



Blue Heart

SUNSHINE COAST



Blue Carbon – Factsheet

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Blue Carbon?

Blue carbon is carbon stored in marine and coastal ecosystems, such as seagrasses, tidal marshes and mangroves. It includes carbon that is stored in the bodies of plants and animals as well as carbon in debris and soil.

Why is the Blue Heart a suitable location for blue carbon projects?

The Blue Heart is located in the heart of the Maroochy River floodplain. Coastal wetlands that once covered the Blue Heart area have mostly been cleared and drained. This means it currently contains much less carbon than it could. Restoring native vegetation to the wetlands in the Blue Heart will increase carbon storage. This could secure carbon credits. As the wetlands in the Blue Heart are coastal and under tidal influence, the carbon they store will be blue carbon.

Blue carbon projects can provide many other benefits to the Blue Heart and the broader Sunshine Coast region. The lower Maroochy River floodplain in the Blue Heart acts as a critical flood storage area for the lower Maroochy catchment. Its flood storage capacity will be vital as sea levels rise.

This will:

- reduce the need for costly infrastructure such as walls and dykes
- help to manage risks from storm surge and flooding.

Wetland restoration will improve the flood storage capacity of the floodplain allowing more water to be held for longer. This may also improve water quality. Wetlands also provide habitat for wildlife such as fish and birds. In turn, this supports recreational activities like fishing and bird watching. This is key to the natural values and sustainable lifestyles the Sunshine Coast is renowned for.

How might landholders take advantage of this opportunity under the Land Restoration Fund (LRF)?

The LRF aims to expand carbon farming in Queensland by supporting land-sector projects that deliver additional environment, social and economic co-benefits.

Projects in areas like the Blue Heart are likely to be recognised as premium projects because they help deliver:

- carbon sequestration
- benefits to biodiversity
- flood mitigation and climate resilience

- improvements to water quality
- local economic opportunities (e.g. cultural, tourism and recreation).

Participation in carbon farming is voluntary. The LRF may offer an income that complements other land-uses.

The Blue Heart does not change the existing tenure of land. Landholders within the Blue Heart can continue to use their land for activities that meet the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014. However, future conditions, including flooding and increasing tidal inundation, may impact the viability of these activities.

The LRF may be an opportunity for landholders to respond to changes within this transitioning landscape, like seawater inundation and our changing climate.

How much is the government investing and how is it being rolled out?

The LRF is a \$500 million investment by the Queensland Government. In 2020, the Queensland Government is investing up to \$100 million for carbon farming projects with co-benefits that meet one or more of the three priority areas identified by the [Priority Investment Plan](#).

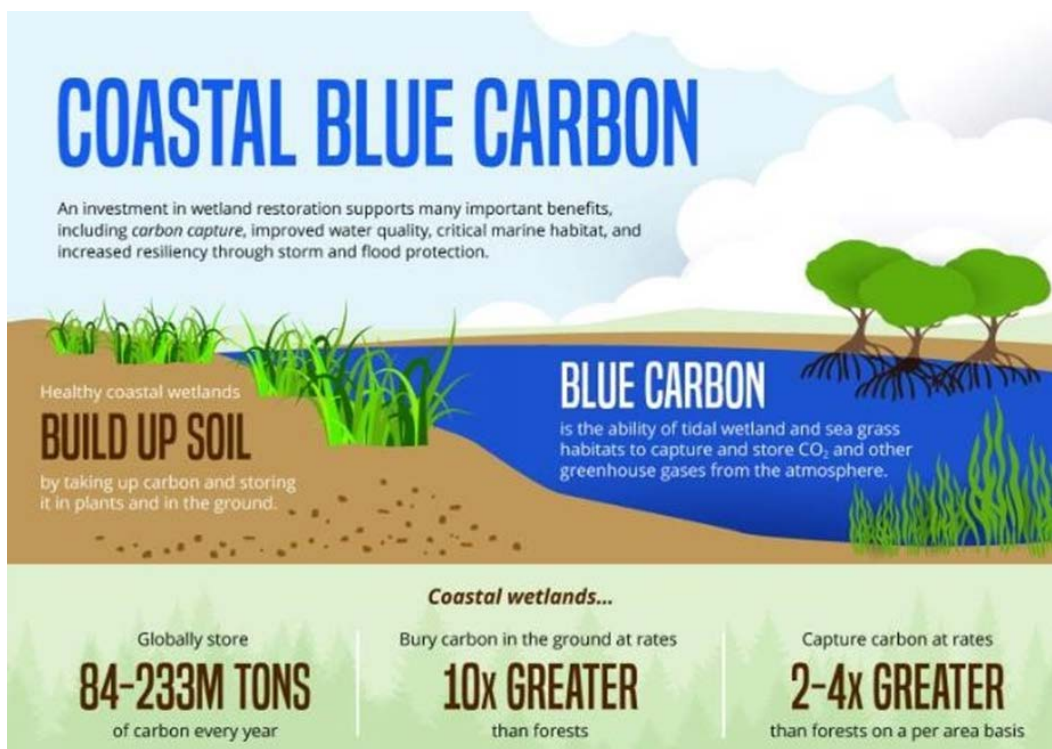
What is the economic forecast for blue carbon opportunities in QLD?

Queenslanders have already secured more than \$800 million in contracts to deliver carbon credits through the Commonwealth's Emissions Reduction Fund. Opportunities such as blue carbon have the potential to contribute up to \$8 billion in revenue to Queenslanders by 2030. The LRF is working with the Commonwealth to expand the range of blue carbon activities eligible to earn carbon credits.

The LRF is also working with researchers and industry professionals on an inventory of blue carbon stocks across Queensland. The Blue Heart will play an important role in achieving blue carbon benefits for Queenslanders.

Future application intakes and funding rounds will be announced on the LRF [website](#) and via the [Land Restoration Fund newsletter](#).

To stay updated on Blue Heart Sunshine Coast's progress visit council's website www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au or email BlueHeart@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.



Source: <https://www.earthcorps.org/our-story/key-initiatives/blue-carbon/>