

Community Based Groundwater Monitoring

An initiative of the-
Groundwater Investigation Group
and **SEQ Catchments Ltd** (previously Natural Resource Management SEQ Inc)

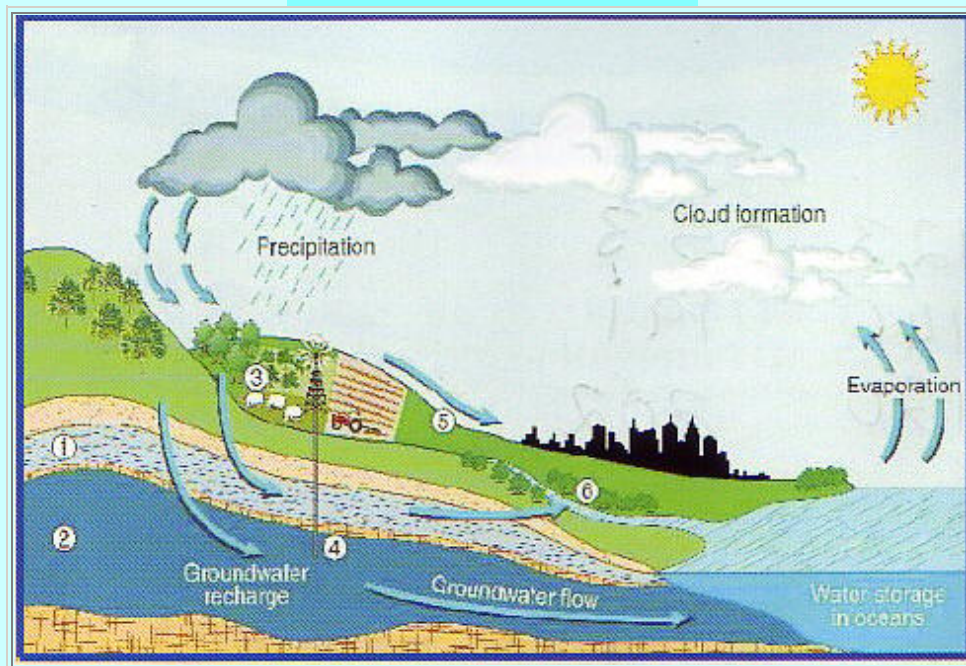
The **Groundwater-investigation Group** (GIG) and **SEQ Catchments** have implemented a programme to establish community-based groundwater monitoring in the Sunshine Coast region, based on a model initially trialled by Maroochy Waterwatch Inc. during 2002/3. The GIG are seeking public interest and participation in this project.

Groundwater - Who needs it ?

"Because groundwater is a hidden resource, both its purity and availability are often taken for granted"
CSIRO Land and Water.

Water, or lack of it, is a major issue these days. Did you know that globally, groundwater makes up 97% of the worlds available fresh water? Groundwater is also a natural part of the water cycle, playing an environmentally important role in:

Water storage;
Water purification;
Maintenance of Wetland Ecosystems
Low-flow in surface streams.



- (1) Unconfined aquifer (2) Confined aquifer (3) Groundwater use
(4) Groundwater extraction (5) Surface water run off (6) Riparian zone

Recent natural resource management plans in SEQ Catchments and Burnett-Mary regions have identified a lack of groundwater monitoring data and poor knowledge of the relationship between surface water and groundwater. As a community we know very little about our groundwater resources and we need to learn more about them. In an effort to meet this need, SEQ Catchments has helped the establishment of a Groundwater Investigation Group (GIG) on the Sunshine Coast to develop a framework for Community Based Groundwater Monitoring that can be replicated to other areas.

Why community ?

Community based monitoring of surface streams has been very successful both in our region and nationally.

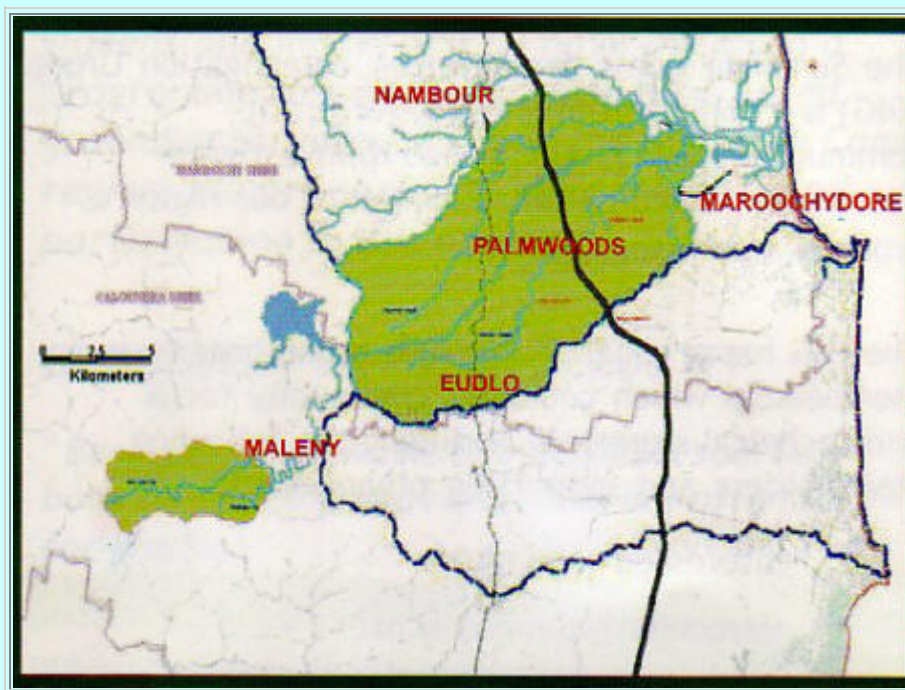
Maroochy Waterwatch Inc. has coordinated community monitoring of surface streams throughout the Maroochy Catchment for over 10 years, and has already successfully trialled groundwater monitoring in the Eudlo , Paynter Creek areas.

Supporting the community to monitor their own groundwater resource not only taps into a wealth of local knowledge and enthusiasm, but also allows the community to be more aware and involved in the management of their own natural resources.

Where ?

The GIG project has continued and expanded the groundwater monitoring previously carried out by Maroochy Waterwatch Inc. in the Eudlo and Paynter Creek sub-catchment of the Maroochy Catchment, and has started up a new monitoring network in the Obi Obi catchment near Maleny in conjunction with local community there.

The monitoring relies on access to private bores voluntarily made available by landholders interested in the project.



How?

Community based monitoring involves the regular collection of groundwater depth information by interested landowners and community members.

An experienced coordinator will provide help and instruction in the use of very simple equipment, and will also assist with distribution of equipment around the networks.

Groundwater depth response to rainfall events will be measured when possible, and groundwater sampling will be carried out for groundwater quality determination.

Who are we?

The Sunshine Coast Groundwater Investigation Group (GIG) is a non-government, not-for-profit community-based group formed to investigate the condition, and natural function of our region's groundwater resources.

The GIG has a collaborative and broad-based membership which combines community focus and technical expertise, including the following stakeholders and supporting organisations:

- ★ Interested Individuals
- ★ Maroochy Waterwatch Inc.
- ★ Barung Landcare Assn Inc
- ★ Lake Baroon Catchment Care Group
- ★ Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee
- ★ Eudlo & Ilkley District Community Assn Inc.
- ★ Maleny District Greenhills Fund
- ★ SEQ Catchments Ltd
- ★ Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resources Management Inc.
- ★ Queensland Dept of Natural Resources & Mines
- ★ Universities
- ★ Caloundra City
- ★ Water providers, including Aquagen and Cooroy Mountain Spring Water

The project is currently funded by SEQ Catchments and the BMRG who have recently provided further funding for detailed groundwater quality testing in the Maleny area.

SEQ Catchments and BMRG are peak coordinating organisations for natural resource management, working with community, industry and local government towards a healthy sustainable future in the South East Queensland and Burnett Mary regions respectively.

Community Involvement

The GIG is seeking community participation in this project by individuals or landholders in the Maleny and Eudlo/Paynter Creek areas, who are interested in making their private bores available for monitoring and / or who may be interested in becoming involved in the monitoring networks and investigation of our groundwater resources.

***For further information or enquiries about the project-
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