



CONSERVATION, HERITAGE AND INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CRAC)

21st Meeting

11 and 12 July 2007 – Townsville

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

The 21st CRAC meeting was held on 11 and 12 July in Townsville. Following is a summary of the main items discussed at the meeting.

SPECIES CONSERVATION

Dugong Conservation Position Statement

Advice was sought from CRAC members as to:

- Management initiatives regarding dugong conservation and relative priorities;
 - What are the priority issues for dugongs in the Marine Park;
 - What priority actions should occur; and
 - Where the GBRMPA should be concentrating its efforts.
- CRAC members recommended that the GBRMPA:
- Describe, in the position statement, the international context for human interactions with dugongs.
 - Clarify references to “illegal take” and “non native-title holders”.
 - Examine the application of the policy at different scales.
 - Explain the rationale for the priority given to protection of dugong.
 - Include a description of the historical context for dugongs and human interactions, including early exploitation.
 - Use the Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement (TUMRA) process to engage Indigenous communities on dugong conservation.
 - Noting that Traditional Owners take the conservation of dugong seriously, efforts should be made to convince the non-Indigenous community of the importance of protecting dugong over activities that threaten dugong survival.
 - Raise awareness within the community about the efforts of Indigenous communities in relation to dugong conservation, and about current management for protection of dugong, especially arising from the 2003 rezoning.

Translocation of Marine Species Position Statement

This position statement was developed to assist the Program Delivery Group with a framework for considering permit applications involving the translocation of species in the GBRMP. The position statement will be publicly available on the website.

The main statement made was that the GBRMPA does not consider activities which are rated as medium or high risk to be suitable in the Marine Park. Without mitigation strategies, no activities were seen to be of low risk.

The CRAC commended the GBRMPA on the development of the position statement and recommends consideration be given to:

- Separating the statement into two parts: 1) policies dealing with the introduction of exotic species; and 2) policies dealing with translocation of naturally occurring species within the Marine Park.
- Developing a set of general principles that will guide the assessment of proposals to translocate species, incorporating relevant principles from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- Referring the statement to other RACs for comment.
- Consider how education could be applied to reduce the risk of incidental translocation of exotic species from recreational boating.

It was also suggested that, as far as possible, apply the precautionary principle and do not intervene in natural processes.

GBRMPA staff were commended for the production of the position statement in the eight-week timeframe.

INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Dharumbal TUMRA – Woppaburra Section

The CRAC congratulated the Dharumbal people, the Board of the Marine Park Authority, Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (QEPA) and staff of the GBRMPA's Indigenous Partnerships and Liaison Unit (IPLU) on the completion of the second TUMRA. The Committee recommends that the GBRMPA:

- 1) Includes an evaluation of the effectiveness of TUMRAs in the Outlook Report.
- 2) Develops guidelines which demonstrate to the wider community the importance and value of TUMRAs; for example, in consideration of development proposals.

Indigenous Involvement in Tourism and its Management

Members were informed that:

- There are opportunities presented for Indigenous tourism though there generally is not an uptake of these. Many prospective Indigenous tourism operators feel that infrastructure is not available to assist and support them in their economic development.
- The Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee (TRRAC) has recently considered how operators and associations might involve Indigenous people in tourism. The CRAC discussed the ways in which Indigenous tourism enterprises might be developed in the GBRMP and

the role the GBRMPA might play in facilitating that development. The CRAC also recommends that the GBRMPA:

- Engages in a strategic approach to Indigenous tourism involving an analysis of markets, products and opportunities for Indigenous tourism ventures;
- Builds on the collaboration developed through TUMRAs as a basis for developing Indigenous tourism ventures;
- Sponsors a series of targeted workshops that bring together all relevant stakeholders to develop regional Indigenous tourism ventures based on TUMRAs;
- Seeks to be involved in the development of Indigenous Tourism Australia's national Indigenous tourism strategy; and
- Considers the potential for incentive mechanisms to build partnerships between tourism and Indigenous communities.

The CRAC agreed to collaborate with the TRRAC in the development of Indigenous tourism policy recommendations.

OUTLOOK REPORT

Members were updated by staff of the GBRMPA's Outlook Report Taskforce on current progress. Assistance was sought from Committee members in expressing views on key pressures facing the Great Barrier Reef as well as with assessing effective methods for community engagement.

The CRAC expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide advice on the development of the Outlook Report, and provided recommendations that:

- Data sets developed for the Representative Areas Programme (RAP) be used as a basis for compiling up-to-date data sets.
- The proposed methodology for the compilation of the Outlook Report be documented. Review of this methodology should be sought from appropriate experts.
- Include cumulative impacts as well as relevant temporal and spatial scales as components of the analysis of risks and trends.
- In seeking community advice on perceived pressures, include criteria which allow for differential weighting of those pressures.
- Given the GBRMPA's intention to establish an expertise-based reference group, include people with expertise in:
 - Risk assessment, both quantitative and qualitative.
 - Community engagement processes.
 - Indigenous community engagement.
 - Political processes.
 - Demography and trend analysis (social and biological).
 - Independent facilitation.
 - Scientific data management.
 - Marine Protected Areas.

In relation to community engagement for the Report, the CRAC provided the following advice:

- Improve community understanding of the purpose of the Outlook Report, the process for producing the Report and the components of the Report.
- Clarify the role of the community in the process.
- Include expertise in community engagement in the design and review processes.

- Work closely with the Department of the Environment and Water Resources (DEW) to ensure a clear expert review process for the Outlook Report draft.

The CRAC considers that the Report, given adequate resourcing and support, will set an international benchmark for such reports and will contribute significantly to the capacity to manage marine environments in Australia and the world.

CORAL REEF RESILIENCE

Members were provided with an overview of the issues regarding Management for the Resilience of the Great Barrier Reef. They were informed that:

- The Outlook Report demands that the GBRMPA assesses indicators of resilience or changes to indicators of resilience.
- The most important, effective and cost-effective response is to manage climate change at source.
- Regarding bleaching, the under-recognised threat is pH changes.

The CRAC looks forward to receiving a future update and in commenting on the development of risk/resilience profiles.

FAREWELL FROM THE GBRMPA CHAIRMAN

Members farewelled the Hon Virginia Chadwick AO, who has been Chairman of the GBRMPA for the past eight years.

Mrs Chadwick was thanked for her lasting legacy, the greatest achievement of which, it was suggested, was the last rezoning, together with the support and encouragement provided to staff during this period.

It was also commented that the Representative Areas Programme has been a benchmark which marine conservation managers will aspire to worldwide.

The CRAC Chairman expressed gratitude at having been a part of all the changes led by Mrs Chadwick who should be proud of her legacy and take away a great sense of satisfaction. Particular mention was made of the advances in the Indigenous area.

Both the Chairman and CRAC members thanked Mrs Chadwick for her excellent leadership.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 7 and 8 November 2007.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr Doug Baird	Tourism and Recreation
Ms Kate Davey	Non-Government Organisation, Conservation
Dr Kirstin Dobbs	GBRMPA
Mrs Christine Doherty	Indigenous
Dr Pat Hutchings	Non-Government Organisation, Ecologist
Mr Bruce Leaver	Dept of the Environment and Water Resources
Dr Ghislaine Llewellyn	Non-Government Organisation, Conservation
Mr Justin McCaul	Non-Government Organisation, Conservation
Prof Helene Marsh	Scientific Community
Mr Peter Ogilvie	Qld Environmental Protection Agency
Assoc Prof Stephan Schnierer	Indigenous
Mr Bernie Singleton	Indigenous
Ms Cathy Skippington	Qld Environmental Protection Agency
Dr Andrew Tobin	Commercial Fishing
Assoc Prof Peter Valentine	Conservation, World Heritage, Protected Area Management
Mr Simon Woodley	Independent Chairman