



CASE

STUDY



Australian Government

“ I HAVE A STRONG INTEREST IN GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT, SOIL HEALTH AND LOOKING AT MORE CONTROLLED, INTENSIVE STOCK ROTATION. ”

BACKGROUND

Bob Harris owns Glencoe Station, a 2,400 ha cattle grazing property just south of Bowen. Glencoe runs parallel to the coast and consists of Eucalypt hills and ranges, alluvial flats and plains and coastal sand dunes. Bob purchased Glencoe in 2000 and runs 700 head of mixed cattle which meet local abattoir and live trade markets. The property is situated in the drier part of the Mackay Whitsundays region. Pasture on Glencoe consists of mainly native grasses, with the addition of stylos to increase soil nitrogen levels and forage protein levels.

BOB HARRIS is a grazier on Glencoe Station, a 2,400 ha cattle grazing property just south of Bowen. Through Australian Government Reef Programme 2013-16 Water Quality Grants, Reef Catchments is working with Bob to fund on-ground activities to improve water quality and land management.



FOCUS ON

- ▶ LAND TYPE FENCING AND WATERING POINTS
- ▶ RIPARIAN FENCING AND OFF-STREAM WATERING POINTS
- ▶ WOODY WEED REMOVAL AND PASTURE SEEDING
- ▶ HOLISTIC GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Bob has been an active participant in Reef Catchment programmes over the last few years and is a member of the Reef Catchments Regional Grazing Working Group, which focuses on promoting Best Management Practice to the local industry. Australian Government Reef Programme (formerly Reef Rescue) funding has assisted Bob in completing a number of projects which have resulted in improved water quality outcomes as well as boosting his farm's productivity.

In 2012 Bob received funding assistance through Reef Catchments to control Prickly Acacia and Chinee Apple over 80 hectares. This work included removal of the woody weeds and seeding of the area with pasture grasses to ensure ground cover and reduced erosion. Funding assistance was also provided to help Bob complete 4 km of land type fencing, install 3 land type watering points, erect 3 km of riparian fencing and install 1 off stream watering point. Bob also completed a Stocktake course to better monitor and manage pasture and land condition.

During 2014 Reef Catchments provided co-funding to help Bob install 6.2 km of land type fencing and 5 land type watering points. Sloping country was fenced off from the flats and plains to enable better stock rotation and more even grazing of pasture. The land type fencing and watering points helped prevent stock overgrazing favoured areas and reduce soil erosion by maintaining greater ground cover. Since installing the land type fencing, Bob has noted a marked improvement in pasture cover in previously overgrazed areas and better utilisation of pastures on slopes. 1.1 km of riparian fencing and an off-stream watering point were also co-funded to control stock access to a series of gullies. The control of stock access to the gullies means less erosion of banks, restoration of vegetative cover and better water quality outcomes.

In addition to work completed in partnership with Reef Catchments, Bob has installed at his own cost

SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT IS PROVIDED BY REEF CATCHMENTS, THROUGH FUNDING FROM AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REEF PROGRAMME WATER QUALITY GRANTS.

a further 23 km of mainly land type fencing. He has recently achieved Grazing Best Management Practice accreditation and has a particular passion for Grazing Holistic Management.

Bob said one of the most important benefits of working in partnership with Reef Catchments to trial new activities was that it provided the **IMPETUS, SUPPORT AND TOOLS NEEDED TO GET THINGS GOING.**

"Reef Catchment projects are an encouragement to foster change in farming practices. Furthermore, past projects serve as an example of improved practices and encourage wider change in others," he said.

"What Reef Programme does is really give you that leg up to get you started. I believe every farmer has their 'one day' – I'm going to do this, and I want to do that. But you need a catalyst and that's what Reef Catchments has helped do, to get things started. All up, we've put in 37 km of fencing and 22 water points. Reef Catchments hasn't been involved with all of that, but it gives you the motivation you need to get going."

Bob has attended workshops and field days focused on holistic grassland management, and moving forward is very interested in implementing methods under the Rodger Savory Grassland Management principles, with a strong emphasis on improving soil health for environmental and financial prosperity.

"The concept really comes back to soil

KEY POINTS



- ▶ 2,400 ha grazing property
- WORKS COMPLETED INCLUDE:**
- ▶ 10.2 km of land type fencing
- ▶ 8 land type watering points
- ▶ Sloping country fenced off from the flats and plains to enable better stock rotation and more even pasture grazing
- ▶ Control of Prickly Acacia and Chinee Apple over 80 hectares
- ▶ Seeding of the property with pasture grasses
- ▶ 4.1 km of riparian fencing and 2 off-stream watering points
- ▶ Grazing BMP accreditation
- ▶ Member of the Reef Catchments Regional Grazing Working Group

health. The people who are interested in grassland management are trying to improve the life in their soil from stock activity and managed rotation to get the nutrients back in their land. If you've got that in order, you'll get your grasses in order and the land looks after your cattle," Bob said.

To achieve this, Bob will continue to utilise fencing to more tightly control the movement of cattle, dividing the property into segments and enabling longer rest periods between grazing events.

