

Eastern Cape Regional Waste Management Plan

A new Queensland Waste Strategy was released by the Queensland Government in July 2019. Recognising the unique waste management challenges facing the state's First Nations shire councils, the Department of Environment and Science (DES) and Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) collaborated with First Nations councils to develop *Respecting Country: A sustainable waste strategy for First Nations communities* released in April 2021. The development of Regional Waste Management Plans (RWMPs) is a key action arising from the *Respecting Country* strategy.

(A separate regional plan has been produced for the Straits and Northern Peninsula region, and plans are also underway for the Western Cape and Gulf regions.)

LGAQ's Project Brief

"The purpose of the RWMP is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the current waste and resource recovery situation across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to build on the 'Respecting Country – A sustainable waste strategy for First nation communities' and establish a clear pathway for current and future waste and resource recovery operations.

The RWMP is to implement best practice waste management and resource recovery with 'fit for purpose' solutions and provide clear priorities for future funding and investment over short, medium, and long-term horizons.

The plan will:

- *include a detailed snapshot of waste flows and existing infrastructure.*
- *identify actions and data collection exercises to inform investment decisions and innovative solutions for waste management and resource recovery.*
- *include an analysis of constraints and opportunities.*
- *identify potential solutions across the region.*
- *make detailed recommendations for sustainable waste management and resource recovery.*
- *engage participating councils and stakeholders to obtain support on proposed solutions."*

The Process

A Prince Consulting (APC) was engaged by LGAQ in 2021 to develop the Eastern Cape Regional Waste Management Plan covering the local government areas of Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.

In developing the Eastern Cape RWMP, APC site inspections and regular meetings have been held with all 3 councils (CEOs, senior managers and operational staff) from November 2021 to July 2022. Other key stakeholders who have been consulted in the process are:

- DES
- LGAQ
- COEX
- Neighbouring councils (e.g. Cook Shire, Cairns Regional Council)
- Private sector contractors (e.g. Auswaste, Cooktown).

The main planning topics addressed include:

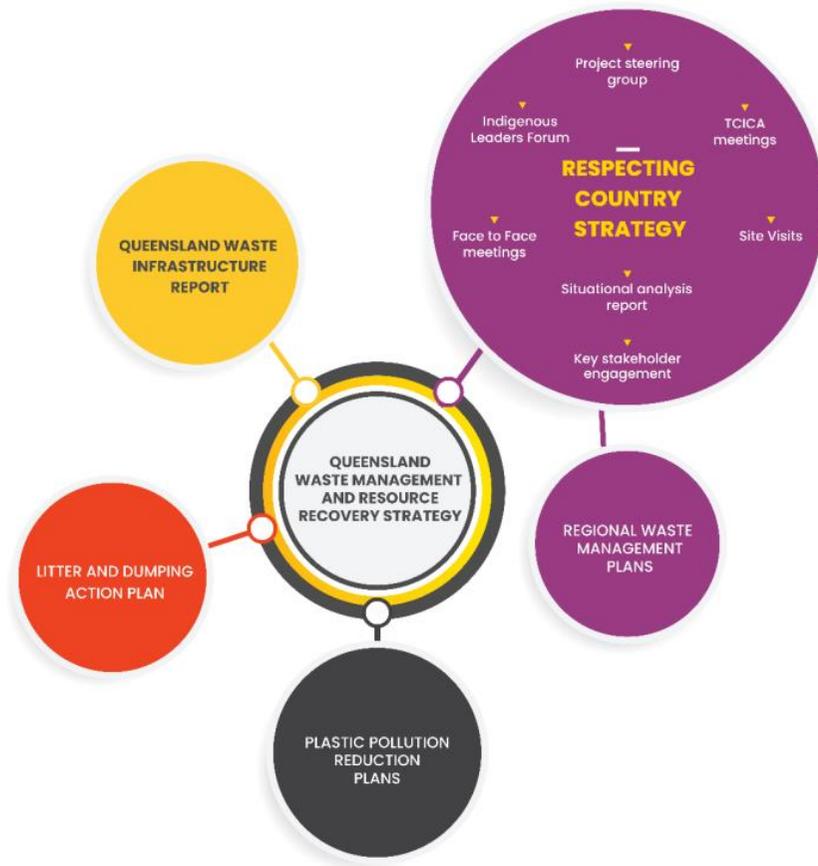
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| ✓ Landfill and transfer facility operations | ✓ Waste separation and recycling |
| ✓ Legacy waste | ✓ Litter and dumping |
| ✓ Organics/composting | ✓ Container refund points (CRPs) |
| ✓ Kerbside waste collections | ✓ Community education. |

Outcomes

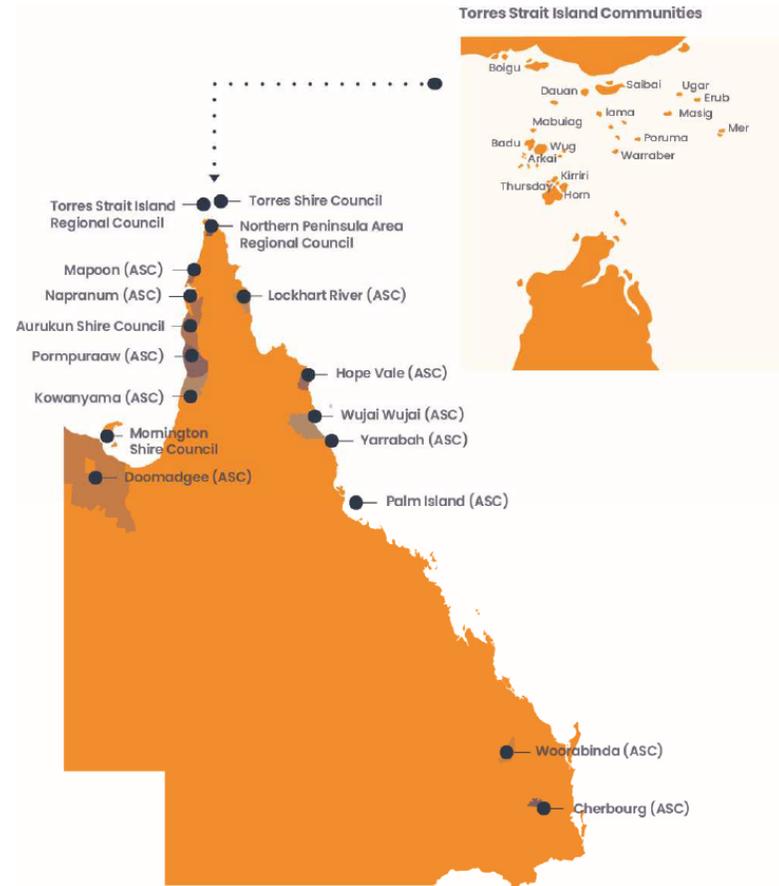
- Work-up tables were produced and regularly updated by APC for each council to discuss and track the above planning topics.
- Fully-costed concept plans have been developed by APC with Council representatives for new Community Recycling Centres / transfer stations, Container Refund Points and associated infrastructure.
- Draft text relevant to each council has been sent in July 2022 to all 3 councils for their review and approval.
- An summary and first draft full RWMP has been sent by APC for LGAQ review and comment.

Once all councils have approved their components of the RWMP, and LGAQ comments received, APC will finalise the RWMP for state government and LGAQ final approval and publication.

RESPECTING COUNTRY STRATEGY



The strategy applies to all aspects of waste management for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils and their communities in these local government areas.



Issues explored at site visits



1

Container refund points in each community - 10c per container to public + handling fee + operator COEX pay for transport

2

Establish new Community Recycling Centres / waste transfer stations in each Council- separate + reduce wastes going to landfill

3

Continue FNQROC scrap metal contract + investigate similar service for other waste materials (e.g. tyres, oils, batteries)

4

Outsource waste collections to the private sector to relieve operational load on Councils

5

Community engagement - reduce, reuse, recycle - community re-use sheds - locally designed education programs

Opportunities