

The State of the Shire- Year 2000 Benchmark

Chapter 9 - Summary of Recommendations Technical Paper

April 2001

RECOMMENDATIONS

Biodiversity – Flora and Fauna

- That traffic is appropriately managed at known cassowary crossing points. Specifically that Road Management Plans be generated and implemented for Coquette Point, ETTY Bay, Mourilyan Harbour, and Mission Beach and Bingil Bay Roads.
- That educational material on how to live with cassowaries be distributed to residences in cassowary habitat.
- That funding be sought for voluntary acquisition of critical cassowary habitat in specific high risk areas.
- That a land rehabilitation program be established for the area to the west side of Ninds Creek.
- That efforts continue for responsible dog ownership at Mission Beach, Coquette Point, ETTY Bay and Mourilyan Harbour.
- That the public awareness campaign for the management of crocodiles in the Johnstone Shire be increased.
- That statistics on vegetation clearing in the Johnstone Shire be collated to enable more effective management of existing habitat.
- That on-ground management of pest plants and animals increase on state land.

Land Management

- That ecologically and economically viable land-use be promoted.
- That preservation and restoration of riverine habitat on a catchment-wide basis be promoted.
- That development and implementation of pro-active river management plans be enacted.
- That regular monitoring be undertaken in the catchments of the Shire.
- That strategic riparian restoration continue throughout the Shire’s Catchments.
- Domestic and Feral animals be controlled to prevent destabilisation of creek banks.
- Research establish a realistic and flexible vegetation buffer width for the major streams.
- Monitoring of introduced fish species and education programs to prevent further introductions.
- Investigations be carried out into protection of wetlands as Fishing Habitats or Marine Park.
- Investigation into land use practices and the impacts on drainage and tidal patterns.
- That the Catchment Group maintain a co-ordinated approach to revegetation.
- That rehabilitation works for the Liverpool Creek be undertaken as stated in the River Management Action Plan – Liverpool Creek.
- General Agricultural Land - that DNR publish the land suitability report occur by June 2002.
- That research continues to improving and enhancing farming practices, and cane varieties.
- That growers continue to utilise industry codes of practice and develop best management practices.
- That industry pursue the partnership between stakeholders to further enhance sustainable practices.
- That continued support be given for the production of Environmental Management Systems in banana enterprises.
- That Council undertake control of all the weeds of national significance in the Shire and that the weed infestations be reduced by 2004 in the order of 50 percent.
- That council develop a stormwater management plan.
- That council upgrade the Innisfail sewage treatment plant to improve effluent quality.
- That Council install a sewage collection and treatment system at Mission Beach.

Water and Atmospheric Management

- That exotoxicological studies in selected freshwater and coastal molluscs, arthropods and fish be conducted.
- That a balanced assessment of the nature, extent and causes of discharges of nutrients and sediment be undertaken to obtain reliable data and quantitative information.
- That instream flow volumes be calculated for the major creeks and rivers in the Shire to allow better management of water extraction permits.
- Regular monitoring and analysis of the key indicators for the major river systems and streams in the Johnstone Basin must occur so that effective water and land management strategies can be developed.

- That investigation be undertaken to identify projects to be undertaken to improve water quality in the Johnstone River Basin.

Solid Waste Management

- That a monitoring and review program be implemented.
- That Council continue with a community awareness and education campaign.
- Funding be sought to assist with educational material and future studies.
- That a waste information database be developed and maintained.
- Establish a waste reporting system providing status, benchmarks, trends, targets and variations.
- That qualitative and quantitative performance indicators be established.
- Council consider implementation of rate based cost incentives to encourage compliance with waste separation initiatives.

The Shire Community

- That an investigation commence into the quantity of crisis housing, supported accommodation and safe housing within three years of the publication of this report.
- That an increase in medical specialist care be provided in the Shire. In particular, surgeons, psychiatrists, gynaecology and obstetrics, orthopaedics, and most importantly, an ear, nose and throat specialist.
- That investigations be conducted into solutions to the management of specialised student and school support resources and services.
- That investigations continue into alternative education pathways
- That remedial action be implemented to alleviate the pressure on school organisational structures
- Further promotion of social and support services available in the Shire and that this promotion needs to be responsive to the different multicultural groups in the Shire.
- That the resources for services offered in the Shire be increased to cope with the current demand on these services.
- That the services offered in the Shire are culturally sensitive and that training be provided to each service in the next three years.
- That non-education based public transport be resourced and improved in the Shire.
- That an annual cultural forum be held in the Shire to exchange ideas, collaborate on projects and establish a cultural register.
- That a joint facility planning committee be established to address recreation in the Mission Beach area.
- That unstructured youth recreational facilities be provided in the Shire. The construction of the skatepark be the first priority.
- That awareness of training programs, services and facilities be increased to inform the community of available services
- That industries in the Shire contact their Industries Training Advisory Board (ITAB) so that their needs are identified for future training programs.

Economic Development

- That further research be conducted on treatment pond systems and in particular the recirculation systems to increase the sustainability of the prawn farming industry.
- That the Flying Fish Point Jetty be restored to provide a valuable historical facility and multi purpose fishing and boating facility.
- That secondary uses be established at the Innisfail Boat harbour to increase the attraction of the facility to the public.
- On completion of stage 1 of the Ulysses Link Track, a study be commissioned to ascertain the viability of extending the track either north or south.
- That the construction of a network of walking tracks in the Wet Tropics be implemented by December 2002.
- That the Palmerston Canopy Walkway be commissioned by December 2003.
- That the Innisfail Scenic route Road Signage be erected by 30 June 2001.

- That a calendar of events be established on the Council website to assist in the promotion and coordination of events in the Shire.
- That a survey of Mission Beach, and the balance of accommodation within the Shire be completed to complement the survey already completed of the Innisfail area.
- That strategies be established and implemented to attract more people to the regional shopping catchment area to utilise the retail facilities in Innisfail
- That assistance be given to private investors to act upon the opportunity to establish needed facilities in Innisfail such as a variety store and a Cinema complex.
- That a regional greenhouse strategy be compiled to look at trees/forestry and evaluate their potential to absorb carbon dioxide.
- Investigation of a market for the utilisation of farm forestry thinnings as a source of electricity
- Research continues into improving and enhancing farming practices and cane varieties so as to maximise industry profitability and sustainability.
- The cane industry enhances its good working relationship with local state and federal government and continues to consult with government on, and stay abreast of, policies affecting the industry.
- Johnstone Shire Council continues to offer rate deferment to growers in financial hardship without imposing interest charges.
- Industry continues work on the strategic plan which aims to modify and implement those elements of “whole of system” raw sugar production that can be improved to ensure the sugar industry is world competitive and profitable on an economically sustainable long term basis.
- That Council continue to foster and facilitate the possible development of an ethanol industry

Council Activities

- That Council continue to resource voluntary conservation programs in the Shire
- That Council provide resources to ensure the development of the Johnstone Revolving Fund
- That Council continue to resource the Integrated Environmental Management System
- That Council upgrade the Innisfail Sewage Treatment Plant to reduce the amount of nutrient going to waterways with initial investigations to be completed by December 2003.
- That site based management plans be developed for the Innisfail Boat Harbour, Green Gravel Pit, and Mission Beach and Etty Bay ablution blocks.
- That Council seek resources to ensure the installation of an appropriate sewage treatment system at Mission Beach
- That Council resource the site closure plan for Goondi and Bells Creek Dump to ensure adequate environment management of these sites by 2004.
- That Council resource the recommendations for the Landfill Remediation Assessment Program over the next 5 years.
- That Council implement the Trade Waste Management Plan
- That Council continue to implement the road resealing program
- That Council commission an investigation into the use of bikeways in the Shire and ascertain where future bikeways should be constructed.
- That Council investigate discharge locations from urban drainage systems and arrange registered drainage easements where required to protect the discharge path to the lawful point of discharge.