



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

GREAT BARRIER REEF
MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

Annual Report Highlights

2012–13

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority works towards the long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park.

This outcome is delivered through three objectives:

- 1. Addressing the key risks affecting the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef**
- 2. Ensuring management supports ecologically sustainable use**
- 3. Fostering stewardship by engaging, educating and inspiring people through the care and management of the Marine Park.**

The agency's key achievements for 2012–13 are presented under these objectives in the following pages.



Objective 1

Addressing the key risks affecting the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef

- Released the *Great Barrier Reef Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2013* and published 12 of the 20 vulnerability assessments for at-risk habitats, species and groups of species that were identified through the strategy
- Released an ecological risk assessment of the East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery, which found that its impacts on marine plants and animals have reduced substantially over the last decade as a result of Marine Park zoning, the introduction of a fishery management plan and improved fishing practices
- Completed the *Informing the outlook for Great Barrier Reef coastal ecosystems* report which details coastal land use changes over many decades and their impact on water quality, habitats and inshore biodiversity
- Managed the marine monitoring program, which monitors the condition of water quality and the health of key marine ecosystems, to assess progress towards Reef Plan goals
- Assisted in developing Reef Plan 2013 and helped set new targets towards achieving the 2020 water quality goal
- Released *Climate Change Adaptation: Outcomes from the Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Action Plan 2007–2012*, a magazine-style publication showcasing the achievements of the first climate change action plan
- Launched the *Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan 2012–2017*, which outlines how the agency will build the Reef's health so it is better able to cope with stress and reduce the impacts of climate change
- Began collaborating with CSIRO to progress a Great Barrier Reef Climate Adaptation Research program
- Helped develop a marine biodiversity offsets framework under the Australia Caribbean Coral Reef Collaboration

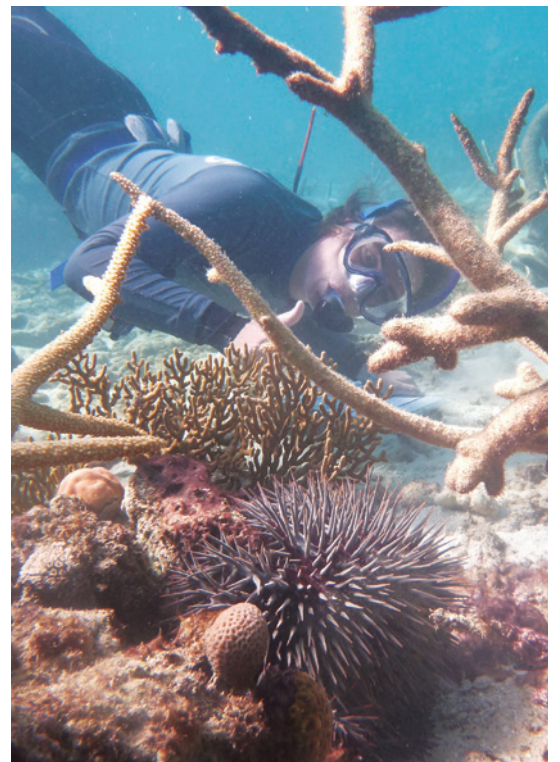




Objective 2

Ensuring management supports ecologically sustainable use

- Progressed a draft strategic assessment report which, at the end of the reporting period, was being finalised for submission to the Federal Environment Minister
- Managed five projects to inform the strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
- Managed a major control program that resulted in more than 95,000 coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish being culled from 71 reefs
- Contributed to the prosecution of the *Shen Neng 1* grounding case, resulting in the first custodial sentence handed down for damage to the Marine Park
- Accredited Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements for the Lama Lama and Yuku-Baja-Muliku Traditional Owner groups
- Completed 1460 dedicated compliance vessel patrol days, 49 multi-agency land-based days and seven dedicated aerial surveillance operations in addition to aerial surveillance provided by Border Protection Command
- Trained more than 150 volunteers and Traditional Owners throughout the catchment in marine animal stranding response
- Assessed the current condition and trend of the outstanding universal value of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
- Achieved more than 65 per cent of visitor days to the Marine Park being carried on High Standard Tourism operators
- Renewed a long-standing partnership with the Department of Defence to avoid and limit potential impacts on the Reef environment during defence training activities
- Delivered compliance training to 31 community rangers and Indigenous community groups





Objective 3

Fostering stewardship by engaging, educating and inspiring people through the care and management of the Marine Park

- Launched the expanded Eye on the Reef program, including a new phone app that enables Reef visitors to record real-time sightings of marine animals
- Expanded the Reef Guardian program with increases in the number of schools, fishers, farmers and graziers involved
- Reduced energy consumption at Reef HQ Aquarium by about 50 per cent through a 205 kilowatt peak photovoltaic solar power system and other energy-saving measures
- Participated in Reef Live, a groundbreaking live broadcast that brought the Great Barrier Reef into lounge rooms all over the world
- Co-hosted the International Coral Reef Initiative in partnership with the Government of Belize
- Expanded the agency's social media toolkit to include Twitter, as well as Facebook and YouTube
- Played a leading role in science-management engagement as part of the 12th International Coral Reef Symposium
- Involved 1132 Reef Guardian students in Future Leaders Eco-challenges which gave them experience in field based environmental activities
- Played an active role in the National Environmental Research Program Tropical Ecosystems Hub at project level, as chair of the biodiversity implementation group, and as a representative on the steering committee and water quality implementation group
- Continued strong partnerships with leading science providers, including the implementation of a major new Social and Economic Long-Term Monitoring Program
- Completed a scoping review of citizen science on the Great Barrier Reef

