

## Media Release

For Immediate Release

# New Project Brings Smart, Local Solutions Supporting Sustainable Farming and Cleaner Waterways

Reef Catchments<sup>1</sup> (Mackay Whitsunday Isaac) is launching the Proserpine Integrated Project (PIP), which brings together seven initiatives tailored to the unique characteristics of this region. The project focuses on improving water quality through practical, place-based solutions that balance environmental, social and economic factors. The PIP is part of the Queensland Government's investment of over \$5.5 million through the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program's place-based projects across the Great Barrier Reef Catchment and will run until May 2027.

Reef Catchments' Sustainable Agriculture Manager, Todd McNeill explained "This project takes a whole-system approach, combining innovation and sustainable farming practices to protect our waterways and support local communities. It's about working with landholders, industry, and researchers to find practical ways to reduce harmful pollutants while also improving farm productivity and resilience."

The seven PIP sub-projects include:

1. Harnessing water quality improvement through circular economy approaches led by the aquaculture industry. Project Lead: Tassal Group
2. Proserpine Catchment Sustainability Plan – using a whole-of-system, values-based framework Project Lead: Alluvium Consulting
3. Catchment Treatment Systems. Project Lead: Reef Catchments Limited
4. Reducing pesticide use using AI (AutoWeed) Project Lead: James Cook University (JCU)
5. Supporting practice change to reduce water quality risk. Project Lead: Reef Catchments
6. Circularity Material Flows Analysis. Project Lead: Pitt&Sherry
7. Supporting investment in Natural Capital. Project Lead: Truii Pty Ltd

Each initiative addresses a different part of the catchment's water quality challenges. From innovative seaweed biofiltration and AI technology to on-farm chemical management and circular economy practices. The project also aims to raise awareness in the community and build capacity for long-term sustainable land and water management.

McNeill added, "Each project aims to support improved land management practices and catchment condition, with benefits for water quality across the region's waterways, wetlands, and ecosystems connected to the Great Barrier Reef."

## Benefits for regional agriculture

Agricultural producers participating in the project will gain access to expert advice, cutting-edge trials using the latest AI technologies, and tools to boost productivity while contributing to important environmental outcomes.

By integrating scientific, cultural, and economic knowledge, the Proserpine Integrated Project will create lasting value for the local landscape and the people who depend on it.

Program Director for Reef Catchment's Bernie Cockayne said "This is a real opportunity to tailor solutions for this region. We're working hand-in-hand with local landholders, industry and research partners to improve water quality while supporting long-term social and economic outcomes."

For news and information about the Proserpine Integrated Project and other Sustainable Agriculture projects visit [www.reefcatchments.com.au/projects/sustainable-agriculture](http://www.reefcatchments.com.au/projects/sustainable-agriculture) .

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## About Reef Catchments

<sup>1</sup>Reef Catchments are the non-Government, Natural Resource Management (NRM) group for the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac region. We are a non-government, not-for-profit organisation.

We facilitate change and work for long-term solutions to sustain, protect, and improve our region's natural resources and environment, now and into the future.

Our Sustainable Agriculture team have a proven track record in working with farmers and landholders to implement actions and activities on their properties to achieve practice change that not only increases on farm productivity and profitability, but also supports a reduction on impacts, such as sediment loss, erosion, and chemical runoff into the catchment areas within the Mackay Whitsunday region.

For more information: [www.reefcatchments.com.au](http://www.reefcatchments.com.au)