



## Collaboration to the Rescue Phase 2

**Mr John Gunn<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Biography:**

*John is a multi-skilled catchment manager with nearly 30 years experience in landcare and natural resource management. He is the main author of the Townsville Water Quality Improvement Plan and has played a key role in progressing urban catchment and water management in Central and North Queensland.*

### **Abstract:**

The Reef Urban Stormwater Management Improvement Group (RUSMIG) came together in Townsville in 2009 partly as a response to the impending release of the State Planning Policy (SPP) Healthy Waters. At the broader Great Barrier Reef catchment level water quality improvement plans (WQIPs) were prepared between 2002 and 2010. Implementation funding for WQIPs was provided under the Reef Rescue program from 2008 until 2013 focusing exclusively on changing agricultural management practices to improve Reef water quality. Urban land use was excluded as a 'low priority'. In 2013 RUSMIG successfully secured Reef Rescue 'urban' funding, in collaboration with Water by Design (Healthy Waterways) and Townsville City Council's Creek to Coral healthy waters initiative, for implementation of a project titled "Collaboration to the Rescue: Better Reef water quality through smart urban water management".

This is an update to the short story presented at the conference in Adelaide at Stormwater 2014 [3rd National Conference on Urban Water Management, 13-17 October 2014] and a look at how RUSMIG and Healthy Waterways have evolved, changed and adapted over the last four and a half years since the end of the Collaboration to the Rescue project. This includes; responding to policy, legislation and governance changes e.g. Reef 2050 LTSP, input to the Reef Scientific Consensus Statement and Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP), production of Living Waterways v2.0, a draft urban catchment and water management framework for reporting and improvement, and implementation of a four year collaborative urban stormwater management and capacity building project being delivered by Healthy Land and Water and RUSMG [not a spelling mistake rather an acronym change] with funding from the Queensland Department of Environment and Science.