

**WHAT'S
OUR
GRADE?**

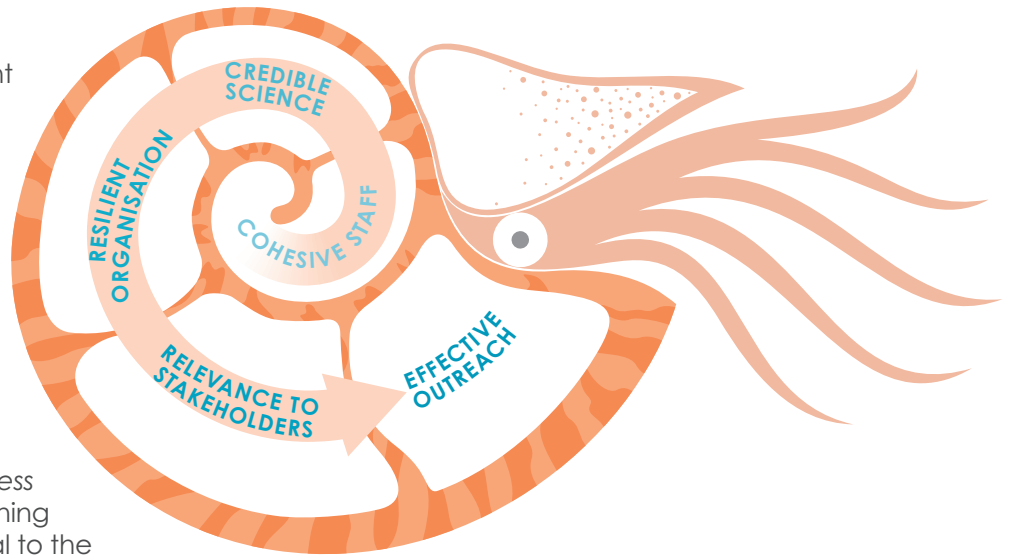
**REEF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS
REPORT CARD**



2022

SUCCESS NAUTILUS

A nautilus is used to represent the sequence of goals that the reef regional partnerships have established because these marine creatures are iconic, symmetrical and beautiful. Fulfilling the goals in each of the nautilus chambers is a recipe for success, thus the term *Success Nautilus*.



At the very core of the *Success Nautilus*, recruiting and retaining **cohesive staff** is fundamental to the success of a partnership. Next, basing resource management on **credible science** is a key to the credibility and relevance of the partnership. Following on from staffing and science is the importance of creating a **resilient organisation** that can withstand financial disruptions and external challenges and be financially sustainable. The partnership works to provide **relevance to stakeholders** and to develop **effective outreach** in order to propel the partnership forward, similar to the water jet propulsion system of the nautilus.

Partnership success



Effective outreach: The ability of the reef regional partnerships to contribute to the health and stewardship of the local waterways, catchments, communities and the Great Barrier Reef ultimately depends on getting the message out and having that message received by the target audiences (*overall impact*). Developing large and receptive audiences (*total reach*) is key to achieving a positive action using communication products that resonate with those audiences (*communication effectiveness*).



Relevance to stakeholders: Key stakeholders can influence changes in behaviour and create positive environmental outcomes (*influencing change*) when stakeholders are motivated and effective. Satisfied partners (*partner satisfaction*) who are actively involved (*stakeholder engagement*) are key to generating motivation and actions.



Resilient organisation: A key to organisational resilience is the ability of an organisation to be maintained at a productive and effective level (*financial sustainability*). This financial sustainability relies on the overall financial status of the partnership (*financial viability*), aided by increasing its partner numbers, contributions and support, and maintaining a diverse suite of funders (*financial diversity*).



Credible science: The various actions and approaches applied by the reef regional partnerships need to be supported by documentation (*technical products*). Technical reports used in regional report cards to inform policy and management need to be made widely available (*data transparency*). Finally, the relevant scientists need to be involved in the process of developing scientifically-robust policies and management decisions (*scientific expertise*).



Cohesive staff: Fundamental to any organisation is having staff who can function effectively through both good times as well as through crises and disruptions (*organisational functionality*). Being able to both recruit and retain staff (*staff retention*) is key to developing a 'corporate memory' and for developing strong stakeholder relationships. Content staff, who enjoy their jobs and who see their contribution as worthwhile, is key to developing cohesive staff (*staff happiness*).



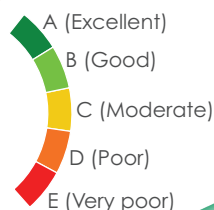
The report card wheel is a sequential set of five goals with three indicators per goal. The sequence begins at the top, with the goal of **cohesive staff** viewed as fundamental, followed clockwise and sequentially by **credible science**, **resilient organisation**, **relevance to stakeholders** and **effective outreach**. Each of the indicators are scored separately (0-100%) for the five reef regional partnership organisations, colour-coded and averaged to create scores for each goal and then averaged again to create a grade (A = 80-100%, B = 60-79.9%, C = 40-59.9%, D = 20-39.9%, E = 0-19.9%) for each partnership organisation. A plus (+) or minus (-) is assigned to a grade if it is within 5% of a grade boundary.



Wet Tropics
Waterways



dry tropics partner
for healthy water

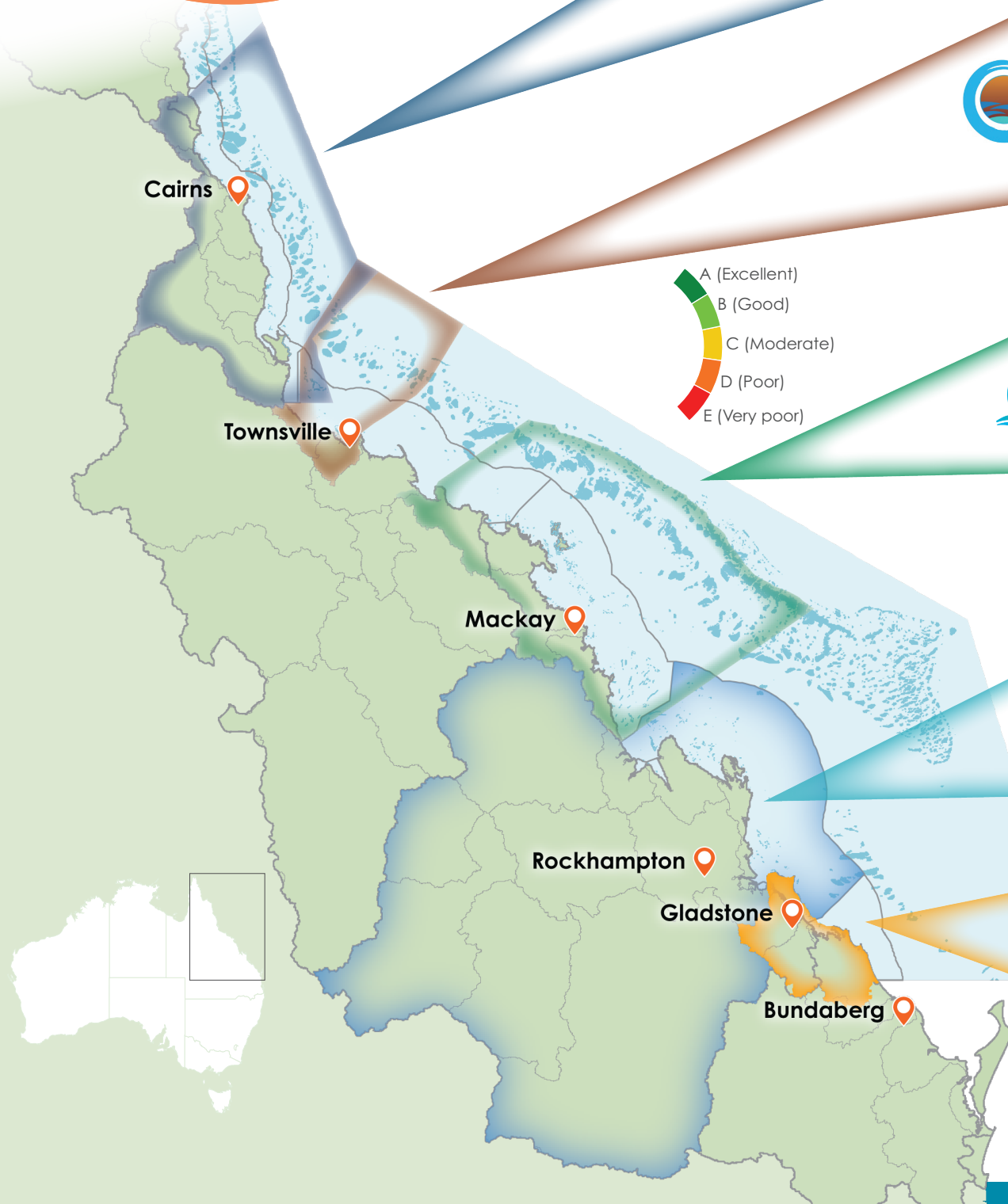


HEALTHY REEF PARTNERSHIP
MACKAY-WHITE

fitz
partner
for river



Gladstone
Health Partnership





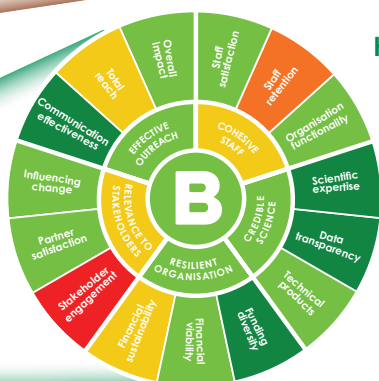
WET TROPICS WATERWAYS (est. 2016)

Wet Tropics Waterways Partnership scored well overall and maintains their B grade received in 2020, with excellent scores for cohesive staff. Overall scores for credible science, relevance to stakeholders, and effective outreach were good, though room for improvement remains for organisational resilience, that was moderate due to low scores for financial viability and sustainability indicators. Effective outreach has improved over the past two years with improvements in all three outreach indicators.



DRY TROPICS PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTHY WATERS (est. 2018)

Dry Tropics Partnership for Healthy Waters scored well overall and improved their C grade received in 2020, with a B grade in 2022. This improvement was driven largely by improvements in organisational resilience and effective outreach. Due to the young age of the Partnership and recent turn-over of a small staff-base, staff retention scored very poorly, but staff remain satisfied and the organisation had excellent functionality.



HEALTHY RIVERS TO REEF PARTNERSHIP - MACKAY-WHITSUNDAY-ISAAC (est. 2014)

Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership scored well overall and maintains their B grade received in 2020, though changes have been observed in how this grade was achieved in 2022. A decline in stakeholder relevance and staff cohesion was offset by an improvement in effective outreach. Recent staff turnover affected the staff retention score and work remains to review and re-engage stakeholders in the region.



FITZROY PARTNERSHIP FOR RIVER HEALTH (est. 2012)

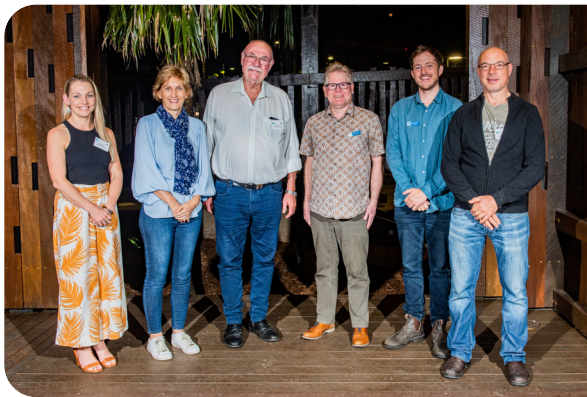
Fitzroy Partnership for River Health received an excellent A grade in 2022, an improvement on their B+ grade in 2020. Excellent scores were achieved across all five values, with improvements in organisational resilience and effective outreach compared to 2020.

Well done Fitzroy team!



GLADSTONE HEALTHY HARBOUR PARTNERSHIP (est. 2014)

Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership scored well overall and improved their B- grade received in 2020, with a B+ grade in 2022. The improved grade was a result of excellent scores for staff cohesion, credible science, and stakeholder relevance. Financial sustainability and total reach were key issues, affecting the organisation's financial resilience and effective outreach.



WET TROPICS WATERWAYS

Wet Tropics Waterways was established in 2016 and produces an annual report card incorporating freshwater, estuaries, inshore and offshore reefs of the Wet Tropics. The partnership also produces the Reef and Rivers podcast and magazine, as well as various reports and is supported by a Technical Working Group.



DRY TROPICS PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTHY WATERS

Dry Tropics Partnership for Healthy Waters is the youngest of all the Partnerships (established in 2018), but has seen success in a short time, now matching the performance of its Partnership peers. The Partnership produces an annual report card on the health of habitat, water quality and biota from freshwater to offshore marine ecosystems along with other focused science communication products.



HEALTHY RIVERS TO REEF PARTNERSHIP MACKAY-WHITSUNDAY-ISAAC

Launched in 2014, Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership has a well-developed program encompassing five catchments, eight estuaries and the marine environment of the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region. Staff have been tracking various indicators of waterway health over the past eight years, along with social-cultural dimensions such as waterway stewardship.



FITZROY PARTNERSHIP FOR RIVER HEALTH

Fitzroy Partnership for River Health was Queensland's first regional report card initiative, releasing its 10th Ecosystem Health Index Report Card in 2021. The Partnership has evolved beyond producing reporting products and now provides a platform for stakeholder collaboration resulting in better water quality outcomes for the region.



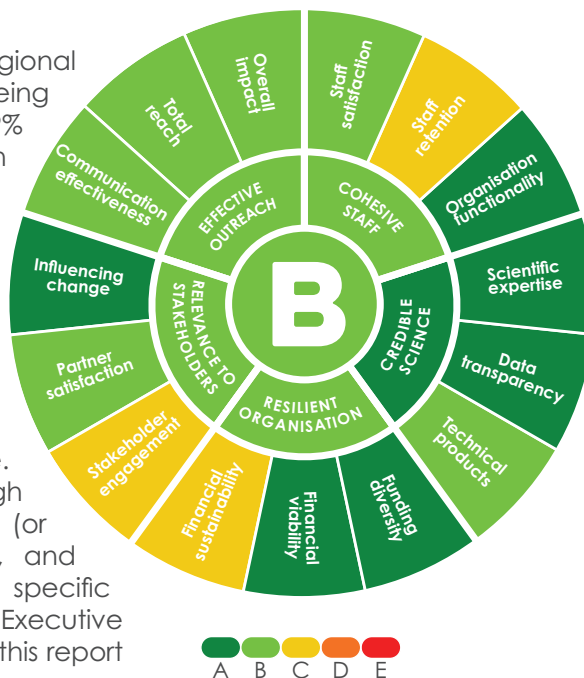
GLADSTONE HEALTHY HARBOUR PARTNERSHIP

Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership is a well-established program, having produced an annual, comprehensive report card since 2014. The report card covers a range of environmental, social, cultural, and economic indicators. The Partnership is well engaged with local industries that utilise the Harbour, showcasing their activities in support of a healthy Harbour.

OVERALL RESULTS

The overall program score, created by integrating the five regional partnership scores for 2022, was a B (Good). Despite this being the same grade as received in 2020, there has been a 9% improvement in the score between years, just 6% short of an A. This was driven largely by improvements in organisational resilience and effective outreach of most of the Partnerships. Minor changes in scores may also reflect subtle changes to the assessment criteria between surveys.

Future efforts should be directed to improving financial sustainability and stakeholder engagement. Improved financial sustainability can be achieved by increasing income to match inflation, planning forward multiple years, and seeking innovative approaches to supplement income. Improved stakeholder engagement can be achieved through a concerted effort to identify and map out stakeholders (or stakeholder representatives) in each Partnership region, and involving them more in Partnership activities. Partnership specific recommendations have been provided to each Partnership Executive Officer and a detailed methodology report describing how this report card was developed is available.



2022 REPORT CARD ASSESSMENT APPROACH

This is the second evaluation report card for the collective reef regional partnerships. External evaluators (Darwinian Consulting) were contracted to facilitate report card development and science communication. The *What's Our Grade?* report card is a product of the evaluation process that included reflection on the past two years (2020 and 2021), with input from each regional partnership to establish the goals, indicators and thresholds. As a group, the aim was to challenge ourselves to look at both failings and successes in an open manner, to take on feedback and share learnings. Successive iterations of the report card will track progress on the health of the partnerships and help guide improvements with the ultimate goal of improving water quality for the Reef through successful Reef Regional Waterway Partnerships.

Three surveys were conducted to generate report card scores: 1) All regional partnership staff were given anonymous surveys to assess their perspectives, 2) A team survey consisting of all staff and the Partnership Chair, led by the Executive Officers of each regional partnership, provided assessments of their respective partnerships, and 3) Partners of each regional partnership were surveyed to establish their perspective on each regional partnership. Results were tallied, discussed with each regional partnership to detect inconsistencies and incorporated into the final report card.



Top row: Simon Costanzo, Bill Dennison, Mel Shepherd, Stephen Turton, Di Tarte.
Second row: Kerry Devenny, Nicole Dendle, Katy Steele, James Donaldson, Leigh Stitz.
Third row: Jamie Corfield, Bonny Stutsel, Mark Schultz, Eva Duerkop, Iain Gordon.
Bottom row: Rachel D'Arcy, Braden Mitchell, Richard Hunt, Jake Hammelswang.



For more information

For more information on the reef regional report card partnerships, contact OfficeoftheGBR@des.qld.gov.au

Workshop facilitation and production of this report card by Darwinian Consulting Pty Ltd.
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Cover photo: Fitzroy River flow (Source: Sean Scott Photography). Cover strip photos (from left to right): Barnard Islands (Source: Travel NQ); Sunset over Cleveland Bay (Source: Paul Groves); The Great Barrier Reef, seen from a scenic flight near Airlie beach, Queensland (Source: Ayanadak123, Creative Commons); Fitzroy waterways split colours (Source: Sean Scott Photography); South Trees (Source: Aerial Media Gladstone).

This report card was funded by the Queensland Government's Reef Water Quality Program.

