

Maintenance of the natural resource base

Queensland has five of Australia's 14 World Heritage areas – more than any other state. Maintaining Queensland's natural resource base is about protecting and enhancing the State's natural resources for generations to come. One of the Government's priorities is Protecting the environment for a sustainable future, including:

- > protecting Queensland's unique environmental and heritage assets;
- > promoting sustainable development through responsible use of the State's natural resources;
- > encouraging the development of environmentally sustainable industries and jobs; and
- > protecting Queensland's diverse plants and animals.

This means using Queensland's natural capital – air, land, water, minerals, gas, native vegetation and biodiversity – for sustainable economic growth.

Ensuring that economic growth does not occur at the expense of Queensland's environment, including the adoption of new 'green' technologies, is a joint responsibility of government, industry and individuals.

Performance summary

Between 1999 and 2006, water saved through capping and piping activities under the **Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative** totalled 66,400 megalitres. This annual saving is projected to increase to over 75,000 megalitres by June 2007.

The most common agricultural crop in Queensland is cereals for grain, which decreased in area by 6.6% in 2004–05, after increasing by 37.9% in 2003–04. The area planted to sugar cane also fell slightly in 2004–05, by 0.7%.

Queensland's forests include 196,000 hectares of state owned and 42,000 hectares of privately owned timber plantation. The proportion of state owned log timber production sourced from plantations was 86% in 2005–06.

Queensland's fish stocks are carefully managed to ensure their long term sustainability. Annual wild caught fisheries resources have fluctuated between 25,000 and 30,000 tonnes since 1994–95, mainly

due to season variation. Production fell to 23,400 tonnes in 2004–05 due to a range of factors, including economic ones.

The majority of mined commodities are exported rather than consumed within Queensland. The contribution of mining to the economic growth of Queensland is significant. The value of production was \$16.2 billion in 2004–05, up from \$12.1 billion in 2003–04. Royalty revenue returned to the State rose from \$966 million in 2004–05 to \$1,450 million in 2005–06.

Since the introduction of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*, the area of native remnant vegetation cleared annually has more than halved. Most clearing in recent years has been in areas of mulga woodland to shrubland, and poplar box and silver leaved ironbark woodland.

Of the 1,351 regional ecosystems identified in Queensland in 2006, 744 were classified as 'no concern at present', 511 as 'of concern' and 96 as 'endangered'.

Queensland's protected area estate has increased from 3.4 million hectares in 1985 to 8.2 million hectares in 2006.

Marine parks now constitute 68,000 km² of state tidal lands and waters, an increase of 16,000 km² since 2004.

Sustainable use of natural resources

Queensland has vast groundwater resources, which account for around 36% of total water use. The Great Artesian Basin underlies 65% of the State and is the sole source of water for stock and domestic use in many western areas. About 25% of the State's total groundwater abstractions are from the basin.

The **Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative** is a joint State–Commonwealth program to assist landholders to rehabilitate artesian bores and replace bore drains with piped systems. The initiative is delivered via state agencies and builds on previous incentive programs.

Capping and piping a bore has significant benefits for the Great Artesian Basin and property management practice. Some of these benefits include preservation and restoration of artesian pressure through the efficient use of water, cleaner water supply for stock and domestic use, and reduction of feral flora and fauna habitat.

Between 1999 and 2006, water saved through capping and piping activities under the initiative totalled 66,400 megalitres per annum. This annual saving by the initiative is projected to increase to 75,000 megalitres per annum by June 2007.

To date in Queensland under this initiative and previous funding arrangements, 728 bores have been rehabilitated or piped, 7,880 kilometres of bore drain have been replaced and 137,800 megalitres per annum of water have been saved.

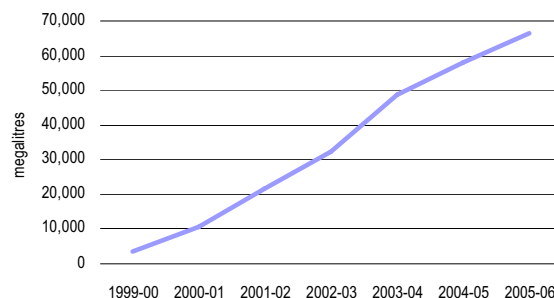
The **Great Artesian Basin Water Resource Plan** provides for future development in the basin within sustainable limits. The volumes of water allowed to be allocated under the plan are capped so that a portion of the savings occurring under capping and piping activities are available for new users. One-third of the available water has been set aside for projects of state or regional significance. The remainder of the water allowed for under the plan will be made available for any purpose and will be released through the process outlined in the **Great Artesian Basin Resource Operations Plan** due to commence in early 2007.

The **Queensland Water Quality Guidelines 2006** focus on the protection of aquatic ecosystems. They complement the National Water Quality Management Strategy, including the Australian Water Quality Guidelines, by including locally and regionally relevant water quality data for fresh, estuarine and marine waters.

Water use

Great Artesian Basin water saved through capping and piping activities, under the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative, cumulative, 1999–00 to 2005–06

Source: Department of Natural Resources and Water



Note: 1 megalitre = 1 million litres

Significant achievements

Water saving initiatives

Background

South-east Queensland is experiencing its worst drought in over 100 years, where major reservoir water levels have dropped to historically low levels. The Government is working with households, business and industry, and has initiated water saving measures to ensure the State copes with the drought, climate change and future needs for the next half century.

Description

Queensland Government initiatives to save water include:

- > rebates for new home rainwater tanks; new water efficient washing machines, toilets and showerheads; plumbing to divert laundry, bath and shower greywater onto gardens; greywater below-ground irrigation systems; and pool covers;
- > under the **Water Efficiency Program**, domestic and commercial users can undertake water efficiency measures; for example, the Home WaterWise Service allows, for households, water efficient devices and installation normally costing around \$150 for \$20;
- > sustainable housing legislation requiring new houses, residential units and townhouses to have water saving shower heads and dual flush toilets in reticulated town water areas. New houses are also required to have water pressure limiting devices. Bathroom renovations are to have dual flush toilets and water saving shower heads in reticulated town water areas;
- > level 3 water restrictions from June 2006, banning all outdoor hosing and level 4 from November 2006, including bucketing restrictions, efficiency measures for pool owners and restrictions for business, industry and government agencies;
- > initiatives under the **Water and Sewerage Program**, including effluent reuse and reduction of potable (safe drinking) water consumption and loss;
- > the **Water Pressure Management** project to assist councils in south-east Queensland to reduce water loss and consumption via pressure reduction. This alone seeks to achieve water savings of 60 million litres a day;

- > funds provided to large water service providers (mainly councils) to prepare system leakage management plans and drought management plans to the Government, and undertake appropriate works to rectify leaks;
- > a report, **Commercial Sector Water Use Efficiency in Queensland**, to determine further opportunities and potential measures to reduce water use in the commercial sector;
- > the **Queensland Water Recycling Guidelines**, to facilitate and promote the safe use of recycled water, as well as a manual for setting up agreements between recycled water suppliers and users; and
- > amendments to the *Water Act 2000* to allow a water supply emergency to be declared.

Impact on priorities

These initiatives contribute to the Government's priority of Protecting the environment for a sustainable future.

Implementation status

The State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2000 was amended to establish new penalty infringement notice offences (with corresponding infringement notice fines) for offences under the *Water Act 2000*. The regulation also amended an existing infringement notice offence by introducing an incremental fines system for multiple infringement notice offences for contravening a water restriction under s.389(3) of the Act.

The Government established the **Queensland Water Efficiency Taskforce** to assist rural and urban communities to improve the management of water supplies to be better able to deal with the impacts of drought. The taskforce deals with water efficiency issues, including industrial and commercial issues. Other taskforce members include representatives from the Queensland Government, local government, industry, agriculture, and environmental organisations.

Sustainable housing legislation will ensure a higher level of water efficiency in new and renovated dwellings, which will assist Queensland communities maintain sustainable water resources.

Significant achievements

Water infrastructure and reforms

Background

Queensland is experiencing strong industry and population growth and with it come the demands of increased water supply at a time of the worst drought on record in many parts of the State.

Initiatives such as **Paradise Dam**, the **Burnett Program of Actions**, **Kirar Weir**, **Gattonvale Offstream Storage** and the **South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy** illustrate how the Queensland Government is addressing Queensland's water challenge.

Description

Paradise Dam, near Biggenden, was completed in November 2005 providing for an additional 20 billion litres per annum of high priority water and 124 billion litres per annum of medium priority water for the Burnett region's agricultural, commercial and residential users.

The environmental projects under the **Burnett Program of Actions** are now well advanced, with the scientific research stage (Stage 1) almost fully completed. The only remaining Stage 1 project is a **Lungfish Recovery Plan**, which is due for completion by January 2007.

Turning the scientific research into practical projects of benefit across the Burnett River catchment, Stage 2 of the program is progressing well, with the flagship project, the new Turtle Hatchery at Paradise Dam, operating since May 2006. This is the first whole of catchment program of its kind in Australia.

Kirar Weir, in the upper Burnett catchment area at Eidsvold, provides for an additional 20 billion litres per annum of water for agricultural purposes.

The **Gattonvale Offstream Storage** provides 5.2 billion litres to supplement the critically low levels of Eungella Dam.

The **South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy** aims to formulate regional strategies to meet the future water supply needs of south-east Queensland. The Stage 2 Interim Report of the **South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy** outlines the approach that needs to be taken to ensure water supplies meet short and medium term needs.

Impact on priorities

These initiatives contribute to the Government's priority of Protecting the environment for a sustainable future. The Queensland Government supports Queensland's regions through statewide infrastructure development, including addressing the State's water crisis by building dams.

Implementation status

Stage 1 (scientific research phase) of the **Burnett Program of Actions** is due to be completed in late January 2007, with the completion of the practical Stage 2 actions in the Burnett River catchment expected to be completed by 2011.

The **South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy** identifies projects that will be implemented over the next 15 years, including regional water pressure reduction and leakage management, recycled water substitution by industry, inter-catchment water distribution, indoor water efficiency, and several dams and weirs.

The area planted to cereal grains in Queensland fell by 6.6% in 2004–05, after increasing by 37.9% in 2003–04, which reflected improved seasonal conditions. The area of cotton increased greatly in the two years to 2004–05. In contrast, the area of sugar cane declined slightly to 411,000 hectares.

The **Fitzroy Industry and Infrastructure Study** recommended intensive animal production as the industry of choice in a 31,000 hectare agricultural corridor and showed that the area has the potential to produce 300,000 head of cattle and 750,000 pigs a year using available water. This would mean an additional \$500 million investment in Queensland's agriculture and \$1 billion in increased output to the state and regional economy.

The proportion of log timber sourced from plantations rather than native forests and the increasing use of fish stocks sourced from aquaculture production are indicators of the responsible and sustainable use of Queensland's natural resources.

Queensland has 56 million hectares of forest,¹ which the Government, leaseholders and private landholders manage for various purposes, including nature conservation, forest recreation, timber production and grazing. These forests include five million hectares of nature conservation reserves² and five million hectares of state owned native forest³ managed for timber production, with less than 1% of the latter harvested each year.

Queensland's forest plantation estate was increased by 14,000 hectares⁴, mainly hardwood plantings, in 2005–06. It now comprises 196,000 hectares⁵ of state owned softwood and hardwood plantation and 42,000 hectares⁶ of privately owned timber plantation.

Queensland's fish stocks are carefully managed to ensure their long term sustainability. Initiatives in 2005–06 include the **Vessel Monitoring System**, the **Automated Quota Reporting System**, the **Long Term Monitoring** program and **At Sea Fisheries Observer** program, investment in aquaculture, and reforms to Queensland's fisheries fees and licensing system. Twenty-six Queensland fisheries passed a sustainability audit under the Commonwealth's *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* in 2005–06.

¹ National Forest Inventory 2005.

² National Forest Inventory 2005.

³ Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries. Although the State owns 14.5 million hectares over which harvesting rights exist, the area currently managed for timber production is unlikely to increase beyond the current five million hectares, and may progressively decrease.

⁴ Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries 2006

⁵ Forestry Plantations Queensland 2006

⁶ Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries 2006

Land use

Agriculture: main crops by area, Queensland, 2002–03 to 2004–05

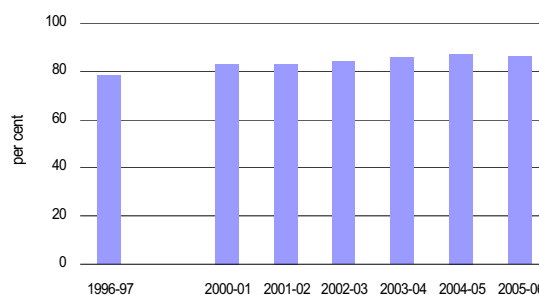
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Agriculture, Australia*, cat. no. 7113.0, unpublished data

Crop	'000 hectares		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Cereals for grain	1,102	1,520	1,419
Sugar cane	423	414	411
Crops and pastures for hay	114	116	113
Cotton	68	101	144
Oilseeds	28	58	26
Peanuts	10	13	14

Timber

Percentage of state owned log timber production sourced from plantations, Queensland, 1996–97 to 2005–06

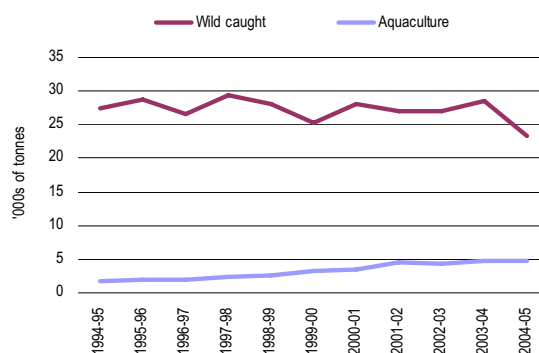
Source: Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries



Fisheries production

Fisheries production (wild caught and aquaculture), Queensland, 1994–95 to 2004–05

Source: Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries



Maintenance of the natural resource base

The majority of mined commodities are exported rather than consumed within Queensland, emphasising the contribution of mining to the economic growth of Queensland. The value of production increased from \$12.1 billion in 2003–04 to \$16.2 billion in 2004–05.

The extension of the commodities boom in 2005–06 resulted in royalty revenue returned to the State rising from \$966 million in 2004–05 to \$1,450 million in 2005–06. This is an increase of \$122 million on revenue initially forecast in the 2005–06 Budget of \$1,328 million. While coal royalty revenue comprised almost 80% of the total revenue, the largest contribution in percentage terms to the increase occurred in the base and precious metals sector.

In addition to royalties, mining generates a significant number of jobs in regional Queensland, both directly and indirectly.

Mineral and energy production

Mineral and energy production levels by commodity, Queensland, 2002–03 to 2004–05

Source: Department of Natural Resources and Water; and Geoscience Australia 2005

Commodity	Unit	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Coal	million tonnes	154	160	173
Coking coal	million tonnes	85	89	103
Thermal coal	million tonnes	69	71	70
Crude oil	million litres	320	425	418
Natural gas condensate	million litres	327	252	287
Natural gas	million cubic metres	4,679	5,255	4,766
LPG	million litres	318	220	344
Oil shale	million litres	67	87	83
Bauxite	'000 tonnes	11,251	12,071	13,798
Copper concentrate	'000 tonnes	1,287	1,654	1,329
Gold bullion	kilograms	38,154	39,922	34,845
Lead concentrate	'000 tonnes	680	756	804
Magnesite	'000 tonnes	456	540	581
Phosphate rock	'000 tonnes	1,909	1,889	1,935
Silver	'000 kilograms	1,655	1,790	1,896
Zinc concentrate	'000 tonnes	1,389	1,386	1,540
Titanium minerals	'000 tonnes	165	161	210

Notes: Crude oil excludes oil shale.

Natural gas includes coal seam gas.

Vegetation management

About 328,000 square kilometres of land in Queensland have been cleared of native remnant vegetation, that is, vegetation approximating original vegetation. This equates to 19% of the State's total land area, although most clearing has occurred in the east of the State.

Around 3,600 square kilometres (0.2%) was cleared annually during the period 2001–02 to 2002–03. This is less than half the level in 1999–00, before the introduction of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.

Most clearing in 2001–02 and 2002–03 was in areas of mulga woodland to shrubland, and poplar box and silver leaved ironbark woodland.

Maps of the State's regional ecosystems and remnant vegetation are available at www.epa.qld.gov.au/remaps. The maps provide information about the distribution of regional ecosystems and their conservation status for the specified area or lot on plan. Digital data, at www.epa.qld.gov.au/redata, for up to three lots on plan can be downloaded and imported into other systems for planning purposes. Information on Queensland's 1,351 regional ecosystems can be found at www.epa.qld.gov.au/redd.

New regional ecosystem mapping for 10 million hectares was completed in 2005–06, which means 78% of the State now has regional ecosystem mapping at 1:100 000 scale. A further eight million hectares is planned for completion in 2006–07.

The Queensland Government in partnership with the Australian Government is mapping the State's 1.3 million hectares of wetlands. The wetlands in the catchment area of the Great Barrier Reef from Mossman to Hervey Bay were mapped in 2005–06. The rest of the State is to be completed in 2006–07 and the maps made available via the internet.

Remnant vegetation

Remnant vegetation by type, Queensland, 2001 and 2003

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

Broad vegetation group	Pre-clearing area (km ²)	Remnant area 2001 (km ²)	Remnant area 2003 (km ²)	Amount cleared (2001-03) (km ²)
Eucalypt woodland on ranges	178,576	138,388	138,316	72
Eucalypt open forest	45,293	30,491	30,482	9
Darwin stringy bark woodland to open forest	87,881	87,418	87,415	3
Yellow jacket and White's ironbark woodland	29,472	27,244	27,217	27
Poplar box and silver leaved ironbark woodland	129,344	62,382	61,445	937
Mixed eucalypt woodland	89,604	67,524	67,302	222
Georgetown box woodland	27,149	27,005	26,968	37
Snappy gum low open woodland	86,191	84,870	84,833	37
Riparian eucalypt woodland	99,502	72,985	72,922	63
Wattle woodland / shrubland on ranges	95,786	93,355	93,185	170
Gidgee open forest to shrubland	99,601	81,062	80,830	232
Brigalow open forest	88,037	9,730	9,556	174
Mulga woodland to shrubland	111,408	98,507	97,034	1,473
Hummock grassland	53,645	53,363	53,338	25
Tussock grassland	348,800	336,447	336,349	98
Rainforest and vine thicket	38,183	18,799	18,783	16
Wetland	94,536	91,188	91,178	10
Mangrove and strand communities	19,305	17,845	17,845	–
Heath and mixed shrubland	15,311	14,461	14,458	3
Total	1,737,624	1,413,064	1,409,455	3,609

Note: Numbers may not add to totals, due to rounding.

Maintenance of biodiversity

Biological diversity is the variety of life – the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes and the ecosystems of which they are a part. Queensland is one of the most diverse places on the planet. It is home to more than 200,000 species of plants and animals, many of which are found nowhere else in the world and they are still being discovered.

Queensland has 1,351 regional ecosystems, of which 744 are classified as ‘no concern at present’, 511 as ‘of concern’ and 96 as ‘endangered’.

Animal diversity (of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, freshwater fish and butterflies) includes 1,955 species, of which 78 are vulnerable, 58 are endangered and seven are presumed extinct. A total of 68 animals have been introduced to Queensland.

Total plant species include 9,907 native vascular (flowering plants, gymnosperms and ferns) and 5,602 non-vascular (mosses, liverworts, lichens and algae) plant taxa, of which 23 are presumed extinct, 152 are endangered and 273 are vulnerable. In addition, 1,314 taxa of macrofungi are currently recognised for Queensland, of a total diversity estimated to be over 10,000 species. The weed flora of Queensland is represented by 1,167 plant species.

A comprehensive protected area system is aimed at maintaining the diversity of ecosystems, species and wild genetic resources. Queensland’s protected area estate was estimated at about 3.4 million hectares (2.0% of the State) in 1985. It increased to an estimated 8.2 million hectares (4.8%) in 2006. Across the remainder of the State, the Government supports and guides sustainable use of the natural resource base.

Marine parks now constitute 68,000 km² (6.8 million hectares) of state tidal lands and waters, an increase of 16,000 km² since 2004. Queensland’s marine parks are managed to conserve biodiversity while still allowing reasonable use. Management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is shared between the Queensland and Australian Governments.

To complement the State’s protected area system, the Government has been promoting nature refuges on private land. In 2005–06, 43 additional nature refuges and one coordinated conservation area were gazetted covering a total of 54,944 hectares, bringing the total area covered by nature conservation agreements to 463,728 hectares.

Regional ecosystems

Terrestrial ecosystems by bioregion, Queensland, 2006

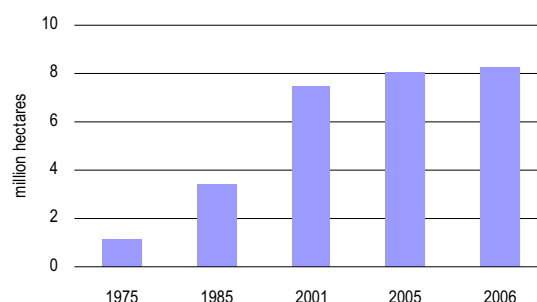
Source: Environmental Protection Agency

Bioregion	Area ('000 ha)	Regional ecosystems			
		Total	Not of concern	Of concern	Endangered
Brigalow Belt	36,430	172	92	50	30
Cape York Peninsula	1,444	222	124	97	1
Central Qld Coast	24,191	75	23	43	9
Channel Country	7,033	56	53	3	–
Desert Uplands	775	77	49	26	2
Einasleigh Uplands	18,506	142	106	36	–
Gulf Plains	12,171	84	66	17	1
Mitchell Grass Downs	23,822	54	49	4	1
Mulga Lands	11,865	65	57	5	3
New England Tableland	1,985	25	6	10	9
Northwest Highlands	7,317	43	32	11	–
South East Queensland	6,215	151	54	75	22
Wet Tropics	22,008	185	33	134	18
Total	173,762	1,351	744	511	96

Protected area estate

Protected area estate, Queensland, 1975 to 2006

Source: Environmental Protection Agency



Future directions

Managing our natural resources presents Queensland with significant challenges, especially for our most precious resource – water.

Queensland's water supply and management is under increasing pressure due to severe drought affecting large parts of Queensland, particularly the south-east, and the requirements of the coal industry.

The Government will deliver water security for Queensland through investment in infrastructure and in planning to use our water in more efficient and productive ways. A **Statewide Water Grid** will link major regional centres with south-east Queensland.

To respond to the increasingly critical water supplies in the south-east, the Water Amendment Regulation (No. 6) 2006 (Subordinate Legislation 2006 No. 202 made under the *Water Act 2000*) declared a water supply emergency for the region. It also outlined solutions and outcomes to ensure security of essential water supplies.

Under the **South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy** and amendment to the *Water Act 2000*, the Government will commence new water infrastructure projects in the south-east aimed at increasing and diversifying supplies:

- > **New dams:** The Government's report **Water for South East Queensland: A Long-term Solution** outlines the need for two new dams to supplement supply in the south-east. Work on Traveston Crossing Dam and Wyaralong Dam as well as Cedar Grove Weir will commence shortly.
- > **Dam raising:** Borumba Dam, Hinze Dam and Mt Crosby Weir will be raised to increase their capacity.
- > **Desalination:** a plant will be built at Tugun as a joint project of the Government and the Gold Coast City Council.
- > **Recycling:** the **Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme** will enable waste water to be recycled and pumped to major industrial users, rather than being discharged into the sea as at present.
- > Other projects include Bribie Island underground water resources and Bromelton off-stream storage.

These projects will be connected to the water grid via major interconnector pipes to be built across the region, including the Southern Regional Water Pipeline, the Eastern Pipeline Inter-connector and the Northern Pipeline Inter-connector.

The draft **Central Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy** proposes pipelines, new dams and raising existing storages, including:

- > Burdekin to Moranbah pipeline;
- > Rockhampton to Livingstone water pipeline;
- > Rockhampton to Gladstone water pipeline;
- > Eden Bann Weir raising;
- > Rookwood Weir;
- > Connors River Dam;
- > Nathan Dam;
- > Water for Bowen project;
- > Fitzroy Water storage; and
- > Lenthalls Dam.

The implementation of these projects across south-eastern and central Queensland will position the State well for future industry and population growth over the next two decades.

Planning and reform are essential to the sustainable management of water:

- > The Queensland Water Commission, established to address the south-east's long term water issues, will finalise the **South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy**, with a clear direction to achieve water security in the region.
- > As outlined in the **Queensland Water Plan 2005–2010**, water resource plans will be in place for the whole of Queensland, underpinning water use and trading and the continued health of riverine systems.
- > Queensland will continue to implement the National Water Initiative principles as agreed with the Commonwealth and other states.

The Government will implement further initiatives to improve water efficiency, including:

- > extending the **Home WaterWise Rebate Scheme** across Queensland;

The Government will commence a range of new water infrastructure projects in the south-east

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- > the **Business Water Efficiency Program**, which will provide incentives for business uptake of efficiency measures;
- > the **Government Buildings Water Conservation Program**, ensuring that public buildings lead the way in saving water. Initiatives underway include auditing and retrofitting government owned buildings with water saving technologies such as tapware, in-line flow restrictors, toilets, showers and urinals. The program is also investigating alternative water sources and new technologies to improve the water efficiency of cooling towers; and
- > further extending the highly effective **Rural Water Use Efficiency** program. Stage 3 of this program will expand the existing partnerships with four irrigation industry groups, and form new partnerships with the production nursery, flower growing and turf production industries.

To further assist in conserving the Great Artesian Basin, the Government will encourage landholders to participate in the capping and rehabilitation of nine identified high risk bores on properties in the area.

The Queensland Government is committed to addressing the long term development needs of the timber industry in Queensland. Using the consultative model established for the **South East Queensland Forests Agreement**, the Government is now pursuing solutions for forest management and industry development in the rest of the State under the **Statewide Forests Process**.

The Statewide Forests Process will address the long term needs of the timber industry

The current focus is the state owned native hardwood forests in the Western Hardwoods Region. This includes a commitment to reduce Western Hardwood Crown allocations, the protection of one million hectares of Western Hardwood forest and a 20 year transition of the timber industry to plantations.

A commercial partnership between the Government and Queensland company Dendrotech has resulted in the commercial release of cloned hybrids of spotted gum species (*Corymbia*) developed to suit different tropical and subtropical growing conditions in regional Queensland. Together with the establishment of **Plantation Industry Development Alliances** with the private sector, this will result in an estimated 100,000 hectare expansion to Queensland's hardwood forestry plantation estate over the next 10 years.