

O'Connell River Catchment

Catchment Information

Description

Area (km ²)	2387
% Gauged	30
Mean Discharge Yr (km ³)	1.5
Rainfall (mm)	1469
Runoff (mm/m ²)	645
Runoff/Rainfall Ratio	44

Land Use

Population	5082
Clearing (km ²)	1214
% Cleared	51
Area under Grazing (km ²)	1904
Area under Sugar (km ²)	264
Area under Horticulture (km ²)	<1

Pesticide Application

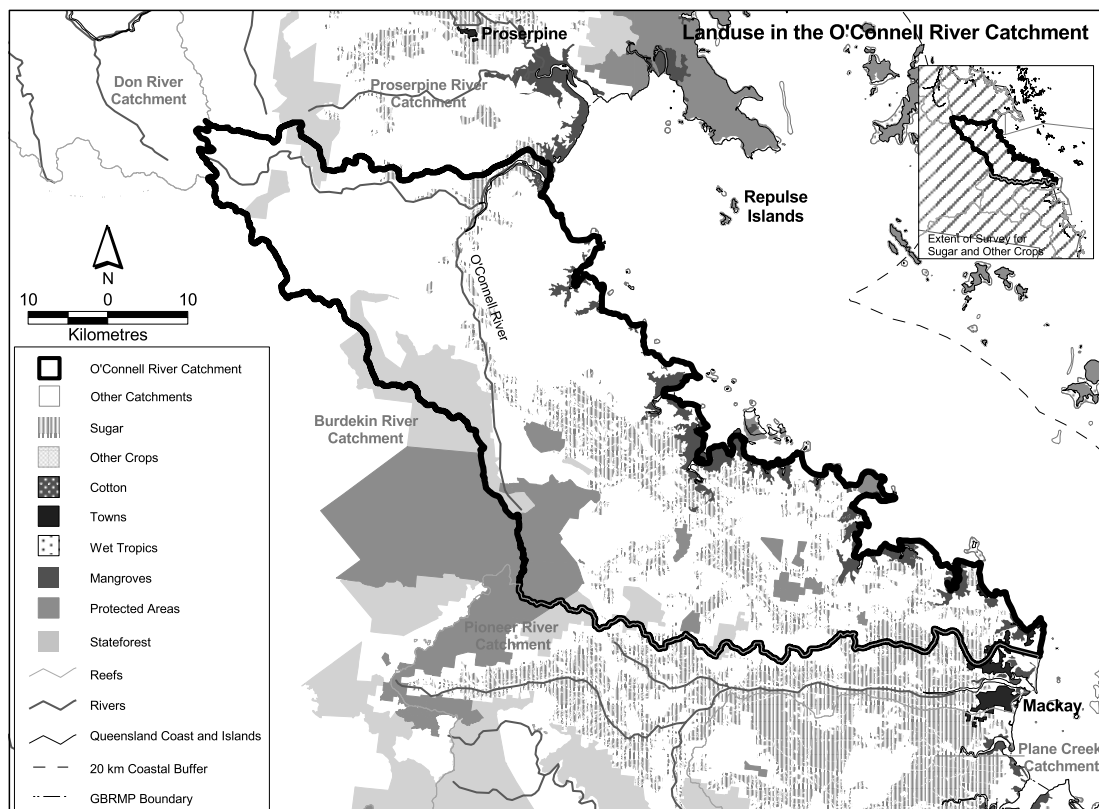
(Kg Active Ingredient/Yr)

Atrazine	25508
Diuron	23896
2-4D	8413
Chlorpyrifos	2024
MEMC	96

Catchment Targets

	1850 T/yr	Current T/yr	Current T/ km ³	ratio	2011 % Red'n	2011 T/yr Target	2011 T/ km ³ Target
Sediment Export	8000	366309	237662	45.8	50	183115	118831
Total N Export	375	1666	1082	4.4	50	833	541
Total P Export	19	365	237	19.2	50	183	119

Data Confidence Index = 1



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The O'Connell River Catchment covers an area of 2387 km². Grazing is the dominant land use occupying approximately 1904 km². Other land uses include 264 km² of sugarcane, predominantly on the river flats. State forest and timber reserves occupy 188 km² and protected areas cover 148 km². Sediment, total phosphorus and total nitrogen export are classified as high risk in the O'Connell River catchment.

Issues in the catchment:

- Severe erosion has occurred on the river banks along the O'Connell River.
- Cultivated agriculture is dominated by the sugar industry.
- High contribution of nutrient (particularly nitrates) and pesticides.
- Approximately 50% of the catchment has been cleared mostly for grazing
- Approximately 6% of the catchment is within protected areas.
- Proximity to inshore reefal areas.
- Commercial and recreational fishery.
- Marine tourism.
- Proximity to seagrass beds and dugong protection area.

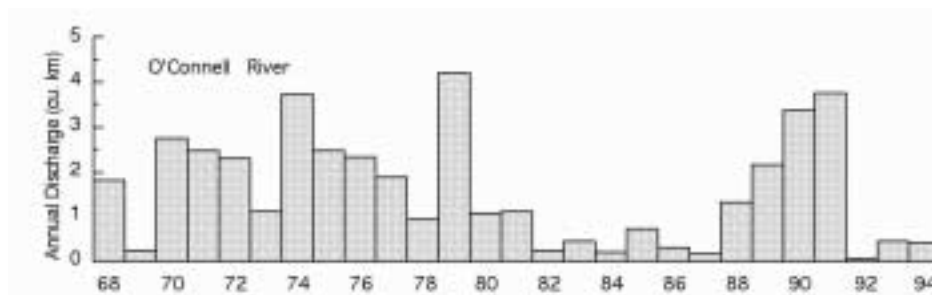


Figure 22. Water discharge patterns in the O'Connell River