



Advancing Business Sustainability

**A Sustainability
Maturity Assessment of
Queensland Business**

March 2023



**Business
Chamber**
QUEENSLAND

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A word from Business Chamber Queensland

At Business Chamber Queensland we're leading the accelerated adoption of sustainable practices so Queensland businesses can thrive now and into the future.

Business Chamber Queensland's Advancing Business Sustainability report presents a unique perspective on business sustainability with insight into how the state's business community approaches sustainability and how developed Queensland businesses are in adopting these practices.

Through this research, businesses told us sustainability means everything from protecting the environment for future generations and reducing their environmental impact, to ensuring their business is economically viable and socially responsible.

Sustainable businesses are future-ready businesses – ready to meet evolving consumer demand, ready to meet supply chain needs, ready to export, and ready to be competitive for procurement opportunities to maximise a sustainable Olympics legacy.

Businesses that act now to operate sustainably are best placed to make the most of immediate and future opportunities.

At the same time, we know sustainable businesses are prepared to maximise opportunities as the state moves towards net zero targets.

This report shows businesses are motivated and ready to commit to sustainable business practices, but it's essential they're supported and empowered to meet and respond to the challenges.

We're already supporting businesses in their early sustainability journey through our ecoBiz program, and we continue to scale the program to support businesses now and in the future.

Business Chamber Queensland's Advancing Business Sustainability report is an essential resource for business, government and industry and comes at a critical time as we plan for the future of Queensland.

Heidi Cooper
CEO

Executive summary

Sustainability is increasingly important globally. Governments are committing to net zero targets and other environmental goals, consumers are demanding sustainable products, and larger corporations are seeking 'green' supply chains. Getting ahead in implementing sustainable practices can set businesses apart from their competition, boost their efficiency, improve their ability to withstand challenges, and benefit their community and the environment.

Adopting sustainable business practices now is simply smart business.

The successful integration of sustainable business practices is challenging for many small and medium businesses and enterprises (SMEs). Limited resources, a lack of information, regulatory barriers, and internal organisational barriers were identified, in the literature and through our findings, as significant barriers to implementing sustainable business practices.

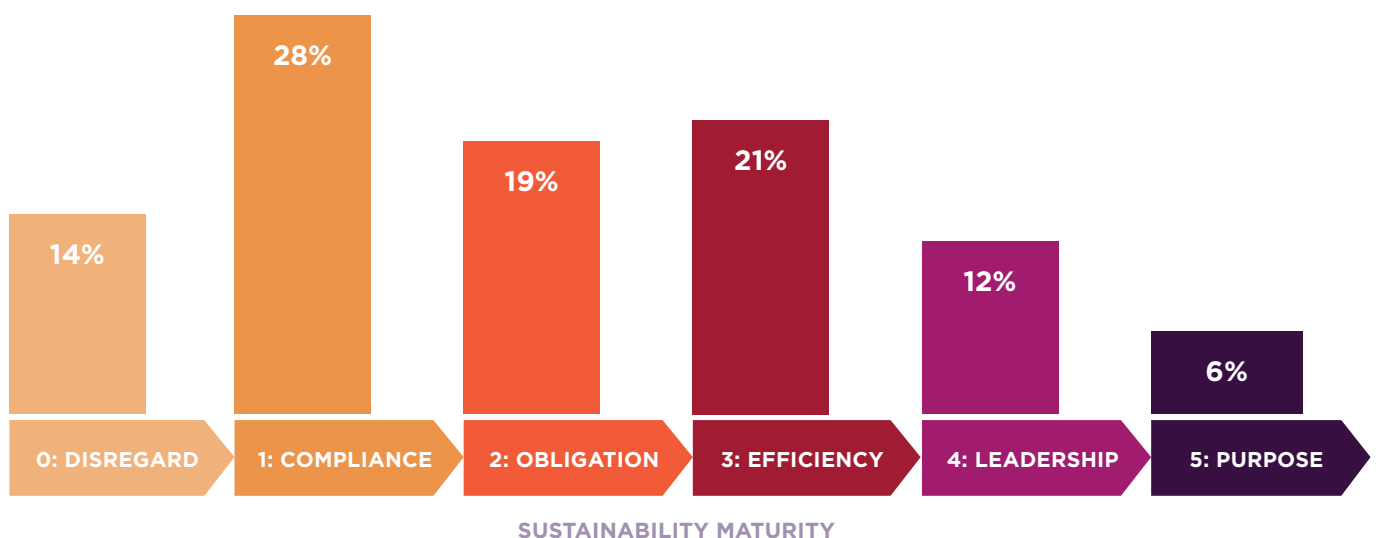
Sustainability maturity refers to how an organisation approaches sustainability and the extent to which an organisation has developed and implemented sustainable practices and policies. In their sustainability maturity, Queensland businesses reported an average score of 2.0, placing Queensland businesses firmly at stage 2: Obligation.

The result suggests on average, Queensland businesses are making sustainability related decisions beyond their industry's minimum compliance requirements, due to external pressures such as consumer demand and a push towards sustainable supply chains. Further, four in ten (39%) businesses also indicated they had implemented practices of the Efficiency stage and above.

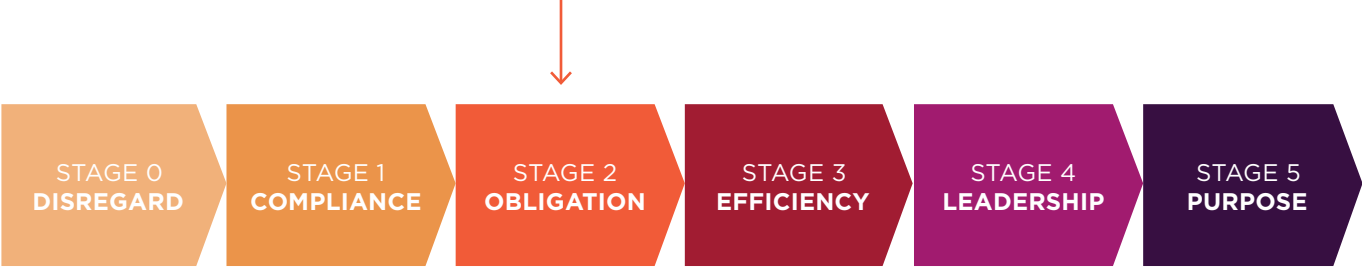
This result is encouraging, in that businesses are acting more proactively than meeting the minimum regulations. However, more than half (61%) of Queensland businesses have not yet progressed further than the Obligation stage and are missing out on the opportunity to realise the cost-savings and efficiency gains made possible through the implementation of sustainable business practices.

Our findings show many Queensland businesses are motivated and ready to take ownership of sustainability but are lacking the tools and information needed to track their performance and take accountability in this space. There are significant challenges businesses need support in addressing to fully capture the opportunities that come with sustainable business practices.

The sustainable transformation of the Queensland economy provides an opportunity for significant growth. In this report we outline what businesses can do to progress their sustainability maturity, and the role that government must play in best supporting businesses at each stage of their sustainability journey.



Queensland businesses are on average, implementing sustainability initiatives *beyond minimum compliance requirements*



Key findings:

24%

of businesses indicated that environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business, and everyone is responsible for the environmental performance

35%

of Queensland businesses have implemented sustainable business practices within the last 12 months

31%

of businesses are motivated to implement sustainable business practices by cost savings and efficiency gains

23%

of businesses have environmental KPIs defined to track environmental performance

Barriers:

26%

reported they were unsure of their sustainability barriers

22%

Cost of compliance and regulatory barriers

17%

Knowledge about sustainable business practices

12%

Lack of interest



Introduction



Sustainability maturity refers to how an organisation approaches sustainability and the extent to which an organisation has developed and implemented sustainable practices and policies.

Operating sustainably is increasingly becoming a priority for Queensland businesses.

Now more than ever, businesses are recognising the importance of implementing sustainable practices. The uptake of sustainable business practices is primarily driven by the increasing global demand for products and services with a low or offset environmental footprint. Building a purpose-driven brand, including an environmentally friendly reputation among the business community and workforce who value a low-impact business ethos, has proven to greatly benefit businesses. Sustainability is a strategic priority to become and remain competitive in today's market of conscious consuming.

Adopting sustainable practices provides a range of financial and strategic growth opportunities for businesses.

While sustainable practices can bring many benefits, many business owners and managers, are often short on time and resources to explore new opportunities. Furthermore, a range of internal and external factors create additional barriers to adopting sustainable practices that may prevent a business from progressing further on their sustainability maturity journey.

This report captures the current state of Queensland businesses in regard to the implementation of sustainable business practices, and the opportunities to progress further. Sustainability maturity is measured in this report through three areas: motivation, accountability, and ownership.

This report outlines some of the current trends in sustainability, the present motivations Queensland businesses have towards sustainability, and an understanding of the barriers in progressing the sustainability journey of Queensland businesses.

This report offers useful insights, resources and guidance for businesses to consider their sustainability journey. Businesses can consider where they currently sit on the sustainability maturity path by taking the quiz on page 42.

Business Chamber Queensland knows business matters. For 155 years, we have represented businesses of every size, every industry and in every part of Queensland.

Business Chamber Queensland has always been committed to advocating for the support business needs to thrive and remain competitive. Recommendations for government throughout the report suggest ways Queensland businesses can be further empowered and supported to advance their sustainability maturity. We all need to work together to deliver a Queensland economy with a strong and sustainable foundations.

Sustainable business practices



A sustainable transformation

In recent years, sustainable practices have become one of the most important priorities for businesses and governments. This is driven not only by climate change concerns – both present disruptions and future threats – but also **the need to develop resilient, viable and competitive ways for businesses to operate into the future.**

One of the predominant ways Queensland is, and will continue to be, impacted by climate change is through natural disasters, with impacts on businesses, workforces, the economy and our communities. Climate change will continue to exacerbate the severity and frequency of weather events in our state, such as tropical cyclones, hailstorms, extreme heat events, flooding, and rising sea levels.¹ In addition to the direct damaging impacts of extreme weather events, these natural disasters also impact on the cost and availability of insurance, disrupt supply chains, and expose businesses and communities' vulnerabilities.²

Even under a low emission scenario, Queensland is expected to incur the largest increase in costs related to natural disasters of any state, facing a cost of over \$466 billion over the next 40 years.³

We all have a role to play in mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Governments around the world have committed to addressing climate change, with more than 70 countries adopting net zero targets and 192 countries having signed the Paris Agreement.⁴

More than 80% of Australia's trading partners and Queensland's connected economies have committed to reaching net zero.

More than ever, governments are willing to utilise the regulatory tools at their disposal to incentivise, encourage, and in some cases compel businesses to adopt sustainable practices.⁵ Queensland businesses are encouraged to progress their sustainability efforts and contribute to this sustainable transformation, as these efforts will also enable businesses to stay economically viable and competitive. Not only is it responsible business, but it is also smart business.

The need for sustainable business practices to remain competitive is no longer a question for the future leaders, but a key strategic planning imperative for business leaders of today.

There are also economic, environmental, and social imperatives for protecting our natural resources. Natural resources play an important role in the global economy, with more than half of the world's economy dependent on natural capital. Industries that heavily relied on nature generated 15% of global GDP (A\$19 trillion) in 2020, with moderately dependent industries generating an additional 37% (A\$39 trillion).⁶

In Queensland specifically, many key industries rely on our high-quality natural resources and ecosystems, including tourism and agriculture, plus many more. IDEEA group, in partnership with the Australian Conservation Foundation, found that 54% (A\$187.1 billion) of the Queensland economy has a moderate to very high direct dependency on nature.⁷

The sustainable transformation of business is also reflected through the global shift in capital markets towards sustainability goals. Sustainability aligned assets under management reached A\$48 trillion in 2020 and continue to rise rapidly, indicating a significant alignment from global capital markets and investors with the goal of sustainability in business.⁸

The Queensland Government has also implemented a Climate Action Plan⁹ with the following targets:

- 50% renewable energy by 2030
- 30% emissions reduction below 2005 levels by 2030
- 70% renewable energy by 2032
- 80% renewable energy by 2035
- Zero net emissions by 2050

1. Insurance Australia Group, 2019, Severe weather in a changing climate. <https://www.iag.com.au/severe-weather-changing-climate>

2. Botzen, Deschenes and Sanders, 2019, The Economic Impacts of Natural Disasters: A Review of Models and Empirical Studies www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1093/reep/rez004

3. Deloitte Access Economics, 2021, Special report: Update to the economic costs of natural disasters in Australia, www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/economics/articles/building-australia-natural-disaster-resilience.html

4. United Nations, 2021, Net Zero Coalition. www.un.org/en/climatechange/net-zero-coalition

5. Deloitte, 2020, The sustainability transformation, www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/strategy/sustainable-transformation-in-business.html

6. World Economic Forum, 2020, Nature Risk Rising: Why the Crisis Engulfing Nature Matters for Business and the Economy www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_New_Nature_Economy_Report_2020.pdf

7. IDEEA, 2022, The nature-based economy: How Australia's prosperity depends on nature, https://www.ideeagroup.com/wp-content/uploads/Nature_Based_Economy_report_Sept_2022.pdf

8. Global Sustainable Investment Alliance, 2020, Global Sustainable Investment Review 2020 www.gsi-alliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/GSIR-20201.pdf

9. Queensland Department of Environment and Science, Climate Action, www.des.qld.gov.au/climateaction

A demand for sustainable transformation

Consumers and investors alike are expecting more from businesses.¹⁰ To an unprecedented extent, consumers now have the means and the tools to inform themselves on which businesses are operating sustainably. Businesses that are late to acknowledge and adopt these trends will likely lose significant share of spending power from conscious consumers, or simply be overlooked.

Larger businesses are increasingly issuing strong environmental statements, such as aiming to ensure their supply chains are sustainable and environmentally friendly.¹¹ Small and medium sized businesses also need to adopt sustainable business practices to remain competitive, in business-to-business transactions, and direct to consumer.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been rapid changes in business behaviours; never has there been such attention on climate-focused innovation, resource reuse, sustainable supply chains, procurement, and competitive employee value propositions.

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games has the potential to be an immense catalyst for change. Brisbane 2032 has set out to be the first climate positive Games. For Queensland businesses to be procurement ready, export ready, and embrace opportunities to scale, they must begin their sustainability journey early to be best positioned to take advantage of the benefits of the Games.

Through extensive consultations with Queensland businesses, we have seen the resilience, innovation, and leadership in our state's business community. We have also seen businesses increasingly recognising the sustainable transformation taking place and realising the need to progress their path towards becoming more sustainable.

Top reasons for businesses to advance their sustainability maturity

Being proactive allows a business to become more **competitive, by differentiating from competitors**, and meet increasing consumer demand for sustainable products and services. Businesses will either already be ahead of new regulatory measures, benefit from experience in already implementing new sustainable business practices and be less disrupted by any new regulatory requirements.

Businesses that wait risk being left behind, while those that take the initiative to incorporate sustainability now can be proactive rather than reactive to future pressures from market forces and government initiatives.

Advancing business sustainability benefits operations internally as well as how a business is viewed in the market. **Research into the impact of sustainability practices in corporate financial performance shows overwhelming positive performance outcomes.**¹² Including return on assets, return on equity, sales growth, profitability, and decreased costs.

Embedding sustainability into a business's strategy and operations enhances business resilience and reduces the risk of disruptions. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of the global supply chains, and how impactful those shocks could be. A 2021 report by EcoVadis suggested businesses that integrated sustainability into their supply chains benefit from greater resilience to shocks, with **63%** of buyers and **71%** of suppliers indicating that sustainable business practices contributed to their ability to endure the COVID-19 economic crisis.¹³

10. Deloitte, 2020, Embedding sustainability into core strategy and business operations, www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/strategy/deloitte-au-con-embedding-sustainability-into-core-strategy-and-business-operations.pdf

11. Accenture, 2022, Reimagining the Agenda: Unlocking the Global Pathways to Resilience, Growth, and Sustainability for 2030, <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/sustainability/ungc>

12. Ishehhi, A., Nobanee, H., Khare, N. (2018). The Impact of Sustainability Practices on Corporate Financial Performance: Literature Trends and Future Research Potential. *Sustainability*, 10, 494. doi: 10.3390/su10020494

13. EcoVadis, 2021, Sustainable Procurement Barometer, <https://resources.ecovadis.com/sp-barometer/2021-sustainable-procurement-barometer>

What does sustainability mean to your business?

“Ability to pass on the business/property to the next generation in better condition than it is at present”

AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY/FISHING, SMALL BUSINESS, SOUTH WEST QUEENSLAND

“Improving business practices to lessen the impact on the environment, in turn protecting the environment for future generations.”

AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY/FISHING, MEDIUM BUSINESS, WIDE BAY-BURNETT

“Potential for business growth as industries transition to higher levels of sustainability.”

MENTORING FIRM, SMALL BUSINESS, BRISBANE

“Reduced impact on the environment, often but not always through reduced costs.”

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, SMALL BUSINESS, FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

“We all have a responsibility to do our bit for the environment.”

ACCOMMODATION AND HOSPITALITY, LARGE BUSINESS, GOLD COAST

“Sustainability is in our ethos, not something we tack on as an afterthought. We aim to reduce our waste of all kinds and repurpose or recycle if we can't reduce. It means making our customers aware of our “green” initiatives and getting them engaged in environmental initiatives without us being preachy. It means including service projects in our tours that help the local environment - like cleaning up the mangroves and planting trees. It means constantly looking to reduce our impact and that of our customers and actively trying to make our region better.”

ARTS & RECREATIONAL SERVICES, SMALL BUSINESS, NORTH QUEENSLAND

“It is the future!”

CONSTRUCTION, LARGE BUSINESS, BRISBANE

“Our business will have a better chance of more profitable and successful business if we are less dependent on our natural resources and look at ways to deal with costs due to climate change, hence reducing the environmental impact of our business.”

EDUCATION, MEDIUM BUSINESS, CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

“We care about the environment and would like to do more to reduce our impact on the environment so we can continue to operate into the future.”

ARTS & RECREATIONAL SERVICES (TOURISM), MEDIUM BUSINESS, NORTH QUEENSLAND

“Due to the nature of what we do and physical location of our manufacturing facilities (rural) its hard and costly to put into practice as far less infrastructural support when compared to the cities but seen as worthwhile for our future.”

MANUFACTURING, LARGE BUSINESS, SOUTH WEST QUEENSLAND

“Minimising the environmental footprint AND at the same time ensure the business remains economically viable and socially responsible.”

AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY/FISHING, MEDIUM BUSINESS, SUNSHINE COAST

“The ability to continue to operate with minimal impact on non-renewable resources and the environment.”

AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY/FISHING, MEDIUM BUSINESS WIDE BAY-BURNETT

What we are doing in this space

Business Chamber Queensland is leading the accelerated adoption of sustainable business practices so Queensland businesses can thrive now and into the future. Within our organisation, we are also progressing our own sustainability journey, including in 2021 becoming the first state chamber in Australia to achieve carbon neutral status under Climate Active.

Existing programs for SMEs

ecoBiz

The ecoBiz program is a program for small to medium businesses. In partnership with the Queensland Government, in partnership with the Queensland Government. With the help of an ecoBiz sustainability expert, businesses are able to develop an action plan to help their businesses save money and increase efficiencies. Over 1000 Queensland businesses have received direct support under the ecoBiz program at no cost, with 90% of them reporting an increase in productivity and savings.

ecoBiz cost savings

Participants in the ecoBiz program have reduced costs related to:



Energy by 29% by avoiding 54,189GJ (equivalent to 680 average household's usage)



Water by 14% by avoiding 460,649 kL (equivalent to 180 Olympic sized swimming pools)



Waste by 13% by avoiding 1,612t (equivalent to 44,000 fully filled 240L wheelie bins)

Stats used are for 1 July 2018 – 30 June 2022

The ecoBiz program continues to evolve to align with business needs, and now includes a carbon measurement tool. This tool measures the carbon emissions of ecoBiz partners at no cost, providing a carbon snapshot based on their utility data provided. This allows Queensland businesses to begin the journey of understanding carbon emissions and their carbon footprint, assisting to progress businesses on their sustainability maturity path.

Business Chamber Queensland's ESG framework

Business Chamber Queensland is undertaking a path to align our Environmental, Social and Governance policy with the United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We want to understand which SDGs we can have the most impact on and how we can best help our members contribute too. This policy will provide a strategic framework for Business Chamber Queensland for our purpose, to define priorities, set goals, innovate, collaborate, achieve targets, communicate, and report performance. By ensuring sustainability is at the heart of business, Business Chamber Queensland is positioned to be a purpose driven leader that can guide businesses to do the same.

Recent sustainable business practices implemented by Business Chamber Queensland

Business Chamber Queensland as a workplace took a series of steps to achieve carbon neutrality, starting with leading a transformation in the way staff thought about their environmental footprint, including turning off computers at the end of the day, reducing waste sent to landfill and making the most of public transport. Carbon offsets were purchased through the Aboriginal Carbon Foundation's Merepah Station fire project in Cape York. Our sustainability initiatives are led by a General Manager of Sustainability, and further driven internally by a workplace Green Team with representatives from all departments.

Continuing to advocate for a sustainable Queensland

We collaborate with government, universities and independent consultants to inform and influence government policy and investments in sustainability. We are committed to leading the accelerated adoption of sustainable business practices so Queensland businesses can thrive now and into the future.

Barriers to sustainable practices

The successful integration of sustainable business practices is challenging for many businesses, especially small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs). While the level of difficulty varies between organisations, many SMEs experience similar barriers. These barriers include regulatory, informational, organisational, and resource challenges. In addition to those identified in the literature, we asked Queensland businesses about the barriers they face in adopting sustainable business practices.

Informational barriers

Our survey findings highlight a lack of information as a key barrier to the adoption of sustainable business practices. **Over one in four (26.2%) businesses indicated they are unsure of what barriers, if any, existed for their business.** The lack of awareness and knowledge of sustainability issues remains a key barrier, as frequently business owners are unaware of their environmental impacts. Therefore, they do not adopt tools or practices to solve an unrealised issue.

Further, 16.7% of businesses identified a lack of knowledge of what are, or how to implement, sustainable business practices as a key barrier. Of those businesses, several indicated they were already taking steps to overcome this barrier.

When the organisation becomes more aware of their impact and benefit of action, they often lack the expertise to solve the problems successfully.¹⁴ This lack of knowledge can result in adopting reactive strategies for sustainability, rather than embedding them into the organisations' long-term strategy. Additionally, a limited understanding can lead to businesses not realising the value adding potential of sustainable practices.

Regulatory barriers

The role of government is crucial for strengthening SMEs' adoption of sustainable practices. Businesses have told us that the lack of sufficient government support and enforcement is a barrier to adoption. SMEs typically have limited budgets to support sustainable projects, they are often dependent on government assistance for development and implementation. A study of manufacturing businesses in Queensland noted inadequate support from government or relevant government agencies for advice was a barrier to adopting green practices.¹⁵

At 22.2% of businesses, the **cost of compliance or regulatory barriers** was identified as a significant barrier to implementing new sustainable business practices. Businesses, especially SMEs, are often time-poor and as such, may not be able to take on significant amounts of additional work. Efficient compliance and regulatory measures are essential for encouraging the further adoption of sustainable business practices.

14. Simpson, M., Taylor, N., & Barker, K. (2004). Environmental responsibility in SMEs: does it deliver competitive advantage? *Business Strategy and the Environment*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.398>

15. Amir, A. (2017). Exploring drivers and barriers to sustainability green business practices within small medium sized enterprises: primary findings. *International journal of business & economic development*. https://ijbed.org/cdn/article_file/content_26562_17-03-27-10-42-33.pdf

Education, awareness-raising and showcasing what it means to be sustainable to businesses, were found to be necessary to progress sustainability maturity in Queensland businesses.

WORKSHOP CONSULTATION FINDING

“At the moment we aim to learn more about [sustainability], its implications and how to implement best practices within our industry”

ARTS & RECREATIONAL SERVICES (TOURISM), SMALL BUSINESS, BRISBANE

Organisational barriers

The existing organisational values and culture impact SMEs' willingness to invest in sustainable practices. The SME's strategic direction is highly dependent on the owner's motivations. Therefore, if the owner expresses little interest in sustainable practices, this is typically reflected in the adoption rate.¹⁶ An SME owner may resist change through the unwillingness to adopt new practices and move away from conventional approaches.¹⁷ A lack of **interest by owners or managers of the business** was identified by 11.6% of businesses as a key barrier to implementing new sustainable business practices.

“We understand our impact and continuously seek opportunities to improve. From supporting environmental initiatives and working with ethical partners, to helping our clients make more sustainable choices. Every little bit counts.”

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE, MEDIUM BUSINESS, BRISBANE

16. Fernández-Viñé, M. B., Gómez-Navarro, T., & Capuz-Rizo, S. F. (2013). Assessment of the public administration tools for the improvement of the eco-efficiency of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. *Journal of Cleaner Production*

17. Purwandani, Junia A. and Michaud, Gilbert, (2021), What are the drivers and barriers for green business practice adoption for SMEs?, *Environment Systems and Decisions*. https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:spr:envsyd:v:41:y:2021:i:4:d:10.1007_s10669-021-09821-3

Resources constraints

SMEs are not only faced with financial constraints, but they often lack the necessary human resources and capabilities.¹⁸

Time constraints on employees were a significant obstacle to implementing practices. SMEs are concerned about the time required to implement and monitor sustainable business practices.¹⁹

For many organisations, sustainability is perceived to be linked with complex terms and time-consuming monitoring.

“For a small business it is hard to find the time to make it all happen. Yes, there is lots of information out there and people to help but it still comes down to being able to implement it and work with it with time and cost constraints”

ELECTRICITY, GAS, AND WATER, SMALL BUSINESS, BRISBANE

Different resourcing challenges were highlighted in the survey responses. 11.3% stated that a **lack of existing operations in their business network to assist or motivate** was a major barrier to successful implementation. The **availability of a market for sustainable products or services** was a key barrier for 10.2% of businesses, followed by available infrastructure in the region at 9.2%, and **incompatible technology or machinery within the business** at 6.7%.

18. Johnson, M.P. and Schaltegger, S. (2016), Two Decades of Sustainability Management Tools for SMEs: How Far Have We Come?. Journal of Small Business Management. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12154>

19. Collins, E., Roper, J. and Lawrence, S. (2010), Sustainability practices: trends in New Zealand businesses. Business Strategy and the Environment <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.653>

Table 1 Barriers to adopting sustainable business practices

Barriers	% of businesses
Unsure	26.2%
Cost of compliance and regulatory barriers	22.2%
Knowledge of what are, or how to implement, sustainable business practices	16.7%
No interest by owners or managers of the business	11.6%
Lack of existing sustainable operations in business network to assist or motivate	11.3%
Available market for sustainable products or services	10.2%
Available infrastructure in region	9.2%
Technology or machinery within the business not compatible	6.7%
No barriers	22.2%





Sustainable practices implemented by Queensland businesses in the last 12 months

We asked businesses: “Has your business implemented any new sustainable business practices within the last 12 months?”

35% of businesses identified they had implemented new sustainable business practices within the last 12 months.

By business size

Survey findings showed that medium (21 – 200 employees) and large businesses (200+ employees) were more likely to have implemented recent practices (40%). In contrast, micro (1 – 5 employees) and small businesses (6 – 20 employees) were less likely to have implemented sustainable business practices in the last year (34% and 33% respectively).

Small businesses were the least likely to have implemented changes at 33%, suggesting their businesses may need tailored support.

“We recycle everything, we are very small but recycle is implemented in everything we do, down to scrap paper”

RETAIL, SMALL BUSINESS, CENTRAL COAST

“Tree planting, improving waste management, responsible purchasing, solar panels washed”

CONSTRUCTION, LARGE BUSINESS, FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND.

By region

Businesses in the following regions were more likely to have implemented new sustainable business practices in the last 12 months than the state average.

- North Queensland* (44%)
- Sunshine Coast (42%)
- Gold Coast (41%)
- Brisbane (37%)

The regions most likely to have implemented sustainable business practices in the last 12 months are also some of those most exposed to natural disasters. Businesses on the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, and Brisbane especially suffered major impacts as a result of flooding in February and March 2022.

This additional risk may be motivating businesses in these areas to adopt and implement sustainable business practices in order to mitigate the effects of, and adapt to, climate change.

*Regions with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20.

“Upgrading existing solar panels, adopting a more digital storage and operation requiring far less use of paper documents, rubbish separation for recycling, reusing packaging and postal materials”

SMALL BUSINESS, NORTH QUEENSLAND

By industry

The survey found that businesses in the following industries were most likely to have recently implemented sustainable business practices within the last 12 months.

- Accommodation, cafes and restaurants (46%)
- Art and recreational services (tourism) (45%)
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing* (41%)
- Manufacturing (41%)
- Education* (40%)

Of the industries that were more likely to have implemented sustainable business practices, the art and recreational services (tourism) and agriculture, forestry, fishing sectors often rely on the environment for their daily operations. This may explain why businesses in these industries were most likely to have recently implemented sustainable business practices.

Recent concerns around single-use packaging and drives to use recyclable or reusable alternatives may help explain why accommodation, cafes and restaurants, and manufacturing, were also among the industries most likely to have recently implemented sustainable initiatives.

*Industries with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20.

“Reduced use of electricity in the office - reduced use of air-conditioning, turning off electrical appliances. Crew do daily rubbish clean-ups at Whitehaven Beach. Use environmentally friendly products, recycled products whenever possible. Do not use single-use plastics. On-going education of staff on environmental issues such as climate change, plastic pollution, and water quality. Education of passengers on these issues is then done organically through conversation rather than ‘lecturing’.”

**ARTS & RECREATIONAL SERVICES (TOURISM),
MEDIUM BUSINESS, CENTRAL COAST**

“Scheduling to reduce vehicle travel to, from and between jobs, replacing all lighting with LED, replacing and upgrading old equipment”

**ACCOMMODATION, CAFES AND RESTAURANTS,
SMALL BUSINESS, SUNSHINE COAST**





The
sustainability
maturity path

Sustainability maturity refers to how an organisation approaches sustainability and the extent to which an organisation has developed and implemented sustainable practices and policies. There is no one way to measure sustainability maturity, and the concept can be assessed using a range of methods.

In this report, we approached sustainability maturity considering a variety of operational and strategic factors, notably motivation, accountability and ownership. It is acknowledged that sustainability maturity is a personalised journey for each business. Businesses at different stages require tailored support and guidance that is specific to the challenges and barriers faced at their current maturity level.

A business with low sustainability maturity will have little to no strategic or operational considerations for sustainability. Any environmental measures or tracking that has been implemented is unlikely to extend beyond existing regulations. They may anticipate the need to adapt in the future but have yet to implement additional sustainable practices.

Businesses that have progressed further on their sustainability journey are likely to have taken steps beyond basic compliance with regulation. The drivers of implementing sustainable practices include external forces outside regulation, such as consumer demand and other market pressures.

Voluntarily implementing eco-efficient lighting, monitoring water usage, and recycling waste where

they can, are all examples of some great first steps. Businesses at this stage in their maturity journey are likely to see the benefits of their business in becoming more sustainable, such as cost savings and efficiency gains.

Businesses at the far end of their sustainability maturity journey have implemented initiatives across the entirety of the businesses. Such businesses are driven internally to pursue sustainable innovation, with sustainability being a primary factor in decision-making throughout all levels of the organisation. Sustainability is viewed as brand enhancement and a driver of long-term growth.

Under this framework, a small business can be further progressed in their sustainability maturity than a large company, even if the initiatives they have implemented are on a smaller scale.

A business may seek to improve their sustainability maturity for any number of different reasons. Understanding where a business is at in terms of sustainability maturity can help managers and owners not only identify opportunities – such as market growth, reduced operating costs, or reducing carbon emissions – but the challenges and barriers that are specific to the business's maturity level.

An assessment of Queensland business is also useful information for the government and industry bodies to identify where gaps currently exist, and what support is needed to progress the state further.



Ecochain sustainability path for businesses

The six stages describe what a business at each stage of the sustainability maturity pathway may look like overall. It is important to keep in mind however, real businesses are often at different stages across the three areas of motivation, accountability, and ownership.

Stage 0: Disregard

A company doesn't act with the environment in mind. Despite most industries having some form of environmental regulation, or consumer demand for sustainable products and services, a business may not yet consider the environment as part of their business operations.

Stage 1: Compliance

Businesses at the compliance stage make environmental decisions based solely on reducing operational risk and complying with regulations. No environmental key performance indicators are defined, and whoever is responsible for compliance measures own environmental topics.

Stage 2: Obligation

Businesses motivated by obligation are driven by outside market forces, such as consumer demand, or pressure from a larger business that is wanting to make their supply chain more sustainable. At this stage, consumers can request ad-hoc compliance information (e.g., some proof the product is environmentally friendly). HSE (Health, Safety, and Environment) managers, or part-time sustainability managers own sustainability.

Stage 3: Efficiency

At the efficiency stage, businesses begin to realise sustainable business practices can actually lead to cost savings and efficiency gains. Environmental key performance indicators partially influence operational decisions as they begin to be defined internally, and full-time, dedicated sustainability personnel own sustainability.

Stage 4: Leadership

It is at the leadership stage that businesses become more driven from internal forces. Sustainable practices and innovation are viewed as brand enhancement, and a driver for long-term growth and business viability. Environmental key performance indicators are defined at a high-level and top-level management own sustainability, with their performance partially measured using environmental key performance indicators.

Stage 5: Purpose

Purpose-driven companies are aiming to create value for society and the environment. They are often founded with that purpose specifically in mind. Sustainability is not a factor to consider, but the main factor in any decision made in the business. Environmental key performance indicators are defined for decision-making on every level, and environmental considerations hold a high strategic priority within the business. Everyone is responsible for sustainability measures and environmental performance in a purpose-driven business.

Figure 1 Sustainability Maturity Path, developed by PwC and adopted by Ecochain



Measuring businesses on sustainability maturity

To assess Queensland businesses' sustainability maturity level, we surveyed businesses across Queensland on a range of operational and strategic factors. The maturity model adopted was based on the Sustainability Maturity Path model developed by PwC and adopted by Ecochain.²⁰ The Sustainability Maturity Path model measures maturity in three areas: motivation, accountability, and ownership.

Across the three areas, businesses can be placed at six points from zero to five, with each number representing a stage along the sustainability maturity path:

20. Ecochain, Sep 2020, Sustainability Maturity Model: How far do you go for the planet? <https://ecochain.com/knowledge/sustainability-maturity-model/>

To truly reflect the Queensland business experience, we surveyed businesses on their sustainable practices through the September quarter 2022 Pulse Survey. 323 businesses responded to the survey questions on sustainability maturity, where the results were used to calculate an average sustainability maturity score for Queensland businesses.

Each business scored themselves across the three categories of motivation, accountability, and ownership. The average of these three scores was then used to calculate each business's sustainability maturity score. This allowed us to then to obtain the aggregate scores for Queensland as outlined in table 3 overleaf.

A profile of business survey respondents can be found at the back of the report.

Why – motivation

the drivers of a business's environmental decision making – the reasons why a business acts on their environmental performance, and to what extent

0 – Disregard: No, the business does not act with the environment in mind.

1 – Compliance: Any business environmental decision making is driven by compliance, solely to reduce operational risk and to comply to regulations.

2 – Obligation: The business is motivated to meet the expectations of outside market forces, such as meeting the demands of certain products, proof or validations.

3 – Efficiency: The business has implemented processes which minimise environmental impacts to achieve efficiency or operational cost savings.

4 – Leadership: The business has implemented sustainable processes and the leadership team has adopted sustainability as a management philosophy.

5 – Purpose: The business is purpose-driven, with environmental sustainability the main factor in any decision made in the business

How – accountability

how performance is measured – are there environmental key performance indicators to measure environmental performance, and if so, to what extent are they used?

0 – Disregard: No, the business does not measure its environmental impact in any way.

1 – Compliance: The business has not set any environmental key performance indicators, with compliance only to meet any minimum legal requirements

2 – Obligation: The business has not set any environmental key performance indicators but is able to answer ad-hoc requests from the market. Such as a customer requesting an environmental product declaration (EPD).

3 – Efficiency: The business has environmental key performance indicators defined on a functional level, with operational decisions partly influenced by environmental key performance indicators.

4 – Leadership: The business has environmental key performance indicators set for which management are either strongly influenced, incentivised, or measured on.

5 – Purpose: The business has environmental key performance indicators defined for decision making on every level, with environmental considerations outweighing economic considerations.

Who – ownership

who in the business is responsible for sustainability and environmental decision making.

0 – Disregard: No one in the business takes responsibility for sustainability

1 – Compliance: Environmental topics are ad-hoc owned by whoever is responsible (legal, operations).

2 – Obligation: Sustainability is owned by QHSE (Quality, Health, Safety, Environment) managers as functional business units, or by part-time sustainability managers in order to meet obligations.

3 – Efficiency: Sustainability is owned by full-time, dedicated sustainability personnel employed by the business.

4 – Leadership: Sustainability is owned by top-level management or executive, with an executive role defined for sustainability.

5 – Purpose: Environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business, and everyone is responsible for the environmental performance.

Sustainability maturity score

Calculated as an average of Motivation, Accountability and Ownership scores





Queensland
business
sustainability
maturity

Queensland businesses recorded a sustainability maturity score of 2.0, placing Queensland businesses on average at Stage 2: Obligation.



Survey findings

Queensland businesses recorded a sustainability maturity score of 2.0, placing Queensland businesses on average at Stage 2: Obligation.

Table 3 Sustainability maturity for Queensland businesses

Area	Queensland score
Motivation	2.3
Accountability	1.6
Ownership	2.3
Maturity Score	2.0

This result suggests that on average, Queensland businesses are making sustainability related decisions beyond their industry's minimum compliance requirements, due to external pressures such as consumer demand and a push towards sustainable supply chains.

Although Queensland businesses on average are at the Obligation stage, this does not tell the full story. It is important to recognise that businesses at each stage face different challenges and require targeted support to progress. Looking at the distribution of the maturity scores of Queensland businesses, and not just the average, allows for greater insights.

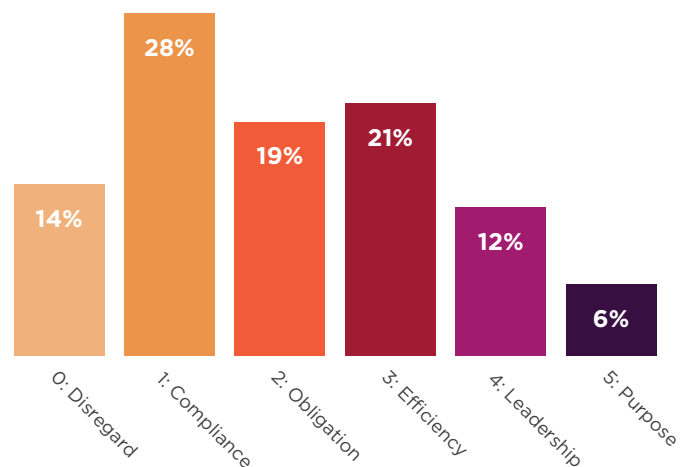
Distribution of maturity

Starting at Disregard, 14% of Queensland businesses indicated that overall, they do not act with the environment in mind. More than one in four Queensland businesses (28%) are sitting at the Compliance stage where environmental decisions are made to meet regulatory requirements and reduce operational risk.

One in five (19%) businesses have reached the Obligation stage, followed by a further 21% at Efficiency. Businesses at these stages recognise that incorporating sustainable practices is smart business, doing so either in response to external market forces, or to achieve efficiency gains and cost-savings.

Encouragingly, almost one in five businesses scored within the high end of sustainability maturity where sustainability is embedded within the business, with 12% at Leadership and 6% at Purpose.

Figure 2 The distribution of Queensland businesses' sustainability maturity scores.



As part of our research, we conducted a series of consultations with businesses, academics, and other experts for this report. Consistently amongst these discussions was the view that **Queensland businesses were not sufficiently aware of the economic benefits of implementing sustainable business practices.**

Sustainability motivation

Motivation speaks to the drivers of a business's environmental decisions – the reasons why a business acts on their environmental performance, and to what extent.

Queensland businesses reporting their motivation via the following question and responses:

Q: “Does your business implement any decision making or operational activities to act on its environmental impact?”

0 – Disregard: *No, the business does not act with the environment in mind.*

1 – Compliance: *Any business environmental decision making is driven by compliance, solely to reduce operational risk and to comply to regulations.*

2 – Obligation: *The business is motivated to meet the expectations of outside market forces, such as meeting the demands of certain products, proof or validations.*

3 – Efficiency: *The business has implemented processes which minimise environmental impacts to achieve efficiency or operational cost savings.*

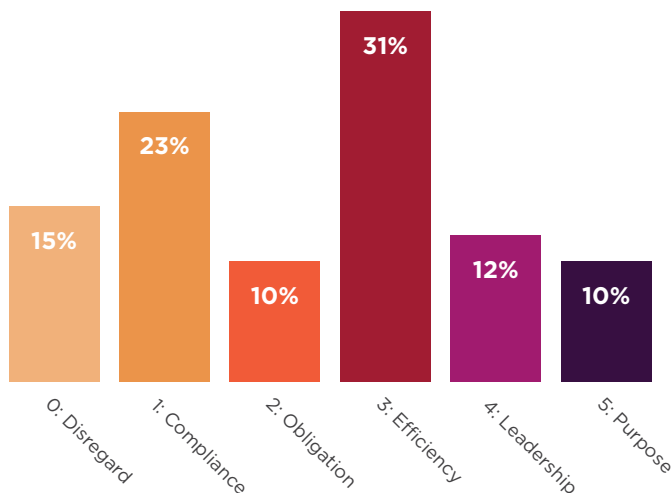
4 – Leadership: *The business has implemented sustainable processes and the leadership team has adopted sustainability as a management philosophy.*

5 – Purpose: *The business is purpose-driven, with environmental sustainability the main factor in any decision made in the business.*

Survey findings

In terms of motivation, Queensland businesses achieved an average of 2.3. This suggests that on average, Queensland businesses have progressed past the Obligation stage and are motivated beyond regulatory compliance measures, basing their environmental decisions on external market forces and efficiency.

Figure 3 Distribution of businesses across motivation



While the average score for motivation (the why) for Queensland businesses was 2.3, close to one third (31%) of businesses said Efficiency motivated their business, with a further 12% at the Leadership stage, and 10% at the Purpose stage. This indicates that many businesses are aware of the various economic benefits of implementing sustainable business practices. However, almost one in four (23%) remained at the Compliance stage, as well as 15% of businesses sitting at Disregard – reporting that they do not act with the environment at mind.

The findings suggest Queensland businesses are motivated to commit more to sustainable practices and ready to take the next steps to achieve efficiency for environmental operations in their businesses.

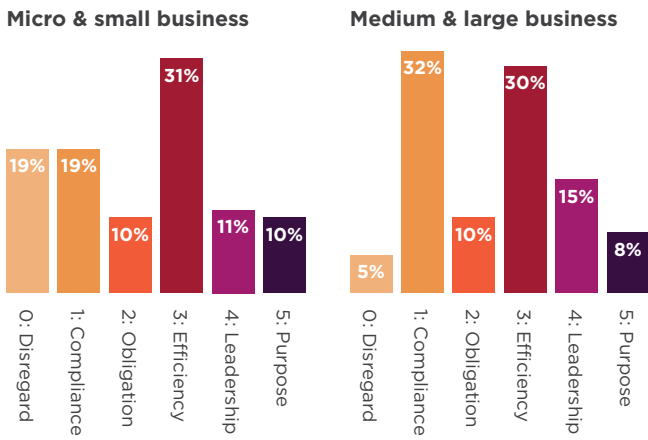
It is clear there are opportunities for both Queensland businesses and government to progress sustainability motivation.

There were mixed opinions on how motivated Queensland businesses are on their journey to adopt sustainability practices.

While some indicated that businesses are “very motivated” and “small businesses are definitely more motivated now than they ever have been”, others were more reserved, and believed businesses to be primarily motivated by regulatory requirements, and that time and resources constraints for SMEs are preventing further progression.

By business size

Figure 4 Distribution of businesses for sustainability motivation by business size groups.



Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding

Close to one in five (19%) of all micro and small businesses indicated they do not act with the environment in mind.

Yet at the same time, survey and consultation findings revealed micro and small businesses are more motivated than ever before. 52% of micro and small businesses have reached or exceeded the Efficiency stage, showing the majority of businesses recognise sustainable business is smart business.

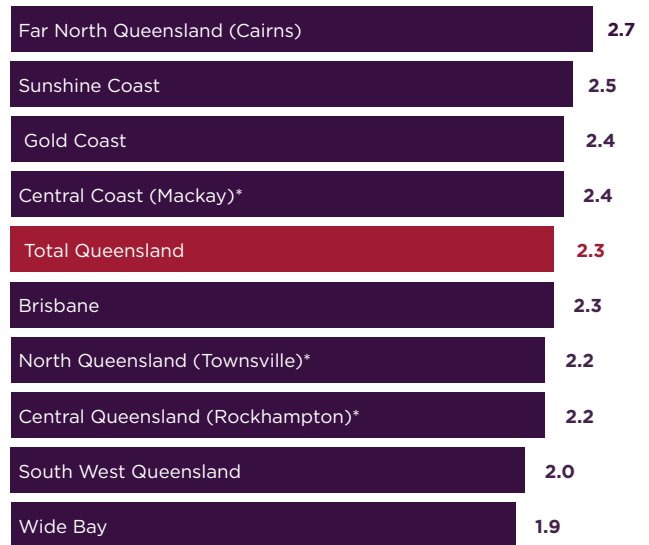
Similarly, 53% of medium and large businesses are reaching the Efficiency stage or greater for motivation. Close to one third (32%) businesses of this size are solely meeting compliance requirements, however larger businesses are also far less likely to disregard sustainability altogether, with only 5% of medium and large businesses indicating environmental outcomes do not factor into their decision making at all.

Average motivation scores by business size differed from the state average, with scores ranging from 2.2 for micro businesses to 2.4 for medium-sized businesses. The primary reason for the difference is the significant proportion of micro and small businesses that are operating at Disregard in motivation.

While this represents a gap, it also demonstrates micro and small businesses have the highest potential to begin their sustainability maturity journey and implement easy to adopt sustainable practices.

By region

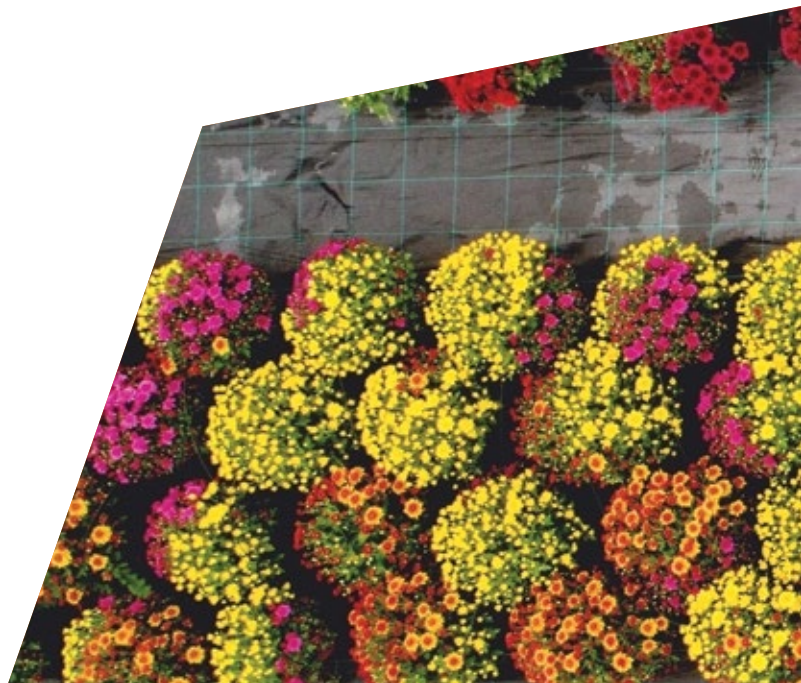
Figure 5 Sustainability motivation by region.



Regions with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20.

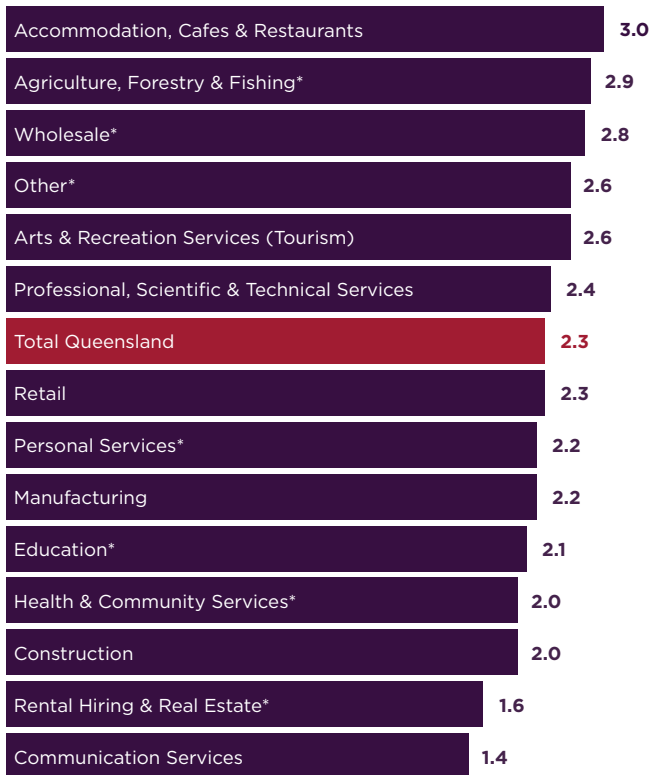
A regional breakdown of businesses' motivation score shows Far North Queensland, Sunshine Coast, and Gold Coast, all achieved motivation scores above the state average with Far North Queensland reporting the highest score for motivation at 2.7. This places the region and Sunshine Coast closer to the Efficiency stage of the maturity model for motivation.

Wide Bay-Burnett and South West Queensland reported motivation scores of 1.9 and 2.0 respectively. It is important to note that the differences in scores from region to region may be more reflective of the makeup of industries and business sizes within those regions.



By industry

Figure 6 Sustainability motivation by industry.



Industries with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20. Results for certain industries were excluded due to limited sample size.

The 'accommodation, cafes and restaurants' sector reported the highest motivation score for Queensland businesses, with an average score of 3.0, firmly at the Efficiency stage.

The 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' sector also scored high at 2.9, followed by 'wholesale', 'art and recreational services (tourism)', and the 'professional, scientific and technical services' sector which all placed above the state average. Many of these sectors tend to be reliant on the environment (such as agriculture and tourism activities), or heavily consumer-facing (such as accommodation, cafes and restaurants).

There is still progress to be made in the 'communications services' industry with a score of 1.4, on average closer to being placed at the compliance stage, as well as the 'rental hiring and real estate' industry with a score of 1.6. This suggests a significant number of businesses in these industries are driven solely through complying with regulations.

Additional measures may be needed for some businesses, including both encouragement and incentives. Actions such as introducing levies or legislations like single-use plastic ban can motivate businesses past the compliance stages to adopt further sustainable practices.





CASE STUDY

Perfect Potion

Perfect Potion, located in Banyo, Brisbane manufactures and retails organic skincare and aromatherapy products. From their packaging to their potions, Perfect Potion is paving the way for sustainability excellence in the manufacturing space, including moving to a purpose-built manufacturing and warehousing facility in 2017. As participants in the ecoBiz program, they have cut their energy consumption and waste sent to landfill by more than half.

For the owners of Perfect Potion, sustainability is intrinsic to their personal values and therefore a driving motivation for the business. They have also found that their commitment to sustainability has strengthened their employee retention, with employees finding themselves drawn to these strong sustainability values.

Energy reduction initiatives implemented

Through installing a 99kW solar system, Perfect Potion has seen reduced energy costs, with a return on their investment realised in only four years. Perfect Potion has been able to remove peak demand charges from their energy bills and are now producing more energy than they are using and inputting it back into the grid. To further reduce their energy needs, skylight panels were installed to maximise natural light into the warehouse, and where lighting is needed, energy-efficiency LEDs have been utilised.

Excessive air-conditioning has also been avoided through fully insulating their warehouse space and installing plastic curtains to avoid cooling loss. Additionally, mechanical ventilation in their packaging bay helps circulate air where it is needed most.

Waste reduction initiatives implemented

To avoid plastic packaging, Perfect Potion purchased a cardboard crimper so that cardboard waste can be recycled for outgoing shipments. Waste stations throughout the warehouse enable easy and efficient waste separation, with soft plastics, batteries and print cartridges all being recycled.

Circular economy concepts are also employed, with used pallets and plastic drums being given away to partner businesses, removing further waste from landfill.

“We were happy to outlay costs to implement initiatives as they aligned with our core values, however we were pleasantly surprised that the changes made have reduced our overheads. I encourage other business owners to take up the program as they’ll see cost savings in their operations and return on their investments, they might be pleasantly surprised.”

**SALVATORE BATTAGLIA,
CO-FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Future-focused actions needed

- Business-focused **education and awareness** to progress sustainability maturity, targeted at cohorts needing assistance in progressing motivation.
- **Identify and fund** high value, high skilled industries for targeted research and development.
- Increase support for Queensland business to **scale, grow and diversify sustainable products and services** for domestic and international markets.
- Commit targeted funding and incentives for Queensland business to **purchase new or upgraded technologies and processes** that improve the adoption of new sustainable practices.

Steps businesses can take

- **Register for programs or mentoring** to help progress their business’s sustainability maturity, such as the ecoBiz program.
- **Source grants and other funding** to help implement sustainability initiatives.
- Implement a **sustainability education and awareness program** within the business such as employee training.
- Consider aligning with broader **sustainability commitments and objectives** for their industry.
- Explore avenues for **external partnerships and collaboration** to progress their sustainability journey, including sustainable supply chains.

Sustainability accountability

Accountability describes how sustainability can be measured within a business – such as the adoption of key performance indicators to measure environmental performance, and to what extent these are used and tracked to inform a business’s decision making.

Queensland businesses reporting their accountability via the following question and responses:

Q: “Does your business implement any decision making or operational activities to act on its environmental impact?”

0 – Disregard: *No, the business does not measure its environmental impact in any way.*

1 – Compliance: *The business has not set any environmental key performance indicators, with compliance only to meet any minimum legal requirements.*

2 – Obligation: *The business has not set any environmental key performance indicators but is able to answer ad-hoc requests from the market. Such as a customer requesting an environmental product declaration (EPD).*

3 – Efficiency: *The business has environmental key performance indicators defined on a functional level, with operational decisions partly influenced by environmental key performance indicators.*

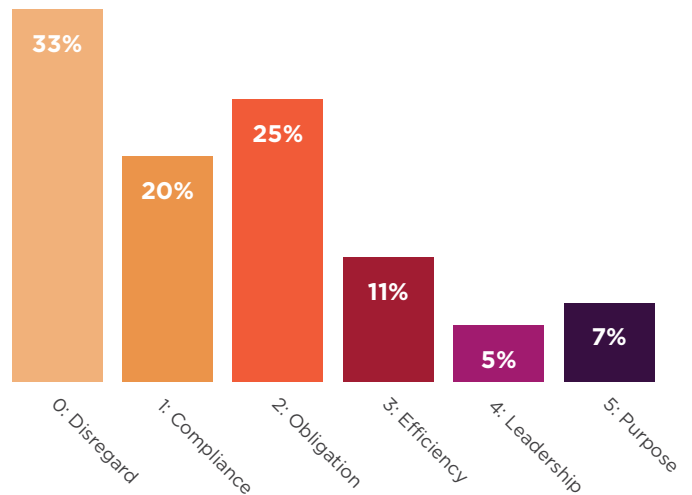
4 – Leadership: *The business has environmental key performance indicators set for which management are either strongly influenced, incentivised, or measured on.*

5 – Purpose: *The business has environmental key performance indicators defined for decision making on every level, with environmental considerations outweighing economic considerations.*

Survey findings

Queensland businesses were the least progressed in accountability, with an average of 1.6. This places Queensland businesses **beyond** the Compliance stage, where no environmental key performance indicators are defined, and environmental information is only collected for proof of compliance.

Figure 7 Distribution of businesses across accountability



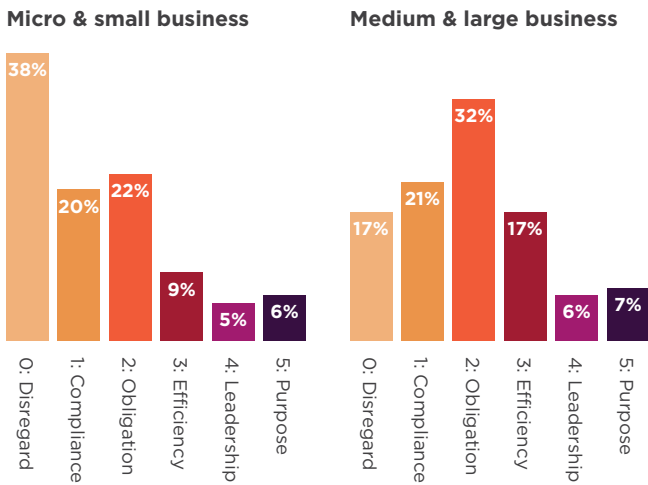
One third (33%) of businesses indicated they were at the Disregard stage in accountability (the how).

At Disregard, the business does not measure its environmental performance in any way. Moreover, the survey results showed only 11% of businesses have reached the Efficiency stage, 5% at Leadership, and 7% at Purpose. Efficiency in accountability is when functional environmental key performance indicators are first defined, suggesting **more than three in four businesses have not defined any key performance indicators for environmental performance.**

One possible explanation for the lag in accountability may be due to a lack of capability or knowledge with respect to setting environmental **key performance indicators** despite the motivation to enact more sustainable business practices.

By business size

Figure 8 Distribution of businesses for sustainability accountability by business size



Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Micro and small businesses reported lower levels of accountability than the state average, with an average of 1.4. **One in five (20%) micro and small businesses reported being at stages 3 – 5 in accountability, where key performance indicators to track their environmental performance start to be implemented on a functional level.** However, nearly two in five (38%) businesses of that size indicated they do not measure their environmental impact in any way.

Medium and large businesses reported an average accountability of 1.9, which is above the state average and places organisations of this size close to the Obligation stage for accountability. Larger businesses tend to have higher levels of accountability, with **three in ten (30%) medium and large businesses reporting being at the Efficiency stage or further – implementing environmental key performance indicators on a functional level.**

Yet, this still represents a minority of businesses of that size, showing the majority of businesses of any size have not yet pushed further than the Obligation stage in terms of accountability. Potentially, it may be that while businesses of larger sizes are more sensitive to market pressures and external forces, there are still not enough internal drivers to push these businesses further on sustainability accountability.

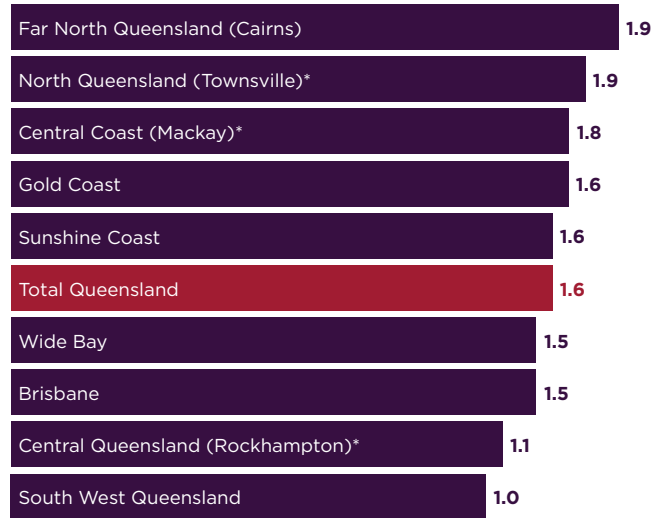
Accountability: Where to start?

There are many simple and cost-effective ways businesses can improve their accountability, such as tracking their utilities usage through their bills, establishing sustainable developmental goals, adopting practices such as eco-labelling, and taking advantage of programs such as ecoBiz.

For guidance on where to start, refer to the back of the report for resources and assistance.

By region

Figure 9 Sustainability accountability by region.



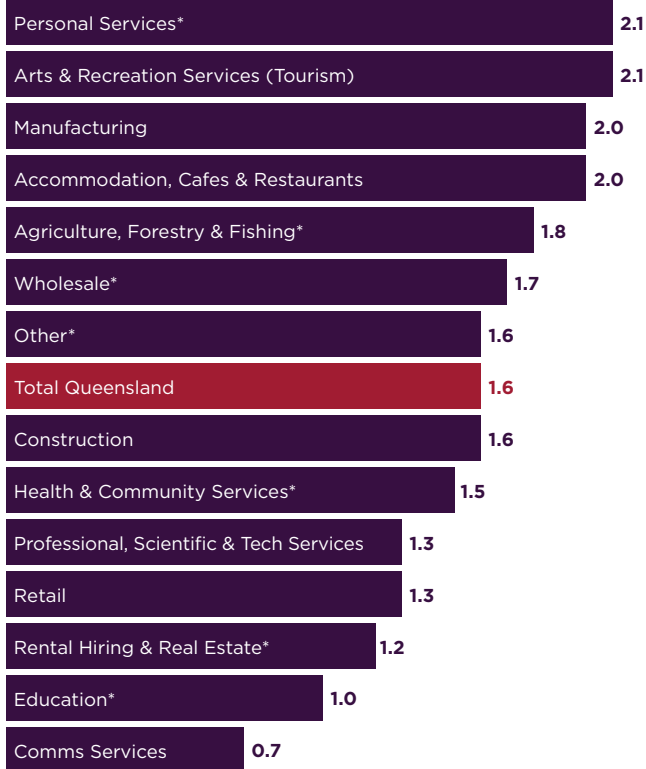
Regions with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20.

Accountability scores as reported by businesses also vary by region. Far North Queensland is once again leading, reporting the highest score of 1.9. North Queensland followed closely behind (1.9), then Central Coast (1.8). Central Queensland and South West Queensland stand out with scores of 1.1 and 1.0 respectively – significantly lower than the state average.



By industry

Figure 10 Sustainability accountability by industry.



Industries with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20. Results for certain industries were excluded due to limited sample size.

Industries that performed well in accountability included ‘personal services’ and ‘art and recreational services (tourism)’ at 2.1, followed by ‘manufacturing’ and ‘accommodation, cafes and restaurants’ at 2.0. In contrast, the ‘communications services’ industry sector reported 0.7 in accountability.

The top scoring industries in accountability are those with extended interactions with their customers such as ‘personal services’ and ‘accommodation, cafes, and restaurants’. However, ‘retail’ is an outlier to this observation, scoring only a 1.3 in accountability. This may be due to retail stores usually located within larger shopping centres, leaving little control of the implementation of accountability initiatives. Other high scoring industries have also seen increased demand for sustainable products in recent years, for example sustainable packaging in manufacturing.

Additionally, many high scoring industries are those with a direct reliance on the environment including ‘art and recreational services (tourism)’ and ‘agriculture, forestry, and fishing’.

There exists external and competitive pressure for businesses to be more sustainable, especially in more customer facing industries.

Eco-labelling is an increasingly common practice, although generally there are limited actions businesses take to review their supply chain to reassess the environmental impacts of material use in their production and services.

Businesses should prepare for standards and regulatory requirements for this to be applied consistently in the future. For example, usage of eco-labelling, to identify “sustainably sourced” materials or “non-certified” materials. As such, adopting these practices and standards early may give businesses significant competitive advantages.





CASE STUDY

Applied Environment and Safety

Based in Noosa Heads, Applied Environment and Safety believe in promoting environmental sustainability and leading by example. As a company, they provide practical environmental and safety consulting services across a wide range of residential, commercial, and construction projects to add value and improve outcomes for their clients.

Their team focuses on practical aspects of environmental and safety planning, implementation, and compliance and have experience consulting across a diverse range of industries including power and transmission; transport and roads; oil and gas; and property development across Australia.²¹

Accountability means ensuring a business can measure and track their sustainability initiatives and performance. Applied Environment and Safety have invested in strategic programs to support their sustainability journey, including undertaking the ecoBiz program, and obtaining carbon neutral accreditation.

ecoBiz

Applied Environment and Safety have utilised the free ecoBiz program as one of the ways to track their environmental performance. Through this process, the business obtained a quantitative measure of their energy, water, and waste usage. As a result of the program, Applied Environment and Safety have implemented several initiatives to reduce their energy and water consumption and waste production, earning a three-star partnership from ecoBiz by reducing their energy, water and waste consumption relative to their productivity, by more than 10%.

21. Applied Environment and Safety, 2022. <https://appliedes.com.au/>

Carbon neutrality

Applied Environment and Safety have successfully become carbon neutral through Climate Active certification. This involved quantifying all their emissions, reducing their emissions, and then offsetting any remaining emissions to achieve a net-zero carbon emissions output.

Following obtaining carbon neutral accreditation, Applied Environment and Safety set out their five-year carbon emissions reduction strategy. This involves transitioning their vehicle fleet to electric vehicles and reducing the emissions in their supply chain through supporting other carbon neutral businesses. Another goal of their business is to shift towards zero waste.

These initiatives require on-going monitoring and the setting of environmental key performance indicators that can be considered at every level of their business.

“We really believe that every person and every business can make a difference. You don’t need to be a big organisation, or spend a lot of money, there are sustainable options, sustainable choices for everyone and every business.”

MELANIE DIXON, DIRECTOR AND PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT

Future-focused actions needed

- Work alongside industry to develop **targets for achieving net zero** carbon emissions in Queensland.
- Invest in the development of easy to use, accessible **carbon accounting tools**.
- **Regional business support** for implementing sustainability measuring and reporting processes.

Steps businesses can take

- **Register for the ecoBiz program** and learn how monitoring and coaching can better inform your sustainability decision making.
- Look into **sustainability accreditation and certifications**.
- Set **goals, targets, and timeframes** for each sustainability initiative.
- Implement **ongoing monitoring and evaluation** of sustainability initiatives, such as understanding your carbon footprint.
- **Annual reporting** on sustainability progress.
- **Embed sustainability** into key values, principles and operating procedures and reporting across all service lines.

Sustainability ownership

Critical to progress being made on sustainability is having clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the organisation. Ownership in sustainability maturity addresses who in the business is responsible for environmental decision making.

Queensland businesses reporting their ownership via the following question and responses:

Q: “Does your business implement any decision making or operational activities to act on its environmental impact?”

0 – Disregard: *No one in the business takes responsibility for sustainability.*

1 – Compliance: *Environmental topics are ad-hoc owned by whoever is responsible (legal, operations).*

2 – Obligation: *Sustainability is owned by QHSE (Quality, Health, Safety, Environment) managers as functional business units, or by part-time sustainability managers in order to meet obligations.*

3 – Efficiency: *Sustainability is owned by full-time, dedicated sustainability personnel employed by the business.*

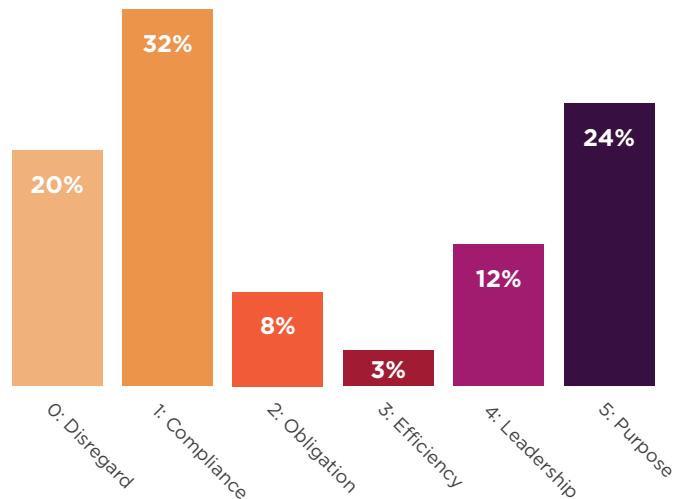
4 – Leadership: *Sustainability is owned by top-level management or executive, with an executive role defined for sustainability.*

5 – Purpose: *Environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business, and everyone is responsible for the environmental performance.*

Survey findings

On average, Queensland businesses performed as well in ownership as they did in motivation with an average of 2.3. This suggests that Queensland businesses have progressed past the Obligation stage. **That is, the average Queensland business has dedicated staff with sustainability related responsibilities.**

Figure 11 Distribution of Queensland businesses across ownership



The distribution of responses shows the key differences in motivation and ownership, with businesses tending towards high and low ends of the maturity path in ownership. Close to one in three (32%) of Queensland businesses are at the Compliance stage regarding ownership, with a further 20% at Disregard.

In this instance, the difference between the average and the ‘typical’ Queensland business can be explained by more than 24% of businesses placing their business at the Purpose stage. Purpose-driven in Ownership is achieved when environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business and everyone is responsible for environmental performance.

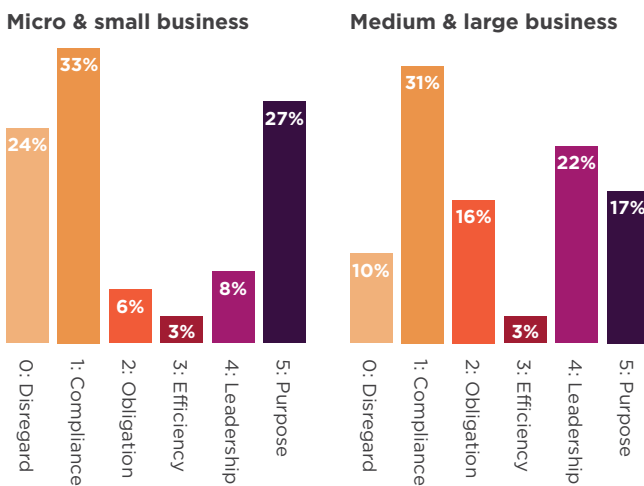
This result was heavily driven by micro and small businesses where owners, managers, and those in small teams often share responsibilities for all aspects of the business, including sustainability, compared to larger organisations where there may be defined roles for those responsibilities. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to see that **almost one in four (24%) of Queensland businesses report that environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business, and everyone is responsible for the environmental performance.**

By business size

Micro and small businesses reported an average ownership score of 2.2, with most businesses indicating either no-one takes responsibility for sustainability in their business (24%) or it is handled ad-hoc by whoever the responsibility falls on (33%).

Looking at the distribution of responses shows that businesses tended towards the extremes, with the average for micro and small businesses being lifted by 27% of business indicating they are purpose-driven, where environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business, and everyone is responsible for environmental performance.

Figure 12 Distribution of businesses for sustainability ownership by business size.



Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

We know that small business owners often wear many hats and given the size of businesses in this category; it is possible that many businesses would be purpose-driven by default. For example, for a sole trader “everyone” being responsible for environmental performance would refer to only one person.

Medium and large businesses reported an average ownership of 2.5, placing them above the state average and closer to the Efficiency stage. When comparing to micro and small businesses, a similar distribution of scores was observed, with the average score being a result of most businesses indicating a very low or very high score.

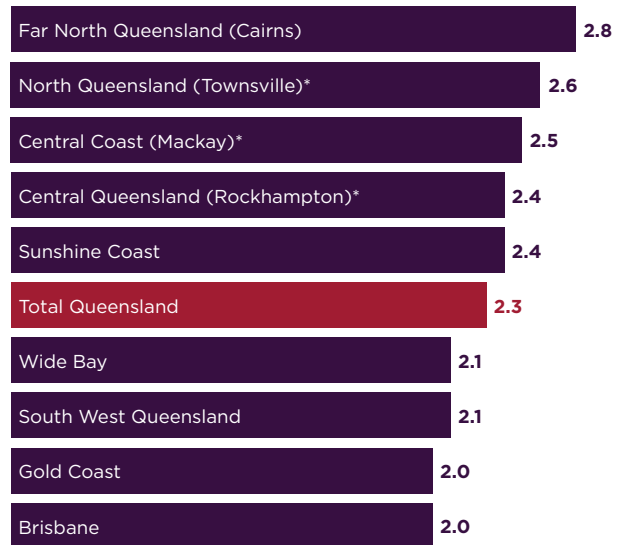
However, the distribution was not as extreme for medium and large businesses, with more businesses of this category placing at Obligation and Leadership, and fewer at the tail-ends of Disregard and Purpose.

The majority (59%) of medium and large businesses placed at least at the Obligation stage, suggesting most businesses of this size have employed part-time sustainability managers. More than one third (39%) achieved the Leadership stage or greater.

In addition to findings from the previous sections, this result suggests that despite being similarly motivated to micro and small businesses, larger businesses may be better equipped to effectively allocate ownership and establish methods to keep track of their environmental performance.

By region

Figure 13 Sustainability ownership by region.



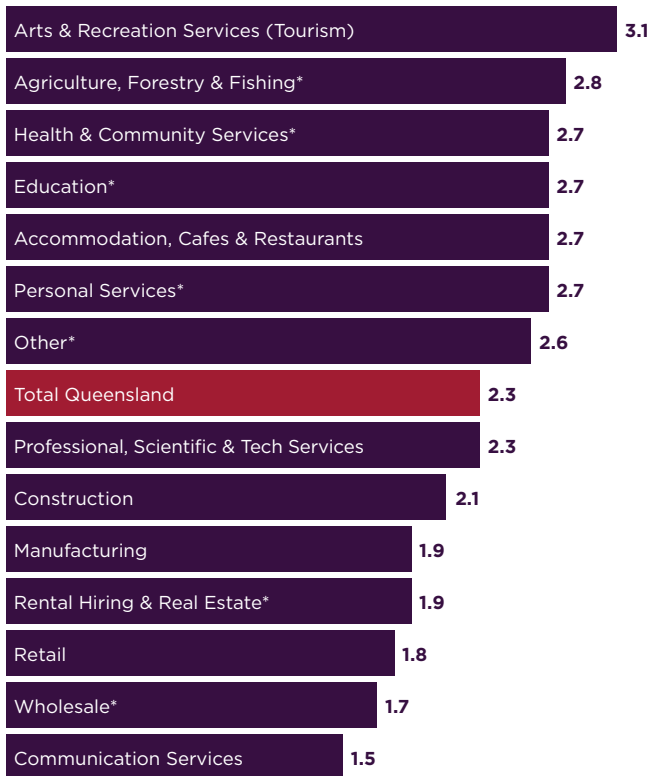
Regions with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20

Far North Queensland again led the state, scoring the highest at 2.8; just short of stage 3 - Efficiency. This suggested that a significant number of FNQ Far North Queensland businesses are showing great leadership by adopting in-house ownership of sustainability initiatives, either by employing a dedicated full-time sustainability staff member (6%), adopting executive level responsibilities (10%), or identifying as a purpose driven sustainable business across all activities (37%) – a great success story for Queensland.



By industry

Figure 14 Sustainability ownership by industry.



Industries with an asterisk indicate a sample less than 20. Results for certain industries were excluded due to limited sample size.

‘Art and recreational services (tourism)’ reported the highest score for ownership at 3.1, firmly at the Efficiency stage. Followed by ‘agriculture, forestry and fishing’ at 2.8, ‘health and community services’, ‘education’, ‘accommodation, cafes and restaurants’, and ‘personal services’ all at 2.7.

It is unsurprising sustainability ownership is widely well-defined and widely shared across the businesses in these top industries, as the importance of sustainability to these industries is apparent. ‘Agriculture, forestry and fishing’, and ‘art and recreational services (tourism)’ depend on the health of the environment and the availability of natural resources. These two industries have also scored above the state averages in motivation and accountability. Businesses in these industries are likely used to complying with environmental requirements, making it natural to develop clearly defined roles and responsibilities in this space.

‘Communication services’, ‘wholesale’, and ‘retail’ scored lower in adopting in-house sustainability ownership with scores of 1.5, 1.7, and 1.8 respectively.

“We have implemented structured goals and projects leading to improving our sustainability, and we follow the Membership of Environmental Sustainability Charter for our industry.”

LARGE BUSINESS, SUNSHINE COAST





CASE STUDY

WestsideHQ

WestsideHQ, located in Corinda, Brisbane is a buzzing hospitality venue and community hub originally established by the RSL as the Sherwood Service Club in 1966. The business has worked closely with their team and local community to transform their approach to sustainability.

WestsideHQ joined the ecoBiz program in 2022 and were recognised as an ecoBiz 3 Star Partner, having saved well over than 10% on water (20%), waste (53%), and energy (29%).

At Westside HQ, staff and customers are encouraged to participate in a range of sustainable business practices. Paper straws and napkins are composted, all metals are stockpiled, cans and bottles are recycled through the local Scouts groups' Containers for Change initiative, and bottle shop customers take their shopping home in recycled cartons instead of bags.

WestsideHQ have also implemented a range of sustainability initiatives including an upgraded commercial kitchen with new energy efficient equipment, LED lighting, energy efficient air-conditioning and gaming machines which shut off to support extensive energy savings.

WestsideHQ attribute their success to the ownership that all staff have taken in implementing the new sustainable practices. Even on a busy night behind the bar and in the kitchen, the team is diligent to sort waste into the correct streams.

The team's commitment and progressive implementation of low-cost behavioural changes to their operations have built up a culture of strong sustainability ownership.

“We created a culture among staff and management. If a light doesn't need to be on or a fridge, cold room or air conditioning doesn't need to be running, don't waste power just for convenience. Everyone from the kitchen staff who use compost bins to bar staff who separate containers on a busy night, it's been invaluable. You couldn't do it without a good team.”

PETROH DACZYNSKI, MANAGER

Future-focused actions needed

- **Showcasing and celebrating** success of sustainability business leaders in Queensland.
- **Commit to funding programs** for Queensland business participation and fostering leadership in the circular economy.
- Empower industry and local councils to develop plans for the **transition to sustainable and resilient industries** and communities.

Steps businesses can take

- Consider how the ecoBiz program and coaching can better **define sustainability roles and responsibilities** within your organisation.
- Establish a **workplace 'green team'** responsible for sustainability to foster internal behavioural change.
- Hire a **sustainability expert**.
- Clearly **assign and define responsibility** for different aspects of the business's sustainability objectives and overall strategy.
- **Ask and encourage** staff to contribute and identify opportunities for sustainability.
- Consider **incorporating sustainability values** into position descriptions.

Where to from here?

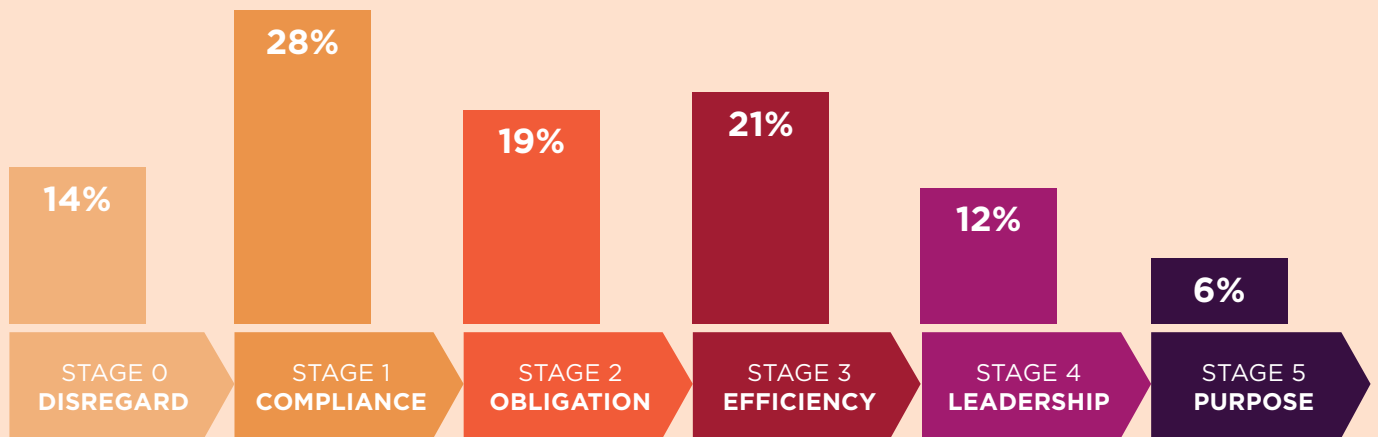
This research into the sustainability maturity of Queensland businesses has shown that businesses exist at all stages of sustainability maturity. However, on average on a scale from zero to five, Queensland businesses are at 2.0 - the Obligation stage. This shows that many businesses still require further support to progress through to the Efficiency, Leadership, and Purpose stages.

Queensland has an opportunity to progress the sustainability maturity of the business community, particularly as we race towards showcasing our state in the 2032 Olympic Games. To achieve a net-positive Games, as well as a Games which maximise the input of Queensland businesses, we need to get

to an average maturity level at the Efficiency stage, while also celebrating those businesses leading with purpose.

Progressing the sustainability maturity of Queensland business requires commitment and support from both business and government. Below we have outlined how industry and government can support businesses at their different stages of sustainability maturity.

The sustainable transformation of the Queensland economy provides an opportunity for significant growth. The Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games has committed to be the first net-positive Games. Queensland businesses will have a large role to play in achieving this.



Stage 0 – Disregard: 14%

Stage 1 – Compliance: 28%

42% of Queensland businesses implement sustainable initiatives to meet regulatory requirements (28%) or report that they disregard sustainable practices entirely (14%).

How we can support this cohort

Businesses at these stages are meeting compliance measures at best. To get them motivated requires a focus on education and awareness, as well as available support for starting their journey with initiatives such as ecoBiz.

Stage 2 – Obligation: 19%

Stage 3 – Efficiency: 21%

The next cohort of Queensland businesses recognise that incorporating sustainable practices is smart business, doing so either in response to external market forces, or to achieve efficiency gains and cost-savings.

How we can enable this cohort

Businesses here have started their sustainability journey and are likely to recognise the financial benefits of implementing sustainable practices. This cohort has a great opportunity to scale and grow their business by taking further advantage of the benefits sustainable practices can offer. Their sustainability journey can be progressed further through capability building, as well as support for overcoming the barriers to new sustainable products and services, and scaling sustainability in their operations. The enhanced ecoBiz program can guide businesses towards becoming an ecoBiz certified star-partner and achieve greater benefits for their business.

Stage 4 – Leadership: 12%

Stage 5 – Purpose: 6%

Businesses at these stages are leaders in sustainability maturity. Sustainable practices and innovation are either viewed as a driver for long-term growth and business viability, or for those most progressed, viewed as the main factor in all business decisions.

How we can enhance this cohort

Businesses at stages 4 and 5 are leaders in their industries and examples of best practice. Celebrating and showcasing these leaders will demonstrate to other businesses how it can be done, and motivate them to do the same to foster growth in sustainable business sectors in Queensland.

Summary

Table 4 Summary of findings and recommendations

Area of sustainability maturity	Insight from Queensland businesses	Steps businesses can take	Future-focused actions needed
<p>Why?</p> <p>Motivation: The reasons why a business acts on their environmental performance, and to what extent.</p>	<p>Queensland motivation score: 2.3 (Obligation). On average, Queensland businesses are motivated beyond just meeting regulatory requirements and are motivated by market expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One in ten micro and small businesses consider environmental sustainability as a main factor in their business decisions. Comparatively, close to one in five (19%) indicated they do not act with the environment in mind. • Far North Queensland achieved the highest regional motivation score at 2.7. Followed by Sunshine Coast (2.5) and Gold Coast (2.4). • Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants reported the highest motivation score for Queensland businesses, with an average score of 3.0 that places the industry firmly at the Efficiency stage. Followed by Agriculture (2.9) and Wholesale (2.8). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register for programs or mentoring to help progress their business's sustainability maturity, such as the ecoBiz program. • Source grants and other funding to help implement sustainability initiatives. • Implement a sustainability education and awareness program within the business such as employee training. • Consider aligning with broader sustainability commitments and objectives for their industry. • Explore avenues for external partnerships and collaboration to progress their sustainability journey, including sustainable supply chains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business-focused education and awareness to progress sustainability maturity, targeted at cohorts needing assistance in progressing motivation. • Identify and fund high value, high skilled industries for targeted research and development. • Increase support for Queensland business to scale, grow and diversify sustainable products and services for domestic and international markets. • Commit targeted funding and incentives for Queensland business to purchase new or upgraded technologies and processes that improve the adoption of new sustainable practices.
<p>How?</p> <p>Accountability: How sustainability performance can be measured in a business</p>	<p>Queensland accountability score: 1.6 (Obligation). On average, Queensland businesses do not have environmental KPIs or ways to track their impact in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of Queensland businesses have not defined KPIs to track their environmental performance. • Queensland businesses performed the lowest in accountability, with an average of 1.6. • Far North Queensland and North Queensland achieved the highest regional accountability scores at 1.9. Central Coast followed at 1.8. • Personal services and arts and recreational services (tourism) achieved the highest industry scores for accountability at 2.1 and was followed by manufacturing at 2.0. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register for the ecoBiz program and learn how monitoring and coaching can better inform your sustainability decision making. • Look into sustainability accreditation and certifications. • Set goals, targets, and timeframes for each sustainability initiative. • Implement ongoing monitoring and evaluation of sustainability initiatives, such as understanding your carbon footprint. • Annual reporting on sustainability progress. • Embed sustainability into key values, principles and operating procedures and reporting across all service lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work alongside industry to develop targets for achieving net zero carbon emissions in Queensland. • Invest in the development of easy to use, accessible carbon accounting tools. • Regional business support for implementing sustainability measuring and reporting processes.

Who?

Ownership:

who in the business is responsible for sustainability and environmental decision-making.

Queensland average ownership score: 2.3 (Obligation).

On average, Queensland businesses have staff to address the topic of sustainability.

- Far North Queensland achieved the **highest regional ownership score** at 2.8, followed by North Queensland and Central Coast (2.6 and 2.5, respectively).
- Art and recreational services (tourism) was the **furthest progressed industry with respect to ownership (3.1)**. Agriculture followed at 2.8 and health and community services at 2.7.

- Consider how the ecoBiz program and coaching can better **define sustainability roles and responsibilities** within your organisation.
- Establish a **workplace 'green team'** responsible for sustainability to foster internal behavioural change.
- Hire a **sustainability expert**.
- Clearly **assign and define responsibility** for different aspects of the business's sustainability objectives and overall strategy.
- **Ask and encourage** staff to contribute and identify opportunities for sustainability.
- Consider **incorporating sustainability values** into position descriptions.
- **Showcasing and celebrating** success of sustainability business leaders in Queensland.
- **Commit to funding programs** for Queensland business participation and fostering leadership in the circular economy.
- Empower industry and local councils to develop plans for the **transition to sustainable and resilient industries** and communities.



Resources

Resources available to businesses to assist them on their sustainability journey.

Programs	Provider Information	Description
ecoBiz	1300 731 988	ecoBiz is a free program for small to medium businesses, funded by the Queensland Government. With the help of an ecoBiz consultant, you can develop an action plan to help your business save money and increase efficiencies.
Community Sustainability Action grants	Queensland Government	The Community Sustainability Action grants fund eligible community groups and individuals for innovative projects addressing climate change and conserving Queensland's natural and built environment.
Climate Change Risk Management Tool for Small Business	Queensland Government	The risk management resource provides information on the risks of climate change and tools to determine the business's vulnerability. The tool is free and contains linked resources.
Business Energy and Advice Program	Australian Government	Free energy efficiency audits and advice for small businesses Australia-wide. The program supports business goals and growth through sustainability.
Emission Reduction Fund	Australian Government	The fund supports opportunities for the organisation to earn Australian carbon credit units for every tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent to a business store or avoids emitting through adopting new practices and technologies.

Some sustainable business practices to consider in your business

Adopting sustainable business practices is an operational priority for many businesses looking to reduce production waste, save on utility expenditure, and leverage a high-quality reputation. Below are some simple and cost-effective practices your business can adopt to become more sustainable.

No cost: Sustainable business practices that can be implemented today at no cost.

Low cost: Sustainable business practices that can be implemented with a small monetary or time investment.

Medium cost: Sustainable business practices that may require a moderate monetary or time investment. Research may be needed to see if this is a right fit for your business.

High cost: Sustainable business practices that may require a significant monetary or time investment. Research may be needed to see if this is a right fit for your business.

Sustainable Business Practice	Description	Cost
Energy efficiency initiatives	Turning off lights and appliances when not in use	No cost
	Setting up air conditioning temperatures to 25C° in summer and 18C° in winter	No cost
	Installing eco-efficient lightbulbs and lighting systems	Low to high cost
	Procure energy efficient appliances	Medium cost
	Install solar panels	High cost
Water efficiency initiatives	Checking for and monitoring leaks	Low cost
	Increase equipment metering to improve water usage tracking	Low to medium cost
	Install rainwater tanks	Medium to high cost
	Install high-efficiency tapware and toilets	Medium to high cost
	Procure water efficient appliances	Medium to high cost
Waste sorting and monitoring	Having a sustainable procurement policy	Low cost
	Use of reusable shopping bags, refillable water bottles, etc	Low cost
	Introduce soft plastic recycling	Low cost
	Improve separation of waste streams	Low to medium cost
	Establish composting scheme	Low to medium cost
	Introduce e-waste collection	Low to medium cost
Behavioural	Monitor and review billing	Low cost
	Set target KPIs and timeframes for improvements	Low cost
	Ask staff what opportunities they can identify	Low cost
	Evaluate alternative offers from utility providers	Low cost
	Establish a 'green team' and assign responsibility for sustainability actions	Low cost
	Investigate grants and funding	Low cost

Sustainability maturity assessment – quiz your business

Provided below is a self-assessment sheet for you to score businesses and determine where your business may be on your own sustainability journey.

For each column, circle the response that best reflects your business. Once finished, record the score of your selected options on the bottom row of the table. Finally, average out your three scores to find your business's overall maturity score.

	Motivation	Accountability	Ownership
Score	Does your business implement any decision making or operational activities to act on its environment impact?	There are several ways a business could measure its environmental impact, depending on the type of business and operations. Are there any key performance indicators (KPIs) for environmental activities in your business?	Who, if anyone, takes ownership or responsibility for sustainability decisions or initiatives in your business?
0	No, the business does not act with the environment in mind.	No, the business does not measure its environmental impact in any way	No-one in the business takes responsibility for sustainability.
1	Any business environmental decision making is driven by compliance, solely to reduce operational risk and to comply to regulations.	The business has not set any environmental KPIs, with compliance only to meet any minimum legal requirements.	Environmental topics are ad-hoc owned by whoever is responsible (legal, operations).
2	The business is motivated to meet the expectations of outside market forces, such as meeting the demands of certain products, proof or validations.	The business has not set any environmental KPIs, but can set up ad-hoc requests that answer to the market	Sustainability is owned by QHSE (Quality, Health, Safety, Environment) managers as functional business units, or by part-time sustainability managers to meet obligations.
3	The business has implemented processes which minimise environmental impacts to achieve efficiency or operational cost savings.	The business has environmental KPIs defined on a functional level, with operational decisions partly influenced by environmental KPIs	Sustainability is owned by full-time, dedicated sustainability personnel employed by the business.
4	The business has implemented sustainable processes and the leadership team has adopted sustainability as a management philosophy.	The business has environmental KPIs set for which management are either strongly influenced, incentivised or measured by.	Sustainability is owned by top-level management or executive, with an executive role defined for sustainability.
5	The business is purpose-driven, with environmental sustainability a main factor in any decision made in the business.	The business has environmental KPIs defined for decision making on every level, with environmental considerations outweighing economic considerations.	Environmental decision making occurs on every level in the business, and everyone is responsible for the environmental performance.
Final score	/5	/5	/5

The maturity in sustainability practices score for your business is the average of the three scores you reported earlier. Round your final average score to the nearest number and use the below figure to identify the current stage of your sustainability journey.

What are my next steps?

Here are some ideas on what to do if you want to progress your business further on sustainable practices:

If your score is 0 to 1: you are at the early stages of your sustainability journey. The good news is, there are significant opportunities for your business. Consider scoring some quick wins with the following suggestions:

- Register for programs or mentoring to help progress their business's sustainability maturity, such as the ecoBiz program.
- Identify if any savings and efficiencies can be achieved from your utility bills.
- Make use of any free resources available in this report.
- Talk to your customers for sustainability ideas they would like to see in your business.

If your score is 2 to 3: you are making great progress. At the Efficiency stage (3), you have started to implement sustainable business practices that lead to cost savings and efficiency gains. There are opportunities for your business to advance in its sustainability maturity and benefit further. To keep on growing sustainably, explore:

- Register for the ecoBiz program and learn how monitoring and coaching can better inform your sustainability decision making.
- Has your business implemented any new sustainable business practices in the last 12 months?
- What, if any, barriers exist for your business to implement new sustainable business practices or operations?

If your score is 4 to 5: Congratulations, your business is showing great leadership in the sustainability space. It is businesses like yours that can bring others along on their sustainability journey. You might consider:

- Sustainable business practices are ever evolving, so be sure to stay up to date with the latest innovations and technologies.
- Lead by example within your business community, sharing your journey with others and the lessons you have learned can help others.





ecoBiz is a free program provided to Queensland businesses to help them reduce their energy and water consumption, waste production and save money, at no cost. The program is delivered in partnership with the Queensland Government.

The ecoBiz program is open to any small to medium (under 200 FTEs) organisation and provides advice on how to cut costs through improved resource efficiency. The assessment covers your organisation's:

- Energy use and how to reduce it, including a tariff review
- Water use and how to conserve it
- Waste generation and how to reduce it
- A carbon snapshot based on provided utility information

The ecoBiz team is always available to help you

Phone: 1300 731 988

Email: ecobiz@businesschamberqld.com.au

Website: ecobiz.businesschamberqld.com.au

What we require from you:

Step 1: Register for the ecoBiz Program

Step 2: The last 12 months of your business's energy water and/or waste invoices

Step 3: 2 hours of your time

What you will receive:

- Site walk-through with a sustainability expert
- Assessment of how you use energy, water and generate waste
- Tailored recommendations on how to save
- Opportunities for partnership to reward sustainable action

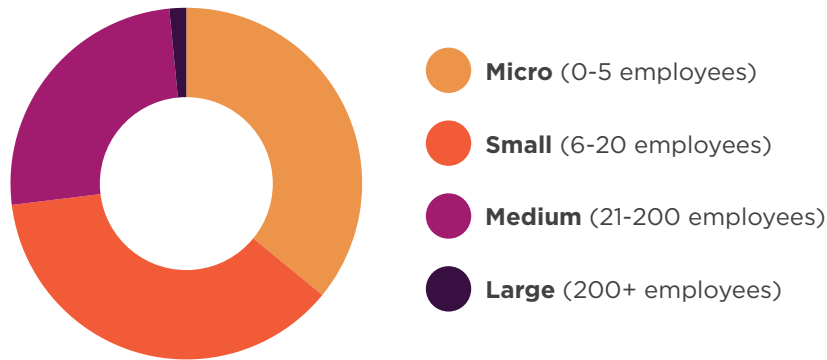
For more information visit

ecobiz.businesschamberqld.com.au

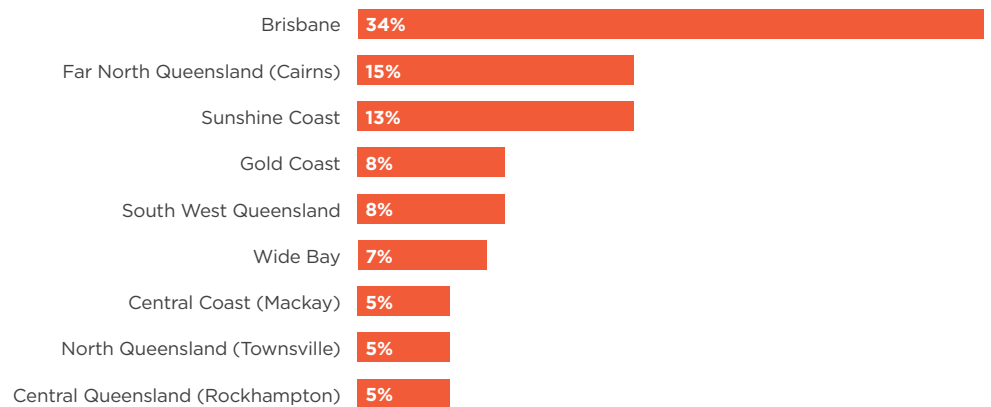
Profile of survey respondents

Business Chamber Queensland collected survey responses via the Pulse Survey of Business Conditions for the September quarter, open from September 29th to October 24th. The sustainability related questions achieved a sample of 323.

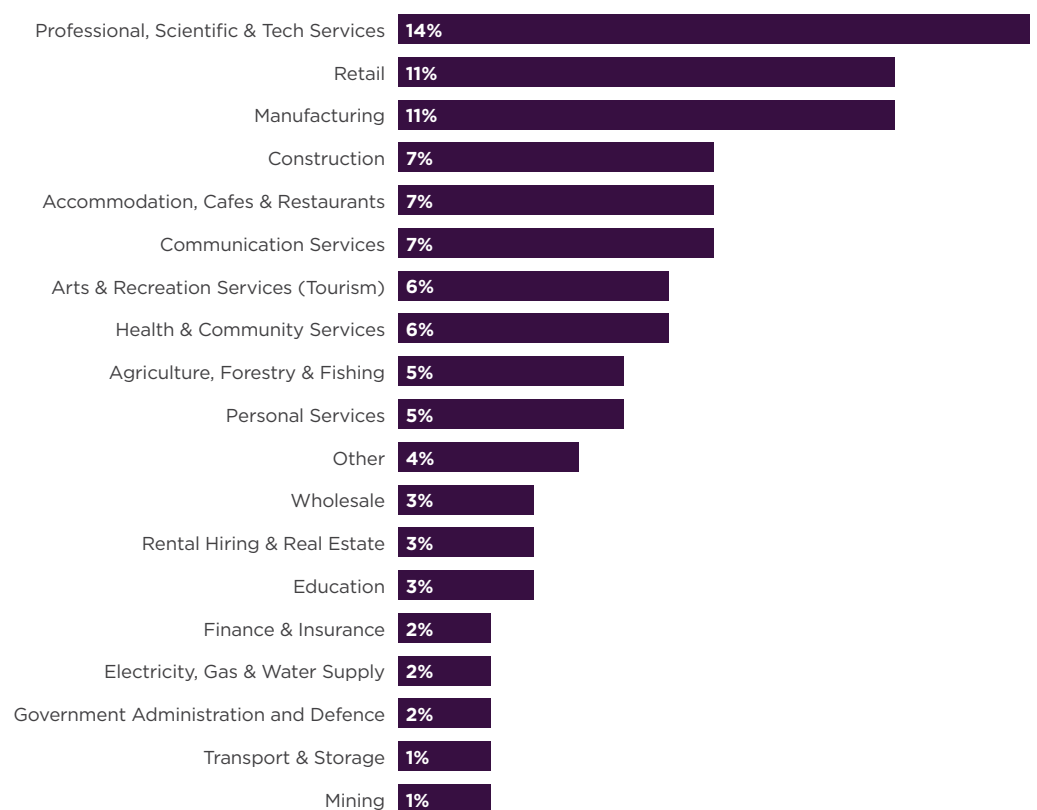
Survey responses by business size



Regional breakdown of survey responses



Industry breakdown of survey responses



Acknowledgements

Business Chamber Queensland would like to thank the following organisations for participating in consultations to inform this report.

- Applied Environment & Safety
- Darwalla Group
- Ernst & Young
- Griffith University
- ekko.world
- Perfect Potion
- Planet Ark
- Process Systems
- University of Queensland
- WestsideHQ

We also thank the extensive business chamber network across Queensland, consisting of more than 100 local and regional chambers advocating for, and supporting Queensland business.

Most importantly we thank the contributions of Queensland businesses in sharing their business experiences through our survey.





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QUEENSLAND

