

Workshop: Coastal algal blooms – management challenges

Tuesday, 18th September

1.25pm – 1.55pm

Main Hall, Anglican Church

Facilitator: Dr Nikki Moore, Southern Region Planning, Environmental Protection Agency

Background

Coastal algal blooms can occur in marine and/or estuarine waters. Awareness of coastal algal blooms and their impacts has increased in Queensland following a decade of seasonal *Lyngbya* blooms in Moreton Bay. Coastal algae are also protected marine plants that have a role and value in aquatic ecosystems. Good judgement is required in determining when algal growth becomes a bloom and when the potential impacts of a bloom warrant the cost and potential impacts of a contingency response.

A range of tools have now been put in place to assist in responding to coastal algal blooms, including:

- The *Queensland Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Action Plan*;
- The *Healthy Waterways Strategy* for SEQ including Coastal Algal Bloom Action Plan and updated *Lyngbya Management Strategy*;
- *Guidelines for Contingency Response to Coastal Algal Blooms 2006*;
- The *SEQ Regional Coastal Management Plan 2006* including policy 2.4.7 Algal blooms.

Discussion

Some of the issues that will be discussed include:

How can we effectively monitor coastal algal blooms? Issues to overcome include defining when a growth becomes a bloom, and when the impacts of a bloom are at a location other than where the algae originally grows. When and where is it necessary and/or cost-effective to implement a contingency response to a bloom?

What balance should be sought between managing contingency response to the impacts of a bloom in comparison to strategically managing the (suspected/known) causes of a bloom?

How can land use planning assist with managing coastal algal blooms? What tools need to be provided to make this effective? Roles of:

- Regional plans, coastal management plans, planning schemes; and
- Development assessment and supporting tools; and
- Other?

How can we better protect aquatic ecosystems from the impacts of coastal algal blooms (eg; seagrass and other marine plants, benthic species, marine turtles and dugong)?

<p>What was discussed (please list the main dot points such as identified issues or threats)</p>	<p>When is algae a bloom? When does it need management? Is it when it lands on beach and requires clean up / professional fishermen can't fish?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolution needed to move on • Agreed process / document events, bloom itself, anecdotal so we know more to help solve problem • Toxins issue – handling processes to be addressed • Filmed bathymetry in good visual may be able to compare changes as blooms occur. Resourcing required. • Regionally a similar monitoring exercise may be beneficial (money?) • Controlling nutrients and blooms go hand in hand. Limit the run off / nitrogen fixation an issue. Regarded as the way forward. More research required for cyno bacteria growth. • Where, what are the sources. • Underlying need to know why? Do we start controlling how and stop the resource (sediment)/STP's • How long do we monitor? 	
<p>Suggested follow-up actions</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>Who will undertake this action?</p>
<p>1.</p>	<p>Catchment based tools to assist OA. Agency comments need to be considered.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Sufficient data to know that we have to limit additional nutrients in estuary, marine systems.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Stop nutrient coming out of catchment.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Effective means to do something about diffuse sources as against point sources. Note NSW has diffuse source policy.</p>	