

Olive-Pascoe catchment water quality targets

Catchment profile

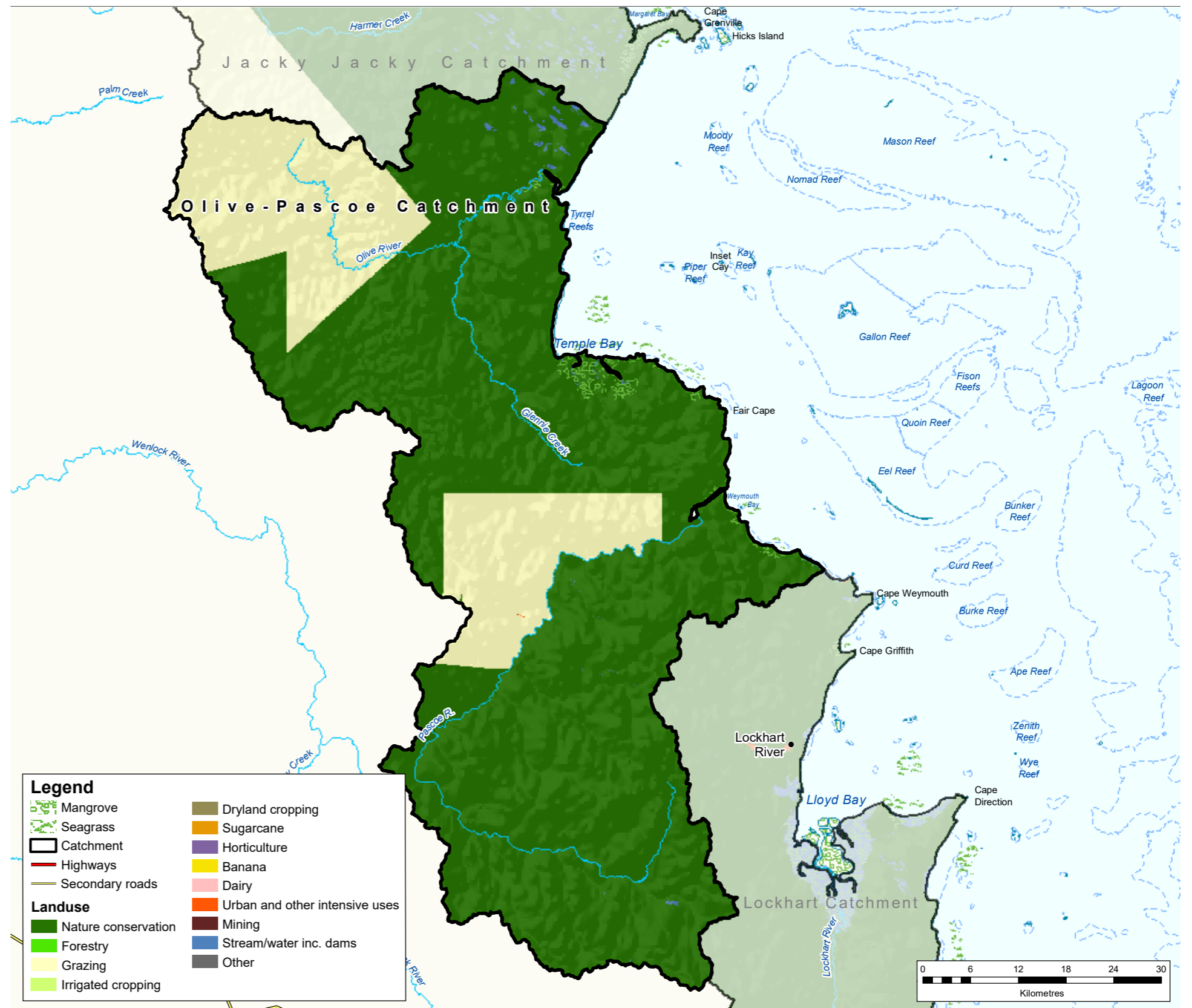
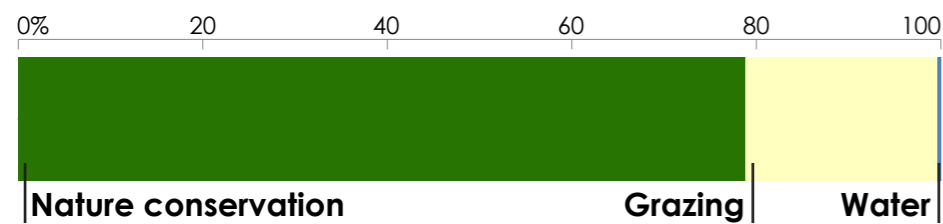
Under the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan, water quality targets have been set for each catchment that drains to the Great Barrier Reef. These targets (given over the page) consider land use and pollutant loads from each catchment.

The Olive-Pascoe catchment covers 4180 km² (10% of the Cape York region). Rainfall averages 1668 mm a year, which results in river discharges to the coast of about 3794 GL each year.

The Olive-Pascoe catchment is in the north of the Cape York region. It is a small catchment area that lies along the east coast of the Cape York Peninsula and is divided by two main waterways, the Olive and Pascoe rivers. The Olive River captures the north section of the catchment and has two sub-catchments, Glennie Creek and Kangaroo River. The bulk of the Pascoe River sub-catchment lies inland, and flows north towards the coast with a number of tributaries joining the main channel, including Garraway, Yam and Hann creeks. The majority of the Olive-Pascoe catchment remains undisturbed from human activities and has vast tracts of floodplains, wetlands and estuaries and only a small proportion of land that is for agricultural use.

Land uses in the Olive-Pascoe catchment

The main land uses are nature conservation (78%), grazing (20%), and water (0.35%).



2025 water quality targets and priorities

End-of-catchment anthropogenic load reductions required from 2013 baseline

Dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN)	Fine sediment	Particulate phosphorus (PP)	Particulate nitrogen (PN)
maintain current load	maintain current load	maintain current load	maintain current load

The Olive-Pascoe catchment has minimal anthropogenic pollutant loads. The aim is to maintain current water quality so that there are no increases in sediment or nutrient loads.

The 2025 targets aim to reduce the amounts of fine sediments, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) and pesticides flowing to the reef. Each target for sediment and nutrients is expressed as: (a) the percentage load reduction required compared with the 2013 estimated load of each pollutant from the catchment; and (b) the load reductions required in tonnes. Progress made since 2013 will count towards these targets. [Previously reported](#) progress between 2009 and 2013 has already been accounted for when setting the targets. The pesticide target aims to ensure that concentrations of pesticides at the end of each catchment are low enough that 99% of aquatic species are protected. The targets are ecologically relevant for the Great Barrier Reef, and are necessary to ensure that broadscale land uses have no detrimental effect on the reef's health and resilience.

A high percentage reduction target may not necessarily mean it is the highest priority. The priorities (ranked by colour) reflect the relative risk assessment priorities for water quality improvement, based on an independent report, the [2017 Scientific Consensus Statement](#). The priorities reflect scientific assessment of the likely risks of pollutants damaging coastal and marine ecosystems.

Pesticides

To protect at least
99%
of aquatic species at the end of catchment

Water quality relative priority

■	Very high
■	High
■	Moderate
■	Low
■	Minimal
■	Not assessed

