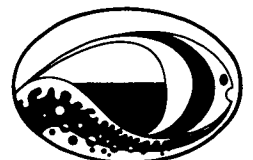


**Cairns and  
Cormorant Pass Sections**

**BASIS FOR ZONING**

**Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority**



**September 1982**

CAIRNS AND CORMORANT PASS SECTIONS

BASIS FOR ZONING

This booklet is intended as an explanatory accompaniment to the zoning plans. The questions and answers contained herein are taken from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority information display which is situated in the Tropical Arcade, Cairns, during the period of public review, 7 September - 7 December, 1982.

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Other information documents are:

- . Cairns and Cormorant Pass Sections zoning plans
- . Zoning the Reef - a descriptive brochure with a map of the zones

These documents and other information are available from:

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority,  
PO Box 1379,  
Melton Place,  
67-71 Denham Street,  
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810

Telephone: (077) 71 2191

## INTRODUCTION

The Great Barrier Reef is the largest system of corals and associated life forms anywhere in the world. As a uniquely beautiful, natural environment on a grand scale, its conservation is part of the heritage of all people.

In recent times, tourism and its associated industries, combined with a large and diverse fishing industry, have increased the economic significance of the Great Barrier Reef to Queensland and Australia. The future of these industries depends significantly on the conservation of the whole Great Barrier Reef as a viable, sustained ecosystem, since it has a scale and a diversity which have made it the focus of world-wide interest and earned it a reputation as the eighth wonder of the world.

The unopposed passing by the Commonwealth Parliament in 1975 of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act was the consequence of recognition by all political parties that one of our great natural heritages should be conserved for future generations. The Act established the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority which, amongst other things, is a resource planning and management body with the object of providing for conservation and reasonable use of the resources of the Great Barrier Reef. This is to be achieved through the declaration and zoning of Sections of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Zoning provides for the separation of incompatible activities. The Authority is also required to set aside some areas to be undisturbed by man, except for the purpose of scientific research. To minimise conflicts, zoning identifies and allocates some areas particularly suited for specific activities.

THE ZONING PROCESS

REASONABLE USE:

Taken individually, all traditional uses of the Great Barrier Reef may be reasonable at some levels.

A level of use becomes unreasonable when it either exceeds the repair or replacement capacity of the Reef ecosystem or when it conflicts or interferes excessively with other uses.

In an area used for many purposes the reasonable limit of any particular use is usually lower than in a situation free from competition and interaction with other uses.

In practice the most accessible reefs are the most heavily used and are used for the greatest variety of purposes. Thus the areas where unreasonable levels of use and conflicts of uses are likely to occur are at the most popular reefs.

DECLARATION:

The first step toward the proclamation of a Section of the Marine Park involves the collation of information relating to resources such as reefs, anchorages, corals and fish and to the present levels of use of these resources in the Section concerned. This information is presented in a report recommending declaration of the Section.

THE ZONING PROGRAM:

The Cormorant Pass Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park was proclaimed on 21 October, 1981 and the Cairns Section on 19 November, 1981.

The first phase of development of the zoning plans for the Sections consisted of a public participation program, 'Help Zone the Reef'. This started shortly after the Sections were proclaimed and lasted until April 2, 1982. The public and particularly users of the Sections were invited to provide detailed information in response to specific questions:

- which offshore areas, reefs and waters are important to you - and which are unimportant?
- which offshore areas, reefs and waters do you use most frequently or would you prefer to use for your activity?
- what activities do you undertake within the Sections?
- what activities, if any, conflict with your activities?
- how do you travel on the reef and from where do you depart?

The program also sought information on anything else which respondents felt to be important, or likely to become important, within the Sections. In response, 202 representations were received. They ranged from comments of individuals and organisations to a formal statement of issues which the Queensland Government considers important in development of the plans.

On the basis of information collected by the Authority and that provided in the representations, a background report on the resources and uses of the Sections was prepared. This has been the basis for development of the zoning plans.

In this, the second phase of public participation in zoning, each plan is subject to detailed examination and comment by users and interested parties. Following this, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is required to submit a report to the Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment on the content of the representations received from the public and the changes to the zoning plan which are appropriate as a result of the representations.

This report, together with the zoning plan and appropriate draft regulations, is submitted to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Council for consideration for endorsement. The Ministerial Council which comprises two Ministers each from the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments has the function of co-ordinating the policy of the Governments concerning the Great Barrier Reef.

If the Minister does not refer the zoning plan back to the Authority for further consideration, he lays it before both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament.

If within 20 sitting days there are no motions passed by either House disallowing the plan, the Minister, by public notice, specifies the date on which the zoning plan will come into effect.

#### THE CONTENTS OF THE ZONING PLAN FOR THE CORMORANT PASS SECTION:

The zoning plan provides for the protection of a population of tame potato cod which, with other tamed species, make Cormorant Pass an area of particular attractiveness for diving. The Section is therefore zoned Marine National Park 'B', the uses of which are described below.

#### THE CONTENTS OF THE ZONING PLAN FOR THE CAIRNS SECTION:

The plan follows the principles established in the zoning plan for the Capricornia Section, which is the first Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. As with that plan, some general guidelines formed the basis for development.

- The plan should be as simple as practicable for users to understand and for day-to-day management to be effective and economical.
- Where possible, zones for limited public access should be distant from major centres of population and reef embarkation points.
- Where possible there should, from points of access, be a gradation from zones of minimal restriction to heavily protected zones.
- Where possible each major population centre and reef embarkation point should have easy access to at least one of each of the public access restricted purpose zones. From North to South the access points identified for the purpose and application of this guideline are:

Lizard Island/Cape Flattery  
Cooktown  
Port Douglas/Daintree River  
Cairns  
Russell River/Innisfail  
Mission Beach/Cardwell

- As far as possible the plan should retain access for small boats to important all weather anchorages. (However, small boats do have access to all zones during emergency conditions.)
- As far as possible provisions should be made for access to alternative areas when a reef or reefs are zoned in a way which excludes a particular activity.
- The plan must not impede the access of international, interstate or intra state shipping to shipping routes or to existing ports on the coast of Queensland. Nor should it impede access to potential ports.
- Provision should be made for conduct of scientific and management research throughout the Section.
- Reefs should only be zoned exclusively for scientific research where existing and probable future research programs indicate that they are likely to be used for that purpose on a frequent and regular basis.
- Reefs zoned for preservation should include representatives of major reef types and habitats particularly characteristic of the Section.

It is recognized that systematic research into the Great Barrier Reef may be assisted by identification of transects across the Reef from inshore to the continental shelf drop off, particularly if these are accessible to Research Stations. Within these transects it is desirable that a representative sample inner, middle and outer reef be zoned in a way which minimizes fishing and collecting. Such reefs may be zoned Marine National Park or Scientific Research.

The plan makes provision for the continuation of traditional fishing and hunting by Aborigines in all zones other than the Preservation Zone. In Marine National Park and Scientific Research Zones traditional hunting will require a permit which will be granted only on conditions relating to recording catch and levels of stock of limited species.

#### ZONES:

The zones are described in detail in the zoning plan.

The six zone types may be summarised in increasing order of restriction:

General Use 'A': Provides for any use with the exception of exploration for, or production of, minerals (other than for the purpose of approved research) and of commercial spearfishing or spearfishing whilst using underwater breathing equipment, other than with a snorkel. These restrictions apply throughout the Marine Park.

- General Use 'B': As for General Use 'A', with the additional prohibition of trawling and the navigation of vessels greater than 500 tonnes.
- Marine National Park 'A': As for General Use 'B', except that fishing allowed only with rod or handline and no more than 2 hooks. Also collecting prohibited.
- Marine National Park 'B': As for Marine National Park 'A', except that fishing is also prohibited.
- Scientific Research: Access only for the purpose of approved scientific research including manipulative research.
- Preservation: No access other than for the purpose of scientific research which cannot be undertaken in another area. Access for research exceptional and generally restricted to observational programs.

Provisions for access in emergencies are included in the zoning plan, even in otherwise restricted areas.

#### AREAS OF PERIODIC RESTRICTION:

- Defence Closure Areas: The objective of this Area is to provide for Defence Forces training. The areas are periodically closed to all access during exercises. Public notices and OTC coastal radio stations advise closure times.
- Seasonal Closure Areas: The objective of this Area is to prevent, when necessary, access to areas important to the breeding of some animals of the Reef Region. Entry is prohibited except in the case of an emergency.
- Replenishment Areas: The objective of this Area is to provide for a specified period of time, an area which is closed to any activity which will remove living resources of the Marine Park, to enable the recovery of fish and other resource stocks.
- Reef Appreciation Areas: The objective of this Area is to provide small areas on heavily used reefs, in which the public may observe and appreciate relatively undisturbed marine life. Within such areas, fishing and collecting will not be allowed. Reef Appreciation Areas shall not incorporate more than 20 per cent of the area of any one reef.
- Reef Research Areas: The objective of this Area is to provide a small area on a reef in which undisturbed approved research may be conducted. Reef Research Areas shall not incorporate more than 20 per cent of the area of any one reef.

The Defence Closure Areas, Seasonal Closure Areas and Replenishment Areas will apply to whole reefs, identified in the zoning plan.

The periods of restriction will be widely advertised before implementation.

Reef Appreciation Areas and Reef Research Areas are not shown in the zoning plan. These areas will only be declared after formal public participation processes.



SOME COMMON QUESTIONS

1. - What is the Great Barrier Reef Region?

The Great Barrier Reef Region is that area shown on the map which covers the Great Barrier Reef and surrounding waters.

2. - What is the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park?

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is made up of those areas within the Great Barrier Reef Region, proclaimed in accordance with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975, where zoning plans are introduced to regulate all reasonable use consistent with conservation of the Reef.

3. - What are the Queensland Marine Parks?

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park extends only up to low water mark on land which is part of Queensland and which is not owned by the Commonwealth Government.

There have, for many years, been Queensland Marine Parks at Heron Island and Green Island. Under the Queensland Marine Parks Act 1982, provision is made for additional Marine Parks extending over tidal lands and tidal waters of Queensland.

It is envisaged that Queensland Marine Parks will be declared in areas of the State between high and low water adjacent to the Cairns Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

4. - Do the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments co-operate in developing Marine Parks?

Yes, the two Governments co-operate closely in both developing and managing Marine Parks.

5. - Why do we need Marine Parks?

The Great Barrier Reef supports and is affected by a wide range of human activity. Management is necessary to ensure that these effects do not exceed the capacity of the living Reef to maintain itself.

6. - What areas of the Great Barrier Reef Region have been declared part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park?

Three Sections of the Marine Park have been proclaimed:

Capricornia	-	October, 1979
Cormorant Pass	-	October, 1981
Cairns	-	November, 1981

7. - What is the effect of declaring an area to be part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park?

When an area is declared part of the Marine Park all operations for the recovery of minerals are excluded, except for purposes of approved research.

8. - Where are the Cairns and Cormorant Pass Sections?

See the maps in the zoning plans.

9. - Why is there a separate Cormorant Pass Section?

The Cormorant Pass Section was proclaimed in October 1981 prior to the Cairns Section, to provide immediate protection for a threatened colony of potato cod.

10. - What is a zoning plan?

A zoning plan provides a basis for the management and regulation of usage within the Marine Park. It divides a declared Section into zones, names them and defines purposes for which each zone may be entered and used.

11. - What is a "Zone"?

A Zone is a named area of reef, sea floor, air space and water within which certain activities, uses and access are regulated.

12. - Why is a zoning plan necessary?

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 requires that a zoning plan be prepared as soon as practicable after an area has been declared part of the Marine Park. Its purpose is to protect the Reef while allowing and regulating reasonable use.

13. - How were the zoning plans for the Cairns and Cormorant Pass Sections worked out?

A public participation program last December to April resulted in 202 representations from members of the public on how they used parts of the Reef. This information was combined with research to formulate zonings to accommodate all user interests.

14. - Where can I obtain a copy of the zoning plans?

In Cairns, copies of the zoning plan are available from:

- Community Information booth adjacent to display
- Cairns Public Library
- Q.N.P.W.S. Office, 409 Sheridan Street.

See details of other distribution points in Zoning the Reef brochure.

15. - What is the proposed zoning for the Cairns and Cormorant Pass Sections?

See the maps in the zoning plans.

16. - What activities are permitted in General Use 'A' Zones?

GENERAL USE 'A' ZONES

RECREATION

Boating ..... YES  
Collecting (e.g. shells,  
coral, aquarium fish) ..... PERMIT  
Diving, Snorkelling,  
Swimming ..... YES  
Line Fishing ..... YES  
Netting (gear restrictions) ... YES  
Trolling ..... YES  
Spearfishing (N.B. not with  
SCUBA) ..... YES  
Traditional Fishing ..... YES

COMMERCIAL

Collecting (e.g. shells,  
coral, aquarium fish) ..... PERMIT  
Cruise Ships ..... YES  
General Shipping ..... YES  
Line Fishing ..... YES  
Netting (gear restrictions) .. YES  
Trawling ..... YES  
Trolling ..... YES

RESEARCH

Non-manipulative ..... YES  
Manipulative ..... PERMIT

EDUCATION AND TOURISM

Provision of Facilities ..... PERMIT  
Establishment of Programs ..... PERMIT

With permission any other activity consistent with the objectives of the Zone.

For full details see the zoning plans.

17. - What activities are permitted in General Use 'B' Zones?

GENERAL USE 'B' ZONES

RECREATION

Boating .....	YES
Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	PERMIT
Diving, Snorkelling, Swimming .....	YES
Line Fishing .....	YES
Netting (gear restrictions) ...	YES
Trolling .....	YES
Spearfishing (N.B. not with SCUBA) .....	YES
Traditional Fishing .....	YES

EDUCATION AND TOURISM

Provision of Facilities .....	PERMIT
Establishment of Programs .....	PERMIT

COMMERCIAL

Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	PERMIT
Cruise Ships .....	PERMIT
General Shipping (above 500 tonnes) .....	NO
Line Fishing .....	YES
Netting (gear restrictions) ..	YES
Trawling .....	NO
Trolling .....	YES

RESEARCH

Non-manipulative .....	YES
Manipulative .....	PERMIT

With permission any other activity consistent with the objectives of the Zone.

For full details see the zoning plans.

18. - What activities are permitted in Marine National Park 'A' Zones?

MARINE NATIONAL PARK 'A' ZONES

RECREATION

Boating .....	YES
Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Diving, Snorkelling, Swimming .....	YES
Line Fishing (gear restrictions)	YES
Netting (gear restrictions) ...	PERMIT
Trolling .....	YES
Spearfishing .....	NO
Traditional Fishing .....	YES

EDUCATION AND TOURISM

Provision of Facilities .....	PERMIT
Establishment of Programs .....	PERMIT

COMMERCIAL

Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Cruise Ships .....	PERMIT
General Shipping (above 500 tonnes) .....	NO
Line Fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trawling .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO

RESEARCH

Non-manipulative .....	PERMIT
Manipulative .....	PERMIT

With permission any other activity consistent with the objectives of the Zone.

For full details see the zoning plans.

19. - What activities are permitted in Marine National Park 'B' Zones?

MARINE NATIONAL PARK 'B' ZONES

RECREATION

Boating .....	YES
Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Diving, Snorkelling, Swimming .....	YES
Line Fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO
Spearfishing .....	NO
Traditional Fishing .....	PERMIT

COMMERCIAL

Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Cruise Ships .....	PERMIT
General Shipping (above 500 tonnes) .....	NO
Line Fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trawling .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO

EDUCATION AND TOURISM

Provision of Facilities .....	PERMIT
Establishment of Programs .....	PERMIT

RESEARCH

Non-manipulative .....	PERMIT
Manipulative .....	PERMIT

With permission any other activity consistent with the objectives of the Zone.

For full details see the zoning plans.

20. - What activities are permitted in Scientific Research Zones?

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ZONES

RECREATION

Boating .....	NO
Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Diving, Snorkelling, Swimming .....	NO
Line Fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO
Spearfishing .....	NO
Traditional Fishing .....	PERMIT

COMMERCIAL

Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Cruise Ships .....	NO
General Shipping .....	NO
Line fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trawling .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO

EDUCATION AND TOURISM

Provision of Facilities .....	NO
Establishment of Programs .....	NO

RESEARCH

Non-manipulative .....	PERMIT
Manipulative .....	PERMIT

With permission any other activity consistent with the objectives of the Zone.

For full details see the zoning plans.

21. - What activities are permitted in Preservation Zones?

PRESERVATION ZONES

RECREATION

Boating .....	NO
Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Diving, Snorkelling, Swimming .....	NO
Line Fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO
Spearfishing .....	NO
Traditional Fishing .....	NO

EDUCATION AND TOURISM

Provision of Facilities .....	NO
Establishment of Programs .....	NO

COMMERCIAL

Collecting (e.g. shells, coral, aquarium fish) .....	NO
Cruise Ships .....	NO
General Shipping .....	NO
Line fishing .....	NO
Netting .....	NO
Trawling .....	NO
Trolling .....	NO

RESEARCH

Scientific non-manipulative ..	PERMIT
Scientific manipulative .....	PERMIT
Other research .....	NO

With permission any other activity consistent with the objectives of the Zone.

For full details see the zoning plans.

22. - When do the zoning plans come into effect?

It is intended that the zoning plans will be finalized by mid 1983.  
Actual management should start shortly after that time.

23. - What general policy exists for management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park?

To manage the Marine Park the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority emphasises education and information services in preference to enforcement.

24. - Where is trawling allowed?

In General Use 'A' Zone.

25. - Where can I go line fishing and trolling?

In the General Use Zones, also in the Marine National Park 'A' Zone but using no more than 2 hooks, a fly or a lure.

26. - Where can I go netting?

In the General Use Zones, also with a permit in the Marine National Park 'A' Zone for recreational purposes only.

27. - Where can I go spearfishing?

In the General Use Zones, but not with underwater breathing apparatus, except snorkels.

28. - Where can't I go fishing?

Preservation, Scientific Research and Marine National Park 'B' Zones. Also in Replenishment, Defence Closure, Seasonal Closure, Reef Research or Reef Appreciation Areas, when in operation. (Trolling is, however, allowed in Replenishment Areas from 1 April to 31 December).

29. - Where can I SCUBA dive?

Anywhere except for the Scientific Research and Preservation Zones. (Scientists can dive here, but only for research purposes).

30. - What provisions have been made for snorkelling, reef walking and other recreational activities?

These are allowed anywhere except within the Scientific Research and Preservation Zones. (Scientists may perform these activities in these zones but only in the interest of research).

31. - Can I collect shells and aquarium fish?

The collection of any shells, coral and fish is by permit only. Permits to collect may be obtained only for General Use Zones. (Scientists, with a research permit, can collect in other zones).

32. - Will the zoning plans prevent any existing activities?

Spearfishing - with underwater breathing apparatus other than a snorkel  
- with a power-head other than for shark protection  
- for commercial purposes  
will be prohibited.

Some activities are restricted to certain zones, e.g. trawling to General Use 'A' Zone.

33. - Where are Zone boundaries in relation to the reef edge?

In general, Zone boundaries are 1 km from the reef edge. However, there are a number of variations. For specific information obtain a copy of the zoning plans.

34. - What penalties will apply for a violation of the zoning plans?

Penalties for specific offences against the zoning plans will be established in the Regulations. Capricornia Section Regulations provide for fines of up to \$5000.

35. - How can I register my reactions to the zoning plans?

For details on making a representation see the back page of brochure Zoning the Reef. Your representation, in writing, is welcomed by the Authority. Representations must be submitted by 7 December.

36. - What happens to the zoning plans after this public participation program?

They are revised in response to representations received. The revised zoning plans will be submitted to the Minister, to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Council and then to Commonwealth Parliament for approval.

37. - How will I find out about the final zoning plans and their application?

A public notice in major and local newspapers and the Commonwealth Government Gazette will advise when the zoning plans are finally approved and available.

38. - What public education/information programs will be available?

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority produces a wide range of maps, guides, posters and brochures to help people better understand, care for and enjoy the Great Barrier Reef. The Authority also conducts active education and extension programs.