

WILD LAW 2013 CONFERENCE

Why is further growth planned for Bribie Island when it is already living beyond its ecological limits?

by

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BRIBIE IS A PLACE OF GREAT NATURAL BEAUTY BUT.....

- It is a sand island with no rocky “backbone” to give it stability
- It is held together by just the vegetation that has adapted to this environment
- It has an average height above sea level of about 4 metres
- Studies by the Federal Government and Moreton Bay Regional Council (MBRC) show that 60% of the dwellings on Bribie would be affected by a 1 in 100 year storm surge
- The Bribie Island environment is extremely fragile. Just the smallest interference in one place can have an enormous impact over a wide area

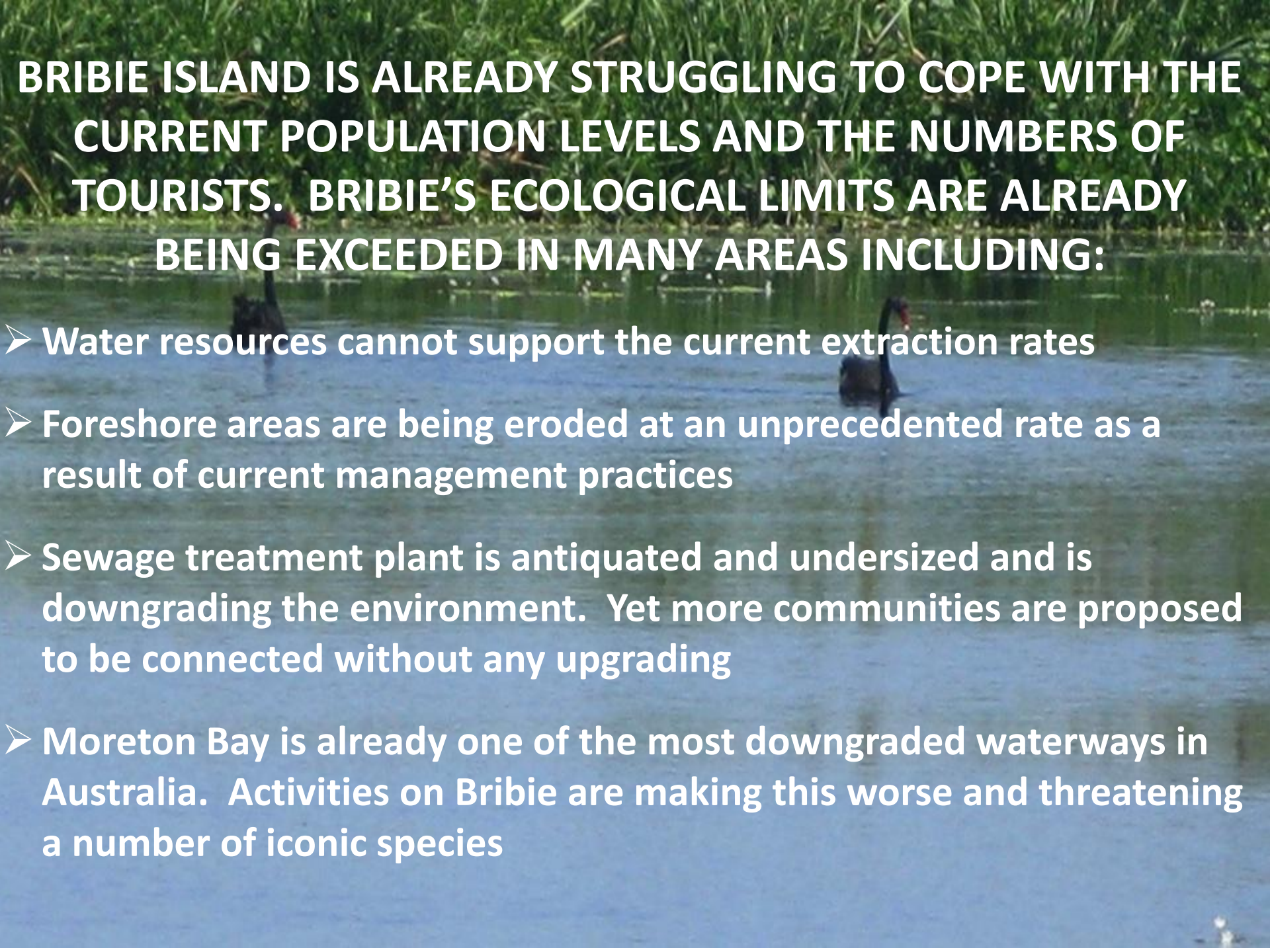
BRIBIE IS PROTECTED BY A RAFT OF LEGISLATION INCLUDING:

- **Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999**
 - **Convention on Migratory Species, Migratory Bird Agreements**
- **Coastal Management Act 1995 (Qld)**
 - **State Coastal Management Plan (SCMP) and South East Queensland Coastal Management Plan (SEQCMP)**
- **Environmental Protection Act 1994**
- **Integrated Planning Act 1997**
- **Fisheries Act 1994**
- **Vegetation Management Act 1999**
- **Marine Parks Act 2004**
- **Nature Conservation Act 1992**

Bribie Island today.....

- Island is under threat
 - Status of protected areas is under review
 - Inappropriate development
 - Inappropriate tourist activity
 - Inappropriate options in care of land and vegetation
 - Illegal clearing of vegetation
- Protective legislation is ineffective. There is a lack of will to enforce legislation by any level of government
- Current permanent population of ~15,000. Significant increase in population being mooted as planning basis for future





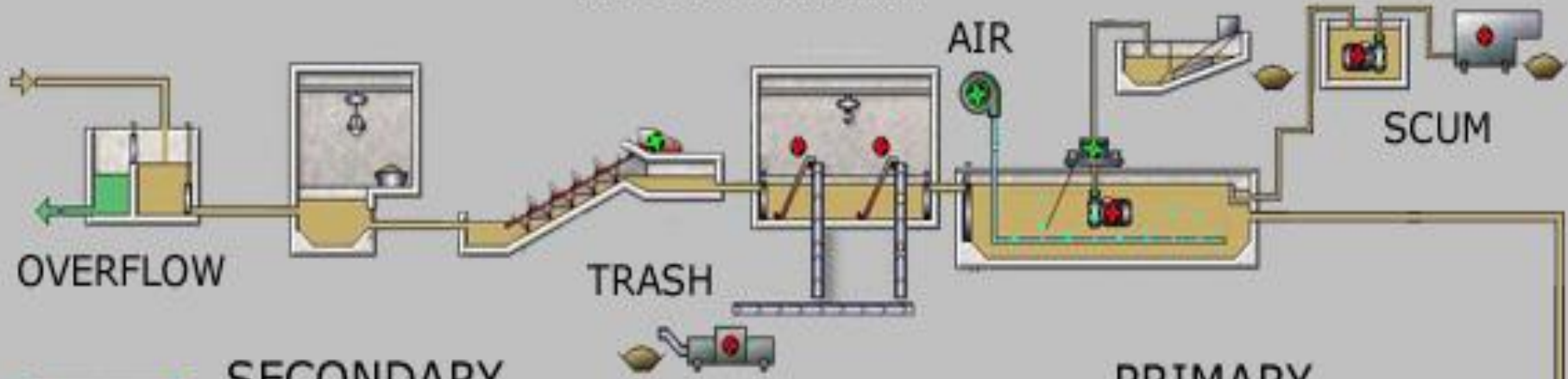
BRIBIE ISLAND IS ALREADY STRUGGLING TO COPE WITH THE CURRENT POPULATION LEVELS AND THE NUMBERS OF TOURISTS. BRIBIE'S ECOLOGICAL LIMITS ARE ALREADY BEING EXCEEDED IN MANY AREAS INCLUDING:

- **Water resources cannot support the current extraction rates**
- **Foreshore areas are being eroded at an unprecedented rate as a result of current management practices**
- **Sewage treatment plant is antiquated and undersized and is downgrading the environment. Yet more communities are proposed to be connected without any upgrading**
- **Moreton Bay is already one of the most downgraded waterways in Australia. Activities on Bribie are making this worse and threatening a number of iconic species**

BRIBIE WATER RESOURCES - SUMMARY

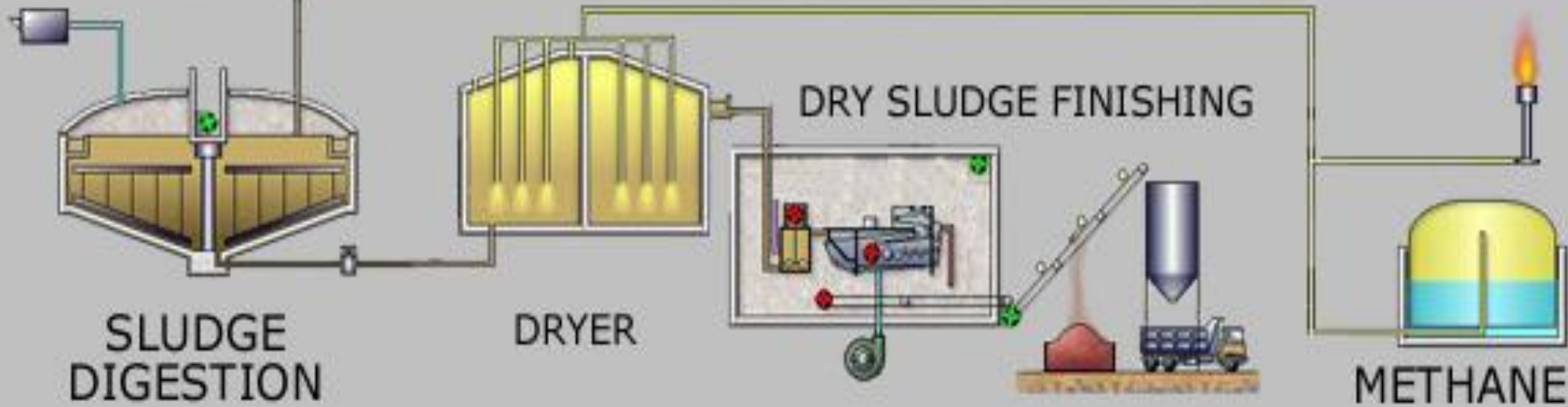
- Current extraction rates cannot be maintained. License limit is already beyond the ecological limit**
- Current license limit will have to be reduced to account for the water extraction by Pacific Harbour Golf Course**
- Future supply expansions will have to come from mainland. Are these available?**
- Long term water quality may be compromised by other activities in the catchment areas**
- Probably among the most expensive water produced in Queensland**

PRETREATMENT



SECONDARY

PRIMARY







BRIBIE SEWAGE TREATMENT - SUMMARY

- Current plant is beyond its capacity. It cannot cope with demands of Bribie's existing population**
- Despite the plant being beyond its capacity, connection of other mainland communities is being mooted**
- Operating license for the current plant does take into account the standards for the environments that the wastes are discharged into. Current operation is downgrading the surrounding environment**

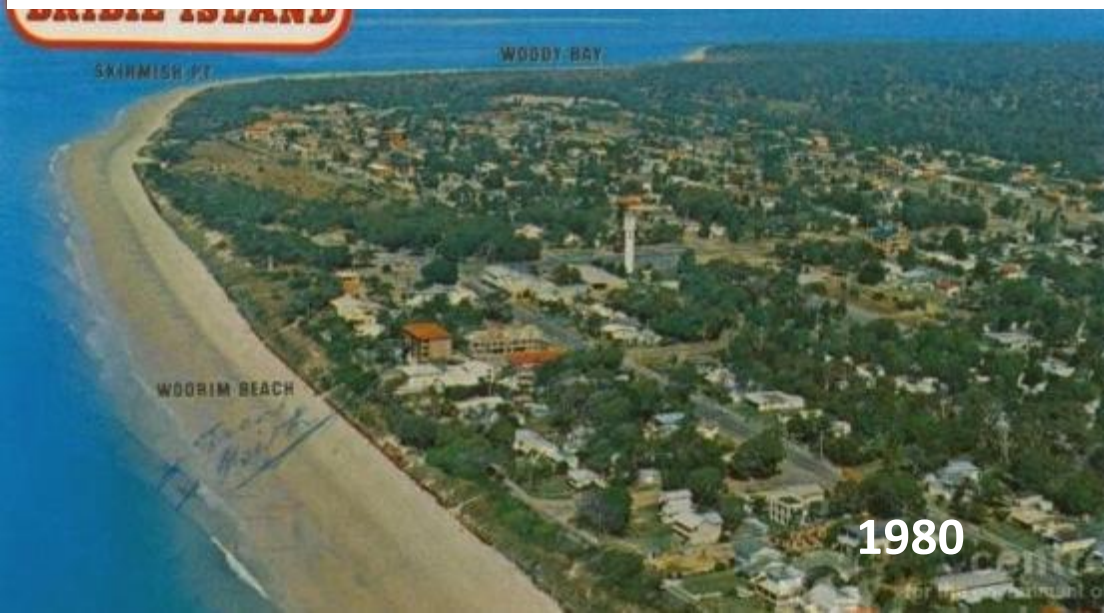


2002



2008 – after first sand replenishment

The Woorim foreshore has changed as a result of human activity

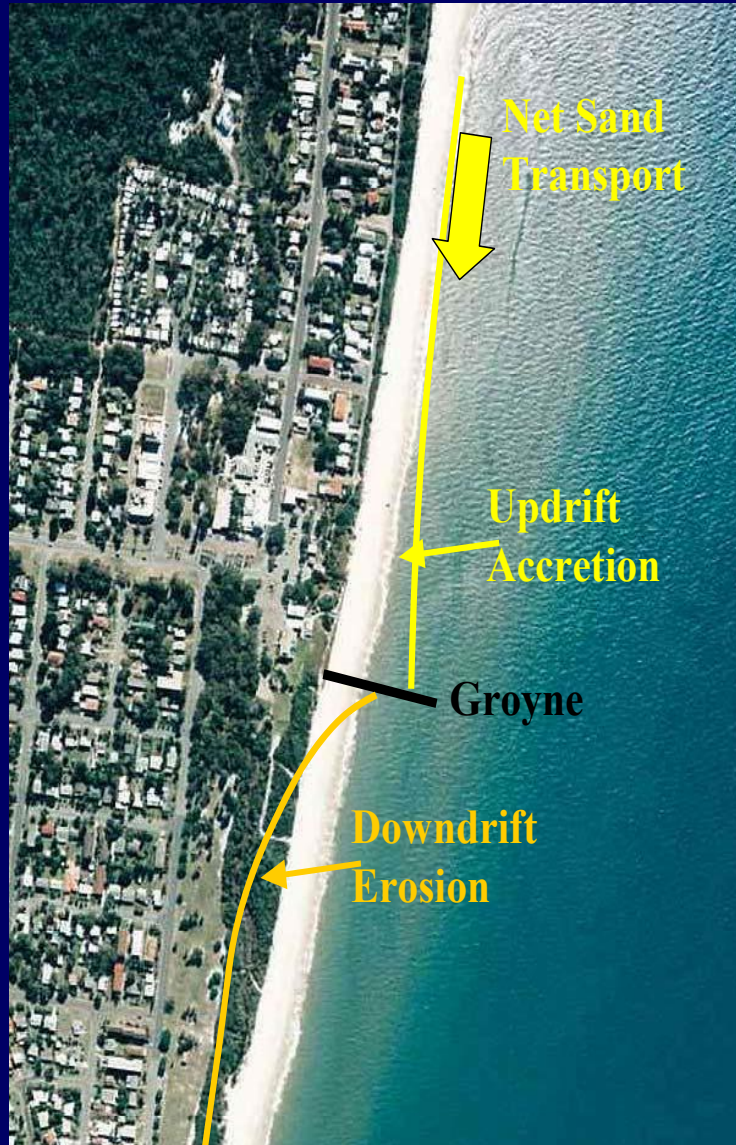


1980



2010 – after further sand replenishment

Possible Groyne Location



The consultants BMT WBM predicted that inappropriate sand placement would have disastrous consequences.

They were correct





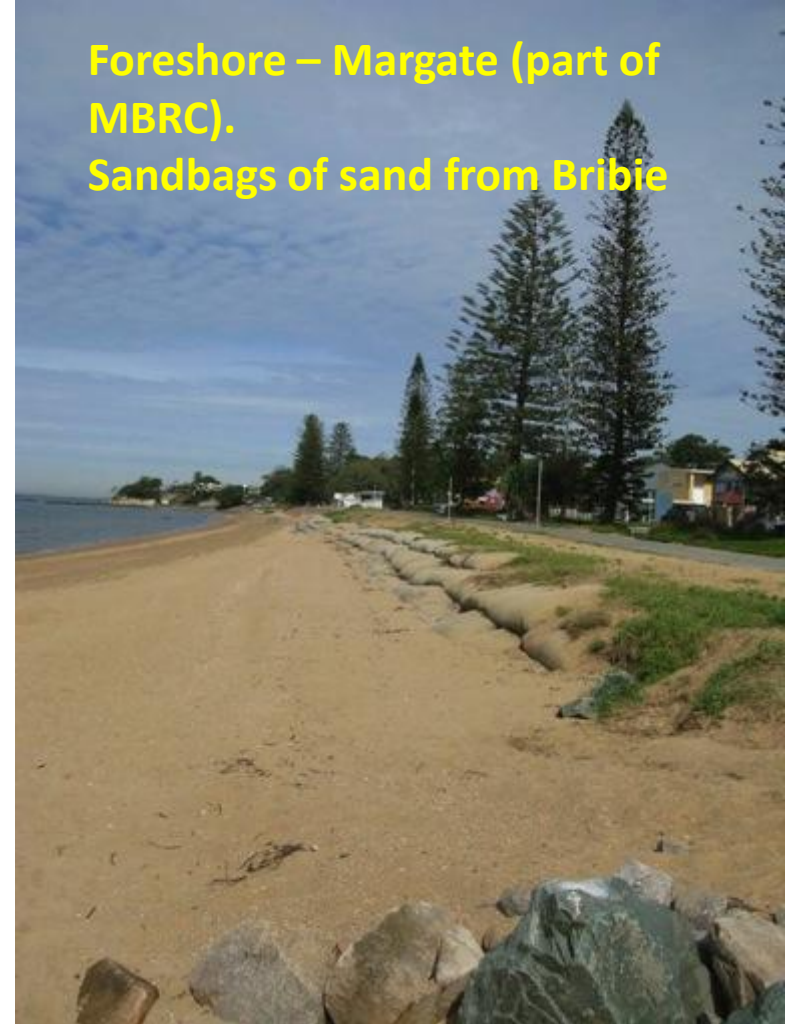
Vegetation removal on dunes along Rickman Parade:

- **No environmental assessment**
- **In erosion control reserve**
- **Contrary to WBSEMP recommendations**
- **Contrary to DERM guidelines**
- **Destroyed turtle nesting habitat due to increased light pollution**
- **No Class 1 pests requiring removal**
- **No public consultation**

This unnecessary and uncontrolled removal of vegetation is widespread along the foreshore



Woorim foreshore being cleared of nearly all vegetation giving seaviews to Boyd Street properties



**Foreshore – Margate (part of MBRC).
Sandbags of sand from Bribie**



Eroded vegetation being removed and further destabilising the foreshore areas

THE VISION FOR WOORIM?

- **No trees**
- **Rock or sandbag walls**
- **No beach**
- **Pathway along dune edge**

BRIBIE FORESHORE MAINTENANCE - SUMMARY

- Foreshore is being lost to erosion at an alarming rate. Over 50 metres has been permanently lost south of Woorim in just two years**
- Inappropriate human activity has been the main cause of recent erosion.**
- The status-quo is not acceptable as a go-forward option, but some of the proposed remediation options will only make matters worse**
- The wishes of real estate owners would appear to be taking precedence**



Bribie Island is an important part of the group of local catchments that make up the Pumicestone Catchment

The Pumicestone Catchment is part of Moreton Bay area which has been described by Professor Hugh Possingham as the most degraded waterway in Australia

Pumicestone Catchment areas received “C” to “D” grades in 2012 Healthy Waterways’ Scorecards

Activities on Bribie are not helpful



More and more of Brisbane is being paved and water needlessly diverted from aquifers into storm water. There are literally dozens of storm water drains emptying into Moreton Bay and not one of them has any sediment trap



Beach accesses at Woorim. Above left – 5th Avenue before Below left – After. Above right – new access off helipad. Below right – Coolamara entrance. Clearing... “to allow two dogs to pass”





There seems little doubt that it is MBRC's intention to remove all the foreshore vegetation from 5th Avenue to the Coolamara Entrance that is seen here from these 2009 satellite photos

All this area has been destroyed as loggerhead turtle habitat

MORTON BAY HEALTH - SUMMARY

- **Poor**
- **Activities on Bribie not helpful**
- **Endangered species becoming more endangered**

BRIBIE ISLAND'S ECOLOGICAL LIMITS SUMMARY

- Ecological limits being exceeded today in a large number of areas**
- Bribie's environment is extremely fragile and has little capacity to recover from current downgrading activities**
- Bribie's future is very cloudy. We face a decreasing quality of life in an increasingly degraded environment**

THE END

TIME FOR QUESTIONS / COMMENTS