

# Queensland Crocodile Management Plan

## Information sheet



The Queensland Government is committed to a crocodile management program that delivers appropriate protection of public safety while enabling the ongoing survival of crocodiles in the wild.

The purpose of the new Queensland Crocodile Management Plan is to introduce a consistent approach to crocodile management throughout Queensland. The plan maintains and consolidates the approach of managing crocodiles according to defined crocodile management zones and does not alter existing practises of removing problem crocodiles.

One of the benefits of the Queensland Crocodile Management Plan is that it provides greater information on the risks posed by crocodiles in each zone, how crocodiles are intended to be managed by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) in each zone, and the key behaviours community members can practise to minimise the risk of crocodile attacks within each zone.

## What are the changes to the previous Queensland Crocodile Management plan?

- The Queensland Crocodile Management Plan is replacing the current mix of four crocodile management plans—covering the local government areas of Douglas/Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Hinchinbrook and Townsville—as well as three Crocodile Urban Management areas in Mackay, Rockhampton and Gladstone and other arrangements across the state.
- There are now six zones (A to F) which apply throughout Queensland.
- There will be no relaxation of the current system of proactive removals under the new plan.
- While no changes have been made to the criteria for removing a crocodile, the new plan better explains the risks posed by crocodiles in each zone and how both crocodile removal and Crocwise behaviours can help to minimise those risks.

## Why are these changes necessary?

- We want people in Croc Country to be aware of the different levels of risk so they can make informed decisions, for example, when considering entering the water. It is not possible, nor the intent of management, to make the zones free of crocodiles, but by explaining the different levels of risk to the public, we hope to reduce the likelihood of a crocodile attack.
- The plan also provides a consistent state-wide approach that replaces a patchwork of plans and arrangements to make it simpler for everyone to understand how the public safety risks associated with crocodiles are managed.

## What are the new zones?

### Zone A

#### **Barrier and removal zone (previously zone 1)**

A 'barrier and removal zone' is suited to areas where there are physical barriers that are generally effective in preventing crocodiles from entering the area. This applies, for example, to Aplins Weir in Townsville in the dry season. Any crocodile in this area is targeted for removal, regardless of size or behaviour.

### Zone B

#### **Active removal zone (previously Proactive zone 2)**

An 'active removal zone' is suited to areas of rivers, creeks and wetlands where crocodiles are frequently in close proximity to large urban populations. All crocodiles, regardless of size or behaviour are targeted for removal.

### Zone C

#### **Targeted management zone (previously zone 2: inland waters or 'urban zone' under Crocodile Urban Management Area framework)**

A 'targeted management zone' is suited to areas that are frequented by large numbers of people, due to being near an urban centre or popular swimming areas, and are also frequented by crocodiles. Crocodiles 2 metres or greater in length and crocodiles displaying dangerous behaviour are targeted for removal.

### Zone D

#### **Targeted beach management zone (previously zone 2: open water and beaches)**

A 'targeted beach management zone' is suited to areas where crocodiles are often seen passing through but are not core habitat, such as beaches. Crocodiles 2 metres or greater in length and any crocodiles displaying dangerous behaviour are targeted for removal. Note that it is generally very difficult to remove crocodiles from open water.

### Zone E

#### **General management zone (previously zone 3)**

A 'general management zone' is suited to areas that are typical habitat for crocodiles but are not near a large urban centre, as well as other areas with varied crocodile numbers that are not otherwise zoned. Essentially, this zone covers the remainder of Croc Country which is defined as the area north of the Boyne River, near Gladstone. Crocodiles displaying dangerous behaviour are targeted for removal.

### Zone F

#### **Atypical habitat zone**

An 'atypical habitat zone' is suited to areas that are not typical habitat for crocodiles – e.g. beyond their typical extent. Areas in this zone include waterways south of the Boyne River. Any crocodile found in Zone F is automatically targeted for removal after a sighting has been confirmed, regardless of size or behaviour. This includes crocodiles in the Mary River.

## Do the zoning maps change?

The zoning maps and management arrangements for each local government area remain largely unchanged. Initially only two minor changes were made as a result of consultation with local governments. These changes include:

- One new small zone C area has been added in southern Cairns for the Ross and Lock Reserve on the Mulgrave River upstream of Gordonvale.
- A 2km expansion of zone C covering the Tully River, to better reflect the use of the river for commercial recreation activities.

Local government area maps with the new A-F zones are available.

After the release of the plan further consultation with local councils resulted in changes to zones in Douglas and Mareeba Shire Council areas. These changes include:

- Creation of new Zone C areas in three freshwater creeks and a suburban lake in Douglas Shire and at the boat ramp at the mouth of the Mossman River.
- Creation of a zone D at Four Mile Beach at Port Douglas.
- Creation of a new zone F at Two Mile Creek near Bibbohra in Mareeba Shire following some recent sightings of crocodiles outside of typical crocodile habitat.

## Why is this important?

The plan responds to the public's support for a balanced approach between crocodile conservation and public safety by setting out how the Queensland Government will manage crocodiles, including removal in certain circumstances, in accordance with the level of risk posed across different areas of the state. The plan also highlights the key safety messages that everyone needs to keep in mind when in Croc Country

## Crocodile population survey

The department has identified a need to review information concerning the size and distribution of the crocodile population in Queensland and the implications of removing crocodiles along the populated east coast of Queensland.

To provide updated and accurate scientific data, EHP's comprehensive surveying program now covers rivers and estuaries from the Gulf through Cape York and down to Gladstone on the east coast.

It will provide a cornerstone of ongoing crocodile management in Queensland.

Survey work will be undertaken over a three to five year period and will be guided by advice from some of the leading crocodile scientists in the world.

The Queensland Government's ongoing approach to crocodile management therefore will be built on state-of-the-art scientific monitoring and survey work, an evidence-based crocodile policy and management framework, a well-equipped, trained team of wildlife officers, and community consultation and input.

### For further information

Report crocodile sightings in Queensland to 1300 130 372.

Further information on crocodiles can be found at [www.ehp.qld.gov.au](http://www.ehp.qld.gov.au)