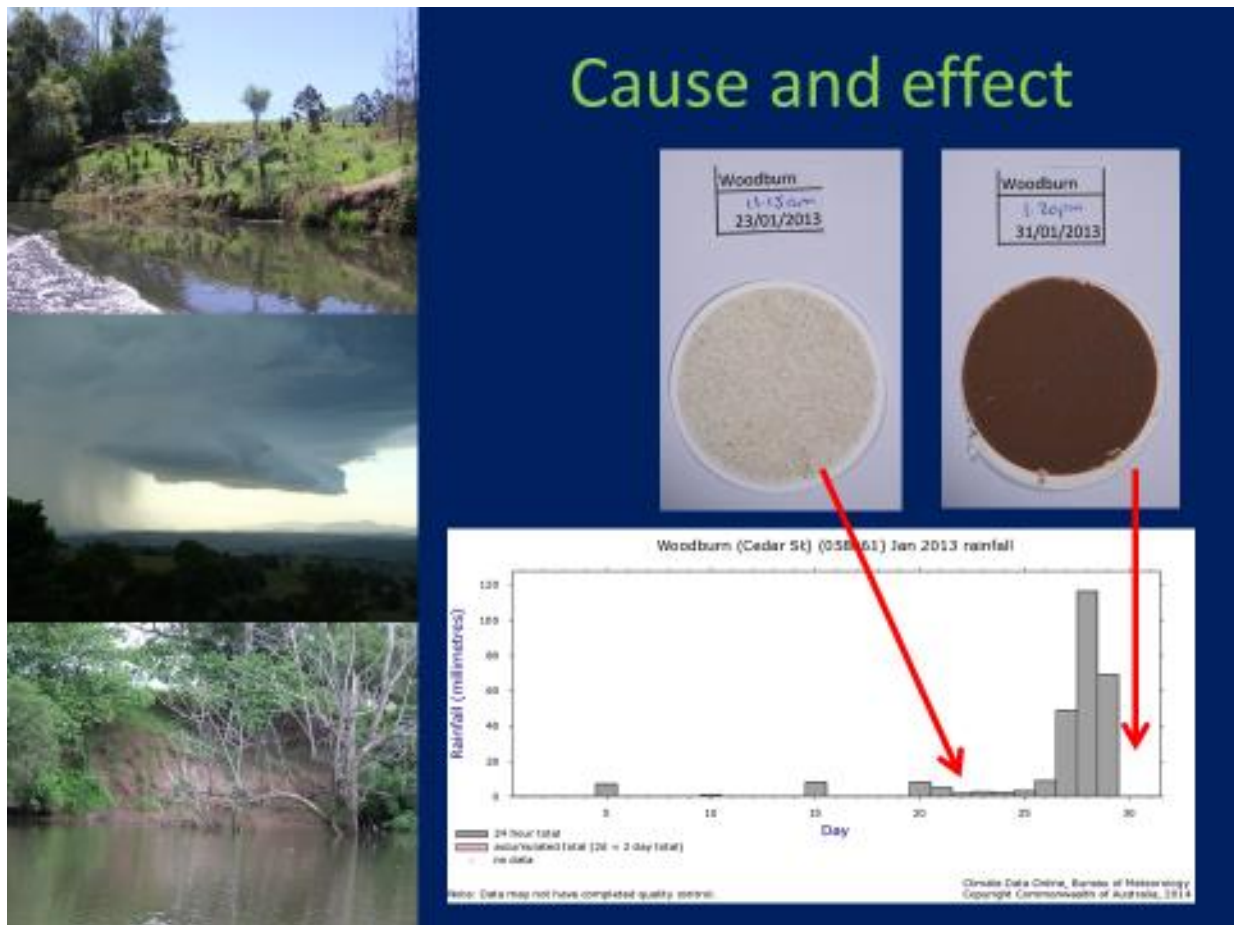


Turbidity and sediment

The Richmond and Wilsons rivers and their tributaries are often coloured brown (turbid) after rain due to sediment eroded from riverbanks. This is normally from areas with bare, grassed, or weed-dominated river, creek or drain banks where sheet erosion or slumping can occur.

The slide below shows the sediment collected by filtering two 250ml water samples, one before and one after ex-tropical cyclone Oswald in January 2013.

While this may be an extreme example, any rain event will cause an increase in turbidity due to the erosion of sediment from riverbanks. Erosion results in a loss of valuable farmland and nutrients and reduces water quality and fish habitat. It is therefore vitally important that river, creek and drain banks be valued and protected through weed control, cattle exclusion and replanting with suitable native species.



Source: A. Reichelt-Brushett, Southern Cross University, Lismore.