

BIO1046

MEDIA RELEASE

\$2.49 Million Investment to safeguard Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) through regional collaboration

7 May 2026 | For Immediate Release

A major \$7.8 million investment through Natural Resource Management Expansion Program (NRMEP) is driving one of the most extensive biodiversity restoration initiatives ever delivered in the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac region.

Backed by Queensland Government funding, Reef Catchments, the region's non-government not-for-profit Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisation; is partnering with the three local Landcare groups – Whitsunday Catchment Landcare (WCL), Pioneer Catchment Landcare (PCL) and Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association (SLCMA) – to implement a \$2.49 million targeted project that will regenerate two nationally significant Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs). These are the Critically endangered Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia (Beach Scrub) and the 4 endangered Broad Leaf Tea Tree (*Melaleuca viridiflora*) Woodland communities.

Reef Catchments CEO, Katrina Dent, said *"This funding allows us to focus effort where it will deliver the greatest benefits for nature and local communities. As the region's Natural Resource Management organisation, we have long-term data, strong partnerships, and a deep understanding of these local threatened communities. That means we can coordinate targeted, effective work across multiple sites and landholders."*

"Coastal rainforests and tea tree woodlands support an extraordinary range of species, yet only small portions remain. This investment through the Natural Resource Management Expansion Program (NRMEP) allows us to work with our Landcare partners and the community to improve their condition and strengthen their resilience. We're grateful to the Queensland Government for supporting this important regional effort."

Despite their small footprint, these habitats are vital biodiversity hubs, sustaining over 120 species, including the iconic Greater Glider, migratory shorebirds and more than 36 unique butterfly species.

Reef Catchments Land and Water Program Director, Bernie Cockayne, said the investment enables urgent and coordinated on-ground action.

"Safeguarding these ecological communities is critical to the long-term health of our region's biodiversity. With this funding, we can take targeted action to restore and protect vital habitats that support threatened species, strengthen landscape resilience and safeguard our coastlines."

Landcare organisations bring more than 30 years of local knowledge and on-ground experience to the project. Combined with more than 22 years of Reef Catchments' environmental stewardship in the local region, the collaboration brings together decades of community knowledge and strong delivery capacity across the region. Their involvement ensures that restoration is both locally informed and regionally coordinated.

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Operations Manager, Nancy Pratt, said the project reflects the power of collective stewardship.

“Landcare has been actively caring for the Central Queensland coastline for more than 30 years. This partnership with Reef Catchments ensures restoration efforts are locally informed, collaborative and coordinated. It’s an important investment in the long-term health of our coastal landscapes.”

Reef Catchments Biodiversity Manager, Daniel Radovic, said combining expertise is key to strengthening ecological corridors.

“Each organisation brings deep local insight and commitment to long-term care. When we combine this knowledge with strategic restoration, the benefits for our native wildlife and ecosystems are profound.”

Through NRMEP investment, the project will deliver targeted weed management, revegetation and corridor restoration across priority TEC sites, enhancing habitat quality and connectivity.

The project aligns with the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Natural Resource Management Plan and contributes to NRMEP’s vision for a thriving and resilient Queensland through improved land condition, enhanced biodiversity and healthier coasts and waterways.

“Regional natural resource management organisations like Reef Catchments are working hard to deliver outcomes that meet the needs of their communities as well as our precious land and water resources.”

Chris Norman, CEO, NRM Regions Queensland

ENDS

Funding

This project is funded by the Queensland Government's Natural Resource Management Expansion Program (NRMEP), investing in the long-term health and resilience of Queensland's natural resources, landscapes and communities.

Further Information

<https://reefcatchments.com.au/projects/threatened-ecological-communities-tec/>

Media Contact

Media Enquiries	Jemma Pope or Jamie-Lee Carter
Phone	07 4968 4200
Email	communications@reefcatchments.com.au
Office	Mackay

About Reef Catchments

Reef Catchments is the Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisation 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, and improve our region's natural resources and environment, now and into the future.

With over 22 years of regional leadership in natural resource management, Reef Catchments operates from offices in Mackay and Proserpine, facilitating over 50 skilled staff across more than 40 active projects spanning sustainable agriculture, waterway health, reef resilience and biodiversity.

www.reefcatchments.com.au