

A summary document is prepared after each meeting of the Reef Advisory Committee to inform other advisory committees serving the Authority, and persons generally (including the public), of business of the RAC. The document forms part of the records of the meeting and so its content is limited to matters raised in the meeting, and, where necessary, background details given to the meeting. Any inquiries should be referred to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's (GBRMPA) Secretariat, or to the appropriate Member.



CONSERVATION, BIODIVERSITY AND WORLD HERITAGE REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11th Meeting

7 and 8 August 2003 – Townsville

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

REPORT ON GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY (GBRMPA) ACTIVITIES

The Committee was briefed on the recent activities of the GBRMPA, including the following issues:

- The completion of the 2nd Community Participation Phase (CP2) of the Representative Areas Program (RAP);
- Traditional use of marine resource agreements; and
- New policy for tourism management in the GBRMP.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION – INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Members were advised that the GBRMPA's communication and promotion is achieved through a whole range of levels; i.e., television, newspapers, brochures and education activities. It is believed that information gets to the majority of Indigenous members along the coast by standard forms of communication. Concurrently, there are also a number of programs initiated through the Indigenous Policy Liaison Unit, such as the Sea Country Newsletter which is distributed directly to the communities. A Sea Country website is currently being developed to provide a forum for sea country communities to display their art and stories, as well as providing an opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Members provided the following comments:

- Documents that focus on the Great Barrier Reef should promote the message that there is a unique and longstanding link between Indigenous people and the World Heritage area; and

- Careful education of the wider community about the importance of traditional hunting to Indigenous communities is essential.

INDIGENOUS ISSUES

A member of the Indigenous community provided the Committee with an insight into personal experiences in negotiating fishing rights between commercial fishers and Indigenous communities along the Mitchell River in the Kowanyama region.

RAP UPDATE

Members were updated on the status of the RAP, including:

- The steps taken in the communication process.
- Over 21 000 submissions were received.
- Draft zoning plan maps with the bioregions laid over the top needed to be distributed during CP2, to assist understanding of the RAP concept.
- Some stakeholder groups offered to prepare alternative zoning maps using the RAP criteria while meeting their own needs.
- The GBRMPA is generating an issues-based map, which will place issues such as spatial issues, "yellow zone" issues, shipping lanes, etc., in a geographical location.

During discussion, members made the following comments:

- Consideration will need to be given to solve situations where there is a range of conflicting substantive suggestions regarding a particular area.

- The purpose and location of Special Management Areas (SMAs) needs to be clarified.
- SMAs should be placed in green and yellow zones adjacent to major Indigenous communities to provide opportunities for economic self-determination consistent with biodiversity objectives.
- As far as possible for site specific issues, the GBRMPA should continue to use a targeted community-based approach that is flexible, engages with the stakeholders at all levels, seeks win-win solutions while meeting all Biophysical Operating Principles and socio-economic cultural principles.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE APPLICATION OF BIOPHYSICAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The Committee discussed the effectiveness of the application of each of the GBRMPA's 11 Biophysical Operating Principles in the Draft Zoning Plan.

MONITORING AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

At the 10th meeting of the Committee, members considered an initial paper by the GBRMPA on key performance indicators (KPIs).

Recognising that this is a complex issue, members provided advice on how this initial framework for monitoring performance and evaluation might be improved:

- Include KPIs from a stakeholder perspective and report on matters that the national community expects to be looked after.
- Recognise matters that are both naturally and culturally important.
- Key performance indicators are critical to 'drive' a monitoring program.
- Clear, strategic objectives and operational objectives need to be identified with KPIs that link to the operational objectives.

The Conservation RAC will develop a discussion paper on KPIs for evaluating the performance of the RAP process, for consideration at its next meeting.

CORAL BLEACHING ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

A presentation was made on the current status of coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef.

Members supported the strategy of maximising Great Barrier Reef resilience by protecting biodiversity, improving water quality and promoting sustainable fisheries, and noted that this important message should be widely propagated to a general audience.

CRUISE SHIPPING IN THE MARINE PARK

Members received a detailed briefing on cruise shipping in the GBRMP and the implications for conservation, biodiversity and world heritage status.

During the meeting, members were also updated on the following issues:

- Natural Heritage Legislation, and its implications for the GBRMPA;
- World Heritage issues; and
- Species Conservation issues.

NEXT MEETING

The 12th Conservation RAC meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 and Wednesday 10 December 2003 in Townsville.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr Doug Baird	Tourism and Recreation
Ms Kate Davey	Non-government organisation, Conservation
Mr Jon Day	GBRMPA
Dr Pat Hutchings	Non-government organisation, Ecologist
Mr Bruce Leaver	Environment Australia
Prof Helene Marsh	Scientific Community
Ms Melissa Nursey-Bray	Non-government organisation, Conservation
Mr Peter Ogilvie	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
Assoc Prof Stephan Schnierer	Indigenous Issues
Mr Tim Smith	Water Quality, Coastal Issues
Mr Duncan Souter	Queensland Seafood Industry Association
Mr Peter Valentine	World Heritage, Protected Area Management
Mr Simon Woodley	Independent Chair
Ms Imogen Zethoven	Non-government organisation, Conservation