

The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area encompasses the world's largest coral reef system, and therefore the world's largest living structure. This mammoth natural rampart stretches 2000 kilometres along the north-east coast of Australia. Its 2900 reefs and almost 1000 islands are home to 1500 species of fish, 242 types of birds, 22 different kinds of whales, 500 different seaweeds, 6 breeding species of turtle, and 400 species of coral. It is because of this diversity that the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area supports an annual tourist industry worth more than \$700 million (more than two million people visit the Reef each year), a fishing industry generating \$130 million per annum and employing around 4000 people, and recreational anglers who make more than half a million trips out to the Reef every year.

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'We believe this Plan's implementation will guarantee that this unique region is passed on to the future as it should be - an outstanding part of Australia's heritage, cared for by Australians for the benefit of the whole world.'

Dr Martin W Holdgate & David McDowell
Past and Present Directors General
IUCN-The World Conservation Union



'The Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators welcomes this initiative ... it will require all parties to approach the task with open minds.'

Keith Nielson
Executive Director
Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators



'This is participatory planning in practice ... and if all sectors maintain their commitment to the plan, a wonderful Great Barrier Reef will still be there for our grandchildren.'

Colin Hunt
Planning Team member representing
the Conservation Movement



'... joint decision making by all those who are part of the Great Barrier Reef in many different ways ensures that this Plan is relevant to everybody. We encourage everybody to use it.'

From a joint statement by the Prime Minister
Paul Keating and Queensland Premier Wayne Goss



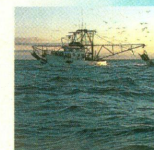
'This strategic plan will provide a basis ... to ensure wise use of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area forever.'

Prof. Graeme Kelleher
Chairman
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority



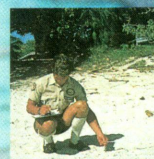
'The concept of strategic planning like this is brilliant and vital - we have to do it.'

Ted Loveday
President
Queensland Commercial Fishermen's Organisation



'This initiative is remarkable for its innovative approach, and is deserving of support from all spheres including government, industry, conservationists and the public.'

Dr Craig Emerson
Director General
Queensland Department of
Environment and Heritage



ECOLOGICALLY
SUSTAINABLE
USE

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future generations

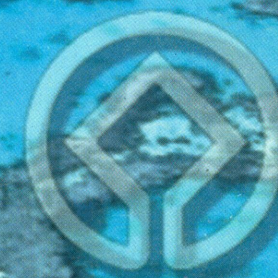
The complete '25-Year Strategic Plan for The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area'
is available from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
PO Box 1379 Townsville Qld 4810
Telephone: (077) 81 8811 Facsimile: (077) 72 6093

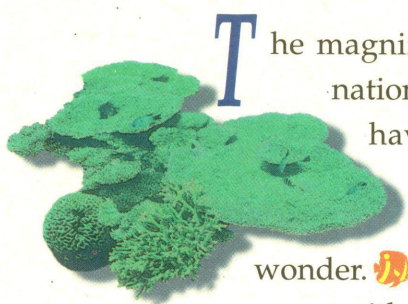
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KEEPING IT GREAT

THE
GREAT
BARRIER
REEF

A 25 YEAR
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE
GREAT BARRIER REEF
WORLD HERITAGE AREA





The magnificent Great Barrier Reef of Australia acts like a magnet. Around the nation and around the world, people who haven't seen it want to, those who have want to come back. And both groups are fulfilling their wish in greatly increasing numbers, including many who come to the region to settle and start up businesses directly linked to this unique marine wonder. 🐠 Inevitably, pressures have built up on the amount of use that the Reef can cope with, and in recent years, it has become clear that the unbridled enthusiasm of people for the Reef could be the very factor that could destroy its delicate natural diversity.

THE PROPOSAL

Why we need a strategic plan.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, those conservationists and responsible management

agencies who clearly saw the threats posed by the increasing pressures for use and access agreed that a vision leading to a long-term strategy was needed to ensure the Great Barrier Reef remained just that ... great. 🇺🇸 Many moves had already been made. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority had been set up in 1975 by the Commonwealth Government to study the complex set of problems, to recommend suitable protection, and, working with State and other Commonwealth agencies and those who use the area, manage the sensitive region in a fair and equitable manner. 🐠 In 1981, the Great Barrier Reef was inscribed on the World Heritage List. 🇺🇸 In 1991 the Marine Park Authority decided that the Reef was of such ecological importance and economic significance that it would be desirable to have long-term agreement amongst all the user groups on the future of the Reef. Emphasis would be placed on the concerns and opinions of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, other long-term and well-established users, conservationists, recreational users and established Reef industries such as shipping, fishing and tourism. Managers and scientists would also have a say. 🐠 And so started a unique democratic process never before applied to a World Heritage Area, let alone one of such importance. The ground-breaking process, designed and facilitated by Kayt Raymond and Associates, has been watched closely by nations around the world, as all facets of the community contributed to creating the vision of the Great Barrier Reef. This vision is what all participants are working towards. Their answers, concerns and aspirations have now been distilled into a definitive document which has the backing of both the Queensland and the Commonwealth Governments. 🇺🇸 It is intended that organisations which have participated in and agreed to the Plan will take responsibility for implementing the objectives which relate to their own activities.

THE PROCEDURE

More than 60 core organisations and individuals were represented in the procedure for reaching an agreed vision, and through

these consultations and workshops around the nation, what started out as a 25-year strategy has become, in effect, a perpetual plan for the protection, wise use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef. 🐠 It became clear that the results desired at the end of the 25-year period could best be achieved in five-year steps. In this way, as knowledge increased and long-term research yielded new information, the means to achieve the overall objectives may need to be reconsidered or at least refined. 🇺🇸 At every stage of the process, the decision-making was, and will be, a joint effort, with all interested parties able to contribute their ideas. And to ensure the broadest and best result, decision-making meetings were and will be organised and run by an independent professional facilitator. This ensures, that everyone has an equal say and that this is everyone's Strategic Plan. 🐠 There will be annual reports available on the progress being made towards the five-year objectives, and widespread community contribution will again be sought at the end of every five-year period.

REALISING THE VISION : A SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTIVES

CONSERVATION

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have a healthy, self-renewing Reef ecosystem.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have clear policies and a variety of integrated management strategies to conserve the Great Barrier Reef and its communities.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have use of Great Barrier Reef resources without causing unacceptable effects to the World Heritage Area.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have management plans for major activities in place which lead to ecologically sustainable use of resources.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER INTERESTS

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have broad community recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders interest and their exercising of responsibilities for use of the area within ecologically sustainable levels.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders meaningfully involved in all aspects of management of the area.

EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND COMMITMENT

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have a community which fully understands and supports the values and attributes of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and who have a commitment to caring for, and having a say in, the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of the region.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To inform the community about the area so they participate in its management and responsible use.

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To provide information to help decision making.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have improved our understanding of ecological, geological and physical processes of the area, of use patterns and their effects, both biological and socio-economic, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interests in the area, and the effects of land-based activities.

INTEGRATED PLANNING

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have the planning and management of the health of the Great Barrier Reef coordinated between stakeholders and across geographical boundaries.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have established mechanisms for regional integration of planning processes, and to have begun to address land-based pollution affecting the World Heritage Area.

MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have clear-cut, easily-understood management practices which will allow for thorough but swift and inexpensive decisions between concerned parties.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have in place processes to resolve disputes quickly and cheaply, and to enforce legislation. To ensure different user groups continue to consult one another, and to have secured committed funds to put the overall strategy into action.

LEGISLATION

25-YEAR OBJECTIVE

To have clear, complete and simple laws at all levels of management which will ensure the overall Strategic Plan can be effectively and efficiently achieved.

5-YEAR OBJECTIVES

To have suitable laws on the books which allow for the agreed cooperative management decisions to be enforced.

