

Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday Regional Water Strategy



MIW Regional Water Strategy



A I T H E R



The MIW Regional Water Strategy is designed to:



Removing barriers and supporting economic development across the MIW region

Region-wide coordinated agricultural expansion

Region-wide agricultural expansion can be achieved through market driven land use change. This requires information sharing and co-ordination between industry, government and bulk water suppliers.

Actions package

- Coordinate agricultural product market intelligence and regional productive capacity to inform water development and realise export opportunities
- To incentivise investment, create a 'one stop shop' information hub to market Queensland's water products and agricultural land suitability
- Incentivise agricultural investment through attraction tours and marketing
- Communicate to stakeholders, via regular updates, the status of bulk water infrastructure developments that could service the region
- Evidence based changes to local zoning precincts to incentivise agricultural expansion

Sustainable, investment friendly regulation

Duplicative (Commonwealth and State) and output-focused approaches to meeting environmental regulations can prohibit investment.

Conversely, outcome-focused approaches to meeting environmental regulation incentivises innovation and sustainable investment.

Actions package

- Work with government and industry to leverage existing regulations and policy to manage water quality through market and outcome-based mechanisms (e.g. bubble licences)
- Leverage regulatory instruments that allow for the beneficial re-use of mine affected water
- Minimise duplication of State and Federal regulation, particularly for bulk water infrastructure developments

Market the region's sustainability credentials to encourage investment

The MIW regions ability to demonstrate sustainable industry and supply chains will continue to support an attractive operating environment for global companies looking to market their environmental credentials.

Actions package

- Develop an authenticated data sharing platform to consistently report social value created by mining, agriculture and aquaculture in the region
- Market, including to international consumers and investors, social and environmental value and credentials created by mining and agriculture in the region
- Advocate for consistent, nationally accepted guidance to value economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of water in different uses

Support the MIW region's existing irrigated cropping

The MIW region's irrigated broadacre cropping and sugar industry is in a period of transition. Support in the short term can help MIW broadacre farmers to realise opportunities to increase farm gate margins in the long term (i.e. Biofutures).

Actions package

- Partner with MIW growers to investigate farm gate margins and how margins change under irrigation scenarios with a view to encouraging irrigation
- Investigate the appropriateness of existing capacity building and extension activities to improve farm gate margins
- Develop new capacity building, extension and succession planning mechanisms to improve farm gate margins
- With appropriate review mechanisms, support a concession on water and energy prices for broadacre growers
- Through coordinated agricultural expansion, support transitions to higher value enterprises (i.e. Biofutures and horticulture)
- Investigate opportunities to reduce water and energy costs with renewable micro grids



Supplying water at the right time and scale to meet new demand

Growing the Bowen Food Bowl

More water to support more high value irrigated cropping near Bowen and industrial activities at the Abbot Point SDA.

Water could be supplied via:

- A pipeline from Peter Faust Dam to the Bowen area with conversion of existing water from Medium Priority to High Priority
- A new pipeline from the Elliot Main Channel to the Bowen area
- Water from Urannah Dam via pipeline to Peter Faust and then onto the Bowen area
- Undertake detailed investigations and a formal business case to determine the optimal solution

A Collinsville agricultural precinct that can meet regional needs

With supplemented water, Collinsville has 9,500 hectares of high-quality cropping land that could support high value irrigated cropping and new agricultural jobs.

- Urannah Dam is capable of supplying water that could underpin high value irrigated cropping near Collinsville, support renewable energy production and, with new water transport infrastructure, meet water needs elsewhere in the MIW region

A world class aquaculture industry

With additional water, the regions aquaculture production could double over ten years. The aquaculture industry has no end of life, is employment-intensive and could exist indefinitely.

Actions package

- Work with government and the aquaculture industry to leverage existing regulations and policy to manage water quality through market and outcome-based mechanisms (e.g. bubble licences)
- Investigate options to ensure aquaculture facilities with known expansion plans can access cost-effective water
- Promote the regions existing Aquaculture Development Areas to prospective investors

The Isaac resources hub

More water will enable expanded coal production and urban water security in the Isaac region.

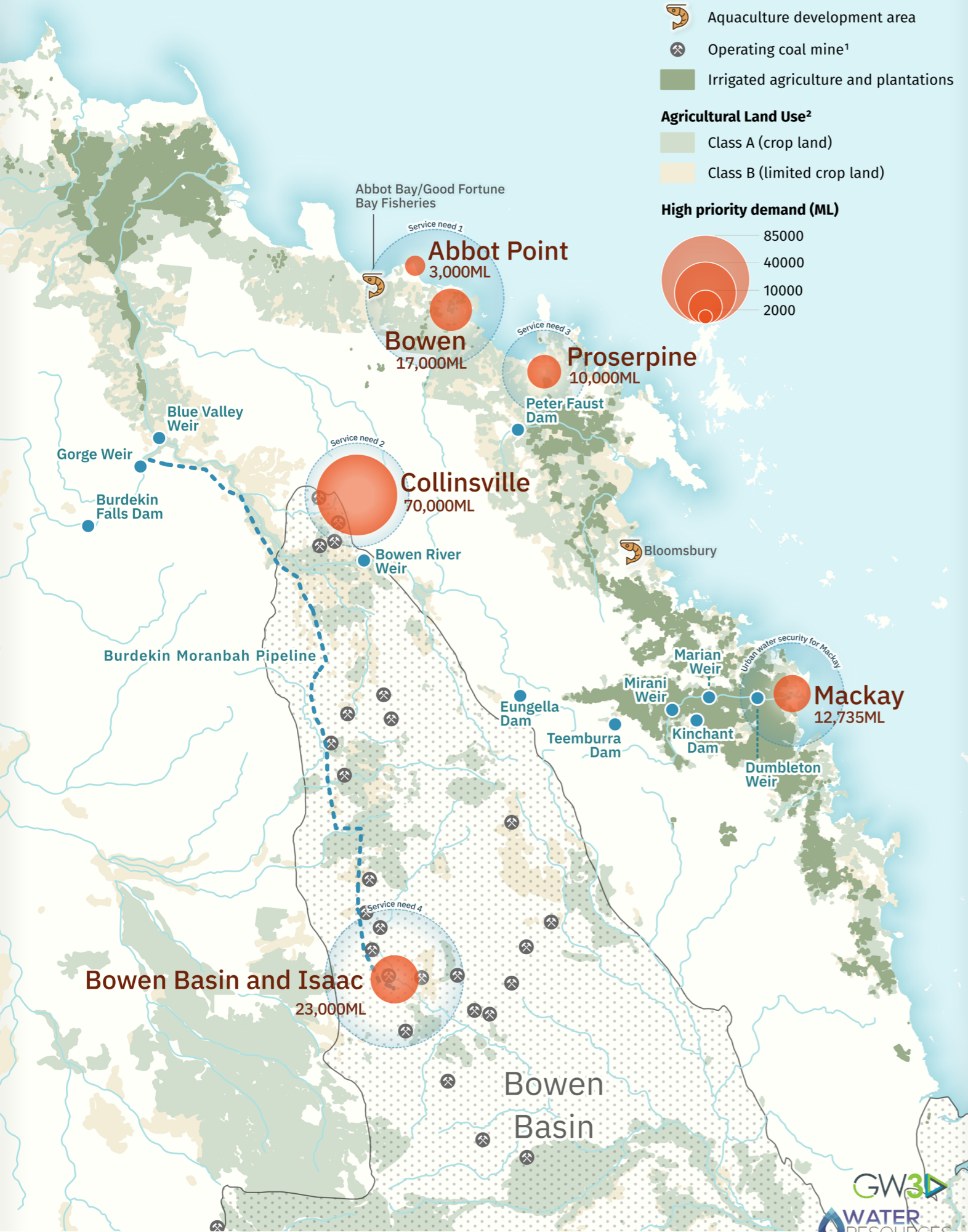
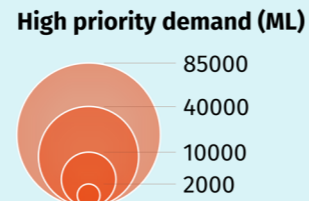
Actions package

- Investigate infrastructure solutions, supply and demand, regulatory and market mechanisms to allow the regions mines to recycle, trade and sustainably reuse mine affected water
- Undertake detailed investigations and a formal business case to determine the optimal pipeline solution to supply water to miners and urban users in the Bowen Basin
- Explore alternative financing mechanisms for pipelines that supply commercial mining
- Explore the feasibility of a community service obligation to reduce Isaac Regional Council's water costs

MIW Region Water Demand

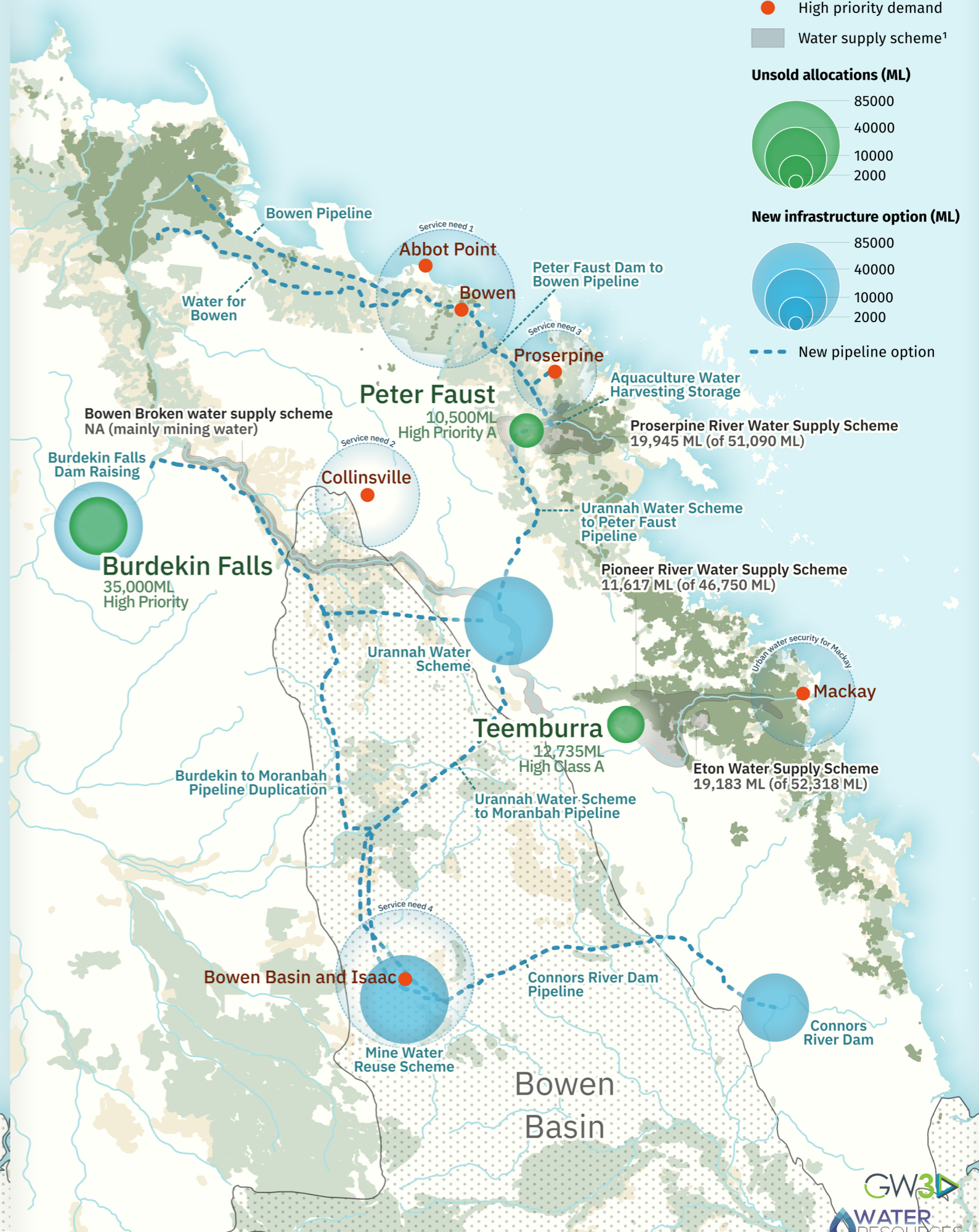
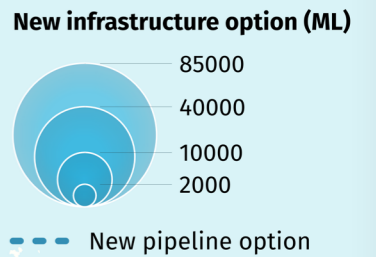
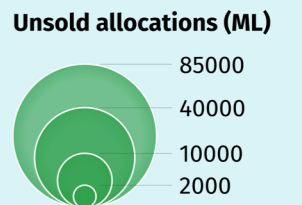
- Aquaculture development area
- Operating coal mine¹
- Irrigated agriculture and plantations

- Agricultural Land Use²**
- Class A (crop land)
 - Class B (limited crop land)



MIW Region Supply Options

- High priority demand
- Water supply scheme¹



¹ Coal resource sites © State of Queensland (Department of Resources) 2021.

² Queensland agricultural land classes © State of Queensland (Department of Environment and Science and Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) 2020.

¹ Water supply scheme figures based on average usage of available irrigation water (2013-2019).