

## Healthy Country Program within the SEQ Healthy Waterways Initiative

Michael Patchett and Vince Nolan,  
Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management

- The Queensland Government is committed to improving water quality and waterway health in South East Queensland.
- The South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Strategy 2007–2012 was launched in May 2008 and will contribute to achieving the Desired Regional Outcomes in the South East Queensland Regional Plan.
- The Strategy is a comprehensive set of action plans and management actions with a 20-year vision for the health of South East Queensland waterways, including Moreton Bay.

South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Strategy	
<b>Issue-based Action Plans</b>	
1	Point Source Pollution Action Plan
2	Non-Urban Diffuse Source Pollution Action Plan
3	Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) Action Plan
4	Protection and Conservation Action Plan
5	Coastal Algal Blooms Action Plan
<b>Enabling Action Plans</b>	
6	Ecosystem Health Monitoring Program
7	Communication, Education and Motivation Action Plan
8	Management Strategy Evaluation Action Plan
<b>Area-based Action Plans</b>	
9	Moreton Bay Action Plan
10	Northern Catchments Action Plan
11	Bremer Catchment Action Plan
12	Logan-Albert Catchments Action Plan

### The Queensland Government Investment

The Queensland Government is investing \$20 million over four years for strategic new initiatives in the Strategy aimed at reducing pollution loads and improving the health of waterways and catchments of South East Queensland. This investment is leveraging significant co-investment from the healthy waterways partners.

### The Strategic Investment

#### Healthy Country

- \$8 million is allocated to the Healthy Country program to reduce rural diffuse pollution loads, restore degraded waterways and to facilitate land stewardship in priority sub-catchments of the Bremer, Lockyer and Logan River systems. An additional \$0.7 million is being invested to engage traditional owners in waterways restoration.

#### Water Sensitive Urban Design

- \$4.0 million is allocated towards reducing diffuse pollution from the urban footprint, including a major capacity building program for Water Sensitive Urban Design, and improving stormwater management and erosion and sediment control in the construction of urban developments and major public transport infrastructure.

#### Coastal Algal Blooms

- \$1.6 million is allocated to the management and prevention of coastal algal bloom hazards.

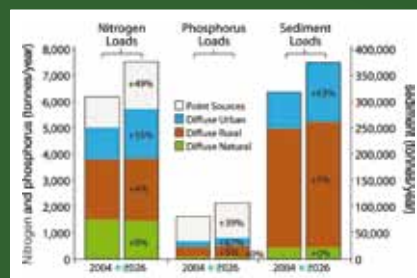
#### Social capital building

- \$6.4 million is allocated to enabling management actions for the Strategy, such as communication and education, investments in water monitoring and the development of decision support tools to achieve healthy waterways.

An estimated average of more than 315,000 tonnes of sediment is discharged to Moreton Bay each year from various sources of which approximately 250,000 tonnes (80%) comes from non-urban diffuse areas. The current erosion and sediment discharge rates are estimated to be 30 times that of pre-European settlement. Unless major interventions are taken to reduce the causes of sediment pollution, the gross sediment load is predicted to grow to approximately 370,000 tonnes per year from all sources by 2026.

Healthy Country was developed as a "proof of concept" project to trial prioritised management interventions in the 3 focal catchments that contribute the majority of sediment to Moreton Bay. The study is the first in South East Queensland to bring together natural resource management groups, State Agencies and Indigenous Traditional Owners for a large-scale project that is underpinned by robust science and a specifically designed monitoring and evaluation framework to track and evaluate management responses.

### The Healthy Country Project Focal Catchment



Predicted changes to annual pollutant loads.