

**Theme:** Public Policy and Governance

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Wetlands: Developing a framework for wetland protection.

The Queensland Wetlands Programme (QWP), a collaborative exercise involving the Australian and Queensland governments, is providing tools and techniques to ensure the sustainable management of these highly valued ecosystems.

In the past, efforts to protect, maintain or rehabilitate wetlands have lacked sufficient integration between levels of government and amongst various program initiatives.

Landholders were left without guidance on the importance of their wetlands or how best to manage them. However, communities and government have an increasing awareness and understanding of wetlands and the services and benefits they provide to the environment and to society.

In support of this increased awareness and commitment to protect wetlands, the QWP has delivered a range of tools to guide the development and implementation of wetland policy in Queensland. Wetland policy and governance arrangements are in the process of being developed in consultation with key stakeholders such as the community, natural resource management groups, agricultural interests and industry to provide a transparent and consistent framework for the protection, rehabilitation and conservation of wetlands in Queensland.