1. Estuarine crocodiles are a vulnerable species in Queensland, and are still recovering from extensive culling and harvesting during the 20th century. However, as crocodile populations have increased, some sectors of the community are concerned that they pose a greater risk to human safety, particularly around expanding urbanised areas in Far North Queensland. Traditionally, the State Government has used a range of tools to manage these risks including monitoring and surveying, education, signage, and removal of some crocodiles. Previously, the relocation of crocodiles was managed under Crocodile Urban Management Areas (CUMAs) whereby crocodiles were removed from specified urban areas based on their size and location and in other areas across the state where they were determined to pose risks to human safety.
2. The pilot arrangements which were partially replaced in 2013 for the implementation of Crocodile Management Plans (CMPs) in four North Queensland council areas are due for review.
3. The Government has publicly committed to a review of the current CMPs based on rigorous science. The crocodile science program (of three to five years) is designed to provide a scientific basis for future arrangements rather than relying on public perception of crocodile numbers. The science program will support and advise the on-going management of crocodiles and address the lack of scientific evidence about the population impacts of current crocodile removal.
4. While the science program is underway, options for crocodile management that maintain public safety and protect the species need to be implemented.
5. The commencement of the proposed science program will be accompanied by targeted engagement with local stakeholders in each of the four CMP locations, along with a public survey on the Queensland Government’s Get Involved website, to better understand community responses to amending the CMPs. This engagement will balance the views about public safety and the conservation of crocodiles prior to changing existing arrangements.
6. Cabinet endorsed the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection undertaking specific engagement with the community in Far North Queensland to understand the views of key stakeholders and the general community.
7. *Attachments*
* [Maps of areas covered under former Crocodile Urban Management Areas and current Crocodile Management Plans](Attachments/Maps.pdf)