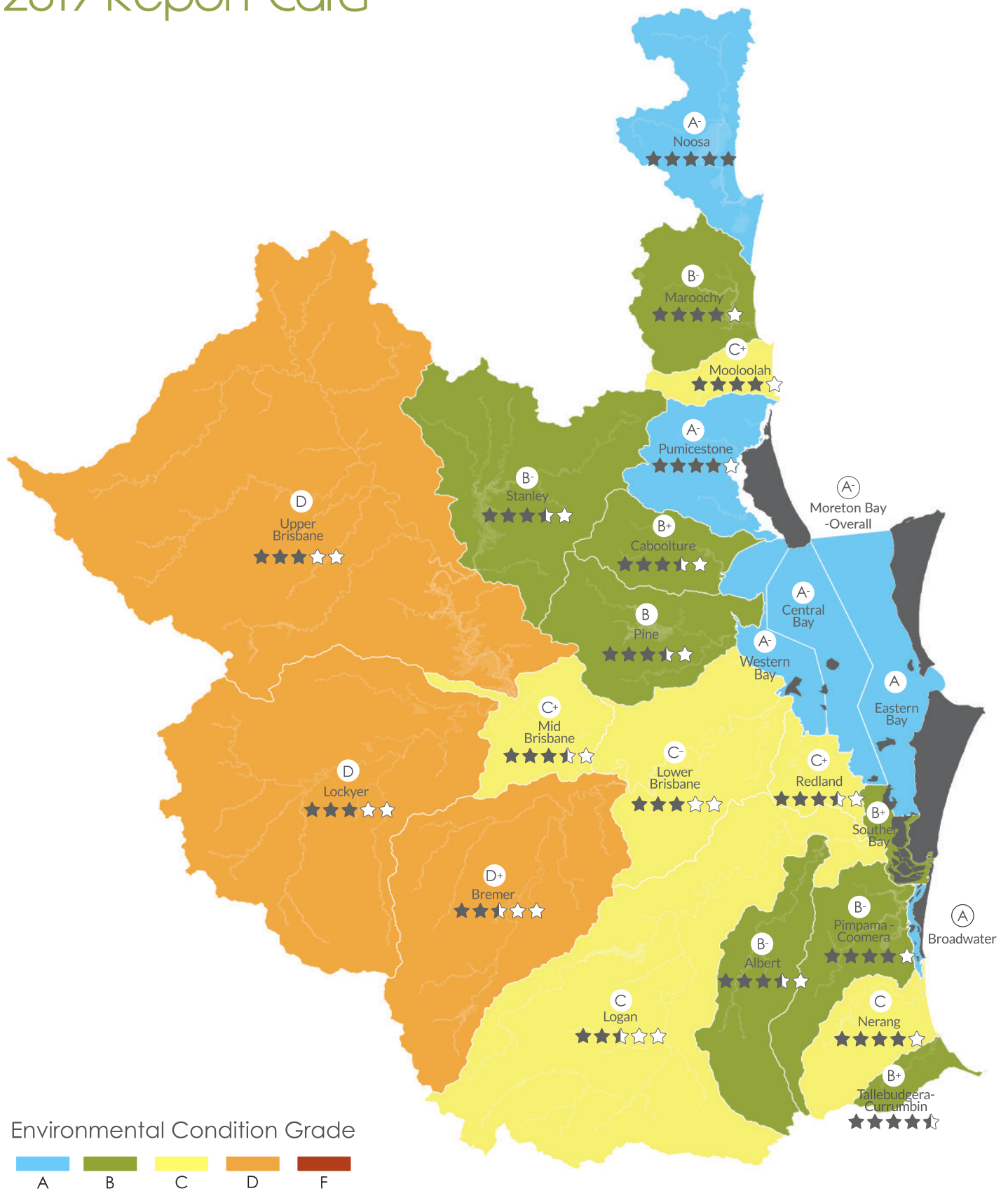
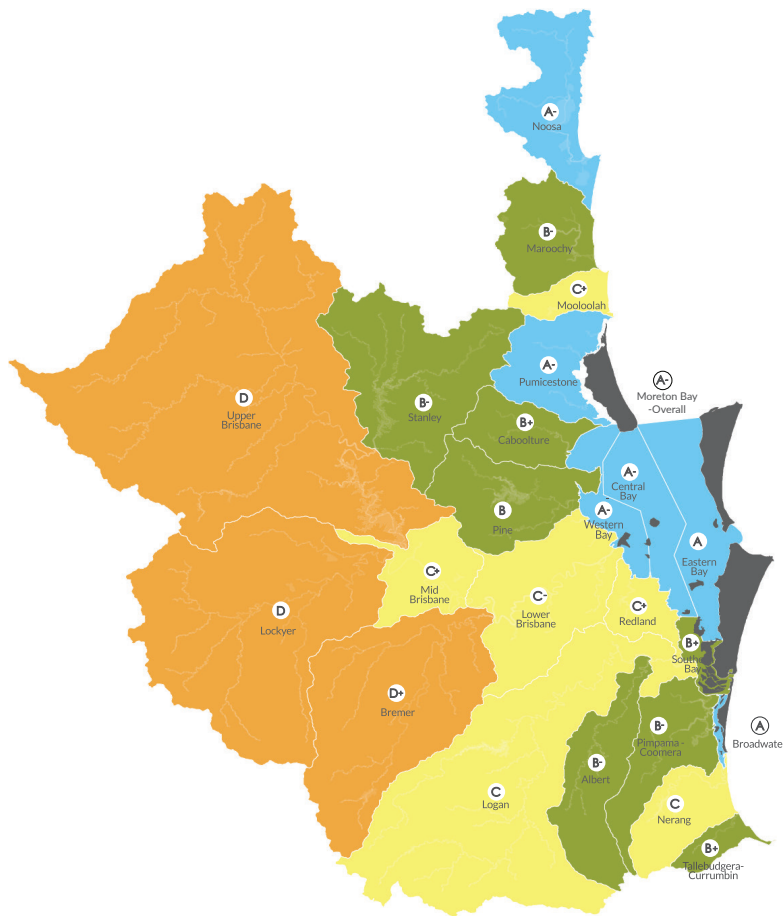


2019 Report Card



2019 Report Card Environmental Condition Grade



The Environmental Condition Grade is comprised of multiple indicators, assessing key freshwater and estuarine aspects of the waterways. Indicators are assessed against established guidelines and benchmarks, resulting in a single grade for each catchment or bay zone. The data used to calculate the grade is an integration of modelling and field monitoring.

- A** Excellent: Conditions meet all guidelines. All key processes are functional and critical habitats are in near pristine condition.
- B** Good: Conditions meet guidelines for most of the reporting area. Most key processes are slightly impacted and most critical habitats are intact.
- C** Fair: Conditions are close to meeting guidelines in most of the reporting area. Key processes are impacted but still functional and critical habitats are impacted.
- D** Poor: Conditions meet few of the guidelines in most of the reporting area. Many key processes are not functional and most critical habitats are impacted.
- F** Fail: Conditions do not meet the set guidelines. Most key processes are not functional and most critical habitats are severely impacted.

The Environmental Condition Story of 2019

There have been exciting improvements in Moreton Bay this year with a reduction in mud and further expansion in seagrass coverage.

The 2019 results reveal that mud in the shallower regions of Moreton Bay has been redistributed to deep areas in Central Bay or removed from the Bay entirely. This improvement highlights the resilience of Moreton Bay to recover and rejuvenate, so long as it has relief from regular pressures. Recent less than average rainfall has brought respite for Moreton Bay, giving time for natural processes to flush the mud out of Moreton Bay. As a result, Moreton Bay has better water quality and more seagrass, meaning a healthier ecosystem.

Seagrass meadows in Bramble Bay, which have not been seen since the 1950's, have recovered over the past two years and now dominate the waters off the southern Redcliffe Peninsula. This is on top of the significant long-term recovery of seagrass in Southern Deception Bay which were lost entirely in 1996.

Overall, there have been no dramatic changes in Report Card Grades this year.

The bay zones and coastal catchments are in good condition, however there are some worrying trends in certain key indicators of our catchment's health.

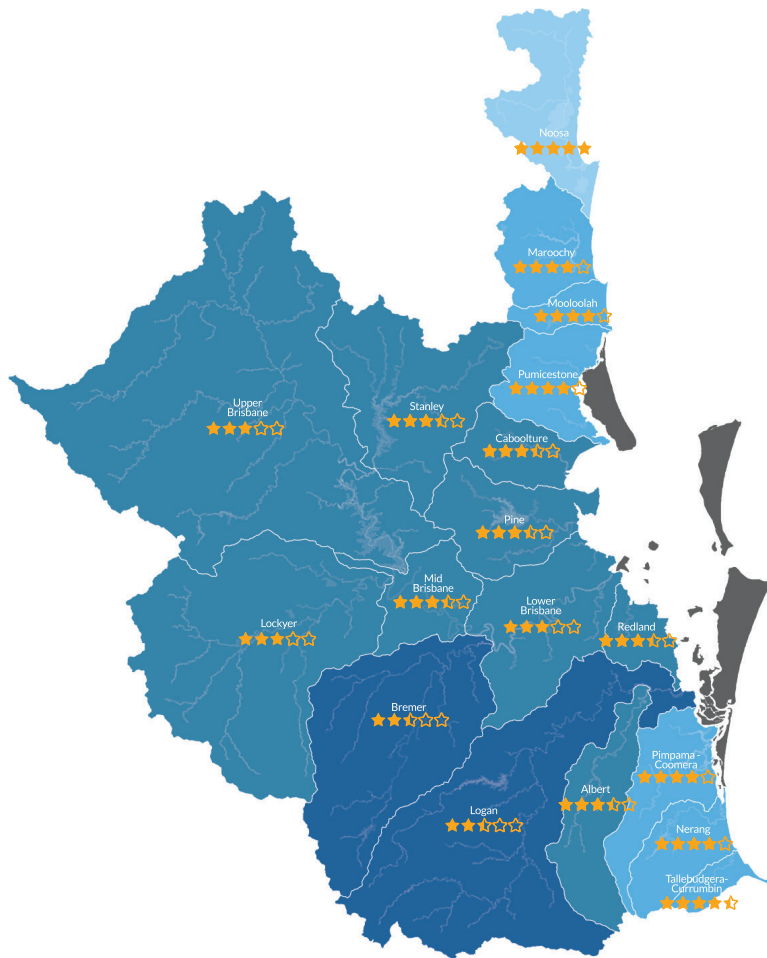
Freshwater fish and macroinvertebrates (crayfish, snails, insects) are doing it tough in the dry conditions. The freshwater fish and macroinvertebrate scores in some western catchments are the poorest we've seen since 2007, at the end of the last drought.

The major issue impacting waterway health in South East Queensland continues to be the amount of mud or sediment entering our waterways. Despite the improvement of mud in Moreton Bay, without further significant investment in reducing sediment pollution, our waterways will continue to deteriorate.

This highlights the need to build the resilience of our waterways and reduce the amount of sediment entering our waterways. To do so, we must prepare our catchments for large rainfall events through managing erosion, stabilising creek channels, rehabilitating riverbank areas, applying sustainable agricultural practices and introducing water sensitive urban design.

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Waterway Benefit Rating



South East Queenslanders gain many benefits from their local waterways. Rivers, creeks, lakes and beaches that are easily accessible and usable are an important place of recreation where locals can walk, cycle, swim, boat, fish, camp, picnic, socialise and relax while enjoying nature. Locals also spend and save money using local waterways for recreation which contributes to the economic value of the area.

Waterways and catchments also provide financial benefits to local communities by contributing to low-cost drinking water, as treatment is needed for purification.

The waterway benefit rating provides an assessment of these social and economic benefits, which are combined to reach an overall rating.



The Waterway Benefit Story of 2019

South East Queensland is fortunate to have beautiful waterways (creeks, rivers, lakes, beaches and bays) that underpin our lifestyle, cultural identity and economy.

The region has emerged as one of Australia's most important economic areas and waterway health is integral to our future economic growth. Waterways are estimated to provide over \$5 billion per year to South East Queensland's economy through industry, tourism, recreation and fishing.

The latest results from our survey shows that people in South East Queensland love their waterways, that they understand the value of their waterways and want them to be protected.

More than 80% of residents reported recreating at their local waterway this year, with 68% satisfied with how easy they were to access and use.

The value that residents receive from their waterways varies from catchment to catchment. For example, some residents value waterways for their contribution to livelihoods whilst other residents value their waterways for rest and relaxation. But consistently across the region, residents most highly value their local waterways for their natural beauty and as a place to experience nature.

Residents across South East Queensland are united in their desire for their waterways to be protected.

The 2019 Report Card is produced with support from our partners



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