



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12 HIGHLIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 1

Addressing key risks affecting the outlook of the Great Barrier Reef

- Completed the integrated Eye on the Reef monitoring program to provide a centralised database for Reef health information
- Contributed to the first Reef Plan report card was released, providing a baseline against which progress in addressing declining water quality will be measured
- Conducted pilot programs in two fisheries to develop assessment standards for fishers wanting to join the Reef Guardian program
- Implemented new commercial netting regulations in Bowling Green Bay to reduce dugong deaths
- Developed an ecological risk assessment of the East Coast Trawl Fishery in collaboration with the Queensland Government and fishing industry
- Conducted Reef Health and Impact Surveys to gauge the recovery of northern reefs after cyclone Yasi and to assess reef recovery from Fitzroy River flood damage



Photo courtesy of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

- Installed fencing at Raine Island in a practical on-ground climate change adaptation initiative to prevent green turtle deaths
- Confirmed that voluntary no anchoring areas in the Keppels area have helped build the Reef's resilience
- Upgraded the tourism operators' emissions calculator to help operators reduce their carbon emissions
- Oversaw a new Australian Government program to reduce the potential severity of a crown-of-thorns starfish outbreak.



'Fountain of Youth — our waters are also our enjoyment' by Kathi Gibson-Steffensen

OBJECTIVE 2

Delivering ecologically sustainable use

- Developed the draft *Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2012*, a roadmap to protect at-risk animals, plants and habitats of the Great Barrier Reef
- Signed an agreement with the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities to conduct a comprehensive strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef Region
- Launched the *Recreation Management Strategy*, providing a framework for managing recreation within the Marine Park
- Increased the number of tourism operators in the High Standard Tourism program from 51 to 57 (now carrying 60% of all visitors)
- Facilitated accreditation of the Port Curtis Coral Coast regional Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement — the fifth and largest agreement of its kind
- Completed 1443 compliance and enforcement vessel patrol days across the Marine Park
- Conducted 894 Reef Health and Impact Surveys in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area



- Partnered with more than 43 marine tourism operators for Eye on the Reef – Tourism Weekly Monitoring program and conducted training for tourism crew in the Cairns and Whitsunday areas
- Facilitated more than 750 students taking part in Future Leaders eco challenges and delivered science teaching units to all 285 Reef Guardian schools
- Completed a collaborative turtle monitoring project, enabling the exchange of western science and traditional ecological knowledge
- Provided environmental impact assessment advice on 10 port-related projects and more than 50 other major projects, including the Great Keppel Island marina and tourism development.

OBJECTIVE 3

Maintaining a high performing, effective and efficient organisation

- Attracted more than 145,000 visitors to Reef HQ Aquarium, breaking a 20-year visitation record
- Launched a new external website which boosted the average user time on a page from 30 seconds to three minutes
- Established a document control system as part of the Australian Government's Information Publication Scheme requirements
- Conducted a comprehensive zoning awareness program targeting recreational fishers, particularly those who fish infrequently in the Marine Park
- Delivered reef education to more than 5700 students through Reef HQ Aquarium's Reef Videoconferencing program
- Worked with the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities to finalise the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area



- Completed a heritage management plan to protect the Lady Elliot Island lightstation, a 139-year-old landmark at the southernmost point of the Great Barrier Reef
- Established a hosting partnership with the Government of Belize for the International Coral Reef Initiative and coordinated the first of two meetings of members
- Gained more than 1200 followers on the agency's Facebook page and launched a YouTube channel which was viewed more than 5500 times
- Refurbished the underwater viewing tunnel, unveiled a new Rainforest Tree exhibition and opened a new conference and training centre at Reef HQ Aquarium.