



Achieving Healthy Waterways

URBAN WATER STEWARDSHIP IN TOWNSVILLE

Water generated from urban areas, including stormwater runoff and wastewater discharge, may impact our local waterways, wetlands and the Great Barrier Reef. Local councils, industry and communities implement management practices to help reduce the impact of urban development.

Understanding the effectiveness of these management practices and stewardship programs, and how they may be improved, is essential for achieving healthier waterways.

To assess the effectiveness of management actions addressing urban water impacts, the Dry Tropics Partnership and the Office of the Great Barrier Reef piloted a process with Townsville City Council to rate and assess 48 stormwater and 17 sewage treatment operational activities.

The Urban Water Stewardship Framework is part of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan and rates the effectiveness of urban water quality management practices.

Future Urban Water Stewardship Framework results will be displayed using a graded score and reported within the annual Townsville Dry Tropics report card.



2018-19 FRAMEWORK OUTCOMES

Management successes



Council supports industry leading research by local students to help improve wastewater treatment outcomes.



Council treats wastewater to meet legislated human health and environmental protection outcomes. This includes operating treatment plants to achieve regulated nutrient discharge limits and minimising overflow from the wastewater network.



Council helps build community capacity to manage local waterways by supporting citizen science monitoring programs such as CreekWatch and Reef Check Australia.



Council has one of the most rigorous erosion and sediment control training programs in Queensland.

Room for improvement



Stormwater quality can be improved in existing urban areas to reduce gross pollution and nutrients from entering waterways.



Opportunities for wastewater reuse programs need to be further explored.



Continued collaboration with Council and other land users is needed to seek whole of catchment solutions.



For more information on the Urban Water Stewardship Pilot workshop methods and results see our website:
drytropicshealthywaters.org

