fitzroy partnership for river health

grades inside

Fitzroy Basin Report Card 2013-14

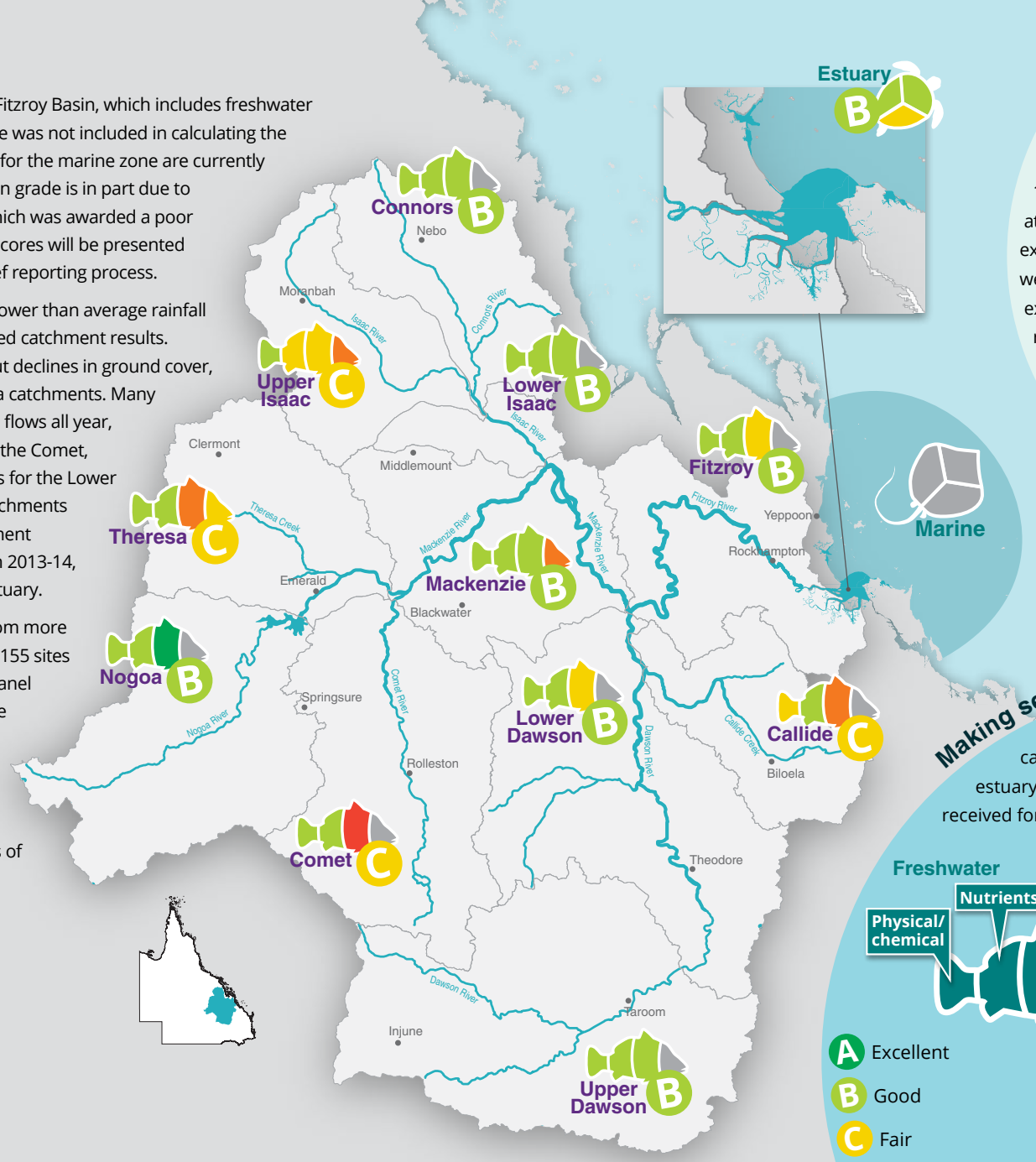
B

Ecosystem Health Results

Overall a B grade has been awarded for the Fitzroy Basin, which includes freshwater and estuary reporting areas. The marine zone was not included in calculating the overall basin grade this year because results for the marine zone are currently unavailable. The improvement in overall basin grade is in part due to unavailability of data for the marine zone, which was awarded a poor grade in the previous three reports. Marine scores will be presented later as part of the broader Great Barrier Reef reporting process.

After three years of significant wet seasons, lower than average rainfall for 2013-14 reduced river flows and influenced catchment results. Drought conditions in the west brought about declines in ground cover, particularly in the Nogoa, Comet and Theresa catchments. Many western catchments went without significant flows all year, which contributed to decreases in scores for the Comet, Theresa and Upper Isaac catchments. Results for the Lower Dawson, Nogoa, Connors and Mackenzie catchments improved. Large floods and associated sediment plumes of previous years were not a factor in 2013-14, which resulted in improved scores for the Estuary.

The Report Card grades have been drawn from more than 1.2 million sample results at more than 155 sites across the Basin. The independent Science Panel has endorsed the results as the best available scientific information. Relying on monitoring data from third parties presents an ongoing challenge. The Partnership is committed to addressing data gaps in the future, especially for the ecological indicators of ecosystem health.



What do we mean by waterway health?

We've assessed water quality, biological and ecological health information for all rivers in the Fitzroy Basin and the estuary.

"To gain the confidence and trust of our Partners and the wider community it is critical that there is rigorous oversight of the monitoring data to ensure the assessment of river health in the Fitzroy Basin is independent, accurate and clearly explained."

Professor Stuart Bunn Science Panel Chair

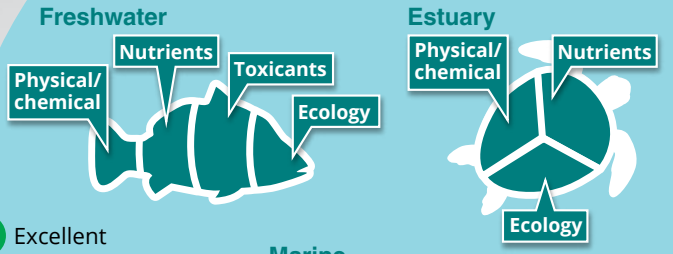
Drinking Water Results

Treated water provided for human use in Rockhampton and Central Highlands Regional Council areas in 2013-14 was excellent, resulting in A grades being attained for all townships. Results did not exceed human health guidelines and there were only a few instances where parameters exceeded aesthetic guidelines related to taste, colour and odour. Slightly elevated levels of aesthetic indicators are observed at times for many drinking water supplies across Australia.

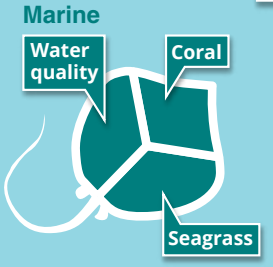
A

Making sense of the eco-indicators

For unique detail on catchment health refer to the freshwater, estuary and marine legends, and the grades received for specific indicators in each catchment.



- A Excellent
- B Good
- C Fair
- D Poor
- E Fail
- No data

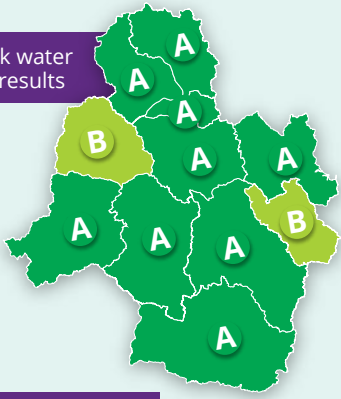


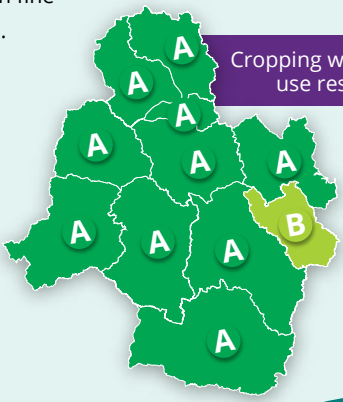
Agricultural Use Results

Available data across the Basin has been compared to stock and crop water thresholds to provide a new Agricultural Use Reporting initiative for the Partnership. In 2013-14, A and B grades were attained for all catchments for water quality for stock and cropping use.

For Stock Use, all catchments attained A's except Theresa and Callide. For Theresa, elevated levels of aluminium, most likely associated with fine sediment, were detected at several sites. For Callide, elevated levels of electrical conductivity, sulfate and copper were found in the Dee River sub-catchment.

For Crop use, all catchments attained A's except Callide, which received a B. For Callide, elevated electrical conductivity and manganese were found in the Dee River sub-catchment, with elevated levels of sodium and chloride also observed at other sites in the catchment.





Major partners

Queensland Government
BMA BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance
Peabody Energy
Anglo American
RioTinto
Santos
fba Fitzroy Basin Association
Glencore

Partners

Australia Pacific LNG
origin
arrow energy
Jellinbah Resources
Wesfarmers
Rockhampton Regional Council
Cockatoo Coal
Ensham
Isaac Plains Coal
New Hope Coal Australia
CHRC Central Highlands Regional Council
CQ University Australia
Cotton Australia
CQG Consulting
Queensland Resources Council

Visit the website for more information:
www.riverhealth.org.au