CAPE YORK REGION

Endeavour catchment water quality targets

Catchment profile

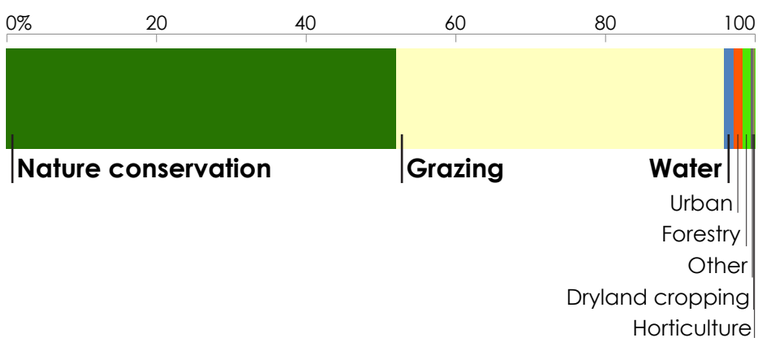
Under the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan, water quality targets have been set for each catchment that drains to the Great Barrier Reef. These targets (given over the page) consider land use and pollutant loads from each catchment.

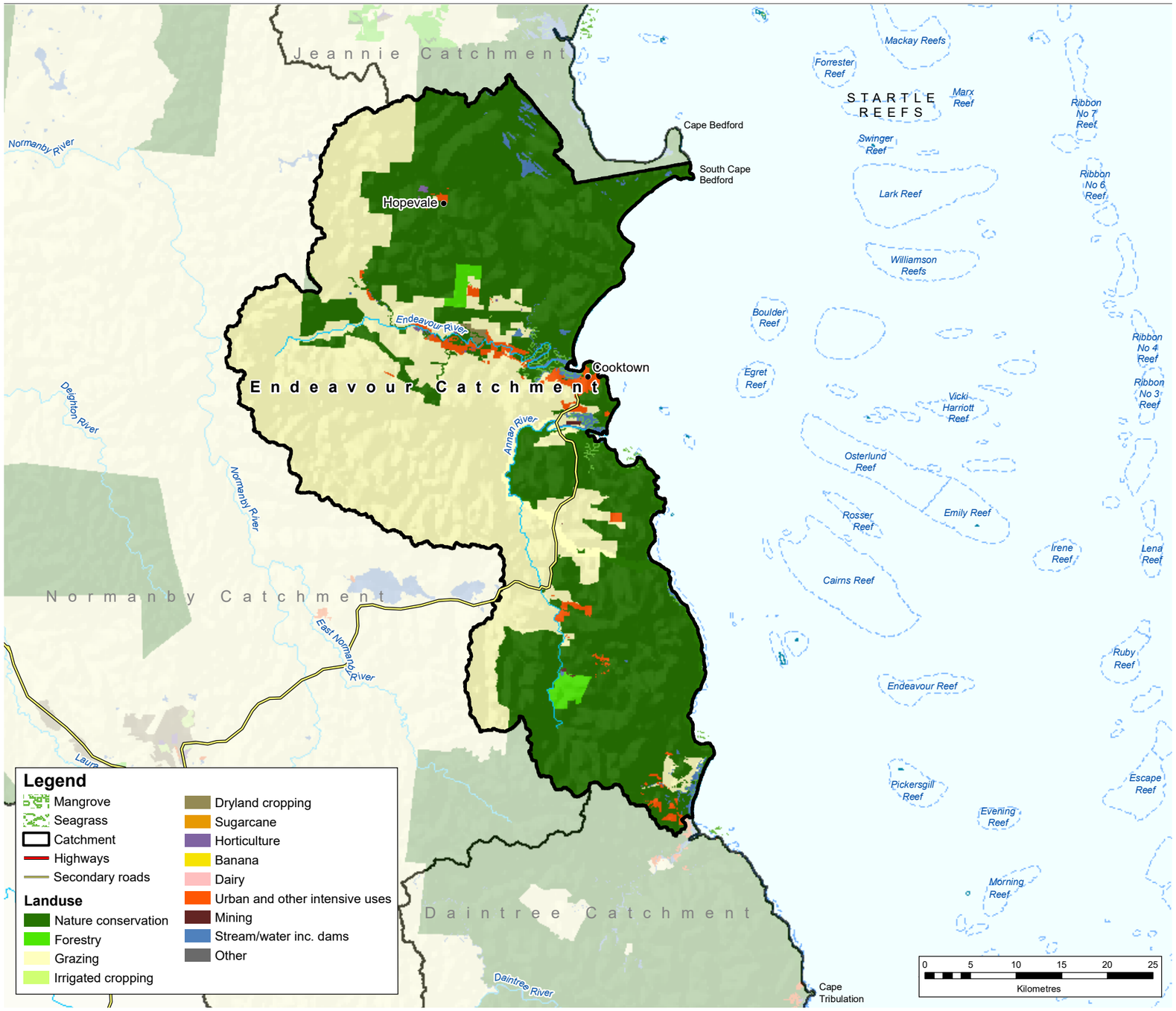
The Endeavour catchment covers 2182 km^2 (5% of the Cape York region). Rainfall averages 1747 mm a year, which results in river discharges to the coast of about 1534 GL each year.

The Endeavour catchment sits south of the Jeannie and east of the Normanby catchments and has the largest population in the Cape York region. The catchment is divided into the Endeavour River in the north and the Annan River in the south. The Endeavour River flows east from the bordering Great Dividing Range to the Coral Sea, where the township of Cooktown is located. While the majority of the catchment is reserved for conservation, there are large areas of grazing, principally in the west, and tracts of intensive agriculture (particularly bananas and irrigated cropping) along the Endeavour River.

Land uses in the Endeavour catchment

The main land uses are nature conservation (52%), grazing (44%), and water (1%).





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)	Pesticides
maintain current load	**10%** 3 kilotonnes	**10%** 3 tonnes	**10%** 11 tonnes	To protect at least **99%** of aquatic species at the end of catchment

The 2025 targets aim to reduce the amounts of fine sediments, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) and pesticides flowing to the reef. Where there are minimal anthropogenic pollutant loads, the aim is to maintain current water quality so there are no increases in loads. 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.

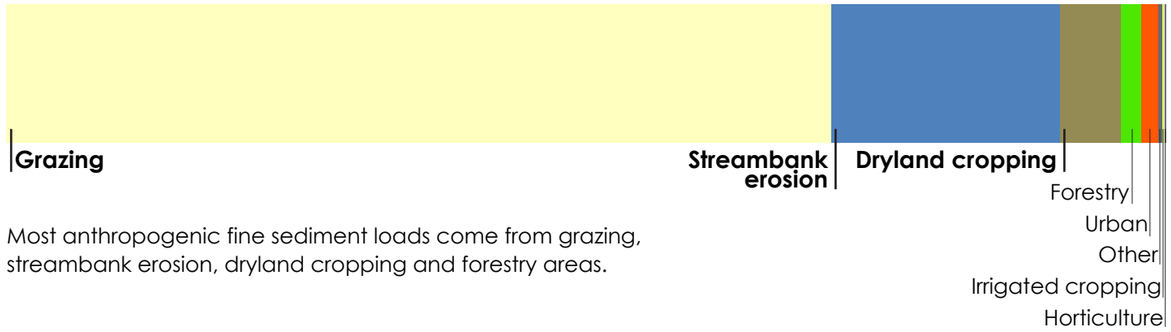
Water quality relative priority

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

Modelled water quality pollutant loads

The Endeavour catchment has minimal anthropogenic dissolved inorganic nitrogen loads and small loads of fine sediment, mostly from grazing.

Fine sediment



Most anthropogenic fine sediment loads come from grazing, streambank erosion, dryland cropping and forestry areas.

Types of sediment erosion

Most sediment erosion comes from hillslopes and streambanks in the Endeavour catchment.