

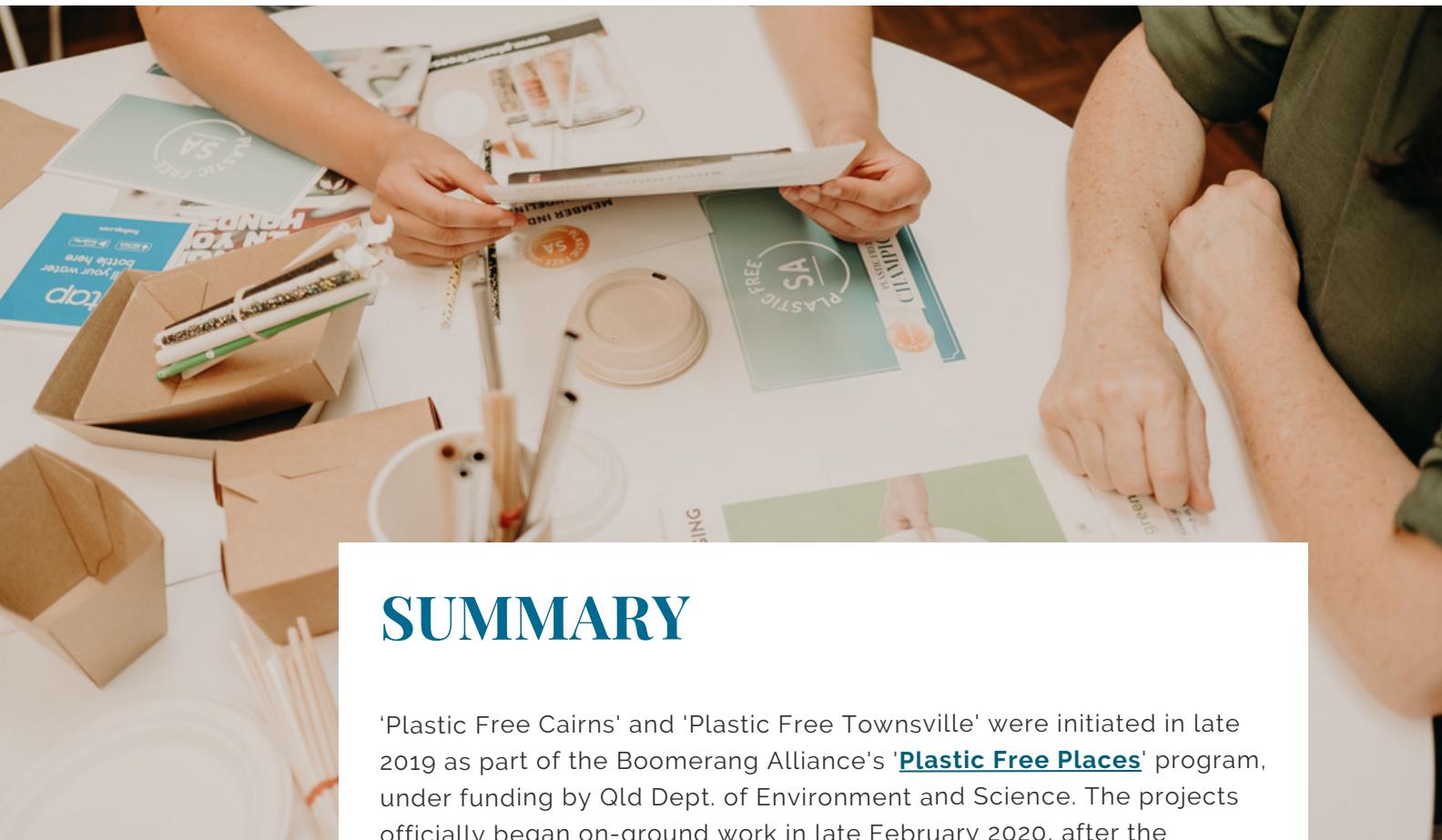


# PROGRESS REPORT AUGUST 2020



**BOOMERANG**  
ALLIANCE

This project has received  
funding support from the  
Queensland Government.  

## SUMMARY

'Plastic Free Cairns' and 'Plastic Free Townsville' were initiated in late 2019 as part of the Boomerang Alliance's '[Plastic Free Places](#)' program, under funding by Qld Dept. of Environment and Science. The projects officially began on-ground work in late February 2020, after the employment and training of two part-time project coordinators.

Both projects started working on-ground with businesses in early March, however rollout was immediately affected by the COVID lockdown, limiting business participation.

During lockdown, we focussed on building networks and partnerships, spreading the word throughout the community, and providing businesses with advice on alternatives during COVID, which were well received and shared on social media.

Both projects have quickly become established, with strong networks and community support.

Since cafés reopening, we have had encouraging success with businesses signing up and switching practices, particularly in Cairns where a strong Council partnership and a progressive community history in the plastic-free space has been an influencing factor.

The Plastic Free Places program continues to receive growing interest from many communities and governments nationally.

## FOOD RETAIL SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

As part of the program, members receive personalised inductions covering practical solutions in eliminating single-use plastic and reducing waste, plus follow-up with extra help, advice and problem solving.

The engagement has been received very positively and is acting as a catalyst for members to not only switch away from single-use plastic, but to think about waste reduction more broadly.

While progress was limited by lockdowns, we have had encouraging success since cafés reopening, with businesses signing up keen to switch. Public sentiment against plastic remains strong, helping to drive this forward.

### Outcomes:

At the end of August 2020, we had 43 members in Cairns and 15 in Townsville.

The program has been well received and is acting as a catalyst for members to not only switch away from single-use plastics, but also save costs by reducing their need for unnecessary packaging.

The first Plastic Free Cairns Champion cafes have been encouraging other food retailers to join, and a number of members are planning on becoming Champions by eliminating their remaining items.



# QUANTIFYING IMPACT

KPI's for the program are the number of businesses who sign up as a member, and the amount of identified plastic items removed from use by our members (through ordering data).

When an item is eliminated, we can calculate average ordering quantities per month of each eliminated item from the data provided. This system allows for robust data reporting.

## CAIRNS

**KPI's - 1 Mar 2020 2019 - 31 Aug 2020 (6 MONTHS)**

 43 Business members	 2 Plastic Free Champions*	 13,600 Pieces of plastic eliminated	 15 Business members	 4 Plastic Free Champions*	 68,056 Pieces of plastic eliminated
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\*Plastic Free Champions are members that have eliminated all of our key plastic items (straws, coffee cups & lids, takeaway containers & lids, food ware (cutlery, plates, cups etc), water bottles & bags).

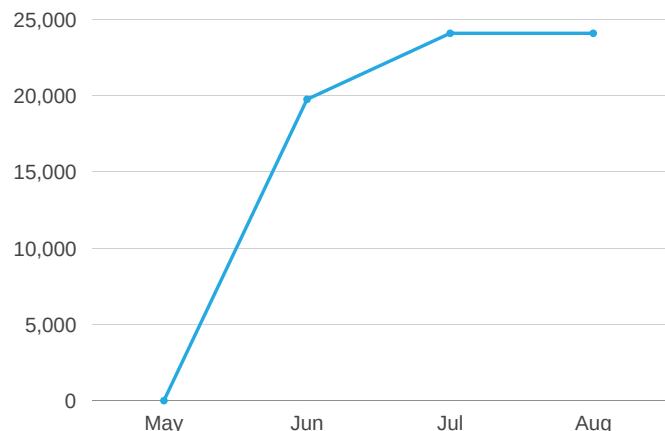
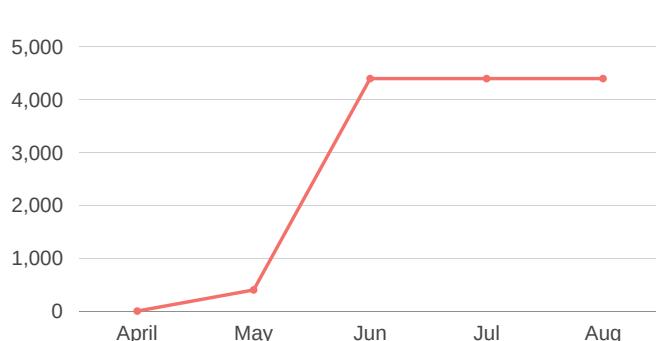
## NO. OF ITEMS ELIMINATED BY CATEGORY (TOTAL)

Item	No. eliminated
Coffee cups	800
Coffee cup lids	12,800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,600</b>

Item	No. eliminated
Water bottles	100
Coffee cups	33,978
Coffee cup lids	33,978
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,056</b>

Note: Coffee cups and lids are often the first items to be eliminated as cafes move through stock quickly, and replacements are more cost comparable compared to other items. While Cairns has more members, Townsville has a higher elimination count due to the larger ordering quantities of several members.

## NO. OF ITEMS ELIMINATED MONTH-BY-MONTH





# MEMBER SUPPORT

## MEMBER COMMENTS - CAIRNS

“The Plastic Free Cairns program is a great initiative for businesses to be given guidance and mentoring on where to find and how to implement plastic free products throughout their supply and set an example to other businesses in the region. Aside from Blackbird Espresso being a Plastic Free Champion, we've decided to go one step further in making our sister company Coffee NQ Far North Queensland's first 100% Plastic Free Packaging Wholesaler. We will be offering incentives and working with our customers to encourage and implement the same mentality in their own businesses. This is an exciting time within our business and we hope that the Cairns community continues to rally behind this movement securing the longevity of our natural landscape for generations to come.

**BLACKBIRD ESPRESSO, CAIRNS CITY**

“We're very proud and thankful for your support!!! Hope that all cafes follow in FNQ and help Save our reef for future generations! Hope our friends get on board!!

**BLACKBIRD WAREHOUSE, BUNGALOW**

“The Plastic Free Cairns Program has helped us to further our understanding of the creative alternative options that are available to help cafés and restaurants in reducing their consumption of single use plastic waste. We would recommend this program to other food businesses in Cairns and further afield, and will encourage our customers to support the program and make the switch to reusable and compostable items.

Our sister restaurant 'Dundee's on the Waterfront' is also participating in the program, with both restaurants striving for the status of 'Plastic Free Champions'.

**DUNDEE'S AT THE CAIRNS AQUARIUM**



## MEMBER COMMENTS - TOWNSVILLE

“ We have now shifted away from single-use plastics towards reusable and compostable takeaway packaging alternatives, both as an espresso bar, but also as a packaging wholesaler supplying 10 wholesale customers with only compostable cups and packaging.

**SPECIALTY COFFEE TRADER**

“ We are so happy to announce that we have joined Plastic Free Townsville and that we are on a mission to become plastic free!! Being in the hospitality business can be so confusing knowing the right things to do for the environment. We have always tried to do better, and with the help of Plastic Free Townsville we are striving to be more environmentally friendly.

**SKULL & SWALLOW CAFE**

“ Plastic Free Townsville is a fantastic initiative - to be able to gain valuable knowledge and timely research in regards to sustainable packaging and accredited suppliers is of extreme benefit to ourselves. Also to the community as a whole. We live in a picturesque coastal city smack bang in the middle of sugarcane country. So we feel it is our responsibility to achieve a lower impact and potentially support one of our biggest industries in the north, by using a by-product of their industry (bagasse). Our main reasons for change are social conscience, fitting with our values and aesthetics.

**A TOUCH OF SALT**

“ Going plastic free was a no brainer for us. We are very conscious of what footprint we leave on the environment with our food truck and found the transition so easy. Townsville's Plastic Free Rep, Diana made any confusion clear and assisted us to have a better understanding on packaging and how to go completely plastic Free. We are proudly Townsville's first Plastic Free Champion. Thank you, Diana, for working so hard to ensure we are educated on our packaging.

**THE HAPPY FOOD TRUCK**