

**Eva Abal**

*SEQ Healthy Waterways Partnership*

**Healthy Waterways-Healthy Catchments: A special partnership to secure the future of coasts, waterways and catchments in South East Queensland**

The coasts and waterways of South East Queensland, Australia, represent unique and complex ecosystems that have a high conservation value, support major recreational activities and contribute significantly to the region's economy. However, the human footprint has led to significant changes in catchment hydrology and sediment delivery, declining water quality and loss of aquatic biodiversity. Predicted population increases in the region are likely to further impact on the ecological and economic health of its waterways and catchments. This growing urban population, industry and agricultural activities are heavily reliant on good quality water supplies. The South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Partnership (HWP), a whole-of-government, whole-of-community approach to understanding and managing the region's waterways, focuses on the implementation of management actions by assisting partners to prioritise their investments and address emerging issues. The HWP provides an oversight of a regional work program that includes monitoring, reporting, marketing and communication, development of decision support tools, research that is directed to problem solving, and maintaining extensive consultative and engagement arrangements. The Partnership framework illustrates a unique integrated approach to water management whereby scientific research, development of decision support tools, community participation, and strategy development are done in parallel with each other to achieve the Healthy Waterways vision. This paper provides an overview of some of the key factors that have contributed to the success of the approach.