

Map Unit: 4A(i) *Sporobolus virginicus* closed-grassland



Figure 1. *Sporobolus virginicus* closed-grassland

Description: *Sporobolus virginicus* forms a dense ground cover usually about 20 cm high. Patches of samphire occur, with *Salicornia quinqueflora* subsp. *quinqueflora* being the most frequent samphire species under these conditions. In infrequently disturbed situations, hammocking occurs due to a build up of organic matter around the base of the plants. Rarely isolated emergent low shrubs of *Avicennia marina* subsp. *australasica* may be present in these grasslands.

Structural Formation Range: closed-grassland (64%), grassland (36%).

Basal Area Estimate m^2ha^{-1} : mean 0.5; range 0.0-1.0.
Avicennia marina subsp. *australasica* ($0.5 \text{ m}^2\text{ha}^{-1}$).

Emergent Layer

Height: mean 1.5 m; range: 1.0-2.0 m.

Crown Cover: mean 4.0%; range: 4.0-4.0.

Frequent species: *Avicennia marina* subsp. *australasica* (9%).

Ground Layer

Height: mean 0.2 m; range: 0.1-0.5 m.

Crown Cover: mean 91.7%; range: 53.0-100.0.

Frequent species: *Sporobolus virginicus* (100%), *Salicornia quinqueflora* subsp. *quinqueflora* (63%), *Suaeda australis* (27%), *Fimbristylis ferruginea* (9%), *Tecticornia pergranulata* subsp.

queenslandica (9%).

Total species recorded: 10. **Mean species per site:** 3 with a standard deviation of 1.

Ecological Notes:

Sporobolus virginicus often occurs as a dense community which may form in patchy distribution together with samphires and claypan. Extensive meadows of this low springy grass are common. The soils in which they occur are often waterlogged due to the density of the *Sporobolus virginicus* which collects rainfall that falls on them as well as restricting saltwater intrusion. These grasslands appear to be recovering their original structure due to changing land use patterns. They were previously grazed and burnt on a regular basis to promote fresh growth for grazing purposes as *Sporobolus virginicus* is an excellent fodder. Due to continued coastal urbanisation, grazing and firing of *Sporobolus virginicus* areas no longer occurs, which has allowed them to regrow and thicken. In thick stands that are ungrazed or burnt, these grasslands take on a hummocky character due to the build-up in peat at the base of the clumps.

Map Unit: 4A(i) statistics and distribution maps

4A(i) *Sporobolus virginicus* closed-grassland

Table 1. Area of *Sporobolus virginicus* closed grassland, grassland (4A(i)).

Vegetation Type, ha	1955	1997	2012	2016	2020	2021
4A(i)	5004	1717	1249	1163	1085	1084

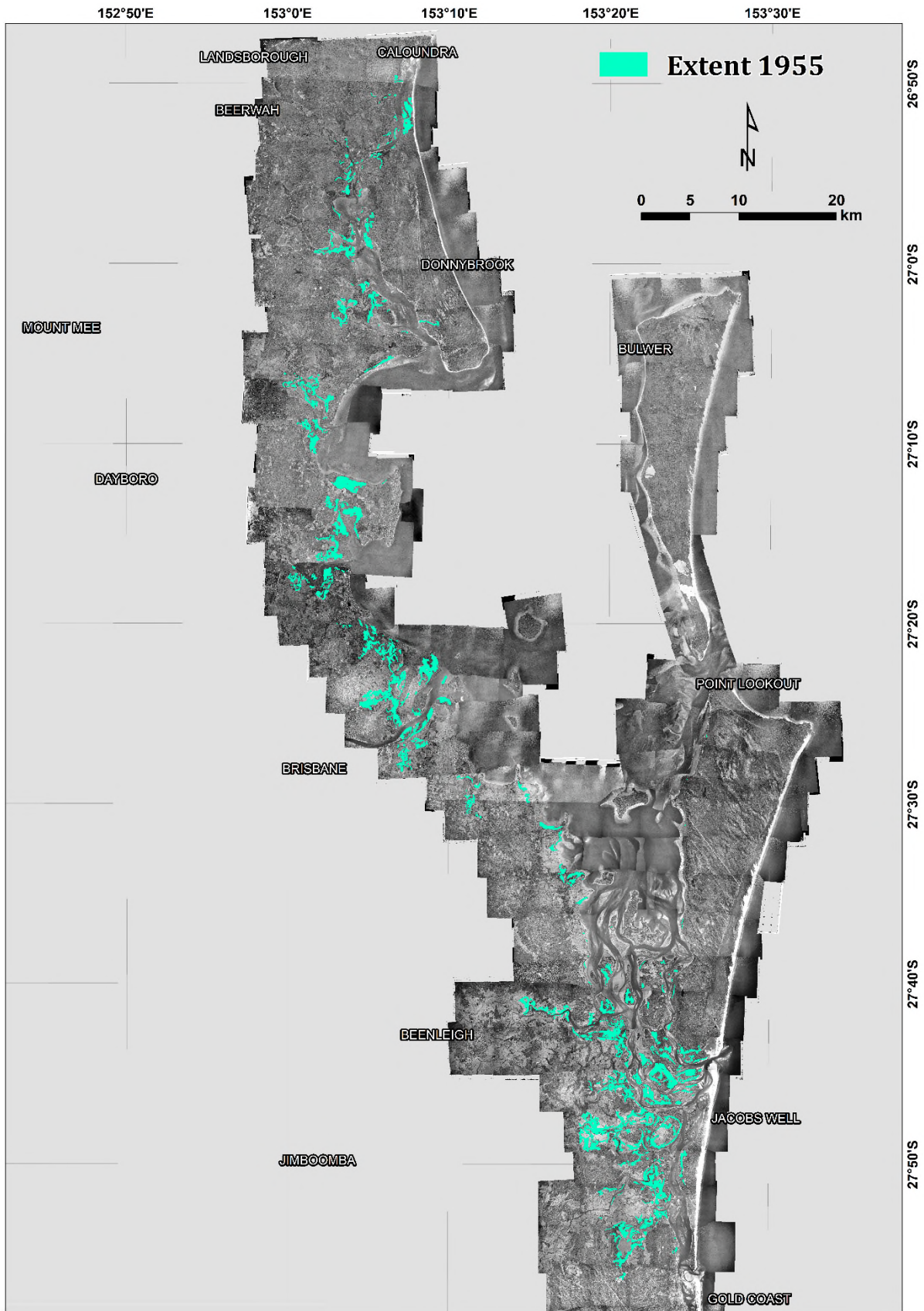


Figure 2. Extent 1955 of *Sporobolus virginicus* closed grassland, grassland (4A(i)).

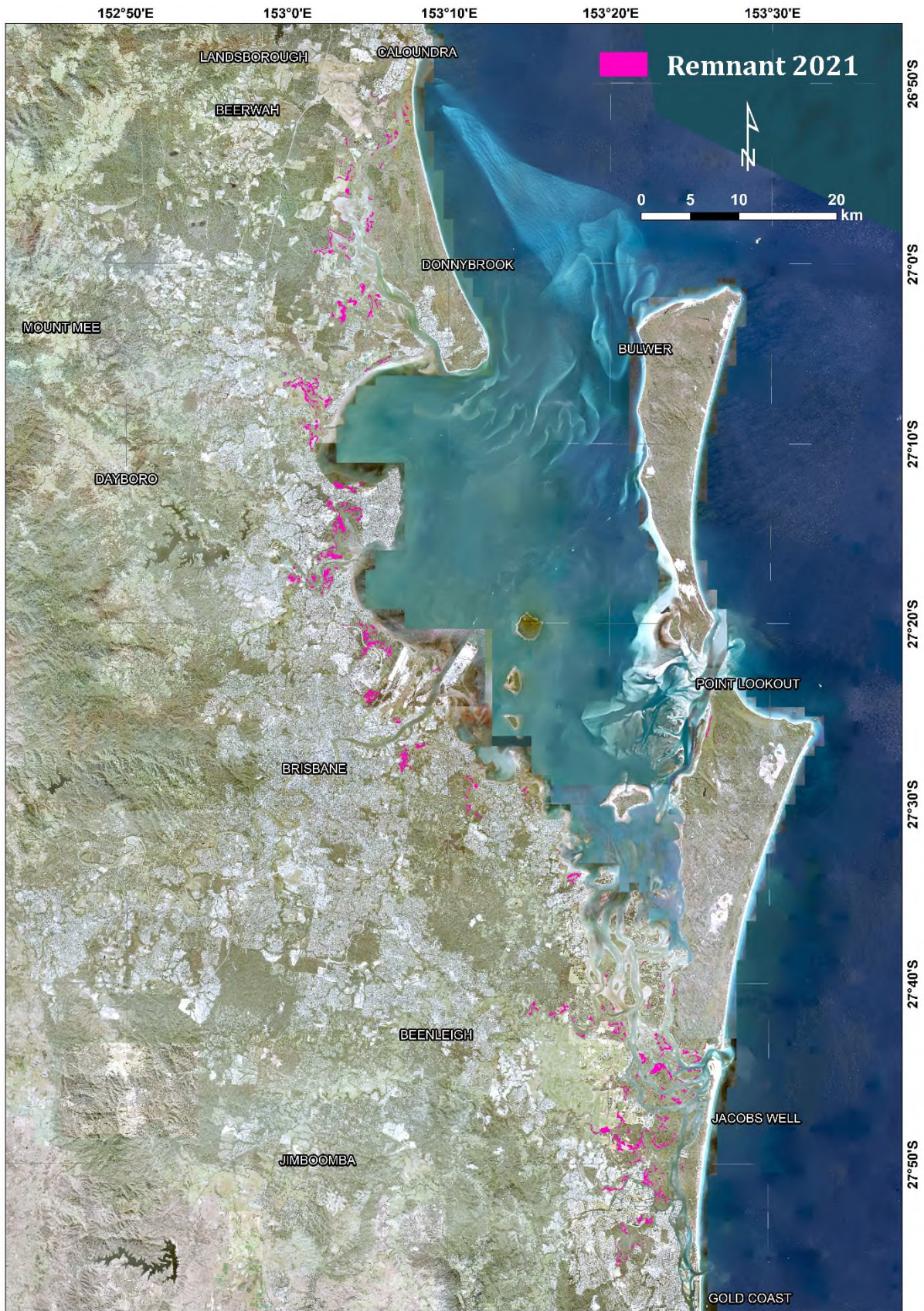


Figure 3. Remnant 2021 extent of *Sporobolus virginicus* closed grassland, grassland (4A(i)).

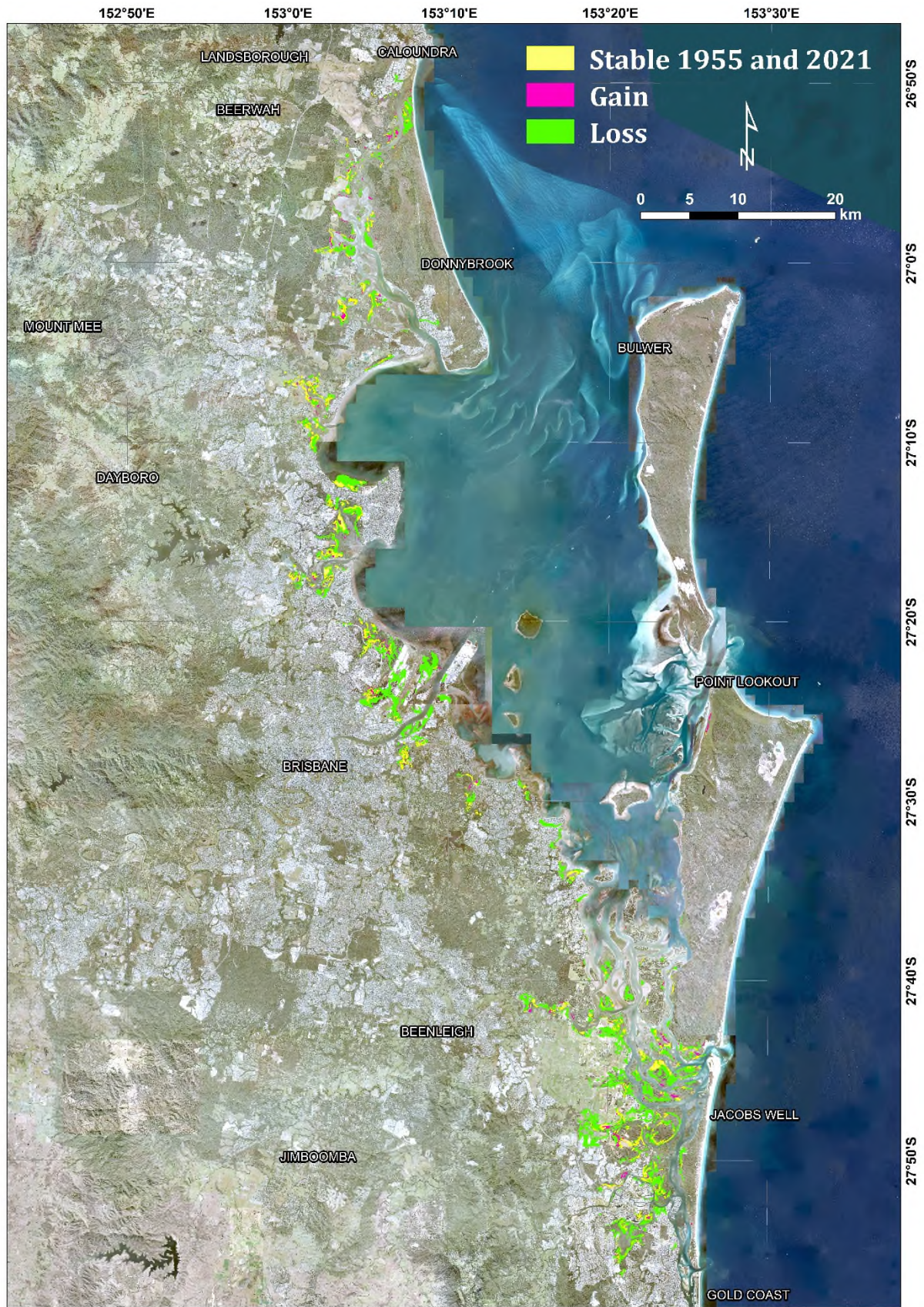


Figure 4. Change in extent between 1955 and 2021 of *Sporobolus virginicus* closed grassland, grassland (4A(i)).