

DOUGLAS SHOAL ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION PROJECT

August 2023

Restoring Douglas Shoal

A groundbreaking coral reef restoration project is underway in a remote area of the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

The project will aid the natural recovery of Douglas Shoal, which was damaged by the grounding of a cargo vessel, the Shen Neng 1, in 2010. The clean-up effort involves removing loose debris and potential pollutants from the ship's anti-fouling paint.

This initiative underscores Australia's commitment to ensuring accountability for environmental damage caused by human activities.



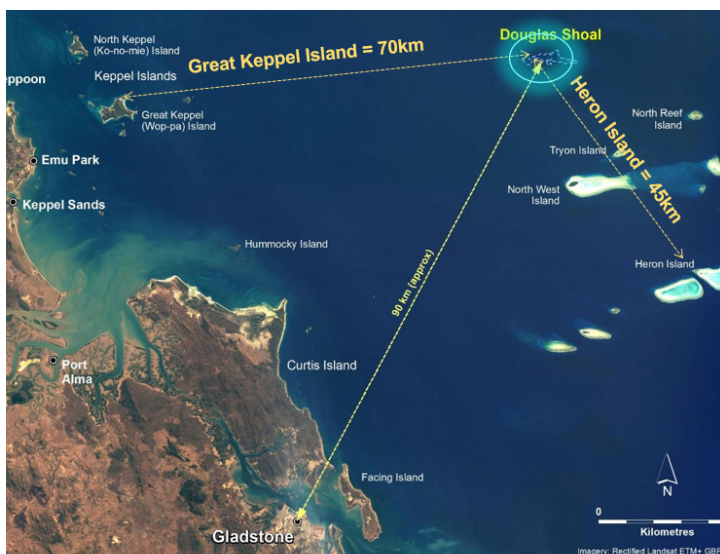
The Shen Neng 1 ran aground in April 2010 causing damage to Douglas Shoal.

Douglas Shoal facts

Douglas Shoal is located in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. This submerged shoal-reef features a large flat-topped ridge that rises within 10–15 metres of the ocean surface, up from a surrounding depth of about 45 metres.

It has important environmental, cultural, social and economic values, supporting abundant fish life and protected species including sea snakes and marine turtles. Undamaged parts of the shoal are covered by a variety of algae mixed with soft and hard corals.

Douglas Shoal is situated in the Sea Country of the First Nations Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng and Taribelang Bunda peoples.



Location of Douglas Shoal

The project

The project involves removing loose coral rubble and anti-fouling paint that was generated by the ship grounding, to promote natural recovery of this shoal which is home to a diversity of marine life. The project is one of the most ambitious and large-scale coral reef restoration projects ever undertaken. There are no known precedents.

The project is fully funded by a \$35 million settlement from the grounded ship's owners and insurers. This project demonstrates Australia's commitment that those who damage our natural environment will be held to account.

Traditional Owners of Douglas Shoal have been actively involved in the project since its inception and are active in a number of on-water components.



Surveying grounding damage at Douglas Shoal.

Scope of works



Trailing suction hopper dredge and floating pipeline.

A trailing suction hopper dredge operated by Boskalis Australia Pty Ltd will perform offshore clean-up activities for the Reef Authority over a two-week period starting in early September 2023.

The project has been designed to optimise environmental benefits minimising all environmental risk to the shoal and the Great Barrier Reef. There is extensive environmental monitoring before, during and after the clean-up.

All material removed from Douglas Shoal will be discharged into large ponds that have been purpose built on land in Gladstone Harbour.

Strict environmental standards are required to be met in the treatment, disposal and beneficial reuse of material removed from Douglas Shoal. All onshore activities are expected to be completed by the end of 2023.



Purpose built ponds to receive material from Douglas Shoal.

For more information visit www.reefauthority.gov.au