

Queensland

# REEF WATER QUALITY

Program



## A project to inform practice change, education and extension in reef catchments

The Queensland Government has committed an additional \$18.5 million to invest in more effective, targeted and coordinated extension to support large scale land management practice change as part of its response to *Recommendation 3: Extension and Education* of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is working jointly with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection on this project to understand what is required to support accelerated and sustained practice change while enhancing capacity in education and extension. The first step that will inform the overall extension and education direction is a review project.

### What is the aim and scope of this review project?

The main purpose of this review is to guide future investment in education and extension for practice change in reef catchments.

While reviewing existing education and extension systems this project will develop recommendations on how best to provide access to services for farmers to enable accelerated practice change and strengthen long-term capacity. This may result in a change in the way that information is provided to farmers, or it may strengthen current approaches that are working well.

Furthermore, the project will respond to the diverse agricultural industries, local communities and geography present within the Great Barrier Reef catchments. The industries considered will include cattle grazing (including beef and dairy production), cropping (including cane and grain farming), and horticulture (including banana growing).

### What will the review project do?

The Queensland Government has commissioned a consultant, Coutts J&R Pty Ltd, to undertake this independent review.

The review, led by Dr Jeff Coutts, will inform the investment strategy by:

- reviewing existing public and private sector extension capacity, career pathways and training and education opportunities
- reviewing current arrangements, innovations and effective examples in extension and education delivery and its impact on practice change
- identifying gaps and opportunities in service delivery, coordination and reporting and how these can best be addressed
- recommending where actions can be taken to ensure that innovative extension and education delivery services can best



be supported to maximise their effectiveness.

A report to the Queensland Government will contribute to the determination of investment priorities under the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program.

### **How will stakeholders be involved?**

Stakeholders will be consulted on above topics in education and extension services specifically in relation to those issues affecting the Great Barrier Reef.

The review will capture input from people delivering extension, particularly on-ground practitioners. The consultancy team will seek input from as many people as possible in regional areas through phone calls, visits and small workshops between December 2016 and April 2017.

Stakeholders may provide input through:

- direct contact from the consultant
- completing web based survey to be established by the consultant
- contacting the consultant themselves, if they are not contacted, to share relevant information or suggestions.

### **More information about the consultant**

Coutts J&R has a long and established track record of delivering professional consultancy services in the speciality fields of extension, education, monitoring and evaluation.

Dr Jeff Coutts brings his considerable experience in the area of reef extension, extension theory, policy and practice, international extension and evaluation. Originally from the Burdekin, Jeff has strong networks across the reef regions. Supporting Coutts J&R in the review is Dr Roy Murray Prior and Mr Peter Long.

Dr Roy Murray Prior lives in North Queensland, has a strong academic teaching, writing, and supervision in extension at the university level and international extension experience. He will

draw on that knowledge, experience and networks and lead in the exploration of extension innovation while providing an opportunity for face-to-face interaction with key stakeholders in the north.

Peter Long has in-depth experience in agriculture and natural resource management, developing, delivering and evaluating extension programs and projects. He will coordinate Best Management Practice (BMP) information to ensure BMP is fully integrated and complemented into the recommendations. He will also maximise face-to-face interaction in Central Queensland.

For more information regarding Coutts J&R, please visit [www.couttsjr.com.au](http://www.couttsjr.com.au)

### **More information**

For more information about the consultancy please contact Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 0427 427 305 or email [ReefBMP@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:ReefBMP@daf.qld.gov.au).

To provide input to the review in relation to practice change, extension and education, please contact Dr Jeff Coutts via email at [jeff@couttsjr.com.au](mailto:jeff@couttsjr.com.au).

For information about the Taskforce Final report, their recommendations and Queensland Government response contact Office of the Great Barrier Reef, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection on (07) 3330 5648, email [OfficeoftheGBR@ehp.qld.gov.au](mailto:OfficeoftheGBR@ehp.qld.gov.au) or visit [www.qld.gov.au/GreatBarrierReef](http://www.qld.gov.au/GreatBarrierReef).