

# QUEENSLAND WETLANDS PROGRAMME

NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST WETLANDS PROGRAMME

and

GREAT BARRIER REEF COASTAL WETLANDS PROTECTION  
PROGRAMME

## Programme Performance Report

1 July 2005 – 30 June 2006

Compiled by the Queensland Wetlands Joint Government Taskforce



**Australian Government**



**Queensland  
Government**

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## 1.0 OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Introduction

This is the first yearly Programme Performance Report detailing performance and achievements for the Queensland Wetlands Programme. The period of performance reporting extends from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

The Queensland Wetlands Programme is a joint initiative of the Australian and Queensland Governments which aims *to support projects and programmes that will result in long-term benefits to the sustainable use, management, conservation and protection of Queensland wetlands* (Queensland Wetlands Joint Government Taskforce, October 2005). The Programme is funded through two sub-programmes:

- Natural Heritage Trust Extension Wetlands Programme (NHT2 Wetlands Programme)  
The NHT2 Wetlands Programme's objective is *to develop and implement measures to support Queensland in the conservation and management of wetlands as outlined in the Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Queensland to deliver the Natural Heritage Trust (Bilateral Agreement) (2004)*. To this end the Commonwealth Government has allocated \$7.5 million to be matched by \$7.5 million in-kind funding by the Queensland Government to implement the relevant provisions of the Bilateral Agreement. The Programme will target wetlands across Queensland including those in the GBR catchment.
- Great Barrier Reef Coastal Wetlands Protection Programme (GBRCWPP)  
The objective of the GBRCWPP is *to develop and implement measures for the long-term conservation and management of wetlands in the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) catchment as per the strategies contained in the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan (Reef Plan)*. The Commonwealth Government has allocated \$8 million to this programme to assist in achieving the goal of the Reef Plan. The Reef Plan aims to halt and reverse the decline in the quality of water entering the Reef, and, specifically, to rehabilitate and conserve areas of the reef catchment that have a role in removing water-borne pollutants

The NHT2 Wetland Programme projects addressed in this report are:

- i. [WL EPA 01] Map and Classify Queensland Wetlands and the Provision of a Wetland Inventory Database
- ii. [WL EPA 02] Wetland Management Profiles

- iii. [WL NRM 01] Understanding Queensland Wetlands: Literature Review and Gap Analysis
- iv. [WL NRM 02] Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy, for the Queensland Wetlands Programme

The GBRCWPP projects addressed in this report are:

- i. Pilot Programme
- ii. Decision Support System
- iii. GBR Catchment Wetlands Acquisition
- iv. Wetlands Display
- v. Wetlands Education
- vi. Grazing Land Management (GLM) Education.

## **1.2 Major achievements for the period**

### **1.2.1 General**

A Project Coordinator has been employed within the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to coordinate the activities of the Queensland Wetlands Programme. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy for the Queensland Wetlands Programme has identified key focus areas which provide the outline for the identification of future project proposals and the implementation of the Programme in the future.

A Marketing and Communications Officer has also been employed within the EPA to communicate the objectives and outputs of the Programme. To date this officer has assisted in the planning for the Society of Wetlands Scientists/AMSA 'Catchment to Coast' Conference in Cairns, where the Programme had a high profile.

### **1.2.2 [WL EPA 01] Map and Classify Queensland Wetlands and the Provision of a Wetland Inventory Database**

- The Wetlands Mapping and Classification Methodology (methodology) was completed and published on the EPA website.
- Mapping and classification of wetland for the GBR catchment from the Wet Tropics to Wide Bay has been completed. The Condamine catchment mapping has been completed. Significant progress has been made in mapping for the GBR catchment north of the Wet Tropics, Wide Bay (outside the GBR catchment), Lake Eyre Basin and the Murray Darling catchment.
- A method was developed and applied for delineating marine and estuarine wetlands and mapping undertaken for the entire east coast of Queensland.
- A website questionnaire was developed to assess stakeholder needs for the Queensland Wetlands Inventory and the Queensland

Wetlands Information System [Wetland*Info* Queensland] and more than 70 responses were received.

- Stakeholder workshops and briefings (more than 30) have been held with Regional Natural Resource Management groups and other interested parties to assess stakeholder needs for the Queensland Wetlands Inventory and Wetland*Info* Queensland.
- The Wetlands Inventory Database design (geodatabase) has been developed in accordance with the principles established for the National Wetlands Inventory. Existing database records within the EPA have been entered into the database.
- A scoping study to determine the requirements for an internet map server to deliver the Wetlands Mapping and Inventory information has been undertaken.

### **1.2.3 [WL EPA 02] Wetland Management Profiles**

Fifteen individual wetlands management profiles were developed for priority wetland sub-groups/areas.

The wetland management profiles project provides a comprehensive set of management information that allows wetland managers to identify:

- the wetland-related values of importance to them;
- the importance/significance of the wetland (distribution, level of protection); and
- the ecology of the wetland and how best to manage it to conserve biodiversity whilst maintaining production values.

### **1.2.4 [WL NRM 01] Understanding Queensland Wetlands: Literature Review and Gap Analysis**

Scoping and gap analysis workshops were conducted in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville, and Toowoomba, supported by Workshop Reports. Exposure drafts of the scoping study and gap analysis reports were circulated for peer review, particularly to members of the multi-disciplinary reference group.

### **1.2.5 [WL NRM 02] Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy for the Queensland Wetlands Programme**

As outlined in section 1.2.1 above a Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy for the Programme has been developed and endorsed by the Queensland Wetland Joint Government Taskforce (QWJGT).

### **1.2.6 Pilot Programme**

The Pilot Programme is a \$2 million, two-year project to fast track delivery of tangible outcomes that protect wetlands in the GBR

catchment area. It is being implemented by a consortium led by Conservation Volunteers Australia on behalf of WetlandCare Australia, Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research, Econcert and CSIRO. To date, 22 wetlands projects have been identified and work has commenced on each of these.

#### **1.2.7 Decision Support System**

The Australian Government has commissioned the development of a wetland decision support system (DSS) to strategically prioritise wetlands for investment in the GBR catchment. The DSS has been developed, trialed in two catchments and peer reviewed and is awaiting finalisation.

#### **1.2.8 GBR Catchment Wetlands Acquisition**

This is to acquire and list as National Park significant wetlands in the GBR catchment. Wetlands have been identified and negotiations are underway to acquire the sites.

#### **1.2.9 Wetlands display**

A wetland exhibit at the Townsville Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority headquarters, ReefHQ Aquarium, has been developed and was launched on 7 June 2006 by the Federal Member for Herbert Peter Lindsay. The display shows the importance of maintaining healthy inland and coastal wetlands in the GBR catchment and sustaining the ecological balance of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem. The exhibit has a waterfall high in the "catchment area" that flows into still wetland pools surrounded by riparian vegetation.

#### **1.2.10 Wetland education**

Wetland education products have been developed as part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's ReefED programme, which is aimed at school children. It includes school-based programs such as curriculum material for teachers and a Reef Beat series complete with teacher's handbook; Web Quest, which is an interactive online activity; and information kiosks at information and environmental facilities in the GBR catchment.

#### **1.2.11 Grazing Land Management (GLM) Education**

This project has developed a module for GLM in Reef catchments to assist in the integration of wetland management into whole-of-property grazing and natural resource management. The project has:

- Completed a wetlands module for the GLM education package including the development of a participant's guide, technical manual and power point presentation with speaker's notes. The

package includes recommendations for grazing regimes to maintain wetland values.

- Held a workshop to review and refine the content of the package. The workshop involved experts in Queensland wetland and freshwater science.
- Undertook a workshop with specialist extension staff to refine the delivery aspects of the package.
- Tested and evaluated the module at a “real” GLM workshop in the Burdekin catchment.
- Desktop published the package in preparation for printing.

### 1.3 Administration of the Programme

1.3.1 Following the commitments by the Australian and Queensland governments to fund the Queensland Wetlands Programme, an implementation plan (*Queensland Wetlands Conservation and Management - Implementation Plan* October 2004) and investment strategy (*QWJGT Investment Strategy for the Queensland Wetlands Strategy* November 2004) were developed. The Implementation Plan and the Investment Strategy have been endorsed by the QWJGT. Work plans for each year of the Programme, outlining current and proposed projects, are also developed for endorsement by the QWJGT.

The Queensland Wetlands Programme is structured to accommodate three levels of operations, namely:

- Programme level - provides high-level direction through a goal and objectives.
- Focus areas - provide an operational structure for grouping related issues.
- Projects - the building blocks that generate new information and tools to support decision-making.

The goal, objectives and wetland focus areas of the Queensland Wetlands Programme and their relationship to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) Strategy are summarised in [Figure 1](#). This figure emphasises the critical role of the wetland focus areas in the Queensland Wetlands Programme. They serve as an integrator of the outputs from the projects, where these projects are funded via the NHT2 Wetlands Programme and GBRCWPP. They are also the primary mechanism by which the objectives of the Queensland Wetlands Programme are achieved.

### **1.3.2 Queensland Wetlands Programme Reporting Arrangements**

The reporting arrangements for the Queensland Wetlands Programme to June 2006 are outlined in the MER strategy.

The reporting and administrative arrangements have subsequently changed in accordance with the Joint Queensland/Australian Government Natural Resource Management Steering Committee meeting of 29 August 2006.

## **1.4 Progress summary against milestones**

The following outlines the progress against the milestones only for the NHT2 Wetlands Programme projects.

### **1.4.1 [WL EPA 01] Map and Classify Queensland Wetlands and the Provision of a Wetland Inventory Database**

Activities 1 and 2 are 100% complete.

Activity 3, 95% complete (Milestones 1 to 4 complete. Milestone 5, 50% complete)

Activity 4, 15 % complete (Milestone 1, 70% complete).

Activity 5, Milestone 1 and 2 are 100% complete, and Milestone 3, 90% complete

Activity 6, 100% complete.

### **1.4.2 [WL EPA 02] Wetland Management Profiles**

Project completed. A Final Report was submitted to and accepted by the QWJGT at its meeting on 5 April 2006.

### **1.4.3 [WL NRM 01] Understanding Queensland Wetlands: Literature Review and Gap Analysis**

Activity 1, Milestone 1, 100 % complete.

Activity 2, Milestone 1, 100% complete

Activity 3, Milestone 1, 95% complete

A draft report was submitted to the QWJGT on 5 April 2006 and was noted. The Taskforce requested that this draft report be peer reviewed. This review was not part of the original project plan or timeline. Upon finalisation of peer review the project will be complete.

### **1.4.4 [WL NRM 02] Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy for the Queensland Wetlands Programme**



This project was completed. A Final Report was submitted and accepted by the QWJGT in January 2006.

## 1.5 Reporting against Focus Areas

### 1.5.1 Five wetland focus areas and intended outputs have been identified to date as indicated in the table below.

The following outlines the progress against the focus areas for the GBRCWPP and the NHT2 Wetlands Programme projects.

Number	Title and Output	Achievements
1	Improving the wetland information base  <i>Consistent methodologies and comprehensive assessment and identification of wetlands, their ongoing monitoring and data storage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wetlands Mapping and Classification Methodology (methodology) was completed, and has been published on the EPA website.</li> <li>• Mapping and classification of wetland for the GBR catchment from the Wet Tropics to Wide Bay has been completed. The Condamine catchment mapping has been completed. Significant progress has been made in mapping for the GBR catchment north of the Wet Tropics, Wide Bay (outside the GBR catchment), Lake Eyre Basin and the Murray Darling catchment.</li> <li>• The Wetlands Inventory Database design (geodatabase) has been developed in accordance with the principles established for the National Wetlands Inventory. Existing database records within the EPA have been entered into the database.</li> <li>• 15 individual wetlands management profiles were developed for priority wetland sub-groups/areas.</li> <li>• Scoping and gap analysis workshops were conducted in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville, and Toowoomba, supported by Workshop Reports. Exposure drafts of the scoping study and gap analysis reports were circulated for peer review, particularly to members of the multi-disciplinary reference group.</li> </ul>

2	<p>Wetlands Planning Arrangements</p> <p><i>Natural resource planning and cohesive planning arrangements to protect, conserve and manage wetlands</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Australian Government has identified and commissioned the development of a wetland decision support system (DSS) to strategically prioritise wetlands for investment in the GBR catchment. The DSS has been developed, trialed in two catchments and peer reviewed and is awaiting finalisation.</li> </ul>
3	<p>On-ground activities to protect and rehabilitate wetlands</p> <p><i>On-ground activities to protect and rehabilitate wetlands including incentives, on-ground management activities, protection and rehabilitation. The activities will support Reef Plan catchments and non-reef catchments.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Pilot Programme is a \$2 million, two-year project to fast track delivery of tangible outcomes that protect wetlands in the GBR catchment area. It is being implemented by a consortium led by Conservation Volunteers Australia on behalf of WetlandCare Australia, Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research, Econcern and CSIRO. To date, 22 wetlands projects have been identified and work has commenced on each of these.</li> <li>This is to acquire and list as National Park significant wetlands in the GBR catchment. Wetlands have been identified and negotiations are underway to acquire the sites.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Education and Capacity Building</p> <p><i>To raise stakeholder awareness of the programme, how it can assist them and to provide education and capacity building for landholders in the better management of wetlands</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A website questionnaire was developed to assess stakeholder needs for the Queensland Wetlands Inventory and the Queensland Wetlands Information System [WetlandInfo Queensland] and more than 70 responses received.</li> <li>Stakeholder workshops and briefings (&gt; 30) have been held with Regional Natural Resource Management groups and other interested parties to assess stakeholder needs for the Queensland Wetlands Inventory and WetlandInfo Queensland.</li> <li>Fifteen individual wetlands management profiles were developed for priority wetland sub-groups/areas.</li> <li>A wetland exhibit at the Townsville</li> </ul>

		<p>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority headquarters, ReefHQ Aquarium, has been developed and was launched on 7 June 2006 by the Federal Member for Herbert, Peter Lindsay. The display shows the importance of maintaining healthy inland and coastal wetlands in the GBR catchment and sustaining the ecological balance of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem. The exhibit has a waterfall high in the “catchment area” that flows into still wetland pools surrounded by riparian vegetation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetland education products have been developed as part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority’s ReefED programme, which is aimed at school children. It includes school-based programs such as curriculum material for teachers and a Reef Beat series complete with teacher’s handbook; Web Quest, which is an interactive online activity; and information kiosks at information and environmental facilities in the GBR catchment.</li> <li>• Completed a wetlands module for the GLM education package including the development of a participants guide, technical manual and power point presentation with speaker’s notes. The package includes recommendations for grazing regimes to maintain wetland values.</li> <li>• Held a workshop to review and refine the content of the package. The workshop involved experts in Queensland wetland and freshwater science.</li> <li>• Undertook a workshop with specialist extension staff to refine the delivery aspects of the package.</li> <li>• Tested and evaluated the module at a ‘real’ GLM workshop in the Burdekin catchment.</li> <li>• Desktop published the package in preparation for printing.</li> </ul>
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	<p><i>progress of implementation, and the effectiveness of the actions invested in for both the NHT2 Wetlands Programme and GBRCWPP.</i></p> <p>C) Review  <i>To review and refine the Queensland Wetlands Programme through an adaptive management framework</i></p>	
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## 1.6 Linkages to Other Programmes

The following outlines the linkages for the NHT2 Wetlands Programme projects.

### 1.6.1 Within Queensland Government

There are significant links through the overall Programme through the reporting structure to the Reef Plan and the activities underway through the NHT2 NAP process.

The individual projects under the Programme have extensive links with other Programmes. These links are documented in the individual project proposal submissions and six monthly and annual reports.

### 1.6.2 Intergovernmental (Australian Government and other jurisdictions)

The Queensland Wetlands Programme links to:

- Reef Plan
- Wetlands and Waterbirds Taskforce.

### 1.6.3 Community, Industry, Research Bodies and Others

The main linkages with community, industry, research bodies and others are primarily made through the individual projects within the Programme and are documented in the individual project proposal submissions and six monthly and annual reports.

## 1.7 Risks or issues affecting performance

### 1.7.1 Wetlands Programme Reporting

The recent appointment of a Programme Coordinator resulted in this first Queensland Wetlands Programme report. Future Programme reports will build on and extend from this initial report.

### 1.7.2 Administrative Arrangements

The reporting arrangements for the Queensland Wetlands Programme to June 2006 are outlined in the MER strategy.

The reporting and administrative arrangements have subsequently changed in accordance with the Joint Queensland/Australian Government Natural Resource Management Steering Committee meeting of 29 August 2006.

### 1.7.3 Future Reporting

Future reporting for the Project Managers and the Programme Coordinator to Community Partnerships (Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines) are scheduled to occur via the ViSTA web based reporting programme. Training sessions with all stakeholders will be in August 2006.

## 1.8 Recommendations

That the QWJGT endorses this Programme Performance Report.

## 2. FINAL REPORTS SUMMARY

The following lists the projects which have had final reports submitted over the past 12 months and those projects for which a final report is due the next 12 months.

### Final Reports submitted

Project Code	Project Title	Date Submitted
WL NRM 02	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Strategy, for the Queensland Wetlands Programme	January 2006
WL EPA 02	Wetland Management Profiles	April 2006

### Final Reports due in next 12 months

Project Code	Project Title	Due Date
WL NRM 01	Understanding Queensland Wetlands: Literature Review and Gap Analysis	September 2006

### 3. PROJECT ACTIVITY REVIEW

A project review is provided for the following projects:

- Map and Classify Queensland's Wetlands and the Provision of a Wetlands Inventory Database WL EPA 01
- Understanding Queensland Wetlands: Information Review and Gap Analysis WL NRM 01

Refer to **Appendix 1**.

### 4. OUTPUT REPORTING



"WL EPA02 Outputs Spreadsheet 05-06 A



"Amended WLNRM01 Outputs Spreads 05-06 A



"Amended WL EPA01 Outputs Spread 05-06 A

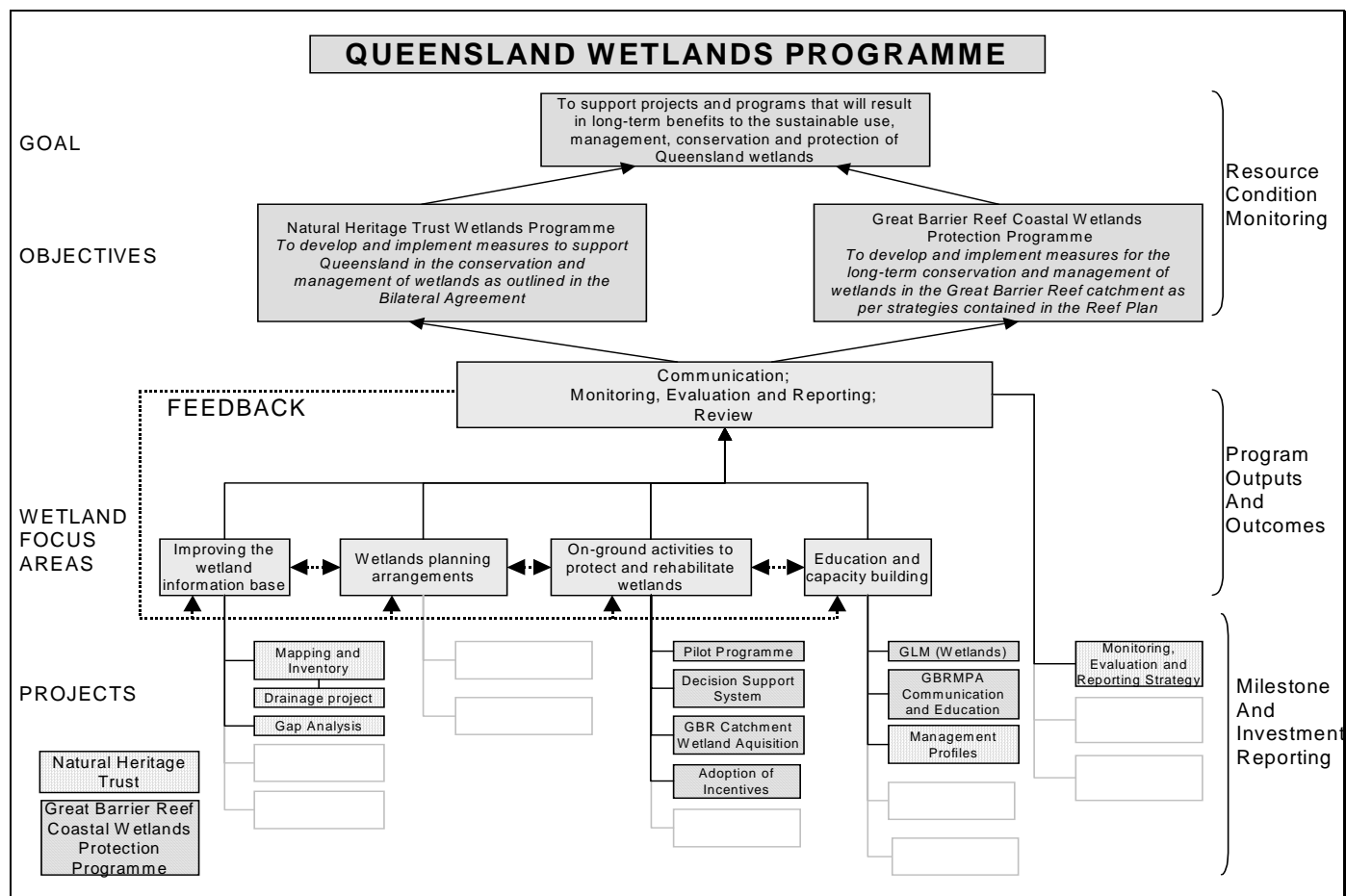


Figure 1 The goal, objectives and focus areas of the Queensland Wetlands Programme and their relationship to the MER





## APPENDIX 1 Project Activity Review - WL NRM 01

PROJECT NAME:	WLNRM01 - Understanding Queensland's Wetlands: Literature Review and Gap Analysis
Reporting Period:	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2005- 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2006
PROJECT ACTIVITY REVIEW:	Provide overview of progress for which for which no final report has been submitted
Key achievements for period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of workshops undertaken as part of this project</li> <li>• Completion of draft report</li> <li>• Completion of a database of wetlands references, relevant to aims of the review</li> </ul>
<p>Milestones scheduled to have been achieved</p> <p>Milestones actually achieved - fully and partially (specify)</p>	<p>Milestones for July 2005 to June 2006:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scoping and gap analysis workshops conducted in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville and Toowoomba by 25 November 2005, supported by Workshop Reports. This milestone is complete.</li> <li>2. Exposure drafts of the scoping study and gap analysis reports were circulated for peer review, particularly to members of the multi-disciplinary reference group. This milestone is complete.</li> <li>3. Final report (with prioritised gaps and approaches to filling gaps) and meta-database finalised and circulated, inclusive of details of presentations of findings at public meetings and other forums. The draft report is complete, but awaiting external review (at the request of, and to be organised by the Queensland Wetlands Taskforce). This review was not part of the original project plan or timeline.</li> </ol>
Explanation of significant variances against milestones (time and/or dollars)	<p>A significant time variance has occurred for milestone 3. Factors that have caused this to occur are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Time commitments of internal reviewers and editors meant that more time was spent on this task than</li> </ol>

	<p>expected.</p> <p>2) Document has been available for, and waiting on external review.</p>
<b>Corrective action taken or Proposed to fix variances</b>	Queensland Wetlands Taskforce to finalise peer review.
<b>Risks associated with project</b>	Redeployment of staff given the cessation of the project funding and significant time taken to organise external reviewing.
<b>Other relevant comments regarding progress/performance</b>	

## APPENDIX 2 Project Activity Review - WL EPA 01

PROJECT NAME:	Map and Classify Queensland Wetlands and the Provision of a Wetland Inventory Database (WMC&D)
Reporting Period:	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2005- 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2006
PROJECT ACTIVITY REVIEW:	Provide overview of progress for which for which no final report has been submitted
Key achievements for period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wetlands Mapping and Classification Methodology (methodology) was completed, and has been published on the EPA website.</li> <li>• All of the 100k topo data for the GBR catchment and the Lake Eyre Basin was processed by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines and provided to the EPA.</li> <li>• Mapping and classification of wetland for the GBR catchment from the Wet Tropics to Wide Bay has been completed. The Condamine catchment mapping has been completed. Significant progress has been made in mapping for the GBR catchment north of the Wet Tropics, Wide Bay (outside the GBR catchment), Lake Eyre Basin and the Murray Darling catchment.</li> <li>• A method was developed and applied for delineating marine and estuarine wetlands and mapping undertaken for the entire east coast of Queensland.</li> <li>• A website questionnaire was developed to assess stakeholder needs for the Queensland Wetlands Inventory and Wetland <i>Info</i> Queensland and more than 70 responses were received.</li> <li>• Stakeholder workshops and briefings (more than 30) have been held with Regional Natural Resource Management groups and other interested parties to assess stakeholder needs for the Queensland Wetlands Inventory and Wetland <i>Info</i> Queensland.</li> <li>• A Wetlands Map Service Application has been developed. This application will provide the format for the wetland inventory and the map service will be</li> </ul>

	<p>available within Government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wetlands Inventory Database design (geodatabase) has been developed by in accordance with the principles established for the National Wetlands Inventory. Existing database records within the EPA have been entered into the database.</li> <li>• The Functional Requirements Specification for the Wetland <i>info</i> Queensland website has been completed.</li> <li>• A scoping study to determine the requirements for an internet map server has been undertaken.</li> </ul>
Milestones scheduled to have been achieved Milestones actually achieved - fully and partially (specify)	All Milestones largely met. Some minor variations to Activity 3 Milestones 5 (50% complete) and Activity 5, Milestone 4 (90% complete)
Explanation of significant variances against milestones (time and/or dollars)	No significant variances, however some of the GBR area has not been fully mapped
Corrective action taken or proposed to fix variances	Much of the processing for those areas of the GBR catchment that have not been completely mapped (i.e. north of the Wet Tropics) has been done and priority has been given to completing this mapping prior to moving to other parts of the state.
Risks associated with project	Existing mapping products are available from the EPA via a number of processes. The existing web based delivery (Maps on the Web) requires those seeking maps to send an e-mail to the EPA requesting the map which is then provided via the web. At a minimal this process would be used to provide the maps on wetlands. A more effective and interactive means of providing wetlands maps via the web involves the use of an Internet Map Service. The workshops held to assess to delivery of Wetland <i>info</i> has demonstrated that the provision of an Internet Map Service has very strong support to ensure that the Wetland Mapping and Classification product is utilised. The EPA has assessed this option. A further application for funding has been forwarded as a new project under the Queensland Wetland Programme.
Other relevant comments regarding progress/performance	