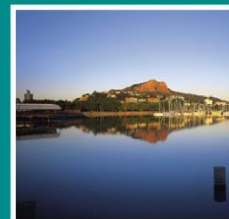
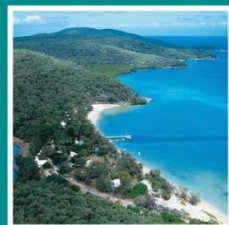
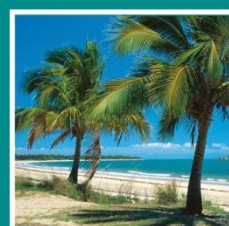


Great Barrier Reef Coastal Zone Strategic Assessment 2014

program report



Great Barrier Reef coastal zone strategic assessment

Program Report

July 2014

The Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning is responsible for driving the economic development of Queensland.

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Contents

Executive Summary	1
Abbreviations.....	5
Structure of report	7
1. Introduction	8
1.1 Purpose of the Program Report	8
1.1.1 Matters of National Environmental Significance	9
1.1.2 Endorsement Criteria.....	9
1.2 Background to the strategic assessment	10
1.3 Geographic area	11
1.4 Activities in the GBR coastal zone	13
1.5 Jurisdictional complexity	13
1.6 Complementary strategic assessments	14
1.7 Joint management	16
1.7.1 Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area	16
1.7.2 Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area	17
2. Queensland Government Program	18
2.1 Policy context	18
2.1.1 Ecologically Sustainable Development	18
2.2 The ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy.....	20
2.2.2 Avoid	21
2.2.3 Mitigate.....	26
2.2.4 Offset.....	26
2.3 How the Program protects MNES and OUV	27
2.3.2 Improved planning for urban areas, industry and ports	29
2.3.3 Rigorous EIS assessment processes for major projects	29
2.3.4 Better guidance for development activities.....	30
2.3.5 Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs	31
2.3.6 Strong joint management initiatives	32
3. Strategic outcomes delivered by the Program	33
3.1 Improved planning for urban areas, industry and ports	34
3.1.1 Regional plans.....	34
3.1.2 Protected area management	35
3.1.3 Port development	36
3.2 Rigorous EIS assessment processes for major projects	38
3.3 EIS assessment process under the SDPWO Act.....	39
3.3.2 Pre-lodgement meetings.....	41
3.3.3 Declaration	41
3.3.4 Preparation of draft TOR	42
3.3.5 Finalising the TOR.....	43
3.3.6 Preparation of an EIS	43
3.3.7 Consultation process for the EIS	44
3.3.8 Consideration of public submissions.....	44
3.3.9 Recommended conditions	46
3.3.10 Compliance	47
3.3.11 Third-party audit	47

3.3.12	Provisions, enforcement and penalties	48
3.4	EIS assessment process under EP Act.....	49
3.4.2	Preparation of draft TOR	52
3.4.3	Initial Advice Statement	52
3.4.4	Finalising the TOR.....	52
3.4.5	Preparation of an EIS	52
3.4.6	Consultation process	53
3.4.7	EIS assessment report	54
3.4.8	Environmental Authority.....	55
3.4.9	Compliance and enforcement	56
3.4.10	EIS triggers for resource activities	57
3.5	Better guidance for development activities.....	59
3.5.1	Meeting EPBC Act requirements	59
3.5.2	New MNES guideline.....	59
3.5.3	New Environmental Offsets Framework.....	60
3.5.4	Revised mapping of MNES.....	61
3.5.5	MNES and approval recommendations	61
3.5.6	Protecting listed threatened species	62
3.5.7	Consistent listing	62
3.5.8	Indigenous cultural heritage guidelines.....	63
3.5.9	Cumulative impact assessment guidelines	64
3.6	Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs	65
3.6.1	Fisheries management	65
3.6.2	Monitoring and regular reporting.....	66
3.6.3	Species prioritisation framework	66
3.6.4	Back on Track	66
3.6.5	Natural Resource Management Investment Program	67
3.6.6	Wet Tropics World Heritage Area	67
3.6.7	Ramsar wetlands.....	68
3.6.8	Queensland Wetlands Program.....	68
3.6.9	Indigenous management programs	69
3.7	Strong joint management initiatives	71
3.7.1	Working with the GBRMPA.....	71
3.7.2	Advising the Australian Government of changes to the Program	72
3.7.3	Reporting to the Australian Government.....	72
3.7.4	Reporting to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum	72
3.7.5	Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan	73
3.7.6	Outcomes-based framework.....	74
3.7.7	Integrated monitoring framework	74
3.7.8	Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership	75
3.7.9	North East Shipping Management Plan	76
3.7.10	Reef Water Quality Protection Plan	77
4.	How the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria.....	78
4.1	MNES and Endorsement Criteria.....	78
5.	How the Program protects MNES and OUV	85
5.1	Protection of MNES and OUV.....	85
6.	How the Program meets the controlling provisions	90
6.1	How the Program meets the controlling provisions	90
7.	Implementation of commitments	98
8.	Conclusion	102

8.1	Measuring performance	102
8.2	Governance	103
	8.2.1 Queensland Environment Taskforce	103
	8.2.2 Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan	103
	8.2.3 Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum	103
9.	References.....	104

Figures

Figure 1	Geographical coverage of the Program	12
Figure 2	Two complementary strategic assessments	15
Figure 3	The ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy.....	20
Figure 4	Planning from the international to the local level	22
Figure 5	Strategic outcomes delivered by the Program.....	28
Figure 6	EIS assessment process under SDPWO Act.....	40
Figure 7	EIS assessment process under EP Act.....	51
Figure 8	Elements of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.....	73
Figure 9	Program commitments implementation and stakeholder engagement	102

Tables

Table 1	Program Report structure	7
Table 2	Schedule for regional plans in the GBR coastal zone	35
Table 3	Outcomes for MNES	78
Table 4	How the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria	79
Table 5	How the Program protects MNES and OUV	85
Table 6	Protection of MNES	90
Table 7	Protection for world heritage properties	91
Table 8	Protection for national heritage places	92
Table 9	Protection for Ramsar wetlands	93
Table 10	Protection for listed threatened species and ecological communities.....	94
Table 11	Protection for listed migratory species	95
Table 12	Protection for Commonwealth marine area.....	96
Table 13	Protection for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	97
Table 14	Implementation of commitments	98

Executive Summary

The strategic assessment

The Queensland Government entered into a Strategic Assessment Agreement (SAA) with the Australian Government in 2012 under section 146 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to undertake a strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) coastal zone¹.

The Queensland Government's strategic assessment of the GBR coastal zone (strategic assessment) responds to the June 2011 decision of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee (WHC) that requested that the Australian Government undertake a strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA)².

The Queensland Government has direct jurisdictional responsibility for the area between the high and low water marks within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) and some coastal waters of the GBRWHA that are outside the GBRMP. The Queensland Government is also responsible for activities in the GBR catchment that may have downstream impacts on the GBR.

The Queensland Government's strategic assessment forms part of a comprehensive approach to the GBRWHA. A complementary strategic assessment of the GBR region is being undertaken concurrently by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the GBRMPA).

Queensland's strategic assessment takes a 'systems' level approach and provides a broad landscape-scale assessment of the state's legislation, policies, plans and programs (the Program).

The assessment identifies and outlines how the Program seeks to manage Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the GBRWHA and Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (WTWHA). It also identifies a range of measures, including a Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan (LTSP), to better integrate and strengthen coastal and marine management in the GBR in conjunction with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA.

The completed strategic assessment comprises three reports: a revised Program Report (this report), a Supplementary Strategic Assessment Report (Supplementary Report) and the draft Strategic Assessment Report³ (draft SAR) that was released for public consultation. The reports are submitted to the Australian Minister for the Environment (the Minister) for consideration of endorsement of the Program.

¹ <http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/pages/e166e5b7-bd7f-4bc5-9807-ba263e248632/files/s146-gbr-strategic-assessment-qld.pdf>

² <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4418/>

³ <http://www.dsdip.qld.gov.au/resources/great-barrier-reef-coastal-zone-strategic-assessment-draft-reports.html>

The three reports have been developed in accordance with the Terms of Reference (TOR)⁴. The Program Report and Supplementary Report address the matters raised in an independent review of the draft Program Report and draft SAR, commissioned by the Australian Government, and comments made in response to the statutory public consultation process.

The draft Program Report and draft SAR outlined a range of commitments for managing and protecting MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone. This revised Program Report and the Supplementary Report include a complete set of all commitments, some of which are already being progressed.

The Queensland Government is proud of the GBR and its world heritage status, and is committed to the preservation of its OUV. The impacts of climate change as a worldwide phenomenon present a significant challenge to the ongoing health of the GBR. Building the resilience of the reef is a key strategy to minimise the impacts of extreme weather events. Current actions to improve water quality and the subsequent decline in biodiversity provide a strong starting point toward improving the resilience of the GBR and the adjacent coastal zone.

The GBR coastal zone is extensive, covering a length of area of 2 300 kilometres, and while largely undeveloped, it is acknowledged as a multiple-use area that supports a range of activities and industries, including urban, industrial and port development, tourism and recreational uses, fishing and shipping. These activities and industries have been subject to an evolving range of Queensland Government regulation and management tools over time.

The Program

The Program described in this report includes existing management activities and the commitments and outcomes that will be delivered for MNES and OUV within the GBR coastal zone as a result of the strategic assessment. It includes an assessment of a range of new and existing legislation, policies, plans and programs against which project approval recommendations are made.

The principles of Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD) and the ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy are core values embedded in the Program to manage the impacts of current developments as well as those that may occur in the future.

Endorsement of the Program being sought under section 146 of the EPBC Act relates to the legislation, policies, plans and programs currently in place and future commitments to provide the necessary protection for MNES and OUV from activities in the GBR coastal zone, including the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) processes under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act) and the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act); and the Queensland Ports Strategy (QPS)⁵.

The report demonstrates how the Program will identify, protect and enhance environmental values, particularly MNES and OUV, in the GBR coastal zone to deliver the equivalent protection of MNES and OUV as required under the EPBC Act.

⁴ <http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/report/great-barrier-tor.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/queensland-ports-strategy.pdf>

Through the Program, the Queensland Government will ensure that planning and development in the GBR coastal zone occurs in a sustainable manner, that it is appropriately managed to avoid or mitigate unacceptable impacts on MNES and OUV, and that the GBR continues to be one of the best managed marine areas in the world for future generations.

The Program **delivers five strategic outcomes** to ensure the identification, protection and enhancement of MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone:

- **improved planning** for urban areas, industry and ports
- **rigorous EIS assessment processes** for major projects
- **better guidance** for development activities
- **enhanced management, recovery and monitoring** programs
- **strong joint management** initiatives.

Improved planning and evaluation of management actions in the GBR coastal zone inform a continuous adaptive management process.

The Queensland Government's existing system provides for the consideration of environmental values in the all stages of planning. The early consideration of MNES is the best means of avoiding and minimising impacts on MNES and minimises the requirement to address MNES issues when development proposals are put forward. Regional plans⁶ consider the balance between economic development and potential environmental impacts, including MNES and OUV.

The Queensland Government is continuing to add to its protected area estate and will continue to provide funding for protected area management in the GBR coastal zone.

The Queensland Government's commitment to deliver the QPS by limiting significant new port development to five Priority Port Development Areas (PPDAs) and the requirement for master planning, including consideration of MNES, OUV and cumulative impacts, further strengthens the protection of the GBR coastal zone against any unacceptable or unsustainable environmental impacts. This commitment will be implemented through legislation and a statutory port master planning guideline that will incorporate rigorous environmental assessment and community engagement.

Rigorous EIS assessment processes in Queensland's legislation are used to assess, monitor and enforce the protection of environmental values on a project-by-project basis. These processes are clearly defined and provide a thorough assessment of MNES and OUV.

The use of the Australian Government's Offsets Policy in the EIS process also demonstrates a firm commitment to the protection of MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.

Better guidance for proponents and decision makers will be available through the development of MNES and cumulative impact guidelines, the enhanced use of the Australian Government's Protected Matters Search Tool, and the development of consistent threatened species listings.

⁶ <http://www.dsdip.qld.gov.au/statewide-planning/regional-planning.html>

Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs have been a significant investment by the Queensland Government through the implementation of a range of programs designed to enhance the condition of MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone. The Queensland Government is also committed to continued investment in a range of programs focused on the identification, management and improvement of condition for habitat and species.

Strong joint management of the GBRWHA with the GBRMPA through a joint field management program has ensured the enforcement of zoning plans and the effective management of the GBRMP, national parks and islands. Joint responsibilities include marine threatened species management, dugong management, island and water quality management, and the regulation of Ramsar wetlands.

The commitments presented in this Program Report are an example of the direction the Queensland Government is taking to demonstrate to the Australian Government how it will work to achieve the necessary protections outlined in the EPBC Act.

Queensland Government specific initiatives under the Program will be delivered and monitored through existing reporting mechanisms. Progress against joint initiatives with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, will be updated through the GBR Ministerial Forum on an annual basis.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that development in the GBR coastal zone is appropriately managed to ensure it maintains or enhances the OUV for which it was declared a World Heritage Area (WHA).

The Queensland Government acknowledges and appreciates the need to uphold Australia's international obligations and is working with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, and other stakeholders to develop the LTSP.

The development of the LTSP is a request of the WHC. It will build on the findings of the comprehensive strategic assessment and bring relevant programs and activities under one plan to ensure greater coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of efforts to protect and manage the GBR.

It will be the primary implementation mechanism to deliver future joint actions on a range of GBR management issues to 2050.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ADH	Australian Height Datum
AEIS	Additional Environmental Impact Statement
AGQWPP	Australian Government Queensland Wetlands Protection Program
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
CIA	Cumulative impact assessment
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CSG	Coal Seam Gas
CSG/LNG	Coal Seam Gas/Liquid Natural Gas
DAFF	Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DEHP	Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection
DNPRSR	Queensland Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing
DNRM	Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines
DOE	Australian Department of the Environment
DPC	Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet
DSDIP	Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
EA	Environmental Authority
ED Act	<i>Economic Development Act 2012 (Qld)</i>
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Environmental Management Framework
EMP	Environmental Management Plans
EP Act	<i>Environment Protection Act 1994 (Qld)</i>
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
ERA	Environmentally Relevant Activities
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
FHA	Fish Habitat Area
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
GBRCWPP	Great Barrier Reef Coastal Wetlands Protection Program
GBRMP	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
GBRMP Act	<i>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (Cwlth)</i>
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
GBRWHA	Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
IAS	Initial Advice Statement
IDAS	Integrated Development Assessment System
IESC	Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coaling Mining Development
IGA	Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2009

Abbreviation	Definition
IGAE	Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment 1992
LTSP	Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
MSES	Matters of State Environmental Significance
MP Act	<i>Marine Park Act 2004</i> (Qld)
NC Act	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> (Qld)
NESMG	North East Shipping Management Group
NESMP	North East Shipping Management Plan
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
PDA	Priority Development Area
PPDA	Priority Port Development Areas
PSSA	Particularly Sensitive Sea Area
QPS	Queensland Ports Strategy
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
RPI Act	<i>Regional Planning Interests Act 2014</i> (Qld)
SAA	Strategic Assessment Agreement 2012
SAR	Strategic Assessment Report
SDA	State Development Area
SDPWO Act	<i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i> (Qld)
SEA	Strategic Environmental Area
SP Act	<i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i> (Qld)
SPP	State Planning Policy
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WHA	World Heritage Area
Wet Tropics WHPM Act	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i> (Qld)
WPA wetland	Wetland Protection Areas
WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority

Structure of report

Table 1 outlines the report structure with details of each chapter's purpose and related sections.

Table 1 Program Report structure

Chapter	Purpose	Section
1. Introduction	Introduces the Program Report	1.1 Purpose of the Program Report
		1.2 Background to the strategic assessment
		1.3 Geographic area
		1.4 Activities in the GBR coastal zone
		1.5 Jurisdictional complexity
		1.6 Complementary strategic assessments
		1.7 Joint management
2. Queensland Government Program	Describes the foundation of the Program	2.1 Policy context
		2.2 The 'avoid, mitigate, offset' hierarchy
		2.3 How the Program protects MNES and OUV
3. Strategic outcomes delivered by the Program	Describes the Program components and commitments	3.1 Improved planning for urban areas, industry and ports
		3.2 Rigorous EIS processes for major projects
		3.3 EIS process under the SDPWO Act
		3.4 EIS process under EP Act
		3.5 Better guidance for development activities
		3.6 Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs
		3.7 Strong joint management initiatives
4. How the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria	Describes how the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria	4.1 MNES and Endorsement Criteria
5. How the Program protects MNES and OUV	Describes how MNES and OUV are protected	5.1 Protection of MNES and OUV
6. How the Program meets the Controlling Provisions	Demonstration of how the Program manages MNES and OUV	6.1 How the Program meets the controlling provisions
7. Implementation of commitments	Table of commitments	
8. Conclusion	Describes Program performance measuring and governance	8.1 Measuring performance
		8.2 Governance
9. References		

1. Introduction

In 2012, the Queensland Government entered into a SAA with the Australian Government under section 146 of the EPBC Act to undertake a strategic assessment of the coastal zone adjacent to the GBR to consider how the Program identifies, protects and manages MNES and OUV. The TOR were developed by the Queensland and Australian governments to set out the requirements for the strategic assessment, including that draft strategic assessment reports be subject to both public consultation and independent review.

Draft strategic assessment and program reports were subsequently prepared and independently reviewed in September–October 2013. The draft reports were released for public consultation from 1 November 2013 to 31 January 2014. In light of public comments and the recommendations of the independent review, a revised Program Report and Supplementary Report have been prepared. This document is the revised Program Report.

The strategic assessment has been undertaken at a ‘systems’ level where the current legislation and policy governing the protection of the GBR coastal zone is implemented. The analysis and evaluation therefore focuses on the effectiveness of the Queensland Government’s legislation, policies, plans and programs to achieve the necessary protection of MNES and OUV and to satisfy the requirements of the EPBC Act.

The Queensland Government has a comprehensive management approach that includes both regulatory and non-regulatory instruments to manage impacts on Queensland’s natural environment and heritage, and in particular the GBR coastal zone.

This report, in conjunction with the draft SAR and the Supplementary Report, demonstrates how the Program will protect MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.

A complete list of commitments made by the Queensland Government under the Program is outlined in Chapter 7 of this report.

1.1 Purpose of the Program Report

This report describes how the Program will ensure activities are conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of ESD and will not result in unacceptable impacts to MNES. It identifies legislation, plans, policies and programs that are currently in use or will be developed to manage and protect the GBR over the 25-year lifespan of the Program.

Specifically this report will:

- describe the Program that constitutes the ‘policy, plan or program’ pursuant to section 146 of the EPBC Act
- outline the commitments and undertakings of the Queensland Government to ensure adequate protection of Part 3 – Protected Matters of the EPBC Act

-
- provide the basis for the Minister to consider endorsing the Program under section 146 of the EPBC Act.

This report has been prepared as a key document supported by the draft SAR and the Supplementary Report to assist the Minister to assess the Program and consider endorsing it under section 146 of the EPBC Act.

1.1.1 Matters of National Environmental Significance

In accordance with the TOR, the following MNES are considered in the GBR coastal zone strategic assessment:

- world heritage properties (sections 12 and 15A)
- national heritage places (sections 15B and 15C)
- wetlands of international importance (sections 16 and 17B)
- listed threatened species and ecological communities (sections 18 and 18A)
- listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A)
- Commonwealth marine area (sections 23 and 24A)
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (sections 24B and 24C).

1.1.2 Endorsement Criteria

When deciding whether to endorse the Program, the Minister must be satisfied that the strategic assessment reports adequately address the Endorsement Criteria, the TOR and the SAA, and that any recommendations by the Minister to modify the Program have been responded to appropriately. In determining whether or not to endorse the Program, the Minister will have regard to the extent to which the Program meets the objects of the EPBC Act. In particular, that it:

- protects the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are MNES
- promotes ESD through the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources
- promotes the conservation of biodiversity
- provides for the protection and conservation of heritage
- promotes a cooperative approach to the protection and management of the environment
- assists in the co-operative implementation of Australia's international environmental responsibilities
- recognises the role of Indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity
- promotes the use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in cooperation with, the owners of the knowledge.

Without limiting the matters the Minister may consider when reviewing the Program, the Minister will consider the manner in which the Program:

- identifies direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on MNES
- avoids impacts on MNES
- mitigates the impacts on MNES
- offsets the impacts on MNES
- contributes to the enhancement of MNES and management of existing threats
- demonstrates adaption to reasonable climate change scenarios.

Commitments in the Program must be adequately resourced throughout its life. The Program must demonstrate an effective system of adaptive management that addresses uncertainty and contingency management as well as procedures for monitoring, independent auditing and public reporting on implementation. The Program must address all of the above matters for it to be considered for endorsement by the Minister in accordance with the EPBC Act.

1.2 Background to the strategic assessment

In June 2011, the WHC requested that Australia:

“...undertake a comprehensive strategic assessment of the entire property, identifying planned and potential future development that could impact the Outstanding Universal Value to enable a long-term plan for the sustainable development that will protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.”

In 2012, the Queensland Government entered into a SAA with the Australian Government under section 146 of the EPBC Act to undertake a strategic assessment of the GBR coastal zone.

This strategic assessment is part of a comprehensive strategic assessment of the GBRWHA and adjacent coastal zone which consists of two components:

- coastal component prepared by the Queensland Government, involving a strategic assessment of the GBR coastal zone, and represented by this report, the draft SAR and the Supplementary Report
- marine component, involving a strategic assessment of the GBR region, prepared by the GBRMPA.

The Queensland Government has direct jurisdictional responsibility for the area between the high and low water marks within the GBRMP and some coastal waters of the GBRWHA that are outside the GBRMP. The Queensland Government is also responsible for activities in the GBR catchment that may have downstream impacts on the GBR.

The GBRMPA is the Australian Government authority primarily responsible for management of the GBR region. The Queensland Government has a strong history of joint management of the GBR with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA.

The Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)⁷ articulates the roles and responsibilities of both governments and has been in place since 1979, and was most recently updated in 2009.

A joint field management program has been established by the Queensland Government and the GBRMPA to enforce the zoning plans and manage the marine park and national park islands.

The Queensland Government and the GBRMPA have worked closely to ensure consistency in reporting where there are joint management responsibilities. These joint responsibilities include marine threatened species management, dugong management, island and water quality management, and the regulation of Ramsar wetlands.

1.3 Geographic area

The GBR coastal zone extends over 2 300 kilometres of Queensland's east coast. It is defined as Queensland Coastal Waters within this 2 300 kilometres area and five kilometres inland or 10 metres Australian Height Datum (AHD) contour, whichever is further. Queensland Coastal Waters is a stretch of water for which Queensland has jurisdictional powers. The limit of Queensland Coastal Waters is defined by a line three nautical miles seaward of the territorial sea baseline including islands. AHD is the reference level adopted by the National Mapping Council of Australia. The level of 0.0 metres AHD is approximately mean sea level.

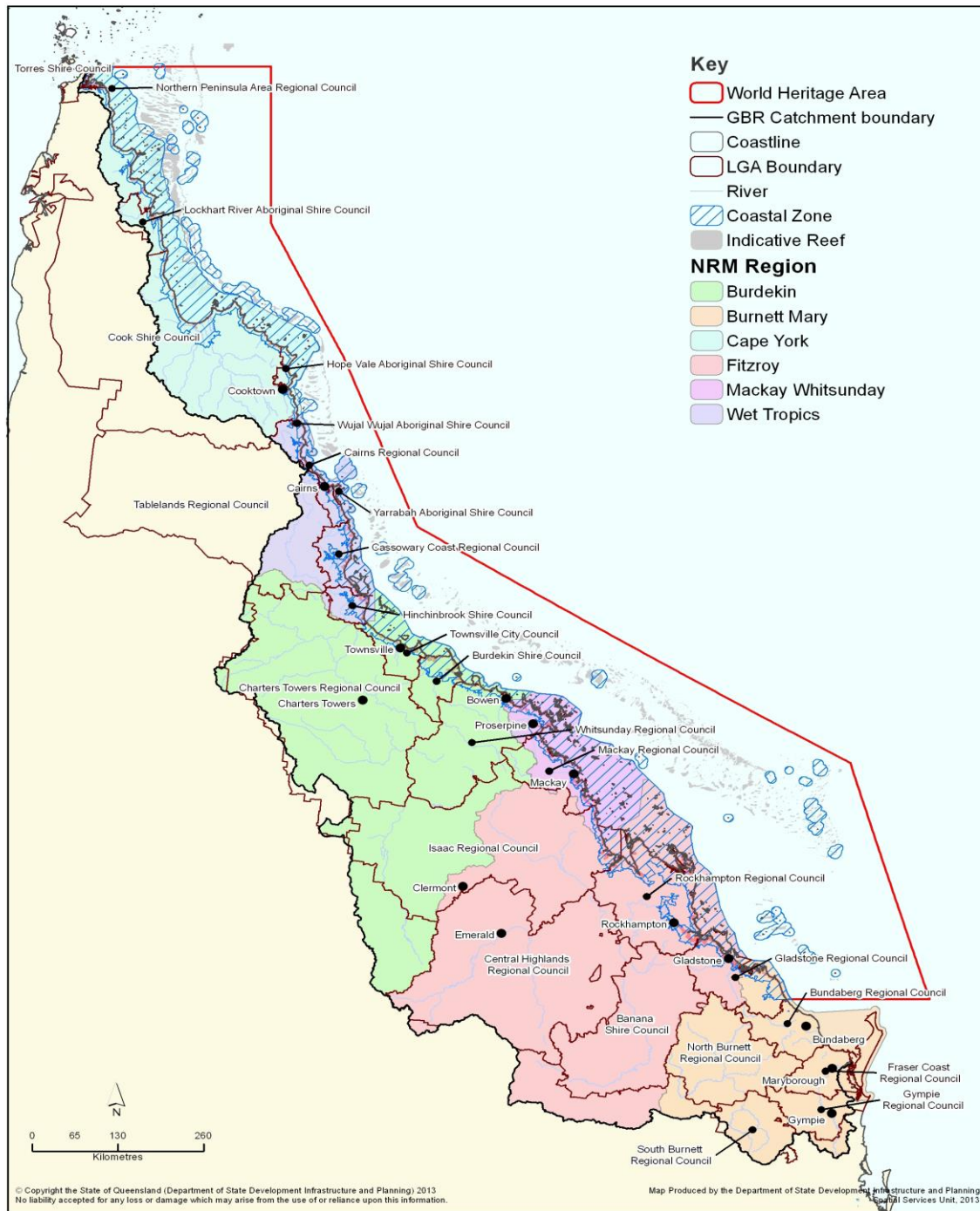
The geographical area of activities covered by the Program is illustrated in Figure 1 and includes:

- the coastal zone adjacent to the GBR, including Queensland Coastal Waters, islands and adjacent inland area
- areas of the GBR catchment to the extent that water quality management arrangements apply.

This GBR coastal zone includes marine parks and terrestrial national parks on islands within the GBRWHA that fall under the state's jurisdiction. For the purposes of the strategic assessment, existing threats within and outside of the strategic assessment area have been considered where impacts from those activities manifest themselves at the GBR coastal zone interface. The Program also considers the impacts that GBR coastal zone activities can have on the WHA and GBRMP.

⁷ <http://www.environment.gov.au/topics/marine/great-barrier-reef/protecting-reef/intergovernmental-agreement>

Figure 1 Geographical coverage of the Program



1.4 Activities in the GBR coastal zone

The GBR coastal zone is recognised by the Queensland Government and internationally as a region of significant environmental, social, cultural heritage and economic importance. The GBR coastal zone covers approximately 120 000 square kilometres of largely undeveloped coastline, with developed areas being mixed use and supporting a diverse range of development activities, including:

- urban development
- industrial development
- port development
- tourism development.

The GBR coastal zone is a region which employs almost half a million people, has a population of just under one million residents and attracts more than two million visitors from Australia and all over the world each year. These visitors are mostly drawn to experience the regions superlative natural ecosystems and tropical climate. The GBR coastal zone also serves as the gateway for Queensland's extensive resources sector through the location of 10 trading ports, four of these being long established bulk commodity export ports.

More detailed information about activities in the GBR coastal zone is located in the Supplementary Report and draft SAR.

1.5 Jurisdictional complexity

Australia has a system of government in which sovereignty is constitutionally divided between a central governing authority (the Australian Government) and constituent political units (states and territories, such as the Queensland Government). This 'federalism' approach is common to many other nations.

Both the Australian and Queensland governments have direct legislative responsibilities within the GBRWHA. The effective management system is a testament to the strong joint management by the two governments since the late 1970s. The ongoing spirit of collaboration and adaptive management has the flexibility to take account of contemporary issues.

While regulation of natural resource management and environment protection on land is primarily the responsibility of state governments (in this case, Queensland), protection for MNES, including world and national heritage places and their values, is afforded through national regulation.

The GBRMP is an MNES and generally extends over Queensland coastal waters to the low-water mark, and under the 1979 Offshore Constitutional Settlement vesting of title and powers over these coastal waters, is subject to the operation of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Cwlth) (GBRMP Act).

Queensland is responsible for the management of the GBR Coast Marine Park, covering approximately 63 000 square kilometres, which is established under the *Marine Parks Act 2004* (MP Act). This is contiguous with the GBRMP and covers the

area between the low and high water marks and many waters within the limits of the State of Queensland.

There are approximately 980 islands and cays within the boundaries of the GBRMP. The majority of the islands fall within the jurisdiction of the Queensland Government and almost half of these are national parks under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NC Act). There are approximately 70 islands that are owned by the Australian Government and form part of the GBRMP.

Despite these complexities, the integrated governance and management model for the GBR that has been functioning over the past 36 years has proven to be effective and successful.

1.6 Complementary strategic assessments

This strategic assessment is part of a comprehensive strategic assessment of the GBRWHA and adjacent coastal zone which consists of two components:

- coastal component prepared by the Queensland Government, involving a strategic assessment of the GBR coastal zone, and represented by this report, the draft SAR and the Supplementary Report
- marine component, involving a strategic assessment of the GBR region, prepared by the GBRMPA.

The GBR region strategic assessment will deliver two reports. A program report containing a detailed description of the GBRMPA's management arrangements, including future commitments, to protect and manage MNES, including the OUV of the GBRWHA, and a supporting strategic assessment report as shown in Figure 2. The two strategic assessments will inform development of the LTSP for the GBRWHA by the end of 2014.

It is important to note that the nature of the management responsibilities of the Queensland Government and the GBRMPA vary considerably and therefore the scope and scale of the strategic assessments vary.

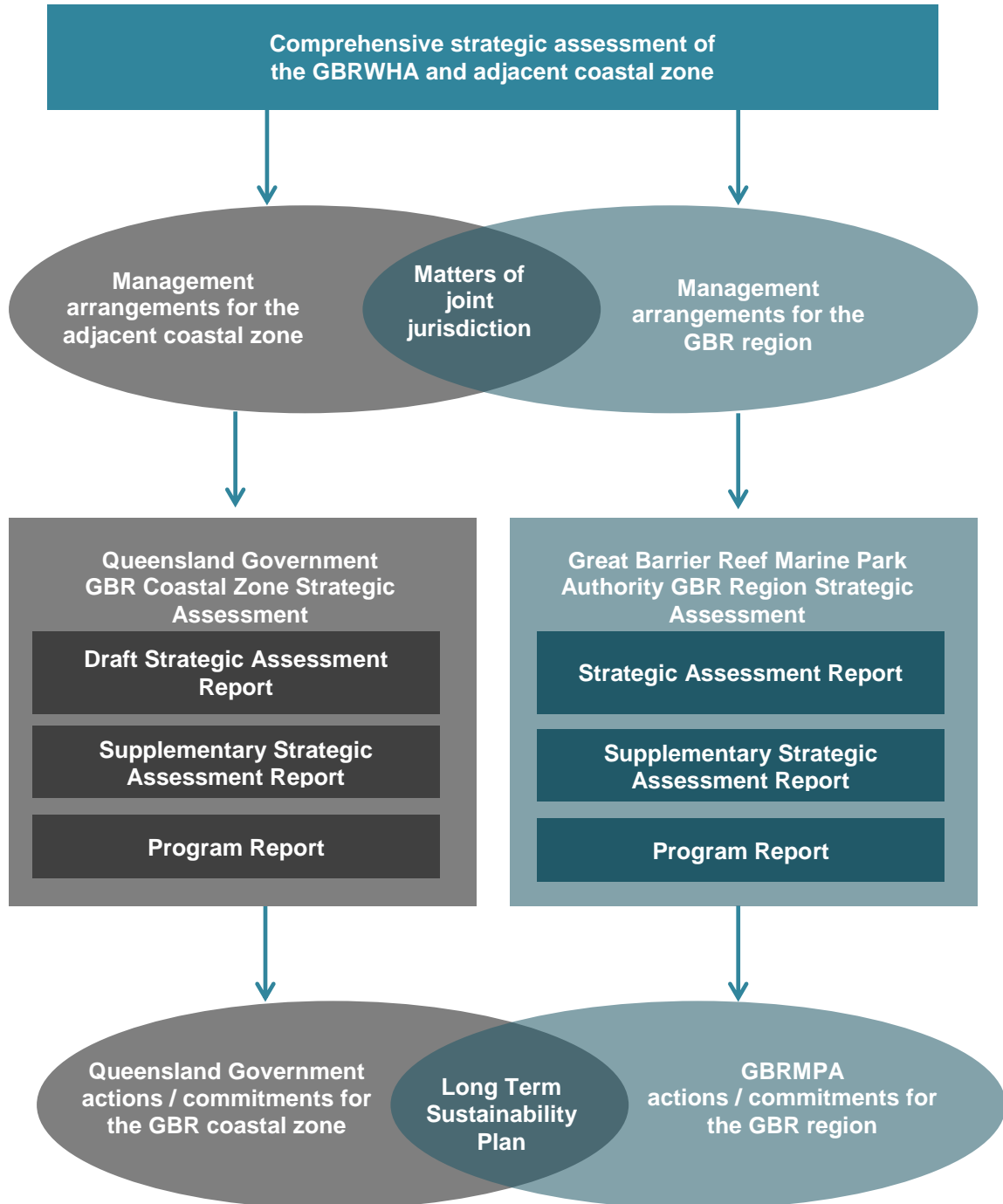
The GBRMPA assessment largely focuses on management arrangements within GBR region, with the primary piece of management legislation being the GBRMP Act. This Act provides a framework for planning and management of the GBRMP, including through zoning plans, plans of management and a system of permits.

Further legislation deals with issues such as environment management charges, aquaculture, shipwrecks and pollution and other defined activities within marine park boundaries. There is also a variety of supporting policy and position statements dealing with tourism, scientific research, protected species and environmental issues.

The Queensland Government strategic assessment evaluates the management system, including a number of pieces of legislation, policies, plans and programs that guide planning, development and management of the GBR coastal zone. These management instruments have a wide variety of applications as well as seeking to protect environmental values in the GBR coastal zone.

The Queensland Government and the GBRMPA have worked closely together to ensure a complementary approach. Where there are joint management responsibilities, the management measures are outlined in both program reports to ensure consistency. Such issues include marine threatened species management, island management, water quality, and the regulation of Ramsar wetlands.

Figure 2 Two complementary strategic assessments



1.7 Joint management

1.7.1 Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area

Both the Australian and Queensland governments have direct legislative responsibilities within and adjacent to the GBRWHA. In practice, the Queensland Government and the GBRMPA manage the GBRWHA jointly. Cooperative management of the GBR was first recognised in 1979 through the Emerald Agreement, which has since been replaced by the IGA in June 2009.

The IGA provides a contemporary framework for cooperation between the Australian and Queensland governments. Under the joint field management program Queensland is primarily responsible for day-to-day field management of the GBRWHA and also has sole responsibility for management of the GBR Coast Marine Park, covering approximately 63 000 square kilometres, as established under the MP Act. This is contiguous with the GBRMP and covers the area between the low and high water marks as well as most waters within the limits of the State of Queensland, as stated in the IGA. Importantly for the scope of the GBR coastal zone strategic assessment, the IGA also states the intergovernmental commitments to:

- maintain complementary relevant Australian and Queensland governments' management arrangements. In particular:
 - marine park legislation and associated regulations
 - zoning plans and plans of management
 - planning and development arrangements
 - environmental assessment and permit requirements
 - management of fishing activities.
- continue a joint program of field management, with shared funding on a 50:50 basis, for the GBRMP and Queensland marine and national parks within the GBRWHA
- continue joint action to halt and reverse the decline in quality of water entering the GBR
- address significant threats to the health and biodiversity of the GBR ecosystem, including pollution from the land and sea, the impacts of climate change, ecologically unsustainable fishing activities and other land based resource extraction activities
- ensure Indigenous traditional cultural practices continue to be recognised in the conservation and management of the GBR.

The IGA also recognises that economic growth and the long-term health of the GBR ecosystem are interconnected, and actions or changes in one can impact on the other and must be taken into account as a guiding principle for implementation of the IGA. In particular, the IGA recognises that population growth and economic development increases the demand for resource and recreational use of the GBR, and that land use activities in the catchment, and urban development could have adverse impacts on the quality of water entering the GBR.

1.7.2 Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area

The Queensland and Australian governments signed an agreement relating to management of the Wet Tropics in 1990. Subsequently, the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (Wet Tropics WHPM Act) and associated Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) were established.

Recognising the important role of the area's traditional owners, the Wet Tropics of the Australian World Heritage Area Regional Agreement was established in 2005 between the Queensland Government, the Australian Government and the Rainforest Aboriginal people of the Wet Tropics. The Regional Agreement provides for the cooperative management of the Wet Tropics WHA by the 18 Rainforest Aboriginal peoples associated with the area, and the Australian and Queensland governments.

The central principles of the agreement are to recognise Rainforest Aboriginal people's rights and interests and to afford them the opportunity to define and negotiate their own priorities, needs and aspirations for management of the Wet Tropics. A collaborative and equitable approach between world heritage management agencies and Rainforest Aboriginal peoples is of vital importance in achieving these principles.

2. Queensland Government Program

The Queensland Government draws on legislation, policies, plans and programs to manage the impacts of activities in the GBR coastal zone. In particular, the Queensland Government's planning and development system provides the context for regulatory management actions, government plans and policies and longer-term, action-oriented programs for managing the GBR coastal zone.

The principles of ESD and the 'avoid, mitigate, offset' hierarchy are core principles embedded in the Program to manage the impacts of current developments as well as those that may occur in the future.

Additional Program principles are applied to maintain and enhance MNES including OUV over time. These include:

- ongoing adaptive management which is critical to provide positive long-term outcomes for MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.
- enhancing MNES which includes rehabilitating degraded ecosystems or restoring cleared ecosystems. The Queensland Government contributes significant resources to enhancing MNES which have been impacted by historical land use practices.

2.1 Policy context

The Program seeks to facilitate ESD balancing economic, environmental and social considerations. As outlined in all the documents which form the final strategic assessment, the Program is designed to identify, protect and manage environmental values across the entire state. Specific considerations are afforded to the GBR coastal zone given its unique values and its world heritage status.

2.1.1 Ecologically Sustainable Development

The overarching policy intent of the Program is to achieve ESD through the GBR coastal zone. The Program delivers the principles of ESD outlined in the 1992 Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment (IGAE)⁸. Through the IGAE, Queensland agreed that:

'the adoption of sound environmental practices and procedures, as a basis for ecologically sustainable development, will benefit both the Australian people and environment, and the international community and environment. This requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes, in order to improve community well-being and benefit future generations.'

⁸ <http://www.environment.gov.au/node/13008>

The Queensland Government also agreed that in order to achieve ESD under the IGAE, environmental considerations will be integrated into government decision-making processes at all levels by, amongst other things:

- ensuring that environmental issues associated with a proposed project, program or policy will be taken into consideration in the decision-making process
- ensuring that there is a proper examination of matters which significantly impact the environment
- ensuring that measures adopted should be cost-effective and not be disproportionate to the significance of environmental problems being addressed.

The above approach is to be achieved through the principles of ESD as set out in the IGAE which are:

- the precautionary principle – where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measure to prevent environmental degradation.
- intergenerational equity – the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity, and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.
- conservation of biological diversity – conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration.
- improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms – including that the polluter pays; and that environmental goals should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures including market mechanisms, which enable those best placed to maximise benefits and/or minimise costs to develop their own solutions and responses to environmental problems.

Principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development

- Decision-making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations.
- If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.
- The principle of inter-generational equity—that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.
- The conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision making.
- Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted.

2.2 The ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy

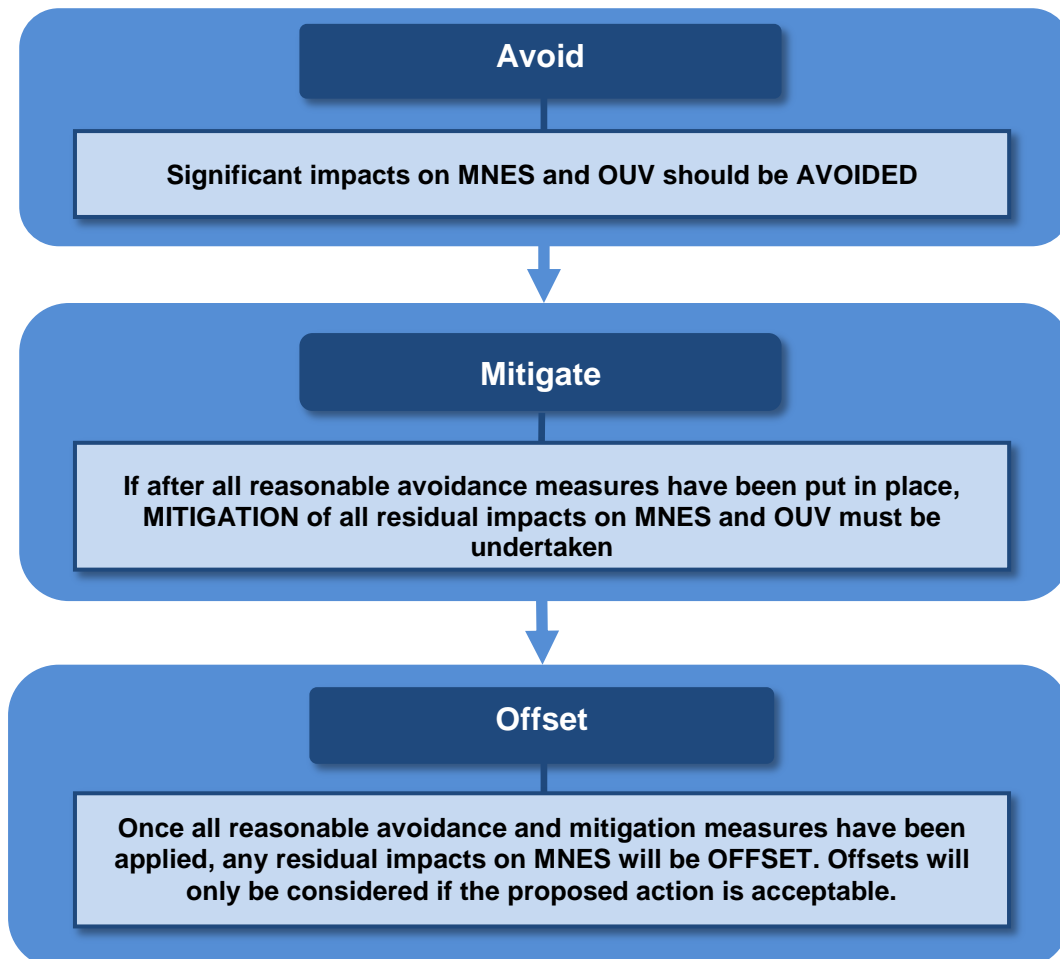
The ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy is the key principle underpinning the state’s planning and EIS processes.

The Queensland Government seeks to ensure that there will be an assessment of the likely impacts on each MNES from activities that may be approved. The EIS processes ensure that adequate information is provided in order for a decision-maker to make an informed decision and that impacts on each MNES are separately identified and explicitly assessed.

If it is determined that a project under an EIS process may have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES, the project will not be approved.

To avoid unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES, the Queensland Government will apply the ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy. This approach is illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 The ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy



2.2.2 Avoid

The first priority is avoiding impacts on MNES. Avoidance of impacts on MNES and OUV are primarily achieved through broader planning activities by locating future urban or industrial areas away from high value areas important for MNES in the first instance. This is achieved through regional and local planning which directs development to avoid areas of important environmental values such as MNES.

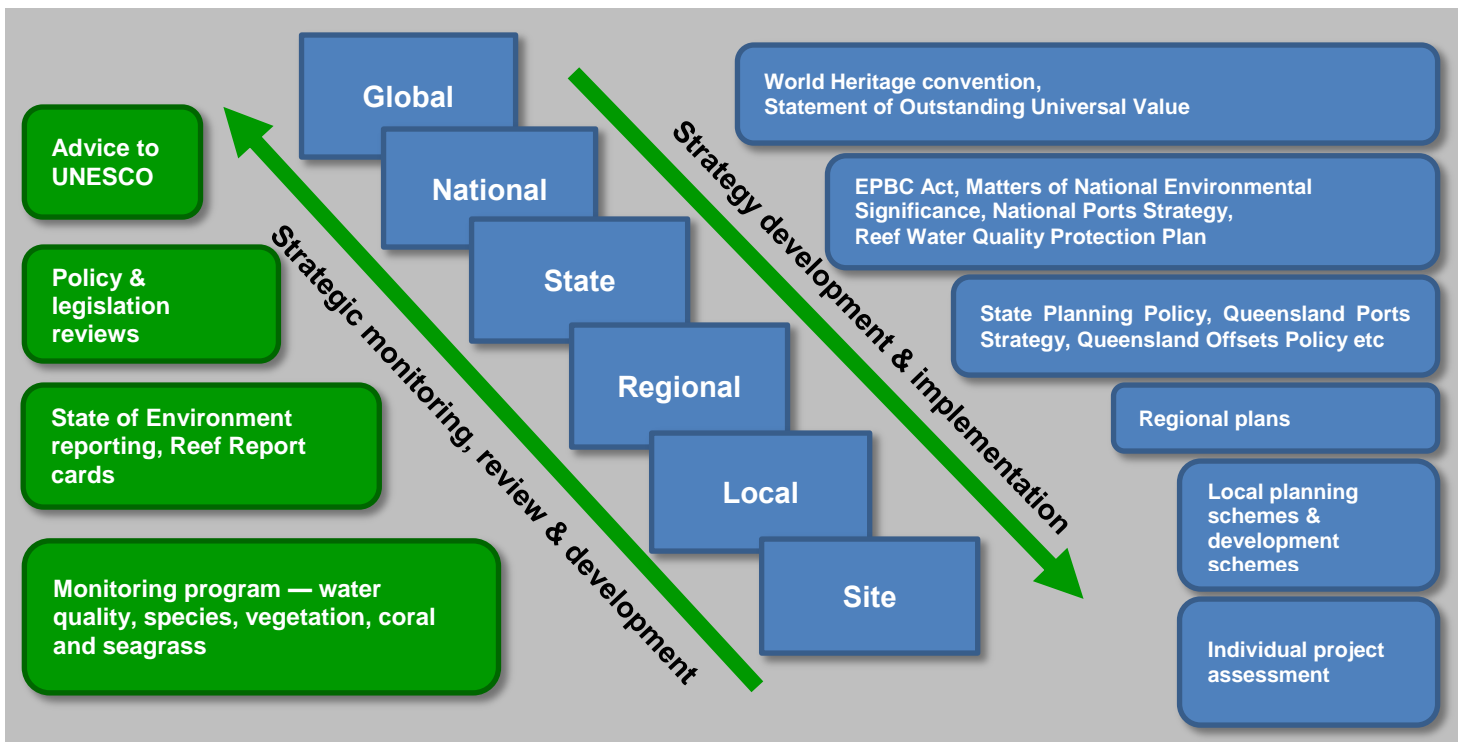
The Queensland Government sets aside areas of ecological importance in terrestrial and marine protected areas. This provides a further means through which development in the most sensitive environmental areas is avoided.

Avoidance also occurs through EIS processes at a project level. On a project specific level, avoidance is achieved through advice provided to proponents at the very early stages of a project proposal being provided to the Queensland Government. Such impacts on sensitive areas are discussed and proponents are advised of the expectations with regard to the 'avoid, mitigate and offset' principles. This may result in a change to the project design or in the development of the project if the proponent proceeds. Where it is not possible for the location of development to avoid impacts on MNES, site-specific measures may be instigated. These may include locating development away from MNES areas within a specific site or carrying out the construction of developments outside sensitive migration seasons. Impacts on MNES are also avoided.

Queensland's planning system

Queensland's planning system provides for consideration of environmental values in the early stages of identifying locations for environmental protection, future urban or industrial areas. While not explicit, this includes consideration of MNES amongst the suite of environmental values that are considered in planning. The early consideration of MNES is the best means of avoiding and minimising impacts on MNES and minimises the requirement to address MNES issues when development proposals are put forward. Figure 4 outlines how the planning system has the capacity to provide a direct line of sight from the global level right down to the local level, by taking into account national and international matters and reflecting these in state planning instruments that are then in turn reflected at the local level.

Figure 4 Planning from the international to the local level



Areas of regional interest

The *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* (RPI Act) protects areas of regional interest from inappropriate development and assists with resolving land use conflict for those activities outside the jurisdiction of the SP Act (e.g. resource activities). To achieve this alignment, the Act introduces an assessment framework to manage the impact of resource activities and other regulated activities on areas of the state identified in the Act as an area of regional interest.

The RPI Act requires resource activities authorised under resource Acts and other regulated activities to align with the regional land use policies of the regional plans as well as any other areas of regional interest prescribed in the *Regional Planning Interests Regulation 2014* (e.g. Strategic Environmental Areas).

Five Strategic Environmental Areas (SEAs), including Hinchinbrook Island and areas on Cape York Peninsula, have currently been identified containing regionally significant environmental attributes (for example bio-diversity, water catchments and ecological function). Within these areas, protection of ecological integrity is the priority land use; however, this does not preclude development from occurring in these areas. Development will be facilitated where it can be demonstrated that the ecological integrity of SEAs is not jeopardised.

Through the RPI Act, a Regional Interests Development Approval will now be required for resource developments, including mining and petroleum/gas, broadacre cropping and large scale water storage dams proposed in SEAs. Resource activities and regulated activities such as broad acre cropping and certain water storage dams can only be approved in these areas, under the RPI Act where they can demonstrate that

the activity will have no widespread or irreversible impacts to the identified environmental attributes for the area. However, the government has identified these activities as ‘unacceptable uses’ in certain designated precincts within SEAs where approval will not be given.

Planning for urban development

The Queensland Government is committed to implementing planning policies that simplify and clarify state interests, in particular through the State Planning Policy (SPP)⁹.

Planning for urban development occurs primarily through state and local planning processes. The SPP is a planning instrument that Queensland’s Planning Minister (or any other Queensland minister in conjunction with the Planning Minister) can make to protect things that are of interest to the state.

When a local government is developing its local planning scheme, it must ensure that the planning scheme reflects the elements outlined in the SPP, providing a line of sight from the state to the local level. If there is a discrepancy between a local planning scheme and the SPP, then what is outlined in the SPP overrides the planning scheme.

The SPP requires that the local government consider MNES in preparing its planning scheme.

Planning in Priority Development Areas

Priority Development Areas (PDA) are specific areas declared by the Queensland Government primarily used for residential area development.

There are currently three PDAs in the GBR coastal zone:

- Oonoonba PDA in Townsville
- Andergrove PDA in Mackay
- Tannum Sands PDA in Gladstone.

A development scheme is required to be prepared for each PDA under the *Economic Development Act 2012* (ED Act). Development schemes ensure that environmental impacts are avoided and minimised. The PDA development schemes override local and other state government planning instruments related to the use of land.

Planning in State Development Areas

State Development Areas (SDAs) are clearly defined areas of land established by the Queensland Government to promote economic development in Queensland.

There are three SDAs adjacent to the GBR coastal zone:

- Townsville SDA
- Abbot Point SDA
- Gladstone SDA.

⁹ <http://www.dsdip.qld.gov.au/resources/policy/state-planning/state-planning-policy.pdf>

The SDPWO Act provides the legislative framework for the declaration, planning (development schemes) and assessment of development applications for the use of land within SDAs. The development schemes ensure that environmental impacts are avoided and minimised. SDA development schemes override local and other state government planning instruments related to the use of land.

Currently, consideration of impacts on MNES is considered by the Coordinator-General as part of the scoping and background planning before declaration of the SDA.

Queensland's protected area estate

Conservation areas are the cornerstone of Queensland's management of natural and cultural heritage values. Protected areas, such as national parks and private conservation reserves (nature refuges), are declared under the NC Act on terrestrial areas and islands.

Protected areas on state land and state marine parks are managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). The majority of the Wet Tropics WHA and Ramsar wetlands are in protected areas. Protected areas also provide a stronghold for threatened species. For example, almost 80 per cent of cassowary habitat is protected in national parks.

Nature refuges are established through a voluntary agreement between a landholder and the Queensland Government. They acknowledge a commitment to manage and preserve land with significant conservation values while allowing compatible and sustainable land uses to continue.

In a vast state bearing a diverse array of species, ecosystems and significant sites, nature refuges fill an important niche in promoting a community-based landscape approach to conservation. The number and area of nature refuges in Queensland has increased significantly over the last decade. The number of nature refuges containing threatened species and their habitat is a measure of the conservation value of nature refuges. Over 84 per cent of nature refuges record the presence of at least one species listed under the NC Act and over 81 per cent of nature refuges record at least one species listed under the EPBC Act.

The GBR Coast Marine Park is a state marine park that runs the full length of the GBRMP from just north of Baffle Creek (north of Bundaberg) to Cape York. It provides protection for Queensland tidal lands and tidal waters. The GBR Coast Marine Park, established in 2004, complements the GBRMP through adopting similar zone objectives, and entry and use provisions. While the activities allowed within the marine parks are generally the same, there are some Queensland-specific provisions that may apply.

Marine parks, including high protection zones are established under the MP Act. Declared Fish Habitat Areas (FHAs) are established under the Fisheries Act. Forty FHAs have been declared over key fish habitats between Baffle Creek and Torres Strait on the east coast. The FHAs allow all legal forms of fishing – recreational, commercial and Indigenous – and restrict the level of coastal development and its impacts on these key fish habitats. The key habitats support a diverse fish fauna that see many species, such as prawns and gamefish, moving into offshore waters, while other species, such as barramundi and mangrove jack, move upstream to mature in freshwaters.

The draft SAR outlines the extent to which different MNES values are afforded protection in the protected area estate.

Future priority areas for conservation

The Queensland Government continues to add to its protected area estate over time and seeks to ensure a comprehensive, adequate and representative system that protects a range of ecosystems and species.

The Queensland Government has identified areas of significant biodiversity value. This includes areas that would benefit from strategic rehabilitation or may be of high value and warrant incorporation into the protected area estate (including through nature refuges) at some time in the future.

Under the Queensland Government's new approach to offsets, strategic investment corridors will also be identified for particular values, where offset delivery could be prioritised in order to benefit impacted matters and to provide strategic landscape scale benefits.

Planning for ports

The QPS outlines the Queensland Government's framework for port development over the next 10 years. The QPS outlines the commitment to restrict development to five PPDA's, which are the existing long-established major ports:

- Port of Abbot Point
- Port of Brisbane
- Port of Gladstone
- Port of Hay Point and Port of Mackay
- Port of Townsville.

The QPS also prohibits dredging for the development of new ports, or the expansion of existing ports, within or adjoining the GBRWHA except in the PPDA's for the next 10 years. The dredging prohibition will not apply to dredging activity for safety reasons, increasing a port's resilience to natural events, maintaining the effective operation of existing port facilities, or for non port-related reasons (e.g. beach maintenance) provided that MNES are considered through rigorous assessment and approvals processes.

Port master planning will be mandatory for the PPDA's and will incorporate rigorous environmental assessment and community engagement. Port master plans will be developed in accordance with 'avoid, mitigate and offset' principles with offsets implemented through Queensland and Australian Government offsets policies as appropriate. The plans will contain an environmental management framework to manage land and marine-based environmental values including MNES, OUV, Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES) and cumulative impacts.

2.2.3 Mitigate

Where development cannot avoid MNES, the next priority is to ensure impacts are minimised as far as possible through the design and construction of the project, through development of management plans or by timing of operations. Mitigation measures are routinely built into the conditions on project approvals. This includes conditions to assess downstream cumulative impacts via monitoring programs.

Mitigation refers to measures applied to reduce the level of impact from activities undertaken during implementation. Mitigation primarily occurs through the EIS process where appropriate conditions are placed on individual development approvals. A range of plans, policies, programs and guidelines developed by the Queensland Government must be considered by a proponent when designing and implementing a project in order to reduce the level of impact from development.

2.2.4 Offset

Environmental offsets are conservation activities which compensate for harm to the environment caused by development when it cannot be avoided or mitigated. Offsets can take the form of positive management interventions such as restoration of degraded habitat, arrested degradation or averted risk, protecting areas where there is imminent or projected loss of biodiversity.

The Queensland Government will apply the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy¹⁰, using the offset assessment guide where applicable, until the Queensland Offsets Framework is finalised. If a proposed offset is consistent with the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy but not necessarily with the outcome indicated by the assessment guide, the parties will work cooperatively towards streamlining offsets under a single Queensland offsets policy.

The Queensland Government is committed to working with the Australian Government to develop offsets guidelines that deliver net benefits. Proponents will be encouraged to apply these guidelines when preparing EIS documents and decision-makers will assess EIS documents in accordance with those guidelines.

The Queensland Government will provide information on offsets, through an Offsets Register to spatially identify areas used as offsets under Queensland legislation and priority areas for future offsets. The Queensland Government will also develop a single Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBRWHA consistent with the Queensland Offsets Framework.

It is intended that financial offsets derived as a result of conditions of approval for actions that are taken within, or will impact on, the GBRWHA MNES will be paid into, and administered by, the Reef Trust.

¹⁰ <http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/12630bb4-2c10-4c8e-815f-2d7862bf87e7/files/offsets-policy.pdf>

2.3 How the Program protects MNES and OUV

The Program includes the existing management activities described in this report and the commitments and outcomes that will be delivered for MNES and OUV within the GBR coastal zone. It includes the planning and development context in which approval recommendations are made. It is supported by a range of management tools designed to achieve the Program objectives including legislation, policies, plans and programs, both existing and new, and a range of commitments.

The Program for the GBR coastal zone comprises:

- a series of commitments designed to enhance environmental outcomes, in particular for the protection and management of MNES and OUV over the next 25 years
- a set of management and development assessment tools that support continued improvement in the delivery of legislation, policies, plans, programs and regulations governing development activities.

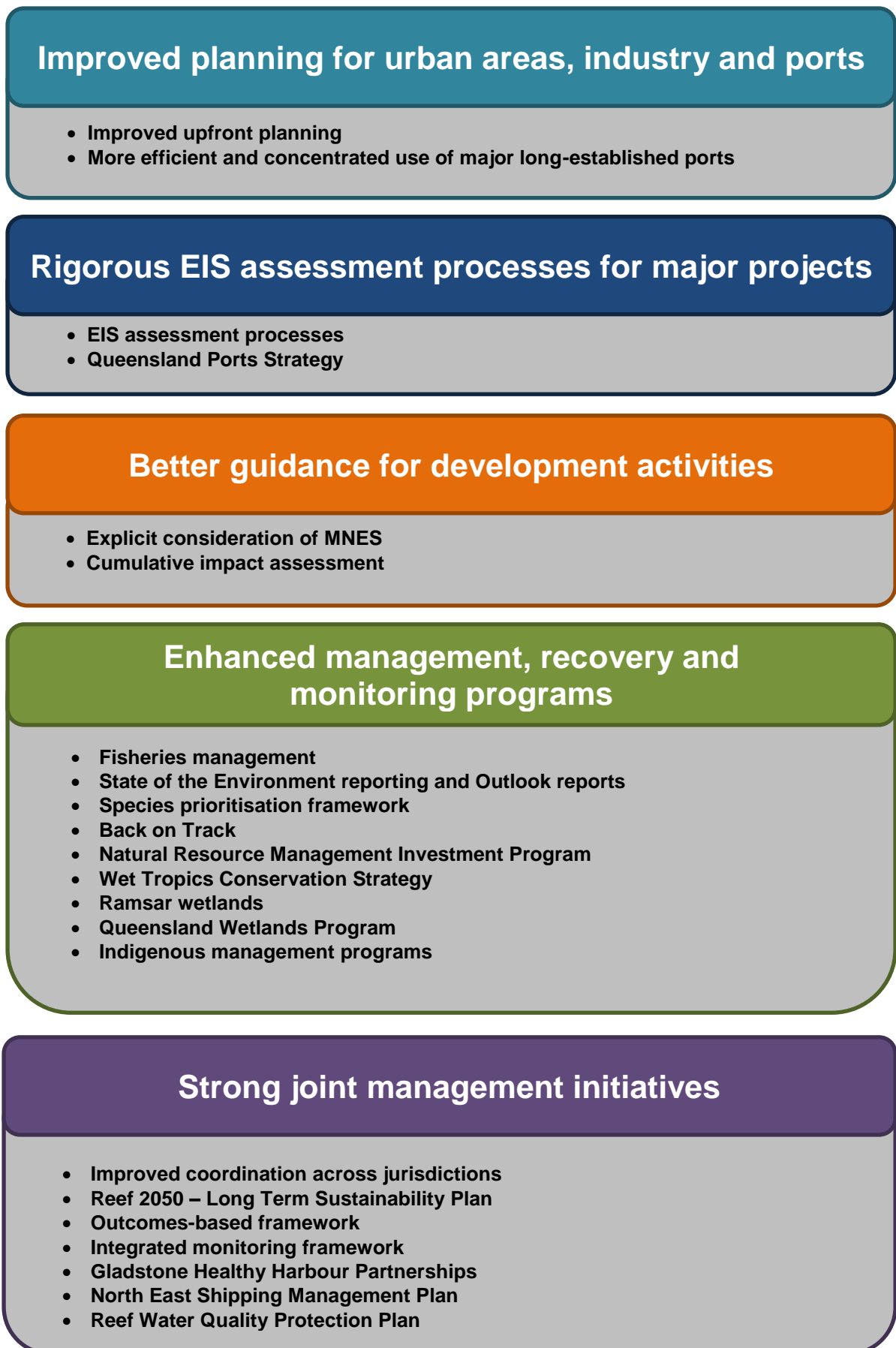
The continued development, refinement and enhancement of existing programs and policies relevant to the GBR coastal zone attempt to build on its successes, remove weaknesses and fill any identified gaps to deliver improved outcomes which are measurable, transparent and sustainable over the 25-year life of the Program.

The Program is designed to protect and manage environmental values across Queensland.

Figure 5 below illustrates how the Program delivers **five strategic outcomes** to ensure the identification, protection and enhancement of MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone:

- **improved planning** for urban areas, industry and ports
- **rigorous EIS assessment processes** for major projects
- **better guidance** for development activities
- **enhanced management, recovery and monitoring** programs
- **strong joint management** initiatives.

Figure 5 Strategic outcomes delivered by the Program



2.3.2 Improved planning for urban areas, industry and ports

Planning and evaluation of management actions in the GBR coastal zone inform a continuous adaptive management process. Those activities relevant to the GBR coastal zone rely on advice provided by scientific researchers with national and international reputations regarding issues of concern to the GBR.

Planning activities include state and regional planning, local planning including SDAs, PDAs and ports planning. The development of these plans enables the consideration of relevant state planning policies.

The Queensland Government recently released its SPP which combined the requirements of several specific planning policies into one single policy. The intent of developing one policy was to streamline planning considerations and to introduce the requirement that specific consideration be given to MNES early in the planning process.

This **improved upfront planning** approach can alert decision makers to sensitive environmental areas and enable development in more appropriate areas. It represents the first step toward the protection of MNES. If in the initial planning process, sensitive areas cannot be avoided for development purposes, a rigorous EIS process is applied at an individual project level to restrict any significant impacts on MNES and OUV.

Under the QPS, the Queensland Government will ensure **more efficient and concentrated use of major long-established ports**. The QPS outlines the initial approach to avoiding environmentally sensitive areas through the concentration of port development over the next 10 years to PPDA's. The strategy recognises the extensive infrastructure already in place to service existing ports and that it is both economically and ecologically beneficial to build on what is already in place, restrict the ports' footprint along the GBR coastline over the next 10 years and to protect and enhance this very unique coastal zone.

Other forms of upfront planning activities under the Program include extending and managing the protected area estate, the establishment of an offsets register which will identify priority areas and strategic investment corridors, and fisheries management activities.

2.3.3 Rigorous EIS assessment processes for major projects

The Program offers considerable protection through conditions imposed on approved projects, mandatory monitoring and reporting required of these projects and the legislative powers available to regulate activities and impacts.

Avoiding sensitive environmental areas potentially affected by development is achieved through **rigorous EIS assessment processes** and the **QPS**.

The EIS process firstly requires environmental impacts, specifically MNES and OUV to be avoided through project location and design. Where those sensitive areas cannot be avoided, the development must demonstrate how the impacts can be adequately mitigated. Finally, those impacts must be offset if avoidance is not possible and mitigation does not provide the necessary environmental protection.

Offsets can take the form of positive management interventions such as restoration of degraded habitat, arrested degradation or averted risk, protecting areas where there is

imminent or projected loss of biodiversity. The Queensland Government is committed to a 'net benefit' policy to offset any residual significant impacts of approved developments.

An EIS is required to consider the impacts from individual projects. An EIS can be undertaken using the SDPWO Act or EP Act. The majority of project proposals which may result in significant environmental impacts are assessed under the SDPWO Act.

The Queensland Government prohibits mining activity in the GBRWHA and rigorously conditions any potential downstream impacts from mining activity outside the WHA. Any mining activity which may result in significant impacts to the GBR are assessed under the EP Act. However, given the restriction of mining activity in the WHA, there are very few projects in close proximity to the GBR coastal zone. Only a very limited number of projects have been assessed under the EIS provisions of the SP Act.

The QPS master planning requirements will ensure that unacceptable impacts on MNES and OUV on both a port and individual project level are not tolerated by the Queensland Government. The process to be undertaken when developing detailed master planning is currently being documented through guidelines. The guidelines will outline the information to be considered to formulate the plans, the analysis required, standards to be addressed and the nature of the outcomes required.

2.3.4 Better guidance for development activities

Explicit consideration of MNES under the SDPWO Act EIS process requires the proponent to identify impacts on each MNES including each relevant listed threatened and migratory species. Specific conditions relating to MNES and OUV are enforced through the Coordinator-General's report on an EIS.

Both the EIS process and the QPS will require project proponents and port authorities to undertake a **cumulative impact assessment** on the environmental impacts, specifically MNES and OUV on the receiving environment. Cumulative impacts consider the combined environmental impacts of existing or proposed projects or activities on the GBR marine area and adjacent coastal zone and the resultant interactions between them over time.

Commitments to assist in ensuring that no unacceptable impacts on MNES and OUV are tolerated in the GBR coastal zone include:

- the development of MNES and OUV guidelines and tools to assist proponents and decision-makers to address these matters
- the use of the Australian Government's Protected Matters Search Tool
- the development of consistent threatened species listings
- the requirement for proponents to comply with development conditions.

2.3.5 Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs

The Queensland Government has made significant investments in a range of programs designed to enhance the condition of MNES and OUV.

The Queensland Government has direct responsibility for most **fisheries management** in the GBR. A range of management plans and regulations are in place, based on the scientific assessment of fish stocks, to appropriately manage commercial and recreational fishing effort and to minimise the impact on species of conservation interest (including threatened species).

Continued monitoring and reporting on the condition and trend of MNES in the GBR coastal zone through its **State of the Environment reporting** and **GBRMPA Outlook reports** will help to ensure management adapts to the latest information and scientific evidence. The Queensland Government will also report annually to the GBR Ministerial Forum on the implementation of the Program.

The Queensland Government's **species prioritisation framework** supports the conservation and recovery of many threatened species.

Back on Track¹¹ is the first species prioritisation framework to be implemented and is designed to prioritise all species to allow the identification of species that are in trouble, and those which have the greatest chance of recovery.

The **Natural Resource Management Investment Program**¹² helps fund projects designed to rehabilitate threatened ecological communities. It has a strong focus on addressing weeds and pests, which will ultimately benefit native vegetation, including threatened ecological communities.

A **Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy**¹³ provides information to guide restoration activities that will improve connectivity in the Wet Tropics WHA.

The two **Ramsar wetlands** in the GBR coastal zone are predominantly within terrestrial and marine protected areas. Declared FHA and Dugong Protection Areas are in place to restrict coastal development and fishing respectively.

The **Queensland Wetlands Program**¹⁴ has supported more than 70 projects to deliver a range of information and decision-making tools to protect and manage wetlands into the future.

Indigenous management programs, such as the Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program, promote Traditional Owner participation in managing land and sea country and promoting environmental protection throughout Queensland and in the GBR coastal zone.

¹¹ https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/prioritisation-framework/back_on_track_species_prioritisation_framework_applications.html

¹² <http://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/land/accessing-using-land/natural-resource-management/nrm-investment-program>

¹³ <http://www.wettropics.gov.au/site/user-assets/docs/wtmaConservationStrategy.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/wetlands/about-us/qld-wetland-program.html>

2.3.6 Strong joint management initiatives

The GBRMP is jointly managed with the GBRMPA. The Queensland Government has direct responsibility for the area between the high and low water marks within the GBRMP and some coastal waters of the GBRWHA that are outside the GBRMP.

The Queensland Government is committed to **improved coordination across jurisdictions** with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA. Streamlining of assessment and joint permitting processes is a priority in the GBR coastal zone. A joint field management program is in place, to enforce both zoning plans and manage the marine park and national park islands. The Queensland Government is committed to working with the Australian Government and the GBRMPA to prepare the **LTSP** to investigate the potential to provide better protection for MNES and OUV through cooperation, joint management and monitoring activities to better inform the condition of the GBRWHA.

The development of an **outcomes-based framework** will provide a systematic process for continual improvement to the GBRWHA. The framework will identify agreed outcomes, targets and activities that contribute to protecting the OUV of the GBRWHA. The outcomes framework will link to an integrated monitoring framework to evaluate the effectiveness of management in achieving the agreed outcomes.

Reef wide monitoring programs are integrated under an existing **integrated monitoring framework** which incorporates reporting on MNES condition into the 'state of environment' reporting.

The establishment and continued commitment to the **Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership**¹⁵ will ensure that the Australian, Queensland and local governments, industry and the community will deliver accountable management, annual reporting and recommendations based on sound science, monitoring and stakeholder engagement.

The draft **North East Shipping Management Plan**¹⁶ (draft NESMP) outlines further protection to enhance ship safety in the GBR, Torres Strait and Coral Sea regions. Additional protection for MNES include an understanding of the impacts of offshore ship anchorages, enforcement of current and new environmental standards on ships trading to the region, consideration of no anchoring areas, ship routing measures and reporting of hazardous cargo and further research into cumulative impacts from shipping in the GBR. The Queensland Government is committed to implementing all recommendations made within its jurisdiction.

The **Reef Water Quality Protection Plan**¹⁷ is a joint agreement with the Australian Government designed to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the health and resilience of the GBR as a result of runoff from broadscale agriculture. Major programs are in place to accelerate the uptake of best management practices and reduce runoff. Recent report cards have shown a reduction in the pollutant loads entering the reef, a significant achievement and a positive sign that the Program is achieving its objective to halt and reverse the decline in water quality.

¹⁵ <http://www.healthyharbour.org.au/>

¹⁶ <http://www.amsa.gov.au/community/consultation/nesm-consultation.asp>

¹⁷ <http://www.reefplan.qld.gov.au/>

3. Strategic outcomes delivered by the Program

In order to ensure future coastal development is environmentally sustainable, the Queensland Government has finalised a series of commitments to strengthen the management of the GBR coastal zone. The commitments are designed to have specific regard for the identification, avoidance, mitigation, offsetting and enhancement of MNES. The commitments provide confidence that the Program will continue to meet high standards and respond to key challenges.

The Queensland Government will implement relevant WHC's recommendations regarding the GBRWHA and work collaboratively with the Australian Government in jointly managing the GBR.

Consistent with the complementary approach to the strategic assessment, the GBRMPA also recommend improvements to management which complement the Queensland Government's commitments.

The Queensland Government will ensure the implementation of the Program through two key mechanisms:

- LTSP for joint commitments with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA
- Existing reporting mechanisms for Queensland-specific initiatives.

Both mechanisms will report to the GBR Ministerial Forum annually to advise of the Program's progress.

Improved planning for urban areas, industry and ports

- Improved upfront planning
- More efficient and concentrated use of major long-established ports

3.1 Improved planning for urban areas, industry and ports

Queensland's planning system provides for the consideration of environmental values in the early stages of identifying locations for future urban or industrial areas.

Queensland's planning and development legislation:

- sets out how and where development may take place and the way in which applications for development and resulting development activities in the GBR coastal zone should be assessed, and provides strategic guidance for local government involvement in planning
- provides assessment mechanisms and conditioning provisions to ensure that unacceptable or unsustainable impacts to MNES are avoided, mitigated or offset
- contributes to the protection of the OUV of the GBRWHA
- sets out the Queensland Government's desired environmental outcomes and provides the regulatory basis for striking a balance between economic development and environmental protection
- provides a range of compliance mechanisms and penalties for non-compliance, making legislative regulation readily enforceable
- allocates responsibility for administration to Queensland Government agencies. Such an allocation comes with transparency and accountability requirements for individuals including for example, authorised officers and inspectors through to ministerial accountability.

Improved upfront planning

3.1.1 Regional plans

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering a new generation of statutory regional plans aiming to manage impacts on the environment; foster diverse and strong economic growth and plan and prioritise infrastructure; and where necessary, plan for urban growth and resolve land use conflicts such as those arising between agricultural and mining activities on land.

Regional plans are important for considering the balance between economic development and potential environmental impacts, this includes MNES and OUV.

At the time of writing, four regional plans had been completed for areas within the GBR coastal zone and a two are being progressed.

Table 2 presents the schedule for the development and review of plans for regions within the GBR coastal zone.

Table 2 Schedule for regional plans in the GBR coastal zone

Region	Current status
Cape York	Currently being prepared
Far North Queensland	Completed 2009
North Queensland	Scheduled
Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday	Completed 2012
Central Queensland	Completed 2013
Wide Bay Burnett	Completed 2011

Commitment 1: The Queensland Government will complete regional plans in the GBR coastal zone where there is a gap and continue to update other regional plans to ensure they respond to the latest information and pressures.

3.1.2 Protected area management

Protected areas, forests and marine parks are the cornerstone of Queensland’s management of biodiversity conservation and natural and cultural heritage values. Protected areas, such as national parks and private conservation reserves (nature refuges), are declared under the NC Act on terrestrial areas and islands. Marine parks, including high protection zones, are established under the MP Act and declared FHAs are established under the *Fisheries Act 1994*.

A nature refuge is an area of land voluntarily protected for conservation, while allowing compatible and sustainable land use to continue. A nature refuge is negotiated through a legally binding, perpetual nature refuge agreement between the landholder and the state.

Tailored to suit the landholder’s management needs, nature refuge agreements acknowledge a commitment to managing and preserving land with significant conservation values. In a vast state bearing a diverse array of species, ecosystems and significant sites, nature refuges fill an important niche in promoting a community-based landscape approach to conservation.

The GBR Coast Marine Park is a state marine park that runs the full length of the GBRMP from just north of Baffle Creek (north of Bundaberg) to Cape York. It provides protection for Queensland tidal lands and tidal waters.

The GBR Coast Marine Park, established in 2004, complements the GBRMP through adopting similar zone objectives, and entry and use provisions. While the activities allowed within the marine parks are generally the same, there are some Queensland-specific provisions that may apply.

Queensland's FHA network supports the protection of all inshore and estuarine fish habitats contained within declared FHAs, which play the key role of sustaining local and regional fisheries. Forty FHAs have been declared over key fish habitats between Baffle Creek and Torres Strait on the east coast. The FHAs allow all legal forms of fishing – recreational, commercial and indigenous – and restrict the level of coastal development and its impacts on these key fish habitats.

QPWS actively manages fire, pest plants and animals in parks and other areas gazetted under the NC Act in order to protect the biodiversity and natural processes in these areas.

QPWS has prepared master plans for Queensland's park system to set out how protected areas will be managed by the Queensland Government for the next 20 years. The QPWS also establish management plans or statements for each park, including any new protected areas, that identify the park's key natural and cultural values and outlines strategies for day-to-day and ongoing management to protect those values. The public is invited to provide input whenever a plan or statement is being prepared.

The Queensland Government provides over \$8 million a year for the joint field management program for the GBRMP which includes compliance, management of visitor facilities and education.

Commitment 2: The Queensland Government will maintain and work to add to its protected area estate and continue to provide funding for protected area management in the GBR coastal zone.

Commitment 3: The Queensland Government will undertake on-ground actions which will deliver long-term benefits for threatened species.

More efficient and concentrated use of major long-established ports

3.1.3 Port development

The Queensland Government will ensure port development in the GBR coastal zone occurs in a balanced and incremental way to support economic development while protecting MNES and OUV.

The QPS is the Queensland Government's blueprint for managing and improving the efficiency and environmental management of the state's ports network over the next decade.

The government's vision is 'to drive economic growth through the efficient use and development of Queensland's long-established major port areas, while protecting and managing Queensland's outstanding environmental assets'.

The QPS outlines 18 actions for the planning, development and management of Queensland's port network.

The actions include:

- the establishment of five PPDA's at the long-established major ports of Abbot Point, Brisbane, Gladstone, Hay Point and Mackay, and Townsville
- the prohibition of dredging within and adjoining the GBRWHA, for the development of new, or the expansion of existing, port facilities outside PPDA's for the next 10 years
- introduction of a statutory guideline for port master planning
- introduction of legislation to give effect to the policy intent of the QPS.

The port master planning process will involve the comprehensive identification and management of environmental values and will require assessment of MNES and OUV as defined under the EPBC Act.

A key element of port master planning will be the development of an Environmental Management Framework (EMF) for each PPDA to manage land and marine based environmental values including MNES and OUV, MSES and cumulative impacts. Port master plans will be developed in accordance with the 'avoid, mitigate, offset' hierarchy of principles, with offsets implemented through Queensland and Australian Government offset policies as appropriate.

The objective of the EMF is to ensure projects undertaken as part of a port master plan meet environmental obligations in a coordinated and integrated manner. The outcome will include stronger, more comprehensive environmental management that is cost effective and efficient.

Commitment 4: The Queensland Government will introduce legislation to implement key actions of the QPS. The legislation will concentrate development at five PPDA's and introduce port master planning which will incorporate environmental considerations and community engagement. The QPS also prohibits dredging within and adjoining the GBRWHA for the development of new, or the expansion of existing port facilities outside PPDA's, for the next 10 years.

Rigorous EIS assessment processes for major projects

- EIS assessment processes
- Queensland Ports Strategy

3.2 Rigorous EIS assessment processes for major projects

The Program will ensure that matters under Part 3 of the EPBC Act are addressed and impacts are not unacceptable. This will be achieved through the legislative mechanisms and commitments and initiatives made under the Program.

The EIS assessment processes under the SDPWO Act and the EP Act are key mechanisms to provide for the protection of MNES and OUV. Both processes assess, monitor and enforce the protection of environmental values regarding development activities undertaken in the GBR coastal zone.

There are several other pieces of legislation, supporting policies, plans and programs to protect the environment as outlined in the Supplementary Report, each providing for the protection of environmental values.

The EIS process ensures that new development proposed in those areas is rigorously assessed and strict conditions and compliance measures can be applied to ensure that environmental values are protected. It considers direct, indirect and cumulative impacts. With regard to the GBR coastal zone, this includes downstream impacts of land-based development on the GBRWHA (and other MNES). The EIS process provides for comprehensive consideration of impacts on MNES and OUV, and where projects are approved, outline conditions to address both direct and indirect impacts.

The authority to enforce compliance and issue penalties for non-compliance is assured for development activities under each act as outlined below. A series of case studies have been prepared which demonstrate how project approvals are achieved and compliance is assured under both EIS processes using the SDPWO Act and EP Act. It is important to note that the majority of proposed projects which demonstrate potential for significant impacts on MNES in the GBR coastal zone are, and continue to be, assessed under the SDPWO Act.

3.3 EIS assessment process under the SDPWO Act

The Coordinator-General has powers under the SDPWO Act to plan, deliver and coordinate large scale projects while ensuring their environmental impacts are managed. This includes managing a comprehensive EIS process including public participation, resulting in strict conditions to manage, mitigate and offset environmental impacts. This process plays a critical role in facilitating environmentally responsible economic development in Queensland and coordinating the complex array of permits and approvals required for large scale projects.

Assessment of environmental impacts under Part 4 of the SDPWO Act is undertaken where the Coordinator-General declares, for the purposes of section 26 of the SDPWO Act, that the proposed action is a coordinated project for which an EIS is required.

A coordinated project declaration does not imply government approval of, support for or commitment to the project in question. Rather, it means the project requires a rigorous and comprehensive EIS assessment, involving whole-of-government coordination. The project proponent is still required to obtain necessary development approvals or to comply with relevant planning and environment laws and planning instruments.

An outline of the EIS process under the SDPWO Act for coordinated projects requiring an EIS is provided in Figure 6.

Figure 6 EIS assessment process under SDPWO Act



3.3.2 Pre-lodgement meetings

Before making an application for declaration, proponents are encouraged to attend one or more optional pre-lodgement meetings.

Pre-lodgement meetings allow for early discussions on a new project proposal. The meetings allow the proponent to discuss the EIS process and to refine the draft Initial Advice Statement (IAS) based on feedback from these meetings. At a pre-lodgement meeting, matters such as the following may be discussed with the proponent:

- the recommendation process and clarification of the statutory approvals being sought as part of the Coordinator-General's assessment process
- project schedule timeframes and milestones
- Coordinator-General guidelines and fee schedule
- IAS requirements
- a preliminary indication of 'critical' and 'routine' matters for the project
- requirements of the proponent's technical and financial capability statement and pre-feasibility assessment of the project.

3.3.3 Declaration

An application for a coordinated project declaration includes:

- an IAS containing sufficient information for the Coordinator-General to assess it against the criteria listed in section 27(1) of the SDPWO Act
- a separate statement detailing the proponent's financial and technical capability to complete the EIS for the project
- a separate statement assessing the technical and commercial feasibility of the project (pre-feasibility assessment)
- the prescribed application fee.

The IAS is a scoping document prepared by or on behalf of a proponent that provides detailed information about a proposed project. The IAS includes information on the:

- size and nature of the proposed project
- environment in and around the project location
- project's potential environmental impacts
- possible measures to mitigate any adverse effects
- scope of statutory approvals being sought.

The information provided in an IAS is relied upon to:

- assist the Coordinator-General in deciding whether to declare a project a coordinated project
- enable stakeholders to determine the nature and level of their interest in the proposal
- assist the Coordinator-General to prepare a TOR for an EIS for the proposed project (if declared a coordinated project).

Declaration decision

The Coordinator-General may decide to declare, or not to declare, a project to be a coordinated project if one or more of the matters mentioned in section 27 of the SDPWO Act apply:

- complex approval requirements, involving local, state and federal governments
- significant environmental effects
- strategic significance to the locality, region or state, including for the infrastructure, economic and social benefits, capital investment or employment opportunities it may provide
- significant infrastructure requirements.

However, the Coordinator-General is not bound to declare a project to be a coordinated project merely because it satisfies one or more of these characteristics.

In deciding whether a project should be declared a coordinated project under section 27(1) of the SDPWO Act, the Coordinator-General must have regard to the following criteria:

- detailed information about the project given by the proponent in an IAS
- relevant planning schemes or policies of a local government, the Queensland or the Australian governments
- relevant State policies and Government priorities
- a pre-feasibility assessment of the project, including how it satisfies an identified need or demand
- the capacity of the proponent to undertake and complete the EIS for the project
- any other matter the Coordinator-General considers relevant.

The Coordinator-General has the discretion to determine the weighting of each of the above matters and can decide to declare or not to declare a project on the basis of one or more of these matters and can refuse to receive or process a declaration application if it lacks sufficient information to make a decision. If the application is refused, the Coordinator-General is required to give a statement of reasons for the decision.

The Coordinator-General may also independently declare a coordinated project if it is justified.

A coordinated project declaration takes effect once a notice of declaration appears in the Queensland Government Gazette.

3.3.4 Preparation of draft TOR

Once a coordinated project has been declared, the Coordinator-General will prepare a draft TOR, which, at the Coordinator-General's discretion, may be released for public and advisory agency consultation. A generic TOR has been prepared for various types of projects that may be adapted for specific project situations.

Should a public consultation process be required, comments are invited from the public and advisory agencies on whether the draft TOR adequately covers all the matters the project proponent must address when preparing the EIS.

The length of the consultation period is not legislatively prescribed; however, it typically runs for 20 business days.

Public notices inviting submissions on the draft TOR are published in local, regional and state newspapers. If the project is a 'controlled action' public notices will also be placed in national newspapers.

The TOR sets out the general and specific requirements the proponent should address in preparing an EIS under section 32 of the SDPWO Act. It also defines the Coordinator-General's expectations of the proponent in preparing an EIS and forms the basis against which the Coordinator-General determines whether the subsequent EIS prepared by the proponent is satisfactory for public release. A TOR should effectively outline the boundaries of the project and its impacts for consideration in the EIS.

A TOR should not be considered exhaustive or exclusive in establishing the requirements for an EIS. The onus remains with the proponent to demonstrate that all of the relevant matters associated with the proposed development are included in the EIS, including other matters that emerge as important from environmental studies or otherwise during the course of preparing the EIS. Proponents are strongly advised to use the TOR as a basis for consultation with relevant advisory agencies and other stakeholders in preparing the EIS.

3.3.5 Finalising the TOR

The Coordinator-General is required to finalise the TOR and give the proponent a copy as soon as practicable after any public consultation period closes. In finalising the TOR, the Coordinator-General must have regard to any submissions on the draft TOR received during the comment period.

3.3.6 Preparation of an EIS

The EIS is prepared in accordance with the approved TOR and must describe the current environment; the project's environmental impacts; and the ways of avoiding, mitigating or offsetting those impacts.

The impacts include direct and, indirect impacts resulting from the construction, commissioning, operation and decommissioning of the project.

The definition of environment as outlined in the SDPWO Act is:

- ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities
- all natural and physical resources
- the qualities and characteristics of locations, places and areas, however large or small, that contribute to their biological diversity and integrity, intrinsic or attributed scientific value or interest, amenity, harmony and sense of community
- the social, economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions that affect, or are affected by, the things mentioned above.

MNES are therefore covered by the definition of environment as outlined in the SDPWO Act. For projects that have the potential to cause significant impacts on MNES, the EIS must also address relevant considerations as defined by the EPBC Act.

The EIS must provide enough information to enable the Coordinator-General to determine whether reasonable measures are being proposed to avoid and mitigate impacts on MNES and whether significant residual impacts are still likely to occur after avoidance and mitigation. Sufficient detail must also be provided on the timing and the expected effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

The Office of the Coordinator-General manages the EIS process on behalf of the Coordinator-General. A wide range of state government departments and relevant local governments known collectively as 'advisory agencies' are invited to review and make submissions on the EIS. The Australian Government may also be invited to provide advice on MNES.

While a coordinated project is undergoing an EIS process, the following are suspended:

- Integrated Development Assessment System (IDAS) approvals process under the *Sustainable Planning Act 1999*
- approvals processes under other relevant Acts.

This suspension remains in place until the Coordinator-General's evaluation report on the EIS is completed and sent to the IDAS assessment manager and other approval managers for their consideration.

3.3.7 Consultation process for the EIS

Under the provisions of Part 4 of the SDPWO Act, the draft EIS must be released for a public consultation process. The Coordinator-General decides that an EIS is suitable for public release, and invites submissions from members of the public and advisory agencies. The proponent must develop a comprehensive and inclusive consultation plan with the stakeholder groups including interested bodies and persons, affected persons, government agencies and referral bodies.

The length of the consultation period is not legislatively prescribed; however, it typically runs for at least 30 business days.

Submissions are invited to comment on the project's potential environmental effects, and whether the strategies proposed by the proponent will effectively manage the project's impacts.

Public notices inviting submissions on the draft EIS are published in local, regional and state newspapers. If the project is a 'controlled action' public notices will also be placed in national newspapers.

3.3.8 Consideration of public submissions

The Coordinator-General must consider all properly made submissions and may also consider submissions that are not properly made.

A 'properly-made' submission is one:

- made in writing to the Coordinator-General
- received on or before the deadline for submissions
- stating the name and address of each submitter

-
- signed by each submitter
 - stating the grounds of the submissions and the facts and circumstances relied on in support of the grounds.

Only properly-made submissions will trigger rights to appeal against a decision about a development application for the project under the SP Act.

During the public consultation period, the Coordinator-General may arrange meetings between the proponent and advisory agencies to:

- present an overview of the EIS
- enable the proponent to outline the key elements of the project, its potential impacts and possible mitigation strategies
- solicit feedback from advisory agencies on matters of interest or concern prior to their formal submissions on the EIS.

After reviewing the submissions received on the EIS, the Coordinator-General may request that the proponent prepare additional information (AEIS) to address omissions in the EIS, or matters raised in submissions on the EIS. On receiving the AEIS, the Coordinator-General may decide to publicly notify the AEIS in the same regional and national newspapers as the draft EIS.

The length of the consultation period is not legislatively prescribed, however is typically runs for at least 20 business days. Alternatively, the Coordinator-General may decide to seek comments from targeted advisory agencies and other stakeholders.

Coordinator-General's evaluation report on an EIS

After assessing the EIS documentation, including any additional information, the Coordinator-General prepares an evaluation report on the EIS. The report includes the Coordinator-General's evaluations of, and conclusions regarding, the project's environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

The Coordinator-General's Report takes into account:

- the EIS (including any additional information)
- all properly made submissions
- other submissions accepted by the Coordinator-General
- comments and advice from state government advisory agencies, the Australian Government and other entities
- technical reports
- legal advice.

After considering all of this information, the Coordinator-General recommends the project either:

- proceed subject to conditions and recommendations designed to ensure the project's environmental impacts are properly managed; or
- be refused on the grounds its environmental impacts cannot be adequately addressed. If the Coordinator-General report states that project is refused, the report must give reasons why the application for the development approval or other approvals must be refused.

The Coordinator-General's report on the EIS is not an approval in itself. The conditions of approval in the report only gain legal effect when they are attached to an approval given under other specific legislation.

The Coordinator-General's evaluation report is published on the department's website. State government advisory agencies, organisations and individuals who made submissions on the EIS are advised in writing of the report's release.

The Coordinator-General's report on the EIS generally lapses three years after it is published. This time period may be extended by the Coordinator-General or if, before the report lapses, the proponent applies for an approval for the project.

3.3.9 Recommended conditions

The Coordinator-General's evaluation report on the EIS may state conditions that must be attached to a:

- development approval under the SP Act
- proposed mining lease under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*
- draft environmental authority (mining lease) under the EP Act
- proposed petroleum lease, pipeline licence or petroleum facility licence under the *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004*
- non-code compliant environmental authority (petroleum activities) under the EP Act
- proposed greenhouse gas injection and storage lease under the *Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009*
- proposed geothermal production lease under the *Geothermal Energy Act 2010*.

The evaluation report may recommend conditions and requirements relating to:

- a community infrastructure designation under the SP Act
- approvals under other legislation for which stated conditions do not apply.

The Coordinator-General can also impose conditions on a project where there is no relevant approval. These conditions could relate to offsets, bonds, audits and the duration of the approval, and nominate a government agency to have jurisdiction for each condition.

The Coordinator-General may include conditions to address impacts on MNES. The conditions may be necessary to protect an MNES, or repair or mitigate damage to an MNES. The Coordinator-General will not recommend a project proceed if it will result in unacceptable impacts to MNES.

Coordinated project proponents are required to obtain all other development approvals and licences from local authorities (e.g. building approvals and material change of use approvals) and state government agencies (e.g. an environmental authority).

Generally, the Coordinator-General's report on the EIS is used by the assessment managers to complete assessment documentation and determine a post-EIS approval and conditioning strategy.

3.3.10 Compliance

Under the SDPWO Act, any conditions imposed by the Coordinator-General are legally enforceable. They apply to anyone who undertakes the project, including the project proponent and the proponent's agents, contractors, subcontractors or licensees.

The Coordinator-General may also state conditions that must be attached to future approvals, such as an environmental authority or a mining or petroleum lease. Compliance with these 'stated conditions' is monitored and enforced by the relevant administering authority.

The Coordinator-General may nominate an administering authority to have jurisdiction of an imposed condition, such as the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP). Compliance with the imposed condition is monitored by the administering authority, however, the Coordinator-General remains responsible for the auditing and enforcement of the condition.

On behalf of the Coordinator-General, the Office of the Coordinator-General's compliance unit:

- monitors and enforces project proponents' compliance with all imposed conditions of approval
- works collaboratively with administering authorities
- reviews and provides advice to the Coordinator-General on third-party audit reports
- ensures non-compliance is addressed appropriately
- advises the Coordinator-General on the conditioning of approvals, to ensure the conditions are effective and enforceable.

The Office of the Coordinator-General's strategic compliance plan outlines its approach to monitoring and enforcing compliance with the conditions of approval.

The compliance unit uses a range of compliance measures to ensure project proponents comply with the Coordinator-General's imposed conditions of approval for a project. Non-compliance with imposed conditions is addressed through education, remediation, and/or enforcement actions.

3.3.11 Third-party audit

Project proponents are generally required to engage an independent and suitably qualified person/s to conduct a third-party audit of compliance with imposed conditions. The audit reports must be submitted to the Coordinator-General for review. The frequency of project auditing varies, but they are generally conducted every six to twelve months during the audit period. The audit period can be for the life of the project. The department's audit guidelines are intended to help project proponents and their contractors meet the Coordinator-General's auditing requirements. The guidelines broadly explain how to engage an auditor; carry out an audit; and format an audit report.

The audit report certifies the status of all imposed conditions and must include the findings of the audit, any breaches of imposed conditions and any corrective actions taken, or revised practices to be implemented.

The audit reports are reviewed by the compliance unit, who make recommendations to the Coordinator-General for consideration, should further compliance action be required.

3.3.12 Provisions, enforcement and penalties

Generally, the SDPWO Act is enforced via enforcement notices and orders. An enforcement notice may require a person to comply with the relevant condition or take the steps the Coordinator-General considers reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with the condition. The enforcement notice may require the:

- person not to start, or stop, a stated activity indefinitely, for a stated period or until further notice from the Coordinator-General
- person to carry out a stated activity only during stated times or subject to stated conditions
- recipient to take stated action within a stated period.

Proceedings for an enforcement order may be applied for by the Coordinator-General through the Planning and Environment Court to remedy or restrain a contravention of an enforceable condition. Application for an interim enforcement order may be made.

If the Coordinator-General believes a person has contravened an enforceable condition, the Coordinator-General may give the person an enforcement notice, requiring the person to comply with the condition or take steps to ensure compliance with the condition.

The Coordinator-General may seek an enforcement order from the Planning and Environment Court under the SDPWO Act to remedy or restrain a contravention of an enforceable condition. It is an offence to contravene an enforcement order.

The SDPWO Act provides penalty provisions for using the land in a manner not consistent with the approved development scheme. Lower-level details of the development, such as operational works or reconfiguration of a lot are regulated in accordance with the SP Act.

3.4 EIS assessment process under EP Act

The object of the EP Act is to protect Queensland's environment while allowing for ESD.

The principles of ESD and the protection of MNES and OUV is inherent in the EP Act

The EP Act sets out the requirements for impacts of large-scale resource projects to be assessed by an EIS process. Controlled actions under the EPBC Act requiring impact assessment can be assessed using an EIS prepared under the EP Act.

The requirement for submitting and approving an EIS for mining activities on land outside WHA (including prospecting, mining claims, exploration, mineral development, and mining leases) and environmentally relevant activities (including land fill, sewage treatment plants, power stations) are detailed in the EP Act.

*Mining activity is prohibited in the WHA (IGA).
Mining activity is prohibited in National Parks in Queensland (EP Act).
Mining activity is prohibited in the Wet Tropics, except where a prior approval is in place (Wet Tropics Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993).*

In Queensland, resource activities (e.g. mining and petroleum activities including Coal Seam Gas) are Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERAs) that may only be carried out by a person holding, or operating under, an Environmental Authority (EA) issued under the EP Act and a resource tenement granted under relevant resource legislation, e.g. the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* or the *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004*.

A mining or petroleum lease (the tenure which permits mining or petroleum operations to commence) cannot be issued until an EA for a resource activity is approved. The Director-General of DEHP is the chief executive of the EP Act and the administering authority for ERAs (excluding some prescribed ERAs which are devolved to local government and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)).

High-impact resource projects may be required to be assessed through an EIS process under chapter 3, part 1 of the EP Act.

An EIS may be required for projects that would involve a:

- significant environmental impact
- high level of uncertainty about potential impacts
- high level of public interest or is likely to contribute substantially to cumulative impacts even if the project on its own would not have a significant impact.

Large-scale resource projects trigger the need for an EIS if the proposed resource project meets any of the EIS triggers in the DEHP guideline 'Triggers for EISs under the EP Act for mining, petroleum and gas activities' (EIS triggers).

A decision may be made to require an EIS even if no EIS criteria are triggered, if DEHP or the Queensland Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, having regard to the standard criteria, determines that the project applied for would involve a significant environmental impact, a high level of uncertainty about potential impacts, involve a high level of public interest; or is likely to contribute substantially to cumulative impacts.

The standard criteria under the EP Act (schedule 4) are:

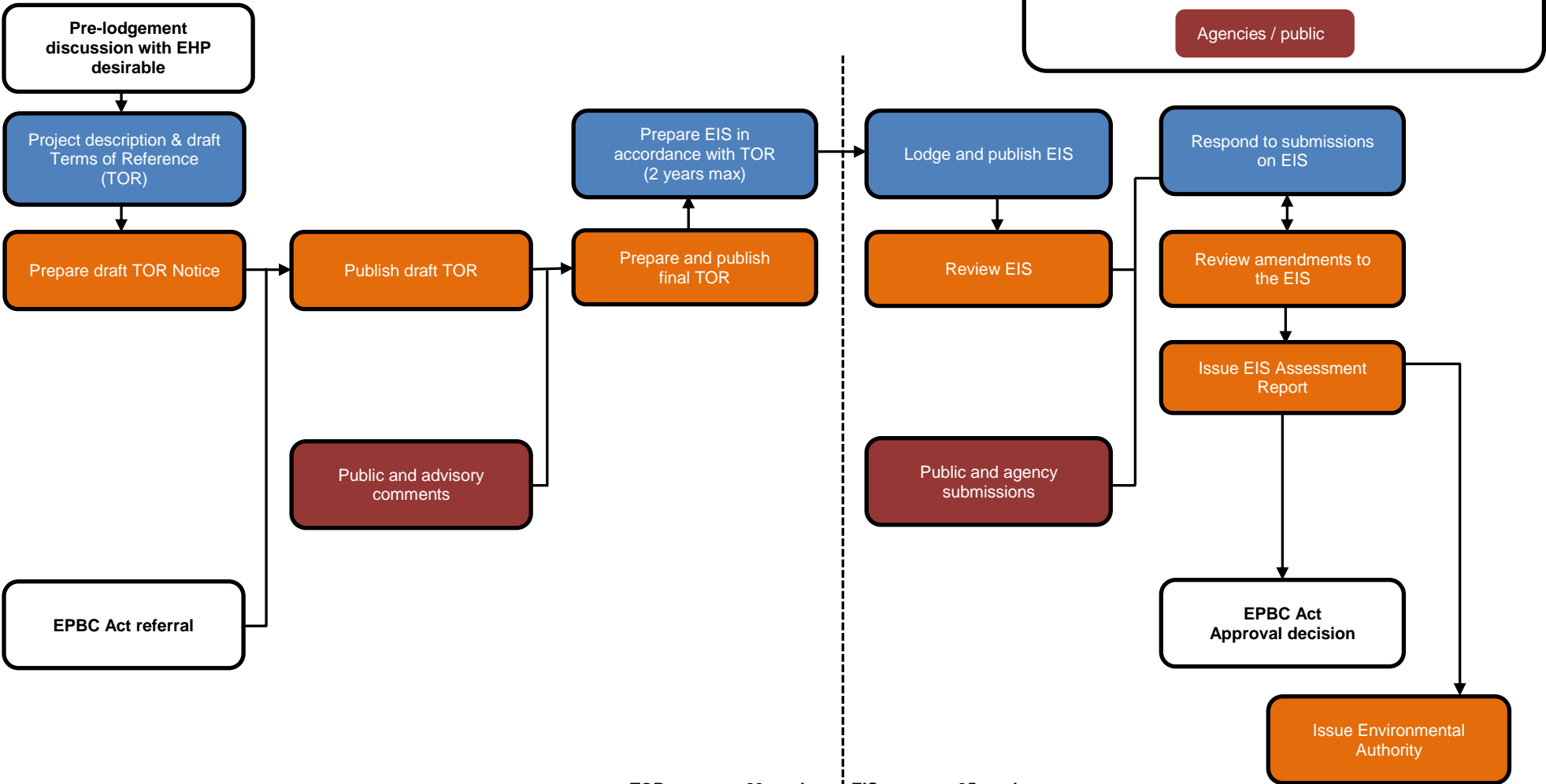
- the principles of ESD as set out in the National Strategy for ESD
- any applicable environmental protection policy
- any applicable Australian, state or local government plans, standards, agreements or requirements
- any applicable EIS, assessment or report
- the character, resilience and values of the receiving environment
- all submissions made by the applicant and submitters
- the best practice environmental management for activities under any relevant instrument, or proposed instrument.
- the financial implications of the requirements under an instrument, or proposed instrument, mentioned in paragraph (g) as they would relate to the type of activity or industry carried out, or proposed to be carried out, under the instrument
- the public interest
- any applicable site management plan
- any relevant integrated environmental management system or proposed integrated environmental management system
- any other matter prescribed under a regulation.

An EIS under the EP Act is not required when the resource project is a coordinated project declared under the SDPWO Act. Refer to section 4 for a description of the SDPWO Act EIS process. Figure 7 illustrates the EIS process. The purpose of an EIS as defined under section 40 of the EP Act, includes:

- assess the potential adverse and beneficial environmental, economic and social impacts of the project
- assess management, monitoring, planning and other measures proposed to minimise any adverse environmental impacts of the project
- consider feasible alternative ways to carry out the project
- give information to the public
- help the administering authority decide an environmental authority application for which the EIS is required
- give information to the Australian government and other state authorities to help them make informed decisions.

In addition, the EIS process is required to meet assessment requirements for a project that is a controlled action under the EPBC Act.

Figure 7 EIS assessment process under EP Act



3.4.2 Preparation of draft TOR

To initiate the EIS process under the EP Act, the proponent is required to submit a draft TOR using DEHP's generic TOR template.

The TOR requires the EIS to include a brief summary of a proposal's compatibility with the standard criteria as defined by the EP Act, which includes principles of ESD prescribed by section 3A of the EPBC Act and other relevant policy instruments.

It must also include the matters necessary for ensuring the assessment of the project under the EIS process gives enough information about the project and its relevant impacts to allow an informed decision whether to approve the project under the EPBC Act. The adequacy of the TOR to address the relevant controlling provisions (e.g. MNES) is determined by the chief executive.

3.4.3 Initial Advice Statement

The proponent must provide a description of the project and operational land, often referred to as the Initial Advice Statement (IAS), and all information required under section 71 and section 41(3) of the EP Act and sections 6 and 7 of the *Environmental Protection Regulation 2008*.

The IAS assists stakeholders and the local community to determine their level of interest in the project. The document would scope the potential impacts to be investigated in an EIS, including impacts on threatened ecological communities, marine and migratory species.

3.4.4 Finalising the TOR

The draft TOR are publically notified and comments received during the notification period would be provided to the proponent.

The proponent must, within the period prescribed under a regulation, give the chief executive of the EP Act—a written summary of the comments; a statement of the proponent's response to the comments; and any amendments of the draft TOR the proponent proposes because of the comments.

If DEHP decides the responses to the TOR provided by the proponent were adequate, the chief executive would then finalise the TOR and publish the TOR notice. Within two years of the Queensland Government finalising the TOR, the proponent would be required to submit an EIS for the project.

3.4.5 Preparation of an EIS

The EIS must meet the requirements of the EP Act and EP Regulation and address all matters outlined in the TOR for the project. The EIS must identify and assess expected adverse and beneficial environmental, social and economic impacts of the project and include suitable planning, mitigation and monitoring measures to manage any adverse impacts of the project.

When determining the significance of an impact, the EIS must take into account the scale, intensity, duration, frequency and irreversibility of the impact, and the risk of environmental harm. Scientific and specialist studies undertaken in response to the TOR must provide details of the methodology, reliability, assumptions and scientific conclusions used to predict the potential adverse and beneficial impacts.

Offsets must be identified where significant residual impacts from development on an area possessing MSES cannot be avoided or minimised.

For projects which have the potential to cause significant impacts on MNES, the EIS must also address requirements of the EPBC Act. It must include a separate assessment report for MNES matters included in the controlling provisions. The EIS must provide enough information about the project and relevant impacts on MNES to allow the Minister to make an informed decision on the project (i.e. approval or refusal) and, if relevant, impose appropriate conditions of approval.

An outline of the existing MNES associated with the site, prediction of the nature and extent of likely impacts and an outline of measures that would be implemented to avoid, reduce or mitigate the impacts on MNES is required by the proponent.

Proposed mitigation measures for impacts on MNES must be consistent with those proposed under Queensland legislation. Any residual impacts on MNES must be offset according to the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy.

For resource projects where water is a controlling provision under the EPBC Act and which are coal seam gas or large coal mine developments, the Australian Government jointly with DEHP, must make a referral to the Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining Development (IESC). The IESC provides scientific advice to decision makers on potential impacts from CSG and large coal mining developments on Australia's water resources.

3.4.6 Consultation process

The EIS process facilitates a high level of public scrutiny. Both the draft TOR and EIS are made publically available for a minimum period of 30 business days. This allows stakeholders and any member of the public to review the draft TOR and comment on what values and impacts should be addressed in the EIS.

After the proponent has produced the EIS document, it is made publically available for a minimum period of 30 business days for stakeholders and the public to review the document, and submit comments on the quality of the proponent's assessment and commitments. If the project is to be assessed under the EPBC Act, then public notices would be placed in newspapers circulating in Australia, Queensland and the area of the proposed project site. DEHP for the TOR stage, and the proponent for the EIS stage, are required to notify all affected parties, as defined in section 38 of the EP Act, that the TOR and EIS are available for review. This would usually be done by mail and would include:

- people who hold land on, or adjacent to, the proposed tenure
- any registered native title body corporate or claimant, or a representative of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander body
- the relevant local government authority.

At various stages in the EIS process, DEHP would also seek advice from advisory bodies. An advisory body is an individual or organisation that is requested to provide advice to DEHP within the extent of their areas of responsibility, interest and expertise.

The option to use advisory bodies is consistent with DEHP's aim to ensure the final TOR and the EIS are comprehensive, and adequately assess impacts on matters relevant to the interests and requirements of all key agencies and interested parties. Members of the advisory body may include:

- Australian and Queensland government departments
- local government authorities
- statutory authorities and academic institutions
- private organisations, community groups (including environmental groups) and special interest groups (including recognised landowner and Indigenous organisations).

The proponent would be encouraged to also undertake community consultation with members of the public and local governments, and undertake ongoing consultation with the Traditional Owners (if relevant) during the public submission period of the EIS. The proponent may also circulate information about the project to the community through meetings, phone calls, letters, and emails.

Submissions received from the public, affected and interested persons and advisory bodies during the EIS public notification periods would be provided to the proponent. The proponent would be required to respond to these comments and make any amendments to the submitted EIS as a result of the submissions.

3.4.7 EIS assessment report

On receipt of the amended EIS and response to comments on the EIS, the chief executive must decide whether or not to allow the EIS to proceed to the final stage of the EIS process. The chief executive may refuse to allow the submitted EIS to proceed. In this case the proponent must be provided with reasons for the decision and given opportunity to apply to the Minister to review the decision.

If the chief executive of the EP Act decides to allow the EIS to proceed to the final stage of the EIS process, DEHP is required to prepare an EIS assessment report under section 57 (EIS assessment report) of the EP Act. The chief executive of the EP Act can only allow the EIS to proceed to this final stage of the EIS process if it considers that the EIS addresses the final terms of reference in an acceptable form, if the proponent's response to the EIS submissions was adequate; and that the proponent has made all appropriate amendments to the submitted EIS as a result of submissions.

When preparing an EIS assessment report, the chief executive of the EP Act must consider the following:

- the final TOR for the EIS
- the submitted EIS
- the submitted supplementary EIS or any amendments to the EIS
- additional information submitted
- the amended Environmental Management Plan (EMP)

- all properly made submissions and any other submissions accepted by the chief executive
- the standard criteria (includes ESD)
- another matter prescribed under a regulation.

The EIS process under the EP Act is completed when the proponent is given a copy of the assessment report.

If the project is being assessed under the EPBC Act, the EIS assessment report would also need to provide an assessment of the adequacy of the submitted EIS in addressing MNES. This is provided as a stand-alone chapter in the EIS assessment report.

3.4.8 Environmental Authority

Following completion of the EIS process, the chief executive of the EP Act is required to decide to either approve the EA application for a resource activity with conditions or to refuse it (i.e. decision stage). The completed EIS forms the application documents used in this decision. A notice of the decision, including draft EA if the decision is to approve the application, would be provided to the applicant and any submitters to the EIS. The submitter may lodge an objection to the notice under section 182 of the EP Act or request referral to the Land Court under section 183 of EP Act. The administering authority must refer the application to the land court for an objections decision. Issuing of the EA under the EP Act, allows the tenure to be granted under *Mineral Resources Act 1989*.

If the project proposes to conduct any 'prescribed ERAs' (e.g. land fill, sewage treatment plants, power stations, aquaculture, extractive and screening activities) off the mining tenement, an application for an EA under the SP Act would be required. A development permit under SP Act for a material change of use, may also be required for some prescribed ERAs, noted in schedule 2 of the *Environmental Protection Regulation 2008* and are known as concurrence ERAs.

The proponent would apply to the assessment manager using the IDAS process. The assessment manager for the development application is determined from schedule 3 of the *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*. The assessment manager would normally be the relevant local government and the development is assessed against the local government planning scheme (e.g. material change of use). Otherwise the assessment manager would be the chief executive of the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP).

The administering authority imposes environmental management conditions on all EAs that it considers are necessary or desirable for achieving the objects of the EP Act. The EA conditions set the environmental performance requirements that the proponent must comply with.

They may include:

- measures to be taken to minimise the likelihood of environmental harm being caused
- carrying out and reporting on a stated monitoring program

- giving of information to the administering authority reasonably required for the administration and enforcement of the EP Act
- giving of financial assurances.

Model conditions which have been developed for specific industries would be applied where appropriate and/or any other conditions which are required or considered necessary or desirable by the administering authority. Model conditions have been developed to assist in regulating the following prescribed ERAs and resource activities:

- ERA 16 - extraction and screening activities
- ERA 60 - waste disposal
- mining activities.

The administering authority may add, change or cancel an EA condition if it considers it necessary because of reasons including:

- a contravention of the EP Act or an environmental offence committed by the registered operator
- the approval was issued on the basis of a miscalculation of matters related to contaminants
- the approval of an environmental protection policy or amendment to an environmental protection policy.

3.4.9 Compliance and enforcement

The administering authority may cancel or suspend an EA if certain events occur. These events are specified in section 278 of the EP Act. For example, an EA can be cancelled or suspended if the holder of an EA is convicted of an environmental offence. In the event that the administering authority proposes to cancel or suspend the EA, they would be required to give notice outlining the proposed action and the grounds or reasons for the proposed action.

Compliance with the conditions of an EA is monitored and enforced by the relevant administering authority (e.g. DEHP for the EA for resource activity and local government for some devolved ERAs).

The DEHP has developed publicly available enforcement guidelines to ensure that its responses are proportionate, consistent and timely. Failure to comply with the EA conditions is a breach of the EA and there are various compliance enforcement actions available under the EP Act. Compliance tools under the Act include:

- environmental evaluation, including environmental audit and environmental investigation
- transitional environmental programs
- environmental protection orders
- direction notices
- clean-up notices
- cost recovery notices.

The chief executive may appoint an authorised person to perform certain functions and exercise particular powers. The powers that an authorised person may exercise are contained in the EP Act, and include powers of entry for places or vehicles, emergency powers and requiring a person to provide information, answer questions about a suspected offence or produce documents required to be held or kept.

The EP Act contains a number of offences to which penalties apply including, relating to environmental authorities and development applications:

- carrying out an ERA without the relevant EA
- contravention of conditions of an EA
- contravention of a development condition
- contravention of standard environmental conditions.

The EP Act also contains a range of offences to which penalties apply associated with environmental harm including offences causing:

- serious environmental harm
- material environmental harm
- environmental nuisance.

As part of its annual compliance plan program, DEHP prepares mid-year and end-of-year reports on the proactive compliance activities it undertakes. Activities may include compliance inspections to ascertain whether clients are complying with conditions and monitoring their performance in managing the environmental risks of an activity.

3.4.10 EIS triggers for resource activities

A site-specific EA application can trigger EIS provisions under the EP Act. However, while section 142 of the EP Act only applies to mining activities, section 143 may apply to any type of resource activity.

However, a decision may be made to require an EIS application, even if no EIS criteria are triggered, if DEHP or the Queensland Government determines that the project applied for would involve a significant environmental impact, or a high level of uncertainty about potential impacts, or involve a high level of public interest.

An EIS is triggered for mining activity under certain criteria including:

- some new applications for green field sites
- major amendment applications for brown filed sites
- petroleum activities in either green or brown field sites.

When deciding whether an EIS is required for an application, under section 143, the administering authority must consider the standard criteria.

Any application for a resource activity that appears to be seeking to avoid an EIS through a staged development would be closely examined and, consistent with the standard criteria, an EIS may be required for the entire project, even though none of the individual stages would trigger an EIS by themselves.

A decision may be made that an EIS is required for an application if the project is likely to contribute substantially to cumulative impacts, even when an EIS is not triggered.

Unacceptable cumulative impacts may occur when the environmental impacts of a project are added to existing environmental impacts contributed by other activities over space and time e.g. impacts to the local airshed, a regional water catchment, or the environmental values of aquifers.

To determine the spatial and chronological extent of potential cumulative impacts, DEHP may take into account existing information including:

- spatial/regional planning
- strategic assessments (EPBC Act)
- bioregional assessments
- regional air/water/noise plans and modelling.

Queensland Ports Strategy

Port master planning will be informed by a statutory guideline. The guideline will outline principles and processes that will be applied according to individual port circumstances such as geography, environment, trade profiles, changing markets and demand.

Critical to the success of port master plans is the comprehensive identification and management of environmental values. This includes consideration of Australian Government requirements under the EPBC Act which outlines MNES including OUV in conjunction with MSES.

The 'avoid, mitigate, offset' hierarchy of principles will be critical to the port master planning process. This means that the first priority is to avoid impacts on environmental values (including MNES, OUV and MSES) where possible. Where impacts cannot be avoided, they must be mitigated where possible and any residual loss of environmental values that cannot be avoided or mitigated must be offset.

A port-specific EMF will be a requirement of port master planning to:

- identify and assess environmental values
- articulate environmental outcomes to be achieved in relation to these values
- articulate how these environmental outcomes are to be achieved at ports.

The EMF will provide a robust and holistic tool for the management of the port environment by adopting an outcomes-based approach to manage risk and determine priorities for the environmental management of ports. It will also provide a mechanism to allow individual projects to meet environmental obligations in a coordinated and integrated manner delivering stronger, more comprehensive environmental management that is both cost effective and efficient.

Port EMFs will include consideration of cumulative impacts. Assessing cumulative impacts requires detailed investigation by proponents to determine the potential impacts outside the boundary of a project and how impacts from various activities interact.

Better guidance for development activities

- Explicit consideration of MNES
- Cumulative impact assessment

3.5 Better guidance for development activities

Explicit consideration of MNES

3.5.1 Meeting EPBC Act requirements

In order to obtain endorsement of the Program, it is critical that the Program demonstrate that it meets the requirement for EPBC Act endorsement. This is achieved with the Program components described against each objective of the Act (Table 5) and details of how the Program provides the necessary protection of MNES and OUV (Table 6). The Program commitments are initiatives that support the Program and its alignment with the objects of the Act.

Commitment 5: The Queensland Government will meet the EPBC Act requirements set out in Table 5.

3.5.2 New MNES guideline

The identification of MNES and OUV forms an important part of the EIS process. It can also be used in forward planning for future development. To assist in the consistent identification of MNES the Queensland Government is proposing to develop a guideline for MNES in the planning system in consultation with the Australian Government. The guideline will be a tool for proponents undertaking EIS processes relevant to the Program to support their assessment of a proposed project's impacts on MNES.

The guideline will support decision-makers involved in planning for urban development (including for PDAs), port development and SDAs. It will provide detail on how potential impacts should be avoided, mitigated and offset; and outline the circumstances in which a planned development would be considered to have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES. It will provide specific details about the OUV of the GBR, drawing significantly from the Interim Guidelines for OUV recently published by the Australian Government.

Commitment 6: The Queensland Government is committed to working with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop MNES guidelines for proponents to use and decision makers to consider when assessing impacts on MNES during the EIS processes under the Program.

3.5.3 New Environmental Offsets Framework

Environmental offsets are conservation activities which compensate for impacts to the environment caused by development when it cannot be avoided or mitigated. Offsets can take the form of positive management interventions such as restoration of degraded habitat, arrested degradation or averted risk, protecting areas where there is imminent or projected loss of biodiversity. Offsetting occurs through the Queensland Government's existing offsetting policies which are designed to counterbalance any residual loss of environmental values that cannot be avoided or mitigated.

DEHP is currently developing a single Environmental Offsets Framework for Queensland, due to commence in late 2014. The framework will replace the five existing Queensland Government offset policies while retaining a focus on environmental protection. It will provide clarity for Queenslanders as a 'one stop' for environmental offsets, clearly establishing what an offset is and how an offset may be delivered.

A key part of the framework will be a new Queensland Environmental Offsets Policy which will establish a simplified and more scientific-based approach to determining an offset obligation and provide greater flexibility in offset delivery choices. The policy will apply to prescribed activities regulated under existing legislation and prescribed environmental matters. This more strategic approach will not only lead to greater benefits for the environment, but will provide more opportunities for landholders to receive income in return for voluntarily agreeing to manage their land, or part of their land, as an offset.

The Queensland Government will apply the Australian Government Offsets Policy until the new Environmental Offsets Framework is accredited by the Australian Government. Offset guidelines that deliver net benefits will be prepared for application by planning and development decision-makers in consultation with the Australian Government. An offsets register will also be developed to spatially identify areas used as offsets and priority areas for future offsets.

Furthermore, the Queensland Government will work closely with the Australian Government to identify opportunities to align with the proposed Reef Trust which is seeking to pool resources and identify strategic investments that will deliver substantial net benefits to the GBR. The Queensland Government will also seek to utilise the latest research outcomes to develop a Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBR in consultation with the GBRMPA and the Australian Government.

Commitment 7: The Queensland Government will apply the Australian Government Offsets Policy until the Queensland Offsets Framework is accredited by the Australian Government. Offsets guidelines that deliver net benefits will be prepared for application by planning and development decision-makers in consultation with the Australian Government.

Commitment 8: The Queensland Government will develop an offsets register to spatially identify areas used as offsets under Queensland legislation and priority areas for future offsets.

Commitment 9: The Queensland Government will develop a single Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBRWHA consistent with the accredited Queensland Offsets Framework.

3.5.4 Revised mapping of MNES

The Queensland Government uses a range of methods to verify and identify the presence of MNES, including onsite ecological surveys and investigations which are regularly undertaken for project by project impact assessments and land use planning processes. Biodiversity planning assessment tools are also used to classify the relative significance of these areas, including regional ecosystem mapping, the Biodiversity Assessment Mapping Methodology for terrestrial areas and Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment and Mapping Methodology for aquatic areas.

The Queensland Government will incorporate the use of the Australian Government's Protected Matters Search Tool to assist in the identification of MNES as part of EIS processes.

Commitment 10: The Queensland Government will use the Australian Government 'Protected Matters Search Tool' in conducting planning and making EIS recommendations related to EPBC Act protected matters.

3.5.5 MNES and approval recommendations

The Queensland Government's EIS process under the SDPWO Act and EP Act provides for a thorough investigation of the potential environmental impacts of proposed development activities with particular regard for MNES. The EIS process specifically requires adherence to:

- a generic TOR which is, in the majority of cases, subject to a public consultation process
- the preparation of very detailed draft EIS documentation which is subject to specialist government and advisory experts, the public and key stakeholders to provide comment on the content, quality and extent of the environmental assessment presented
- the expectation that the proponent will redraft the documentation to a final version which addresses the concerns of the public, stakeholders, the scientific community, the Queensland and Australian governments' requirements and the overall expectations of the general community with regard to delivering a project that will not produce unacceptable impacts.

Once a proponent has satisfied those requirements, then conditions are attached to the approval of the project to ensure that best practice technology is applied throughout the development of the project and that all impacts of each activity of the project are monitored and the results diligently reported to the appropriate agency on a regular basis. Each project will include a separate analysis of the impacts on MNES during assessment for establishing conditions, where necessary.

The Queensland Government provides an assessment methodology for major projects which can ensure the protection of environmental values with specific reference to MNES and OUV protection. Its system of valuation, expert review, public scrutiny and conditions can ensure the maximum environmental protection from development activities.

Commitment 11: The Queensland Government will ensure that stringent conditions addressing MNES and OUV will be incorporated into EIS approval recommendations.

3.5.6 Protecting listed threatened species

The Queensland Government is committed to the survival and conservation status of listed threatened species and ecological communities being promoted and enhanced. The Queensland Government also acknowledges the significance of the GBR and adjacent coastal zone to listed threatened species and ecological communities.

The SPP explicitly states that MNES can be considered in the local government area when developing planning schemes.

DEHP has responsibility for managing and conserving threatened species in Queensland through the NC Act. It manages, facilitates and coordinates activities relating to the conservation and protection of threatened flora and fauna in Queensland. However, a range of different user groups and individuals within all levels of government, the community, the science and research sectors and industry undertake activities relating to threatened species.

The Queensland Government remains committed to the recovery plans for threatened species under the EPBC Act and will continue to work with the Australian Government, non-government organisations, traditional owners and other stakeholders to prioritise and implement actions aimed at habitat protection and recovery and reduced threats.

The Queensland Government will continue to prioritise actions to recover threatened and migratory species utilising the best available information with consideration for Australian Government plans and programs.

Commitment 12: The Queensland Government will prioritise actions to recover species, taking into account national recovery plans, threat abatement plans and conservation advice.

3.5.7 Consistent listing

Multiple lists of threatened species and ecological communities exist across jurisdictions. Listings of some species differ between state/territory and national levels.

Under the NC Act, there are 794 species listed as threatened (extinct in the wild, endangered or vulnerable) in Queensland. Of these species, about 414 are listed as threatened nationally under the EPBC Act.

A single, national list of all protected species and ecological communities will provide greater certainty and consistency and has been previously pursued as part of the national environmental reform agenda. This will help standardise the listing processes across jurisdictions and reduce unnecessary duplication.

A national list has been previously pursued as part of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) national environmental reform agenda. The Queensland Government continues to support this initiative.

The Queensland Government commits to using the list of species as identified by the Australian Government as nationally threatened species under the EPBC Act.

Commitment 13: The Queensland Government will continue to work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to achieve consistent national listing of threatened species.

3.5.8 Indigenous cultural heritage guidelines

The GBR region is home to approximately 70 Traditional Owner groups, all with unique connections and heritage values related to the reef and GBR coastal zone. These groups are located along the Queensland coast, from the eastern Torres Strait Islands in the north to near Bundaberg in the south.

Legally recognising the rights of Traditional Owners to access and use their traditional Country and resources is an important aspect of Indigenous cultural heritage. As part of the Program, legislation is in place to recognise and protect Indigenous cultural heritage in Queensland, including the GBR region:

- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*
- *Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003*

Under the EIS process, proponents are required to take all reasonable steps to obtain the views of Indigenous peoples in relation to a proposed action that is likely to have a significant impact on any MNES that relates to Indigenous cultural heritage, or that will occur on or affect land or waters that may be subject to native title. An EIS assessment and decision recognises the role and interests of Indigenous peoples, promote the use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity and Indigenous heritage which reflect the objects of the EPBC Act.

The Program strongly encourages participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in managing the GBR coastal zone, and recognises the special rights and interests of Traditional Owners. Their knowledge of biodiversity and the cultural values of the area are recognised and promoted through legislation and activities to conserve biodiversity and MNES within the GBR coastal zone. Further information on the Queensland Government's policies, programs and initiatives for managing Indigenous cultural heritage are in the Supplementary Report.

Commitment 14: The Queensland Government will require project proponents to apply the Australian Government's guidelines for consulting with Indigenous peoples in relation to cultural heritage and the management of traditional use. The Australian Government guidelines will be developed in cooperation with the Queensland Government and the State will also explore ways to streamline Indigenous consultation processes between the two governments.

Cumulative impact assessment

3.5.9 Cumulative impact assessment guidelines

The identification of MNES and OUV are recognised as critical aspects in the project assessment and approval process. However, OUV in particular is not well understood with regard to its identification and assessment of values. Cumulative impacts from project activities is also an important aspect of the impact assessment process to ensure that a full understanding and investigation is undertaken by the proponent to determine potential impacts outside the strict boundaries of the project.

Despite the fact cumulative impact assessments are considered in EPBC Act decisions, there is currently no established methodology to inform the preparation of project-specific assessments in relation to regionally based cumulative impacts.

Of particular concern, is that there is no shared understanding of how impacts interact with other activities to determine the full extent of impacts often felt well downstream from the project's location.

Having a consistent understanding and methodology for the assessment of cumulative impacts is the key to providing accurate and comprehensive cumulative impact assessments. Consequently, the Queensland Government is committed to working with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA, to develop guidelines that will promote greater understanding and provide methodologies for proponents undertaking cumulative impact assessments.

Commitment 15: The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop guidelines for proponents to use and decisions makers to consider when assessing cumulative impacts on MNES in the GBRWHA.

Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs

- Fisheries management
- State of the Environment reporting and Outlook reports
- Species prioritisation framework
- Back on Track
- Natural Resource Management Investment Program
- Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy
- Ramsar wetlands
- Queensland Wetlands Program
- Indigenous management programs

3.6 Enhanced management, recovery and monitoring programs

3.6.1 Fisheries management

During the last 30 years, significant commercial fishing management changes in Queensland's east coast waters have helped to ensure that fisheries remain ecologically sustainable. These include reviews of all the major fisheries, such as the prawn trawl, reef line and inshore net fisheries, as well as smaller fisheries such as tropical rock lobster, marine aquarium fish and sea cucumber. A number of other management measures have also been introduced including removal of 'latent effort' for fishers who did not use their licence to a commercial level, and the investment of \$9 million for a buyout of the East Coast net fishery which will deliver a range of conservation benefits.

The Australian Government has assessed and accredited under the EPBC Act Queensland's fisheries which export or operate in Commonwealth waters as part of an independent assessment of all export fisheries. As part of this process, annual status reports are prepared for each fishery to report on the status of the fishery. In addition advice is provided relating to interactions with protected species and management changes.

Commitment 16: The Queensland Government will ensure that fisheries are managed for the purpose of ecological sustainability, supported by the ongoing collection of commercial and recreational data through various monitoring programs.

3.6.2 Monitoring and regular reporting

The Queensland Government is committed to monitoring programs based on the concepts of continuous improvement and adaptive management, informed by the best available information. Queensland has a range of mechanisms in place to monitor and review the state of the environment with particular attention to MNES. These monitoring activities inform decision making, with some activities required by legislation while others support long-term, ongoing government programs such as Reef Plan.

The monitoring programs' objectives range from broad GBR-wide outcomes to regional and/or value specific outcomes, and may provide an input into a wide number of program components. Together these monitoring activities improve the effectiveness of the Program as a whole as part of an adaptive management process.

The Queensland Government utilises monitoring data to regularly report on the condition of MNES and the effectiveness of management. Reporting includes:

- Queensland State of the Environment reporting every four years (required under the EP Act)
- State of the Wet Tropics Annual Reporting
- Reef Plan annual report cards
- Fisheries Annual Status Reports
- Gladstone Healthy Harbour report cards (from 2015)
- Fitzroy Healthy Waterways Partnership Annual Report Cards (commenced 2013)
- Marine strandings reports (annual).

A strategic assessment is a partnership approach to the management of MNES and OUV and the Queensland Government will ensure relevant information is shared with the Australian Government to support ongoing management. As a result, information about MNES condition and trend will be systematically built into the Queensland Government's four-yearly State of the Environment reporting.

Commitment 17: The Queensland Government will incorporate reporting on MNES into Queensland State of the Environment reporting.

3.6.3 Species prioritisation framework

The Queensland Government's species prioritisation framework provides comprehensive information at a regional level regarding on-ground actions required to recover threatened species to enable government and non-government entities to target their decisions and investments. This framework supports the conservation and recovery of many threatened species.

3.6.4 Back on Track

Back on Track is the first species prioritisation framework to be implemented in Australia. This framework is designed to prioritise all species using multiple criteria, to allow the identification of species that are in trouble, and those which have the greatest chance of recovery.

3.6.5 Natural Resource Management Investment Program

There is a range of supporting programs in place designed to enhance and improve environmental values in Queensland, including MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone. These programs focus on addressing the legacy of past impacts and seeking an improvement in the overall condition of the GBRWHA and the adjacent GBR catchment.

The Queensland Government administers a number of environmental grants and Natural Resource Management (NRM) programs to offer funding for projects that address environmental degradation, protect the state's natural assets, and monitor and preserve the local natural environment. Examples of grant applications include:

- protection of wildlife habitat for threatened, protected and iconic species
- clean-ups of creeks, waterways and other local areas
- controlling pests and weeds
- restoring degraded landscapes.

Commitment 18: The Queensland Government is providing \$12 million over three years in grants under the Everyone's Environment Grants program.

Commitment 19: The Queensland Government will provide \$30 million of NRM funding to the reef for biodiversity, wetlands, water quality, coastal risk, sustainable agriculture and weeds and pest management projects over the next five years. This will support the sustainable management of natural resources and help protect significant natural assets.

3.6.6 Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) is responsible to both the Australian and Queensland Governments through the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council and has an independent Board of Directors appointed by both governments. The WTMA administers the Queensland Government's Wet Tropics legislation and sets policies and procedures which govern activities and land use within the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.

The Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy provides a strong foundation to inform future conservation activities in the WHA and outlines actions to achieve the conservation, rehabilitation and transmission to future generations of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* provides legislative protection for the Area but the Area must be managed as a core component of the entire Wet Tropics bioregion.

The conservation strategy discusses threats to the world heritage values such as climate change, habitat fragmentation, fire management and the use of water which go beyond the Area's boundaries and identifies actions the WTMA will take to address these issues. The Queensland Government will continue to support the WTMA and on ground activities that contribute to improving the condition of the Wet Tropics WHA, including its OUV.

Commitment 20: The Queensland Government will continue to support programs that improve the OUV of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

3.6.7 Ramsar wetlands

The Queensland Government acknowledges the importance of wetlands to the health of the GBR and is committed to ensuring the ecological character of each Ramsar wetland is maintained and protected.

State Development Assessment Provisions seek to ensure that development is planned, designed, constructed and operated so as to not cause harm to the hydrology of wetlands in Wetland Protection Areas (WPA wetland) that protect MNES and MSES in the GBR. Protection of WPA wetlands is designed to maintain the ecological processes of these wetlands which reduce nutrient, pesticide and sediment loads in the reef catchments, and importantly protect them from the effects of high impact earthworks.

The values of the Bowling Green Bay Ramsar site were described in the Bowling Green Bay demonstration case outlined in the draft Strategic Assessment Report. A Protected Area Management Plan has been developed for this area.

The Shoalwater and Corio Bay Ramsar site is managed through a number of plans, policies and management arrangements. The Australian Department of Defence undertakes management responsibilities such as maintaining a feral pest control program over its area of responsibility. Corio Bay is a gazetted FHA and has restrictions placed on it to protect its fish habitat values. The entire area is within the Mackay-Capricorn Marine Park and managed within the provisions of its Zoning Plan. Conservation management of the marine areas are the responsibility of the GBRMPA, DEHP and Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing.

3.6.8 Queensland Wetlands Program

In 2003, the Australian and Queensland governments established the Queensland Wetlands Program to protect wetlands in the GBR catchment and throughout Queensland. The program has supported more than 70 projects that have delivered a range of new mapping, information and decision-making tools that enable government agencies, landowners, conservationists and regional natural resource management bodies to better protect and manage wetlands in Queensland. The program provides important scientific and policy information that helps inform a range of activities designed to improve the ecological character of Ramsar wetlands.

The first phase of the Queensland Wetlands Program (2003 - 2008) was funded through the GBR Coastal Wetlands Protection Program (GBRCWPP) and the Queensland Natural Heritage Trust Wetlands Program (until June 2009).

From 2008 to 2013 the program was supported by the Queensland Government's Regional Natural Resource Management Investment Program and the Australian Government through the Caring for our Country Reef Rescue initiative and the Australian Government's Queensland Wetlands Protection Program (AGQWPP).

Phase three of the program is being funded by the Queensland Government through the Queensland Regional National Resource Management Investment Program, South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Program, and Fish Habitat Initiative.

The Queensland Wetlands Program forms part of Reef Plan and will assist in monitoring the new Reef Plan target of no net loss of the extent and an improvement in the ecological processes and environmental values, of natural wetlands (including Ramsar wetlands). DEHP is the lead agency for the Queensland Government, with other Queensland and Australian government departments and key stakeholders also involved in the program's implementation.

Commitment 21: The Queensland Government will continue to support the Queensland Wetlands Program to deliver a range of new mapping, information and decision-making tools and products to enable local, state and federal government agencies, landowners, regional natural resource management bodies and conservation groups to protect and manage wetlands into the future.

3.6.9 Indigenous management programs

The Queensland Government's Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program¹⁸ promotes Traditional Owner participation in managing land and sea country and promoting environmental protection throughout Queensland and in the GBR coastal zone. It is managed by DEHP with most rangers being the Traditional Owners of the land on which they work. Rangers are employed through local Indigenous host organisations with funding provided by the Queensland Government.

Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers ensure the unique ecologies of Queensland's natural environment are better managed and preserved by:

- managing weeds, feral animals and other threats
- performing fuel reduction and ecological burning
- collecting data on protected species and habitats
- supporting disaster recovery efforts
- managing visitor activity
- recording traditional stories
- helping manage national parks.

Ranger activities are tailored to meet local needs and are negotiated between local communities, landowners, Traditional Owners and government agencies. There is a strong emphasis on providing appropriate training and support to rangers and their communities to equip them with the skills and knowledge to look after their local natural environment. Ranger positions are full-time and are an important employment opportunity, particularly in remote communities.

The Queensland Government has committed to employing 40 new Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers, bringing the total number of rangers across Queensland to 80 by 2015. The Government also funds a Junior Ranger program which brings traditional and modern values for looking after country into the school curriculum.

¹⁸ <http://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/ecosystems/community-role/ranger/>

Another program aimed at promoting Traditional Owner participation in environmental management is the Indigenous Sea Country Management Grants Program¹⁹. The program provides Traditional Owner groups with grants to support the development of sustainable management practices in relation to dugong, turtles and other marine resources.

Under Reef 2050, the Queensland and Australian governments are also committed to working with Traditional Owners on a Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan. The plan will protect dugong and turtle populations in Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands from the threats of poaching, illegal hunting and marine debris.

Additionally, the Australian and Queensland governments recently announced joint funding of \$7 million over four years for an initiative to work with Traditional Owner communities to help stop environmental damage from feral pigs and protect turtle populations along the Queensland coast.

Commitment 22: The Queensland Government is committed to providing 40 new Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers in Queensland over three years to 2015, bringing the total number of Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers to 80.

¹⁹ <https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/coastal/management/indigenous-sea-country-grants.html>

Strong joint management initiatives

- Improved coordination across jurisdictions
- Reef 2050 – Long-Term Sustainability Plan
- Outcomes-based framework
- Integrated monitoring framework
- Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnerships
- North East Shipping Management Plan
- Reef Water Quality Protection Plan

3.7 Strong joint management initiatives

Improved coordination across jurisdictions

3.7.1 Working with the GBRMPA

The Queensland Government has a strong history of joint management of the GBR with the GBRMPA and the two entities currently work together on a number of initiatives and programs that support a healthy GBR, including the Joint Field Management Program and the Queensland Wetlands Program.

The Queensland Government is committed to continuing this strong and enduring relationship with the GBRMPA in day-to-day management of the GBR. In regard to compliance management, further efforts will be made to better coordinate actions across jurisdictions to prevent repeat offences within the marine park. Additionally, the Queensland Government will work with the GBRMPA to develop a reef-wide island management strategy as part of the Joint Field Management Program to ensure strategically planned activities on islands.

The Queensland Government is committed to working collaboratively with the GBRMPA to streamline assessment processes and joint permitting arrangements where there is currently duplication. The Queensland Government will also work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, on the development of MNES guidelines and cumulative impact assessment guidelines which will ensure that all matters are covered comprehensively and the guidelines are applied consistently. Additional collaboration will occur in regards to the identification of MNES, OUV and supporting values, the undertaking of an assessment of the Indigenous heritage values of the GBRWHA, and the development and implementation of the LTSP.

Commitment 23: The Queensland Government will continue to work closely with the GBRMPA to increase the implementation of complementary actions across protected area jurisdictions, including the streamlining of assessment and joint permitting processes, the formulation of joint park user policies, and discouraging repeat offending.

Commitment 24: The Queensland Government will continue to support ongoing joint field management activities with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA.

3.7.2 Advising the Australian Government of changes to the Program

Given the scale of the GBR coastal zone and the complexity of management arrangements, changes will undoubtedly occur over the life of the Program as components change or evolve in response to emerging issues or initiatives.

Where a substantive change in policy or legislation that may impact on the Program is proposed, the Queensland Government will advise the Australian Government and prepare a MNES Impact Statement to demonstrate that the change will not result in unacceptable impacts on MNES in the GBR.

Commitment 25: The Queensland Government will advise the Australian Government of any proposed changes of substance to the Program and will prepare a MNES Impact Statement in such cases.

3.7.3 Reporting to the Australian Government

The Queensland Government is committed to acting in accordance with the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*²⁰, and will provide the Australian Government with any information it requires to fulfil its obligations under the Operational Guidelines. This includes notifying the Australian Government of any proposed developments that may impact upon the environmental values of a WHA property.

Commitment 26: The Queensland Government will report to the Australian Government regarding proposed developments that may impact upon world heritage properties to ensure Australia's international obligations continue to be met.

3.7.4 Reporting to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum

The Queensland Government is committed to working collaboratively with the Australian Government for the ongoing protection and management of the GBR and adjacent coastal zone. The comprehensive strategic assessment is a demonstration of the strong working relationship the Queensland and Australian governments already share in relation to the GBR.

To ensure the highest level of collaboration moving forward, the Queensland Government, each year, will provide a report on the implementation of the LTSP to the GBR Ministerial Forum. This will help identify opportunities for further cooperation, resolve any emerging issues, and maintain momentum on the implementation of the LTSP and key commitments under the Program.

Commitment 27: The Queensland Government will report annually to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum on implementation of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.

²⁰ <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide13-en.pdf>

3.7.5 Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan

In 2011, the WHC requested that Australia develop of a long-term plan for sustainable development that will protect the OUV of the GBR. The draft strategic assessment reports also identified the need for better integrated and strategic management of the GBR with clear and measurable outcomes and targets.

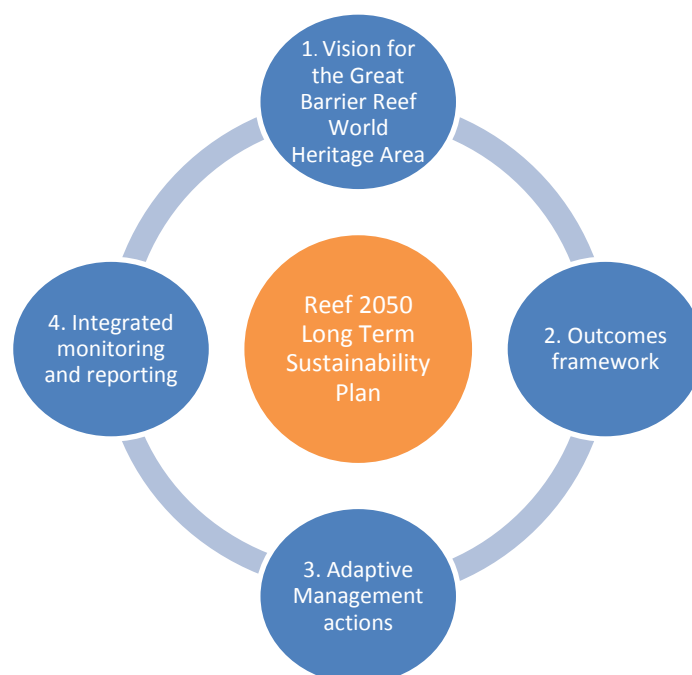
As a result, the Queensland and Australian governments are currently developing the LTSP to guide the protection and management of the GBRWHA to 2050. The LTSP will build on the findings of the comprehensive strategic assessment and bring relevant programs and activities under one plan to ensure greater coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of efforts to protect and manage the GBR.

The LTSP will include the following elements:

- Vision: a vision for the GBRWHA that reflects the diversity of use and interest in the property, protects the property’s OUV, sustains its integrity and integrates the three pillars of sustainability (environmental, social and economic)
- Outcomes: an framework that includes desired outcomes and targets for protection of the GBR’s OUV
- Actions: adaptive management actions to deliver outcomes and targets, primarily drawn from the two strategic assessments and with a focus on critical areas of new work
- Monitoring: integrated monitoring and reporting program to measure the success of the plan.

A key focus will be identifying how governments, non-government organisations, industry and community interest groups can work together to further strengthen existing and new initiatives to manage and protect the GBR. Stakeholder and public consultation will be undertaken throughout the LTSP’s development.

Figure 8 Elements of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan



The GBR Ministerial Forum will oversee development and implementation of the LTSP. The Forum, made up of relevant Australian and Queensland government ministers, provides an avenue for the two governments to prioritise protection, facilitate adaptive management and guide decision making both in the WHA and in the adjacent coastal zone. The final LTSP will become a schedule to the IGA and will be reviewed every five years.

The outcomes of the comprehensive strategic assessment will be reflected in the LTSP where appropriate. During the strategic assessment consultation period, the public and stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the scope of the LTSP.

Commitment 28: The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop a Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan for the GBRWHA by the end of 2014 and ensure its implementation.

3.7.6 Outcomes-based framework

At the December 2012 Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum, ministers agreed the Australian and Queensland governments would jointly develop an outcomes-based framework to provide a systematic process for continual improvement to the GBRWHA including targets to be monitored, reported and adapted over time. The outcomes-based framework will be a central component of the LTSP.

The framework will be a model for outlining desired outcomes and measurable targets for the condition and trend of MNES and OUV in the GBR. When available, targets will be drawn from and build upon existing policies, plans and programs such as the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan (e.g. halting and reversing the decline in water quality) and the draft NESMP. The framework will recognise that the GBRWHA is underpinned by a variety of ecosystems, species and processes and is affected by activities within both the coastal reef catchments and marine environments.

Targets within the outcomes-based framework will be identified for seven key themes – water quality, biodiversity, economic benefits, heritage, community benefits, ecosystem health and governance. They will be scientifically justified, meaningful and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound). The outcomes-based framework will link to an integrated monitoring framework that will also be a component of the LTSP to rigorously and systemically report on the performance of management in working to achieve the agreed outcomes and targets.

Commitment 29: The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop an outcomes-based framework for the GBRWHA as part of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.

3.7.7 Integrated monitoring framework

The Queensland Government is responsible for a number of monitoring programs relevant to the GBR with particular focus around water quality, vegetation monitoring, fisheries and biodiversity. The Queensland Government also undertakes monitoring and reporting activities on the conditions imposed on approved projects.

There are a wide range of government entities, organisations and institutions that undertake monitoring in the GBR with many of these programs being fit for purpose and serving a particular or specialised function. However, integrating some of these programs has the potential to deliver greater outcomes for understanding the condition and trend of MNES and environmental values in the GBR. Consequently, the Queensland Government is committed to working closely with the Australian Government to better integrate existing monitoring programs under an integrated monitoring framework that sits under the LTSP.

The framework will build upon and coordinate existing monitoring and reporting activities, and be directly linked to the outcomes and targets to be developed under the LTSP outcomes-based framework. The process of developing the framework and the reporting of results will be undertaken in close consultation with key stakeholders and interest groups involved in monitoring programs in the GBR.

Commitment 30: The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.

3.7.8 Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership

The Port of Gladstone is the largest multi-commodity port in Queensland and the sixth largest in Australia. More than 30 products are handled and port users include major industries such as aluminium refineries, coal export, fishing and tourism industry, and a newly developed CSG/LNG industry.

In keeping with the WHC's recommendations, the Queensland Government has actively participated in an Independent Review of the Port of Gladstone. The review stated that the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership presents an excellent opportunity for addressing environmental issues and building stakeholder and public confidence in the future.

The Queensland Government has committed \$4 million over two years to support the establishment of the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership. This funding will be matched by industry, community, research and local government. The Australian Government also provided \$1 million in funding toward the partnership.

Positive outcomes from the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership will help ensure site-level protection of MNES, as well as constructively influencing reef-wide port management.

Commitment 31: The Queensland Government will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders in Gladstone Harbour through the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership to ensure open and accountable management of Gladstone Harbour, including annual reporting on ecosystem health and future actions underpinned by rigorous monitoring and science.

3.7.9 North East Shipping Management Plan

Shipping management within the GBRMP is primarily the responsibility of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the GBRMPA.

The two Australian Government agencies work in close collaboration with Maritime Safety Queensland, which is responsible for ship safety within port limits and in Queensland waters.

Management of shipping in the GBR has significantly improved since its inscription on the World Heritage List and subsequent designation as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) by the International Maritime Organisation. This designation has included the Torres Strait since 2004.

The draft NESMP sets out the Australian Government's intentions to enhance ship safety in the GBR, Torres Strait and Coral Sea regions. Developed by the North East Shipping Management Group (NESMG), of which the Queensland Government is a member, the draft NESMP includes measures for the protection of the environment from the effects of shipping in the north-east region.

The NESMG, which is tasked with the development and implementation of measures to continually enhance maritime safety in the sensitive marine environment of Australia's north east region, will oversee the implementation of the draft NESMP and its work program.

Some of the key recommendations of the plan seek additional protection for MNES in the GBR including:

- NESMG to establish an Anchorage Management Working Group under the NESMG to implement findings from the study, and identify impacts and proposed management strategies associated with offshore ship anchorages in the GBRWHA.
- AMSA to continue to stringently enforce current and new environmental standards on ships trading to the region.
- AMSA to assess the viability of implementing satellite oil spill detection permanently in the region so that it will continue to act as a deterrent for would-be polluters.
- AMSA to investigate means to encourage users of shipping to ports in the region to employ ships constructed with bunker fuel tanks in protected locations (built after August 2010) and investigate future means to mandate this requirement for ships calling at GBR ports.
- AMSA to consider the need for further Associated Protective Measures in the GBR and Torres Strait PSSA. These may include no anchoring areas, ship routing measures and reporting of hazardous cargoes for the existing GBR and Torres Strait PSSA.
- Concentration points at all bulk ports in the GBRWHA to identify potential sink marine pest areas.
- The Australian Government and the GBRMPA to undertake further research into cumulative impacts from shipping in the GBR.

- AMSA to establish consultative arrangements with communities in the Torres Strait and GBR to better understand shipping impacts on those communities and engage the communities in pollution response arrangements.
- AMSA to work with pilotage providers to consider the implications of voluntary pilotage in the southern area of the GBR.

Commitment 32: The Queensland Government is committed to reducing the risk of shipping incidents and potential pollution of the marine environment by implementing its responsibilities as part of the North East Shipping Management Group.

3.7.10 Reef Water Quality Protection Plan

The Queensland Government is proud of the GBR and its world heritage status, and is proactive in the preservation of its OUV.

The impacts of climate change will put pressure on threatened and migratory species as extreme weather events become more frequent. The Program includes management strategies that focus on building health and resilience so that MNES can better adapt and respond to climate effects. Continuing to build resilience in the system is the key to halting the decline, reversing the trend and minimising the all-encompassing impacts of severe weather events, sea level rise and increased sea temperatures influenced by climate change.

Of critical importance, is the work being done jointly with the Australian and Queensland governments and stakeholders to improve water quality entering the GBR through the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan (Reef Plan). Water quality is widely recognised as the most critical issue for the long-term resilience of the GBR.

Reef Plan is a collaborative program of coordinated projects and partnerships designed to improve GBR water quality through improved land management in reef catchments. Reef Plan's primary focus is diffuse source pollution from broadscale land use, and it sets ambitious but achievable targets for improved water quality and land management practices while identifying actions to improve the quality of water entering the reef. Initially established in 2003, the plan was updated in 2009 and 2013.

The Queensland Government is committed to maintaining its investment in Reef Plan and will continue to work in close partnership with the Australian Government and stakeholders to identify the best on-ground actions to deliver water quality improvements. Recognising the success of Reef Plan in addressing runoff from broadscale land use, consideration will be given to expanding its scope to encompass other sources of pollutants at its next major review in 2018. Foundational work (e.g. on urban runoff) will be done over the next five years to inform this.

Commitment 33: The Queensland Government is committed to maintaining funding of \$55 million over the next five years for reef water quality initiatives under the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan.

Commitment 34: The Queensland Government will continue to fund and support the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and the associated Paddock to Reef monitoring program to help achieve the long-term goal of no detrimental impact from the quality of water entering the GBR. Consideration will be given to the inclusion of other pollutants other than broadscale land use during the Plan's next review in 2018.

4. How the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria

4.1 MNES and Endorsement Criteria

The strategic assessment is an assessment of the adequacy of the Program to identify and manage impacts on matters protected under Part 3 of the EPBC Act. In accordance with the TOR, the following MNES within the GBR coastal zone are considered:

- World heritage properties (sections 12 and 15A)
- National heritage places (sections 15B and 15C)
- Wetlands of international importance (sections 16 and 17B)
- Listed threatened species and ecological communities (sections 18 and 18A)
- Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A)
- Commonwealth marine area (sections 23 and 24A)
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (sections 24B and 24C)

The goal of the Program is to protect, manage and enhance MNES in the GBR coastal zone as outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Outcomes for MNES

MNES	Outcomes
All MNES	MNES are protected and conserved.
World heritage properties	The OUV of Queensland's world heritage properties is identified, protected, conserved, presented and transmitted to future generations.
National heritage places	The nature of Queensland's national heritage places is identified, protected, conserved, presented and transmitted to future generations of Australians.
Wetlands of international importance	The ecological character of each Ramsar wetland is maintained, and conservation and the wise and sustainable use of each wetland is promoted for the benefit of humanity in a way that is compatible with maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem. This is to be achieved through the implementation of ecosystem approaches, within the context of sustainable development.
Listed threatened species and ecological communities	The survival and conservation status of listed threatened species and ecological communities is promoted and enhanced, including through the conservation of habitat critical to the survival of a species or community and other measures contained in any recovery plans, threat abatement plans or conservation advices.
Listed migratory species	The survival and conservation status of migratory species and their critical habitat is promoted and enhanced, consistent with Australia's international obligations.
Commonwealth marine environment	The environment of Commonwealth marine areas will be maintained or enhanced in full conformity with relevant marine bioregional plans and plans of management for relevant Commonwealth reserves.
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	The OUV of the GBRMP, as a world heritage property, must be identified, protected, conserved, presented and transmitted to future generations. The environmental, biodiversity and heritage values of the GBRMP are protected and conserved for the long-term, consistent with the objects of the <i>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975</i> .

The TOR set out a number of criteria that will be considered by the Minister. Table 4 below demonstrates how the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria.

The Program Report, the Supplementary Report and the draft Strategic Assessment Report combine to address the TOR. Table 2 of Supplementary Report establishes how the Queensland Government’s package of strategic assessment reports address the TOR. It identifies chapters in reports that correspond to the TOR.

Table 4 How the Program meets the Endorsement Criteria

Endorsement Criteria	How the Program addresses the Endorsement criteria
<p>a) To provide for the protection of the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are MNES</p>	<p>To avoid unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES, including OUV, the Queensland Government will apply the ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy of principles for guiding the planning, assessment and approval of development activity and proposed actions.</p> <p>The Program, through state planning activities, seeks to concentrate development to avoid areas of environmental significance where possible.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will extend its protected areas over time to ensure protection of a range of ecosystems and species and improved protection for MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.</p> <p>If the Queensland Government considers the impact of a proposed action would have unacceptable impacts on a MNES and OUV, it will not approve the action.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that there is sufficient information on the relevant impacts of a proposed action to allow the decision maker to make an informed decision whether or not to approve a proposed action, and if so, under what conditions.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure all relevant significant impacts of development activity will be explicitly assessed for each MNES and OUV, under the EIS process.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will concentrate port development to five PPDAs at long-established major ports.</p> <p>Within and adjoining the GBRWHA, the Queensland Government will prohibit dredging for the development of new, or the expansion of existing port facilities, outside PPDAs for the next 10 years (to 2024).</p> <p>For listed threatened species, listed threatened ecological communities and listed migratory species, the Queensland Government will assess impacts with regard to the full extent of the geographic range of the MNES.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will not act inconsistently with Australia’s obligations under international treaties.</p> <p>The Queensland Government commits to working with the Australian Government to develop an MNES guideline and cumulative impact assessment guidelines. Queensland will ensure that MNES and cumulative impact assessment guidelines will be considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>The Queensland Government prohibits mining activity in the GBRWHA and rigorously conditions any potential downstream impacts from mining activity outside the WHA for the protection of OUV.</p>

Endorsement Criteria	How the Program addresses the Endorsement criteria
<p>b) To promote ESD through the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will ensure that activities under the Program will not have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES and OUV.</p> <p>The Program delivers upon the ESD principles outlined in the IGA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the precautionary principle • intergenerational equity • conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity • improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms. <p>The Program achieves the principles of ESD through decision-making processes that effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations.</p> <p>The Queensland Government applies the precautionary principle where appropriate within the planning and development decision-making processes.</p> <p>The Program applies the ‘avoid, mitigate, offset’ hierarchy of principles when assessing the potential impacts of activities in the GBRWHA.</p> <p>For the consideration of MNES, the Queensland Government will apply offsets in accordance with, or consistent with, the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy. The use of strategic offsets and monetised offsets will not result in a net loss of MNES.</p> <p>The Queensland Government prohibits mining activity in the GBRWHA and rigorously conditions any potential downstream impacts from mining activity outside the WHA for the protection of OUV.</p>
<p>c) To promote the conservation of biodiversity.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will extend its protected areas over time to ensure protection of a range of ecosystems and species and improved protection for MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that activities under the Program will not have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES and OUV.</p> <p>Through EIS processes, the Queensland Government will ensure that recovery, threat abatement plans, conservation advice, wildlife conservation plans for migratory and marine species and Ramsar wetlands as defined in the EPBC Act will be considered as part of the decision making.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that an action approved in accordance with the Program will not have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES and OUV, when assessing a development proposal.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the Australian Government ‘Protected Matters Search Tool’ in conducting planning and making EIS decisions related to EPBC Act protected matters • prioritise actions to recover species, taking into account national recovery plans, threat abatement plans and

Endorsement Criteria	How the Program addresses the Endorsement criteria
	<p>conservation advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to achieve consistent national listing of threatened species • undertake on-ground actions which will deliver long-term benefits for threatened species • continue to support programs that improve the OUV of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area • provide \$12 million over three years in grants under the Everyone’s Environment Grants program • provide \$30 million of NRM funding to the reef for biodiversity, wetlands, water quality, coastal risk, sustainable agriculture and weeds and pest management projects over the next five years • maintain funding of \$55 million over the next five years for reef water quality initiatives under the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan. <p>The Queensland Government prohibits mining activity in the GBRWHA and rigorously conditions any potential downstream impacts from mining activity outside the WHA.</p>
<p>d) To provide for the protection and conservation of heritage.</p>	<p>The Program focuses on the protection of the GBRWHA and its OUV.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will extend its protected areas over time to ensure protection of a range of ecosystems and species and improved protection for MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that activities under the Program will not have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES and OUV.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will not act inconsistently with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian world heritage values and management principles of a declared world heritage property • Australia’s obligations under the World Heritage Convention • National heritage values and management principles of a national heritage place. <p>The Queensland Government will work cooperatively with the Australian Government to ensure the protection of the values for which each world heritage property and national heritage place is listed according to world and national heritage principles.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure the greater use of Indigenous peoples’ knowledge in the conservation, management and protection of Indigenous heritage values in the GBRWHA.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will report to the Australian Government regarding proposed developments that may impact upon world heritage properties to ensure Australia’s international obligations continue to be met.</p>

Endorsement Criteria	How the Program addresses the Endorsement criteria
	<p>The Queensland Government will continue to support programs that improve the OUV of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.</p> <p>The Queensland Government prohibits mining activity in the GBRWHA and rigorously conditions any potential downstream impacts from mining activity outside the WHA.</p>
<p>e) To promote a cooperative approach to the protection and management of the environment, involving governments, the community, land-holders and Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, landholders, and the community, including Indigenous peoples, to implement the Program.</p> <p>Where an action is likely to have a significant impact on MNES, and OUV, the Queensland Government will consider the role and interests of Indigenous peoples in promoting the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources and promote the cooperative use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity and Indigenous heritage.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will consider and apply, as appropriate, guidelines published by the Australian Government in relation to consulting with Indigenous peoples for proposed actions that are under assessment.</p> <p>Through the IGA, the Queensland Government commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain relevant complementary management arrangements with the Australian and Queensland governments. In particular: marine park legislation and associated regulations; zoning plans and plans of management; planning and development arrangements; environmental assessment and permit requirements; and management of fishing activities. • continue a joint program of field management, with shared funding for the GBR Marine Park and Queensland marine and national parks within the GBRWHA. • continue joint action to halt and reverse the decline in quality of water entering the GBR. • address significant threats to the health and biodiversity of the GBR ecosystem, including pollution from the land and sea, the impacts of climate change, ecologically unsustainable fishing activities and other land based resource extraction activities. • ensure Indigenous traditional cultural practices continue to be recognised in the conservation and management of the GBR. <p>The Queensland Government will work cooperatively with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop MNES guidelines for proponents use and decision makers to consider when assessing impacts on MNES during EIS processes under the Program. • develop guidelines for proponents to consider when assessing cumulative impacts on MNES in the GBRWHA. • establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.

Endorsement Criteria	How the Program addresses the Endorsement criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop consultation guidelines for engagement with Indigenous peoples. <p>The Queensland Government will seek and take into account advice of the GBRMPA on a proposed action which is within or likely to impact on, the GBRMP.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to achieve consistent national listing of threatened species.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will provide 40 new Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers over three years to 2015, bringing the total number of Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers to 80.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders in Gladstone Harbour through the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership to ensure the open and accountable management of Gladstone Harbour.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to work with the GBRMPA to increase the implementation of complementary actions across jurisdictions, including the streamlining of assessment and joint permitting processes, the formulation of joint park policies, and discouraging repeat offending.</p>
<p>f) To assist in the cooperative implementation of Australia's international environmental responsibilities.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will ensure that activities under the Program will not have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on MNES and OUV.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will provide information to the Australian Government to meet reporting commitments to the World Heritage Committee for proposed actions that are likely to have a significant impact on a world heritage property.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will not act inconsistently with Australia's obligations under international treaties.</p> <p>Where required, the Queensland Government will seek advice from the Australian Government on how Australia's international obligations relate to MNES.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will incorporate reporting on MNES into Queensland State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that conditions addressing MNES and OUV, will be incorporated into EIS approval recommendations.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will report to the Australian Government regarding proposed developments that may impact upon world heritage properties to ensure Australia's international obligations continue to be met.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop an outcomes-based framework for the GBRWHA as part of the LTSP.</p> <p>The Queensland Government prohibits mining activity in the GBRWHA and rigorously conditions any potential downstream impacts from mining activity outside the WHA.</p>
<p>g) Recognise the role of Indigenous peoples in the conservation and</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will ensure that greater recognition of the role of Indigenous peoples in the management and protection of indigenous heritage values in the GBRWHA.</p>

Endorsement Criteria	How the Program addresses the Endorsement criteria
<p>ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity.</p>	<p>The Program strongly encourages participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in managing the GBR coastal zone, and recognises the special rights and interests of Traditional Owners.</p> <p>Through the IGA, the Queensland Government commits to ensure that Indigenous traditional cultural practices continue to be recognised in the conservation and management of the GBR.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that through EIS processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proponents apply the Australian Government guidelines for consulting with Indigenous peoples in relation to cultural heritage and the management of traditional use. • proponents take reasonable steps to obtain the views of directly affected Indigenous peoples regarding potential significant impacts on any MNES and OUV that relates to Indigenous cultural heritage. • the role and biodiversity knowledge of Indigenous peoples regarding the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources is considered.
<p>h) Promotes the use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in co-operation with, the owners of the knowledge.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will ensure the greater use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge in the management and protection of Indigenous heritage values in the GBRWHA.</p> <p>Through the IGA, the Queensland Government commits to ensure that Indigenous traditional cultural practices continue to be recognised in the conservation and management of the GBR.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that through EIS processes that proponents treat the views of Indigenous peoples as the primary source of information on the value of Indigenous cultural heritage that relates to MNES and OUV.</p> <p>The Queensland Government is committed to providing 40 new Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers over three years to 2015, bringing the total number of Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers to 80.</p>

5. How the Program protects MNES and OUV

5.1 Protection of MNES and OUV

The TOR set out a number of criteria that will be considered by the Minister. The criteria are addressed at some length in the draft Strategic Assessment Report and the Supplementary Report. The main points are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5 How the Program protects MNES and OUV

How the Program protects MNES and OUV	How the Program protect MNES and OUV	How this will be demonstrated
Identifies direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on MNES	<p>Continue strong hierarchy of identifying, avoiding, mitigating and offsetting potential impacts of activities in the planning and EIS processes identified in the Program.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on MNES are identified and assessed in the ports master planning process, and in EIS processes.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure all relevant impacts on MNES are explicitly identified separately in the ports master planning process and in EIS processes.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of water quality are addressed through the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the LTSP.</p>	<p>Use scientifically based information and expert opinion.</p> <p>Undertake environmental assessments to identify environmentally sensitive areas, protected species and heritage values.</p> <p>Monitor programs for important environmental values including water quality.</p> <p>Implement EMFs for key ports.</p> <p>Report on the environment through State of Environment reports.</p> <p>Apply OUV, MNES and cumulative impact assessment guidelines.</p> <p>Apply the species prioritisation framework to provide comprehensive information at a regional level to inform the extent of on-ground actions required to recover threatened species.</p> <p>Apply the natural resource management investment program to assist in funding projects designed to rehabilitate threatened ecological communities.</p> <p>Use the Australian Government 'Protected Matters Search Tool' in planning and development activity.</p> <p>Establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the LTSP.</p>

How the Program protects MNES and OUV	How the Program protect MNES and OUV	How this will be demonstrated
<p>Avoids impacts on MNES</p>	<p>State planning activities give consideration to MNES and OUV when identifying potential areas for future development and provide the opportunity to avoid significant impacts on MNES where practicable.</p> <p>EIS processes engage proponents early to provide advice and to direct development proposals away from environmentally sensitive areas.</p> <p>The implementation of recovery, threat abatement and conservation plans for migratory and marine species to promote the conservation of biodiversity and avoid sensitive areas where possible.</p> <p>Adherence to the principles of environmental policy set out in the IGAE.</p> <p>The IGA and the <i>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975</i> prohibits mining activity in the WHA.</p> <p>MNES are protected through the Queensland Government's protected areas which provide protection for a range of ecosystems and species as well as the OUV of the GBRWHA.</p> <p>Wildlife and areas are protected through the <i>Marine Parks Act 2004</i>, <i>Fisheries Act 1994</i> and the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> when assessing planning and development applications.</p>	<p>Apply the 'avoid, mitigate and offset' hierarchy in planning and decision making.</p> <p>Consider MNES in state land use planning activities where appropriate.</p> <p>Ensure conservation plans and guidelines are considered through EIS processes.</p> <p>Implement compliance measures if a breach of project conditions or environmental protection laws and regulations occurs under the Program.</p> <p>Implement effective joint management arrangements with the GBRMPA to ensure compliance with regards to the impacts of activities under the Program.</p> <p>Prohibit mining activity in the GBRWHA.</p> <p>Implement Environmental Management Frameworks for key ports.</p> <p>Identify strategic rehabilitation areas of high value for incorporation into the protected area.</p> <p>Maintain and expand protected areas over time.</p> <p>Protect threatened and vulnerable wildlife under the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>.</p>
<p>Mitigates the impacts</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will ensure that where significant impacts on MNES of activities cannot be avoided, mitigation strategies will be put in place as part of ports master planning and in EIS processes.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that the EIS processes will consider the impacts of activities on listed threatened species, ecological communities and migratory species with regard to the full extent of the geographic range of the MNES.</p>	<p>Apply the 'avoid, mitigate and offset' hierarchy in the planning and EIS decision-making processes.</p> <p>Consider relevant conservation plans, the SPP and guidelines where appropriate.</p> <p>Implement conditions for EIS development projects.</p> <p>Comply with conditions and licencing for development including regular monitoring of impacts.</p> <p>Implement effective management strategies under the Queensland Wetlands Program.</p>

How the Program protects MNES and OUV	How the Program protect MNES and OUV	How this will be demonstrated
	<p>The Queensland Government will consider the requirements of the <i>Marine Parks Act 2004</i> and the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> when assessing planning and development applications.</p> <p>After all reasonable avoidance measures have been put in place in an EIS processes, mitigation of any residual significant impacts on MNES must be undertaken where practicable.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that impacts from mining activity outside or adjacent to the WHA are rigorously conditioned for potential downstream impacts.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the LTSP.</p>	<p>Implement support programs to manage the Wet Tropics WHA.</p> <p>Apply fisheries management strategies using commercial and recreational data collected from existing monitoring programs.</p> <p>Implement on-ground activities to deliver long term benefits for threatened species.</p> <p>Provide funding of \$30 million for reef biodiversity, wetlands, water quality, coastal risk, sustainable development programs over the next five years.</p> <p>Maintain \$55 million in reef water quality initiatives over the next five years.</p> <p>Increase the implementation of joint management programs with the GBRMPA and support ongoing field management programs.</p> <p>Implement Environmental Management Frameworks for key ports.</p> <p>Establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of LTSP.</p>
Offsets the impacts	<p>Once all reasonable avoidance and mitigation measures have been applied, the Queensland Government will consider appropriate offsets for planning and EIS projects.</p> <p>In determining offset requirements for MNES, the Queensland Government will apply the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy or an offset consistent with the EPBC Act.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will deliver net benefits through the application of new Queensland Government offset guidelines.</p>	<p>Apply the ‘avoid, mitigate and offset’ hierarchy in EIS decision making.</p> <p>Conditions for EIS projects.</p> <p>Develop a Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBRWHA covering individual or multiple species, ecosystems, heritage properties and the marine environment.</p> <p>Identify strategic investment corridors, where offset delivery can be prioritised to benefit impacted matters and to provide strategic landscape scale benefits through the Queensland Government’s new approach to offsets.</p>
Contributes to the enhancement of MNES and management of existing threats	<p>The Queensland Government will promote the conservation of biodiversity.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will have regard for any relevant bioregional plans, any relevant</p>	<p>Conditions for EIS development assessment projects.</p> <p>Use of the ‘Protected Matters Search Tool’.</p> <p>Develop a Direct Benefit</p>

How the Program protects MNES and OUV	How the Program protect MNES and OUV	How this will be demonstrated
	<p>approved conservation advice and other policies, advice or guidelines relating to MNES when assessing an EIS project.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders in Gladstone Harbour through the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership to ensure open and accountable management</p> <p>The Queensland Government will provide \$12 million over three years in grants under the Everyone's Environment Grants program.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will provide \$30 million of NRM funding to the reef for biodiversity, wetlands, water quality, coastal risk, sustainable agriculture and weeds and pest management projects over the next five years.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to fund and support the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and the associated Paddock to Reef monitoring program to help achieve the long term goal of no detrimental impact from the quality of water entering the GBR.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to fund and support ongoing joint field management activities with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA.</p>	<p>Management Plan for the GBRWHA consistent with the Queensland Offsets Framework including identifying strategic corridors to prioritise benefits on a landscape scale.</p> <p>Implement port master planning.</p> <p>Develop a LTSP for the GBRWHA.</p> <p>Continue to support the Queensland Wetlands Program.</p> <p>Support programs that improve the OUV of the Wet Tropics WHA.</p> <p>Prioritise actions to recover species, taking into account national recovery plans, threat abatement plans and conservation advice.</p> <p>Maintain and work to add to the Queensland protected area estate and continue to provide funding for protected area management in the GBR coastal zone.</p> <p>Undertake on-ground actions which will deliver long-term benefits for threatened species.</p> <p>Complete regional plans in the GBR coastal zone</p>
Demonstrates adaption to reasonable climate change scenarios	The Queensland Government will continue to fund and support the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and the associated Paddock to Reef monitoring program to improve the resilience of the GBRWHA.	Provide funding. Continue to respond to the outcomes of monitoring programs.
Demonstrates an effective system of adaptive management	<p>The Queensland Government is committed to implementing the Program based on the concept of continuous improvement and adaptive management, informed by the best available information from a range of sources, with the capacity to make continual improvements as new information emerges.</p> <p>The Queensland Government is</p>	<p>Review legislation on a regular basis.</p> <p>Information from monitoring programs is used to inform management responses.</p> <p>Monitor programs for important environmental values including water quality.</p> <p>Report on the environment through</p>

How the Program protects MNES and OUV	How the Program protect MNES and OUV	How this will be demonstrated
	<p>responsible for a number of monitoring programs, particularly focused around water quality, vegetation monitoring, fisheries and biodiversity monitoring.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will ensure that fisheries are managed for the purpose of ecological sustainability, supported by the ongoing collection of commercial and recreational data through various monitoring programs.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders in Gladstone Harbour through the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership to ensure the open and accountable management of Gladstone Harbour, including annual reporting on ecosystem health and future actions underpinned by rigorous monitoring and science.</p> <p>The Queensland Government is committed to continuing its strong relationship with GBRMPA in day to day management of the GBR, particularly through the joint Field Management Program. Further efforts will be made to better coordinate actions across jurisdictions to prevent repeat offences in the GBRMP.</p> <p>The Queensland Government is committed to working with GBRMPA to streamline assessment processes and joint permitting arrangements where there is currently duplication.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the LTSP.</p>	<p>State of Environment reports.</p> <p>Apply fisheries management strategies using commercial and recreational fishing data collected from existing monitoring programs.</p> <p>Use scientifically based information and expert opinion.</p> <p>Implement compliance measures if a breach of project conditions or environmental protection laws and regulations occurs under the Program.</p> <p>Implement effective joint management arrangements with the GBRMPA to ensure compliance with regards to the impacts of activities under the Program.</p> <p>Develop a Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBRWHA covering individual or multiple species, ecosystems, heritage properties and the marine environment.</p> <p>Implement commitments identified in the Program.</p> <p>Establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the LTSP.</p>

6. How the Program meets the controlling provisions

In order to obtain endorsement of the Program, it is critical that the Program demonstrate the manner in which the Program manages MNES and OUV in the GBR coastal zone.

6.1 How the Program meets the controlling provisions

The protection and management of MNES and OUV is assured through legislative and management commitments as outlined in the tables below.

Table 6 Protection of MNES

Outcome: MNES are managed, protected and conserved.

Commitments

The Queensland Government commits to:

- meeting the EPBC Act requirements set out in Table 5.
- working with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop MNES guidelines for proponents to consider when assessing impacts on MNES during EIS processes under the Program.
- incorporating reporting on MNES into Queensland State of the Environment reporting.
- advising the Australian Government of any proposed changes of substance to the Program and will prepare a MNES Impact Statement in such cases.
- working with the Australian Government, including the GBRMPA, to develop guidelines for proponents to consider when assessing cumulative impacts on MNES in the GBRWHA.
- using the Australian Government 'Protected Matters Search Tool' in conducting planning and making EIS recommendations related to EPBC Act protected matters.
- applying the Australian Government Offsets Policy until the Queensland Offsets Framework is finalised. Offset guidelines that deliver net benefits will be prepared for application by planning and EIS assessment decision-makers in consultation with the Australian Government.
- developing an offsets register to spatially identify areas used as offsets under Queensland legislation and priority areas for future offsets.
- developing a single Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBRWHA consistent with the accredited Queensland Offsets Framework.
- ensure that conditions addressing MNES and OUV will be incorporated into EIS approval recommendations.
- reporting to the Australian Government regarding proposed developments that may impact upon world heritage properties to ensure Australia's international obligations continue to be met.

- continuing to support the Queensland Wetlands Program to deliver a range of new mapping, information and decision-making tools and products to enable local, state and federal government agencies, landowners, regional natural resource management bodies and conservation groups to protect and manage wetlands into the future.
- continuing to support programs that improve the OUV of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
- prioritising actions to recover species, taking into account national recovery plans, threat abatement plans and conservation advice.
- continuing to work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to achieve consistent national listing of threatened species.
- requiring project proponents to apply the Australian Government’s guidelines for consulting with Indigenous peoples in relation to cultural heritage and the management of traditional use. The Australian Government guidelines will be developed in cooperation with the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government will also explore ways to streamline Indigenous consultation processes between the two governments.
- undertaking on-ground actions which will deliver long-term benefits for threatened species.

Table 7 Protection for world heritage properties

Outcome: The OUV of Queensland’s world heritage properties is identified, protected, conserved, presented and transmitted to future generations.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *Wet Tropics Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- *Marine Parks Act 2004*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

For EIS processes:

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- give consideration to any significant impacts on world heritage properties resulting from urban, industrial, aquaculture and tourism developments or port activities in planning and EIS processes.
- ensure that an ‘avoid, mitigate and offset’ hierarchy is applied in planning and EIS processes to ensure that unacceptable significant impacts to the values of a world Heritage property do not occur.
- have regard for relevant policies, guidelines and statements of OUV.
- apply relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to the values of a world heritage property.
- not accept an EIS project proposal that involves mining in a WHA.
- not recommend for approval an EIS project if it:
 - is inconsistent with Australia’s obligations under the World Heritage Convention
 - is inconsistent with a plan of management that has been prepared for the property under the EPBC Act

- that proposes activities that will contravene a plan of management for a world heritage property or proposes unacceptable impacts to the world heritage values of a world heritage property
- is inconsistent with the Australian World Heritage management principles.

Table 8 Protection for national heritage places

Outcome: Queensland’s national heritage places are identified, protected, conserved, presented and transmitted to future generations of Australians.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *Wet Tropics Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- *Marine Parks Act 2004*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

For EIS processes:

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- ensure there are no unacceptable impacts to national heritage places resulting from urban, industrial, aquaculture and tourism developments or port activities
- ensure that an ‘avoid, mitigate and offset’ hierarchy will be followed to ensure that an activity does not result in unacceptable impacts to the national heritage values of a national heritage place.
- have regard for relevant policies, guidelines, management plans, and gazettal instruments.
- apply and enforce other relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to the values of a national heritage place.
- not recommend for approval an EIS project that:
 - proposes activities that will contravene a management plan that has been prepared for the place under the EPBC Act
 - proposes unacceptable impacts to the national heritage values of a national heritage places
 - is inconsistent with the national heritage management principles; or an agreement to which the Australian Government is a party in relation to a national heritage place.

Table 9 Protection for Ramsar wetlands

Outcome: The ecological character of each Ramsar wetland is maintained, and conservation and wise and sustainable use of each wetland is promoted for the benefit of humanity in a way that is compatible with maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem. This is to be achieved through the implementation of ecosystem approaches, within the context of sustainable development.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *Environment Protection Act 1994*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- *Marine Parks Act 2004*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

For EIS processes:

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- ensure that an ‘avoid, mitigate and offset’ hierarchy will be followed to ensure that an activity does not result in unacceptable impacts to the ecological character of a Ramsar Wetland.
- have regard for relevant policies, guidelines, management plans, ecological character descriptions, and Ramsar information sheets.
- apply and enforce other relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to the ecological character of a Ramsar Wetland.
- not recommend for approval an EIS that:
 - proposes activities that will contravene a management plan under the EPBC Act
 - proposes unacceptable impacts to the ecological character of a Ramsar wetland
 - contravenes Australia’s obligations under the Ramsar Convention or the Australian Ramsar management principles
 - will result in unacceptable impacts to the ecological character of a Ramsar Wetland.

Table 10 Protection for listed threatened species and ecological communities

Outcome: The survival and conservation status of listed threatened species and ecological communities is promoted and enhanced, including through the conservation of habitat critical to the survival of a species or community and other measures contained in any recovery plans, threat abatement plans or conservation advices.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *Environment Protection Act 1994*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*
- *Vegetation Management Act 1999*

For EIS processes:

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- have regard for any approved conservation advice in relation to a threatened species or threatened ecological community.
- ensure that an 'avoid, mitigate and offset' hierarchy will be followed to ensure that an activity does not result in unacceptable impacts to a listed threatened species or ecological community.
- have regard for relevant policies, guidelines, mapping, approved conservation advices, threat abatement plans and recovery plans.
- apply and enforce other relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to a listed threatened species or ecological communities.
- not recommend for approval an EIS project:
 - that will result in unacceptable impacts to a listed threatened species or ecological community
 - that is inconsistent with a threat abatement plan or recovery plan for a listed threatened species or ecological community
 - that is inconsistent with the Australia's obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Apia Convention, or Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
 - that is inconsistent with a recovery plan or threat abatement plan for a listed threatened species or ecological community.

Table 11 Protection for listed migratory species

Outcome: The survival and conservation status of migratory species and their critical habitat is promoted and enhanced, consistent with Australia's international obligations.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *Environment Protection Act 1994*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

For EIS processes

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- ensure that an 'avoid, mitigate and offset' hierarchy will be followed to ensure that an activity does not result in unacceptable impacts to a listed migratory species or an area of important habitat.
- have regard for relevant policies, guidelines, mapping, and wildlife conservation plans.
- apply and enforce other relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to a listed migratory species.
- not recommend for approval an EIS project:
 - that proposes activities that are inconsistent with relevant recovery plans, a wildlife conservation plan for the species, conservation advice or an IGA under the EPBC Act
 - that is inconsistent with Australia's obligations under the Bonn, CAMBA, JAMBA and ROKAMBA Conventions
 - that will result in unacceptable impacts to a listed migratory species.

Table 12 Protection for Commonwealth marine areas

Outcome: The environment of Commonwealth marine areas will be maintained or enhanced in full conformity with relevant marine bioregional plans and plans of management for relevant Commonwealth reserves.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- ensure that an 'avoid, mitigate and offset' hierarchy will be followed to ensure that an activity does not result in unacceptable impacts to the environment of a Commonwealth marine area.
- have regard for; relevant policies, guidelines, mapping, wildlife conservation plans, gazettal instruments, bioregional plans and management plans when assessing an EIS project.
- apply and enforce other relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to the environment of a Commonwealth marine area.
- not recommend for approval an EIS project:
 - that proposes activities that will contravene a plan of management for the Commonwealth marine area or proposes unacceptable impacts to the Commonwealth marine environment
 - that will result in unacceptable impacts to the Commonwealth marine area
 - that is inconsistent with a plan of management for a Commonwealth reserve, the IUCN reserve management principles; a plan of management for a Commonwealth heritage place, or with the Commonwealth heritage management principles.

Table 13 Protection for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Outcome: The OUV of the GBRMP, as a world heritage property, must be identified, protected, conserved, presented and transmitted to future generations. The environmental, biodiversity and heritage values of the GBRMP are protected and conserved for the long-term, consistent with the objects of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

Relevant Queensland legislation may include:

- *Fisheries Act 1994 (as it relates to Fish Habitat Areas)*
- *Marine Parks Act 2004*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

For EIS processes:

- *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2010*
- *Environment Protection Act 1994 and Environment Protection Regulation 2008*
- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

The Queensland Government will:

- not contravene any zoning or other plans under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* when approving activities outside the GBRMP.
- ensure that an 'avoid, mitigate and offset' hierarchy will be followed to ensure that an activity does not result in unacceptable impacts to the environment in the GBRMP.
- have regard for relevant policies, guidelines, mapping, wildlife conservation plans, gazettal instruments, bioregional plans and management plans when assessing EIS projects.
- apply and enforce other relevant supporting legislation to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts to the environment of the GBRMP.
- not recommend for approval an EIS project:
 - that proposes activities that will contravene a plan of management for the GBRMP or proposes unacceptable impacts to the environment of the GBRMP.
 - that will result in unacceptable impacts to the GBRMP.

7. Implementation of commitments

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that development in the GBR is appropriately managed to ensure it maintains or enhances the OUV for which it was declared a WHA.

Consequently, the Queensland Government is working to strengthen its legislative and regulatory framework aimed at managing and protecting the GBR coastal zone and the commitments outlined in both this revised Program Report and the Supplementary Report have been developed to respond to the key challenges facing the GBR.

The development of the LTSP was requested by the WHC and will build on the findings of the comprehensive strategic assessment and bring relevant programs and activities under one plan. It will be the primary implementation mechanism to deliver future joint commitments and actions within the GBRMPA on a range of management issues.

Table 14 is a list of the Queensland Government's strategic assessment commitments and contains details of their implementation mechanism and current status.

Table 14 Implementation of commitments

No.	Commitment	Implementation mechanism	Status
1	The Queensland Government will complete regional plans in the GBR coastal zone where there is a gap and continue to update other regional plans to ensure they respond to the latest information and pressures.	DSDIP	Commenced
2	The Queensland Government will maintain and work to add to its protected area estate and continue to provide funding for protected area management in the GBR coastal zone.	DNPRSR	Ongoing
3	The Queensland Government will undertake on-ground actions which will deliver long-term benefits for threatened species.	DEHP / DPC / LTSP	Ongoing
4	The Queensland Government will introduce legislation to implement key actions of the QPS. The legislation will concentrate development at five PPDAs and introduce port master planning which will incorporate environmental considerations and community engagement. The QPS also prohibits dredging within and adjoining the GBRWHA for the development of new, or the expansion of existing port facilities outside PPDAs, for the next 10 years.	DSDIP	Commence by late 2014
5	The Queensland Government will meet the EPBC Act requirements set out in Table 5.	Queensland Government	Ongoing
6	The Queensland Government is committed to working with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA, to develop MNES guidelines for proponents to consider when assessing impacts on MNES during the EIS processes under the Program.	DPC / LTSP	Commence by early 2015

No.	Commitment	Implementation mechanism	Status
7	The Queensland Government will apply the Australian Government Offsets Policy until the Queensland Offsets Framework is accredited by the Australian Government. Offsets guidelines that deliver net benefits will be prepared for application by planning and development decision-makers in consultation with the Australian Government.	DEHP / DSDIP	Commence by end 2014
8	The Queensland Government will develop an offsets register to spatially identify areas used as offsets under Queensland legislation and priority areas for future offsets.	DEHP	Commence by end 2014
9	The Queensland Government will develop a single Direct Benefit Management Plan for the GBRWHA consistent with the accredited Queensland Offsets Framework.	DEHP / DPC / LTSP	Commence by early 2015
10	The Queensland Government will use the Australian Government 'Protected Matters Search Tool' in conducting planning and making EIS decisions related to EPBC Act protected matters.	DEHP / DSDIP	Ongoing
11	The Queensland Government will ensure that stringent conditions addressing MNES and OUV will be incorporated into approval recommendations.	DEHP / DSDIP	Ongoing
12	The Queensland Government will prioritise actions to recover species, taking into account national recovery plans, threat abatement plans and conservation advice.	DEHP / DPC / LTSP	Ongoing
13	The Queensland Government will continue to work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to achieve consistent national listing of threatened species.	DEHP	Ongoing
14	The Queensland Government will require project proponents to apply the Australian Government's guidelines for consulting with Indigenous peoples in relation to cultural heritage and the management of traditional use. The Australian Government guidelines will be developed in cooperation with Queensland and the State will also explore ways to streamline Indigenous consultation processes between the two governments.	DEHP / DSDIP	Commence by early 2015
15	The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA, to develop guidelines for proponents to consider when assessing cumulative impacts on MNES in the GBRWHA.	DPC / LTSP	Commence by early 2015
16	The Queensland Government will ensure that fisheries are managed for the purpose of ecological sustainability, supported by the ongoing collection of commercial and recreational data through various monitoring programs.	DAFF / DPC	Ongoing
17	The Queensland Government will incorporate reporting on MNES into Queensland State of the Environment reporting.	DEHP	Commence 2015
18	The Queensland Government is providing \$12 million over three years in grants under the Everyone's Environment Grants program.	DEHP	Commenced

No.	Commitment	Implementation mechanism	Status
19	The Queensland Government will provide \$30 million of NRM funding to the reef for biodiversity, wetlands, water quality, coastal risk, sustainable agriculture and weeds and pest management projects over the next five years. This will support the sustainable management of natural resources and help protect significant natural assets.	DNRM	Commenced
20	The Queensland Government will continue to support programs that improve the OUV of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.	DEHP / Wet Tropics Management Authority / DNPRSR	Ongoing
21	The Queensland Government will continue to support the Queensland Wetlands Program to deliver a range of new mapping, information and decision-making tools and products to enable local, state and federal government agencies, landowners, regional natural resource management bodies and conservation groups to protect and manage wetlands into the future.	DEHP	Ongoing
22	The Queensland Government is committed to providing 40 new Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers in Queensland over three years, bringing the total number of Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers to 80.	DEHP	Commenced
23	The Queensland Government will continue to work closely with GBRMPA to increase the implementation of complementary actions across protected area jurisdictions, including the streamlining of assessment and joint permitting processes, the formulation of joint park user policies, and discouraging repeat offending.	DNPRSR / DPC	Ongoing
24	The Queensland Government will continue to fund and support ongoing joint field management activities with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA.	DNPRSR / DPC	Ongoing
25	The Queensland Government will advise the Australian Government of any proposed changes of substance to the Program and will prepare a MNES Impact Statement in such cases.	DEHP / DSDIP	Ongoing
26	The Queensland Government will report to the Australian Government regarding proposed developments that may impact upon world heritage properties to ensure Australia's international obligations continue to be met.	DEHP / DSDIP	Ongoing
27	The Queensland Government will report annually to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum on implementation of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.	DPC / LTSP	Commencing 2015
28	The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA, to develop a Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan for the GBRWHA by the end of 2014 and ensure its implementation.	DPC / LTSP	Commenced
29	The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA, to develop an outcomes-based framework for the GBRWHA as part of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.	DPC / LTSP	Commence by early 2015

No.	Commitment	Implementation mechanism	Status
30	The Queensland Government will work with the Australian Government, including GBRMPA, to establish an integrated monitoring framework and program for the GBRWHA as part of the Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan.	DPC / LTSP	Commence by early 2015
31	The Queensland Government will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders in Gladstone Harbour through the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership to ensure open and accountable management of Gladstone Harbour, including annual reporting on ecosystem health and future actions underpinned by rigorous monitoring and science.	DEHP	Ongoing
32	The Queensland Government is committed to reducing the risk of shipping incidents and potential pollution of the marine environment, including implementing its responsibilities as part of the North East Shipping Management Group.	DTMR (Marine Safety Queensland)	Ongoing
33	The Queensland Government is committed to funding of \$55 million over the next five years to develop, promote and install best management practice systems to improve reef water quality.	DEHP / DPC	Commenced
34	The Queensland Government will continue to fund and support the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and the associated Paddock to Reef monitoring program to help achieve the long-term goal of no detrimental impact from the quality of water entering the GBR. Consideration will be given to the inclusion of other pollutants other than broadscale land use during the Plan's next review in 2018.	DPC / LTSP	Ongoing

8. Conclusion

An important element of the strategic assessment is the implementation of the proposed Program, including commitments. Table 14 lists the agencies responsible for the implementation of the commitments made by the Queensland Government.

8.1 Measuring performance

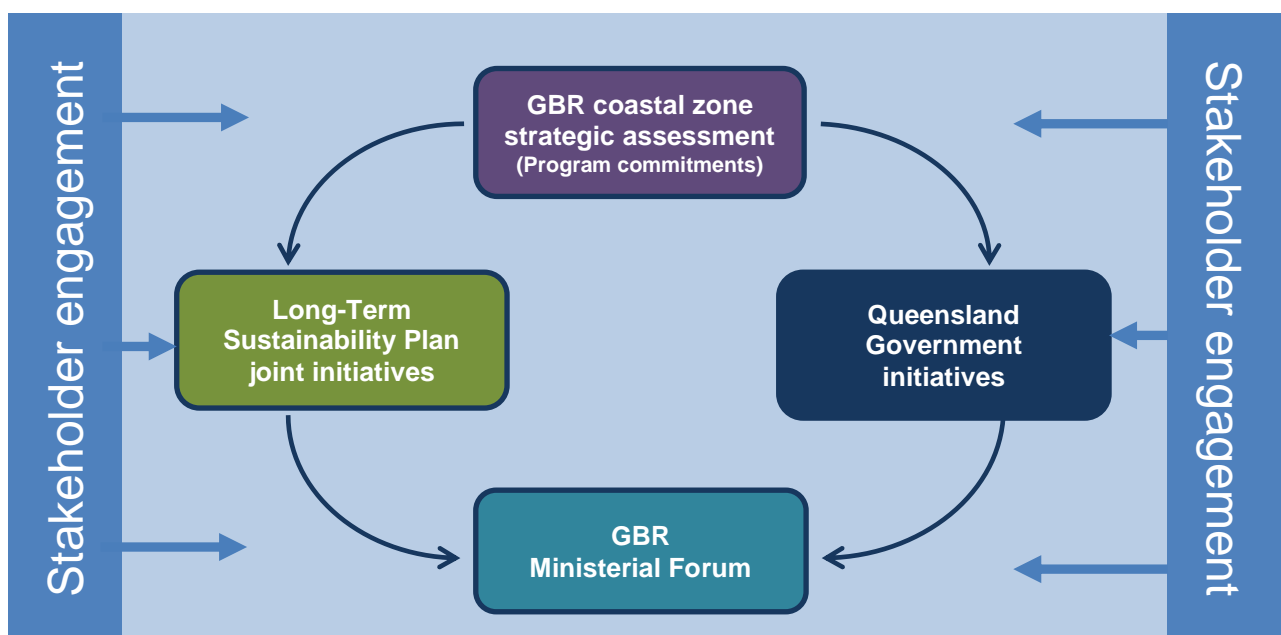
In order to measure the performance of the Program against the Program objectives, it is intended to utilise the existing monitoring mechanisms to determine the Program's effectiveness. As described in Figure 9, where new commitments require a separate reviewing process, all joint management initiatives will be implemented and reviewed through the LTSP and specific Queensland Government initiatives will be implemented and reviewed by the respective Government agency.

The reporting role to convey the effectiveness of future activities will be measured against the TOR and the Program commitments with the results provided to DOE.

The primary objective of the Program is to ensure all development activities in the GBR coastal zone are carried out in a manner in which impacts on the environment are avoided, mitigated or offset to ensure no unacceptable impacts occur to matters protected under Part 3 of the EPBC Act.

The Queensland Government will provide an update on the Program commitments through the LTSP. The report will also highlight any decisions made under the Program, the findings of compliance inspections, environmental incidents reported and any investigations underway for the previous year. The report will be provided to the Minister and published on the Queensland Government website.

Figure 9 Program commitments implementation and stakeholder engagement



8.2 Governance

8.2.1 Queensland Environment Taskforce

The Queensland Government established a stand-alone Environment Taskforce in March 2014 to work on strategic whole-of-government environmental projects relevant to the GBR. The taskforce will consolidate and drive strategic environmental policy and coordinate the implementation of initiatives aimed at promoting the protection and management of the GBR. The Taskforce's first priority is to provide Queensland Government input to the development of the LTSP in collaboration with the Australian Government.

8.2.2 Reef 2050 – Long Term Sustainability Plan

In support of the outcomes of the strategic assessment, the Queensland and Australian governments are currently developing the LTSP to guide the protection and management of the GBRWHA to 2050. The LTSP will build on the findings of the comprehensive strategic assessment and bring relevant programs and activities under one plan to ensure greater coordination, efficiency and effectiveness to protect and manage the GBR.

Stakeholder engagement is a major component of the work to develop the LTSP, with the establishment of a Partnership Group bringing together representatives of government, key industry organisations and interest groups to discuss relevant issues and reach agreement on the LTSP's final contents. Stakeholder groups will also be invited to identify and implement some of the LTSP's actions, recognising that a whole-of-community approach is needed to ensure protection of the GBRWHA. This is consistent with the partnership model used for the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan.

The LTSP will become a schedule to the IGA, and will be reviewed every five years.

8.2.3 Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum

The GBR Ministerial Forum is overseeing the development and future implementation of the LTSP. It is a forum established under the IGA that is made up of Australian and Queensland government ministers with environment and natural resource management portfolios. It provides an avenue for the two governments to prioritise protection actions, facilitate adaptive management strategies and guide decision making, both in the WHA and adjacent coastal zone.

Annual reports on the implementation of the Program commitments and initiatives under the LTSP will be provided to the GBR Ministerial Forum.

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