



**BURDEKIN DRY TROPICS
REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT
STRATEGIC APPROACH 2020-2025**

Contents

1.	Foreword	3
2.	Introduction	4
3.	Background	5
4.	Our approach	6
5.	Terms of Reference	7
6.	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI)	10
7.	Project Prioritisation	11



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Please reference as: Burdekin Dry Tropics Regional Pest Management Strategic Approach 2020-2025.

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1. Foreword

Pest plants and animals are a serious threat to our region's economic, social and environmental sustainability. They adversely affect the healthy function of ecosystems, reduce primary industry productivity and profitability, and can have significant impacts on a raft of social, recreational and health values.

In contrast to the enormous costs of pest plants and animals, the resources available for managing them are limited. Collaboration and aligning effort are key to ensuring maximum value of those resources.

In 2008, NQ Dry Tropics facilitated a process that brought together regional players in pest management; including infrastructure managers, and local and state government representatives. An early product of that process was the Burdekin region's first Regional Pest Management Strategy. Since then, NQ Dry Tropics has continued to provide support and stewardship to the Strategy and the Regional Pest Management Group. The Regional Pest Management Group is a stakeholder group represented by state and local government, natural resource management, infrastructure, industry and community groups and local Traditional Owners.

The Regional Pest Management Group has remained committed to a collaborative regional process. As part of

that ongoing commitment, the group, with support from NQ Dry Tropics, has continued to update its strategic intent. This document represents the strategic intent of the group for 2020-2025 where regional collaboration and coordination will continue to refine the pest plant and animal priorities of Local Government Biosecurity Plans. Recognising that any strategic approach needs to quickly adapt to emerging priorities and opportunities, this document is being developed and maintained by NQ Dry Tropics within a web-based environment.

Pest plant and animal issues do not exist in isolation from broader land and water management considerations. As such, this Regional Pest Management Strategy will continue to link to the management goals and activities of the Burdekin Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management Plan (2016-2026).

NQ Dry Tropics is proud of what has been achieved by the Regional Pest Management Group. But the task of delivering against the strategy goes beyond the group and requires broad support from other organisations, agencies and community groups. Therefore, I invite anyone interested in supporting this strategy to contact our Regional Pest Management Group.

Dr. Scott Crawford CEO NQ Dry Tropics

2. Introduction

Pest management on private and public land is important socially, economically, environmentally and culturally for the preservation of our natural resources, rural industries and community values.

The Burdekin Dry Tropics natural resource management region, covering an area of approximately 146,000km², is made up of numerous areas, assets and industries of considerable environmental and economic significance. Most of the region is managed for beef cattle grazing, however the region is known as the most productive sugarcane and largest winter vegetable growing centre in Australia. The region also includes internationally-recognised wetlands, tropical savannas and internationally recognised rainforests, providing habitat for many local and migratory species that rely on the health of the system.

Pest plants and animals have considerable impact on these natural and economic values. The importance of pest management is recognised at a national and state level. The *Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017-2027*, the *Australian Weeds Strategy 2017-2027*, the *Queensland Biosecurity Strategy 2018-2023* and the *Queensland Biosecurity Act 2014* provide guidance on the control and reduction of pests in Queensland. While the Commonwealth and state governments have provided a broad strategic direction for pest management, there is a need to convert this intent into on-ground action. Many organisations, groups and landholders are actively undertaking pest management work, some with individual plans and schedules. This strategy is designed to guide regional investment towards on-ground pest management activities within the Burdekin Dry Tropics region.

Developed by members of the Burdekin Dry Tropics Regional Pest Management Group, the strategy reflects the Commonwealth and State government pest management intent, interpreting this intent at a regional level for landholders and organisations that have a role in local and regional pest management for biodiversity and local economy outcomes. The strategic approach is not designed to contain detailed information on all invasive pest plants and animals in the region. Instead, it should assist stakeholders to work collaboratively on regionally-important pest projects to deliver positive pest management outcomes at a local level.

The Regional Pest Management Group will assist with the coordination and implementation of this strategic approach for an operating period of 2020 to 2025, but its success will ultimately rely on the will, dedication and commitment of all landholders, land managers and stakeholders in the region.

It is the intent of this strategic approach to:

- promote cooperative stakeholder planning and knowledge transfer, and support the delivery of coordinated on-ground pest management activities;
- develop and deliver regionally strategic pest management projects that result in an increase in economic, environmental, cultural and social values; and
- inform local government pest management plans and provide the link between local pest management intent and the intent of the Commonwealth and State at the regional level.

Box 1: Asset definitions

- *High-value agricultural* — recognised areas which produce agricultural goods with a high economic value per kilogram, per hectare or per calorie. This includes plantation forests, native and modified pastures, cropping, perennial and seasonal horticulture, and intensive animal production.
- *High-value environmental* — recognised areas of managed resource protection and nature conservation, marshes or wetlands and the riparian corridors that connect them. These asset areas are recognised for their ecological

value, including the diversity and richness of native species. They may be important sites of refuge.

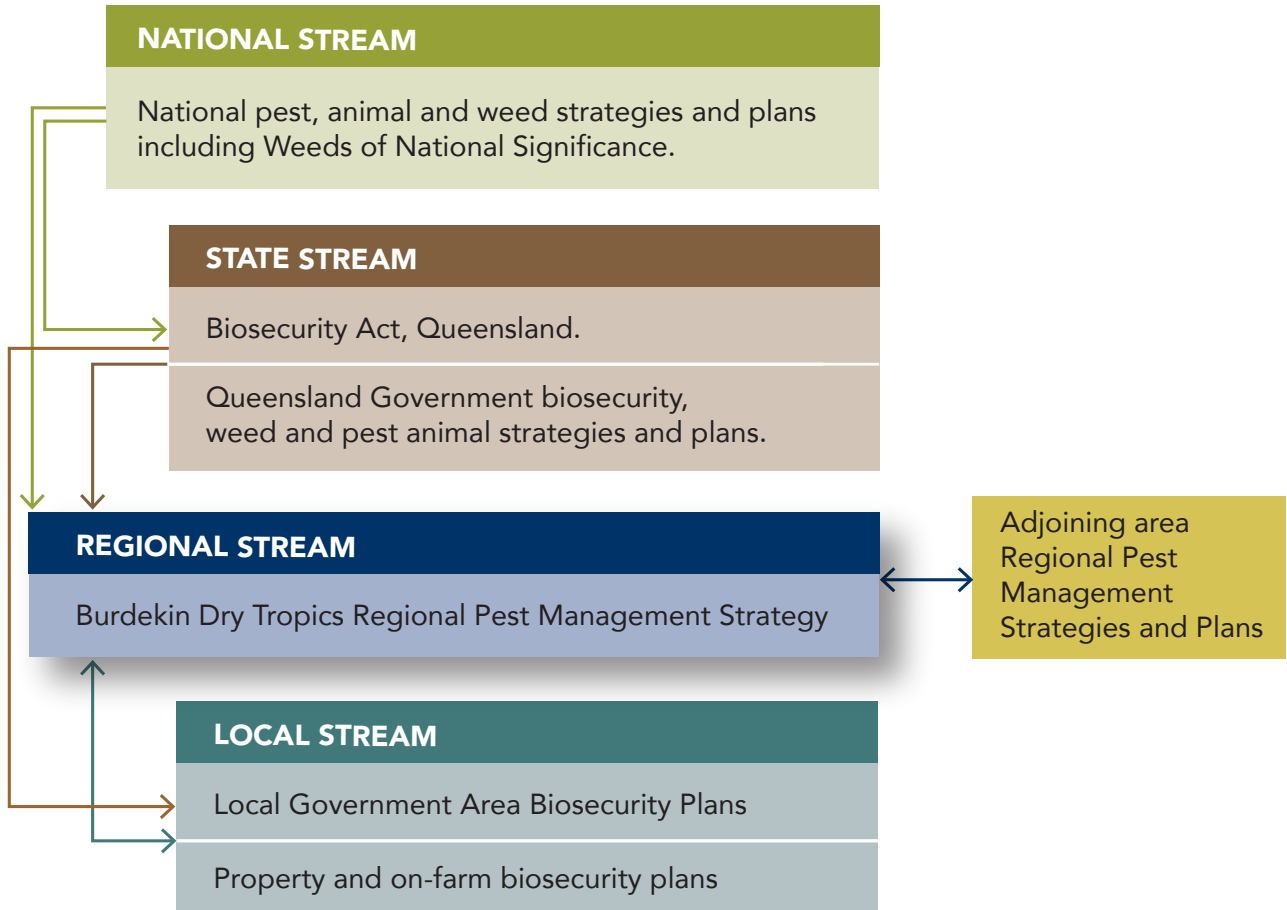
- *Cultural* — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage including significant areas or objects.
- *Social* — the attributes of individuals in the community including their interactions and behaviour; human capital such as education, skills and health; infrastructure and technology, residential housing and Defence capability.

A guideline to regional asset locations is provided in the appendix.

3. Background

The Group’s strategic approach sets the foundation for collaborative and coordinated regional action, while maintaining alignment to all current Local, State and National plans. Particular attention is given to Local Government Area Biosecurity plans, where there are

opportunities to build on existing pest management programs for the best possible investment outcomes. Investment outcomes are supported by a regional commitment to leveraging and sharing resources, including funding, knowledge and skills.



4. Our Approach

VISION

Through cooperative partnerships, enhance and protect the natural, economic, cultural and social values of the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region.

MISSION

To have a diverse network of stakeholders collectively focused on reducing the impact of pest species in the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region

THEME 1	THEME 2	THEME 3	THEME 4
Cooperative stakeholder partnership and coordination	Support for research and best practice	Community engagement and capacity building	Operational project planning and implementation

GOAL	By 2025, the RPMG has made an on-going commitment to maintaining coordinated pest management actions.	By 2025, the RPMG is actively involved in research-based initiatives to improve knowledge in best practice and to resolve identified research gaps.	By 2025, there is an increase in the understanding and uptake of best practice pest management by the Burdekin Dry Tropics community.	By 2025, collaboratively-resourced RPMG operational projects and programs have reduced the impact of priority pest species on high-value regional assets.
OBJECTIVES	<p>By 2023, there is a formal commitment from all local government organisations on the RPMG committee, to support the coordinated delivery of the RPMS and its projects and programs.</p> <p>By 2025, the RPMG has dedicated time to partnership preservation, stakeholder engagement and the development of new partnerships, across the spectrum of pest management stakeholders in the region, including local Traditional Owner groups.</p>	<p>By 2025, the RPMG has diversified its research connections by developing new strategic collaborative partnerships with universities, national or state collaborative research organisations, societies and committees.</p> <p>By 2025, the RPMG has invested time and resources to support the delivery of collaborative research initiatives.</p>	<p>By 2025, RPMG stakeholders with the support of their respective organisations, are skilled in effective communication for community engagement in the field of pest management.</p> <p>By 2025, the RPMG has engaged the community through the delivery of strategic communications and events, and has documented community feedback to ensure continual improvements in engagement effectiveness.</p>	<p>All pest management stakeholders are committed to RPMG-led projects and to regional biosecurity programs linked to the pest management targets of Local Government Area biosecurity plans.</p> <p>All current and future planned RPMG projects apply best practice pest management principles and where identified, integrate research to support continual project improvement.</p> <p>All RPMG-led projects and programs are supported by promotional and educational resources aimed at the Burdekin Dry Tropics community.</p>

The RPMG maintains an up-to-date work plan which details the key actions to be delivered by the group. A copy of the most up-to-date work plan is available upon

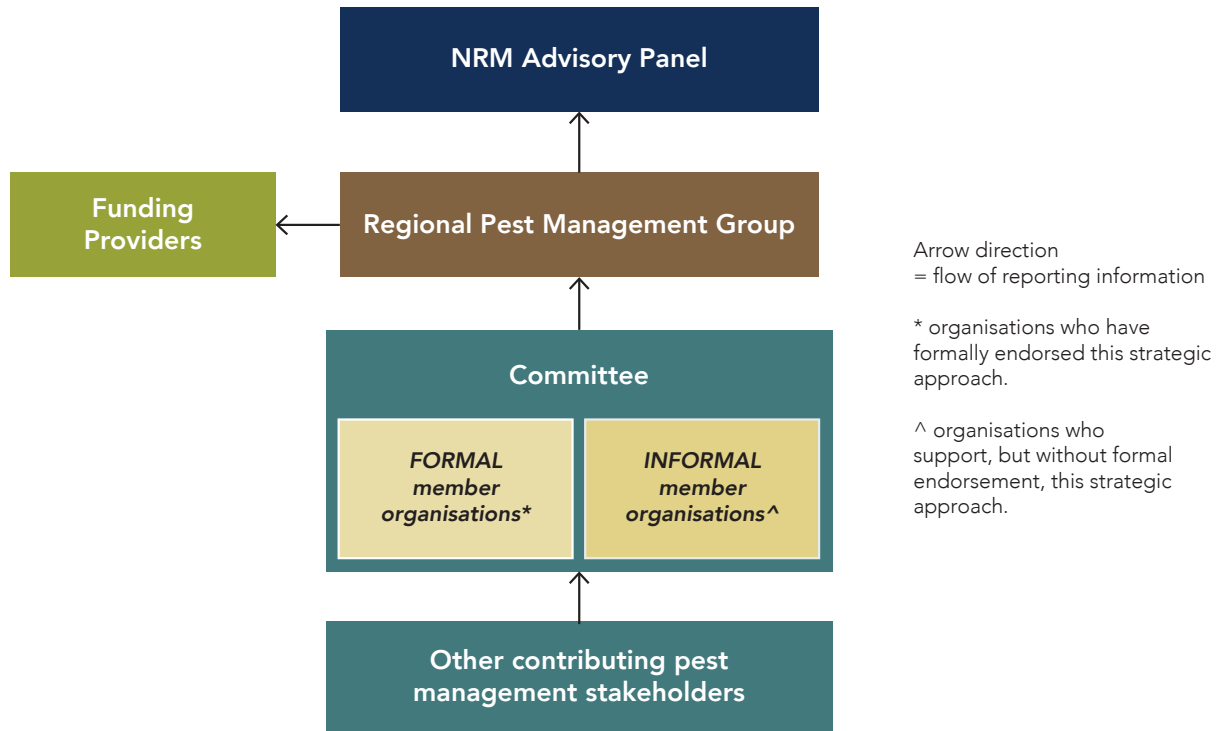
request. The work plan includes information regarding stakeholder roles and responsibilities, timeframes, and activity status.

5. Terms of Reference (ToR)

Governance and group structure

The Burdekin Dry Tropics RPMG has a shared governance structure where the authority and responsibilities are shared between governmental agencies, not-for-profits and other eligible members. The group structure consists of a committee, and stakeholder representatives from other organisations with an interest in pest management, including organisations from outside the Burdekin Dry

Tropics NRM region. The committee consists of a Chair (Biosecurity Queensland) and a secretariat (NQ Dry Tropics). The RPMG committee, on behalf of the RPMG collective, reports to a NRM Advisory Panel on the delivery progress of the RPMS. The NRM Advisory Panel exists to provide an opportunity for members of the Burdekin Dry Tropics community to participate in, assist with, and advise on the processes and activities required to deliver the regional NRM plan and associated plans.



The Chair is responsible for:

- finalising meeting agendas with the Secretary; and
- facilitating agenda items and decisions, and preserving order according to standard meeting procedures, including timing.

The Secretary is responsible for:

- scheduling meetings and distributing meeting reminders;
- performing administrative duties to ensure meeting agendas and other papers, catering and venues are confirmed;
- liaising with the Chair and committee members to address actions from previous meetings;
- preparing an update on the status of RPMG projects, activities and actions for meetings;
- ensuring meeting minutes are accurately recorded
- scheduling additional meetings if required;
- maintaining an up-to-date pest management stakeholder contact list;
- formally inviting new members or experts to attend scheduled meetings, if requested; and
- maintaining and regularly updating the RPMG workplan which details the strategic actions and progress of the group towards its objectives and goals.

Term

The term will be ongoing from the adoption of the strategy, 2020-2025. Thereafter, the group will initiate a review of the 2020-2025 RPMS and these ToR.

Membership

The core decision making function of the Burdekin Dry Tropics Regional Pest Management Group will consist of a committee of 12 member organisations.

A wide range of contributing Pest Management stakeholders from the region provides a powerful supporting function for advisory, promotion, extension, research and project delivery functions for the Regional Pest Management Strategy. A list of contributing Pest Management stakeholders, as identified by the RPMG, can be obtained by contacting the Secretary, NQ Dry Tropics.

RPMG Committee members		Other contributing Pest Management stakeholders:
Formally committed members	Informally committed members	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barcaldine Regional Council • Burdekin Shire Council • Charters Towers Regional Council • Isaac Regional Council • NQ Dry Tropics • Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council • Townsville City Council • Whitsunday Regional Council 	<p>The Queensland departments (or their equivalent) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and Fisheries • Natural Resources, Mines and Energy • Transport Main Roads • Environment and Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Landcare groups • Local Traditional Owner groups • Industry and infrastructure managers • Fringing and neighbouring Local Government organisations • All other unidentified State government departments • Neighbouring regional pest management groups

Roles and Responsibilities

THE COMMITTEE AND ITS MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- providing active leadership in the implementation of the goals and objectives of the strategy;
- maintaining focus on the agreed scope, outcomes, and benefits of the strategy;
- implementing the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) plan and annually (May–June) reviewing actions, projects and assumptions in order to adapt to changing conditions in funding and knowledge;
- compiling a written report for the NRM Advisory Panel, annually (see Appendix);
- attending scheduled group meetings and nominating a proxy in absence;
- championing the delivery of the Regional Pest Management Strategy, its annual work plan and schedule of activities by fostering successful collaborative partnerships within and outside of the organisations that are represented, including resource sharing;
- ensuring information documented in meeting minutes is accurate, and is approved by a minimum

of two (2) committee members at the next scheduled meeting;

- making timely decisions and taking appropriate actions to progress the strategy;
- maintaining confidentiality where required;
- sharing data and information relating to pest management projects within the region;
- the proper and responsible use of RPMG information and resources;
- in the event of an emergency pest management response such as the incursion of a new pest in the region, providing in-kind resources to the required organisations to ensure the risk of pest spread is prevented;
- supporting the Secretariat by submitting evidence related to pest management activities for reports and promotion materials which may be distributed to an external audience;
- develop a suite of regionally-focused pest management projects, and pursue funding to implement projects; and
- contribute to the deliver of actions in the workplan where applicable.





ALL PEST MANAGEMENT GROUP STAKEHOLDERS WILL BE:

- invited by the committee to participate and collaborate in specific projects, and other relevant activities, research or other appropriate contributions to the delivery of the RPMS;
- provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner;
- given a reasonable time to make key decisions;
- alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact projects, as they arise;
- involved in open and honest discussions, without resorting to any misleading assertions; and
- contribute to the deliver of actions in the workplan where applicable.

Decision making

Where voting is required to reach a decision, a majority vote will be used to reach a decision. A limit of one vote per respective committee member organisation is allowed. For decisions where any committee members are absent, a period of ten (10) working days will be allowed. If a decision is still not reached, the motion in question will be postponed to the next scheduled meeting. Non-member entities who may be present during decision making, do not have voting rights. Non-member entity concerns will however be considered by

the committee at the time of voting.

Meeting schedule and functions

There will be four (4) meetings per calendar year. Meetings may be postponed up to four weeks from the date initially set before cancellation must occur, with agenda items carrying over to the next meeting.

There will be a standing list of agenda items at each meeting, which may include opportunities for technical exchange, exposure to new pest issues and research, and specific guest presentations. A guide to the focus of each meeting is provided on the basis of supporting member organisations in aligning organisational activities to those related to the RPMG and RPMS.

Meeting locations will be rotated between Townsville, Bowen, Charters Towers, Ayr and Alpha or Moranbah. The date and location of meetings will be determined at the close of each meeting.



6. Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI)

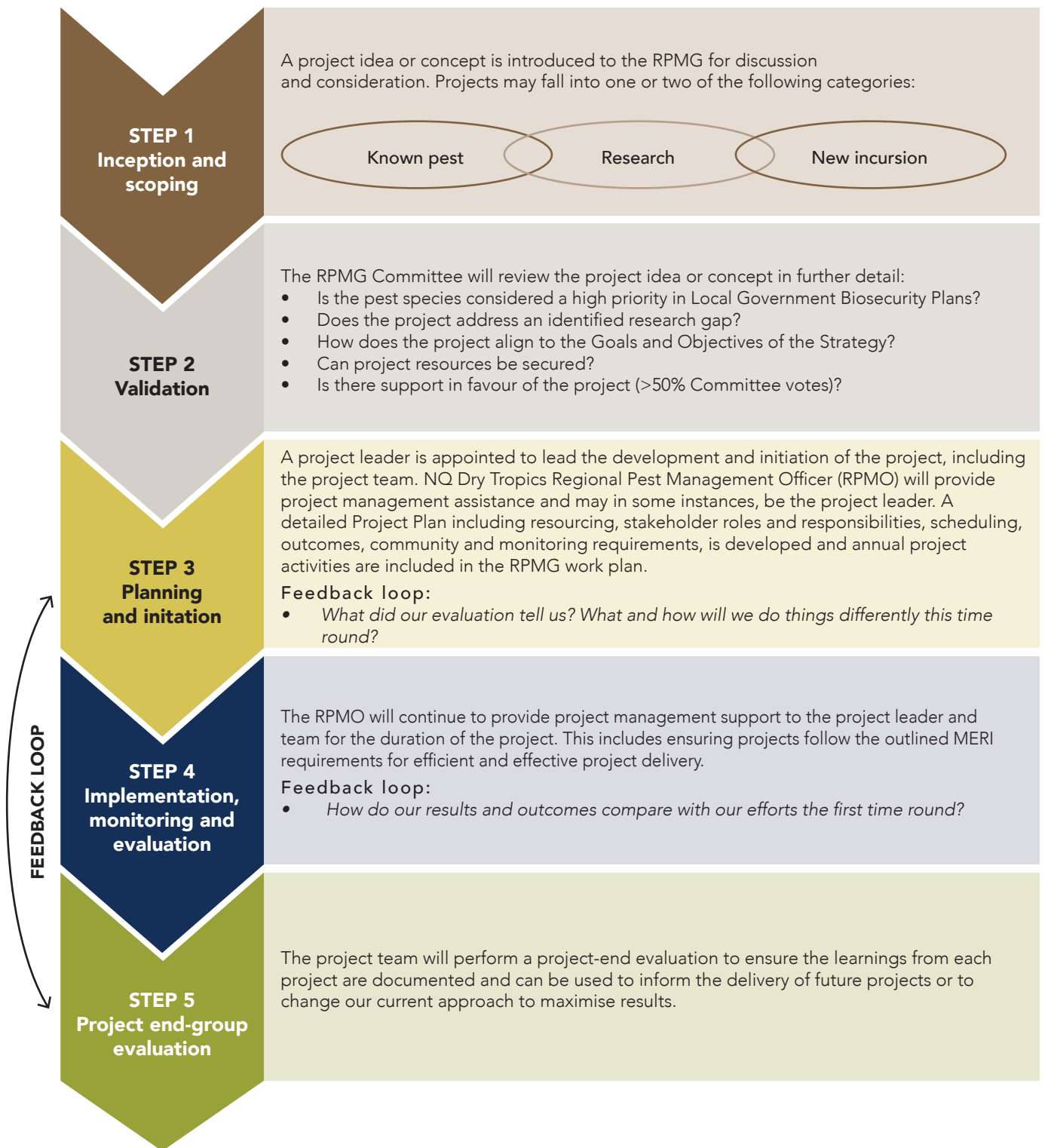
The MERI plan for the Regional Pest Management Strategic Approach provides an opportunity for the Regional Pest Management Group to implement approaches to help monitor progress, maintain accountability of achievements, and support an adaptive management approach. The MERI plan also helps the RPMG identify risks and share achievements and lessons learned with itself and the broader community.

The MERI plan includes details on milestones, indicators and data collection. A series of key-evaluation questions (KEQs) will help to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the RPMG in implementing the strategy. A copy of the MERI plan can be requested by contacting the Secretary (NQ Dry Tropics).

MONITORING	EVALUATION	REPORTING	IMPROVEMENT
We will set indicators and tolerances, and collect data and information to measure our progress and success.	We will analyse our data and information, assess what it means and make informed judgements of the success and progress of our work, and what improvements can be made.	We will communicate what we have found out through our monitoring and evaluation, with each other and with the broader community. This includes our achievements and lessons learned.	We will learn and implement change where necessary to improve the way we do things.

7. Project Prioritisation

The RPMG uses the following decision based framework:



The RPMG recognises that pest management is a dynamic field and that the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region is constantly under threat from new pest incursions. Consequently, the RPMG acknowledges the need to:

- maintain up-to-date knowledge on pest species distribution;
- adaptively manage its approach and projects in response to project learnings and funding changes; and

- proactively respond to new pest incursions.
- For details on the current projects and program priorities, please contact NQ Dry Tropics as the Secretary of the Regional Pest Management Group.



GET IN TOUCH

We have offices in Townsville and Bowen. To find out more about how you can work with us, please get in touch on: (07) 4799 3500

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