondai	all industries	NRM group, education, project management and implementation
<i>Canegrowers Bundaberg</i>	Bundaberg	cane	land management and agronomic advice,
<i>Central Burnett Landcare ▲</i>	Munduberra	grazing, cropping	Producer Learning Group, manage <i>Enhanced Extension</i> project
<i>Coulstoun Lakes Development Group</i>	Coulstoun Lakes	grazing, cropping, horticulture	Producer Learning Group
<i>Department of Agriculture and Fisheries **</i>	Bundaberg, Gympie, Kingaroy	cane, grazing, cropping	policy development, land management advice
<i>Department of Environment and Science</i>	Brisbane	all industries	policy development
<i>Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy</i>	Bundaberg, Gympie	all industries	policy development, land management advice
<i>FarmStuff</i>	Monto	cropping	agronomic advice
<i>Growcom * ▲</i>	Bundaberg	Horticulture	land management advice, manage Hort360 project
<i>Gympie District Beef Liaison Group</i>	Gympie	Grazing	producer Learning Group
<i>Isis Canegrowers * ▲</i>	Childers	cane	manage <i>Enhanced Extension</i> project
<i>Isis Productivity Limited (IPL)</i>	Childers	cane	land management advice, manage Isis 20:20 project
<i>Kewpie</i>	Kingaroy	grazing	product sales
<i>Landmark</i>	Gympie, Munduberra, Bundaberg	grazing, cane, cropping, horticulture	product sales
<i>Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee</i>	Gympie	grazing, cropping	NRM group, education, project management and implementation
<i>Maryborough Canegrowers</i>	Maryborough	cane	land management and agronomic advice
<i>Maryborough Sugar Factory</i>	Maryborough	cane	land management and agronomic advice
<i>Miriam Vale Rural Science and Landcare Group</i>	Miriam Vale	Grazing	producer Learning Group

<i>Monto Growers Group</i>	Monto	cropping, grazing	producer Learning Group
<i>Native Forest Grower Network</i>	Gympie	native forestry	producer Learning Group
<i>NextGen</i>	Bundaberg	cane, pulse crops	producer Learning Group
<i>Norco</i>	Gympie, Murgon, Kingaroy	grazing, cropping	product sales
<i>Northern Agriservices</i>	Kingaroy, Bundaberg, Childers, Goomeri, Kumbia, Murgon,	grazing, cane, cropping, horticulture	product sales, agronomic advice, irrigation advice
<i>OGBR</i>	Brisbane		policy development
<i>Private Forestry Service Queensland ▲</i>	Gympie	native forestry, grazing	management of native forestry areas, land management advice, manage Enhanced Extension project
<i>Qld Rural Supplies</i>	Gympie	grazing	product sales, agronomic advice
<i>Resource Consulting Services</i>	Yeppoon, Murgon, Gympie	grazing, cropping	private consulting service, land management advice
<i>South Burnett Grazing Network Inc. ▲</i>	Kingaroy	grazing	Producer Learning Group, manage Enhanced Extension project
<i>South East Burnett Landcare Group</i>	Booubyjan	grazing	Producer Learning Group
<i>SRA * ▲</i>	Bundaberg	cane, cropping	manage Enhanced Extension project
<i>The Peanut Company of Australia</i>	Kingaroy, Gayndah	pulse crops (peanuts)	processing, agronomic advice
<i>Tom Grady Rural</i>	Gympie	grazing	agronomic advice
<i>Total Grower Services</i>	Bundaberg	cane, horticulture	agronomic advice, soil testing, plant nutrition
<i>Verterra</i>	Brisbane	some horticulture crops	farm layout and design

* indicates stakeholders that are members of the Regional Extension Reference Committee (BMRERC) and as part of this group have actively contributed to the development and implementation of the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Service Strategy.

▲ indicates recipients of *Enhanced Extension* funds

4.6.4 Gaps in extension and farming practice knowledge in the Burnett Mary region

The Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee (BMRERC) undertook a review of the extension gaps and challenges that were identified in the 2018 Regional Extension Services Strategy to guide the allocation of 2019/2020 flexible and peer to peer funding.

Despite the development of the 2018 Regional Extension Services Strategy, there does not appear to have been a discernible change in extension services in the Burnett Mary region in the past 8 months.

Table 4 highlights the identified gaps in extension and farming practice knowledge in the Burnett Mary

Table 4: Gaps in provision of extension and knowledge of farming practices in the Burnett Mary region

Gaps in extension knowledge	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-ordinated and consistent message to growers and across industry sectors. - Consistent and timely communication between on-ground extension and research, science providers. - Awareness of the existing extension approaches across industries.
Co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a collaborative, area wide, strategic and structured approach to extension. - Incorporate extension services provided by independent service providers and agribusinesses. - Ensure events geographically appropriate, relevant and timely.
Adoption and knowledge and technology transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding and addressing barriers to adoption, incorporate learnings from other industries. - Understanding the extent and effectiveness of extension effort in the Burnett Mary. - Understanding of links between practices and NRM issues and knowledge gaps across the region. - Involvement of growers/existing farming groups in developing and running extension programs. - Enhance the technical understanding and extension skills of extension providers. - Suitable mentoring programs (soil conservation, pasture agronomy, financial analysis, new industry options) and succession planning for extension. - Develop relationships with "unengaged" landholders.
Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - System for benchmarking at farm level. - Measuring capacity/attitudinal change, benefits of good extension. - Ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation is directly related to the deliverables of project.
Gaps in farming practice knowledge	
Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irrigation efficiency/performance - Energy efficiency - Drainage and block layout - Irrigation economics - Water access and security
Farming Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Productive farming systems (controlled traffic, reduced tillage, crop rotations, organic matter & soil biology, farm layout) - Understanding different management options - Crop rotation/sequencing - Trash management
Soil Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On farm advice and 1:1 service - Remediation techniques - Holistic farm management

Financial analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proactive/preventative management change - Farming systems economics
Whole farm planning and holistic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of integrated, whole farm advice - Pasture management/agronomy - Promote link between sustainable production and improved water quality and retention of biodiversity

Table 7 is a compilation of issues impacting on extension service delivery highlighted throughout the consultation associated with the review of the BMRESS. Many issues highlighted in the 2018 Regional Extension Services Strategy were highlighted again in the review.

Table 7: Issues impacting on extension service delivery in the Burnett Mary region

Relationships		
Issue	Cause	Solution
Practice change is a long-term outcome and requires the development of long term relationships and trust between client and extension practitioner.	Many projects targeting practice change and, consequently, many extension practitioners are only around for a relatively short time (funding or personal/career reasons) and tend to suit funding programs rather than on client's management programs.	<p>Programs targeting practice change in the Burnett Mary must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be long term and recognise the need for follow up and the development of real relationships and trust between clients, extension practitioners and funding bodies - Align with the on-ground management programs of landholders implementing the change <p>Develop a community of practice for extension in the Burnett Mary that focusses on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understanding personal extension practice - continuous improvement of extension practice/ approach - identifying current challenges and, using a peer to peer model, to find practical solutions
Agribusiness provides widespread extension services but not quantified or included in programs.	Range of agribusiness services is extensive and unchartered, and many extension services are developed in response to an identified need and are extremely flexible.	Identify agribusiness extension providers in the Burnett Mary and develop collaborative working relationships.

<p>Unclear understanding of clients' needs and drivers for practice change.</p>	<p>Extension practitioners don't always have a clear understanding of what drives their audience and how/why they make decisions.</p>	<p>Build understanding of practice change audience through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of the existing social networks, existing extension networks, key stakeholders, extension providers - Quantifying producers' knowledge, knowledge gaps and priorities in relation to NRM activities - Identification of producers' motivators and what producers need to build their capacity for best practice management - Clarification of decision making processes
<p>Many programs aimed at improving water quality aren't successful in attracting new people.</p>	<p>Many projects involve existing participants which are quickly and easily reached through traditional methods/networks, often driven by short funding timeframes and target driven approaches</p>	<p>Develop a strategy to effectively reach and develop relationships with those landholders who have previously been unengaged in practice change activities (link to Community of Practice project)</p>

4.6.5 Training and development needs in the Burnett Mary region

A Reef Extension Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was undertaken in October 2018 to guide both the range and the form of the training and development activities to build the capacity of extension service providers in the Great Barrier Reef catchments, as part of the Enhanced Extension Coordination program. Cross Industry Networking forums have included feedback sessions for extension service providers to provide extensive feedback on training and development needs.

In addition, extension practitioners have provided feedback on training needs throughout the consultation for the BMRESS, in particular at the CIN forums. Table 6 is a compilation of the results of the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and feedback from extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary region. This table will guide capacity building activities being developed for extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary.

Table 6 Extension training needs in the Burnett Mary region

Extension Practitioner Training Needs

- understanding and using various forms of social media - innovative ways of extending information
- "the art of extension" training - effective presentation and facilitation skills
- building effective relationships with landholders - building connectivity, extending information
- understanding and facilitating change with producers - matching limited resources and external priorities with producer needs
- recognising and responding to landholder needs, including understanding and dealing with stress and counselling skills
- building relevant technical skills – soil conservation, soil health, irrigation management, pasture management



Photo: Land condition training for extension staff, Brian Pastures Research Station, 2019

5 Implementation of the Regional Extension Services Strategy

In response to the E&E Review, the Queensland Government provided \$2 million to employ/extend Regional Extension Coordinators across the reef regions. An additional \$2.25 million of flexible funds is being invested across the 6 reef regions to support the work of regional extension coordinators in their host organisations. Of this, \$750,000 is allocated specifically for peer to peer facilitated group learning. Table 7 indicates the allocation of funds to the Burnett Mary region, which will be directed by the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy.

Funds Allocation	Peer to peer learning	Flexible funds	Total
2018/2019	\$ 75,000	\$150,000	\$225,000
2019/2020	\$ 50,000	\$100,000	\$150,000
Total (Burnett Mary)	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$375,000

It is anticipated that additional, ancillary projects being developed and implemented in the Burnett Mary Region by regional partners will also address priorities identified in the BMRESS.



Photo: Central Burnett Landcare Group Field Day, Munduberra 2019

5.1 Discretionary Flexible and Peer to Peer Funding

The allocation of discretionary flexible and peer to peer funding through the *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project enables regions to develop projects to address gaps and barriers in extension delivery based regional priorities set out in a regional strategy.

The BMRERC played a key role in the identification of gaps in extension services and knowledge of farming practices leading to improved water quality in the Burnett Mary region and the development of guidelines and assessment criteria for the *Enhanced Extension Coordination* funding program. In the Burnett Mary, the BMRERC provided extensive guidance on the development of projects and allocation of funds throughout the region.

The application form and guidelines for the use of *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project funding and the checklist for assessment are included in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.



Table 8 provides a summary of *Enhanced Extension Coordination* projects being undertaken by a range of extension service providers in the Burnett Mary region.

Table 8: Distribution of *Enhanced Extension Coordination* funding in the Burnett Mary

Project Name/key extension activity	Contact person	Industry	Completion
Achieving Better Results Together (BCCA) – Residential workshop and field tours to Monto and Childers farms	Naomi Purcell 0417 008 769	Cropping and Cane	2019
Risk based decision making in cropping and grazing industries in the Burnett (BCCA) – Survey to identify decision support tools used by producers – Cam Nicholens workshops – <i>“Improving Resilience and Risk-Based Decision Making”</i>	Naomi Purcell 0417 008 769	Grazing and Cropping	2019
Burnett Inland Ag Network Extension (BIEDO) – South Burnett Ag Network Meetings (October, December, February) – North Burnett Ag Network Meetings (October, December, February)	Kristy Frahm 0429 683 121	All Industries (Inland Burnett)	2020
Best Practice Grazing and Cropping in the Central Burnett (CBLCG) – Producer Demonstration Sites and field days with expert speakers. Subject TBC	Marion Denholm 4165 4531	Grazing and Cropping	2020
Private Forestry Nutrient Retention Program (PFSQ) – Producer Field Days (x3) – Development of App	Luke McWilliam 0437 220 399	Grazing	2020
Availability of Current Technology to Assist Growers Identify and Address Block Impediments for Sustainability and Profitability (SRA) – Testing Today's Technology field days	Hannah Russell 0436 924 713	Cane	2020
Better Informed Investment Decisions (SRA) – Identification of collaborating growers, workshops, 1:1 extension	Veronica Chapman 4155 7645	Cane	2020
Women in Horticulture Bus Trip (BFVG) – Empowering Women Workshop - Genevieve Matthews <i>“The Art of Extraordinary”</i> – Bus trip to Reef Trust and farming practice sites	Bree Grima 0403 616 702	Horticulture	2020
Grazing Management for Environmental and Profit Outcomes (SBGN) – Dick Richardson - <i>Grazing Naturally Workshop series</i>	Bec Cross 0403 824 993	Grazing	2020

Wide Bay Burnett Young Farmers Forum (BIEDO) – Young Farmers Forum	Kristy Frahm 0429 683 121	All Industries (Burnett Mary)	2020
Improve GBR water quality by property adopting computer mapping (AgForce Qld) – Mapping workshops and webinars	Noel Brinsmead 0400 665 436	Grazing	2020
Exploring a Community of Practice Approach in Extension – Burnett Mary Pilot (BMRG) – Facilitated workshops to co-design a Community of Practice framework for extension in the Burnett Mary region	Cathy Mylrea 0448 041 282	All Industries (Burnett Mary)	2020

5.2 Reef Extension Training and Development Project

The Training and Capacity Building focus area is administered by DAF through the Manager (Reef Extension Training Development) and aims to develop and implement a best practice framework for upskilling the extension delivery staff across sectors in Reef regions. This includes undertaking a collaborative process whereby regional extension staff participate in a GBR wide training needs analysis, specifically seeking feedback on generic extension capabilities and industry specific technical skills.

A Reef Extension Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was undertaken in October 2018 to guide both the range and the form of the training and development activities to build the capacity of extension service providers in the Great Barrier Reef catchments, as part of the Enhanced Extension Coordination program. In the Burnett Mary region, the TNA was complemented by input from extension practitioners at CIN forums. Table 6 is a compilation of the results of the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and feedback from extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary region. This will guide capacity building activities being developed for extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary.

Funding is being provided to support reef extension personnel to attend training or participate in mentoring programs. The Regional Extension Coordinators will play a key role in supporting capacity building for the regional extension providers, working with the Manager (Reef Extension Training Development) to make available and coordinate opportunities for regional extension staff to participate in extension training.

Extension practitioners from the Burnett Mary region have attended a range of training opportunities provided through the Reef Extension Training and Development Project. These include:

- Reef Extension Think Tank (Townsville 2019)
- Behaviour Innovations (Biggenden 2019)
- Agronomy in Practice (Ballina and Mission Beach 2019)

The TNA identified a range of knowledge gaps relating to soil conservation, specifically “Technical knowledge and understanding relating to soil management (24 mentions); soil science; soil chemistry and structure; soil health; soil conservation and soil agronomy was discussed by respondents as a significant technical challenge impacting their services. Understanding and the measurement of soil health indicators were noted to be relevant to many producers and respondents indicated a need to be kept up to date on soil health research; soil chemistry and structure; and improving their abilities and skills to be able to interpret soil tests and make recommendations. Several respondents also discussed the need for improved understanding of soil conservation and mitigation including watershed design and contour bank placement; and erosion control methods specific to soil types”.

In the Burnett Mary region, the *Reef Extension Training and Development Project* has provided funding for the **Soil Conservation Technical Training and Mentoring Program**. This project will be a collaboration between BMRG, FBA and NQDT. This proposal aims to:

- increase specialist soil conservation and erosion control skills of 30 existing extension service providers
- increase landholder access to affordable, accessible and adequate technical advice and facilitate practice change in soil conservation and erosion control
- establish a proof of concept trial that may be replicated in other Regions, and if successful, extended to a five-year project in the Fitzroy Basin and the Burnett Mary Region
- support and value add to existing practice change programs in the Fitzroy Basin, North Queensland Dry Tropics and the Burnett Mary Regions

5.3 Personnel and Expertise Project

The regional consultation and the E&E Review noted a lack of capacity in some specialty areas which is exacerbated by the real, or impending, loss of experienced extension personnel in the regions. An inability to readily replace this expertise in a timely manner has negative impacts on extension activities relating to land management practices in the region. Consequently, specialised skills may not be available in the region to address priorities identified in Regional Extension Plans.

Through the Enhanced Extension Coordination project, DAF will provide resources to *augment existing services or expertise for high priority skills gaps* (e.g. soil conservation, soil health, and hydrology or water quality) or other local skills gaps (e.g. farming systems, rotational crops or proactive farm economics). These priorities are identified in the Regional Extension Plans developed across the six NRM regions and will be resourced across regions. That is, where multiple regions identify similar priorities, suitable expertise will be engaged to work across regions where practical. It is anticipated that Regional Extension Coordinators will collaborate with one another to extend this expertise into their respective regions. The decision on what skills gaps can be filled will also depend on being able to access suitable expertise and their availability to service projects in the regions at times when aligned projects are being rolled out. If there are opportunities to align to the Training and Development program and value add to this program this will also be considered.

In the Burnett Mary region, the *Personnel and Expertise Project* has provided funding for the **Sustaining our Soil** project. This project aims to increase the uptake of key soil conservation best practice by landholders in the Burnett Mary and Fitzroy regions to address water quality priorities. The project will address the extensive gap in soil conservation extension skills throughout these regions through the provision of targeted advice to landholders by private service providers. The project complements the **Soil Conservation Technical Training and Mentoring Program** and will be implemented in coordination with this project.

6 Monitoring and Evaluation

This Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been designed to monitor and evaluate the performance of the BMRESS in coordinating the extension effort in the Burnett Mary Region and in facilitating collaboration amongst extension providers. It is based around Key Result Areas (KRAs) established in the *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project that were developed by DAF with input from the Department of Environment and Science and Coutts J&R.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework sets out the processes and methods for measuring the effectiveness of implementing the Burnett Mary BMRESS and the associated efforts to enhance the coordination of extension projects in the Burnett Mary Region. The purpose of the evaluation information can be summarised into the following categories:

- **Reporting:** justifying the investment
- **Communication:** increasing awareness of the outcomes, successes and lessons learnt
- **Adaptive management:** making improvements to project delivery
- **Informing future work:** evaluate outcomes to provide recommendations for future projects.

The project logic for the Enhanced Extension Coordination project in the Burnett Mary region is included in Appendix 3.

Table 9 and Table 10 outline the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Evaluation Methods and Timing for the *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project.

Table 9 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Enhanced Extension in the Burnett Mary Region

Project objectives	Regional Activities/ deliverables	Evaluation questions	Performance indicators	Evaluation methods
Overall Reef Water Quality Outcomes	Reef 2050: Queensland Reef Water Quality Program Goals	<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What measurable progress has been made towards meeting Reef 2050 WQIP 2025 land management and water How has the Regional Extension Plan and coordination added to the rate and quality of progress What have been the positive and negative impacts that have resulted? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of progress Evidence of added value from the Regional Extension Plan and coordination Examples of positive and negative impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddock to Reef Report Card Scientific Consensus statements Collated data from the evaluation of the coordination project below.
<p>Key Result Area 1: Improved effectiveness and efficiency through improved collaboration and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Maintain, enhance and expand regional extension partnerships and collaboration across major agricultural industries and NRM groups, programs and projects (e.g. Reef Trust Phase 3) and future funding</i> 	<p>Coordination Positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional extension coordinator BMRG <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible regional funding to support collaborative activities and fill regional gaps. Peer to Peer funding Skills/Expertise Gap Project (DAF) Training and Development Program (DAF) Other programs and resources provided by extension practitioners 	<p>Benefits derived</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What cost efficiency, practice change, economic and environmental benefits have occurred from the extra coordination and funding in terms of improved efficiencies and effectiveness of extension. What improved efficiencies and effectiveness of extension in the Burnett Mary have occurred from the improved coordination and funding opportunities? <p>Impact on organisations and people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has coordination of extension improved across the Burnett Mary region. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Documented cases of newly initiated collaborative extension activities, projects or programs and linkages between related programs – at regional and cross-regional levels Increased formal linkages between extensions and 	<p>Secondary data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation/progress reports of structures, positions, resources, activities and outputs put in place in the coordination program. Benchmark analysis of projects and programs being funded and their relationships. Regional Landholder Engagement Project List updated annually Membership and activity details of proposed Burnett Mary Reef Extension Network.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Strengthen links, collaboration and leverage of product development between researchers/scientists (reef, industry etc.) and extension staff to maximise knowledge transfer</i> <i>Minimise the duplication of effort across Australian Government, State Government and industry programs which have extension activities associated with them</i> <i>Enhance and support the increased extension effort being provided through and the increased urgency for this to lead to on ground practice change outcomes for reef water quality</i> 	<p>Platforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional coordination groups – formally bringing deliverers together, facilitating collaboration and new initiatives to fill gaps and developing regional extension plans Inclusion of other regional industry/NRM/Community groups in coordinated extension program e.g. SRA Regional Adoption Coordinator Community of practice – on-line platform and face to face events. Other regional groups and industry extension practitioners. <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Burnett Mary Regional Extension Strategy Identification extension gaps and barriers to adoption of best practice management in the Burnett Mary Identification of extension practitioners influencing improved management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are extension programs being strategically planned and targeted to areas of greatest need and to achieve greatest impacts in water quality targets in the Burnett Mary? What new initiatives have resulted from the coordination of activities? To what extent do extension personnel connect with and provide support other regional extension staff? <p>Effectiveness of process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the implementation of the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Strategy been effective? How has communication and sharing of information/experience between projects within and across regions and industries improved? What extra capacity building activities have occurred? What was the participation, reaction and impact of capacity building activities on participants? To what extent has the communication and collaboration between researchers/scientists and extension officers increased? 	<p>capacity building programs and projects funded to improve sustainable landscapes</p> <p>Evidence of impact of improved coordination on practice changes on enterprises which have a known impact on economic and/or water quality benefits.</p> <p>7. Improvements in the levels of stakeholder satisfaction re coordination, access to and effectiveness of extension delivery.</p> <p>8. Increases in the extent/type of interaction between extension staff within region and between</p>	<p>Primary data collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narratives and detailed case studies showing how extra coordination has resulted in collaboration and impacted on efficiency and impacts Regular extension practitioner workshops sessions about coordination, learning, issues and impacts.
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<p>Key Result Area 2: Improve the professional capacity of the extension network</p> <p>Key Result Area 3: Improve evaluation and review of extension effort and impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify gaps/opportunities and provide feedback to inform and support future allocation and targeting of on-ground resources</i> • <i>Provide strategic advice on regional gaps, needs and appropriate responses that meet the needs of Reef Plan and the Queensland Government Great Barrier Reef Water Quality program</i> 	<p>practices in the Burnett Mary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of opportunities to improve collaboration - Implementation of agreed collaborative activities in line with the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Strategy - Facilitated peer to peer learning opportunities - Undertake regional Communication Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - led by Regional extension coordinator <p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a training needs analysis including identifying professional capacity challenges, and collaborative opportunities to address them - Raise awareness amongst network and facilitate training organised through Manager (Training & Development). <p>Skills/expertise gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify regional needs for skills and expertise to value add to extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent does reporting of M&E meet the P2R needs and requirements? - To what extent is strategic advice being provided to investors on where extension effort should be targeted? - What barriers/ issues have impacted on the process and what changes are needed? - What were the expected/ unexpected results of coordination? 	<p>regions and their awareness of other programs</p> <p>9. Production and use of required regional extension plans.</p> <p>10. Extent of participation in extension capacity building activities and resulting improvement in the levels of understanding, skills, motivation, job satisfaction and commitment to extension in the reef regions.</p> <p>11. Documented use of new science being used in extension activities and their uptake by producers.</p>
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	<p>activities and for support from DAF skills gap/expertise project</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record information in YouDATA and provide data for the E&E WebMap platform. - Regional Extension Coordinators to work with P2R and delivery organisations to increase spatial monitoring and evaluation of extension impact. - Document findings to provide policy makers with information and implications for extension policy, funding and operational activities in the Burnett Mary. - Facilitate annual regional meetings to review Regional Extension Strategy and provide feedback to key stakeholders 			
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Table 10: Evaluation Methods and Timing

Evaluation Method	Focus	Timing	Responsibility
Secondary data capture and analysis	Using available reporting and data sets to capture trends, activities, changes in linkages and impacts. Includes analysis of capacity building/extension projects and linkages; progress reports of extension providers; P2R reports and Report card; Reef Extension Network data.	Annually	Regional Extension Coordinators Member extension providers
Narratives	To qualitatively capture impacts and outcomes from projects and barriers/issues.	Collected throughout projects and reported via six-monthly progress reports.	Regional Extension Coordinators
Case studies	To quantify where possible specific instances of change and resulting efficiencies and impact	Annually with an emphasis on final 6 months	Regional Coordinators Member extension providers
Interviews with informed stakeholders	To quantify and qualify benchmarks and changes in coordination, collaboration and extension delivery performance. Informed Producer input should also be sought in the final benchmark.	Annually	Regional Extension Coordinators Member extension providers M&E Consultants
Workshop debrief of coordinators	Capture observations, experiences and outcomes from coordinators as well as opportunities for improvement.	Annual Regional Extension Coordinator workshop	Manager (Extension Coordination) to organise workshop M&E Consultants
Workshop evaluation – AG and QG	Capture feedback provided to AG and QG, actions planned and success of workshop, areas for improvement	Annual Regional Extension Coordinator workshop	Manager (Extension Coordination) to organise workshop M&E Consultants/ Independent facilitator to collect data
Extension personnel survey	To capture feedback, satisfaction, observations and experiences from stakeholders involved in the project and document examples of actions taken and how activity assisted.	Annual	Manager (Extension Coordination) M&E Consultants

Analysis of Communication activities	Show evidence of key messages being developed and used by extension officers. To share project outputs and outcomes.	Reported in six-monthly progress reports	Regional Extension Coordinators Communications officer Manager (Extension Coordination)
Capacity building evaluation	Show evidence of capacity building in extension network.	Reported in six-monthly progress reports	Regional Extension Coordinators Manager (Training & Development)

This Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will be implemented by the Regional Extension Coordinator in consultation with the BMRERC and form part of the broader cycle of review, reporting and improvement of the BMRESS and the *Enhanced Extension Coordination* project. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been further developed to suit project level monitoring and evaluation.

The components of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, evaluation questions, performance indicators and evaluation methods for the BMRESS are aligned to the MERI Plan for the Enhanced Extension Coordination project. The information collated in the YourDATA and E&E WebMap platforms will form part of the evaluation methods and be used to inform the performance indicators for the project.

6.1 Reporting Platforms

6.1.1 YourDATA

The Regional Extension Coordinator for each throughout GBR catchments will report on the implementation of the Regional Extension Plans to the Manager (Extension Coordination) (DAF) via the YourDATA data base platform. It is an online monitoring and evaluation database developed by Coutts J&R to assist programs and projects to collect and report key evaluation data; such as project activities, narratives, milestones, and feedback sheet responses. YourDATA provides a secure central data collection point with individual user accounts – allowing team members to input, edit, and view their own M&E data and managers to view, filter, analyse and export all project/program data for reporting.

6.1.2 WebMap App

Regional data on extension effort, resources and uptake of improved management practices will be collated by each Regional Extension Coordinator and entered into the Reef Extension and Education (E&E) WebMap App. The WebMap App is an ESRI ArcGIS Online interactive mapping platform designed to display the extension, incentive and best management practice projects activities being delivered by a range of industry, government and regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations. It is designed to make information more accessible to assist the Regional Extension Group and extension providers to review, prioritise, plan and monitor their extension activities in their region.

7 Acronyms

BCCA	Burnett Catchment Care Association
BMRG	Burnett Mary Regional Group
BMP	Best Management Practice
DAF	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
KIT Days	Keep in Touch days (Resource Consulting Service activity)
MRCCC	Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee
MSF	Maryborough Sugar Factory
NRM	Natural Resource Management
QFF	Queensland Farmers Federation
RWQG	Reef Water Quality Grants
SRA	Sugar Research Australia



Photo: Soil Conservation Technical Training, Brian Pastures, 2019

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Waterhouse, J. et al., 2014. Assessment of the relative risk of degraded water quality to ecosystems of the Burnett Mary Region, Great Barrier Reef DRAFT REPORT A Report for Burnett Mary Regional Group,

Brodie, J. et al., 2013. Scientific Consensus Statement. Chapter 3: *Relative risks to the Great Barrier Reef from degraded water quality in The State of Queensland.*

The Extension and Education Strategy Update and Implementation Guide (*Extension and Education Strategy Update*)



9 Appendices

Appendix 1: *Enhanced Extension Coordination Funding - Support Information*

Enhanced Extension Coordination in the Great Barrier Reef Project

Round 2 Supporting Information

FLEXIBLE FUNDING

(including Peer to Peer learning)

The Enhanced Extension Coordination in GBR Project aims to help address the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Water Science Taskforce (The Taskforce) recommendation that the Queensland Government invest in more targeted and coordinated extension to support large scale land management practice change that will result in improved water quality outcomes for the GBR.

The Taskforce engaged Coutts J&R to undertake a review of reef extension, The Review of Practice Change, Education and Extension in Reef Catchments (E&E Review). Recommendations from the E&E Review include 'provision of *flexible funds to allow priority cross-program/organisational activities to add value to current delivery programs, build synergies, address challenges and plug gaps*' and '*an increased focus should be on funding peer to peer facilitated group learning, which may include focus farms, whole farm review groups, producer demonstration sites and/or producer learning groups*'.

In response to the E&E Review, the Queensland Government has provided flexible funding to the Burnett Mary region. The funding will be administered by the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee (BMRERC).

Successful applicants will be required to provide a mid-project update report and a final report on their projects which will be linked to milestone payments. Monitoring and evaluation of projects will also be a requirement and could differ with each project. For instance, if the project involves workshops, then participants could be provided with an evaluation form or some other evaluation method to assess the worth of the workshop.

Further information will be provided on reporting requirements on the success of application. The intent is for the reporting to focus on key achievements and not to be overly onerous.

The project must be completed by 15th May 2020.

Applications for the second round close on the 15th July 2019.

An assessment panel will assess applications. Applicants will be advised of their success or otherwise by the **19th July 2019**

Please submit your completed electronic application to:

Wendy Thorsborne
Regional Extension Coordinator
Burnett Mary Regional Group
m: 0474 879 935
t: +61 7 4169 0720
e: wendy.thorsborne@bmrq.org.au

Enhanced extension coordination





Project Criteria

The flexible funds will support extension and education projects that meet the following criteria. Please include these criteria in your application.

CRITERIA 1

The proposed project should support one or more of the following:

- Supports cross-program/organisational collaboration
- Adds value to current activities
- Supports the use of innovative learning approaches and/or new tools and technologies to support on-farm learning.

CRITERIA 2

The project **MUST** contribute to meeting the 2025 Water Quality Targets, either directly or indirectly. Further information on catchment targets can be found at <https://www.reefplan.qld.gov.au/tracking-progress/targets/catchment-targets>

Region	Catchment/ Basin	Area (ha)	Targets								Pesticide target to protect min 9% of aquatic species at end-of-catchment
			Dissolved inorganic nitrogen		Fine sediment		Particulate phosphorus		Particulate nitrogen		
			tonnes	% reduction	kilo-tonnes	% reduction	tonnes	% reduction	tonnes	% reduction	
Burnett Mary	Baffle Creek	408,470	16	50	11	20	15	20	33	20	
	Kolan River	290,450	34	50	6	20	5	20	14	20	
	Burnett River	3,319,540	150	70	85	20	29	20	68	20	
	Burum River	337,170	93	50	3	20	3	20	8	20	
	Mary River	946,580	180	50	130	20	160	20	470	20	

Management priority				
Very high	Moderate	Minimal		
High	Low	Not assessed		

CRITERIA 3

Projects should address one or more of the following regional priorities endorsed by the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee (BMRERC):

- Measurable progress can be demonstrated towards meeting water quality targets relevant to the Burnett Mary region.
- Producers/growers are involved in the design and delivery of extension programs and peer to peer projects are encouraged and supported.
- Maintain, enhance and expand regional partnerships, including researchers, reef scientists, extension providers, government agencies, NRM and industry groups.
- The professional capacity of Burnett Mary extension providers and other industry stakeholders is enhanced through training and capacity building opportunities.
- Duplication of extension activities is reduced and there is clarity around key messages.



CRITERIA 4

The project **MUST** address one or more of the following gaps in extension services and/or farming practices identified in the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Services Strategy:

Regional GAPS - People and Extension	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A co-ordinated and consistent message to growers and industry sectors. • Consistent and timely communication between on-ground extension and research, science providers. • Raise awareness of the existing extension approaches across industries.
Co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collaborative, area wide, strategic and structured approach to extension. • Incorporate extension provided by independent service providers and agribusinesses • Ensure events geographically appropriate, relevant and timely
Adoption and knowledge and technology transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and addressing barriers to adoption, incorporate learning from other industries. • Understanding extent and effectiveness of extension effort • Understanding of NRM issues, practices and knowledge gaps across the region • Involvement of growers/existing farming groups in developing and running extension programs. • Enhance the technical understanding and skills required of extension providers. • Mentoring program (esp soil conservation, pasture agronomy, financial analysis, new industry options) • Develop relationships with “unengaged” landholders
Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm benchmarking • Measure capacity/attitudinal change, benefits of good extension • Monitoring and evaluation directly related to the deliverables of project

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Regional GAPS - Farming Practices

Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation Efficiency/Performance • Energy Efficiency • Drainage & Block layout • Irrigation Economics • Water access and security
Farming Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive Farming Systems (Controlled Traffic, Reduced tillage, Crop Rotations, Organic matter & soil biology, Farm layout) • Understanding Different Management Options • Crop Rotation/Sequencing • Trash Management • Farming Systems Economics
Soil Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On farm advice, 1:1 • Remediation techniques • Holistic management
Financial analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive/preventative management change
Whole farm planning and holistic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated, whole farm advice • Pasture management/agronomy • Promote link between sustainable production and improved water quality and retention of biodiversity

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Criteria 5

Eligible and Non-eligible Activities

What activities are eligible for flexible funding?	What activities are out of scope — not deemed appropriate for flexible funds expenditure?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted activities to increase uptake of key practices to address water quality priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities that fall outside the Lower Burdekin region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted extension activities that address challenges and fill gaps in current delivery effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicle purchase/lease/running expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building synergies within catchments and regions to add value to current programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchasing equipment for host organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting cross regional and cross organisational activities, learnings and information sharing (e.g. events such as field days/ workshops) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of existing activities or projects (e.g. BMP programs which have ongoing support via other funding arrangements), or activities which duplicate others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative capacity building for producers and/or extension staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality monitoring or research if there is not a major producer engagement component
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piloting/demonstrating new technologies or platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchasing equipment or providing funding to a particular producer (e.g. as per grants program)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-year projects, with funding provided annually upon demonstration of outcomes; in particular to support longer term peer-to-peer learning groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities that are not related to agricultural management (e.g. urban or industrial)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrations/applied research trials e.g. regional validation of existing improved management practices in new areas* <p>* This may include on-ground works in limited situations where it is an essential component of an extension activity that facilitates learning in an area of identified need or as part of peer-to-peer learning via facilitated producer groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities that do not contribute to improved water quality outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salary for existing staff / staff relocation costs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities which are retrospective—have commenced / are funded but not yet completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities required as compliance or are part of an approval or funding contract under Commonwealth or state legislation or agreement



Enhanced Extension Coordination in the Great Barrier Reef Project

Round 2 Application Form

FLEXIBLE FUNDING

(including Peer to Peer learning)

1. Applicant Details

Organisation Name (Applicant)	
Postal Address	
Contact Person	
Contact Position	
E-mail	
Best phone number to contact	
Incorporated Yes/No	
Incorporation Number	

2. Details of Supporting Organisation

If your organisation is not incorporated, please nominate an incorporated organisation that will receive the grant on your behalf and be responsible to ensure you acquit the grant.

Name of Organisation/Committee/Group/Individual	
Postal Address	
Contact Person	
Contact Position	
E-mail	
Best phone number to contact	



3. Project Description

Project Title: _____

In your answer, please include:

- A clear description of the project and why your project should be funded
- Project objectives, deliverables and outcomes
- How the project addresses criteria 1-5 in the supporting information
- Project location, project participants and stakeholders
- Activities and timeline
- How you will evaluate and monitor the success or otherwise of the project.



4. Supporting Information:

4.1 REGIONAL PRIORITIES - Please indicate which of the regional priorities endorsed by the Burnett Mary Regional Extension Reference Committee are addressed in your project?

- Measurable progress towards meeting water quality targets relevant to the Burnett Mary region can be demonstrated.
- Producers/growers are involved in the design and delivery of extension programs and peer to peer projects are encouraged and supported.
- Regional partnerships, including researchers, reef scientists, extension providers, government agencies, NRM and industry groups are maintained, enhanced and expanded.
- The professional capacity of Burnett Mary extension providers and other industry stakeholders is enhanced through training and capacity building opportunities.
- Duplication of extension activities is reduced and there is clarity around key messages.

4.2 COLLABORATION - How does your project support cross-program/organisational collaboration?

In your answer, please identify any partners/collaborators in your project and how they are to be involved.



4.2. COMMUNICATION – How will you promote your activities and communicate the outcomes of your project. In your answer, please include to whom and when and how you will communicate the outcomes of your project?

4.3 VALUE ADDING - Please outline how your project adds value to planned or existing activities/projects?

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4.4. INNOVATION - How does your project support the use of innovative learning approaches and/or new tools and technologies to support on-farm learning?



5. Budget (GST Exclusive)

ITEM	Grant	In Kind Contribution	Other Income
Wages (refer to eligibility guidelines)	\$	\$	\$
Materials	\$	\$	\$
Equipment Hire	\$	\$	\$
Marketing	\$	\$	\$
Other Expenses	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
Grant Amount Requested	\$	\$	\$
In Kind Contribution	\$	\$	\$
Other income	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$	\$	\$

6. Payment Details

Goods and Services Tax (GST) may apply to your grant funding depending on the tax status of the applicant.

Registered for GST

If the applicant is registered for GST, then GST will apply to the grant amount funded. BMRG will 'gross up' grants to those applicants by 10%. The successful applicant will need to submit a Tax Invoice before the grant funding can be released.

Not Registered for GST

If the applicant is not registered for GST, then GST does not apply to the grant funding.

Is the entity receiving the funds registered for GST?

Yes

No

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Does the entity receiving the funds have an ABN?

Yes - please advise ABN

No – please complete and attach a “Statement by a Supplier” form (ATO NAT3346)

** If the entity receiving the funds does not have an ABN, BBIFMAC will be required to withhold 46.5% of the total amount for remittance to the Australian Tax Office.

7. Certification

As the authorised representative, I have read and understood the conditions of the grant as set out above.

Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Signature	
Date	

For further information please contact:

Wendy Thorsborne
 Regional Extension Coordinator
 Burnett Mary Regional Group
t: +61 7 4169 0720
m: 0474 879 935
e: wendy.thorsborne@bmrq.org.au

Useful resources to assist in project development:

1. Review Report Practice Change, Education and Extension in Reef Catchments Project (Coutts J&R, 2017) <https://reefextension.couttsjr.com.au/ReefExtensionEducationReview-MarkedFinalJune-2017.pdf>
2. Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan <https://www.reefplan.qld.gov.au/about/assets/reef-2050-water-quality-improvement-plan-2017-22.pdf>
3. Water Quality Improvement Plan for the Burnett Mary 2015 <http://www.bmrq.org.au/resources/publications/water-quality-improvement-plans/>

Enhanced extension coordination



Appendix 3: Enhanced Extension Coordination - Project Logic

Goal	Through improved and targeted coordinated extension support, large scale land management practice change will result in improved water quality outcomes for the GBR		
Objective	Increase facilitated targeted and coordinated delivery of extension services in grazing, cane, cropping and horticulture industries in the Burnett Mary		
	Assumption: That improved integration and planning of funded programs will reduce fragmentation of extension effort. Increased capacity and effectiveness of extension practitioners will be achieved through a more structured and coordinated approach.		
Key Result Area 1	Key Result Area 1	Key Result Area 2	Key Result Area 3
	Improved effectiveness and efficiency of extension activities through coordination and collaboration	Effective monitoring and evaluation of the extension effort and outcomes	Improve the professional capacity of extension practitioners in the Burnett Mary region
	Assumption: That undertaking activities and outputs in line with this Regional Extension Services Strategy will improve collaboration and coordination of extension in the Burnett Mary Region		
Outputs	BMRESS developed in consultation with the BMRERC and industry stakeholders	Flexible and Peer to Peer projects coordinated and delivered in line with funding guidelines	Project effort and outcomes are effectively monitored and evaluated
	Flexible and Peer to Peer projects coordinated and delivered in line with funding guidelines	Recommendations, lessons learned, and advice from events and projects are recorded and distributed	CIN and BMRERC move from fragmented to networking or cooperation
	BMRESS developed in consultation with the BMRERC and industry stakeholders	Collate and provide data to YourDATA, P2R and spatial mapping	Training needs of extension practitioners identified via CIN and professional capacity improved
Activities	Develop BMRESS in consultation with the BMRERC and industry stakeholders	Identify and allocate appropriate extension providers to deliver Enhanced Extension projects	Develop evaluation frameworks for Flexible and Peer to Peer projects
	Develop BMRESS in consultation with the BMRERC and industry stakeholders	Collate and provide data to YourDATA, P2R and spatial mapping	Understand regional communication activities including event and project promotion
	Identify and allocate appropriate extension providers to deliver Enhanced Extension projects	Collate and provide data to YourDATA, P2R and spatial mapping	Maintain the CIN forum through network meetings, facilitated events and BMRESS consultation
	Develop BMRESS in consultation with the BMRERC and industry stakeholders	Identify and allocate appropriate extension providers to deliver Enhanced Extension projects	Support training needs analysis, and facilitate professional capacity building opportunities for extension practitioners