

Reef Guardian Council Action Plan supports brighter future

23/08/2017

Douglas Shire Council has thrown its full support behind the Reef Guardian Council Action Plan to protect the Great Barrier Reef, Mayor Julia Leu, said.

“A healthy and flourishing Reef is vital to our Douglas tourism industry, supporting thousands of jobs and loved by all sectors of our community. It is one of the world’s great natural wonders, attracting a significant number of international and domestic visitors annually,” Mayor Leu said.

“Climate change is now recognised as a primary driver of reef decline with the increasing frequency of bleaching events as ocean temperatures rise. What we do now can have long-lasting benefits on how future generations enjoy the reef, so it’s very important to act now on climate change and transition to a low carbon future,” she said.

“Other main threats to the Reef include crowns of thorns starfish, poor water quality and impacts from coastal development.

“Our action plan lists a range of initiatives that we have carried out or plan to undertake this financial year to help protect the Reef here in Douglas and raise awareness about the impacts of a changing climate.

“Activities target climate change, land and water management, waste management and the community,” Mayor Leu said.

Highlights include:

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Calculating a carbon footprint baseline for 2015-16 covering Council’s operations – underway
- Coastal Hazard Adaption Strategy – work underway on Phases 3 and 4 which address coastal climate change projections up until 2100
- Completed lighting and electrical upgrade at Victor Crees Memorial Building, Mossman
- Upgrading Mossman Library to LED lighting – trial underway

LAND MANAGEMENT

- Developing a bio-security plan setting out how Council prevents, responds to and recovers from pests and diseases
- Trialling enhanced feral pig management technology

WATER MANAGEMENT

- Working with the Wet Tropics Healthy Waterways Partnership to improve water quality and monitoring data in Dickson Inlet and the Mossman River
- Investigating a recycled water network for the Shire to offer the community an irrigation alternative to drinking water
- Undertake a water leak detection program to enable Council to priorities and minimise potential leaks in the reticulation network

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Free electronic waste recycling at Killaloe, Newell Beach and Cow Bay transfer stations
- Auditing public place recycling bins to better understand use
- Public waste education program to improve recycling rates in Douglas

COMMUNITY

- Promoting recycling at Port Douglas State School as part of National Science Week
- Continuing to support Plastic Free Douglas community group to reduce use of plastic bags and other disposable plastic in the Shire
- Investigating alternatives to single use plastic bags for fruit and vegetables in local supermarkets and groceries

The Reef Guardian Program is a stewardship program that encourages and supports councils, schools and industries to become actively involved in protecting the Great Barrier Reef.

The Reef Guardian Council program recognises the good environmental work councils are achieving throughout the 42 million hectare Reef catchment.

Kerrie Hawkes CEO Unit Executive Officer

Communications@douglas.qld.gov.au

70 4099 9411