

# Healthy Rivers

Rivers are the lifeblood of our landscapes. While many of our state's rivers have been degraded by pollution, vegetation clearing and excessive water use, we still have free-flowing rivers that are among the best in the world. With strong government policies and community action, we can protect and restore our rivers so they remain healthy and sustainable long into the future for all people, and other species, who rely on them.

## Suggested policy solutions for the next Queensland government:

### Lake Eyre Basin & other free-flowing rivers

- Strengthen legislative protection for Queensland's free flowing rivers and wetlands by
  - » working with Traditional Owners, community members and other stakeholders of the Channel Country floodplains around how to improve legislative protection;
  - » commit to introducing stronger legislative protection for Channel Country rivers and floodplains by the first sitting week of 2021<sup>4</sup>
  - » introduce new measures to protect pristine rivers in the Gulf country by the end of the second year of the Parliamentary term; and
  - » protect Cape York rivers by the end of the Parliamentary term.

### Dams and weirs

- Commit to not provide any public funds to build new dams and weirs. Instead, make better use of existing unused water allocations in existing dams and weirs.
- Remove redundant and ineffective dams and weirs and install fish and turtle passage devices on existing dams and weirs.
- Ensure use of water from existing dams and weirs for agriculture does not cause any adverse impacts to receiving waters.

- Ensure all proposals for dams, weirs or similar structures on a river system have their impacts assessed cumulatively.

### Water resource management

- Strengthen the ecological outcomes that are defined in regional water plans established under the Water Act 2000.
- Reduce water demand through urban, agricultural and industrial water use efficiency programs.
- Support the use of purified recycled water to augment urban water supplies.
- Commence a process to have Brisbane accredited as a Wetland City under the RAMSAR Wetland City Framework.

### No backwards steps:

- Continue to ensure Queensland's water resources are managed in accordance with National Water Initiative (NWI) principles and
- Maintain Queensland's support for the Murray Darling Basin Plan objectives and outcomes
- Maintain the option to use purified recycled water (PRW) to augment SEQ urban water supply in times of drought.

<sup>4</sup> This requires making all resource activities an 'unacceptable use' within an extended Designated Precinct, which incorporates High Preservation Areas, Special Floodplain Areas and Floodplain Management Areas under the former Wild Rivers Act 2005.