



EVALUATION PLAN: VERSION 4.0

An evaluation of the Australian Government Reef Trust water quality investments and prioritisation to inform future water quality investment

June 2022



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Glossary

Term	Description (for the purposes of this project)
Adaptive management	An active culture of reflection comprising effective evaluation, rewards for thinking and reflection, appropriate communication for all project participants, and provision of mechanisms for incorporating learning into planning and management. Within the context of adaptive management, evaluation is an important organisational learning tool and business management practice through which lessons can be drawn and hypotheses tested to guide future work and form part of the corporate history.
Appropriateness	A determination made by comparing the program with the needs of the intended beneficiaries using any of the techniques of needs analysis.
Attribution	The causal link of one thing to another. For example, the extent to which observed (or expected) changes can be linked to a specific intervention in view of the effects of other interventions or confounding factors.
Cost-effectiveness	Cost-effectiveness is a measure how effective a given project is in achieving its outcomes relative to its cost. This can be calculated for a range of projects with similar objectives to determine which projects are the most cost-effective relative to alternatives.
Delivery mechanisms	The mechanism by which the individual Reef Trust projects have been selected and commissioned. Primary delivery mechanisms include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reef Trust Tender also known as reverse tenders - Direct invite to a Delivery Partner. Landholders invited to register interest to participate. Results in individual project grant agreements with landholders. • Grant agreement - Direct invite to delivery partner, deliver on specified activities (by RT Program) • Targeted competitive grants - Investment prioritisation undertaken and allocation of funds via grant agreements (direct invite). • Direct co-investment (to pre-existing project). • Regional Land Trust Partnerships – Comprises project work orders, with project Services and minimum targets. Delivery partners invoiced for services delivered per year (individual units costed). • Technical assistance - Direct contract
Delivery partner (grants)	The nominated proponent or lead agency accountable for the delivery of the grant agreement
Efficiency	The notion of getting the highest value out of program or project resources
Management intervention	For the purposes of this evaluation, management interventions refer to the specific management activities or practices adopted that are implemented during the course of the project. Each management response is delivered using a range of individual management interventions that work together to deliver the project's outcomes and outputs. For example, management interventions for management practice adoption for nutrient management could include development of nutrient management plans and trash blanketing.
Management response	The high level approach to addressing a known threat or group of related threats. For sediment management the two most common high level management responses are: landscape remediation (on ground works) and management practice adoption (grazing). For nutrients the primary high level management response is management practice adoption (nutrients). Each management response is delivered using a range of individual management interventions.
Measures	The term 'measure' refers to any data or information source that would be used to measure a change in the condition, state, behaviour, and management actions. Here, measures include what others may term indicators, targets, characteristics, and/or parameters. Measures are typically linked to a data collection 'method' (sometimes multiple methods) to collect the data or information required to understand the result. A different or similar analytical 'method' may also be required to analyse the data for evaluation.
Monitoring	The regular collection and analysis of information to assist timely decision making, ensure accountability and provide the basis for evaluation and learning. It is a continuing function that uses methodical collection of data to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing project or program with indicators of progress and achievement of objectives
Outcomes	Outcomes generally are the intermediate and long-term results of the activities or initiatives. Outcomes describe the changes in the biophysical environment and/or capacity that is expected if the program is successful.
Output	Tangible project deliverables such as the development of a guideline.
Performance indicator	A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable basis for assessing achievement, change or performance. It is a unit of information measured over time that can help show changes in a specific condition. A given goal or objective can have multiple indicators.
Phase	Refers to Reef Trust Phase. Each phase of the Reef Trust is supported by a targeted Investment strategy.

Program	Refers to Reef Trust Program. The Reef Trust is the Australian Government’s flagship investment program to support the delivery of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) – the Australian and Queensland Government’s long-term framework for protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef.
Project type	Refers to what industry the project was delivered by/for, the target pollutant and the type of management response.
Project	Refers to Reef Trust project. Refer to Table 2 for a list of individual Reef Trust projects.
Regional Land Partnership	A sub-program of the National Landcare Program Phase Two. Investment source for Reef Trust Phase 7, with direct procurement of services from preferred providers
Technical partner	The Reef Trust program has engaged the services of recognised specialists across different fields to undertake targeted reviews and technical assessments for example of a specific management response such as landscape remediation for gullies.
Value for money	For the purpose of this evaluation, achieving value for money is considered as delivering pollutant load reductions, as well as other financial, social, and environmental objectives, in a cost-effective manner.
Service Provider (for Regional Land Partnerships - RLP)	The nominated proponent or lead agency accountable for the delivery of a Regional Land Partnership investment project (Reef Trust Phase 7).

List of acronyms and abbreviations

Acronym / Abbreviation	Description (for the purposes of this project)
DAWE	Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
QRWQP	The Queensland Reef Water Quality Program
RLP	Regional Land Partnership
RTWQIP	Reef Trust Water Quality Investment Program
Reef 2050 WQIP	Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan
WQ	Water Quality

1 Introduction and background

The Department of Agriculture, Water and Energy (DAWE) is seeking to evaluate aspects of the Reef Trust Water Quality Investment Program (RTWQIP) to identify improvements and look towards options for continued investment and delivery models for Reef Trust. The objective of this evaluation is to:

- Provide an evidence base that can inform future Reef Trust investment and program design
- Identify the success factors or key components that could be continued or enhanced
- Identify the barriers and potential strategies for more effective program delivery, monitoring and evaluation
- provide recommendations, strategies or options to strengthen and improve future Reef Trust water quality investments going forward from 2022 for consideration by the Reef Branch of DAWE.

The outputs of this evaluation form part of the Australian Government's Reef Trust Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Australian Government, 2016) and subsequent updates, serves to both:

- provide an opportunity for flexibility to respond to changing environmental and economic challenges facing the Reef and its communities
- support other forms of reporting by the Australian Government including reporting on management achievements in protecting the outstanding universal value of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

This evaluation will draw on information and data provided by Delivery Partners who are required to report on progress of the Reef Trust program investments. Projects are monitored six monthly and reported annually through the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Tool (MERIT) located on Atlas of Living Australia website.

1.1 Scope and audience of evaluation

This evaluation will assess how RTWQIP projects address Reef Trust Outcome 1 and ultimately contribute to the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) targets. Refer to Section 2 for further details of the program logic.

The primary audience for this evaluation is the Australian Government, specifically DAWE. Secondary beneficiaries of the lessons and recommendations may include:

- The Queensland Government
- The Great Barrier Reef Foundation
- Project Delivery Partners (current and future)
- Other investors in the Great Barrier Reef region.

2 Program logic

The Reef Trust is the Australian Government’s flagship investment program to support the delivery of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) via Reef Trust Outcome 1 and the Reef 2050 WQIP 2017 – 2022. This evaluation draws on the program logic developed for the Reef 2050 WQIP (State of Queensland, 2018), which identifies the outcomes, objectives and targets for whole-of-Reef water quality improvement (Figure 1).

The Reef Trust’s objective is to ‘provide cost effective, strategic investment which goes above and beyond existing programs to address key threats to the Great Barrier Reef and catchments for the long-term protection and conservation of the outstanding universal value of the Great Barrier Reef’. The Reef Trust is designed to direct funding in a targeted and strategic way to deliver against four outcomes (Figure 2).

- Outcome 1: Improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef from broad-scale land use to increase the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.
- Outcome 2: Improve the health and resilience of coastal habitats.
- Outcome 3: Improve and protect marine biodiversity, including the reduction of Crown-of-Thorns Starfish (*Acanthaster cf. solaris*) and protection of listed threatened and migratory species such as dugongs and marine turtles.
- Outcome 4: Any new development maintains or improves the condition of matters of national and state environmental significance through the strategic delivery of offsets through the Reef Trust.



Best management practices are defined by this Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan's water quality risk frameworks
priority areas as defined in Appendix 3
¹Natural wetlands include lakes, swamps and estuarine wetlands.

Figure 1. Reef 2050 WQIP program logic (State of Queensland, 2018) in relation to the Reef Trust Outcomes

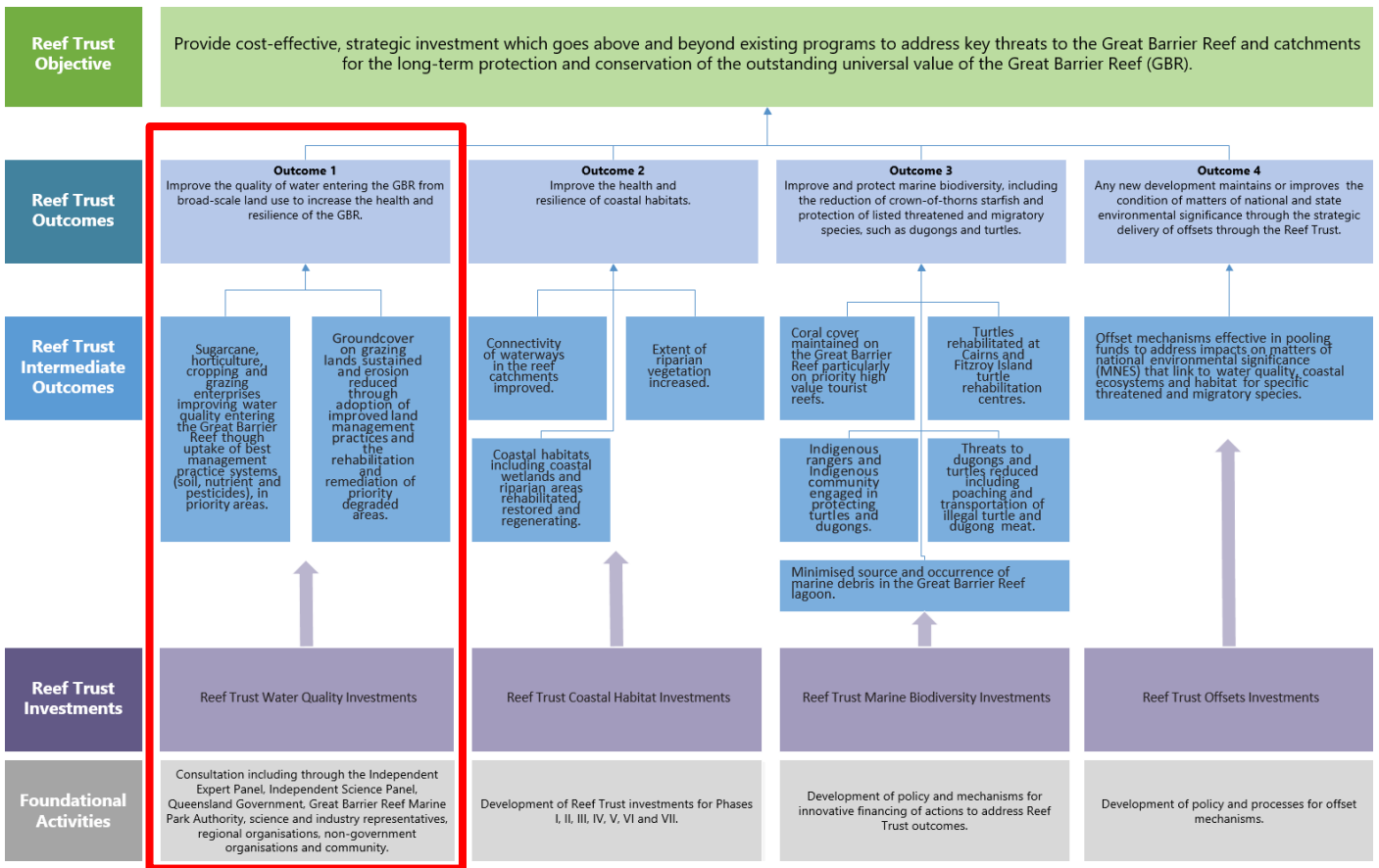


Figure 2. Reef Trust Program Logic (Australian Government, 2021)

Phase 7 of the Reef Trust is delivered through the Regional Land Partnership (RLP), a flagship program of the National Landcare Program Phase Two. Regional Land Partnership projects focus on connecting efforts for the recovery of species identified under the Threatened Species Strategy, protecting threatened ecological communities, and reducing threats to our globally-important wetlands and world heritage sites (including the Great Barrier Reef). Projects also aim to improve on-farm soil, biodiversity and vegetation, and increasing the capacity of farms to adapt to climate change and evolving market demands (Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, 2022).

3 Key evaluation questions

Key evaluation questions (KEQs) are identified in the Reef Trust Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Australian Government, 2016) and were updated in 2020. They describe how projects will ensure that the Reef Trust program will deliver its intended impact, while ensuring the program is delivered effectively, efficiently and appropriately. These Reef Trust KEQs have been refined to better reflect the intended scope of this project to evaluate Reef Trust Outcome 1.

Table 1. Refined key evaluation questions to facilitate a focus on Reef Trust Outcome 1

Criterion	Reef Trust KEQ	Refined KEQ	Scale (RT Program, phase, project)	Comments (internal use only)	
Impact	1. In what ways and to what extent has the program contributed to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> achievement of the Reef Trust Outcome 1 - <i>Improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef from broad-scale land use to increase the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.</i> Estimated relative achievement (where available) of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017-2022 targets.	What is the total combined pollutant saving delivered by the Reef Trust Program?	Program	<i>Assumes that improved water quality delivers increased health and resilience of the GBR</i>	
		What is the pollutant saving delivered by the project?	Project		
		Which management responses, project type, and/or delivery mechanism had the biggest impact on delivery of pollutant savings?	Program		<i>Refer to descriptions of management responses, project types and approaches in Glossary of Terms</i>
		What extent of overall water quality improvement (from Reef 2050 WQIP) can be attributed to the Reef Trust Program?	Program		<i>Ensure alignment between pollutant saving and equivalent budget and timeframes</i>
	2. What are the lasting or enduring outcomes? Did the investment achieve cost-effective pollution abatement?	Did the project investment achieve pollution abatement and to what extent? Was it cost effective? <i>Refer also to 'Legacy'</i>	Project	<i>What about other aspects / metrics (other widgets etc.) Sediment savings – changed over time</i>	
	3. What, if any, unanticipated positive or negative changes or other perverse outcomes have resulted?	Were there any unanticipated costs, benefits or perverse outcomes of the project?	Project	<i>e.g. laying foundational / groundwork for other programs</i>	
	4. To what extent were the changes directly or indirectly produced by Reef Trust's programs, policies, strategies and interventions?	To what extent did the Reef Trust Program build enabling capacity for future water quality improvement in addition to direct pollutant savings?	Program	<i>The terms Direct and Indirect will be further described in relation to each indicator</i>	

Criterion	Reef Trust KEQ	Refined KEQ	Scale (RT Program, phase, project)	Comments (internal use only)
	What foundations/capacity existed from other previous investment programs that has enabled the Reef Trust program to better achieve its outcomes?			<i>The Reef Trust programs, policies, strategies refer to those identified in the Reef Trust Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (Australian Government, 2016)</i>
	5. What benefits have been made to industries operating in Reef regions and communities by Reef Trust Investments?	N/A	N/A	<i>Out of scope. Not water quality related</i>
Effectiveness	6. Was the Reef Trust Water Quality Investment Program (water quality investments) focused effectively to achieve the outcome?	Have the planned phases of water quality investment successfully delivered the deliverables and outcomes according to the original work plan? Was there evidence of adaptive management across the phases of investment?	Program Phase	<i>There is no reasonable benchmark to compare this investment too. We will address this in the lessons and recommendations to future design.</i>
	7. To what extent have the Reef Trust water quality investments been completed, and program outputs and outcomes been delivered in line with its policies, procedures and principles?	To what extent have the Reef Trust Program (water quality investments) delivered on the KPIs identified in the Reef Trust Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2021?	Program	Refer to Investment Strategies
		To what extent was the project completed in line with contract guidelines, reporting requirements and MERI procedures?	Project	Refer to systems and requirements described in the original documentation, agreements and guidelines
	8. Has the program applied and tested innovative approaches to delivery and generated ongoing management and sharing of knowledge for long-term success?	Were the investments / projects considered 'innovative' from an industry perspective? <i>Refer also to 'Legacy'</i>	Project Program	
	9. Were the governance arrangements (contracting, agreement documentation) and reporting processes (MERIT, reporting frequency and quality) effective?	Were the governance arrangements and reporting processes effective?	Project	<i>Separate out into different areas using indicators</i>
Were the governance arrangements and reporting processes effective?		Program		
10. Were the right resources available and applied to support delivery?	Did delivery partners have access to appropriate internal and external resources and technical support during design and delivery?	Project	<i>Use indicators to specify the types of resources</i>	

Criterion	Reef Trust KEQ	Refined KEQ	Scale (RT Program, phase, project)	Comments (internal use only)
		Did the internal Reef Trust team have access to appropriate internal and external resources and technical support during design and delivery?	Program	
		Did delivery partners have the appropriate capacity and capability to design and deliver the project outcomes?	Project	
	11. Are there alternate policies, interventions and strategies identified that might be more effective?	N/A		<i>This question will be addressed in general as part of the lessons and recommendations Regional delivery approaches – what else is working – what other things being applied</i>
Efficiency	12. To what extent has the Reef Trust implemented planned phases of investment and produced deliverables and outcomes according to the work plan and budgets?	Have the planned phases of water quality investment successfully delivered the deliverables and outcomes according to the original work plan? <i>(Moved to effectiveness)</i>	Program	<i>Implementation of budget not in scope</i>
	13. To what extent has the Reef Trust achieved value for money and cost-effectiveness?	To what extent has the Reef Trust program achieved value for money and cost-effectiveness?	Program	<i>Refer to descriptions in the Glossary of Terms</i>
	14. Have the Department’s resources and those of co-investors been used in the most efficient way?	To what extent has the Reef Trust program water quality investment been leveraged/aligned with other programs?	Project Program	<i>Dependent on quality of financial data</i>
	15. What could be done differently to improve overall efficiency of Reef Trust water quality investment management and implementation?	How could the Reef Trust Program have been more efficiently delivered?	Program	
Appropriateness	16. To what extent has the Reef Trust aligned with the needs and context of the program partners and participants?	To what extent did the Reef Trust investment prioritisation and design process for each phase align with the needs of project partners and participants? How appropriate and rigorous was the project design process?	Program / Phase Project	
	17. Was there appropriate complementarity across different government funded projects/programs (i.e., Qld government, Reef Trust Partnership)?	Was there appropriate complementarity across different government funded projects/programs (i.e., Queensland government, Reef Trust Partnership)?	Program	

Criterion	Reef Trust KEQ	Refined KEQ	Scale (RT Program, phase, project)	Comments (internal use only)
	18. Were communication processes appropriate?	Were communication processes between Reef Trust program managers and proponents appropriate?	Program	
	19. To what extent were the methods employed by the Reef Trust the most appropriate to achieving its intended outcome and those of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan?	Which of the various delivery mechanisms applied during the various Reef Trust phases deliver the greatest water quality improvement?	Program Phase	<i>Refer to Glossary of Terms for description of delivery mechanisms</i>
Legacy	20. What are the lasting or enduring outcomes? Did the investment achieve cost-effective pollution abatement?	What were the lasting or enduring outcomes of the program? What were the lasting or enduring outcomes of the project?	Program Project	Indicators of enduring legacy are described in Table 5

3.1 Focus of evaluation

The Reef Trust water quality investment comprises 21 active (aggregated) and 19 completed water quality improvement projects (aggregated) administered by DAWE which focus on improved land management practices and gully and streambank remediation in the catchments which drain into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon (Table 2). These projects facilitate the adoption by landholders of improved management practices in priority areas for soil, nutrients, and pesticides in sugarcane, horticulture, cropping, grains and grazing enterprises.

Table 2. Reef Trust water quality investment projects (Source: DAWE, 2022)

Reef Trust Investment Phase	Investment area	Project name	Project code / working title	Delivery Partner	Total project value ¹	Status
Phase 1	Reef Trust Tender - Wet Tropics	Reef Trust Tender Wet Tropics Grants to farmers	RT1.1 Grants for Farmers	FNQ NRM Ltd (Terrain)	\$1,704,313	Completed
	A-Class Grazing Practices - Burdekin & Fitzroy	Promotion of A-class Grazing (Burdekin and Fitzroy Regions).	RT1.2 A-Class Grazing	Department of Environment & Heritage Protection -	\$ 3,000,000	Completed
Phase 2	Gully erosion control in priority grazing landscapes	Fifty percent reduction in gully erosion from high priority sub catchments in the Normanby	RT2.1 Fifty percent reduction in Normanby subcatchments	Cape York NRM	\$ 780,248	Completed
		Gully prevention and remediation on Normanby River, Kings Plains.	RT2.2 Normanby River remediation	South Endeavour Trust	\$ 304,400	Completed
		Technical Support for Reef Trust Gully Erosion Control Programme (Procurement)	RT2.3 CSIRO Technical Support	CSIRO	\$410,000	Completed
		Technical Support for Reef Trust Gully Erosion Control Programme – Reserve projects (Phase 2)		CSIRO	\$115,608	Completed
		Point Source Sediment Management in the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region – East Burdekin	RT2.4 East Burdekin point source sediment management	NQ Dry Tropics	\$906,000	Completed
		Gully Remediation in the Fitzroy by Revegetation and Grazing Land Management – Theresa Creek	RT2.5 Theresa gully remediation	Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA)	\$702,884	Completed
		Gully Remediation in the Fitzroy by Revegetation and Grazing Land Management - Fitzroy	RT2.6 Fitzroy gully remediation	Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA)	\$702,884	Completed
		Gully Remediation in the Fitzroy by Revegetation and Grazing Land Management - Mackenzie	RT2.7 Mackenzie gully remediation	Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA)	\$702,884	Completed
		Gully Remediation in the Fitzroy by Revegetation and Grazing Land Management - Isaacs	RT2.8 Isaac gully remediation	Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA)	\$702,884	Completed

¹ Some values may differ from the financial information provided by delivery partners and in final financial acquittal documents.

Reef Trust Investment Phase	Investment area	Project name	Project code / working title	Delivery Partner	Total project value ¹	Status
		Don River Catchment sediment reduction project: Improving GBR water quality	RT2.9 Don River sediment reduction project	Greening Australia	\$ 962,550	Completed
		Gully management in highly erodible sub-catchments of the Mary River Catchment	RT2.10 Mary River catchment gully management	Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC)	\$ 808,760	Completed
		Point Source Sediment Management in the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region – Bowen Broken Bogie	RT2.11 Burdekin Region point source sediment management	NQ Dry Tropics	\$906,000	Completed
	Reverse Tender - Burdekin	Reef Trust Tender -Burdekin grants to farmers	RT2.12 Burdekin DIN management	NQ Dry Tropics	\$3,137,572	Completed
Phase 3	Water quality improvements	Project Catalyst Revamp - game changing farm management practices	RT3.1 Updated farm management practices	Catchment Solutions	\$ 3,000,000	Completed
		Reef Alliance – Growing a Great Barrier Reef (Horticulture)	RT3.2 Improving Horticulture practices	Queensland Farmers Federation		Completed
		Reef Alliance – Growing a Great Barrier Reef (Cane)	RT3.3 Improving sugar cane practices	Queensland Farmers Federation		Completed
		Reef Alliance – Growing a Great Barrier Reef (Dairy)	RT3.4 Improving dairy practices	Queensland Farmers Federation		Completed
		Reef Alliance – Growing a Great Barrier Reef (Grain)	RT3.5 Improving grain practices	Queensland Farmers Federation		Completed
		Reef Alliance – Growing a Great Barrier Reef (Grazing)	RT3.6 Improving grazing practices	Queensland Farmers Federation		Completed
		Reef Alliance – Growing a Great Barrier Reef (Combined)	N/A	Queensland Farmers Federation	\$45,666,991	Completed
		Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Sustainable Agriculture –Cane	RT3.7 Sustainable Cane Practices	Reef Catchments	\$ 4,425,000	Completed
		Project Pioneer: Innovation in Grazing Land Management	RT3.8 Grazing Land Management	Resource Consulting Services	\$ 2,908,000	Completed
Phase 4	Repeated reverse auctions – Wet Tropics and Burdekin	Reef Trust Repeated Tenders - Wet Tropics	RT4.1 Wet tropics repeated tenders	FNQ NRM (Terrain)	\$ 6,719,020	Active
		Reef Trust Repeated Tenders - Burdekin	RT4.2 Wet tropics repeated tenders	NQ Dry Tropics	\$ 7,381,889	Active
	Trialling of enhanced efficiency fertilisers	Support of cane farmer trials of enhanced efficiency fertiliser in the catchments of the Great Barrier Reef	RT4.3 Cane farmer trials	Queensland Cane Growers Association	\$7,100,000	Completed
	Addressing stream bank and gully erosion	GRZ'M. Great Barrier Reef Riparian Zone Management - a Mary River Project Catchment	RT4.4 Mary Catchment Riparian Project	Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC)	\$ 3,027,000	Active
		Scaling up Normanby Basin gully and stream bank Remediation in priority areas	RT4.5 Stream bank remediation in priority areas	Cape York NRM	\$ 4,000,000	Active

Reef Trust Investment Phase	Investment area	Project name	Project code / working title	Delivery Partner	Total project value ¹	Status
		Fitzroy subcatchment gully and stream bank erosion control program	RT4.6 Gully and stream bank erosion control program	Catchment Solutions	\$ 3,891,070	Active
		Stream bank and gully erosion through improved practices in the Fitzroy	RT4.7 Stream bank and gully erosion	Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA)	\$ 3,867,325	Active
		Improving Reef Water Quality through Herbert River Catchment and Gully Remediation	RT4.8 Herbert River remediation	FNQ NRM (Terrain)	\$ 2,974,773	Active
		Gully restoration in priority reaches to improve water quality on the GBR	RT4.9 Gully restoration in the GBR	Greening Australia	\$ 3,770,000	Active
		Laura Gullies Project, fix up and skills for the future	RT4.10 Laura gullies project	Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation	\$ 2,065,000	Active
		Stomping out Sediment in the Burdekin – livestock impact for gully remediation.	RT4.11 Burdekin gully remediation	NQ Dry Tropics	\$ 2,000,000	Active
		High priority stream bank erosion control in the Mackay Whitsunday region.	RT4.12 Controlling streambank erosion in the Mackay Whitsunday region.	Reef Catchments	\$4,000,000	Active
		Technical Support for Reef Trust Gully and Stream Bank Erosion Control Program (Phase 4)	RT4.13 CSIRO Technical Support	CSIRO	\$ 2,383,000	Active
Phase 5	Project Uplift Farming Systems Initiative	Project Uplift Farming Systems Initiative	RT5.1 Sugarcane SRA farming system	MSF Sugar	\$4,520,780	Active
Phase 6	Complete nutrient management planning in sugarcane	Complete nutrient management planning in sugarcane	RT6.1 Delivering tailored solutions (CR161)	Department of Environment & Science - Qld Government	\$3,384,285	Active
Phase 7	Water quality Regional Land Partnership	Improving land management practices and water quality in the Burnett River catchment	RT 7.1 Improving water quality in the Burnett River Catchment	Burnett Mary Regional Group (BMRG)	\$6,099,986	Active
		Water quality and soil improvements in grazing and cropping enterprises in the Fitzroy	RT7.2 Improving water quality in the Fitzroy basin	Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA)	\$5,700,000	Active
		Broadscale adoption of 'Tried and Tested' innovative precision agriculture techniques for improved use of nutrient, water and pesticide.	RT7.3 Precision agriculture used to reduced nutrients and pesticides entering the water	NQ Dry Tropics	\$ 4,100,000	Active
		Streambank remediation in the Burdekin catchment	RT7.4 Streambank remediation in the Burdekin catchment	NQ Dry Tropics	\$2,900,000	Active

Reef Trust Investment Phase	Investment area	Project name	Project code / working title	Delivery Partner	Total project value ¹	Status
		Targeted support to maximise soil, biodiversity and vegetation outcomes in the O'Connell and Proserpine Basins of the Mackay Whitsundays	RT7.5 Maximising ecosystem biodiversity on the O'Connell and Proserpine basins	Reef Catchments	\$5,400,000	Active
		Mobilising the Murray and Mossman: an integrated place-based program delivering the step-change that is needed for the Reef.	RT7.6 Place-based program in the Murray and Mossman catchments	NQLD NRM Alliance	\$ 5,612,947	Active

4 Approach to evaluation

The evaluation methodology (Figure 3) was developed to provide a balance between assessing performance against the refined KEQs for all seven Reef Trust phases and 43 individual projects, as well as providing a cost-effective approach to enabling a deep analysis of a representative sample of projects.

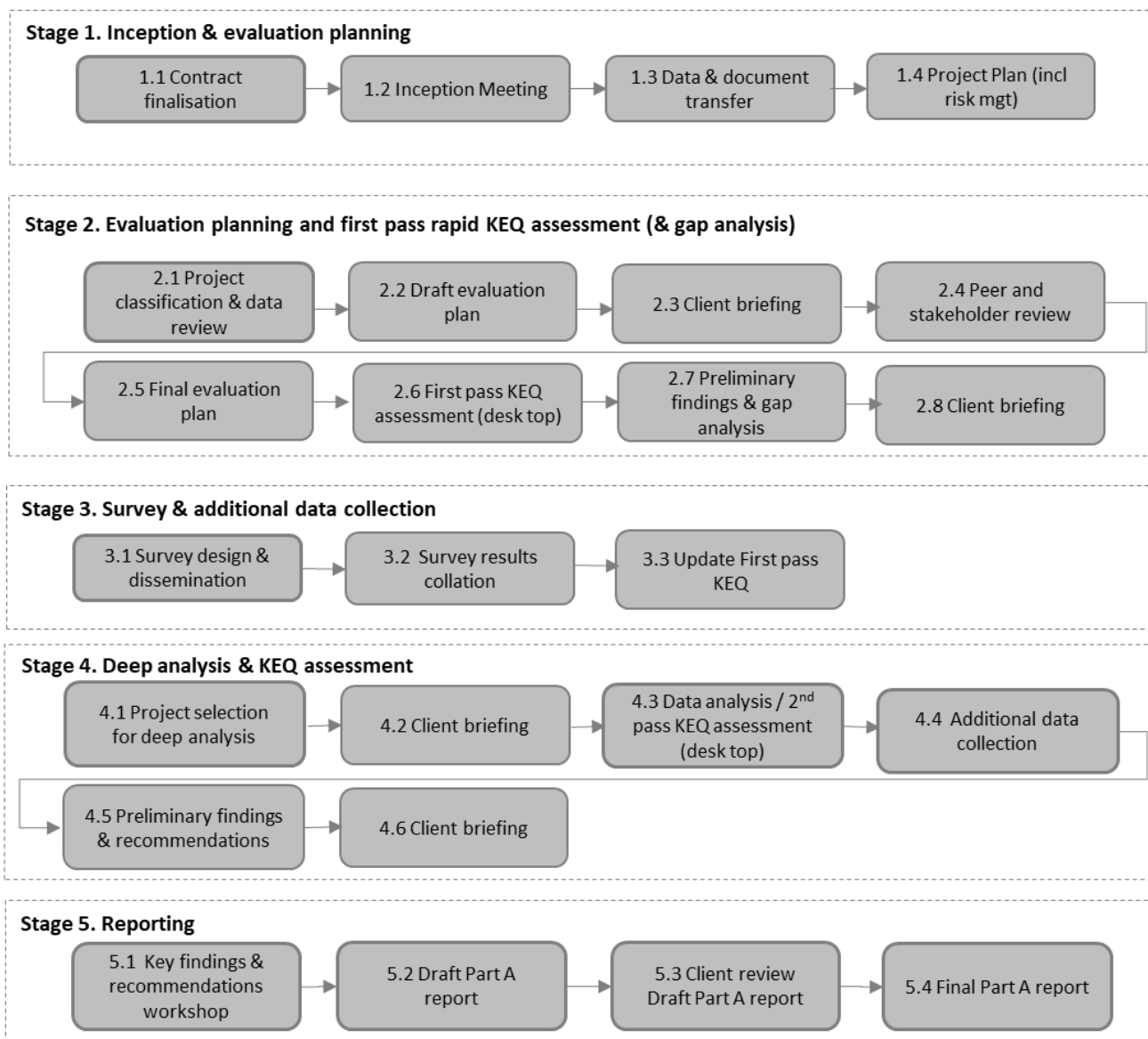


Figure 3. Evaluation methodology summary

Some of the KEQs and their performance indicators will focus on the project scale, while others will be assessed at the program scale.

For project scale assessment, some indicators will be assessed for all 43 Reef Trust projects, this is referred to as the ‘first Pass’ assessment. The 43 Reef Trust projects will also be classified into different project types. Project types will be determined by analysing project design and delivery attributes or features (Section 4.1). A representative sample of each project model type will be selected to be assessed during the ‘second pass’ which comprises a deeper analysis of a number of additional indicators of performance.

The indicators that will be assessed during the first and second pass are provided in Section 5.

4.1 Second pass project selection

Projects to be assessed during the second pass assessment have been selected to provide a representative sample across industry, target pollutant and their primary management response used to address the target pollutant (Table 3).

Table 3. Common management responses and key management interventions

Industry	Target pollutant	Primary management response	Examples of management interventions
Intensive agriculture	Nutrient management	Management practice change	e.g. Matching Nitrogen and Phosphorus to crop requirements, use of mill mud, fertiliser application method, rates of application, nutrient budgeting
	Sediment management	Management practice change	e.g. minimum tillage, fallow land management, crop residue cover, controlled machinery traffic, ground cover during fallow, controlling runoff (buffers), maintaining covered ground, inter-row management
Grazing	Sediment management (Hillslope management)	Management practice change	e.g. Stocking rates, groundcover thresholds, vegetation management (ground cover, stock access, grazing pressure, off-stream watering)
	Sediment management (Streambank management)	Management practice change	e.g. Manage grazing pressure, fencing, off-stream watering, weed control, wet season spelling
	Sediment management (Gully management)	On-ground management intervention	e.g. revegetation, porous check dam, contour banks, gully reshaping, earthworks, whoa-boys, culverts, table drains

Table 4 provides a summary of the projects and classifies each project by the industry, target pollutant and the type of management response. The Reef Trust projects identified in bold are proposed to be subject to a more detailed 'second pass' indicators and analysis.

Table 4. Project classification categories and associated projects

Industry	Target pollutant	Management response	Examples of management intervention	Projects that represent this classification
Intensive agriculture	Nutrient management	Management practice change	Matching Nitrogen and Phosphorus to crop requirements, use of mill mud, fertiliser application method, rates of application, nutrient budgeting	<p>RT1.1 Grants for Farmers</p> <p>RT2.12 Burdekin DIN management</p> <p>RT3.1 - Updated farm management practices</p> <p>RT3.2 - Improving horticulture practices</p> <p>RT3.3 - Improving sugar cane practices</p> <p>RT3.4 - Improving dairy practices</p> <p>RT3.7 - Sustainable Cane Practices</p> <p>RT4.01 Wet tropics repeated tenders – Wet Tropics</p> <p>RT4.02 Wet tropics repeated tenders - Burdekin</p> <p>RT4.03 - Cane farmer trials</p> <p>RT5.1 - Sugarcane SRA farming system</p> <p>RT6.1 Delivering tailored solutions</p> <p>RT7.3 Precision agriculture used to reduce nutrients and pesticides entering the water</p> <p>RT7.5 Maximising ecosystem biodiversity on the O’Connell and Proserpine basins</p> <p>RT7.6 Placed based program in the Murray and Mossman catchments</p>
	Sediment management	Management practice change	Minimum tillage, fallow land management crop residue cover, controlled machinery traffic, ground cover during fallow, controlling runoff (buffers), maintaining covered ground, inter-row management	RT3.5 Improving grain practices
Grazing	Sediment management (Hillslope management)	Management practice change	Stocking rates, groundcover thresholds, vegetation management (ground cover, stock access, grazing pressure, off-stream watering)	<p>RT1.2 A-Class grazing</p> <p>RT3.8 Grazing land management</p> <p>RT7.2 Improving water quality in the Fitzroy basin</p>
	Sediment management (streambank management)	Management practice change	Manage grazing pressure, fencing, off-stream watering, weed control, wet season spelling	<p>RT2.09 Don River sediment reduction project</p> <p>RT4.04 Mary River catchment riparian project</p> <p>RT4.05 Streambank remediation in priority areas</p> <p>RT4.12 Controlling streambank erosion in the Mackay Whitsunday region</p> <p>RT7.1 Improving water quality in the Burnett River catchment</p> <p>RT7.4 Streambank remediation in the Burdekin catchment</p>
	Sediment management (Gully management)	On-ground management intervention	Revegetation, porous check dam, contour banks, gully reshaping, earthworks, whoa-boys, culverts, table drains	<p>RT2.01 Fifty percent reduction in Normanby subcatchments</p> <p>RT2.02 Normanby River remediation</p> <p>RT2.04 East Burdekin point source sediment management</p> <p>RT2.05 Theresa gully remediation</p> <p>RT2.06 Fitzroy gully remediation</p> <p>RT2.07 Mackenzie gully remediation</p> <p>RT2.08 Isaac gully remediation</p> <p>RT2.10 Mary River catchment gully management</p> <p>RT2.11 Burdekin region point source sediment management</p> <p>RT3.6 Improving grazing practices</p> <p>RT4.06 Gully and stream bank erosion control program</p> <p>RT4.07 Stream bank and gully erosion</p> <p>RT4.08 Herbert River remediation</p> <p>RT4.09 Gully restoration in the GBR</p> <p>RT4.10 Laura gullies project</p> <p>RT4.11 Burdekin gully remediation</p>
Nutrients	All	-	1. Technical assistance – nutrients	RT
Sediment	All	-	2. Technical assistance – sediment	<p>RT2.03 - CSIRO Technical Support</p> <p>RT4.13 - CSIRO Technical Support</p>

5 Indicators and metrics to be assessed

As identified in Section 3, some KEQs and their indicators of performance are better suited to assess at the project scale while others are more relevant to the whole-of-Reef Trust Program or Phase scale. The following sections outline the indicators for each of these scales.

5.1 Project scale indicators and metrics

The KEQs, indicators and the approach to assessment to be applied to Reef Trust water quality investment projects are described in Table 5.

Table 5. Project scale indicators and metrics against relevant KEQ

Criterion	Refined KEQ (from Table 1)	First pass indicators of performance	Second Pass indicators of performance (applies to representative projects only)	Data/information source	Approach to assessment
Impact	What are the pollutant savings delivered by this project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tonnes of sediment saved • Kilograms of DIN saved • Any other pollutant savings • Land and catchment targets i.e. groundcover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tonnes of sediment/hectare of practice change area • Kilograms of DIN/hectare of practice change area 	P2R or other agreed data sets	Data analysis Confidence rating
	Were there any unanticipated costs, benefits or perverse outcomes resulting from the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of positive additional outcomes (or project spill over) • Evidence of unanticipated benefits • Evidence of unanticipated costs • Evidence of unanticipated perverse outcomes 	N/A	Document review	Thematic analysis Confidence rating
Effectiveness	To what extent were project outputs and outcomes delivered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent activities delivered planned outputs and outcomes 	N/A	Document review	Assessment rating Confidence rating Thematic analysis
	To what extent was the project completed in line with contract guidelines, reporting requirements and MERI procedures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence/application of appropriate governance arrangements • Presence/application of a MERI plan • Reporting requirements met • Relevant policies and procedures met 	N/A	Document review Survey	Assessment rating Confidence rating
Efficiency	Did the project investment achieve cost-effective pollution abatement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$/tonne or kilogram of pollutant saved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of maintenance costs • Breakdown of costs related to design, landscape remediation, communications and engagement, and M&E 	Document review Survey	Thematic analysis Confidence rating

Criterion	Refined KEQ (from Table 1)	First pass indicators of performance	Second Pass indicators of performance (applies to representative projects only)	Data/information source	Approach to assessment
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of cost-sharing and co-investment Evidence of coordination and planning with other services in the region 		
	To what extent has the RTP water quality investment been leveraged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portion of total budget funded through other investments sources, including in kind contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portion of project funded through other investment sources, including in kind contributions 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review Survey	Thematic analysis
Appropriateness	How appropriate and rigorous was the project design process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence/application of a stakeholder analysis and/or communication and engagement plan Presence of a systems understanding process (water quality, social, economic, etc) Alignment to regional planning Evidence that Traditional Owners been appropriately engaged in on ground water quality improvement and monitoring activities where appropriate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of adaptive management Evidence of prioritisation / planning scoping Extent and type of landholder and stakeholder involvement in design Extent and type of landholder and stakeholder involvement in delivery 	Document review Survey	Assessment rating Confidence rating
Legacy	What were the lasting or enduring outcomes of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of improved skills and knowledge of individuals and organisations Evidence of improved commitment of landholders and organisations Use of tools such as decision support tools, improved farm technologies Evidence of enduring partnerships and networks Total project reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of maintenance costs / activities for on ground works and ongoing enabling capacity (e.g. social capital) 	Document review Survey	Assessment rating Confidence rating Thematic analysis
	To what extent did the project generate and share knowledge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported knowledge creation and sharing (workshops, conferences, journal articles etc); number of events/outputs as well as success of these 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research impact – knowledge translation, dissemination, and access Development of a learning culture/degree of collaboration (e.g. setting up a community of practice etc). 	Document review Survey	Assessment rating Confidence rating Thematic analysis

5.1.1 Confidence ratings

The projects in the first pass assessment will be assessed against the indicators in Table 5, along with a confidence score for each rating using the below star rating:

- * Low agreement and no/limited evidence
- ** Moderate agreement and moderate evidence
- *** High agreement and robust evidence.

5.1.2 Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria that will form the basis of the evaluation is outlined in Table 6. It is important to note that these criteria will be reviewed and updated as required.

Table 6. Assessment criteria for relevant project scale indicators

Criterion	Refined KEQ	First pass indicators of performance	Assessment criteria			
			Strong performance / on track progress	Moderate performance/ moderate progress	Poor performance / progress at risk	Data gap
Effectiveness	To what extent were project outputs and outcomes delivered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of planned outputs and outcomes 	<p>Clear, documented evidence that the project has fully delivered or overdelivered on the planned outputs stated in the MERI plan.</p> <p>Clear, documented evidence that the project has made measurable progress towards planned outcomes, based on the indicators and data sources stated in the MERI plan, or any other measures found.</p>	<p>Evidence that the project has mostly delivered (i.e., greater than 50%) on the planned outputs stated in the project plan and/or MERI plan, with only some activities or outputs falling short of what was planned.</p> <p>Some evidence that the project has made progress towards planned outcomes, based on indicators and data sources stated in the MERI, or any other measures found.</p>	<p>Evidence that the project did not deliver or only partially delivered (i.e., less than 50%) the planned outputs stated in the project plan and/or MERI plan. Several activities or outputs were not delivered as planned.</p> <p>Little or no evidence that the project has made progress towards planned outcome based on indicators or data sources stated in the MERI or any other measures.</p>	The project documentation doesn't enable this to be assessed/Not identified for this project.
	To what extent was the project completed in line with contract guidelines, reporting requirements and MERI procedures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of appropriate governance arrangements • Presence/implementation of a MERI plan • Reporting requirements met • Relevant policies and procedures met 	<p>Clear, documented evidence that the project developed a comprehensive MERI plan, produced detailed reports on time, established an appropriate governance arrangement and aligned to</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that the project established some governance arrangements, developed a MERI plan and met the relevant policy and procedures. Reporting requirements were</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that there are clear gaps in any of the following – establishment of governance arrangements, development of a MERI plan, meeting reporting requirements and/or</p>	

Criterion	Refined KEQ	First pass indicators of performance	Assessment criteria			
			Strong performance / on track progress	Moderate performance/ moderate progress	Poor performance / progress at risk	Data gap
Appropriateness	How rigorous was the project design process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of a stakeholder analysis and/or communication and engagement plan • Presence of a systems understanding process • Evidence that Traditional Owners been appropriately engaged in on ground water quality improvement and monitoring activities where appropriate? 	<p>appropriate policies and procedures.</p> <p>There is clear evidence and documentation of a rigorous project design process. The process utilised a wide range of information sources to perform a systems analysis. A clear decision-making process was used to ensure that the project aligned with priorities of the Reef Trust program and other local management priorities. Stakeholders were included to help inform priorities and support decision making.</p>	<p>generally met with possible delays.</p> <p>Evidence suggests that there was a project design process that considered background information and Reef Trust priorities. Stakeholders were consulted as part of the process.</p>	<p>aligning to the relevant policies and procedures.</p> <p>There is limited evidence to suggest how the project was designed and how decisions were made.</p>	
Legacy	What were the lasting or enduring outcomes of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of improved skills and knowledge of individuals and organisations • Evidence of improved commitment of landholders and organisations • Use of tools • Total number of stakeholders who have directly participated across all activities (project reach) 	<p>The project is likely to have a strong legacy outcome, as the following is clearly documented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. individuals and organisations improved their skills and knowledge throughout the life of the project. ii. Landholders and organisations involved demonstrated increased commitment to land stewardship iii. The project developed and shared tools that continue to be used by landholders or future Reef projects iv. A wide range of landholders and stakeholders were directly 	<p>The project is likely to have a moderate legacy outcome. There is evidence (including anecdotal evidence) to suggest that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. individuals and organisations may have improved their skills and knowledge throughout the life of the project. ii. Perception that landholders and organisations involved increased commitment to land stewardship iii. The project developed tools that could be used by landholders or future Reef projects 	<p>It is unclear what the lasting or enduring outcomes of the project are. Some anecdotal evidence that the project may have improved skills, knowledge or commitment of landholders and organisations.</p>	

Criterion	Refined KEQ	First pass indicators of performance	Assessment criteria			
			Strong performance / on track progress	Moderate performance/ moderate progress	Poor performance / progress at risk	Data gap
			and/or indirectly engaged in the project.	iv. Landholders and stakeholders were directly and/or indirectly engaged in the project.		
	To what extent did the project generate and share knowledge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported knowledge creation and sharing (workshops, conferences, journal articles etc) 	There is clear documented evidence that the project generated valuable knowledge that was actively shared with its intended audience Arrangements are in place to continue the knowledge legacy of this project.	Evidence suggests that the project generated knowledge and made the information available to those who sought it.	It is unclear if the project has developed and shared knowledge.	

5.2 Program and phase scale indicators and metrics

The Reef Trust Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Australian Government, 2016) mentions that periodic evaluation of the Reef Trust is undertaken regularly in the lead-up to identifying the next phase of investment thereby supporting regular evaluation to identify opportunities to adaptively manage the program to continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Reef Trust interventions and review the appropriateness of the policies which underpin the program. This Plan also notes that the program undertakes regular consultation in developing successive phases of investment. This evaluation will in part determine the effectiveness of this program evaluation process.

The KEQs, indicators and the approach to assessment to be applied to the Reef Trust water quality investments program is described in Table 7.

Table 7. Program scale indicators and metrics against relevant KEQ

Criterion	Refined KEQ	Indicators of performance	Data/information source	Approach to assessment
Impact	What is the total combined pollutant saving delivered by the Reef Trust Program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Tonne or Kilogram of pollutant savings across all projects Total reported area of practice change reported Total reported contributions for other specified Reef 2050 WQIP catchment and land management targets (e.g. groundcover) Total reported other outputs (pending data availability) 	P2R or other agreed data sets	Data analysis
	What extent of overall water quality improvement (from 2050 WQIP) can be attributed to the Reef Trust Program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of the Reef 2050 WQIP pollutant target delivered by Reef Trust water quality investments 	P2R or other agreed data sets	Data analysis
	Which management responses, and/or delivery mechanism had the biggest impact on pollutant saving?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison of total pollutant savings for different deliver mechanisms, management responses, project types 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review	Comparative assessment
	Were there any unanticipated costs, benefits or perverse outcomes resulting from the Reef Trust Program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of unanticipated costs, benefits or perverse outcomes 	Document review Interview	Thematic analysis
	To what extent did the Reef Trust Program make changes that built enabling capacity for future water quality improvements in addition to direct pollutant savings? What foundations/capacity existed from other previous investment programs that has enabled the Reef Trust program to better achieve its outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of improved skills and knowledge of individuals and organisations Summary of improved commitment of landholders and organisations Summary of project reach Summary of use of tools 	Document review Survey Interview	Thematic analysis / synthesis of project level results
Effectiveness	To what extent did the Reef Trust Program deliver in accordance with guiding policies, procedures and principles (including those in the Reef Trust Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2021)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Outcome 1 key performance indicators 	P2R or other agreed data sets	Data analysis

Criterion	Refined KEQ	Indicators of performance	Data/information source	Approach to assessment
	Have the planned phases of water quality investment successfully delivered the outputs and outcomes according to the original work plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of delivery on planned outputs and outcomes 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review	
	Were the investments / projects considered 'innovative' from an industry perspective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of industry benchmarking and review 		
	<p>What aspects of the Reef Trust program could have been improved to make it more effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the governance arrangements, MERI, and communication processes for the Reef Trust Program effective? Did delivery partners have access to appropriate internal and external resources and support during design and delivery? Did the internal Reef Trust team have access to appropriate internal and external resources and support during design and delivery? Did delivery partners have the appropriate capacity and capability to design and deliver the project outcomes? Were communication processes between Reef Trust program managers and proponents appropriate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported challenges Reported opportunities for improvement with regards to governance, resourcing, capacity and capability, communication etc. 	Document review Survey Interview	Thematic analysis
Efficiency	To what extent has the Reef Trust program achieved value for money and cost-effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$/tonne or kilogram of pollutant saved compared to other programs (e.g. QRWQP projects) Breakdown of costs related to design, landscape remediation, communications and engagement, and M&E compared to other programs (e.g. QRWQP projects) Perceptions of costs and benefits for landholders 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review Survey	Comparative assessment
	To what extent has the RTP water quality investment been leveraged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portion of total combined program investment funded through other investment sources, including in kind contributions 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review	Comparative assessment
	How could the Reef Trust Program have been delivered more efficiently?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported challenges and opportunities for improvement 	Document review Survey Interview	Thematic analysis
Appropriateness	How appropriate and rigorous was the Reef Trust investment prioritisation and design process at the program and phase level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of prioritisation that aligns with the Reef 2050 WQIP 	Document review Survey	Thematic analysis

Criterion	Refined KEQ	Indicators of performance	Data/information source	Approach to assessment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of transparency in phase design, prioritisation, procurement and selection. Evidence of adaptive management / identified opportunities for improvement during reviews Consideration of regional planning and other regional scale needs Identification of other successful approaches, strategies, interventions Opportunities to enhance approaches, strategies or interventions 	Interview	
	Was there appropriate complementarity across different government funded projects/programs (i.e., Qld government, Reef Trust Partnership)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of collaboration, co-investment and coordination between project and investment partners Extent of common and consistent use of Reef Trust processes (e.g. assurance processes, reporting, alignment) Evidence of coordination and planning with other services in the region Extent of data and information sharing that has improved decision making Stakeholder perceptions of complementarity 	Document review Survey Interview	Thematic analysis
	Which of the various delivery mechanisms applied during the various Reef Trust phases is the most appropriate to deliver long-term water quality outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the different delivery mechanisms delivered water quality improvement 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review	Thematic analysis
	Which of the various management responses (and specific interventions) applied during the various Reef trust phases is the most appropriate to deliver long-term water quality outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the different management responses delivered water quality improvement 	P2R or other agreed data sets Document review	Thematic analysis
Legacy	What were the lasting or enduring outcomes of the Reef Trust program?	<p>General trends relating to the legacy of projects in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of improved skills and knowledge of individuals and organisations Evidence of improved commitment of landholders and organisations The requirements to maintain the legacy of on-ground works and ongoing project delivery capacity (e.g. social capital, skills and knowledge) 	Document review Survey Interview	Thematic analysis

6 Reporting

6.1 Analysis

An evaluation report will be developed that responds to each of the key evaluation questions, providing evidence to support the results. Depending on the assessment method, results for each KEQ will be provided as a description, a rating, comparative assessment results or the results of a thematic analysis. We will aim to provide (where possible) an overall summary table of results, as well as detailed results as per the assessment template provided in Table 8.

Table 8. Assessment template to be completed for each project against the assessment criteria.

Evaluation questions	Rating /Results	Confidence	Evidence & key findings (How does the project meet the assessment rating criteria)	Data gaps
<i>Project scale KEQ</i>	<i>Result of the assessment as per the assessment criteria. E.g. Strong, moderate, poor, unclear Or Description of the results (tonnes of DIN saved)</i>	<i>We will provide a ranked confidence score (low, medium or high) for each KEQ/performance indicator.</i>	<i>This column will be populated with the evaluation findings and summary of evidence to support the findings.</i>	

Data and information obtained from the project-level assessment will also be analysed to identify any trends or relationships that relate specifically to a given context. A range of attributes have been identified that contribute to a project's context. Some of the attributes that may be considered are provided in Table 9. Other attributes will also be identified during the evaluation process.

Table 9. Possible attributes used to classify projects into project types

Attribute	Description
Reef Trust Phase	Phases 1 -7
Delivery partner type	For example, government, NRM group, industry, private business, research organisation or other NGO.
Reef region	Cape York, Wet Tropics, Dry Tropics, Mackay-Whitsunday, Fitzroy, Burnett-Mary
Reef Trust project scale	The scale at which the Reef Trust project is operating at. For example, paddock/farm, subcatchment or catchment/basin, or multiple catchments
Commodity/land use	For example, grazing, sugarcane, bananas, horticulture, or grains
Target pollutant	Refers to the water quality targets in the Reef 2050 WQIP i.e. fine sediment, DIN, particulate nitrogen, particulate phosphorous, pesticides, other land and catchment management targets
Type of primary management response applied	Refers to the application of primary management response used to address the target pollutant. For the purposes of this project we have grouped management responses. Each management response can comprise a range of individual management interventions.
Delivery mechanisms	The mechanism by which the individual Reef Trust projects have been selected and commissioned. Primary delivery mechanisms include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reef Trust Tender also known as reverse tenders - Direct invite to a Delivery Partner. Landholders invited to register interest to participate. Results in individual project grant agreements with landholders. • Grant agreement - Direct invite to delivery partner, deliver on specified activities (by RT Program) • Targeted competitive grants - Investment prioritisation undertaken and allocation of funds via grant agreements (direct invite). • Direct co-investment (to pre-existing project). • Regional Land Trust Partnerships – Comprises project work orders, with project Services and minimum targets. Delivery partners Invoiced for services delivered per year (individual units costed).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance - Direct contract
Project or package	<p>For on-ground project only. Refers to the extent that the Reef Trust project comprises a small number of sub-project sites (e.g. 5-10) or a larger package (or program) of sub-projects (e.g. greater than 10 with individual sub-agreements).</p> <p>For management practice change projects only. Refers to the extent that the Reef Trust project operates as a single project with multiple activities or a larger package (or program) of sub-projects with individual sub-agreements.</p>
Number and/or diversity of management responses applied	Refers to the number of applications in the project area of the same management response and the diversity of different management responses
Approach to design	Includes key features such as the use of a place-based approach to design and project planning.
Type of participatory approach to design and delivery	For example, did the project use a highly collaborative or co-design approach, or alternatively collaborative or consultative approaches
Degree of project maturity	For example, is the project an R&D or just starting out as a pilot compared to the project being implemented at full scale for the first time, or has been proved to be successful and is now being 'franchised' into different locations.

6.2 Recommendations and conclusions

Many of the KEQs are structured as learning questions, so our responses to these questions will identify challenges and opportunities for improvement; these will be highlighted. In addition, we will conduct a thematic analysis across all of the findings to draw out high level recommendations and conclusions.

A workshop will be held with key stakeholders (refer to Section 7) to gather perspectives on the findings. This will be an online workshop and designed to allow reflection on the findings and the experiences of the group. This process allows us to test thoughts and ideas and compare and contrast to other similar projects our broader team has been involved with over many decades.

The key purpose of the recommendations and conclusions will be to identify common themes around “what works, in what respects, to what extent, in what contexts, and how?”, rather than merely “does it work”? For example, a highly successful project that is delivering practice change and water quality outcomes may not be replicable in other regions. The challenge will be to document why that project was successful in that particular context, and how to transfer the principles behind its success, rather than to replicate the exact project into a different context where it may not be suited.

Some of the key contextual factors that will be considered in evaluating the projects include:

- Alignment of the project to Reef 2050 WQIP priorities
- The scale that the project is working on
- The characteristics of the targeted land management practice
- The characteristics of the target population
- The characteristics of the chosen method or approach to changing farmer behaviour, and the timeframes associated with change (e.g. extension, grants, participatory place-based approaches, communications)
- The characteristics and capacity of the delivery agent (both organisational and individual)
- The extent of collaboration and coordination in the region
- Other external factors such as climate, extreme weather events, changes in the market and economy.

7 Stakeholder engagement plan (Part A)

7.1 Communication and engagement objectives

There are three primary communication and engagement objectives for this project. They are to:

1. Obtain essential data and information to inform the assessment of the KEQs.
2. Work collaboratively with key stakeholders to access and build on the knowledge and experience to inform the evaluation method ensuring it is targeted and provides relevant outputs.
3. Ensure key stakeholders have the opportunity to access the lessons and knowledge developed through this evaluation to inform the design and delivery of other non-Reef Trust programs and projects.

7.2 Communication and engagement outcomes

If the communication and engagement objectives have been successfully delivered the following short-term outcomes will be achieved.

- Key stakeholders have had the opportunity to influence the focus of the Reef Trust evaluation by providing feedback on the KEQs, the indicators and metrics used to assess performance and collect evidence.
- Key stakeholders are kept up to date on evaluation and reporting progress.
- Key stakeholders have opportunity to clarify previously reported information and provide additional data and evidence to support the Reef Trust evaluation.
- Key stakeholders, current and future potential Reef Trust project managers have access to the key findings and recommendations that could lead to more impactful, effective, efficient and appropriate project design and deliver.
- Key stakeholders have the opportunity to influence and shape the design of future Reef Trust investments.

7.3 Target audiences and stakeholders

The primary audience for the Reef Trust Evaluation is the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

There are a number of secondary audiences that may benefit from the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations, these include:

- The Queensland Government, specifically the Department of Environment and Science (DES) and the Office of the Great Barrier Reef – by ensuring that optimum value and benefit from their future investments will be achieved.
- Current and future Reef-related delivery partners and project managers by providing them accessible information to guide future improvements in program / project design, implementation and reporting, and to provide optimum value to project beneficiaries.
- Other investors including the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

A high-level stakeholder analysis has been undertaken in Appendix 1. The analysis provides the transparency behind which stakeholder (organisations and in some cases individuals) will be engaged, and the approach to how they will be engaged.

The key stakeholders or primary audience for Part A of the project as confirmed by the stakeholder analysis includes:












- All delivery partners (across all Reef Trust phases)
- All NRM groups located within the Reef catchment
- Reef Trust Technical Partners
- DES, Office of the Great Barrier Reef
- DES, Science and Technology Division
- Great Barrier Reef Foundation
- DAF Extension Coordinators
- Paddock to Reef Team

Representatives from these organisations will be invited to:

- a) Attend a one hour online project briefing and introduction to the evaluation plan
- b) Invitation to review and provide comment on the draft Evaluation Plan
- c) Invitation to an interactive workshop to discuss preliminary findings and recommendations.

7.4 Communication and engagement strategies

Alluvium will use a number of communication and engagement strategies throughout the project to delivery of the outcomes.

Outcome	Strategy	Description
Key stakeholders have had the opportunity to influence the focus of the Reef Trust evaluation by providing feedback on the KEQs, the indicators and metrics used to assess performance and collect evidence.	 Online briefing	Alluvium will hold a virtual briefing on the draft Evaluation Plan to clarify the project scope and approach and to clarify any stakeholder questions.
	 Offline document review and feedback	Following the briefing, stakeholders will be given the opportunity to provide written feedback using a web-based document tool (e.g. Google docs)
Key stakeholders are kept up to date on evaluation and reporting progress.	 Electronic progress updates	Alluvium will develop and disseminate a progress update to all key stakeholder reporting on progress to date, key activities still to be completed and anticipated completion dates.
	 Project web platform	An opportunity exists to establish a basic project website and engagement platform that would provide a central point for information access. The preferred platform is developed by Social Pinpoint Social Pinpoint - Social Pinpoint - A Place to Engage Your Community for which Alluvium holds a licence for. The Website can have access control meaning only invited users would be given access. The website would be used to underpin the engagement in Part A and Part B.
Key stakeholders have opportunity to clarify previously reported information, and provide additional data and evidence to support the Reef Trust evaluation	 Electronic survey	An online survey (e.g. Survey Monkey™) will be developed and disseminated to fill targeted information gaps following the desktop assessment, the survey will collect quantitative and qualitative responses. We will send a draft to the DAWE project manager prior to disseminating the survey.
	 Semi-structured interviews	For indicators included in the second pass or deep analysis interviews may be conducted e.g. with delivery proponents or Reef Trust program staff. Interviews will be semi-structured and conducted using video conference.
	 Focus groups	For indicators included in the second pass or deep analysis focus groups may be conducted e.g. with delivery proponents or Reef Trust program staff. Focus Groups maybe conducted in person (e.g. in Canberra with Reef Trust program staff) or on line using video conference where stakeholders are not within close or central proximity.
Key stakeholders, current and future potential Reef Trust project managers have access to the key findings and recommendations that could lead to more impactful, effective, efficient and appropriate project design and deliver.	 On-line briefing	Alluvium will hold a virtual briefing on the draft findings and recommendations, sharing the evaluation findings but also providing an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the recommendations.
	 Offline document review and feedback	Following the briefing, stakeholders will be given the opportunity to provide written feedback using a web-based document tool (e.g. Google docs). This may take the form of an interactive in person or virtual workshop.
Key stakeholders have the opportunity to influence and shape the design of future Reef Trust investments.	 On-line briefing	As above
	 Offline document review and feedback	As above

7.5 Approval process

Prepared communication drafts, collateral and documents relating to the delivery of the project will be required to be reviewed and approved by DAWE prior to release.

7.6 Branding and acknowledgments

For external communication materials, including PowerPoint presentations, the Australian Government crest and the Alluvium logo will be used. All communications materials will be consistent with the Reef Trust Branding Guidelines (Australian Government, 2020).

8 References

Australian Government (Department of the Environment and Energy). (2016). *Reef Trust Monitoring and Reporting Plan*. Canberra : Commonwealth of Australia.

Australian Government. (2020). *Reef Trust branding guidelines. For partner and delivery agencies and organisations, environmental approval holders and investors in the Reef Trust*. Canberra : Australian Government .

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. (2022, April 26). *Regional Land Partnerships*. Retrieved from Australian Government - National Landcare Program: <http://www.nrm.gov.au/regional-land-partnerships>

Appendix 1 Stakeholder analysis

High-level stakeholder analysis (Part A)

High Medium Low

Group	Specific organisations and stakeholders	Influence [H, M, L]	Impact [H, M, L]	Interest	Summary analysis	Engagement approach
DAWE	Reef Trust delivery team				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular project team meetings Review of key stages as per project plan
Reef Trust Steering Committee	Tbc				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular progress updates Interview and focus group as required Briefing on key findings and recommendations Invitation to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations
Reef Trust delivery partners (previous and current)	As per RT agreements				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to review draft evaluation plan Regular progress updates Survey Interview and focus group as required Briefing on key findings and recommendations Invitation to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations
Landholders engaged in project delivery	As per RT agreements				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular progress updates via website or industry eNews Briefing on key findings and recommendations
Reef Trust Technical Partners	CSIRO (Gully – Scott W, Rebecca B GU (Andrew Brooks, T Pietsch) ANU (Peter Hairsine) P2R Team (Kevin McCosker, Adam Northey, Emily Brooks)				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to review draft evaluation plan Regular progress updates Invitation to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations Interview or focus group
Reef NRM Groups (CEOs)	Cape York NRM Terrain NQ Dry Tropics				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-line brief of draft evaluation plan Invitation to review draft evaluation plan Regular progress updates

Group	Specific organisations and stakeholders	Influence [H, M, L]	Impact [H, M, L]	Interest	Summary analysis	Engagement approach
	Reef Catchments Fitzroy Basin Association Burnett Mary Regional Group					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations
Other Reef investors and program managers	Office of the Great Barrier Reef (<i>Scott Robinson, Chris Johnson, Lex Cogle</i>) Great Barrier Reef Foundation (<i>Theresa Fyfe</i>)				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress updates • Invitation to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations • On-line brief of draft evaluation plan • Invitation to review draft evaluation plan
Government extension / support service providers	DAF Extension Coordinators Paddock 2 Reef Team DES, Science & Technology Division				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation to review draft evaluation plan • Data clarification (as required) • Regular progress updates • Invitation to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations • Briefing on key findings and recommendations
Agricultural peak bodies	QFF CANEGROWERS AgForce ABGC Growcom Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress updates • Briefing on key findings and recommendations
Agricultural RDIs / BMP programs	SRA Smart Cane BMP Hort 360				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress updates • Briefing on key findings and recommendations
Private Agribusiness / extension service providers (non-delivery partners)	Agritech Solutions RCS Australia Farmacist				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress updates • Briefing on key findings and recommendations
NGO / local scale NRM / community-based	AMCS WWF				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress updates • Briefing on key findings and recommendations
Research providers	CSIRO Griffith University James Cook University TropWater QUT				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress updates • Briefing on key findings and recommendations

Group	Specific organisations and stakeholders	Influence [H, M, L]	Impact [H, M, L]	Interest	Summary analysis	Engagement approach
	UQ ANU					
Other consultants	C20 Sub-consultants (e.g. engineering design companies with, Fruition, Neilly Group, Ian Prosser, Alluvium)				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular progress updates Briefing on key findings and recommendations
Science advisors / investment prioritisation	Independent Expert Science Committee Reef Advisory Committee				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview