



## ECOSYSTEM REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ERAC) 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting – 1 and 2 September 2010 – Townsville SUMMARY DOCUMENT

The Chairman paid respect to the Wulgurukaba and Bindal Traditional Owners and acknowledged their traditional land and sea country in the Townsville region.

A summary of the outcomes of the main items discussed is set out below.

### BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Members were updated on the progress of the Biodiversity Strategy, and provided comment and feedback on the guiding principles; list of habitats and species for vulnerability assessments and list of proposed reviewers; the utility of the Vulnerability Assessment process; and the public consultation process.

The Committee endorsed the GBRMPA's approach to develop the Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef, not solely for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Committee:

1. Recommended including a clear statement of the purpose of the Strategy and agreed it should be a broad framework for setting strategic direction and guidance on operational aspects and not detailed actions.
2. Endorsed the proposed set of guiding principles and recommended -
  - a) Additional principles on
    - i. ecosystem resilience, and
    - ii. shifting baselines;
  - b) Including addressing the issue of scale under the biodiversity conservation principles; and
  - c) Reorganising the principles into groupings of "like" principles (e.g. ecological, social and management).
3. Recommended assessing the practicality of undertaking vulnerability assessments of groupings of bioregions and trophic levels in addition to the proposed habitats. This should assist in providing a spatial context to the assessments. In addition, recommended exploring the consideration of the role and inclusion of ecosystem processes in the development of the Strategy (e.g. the Trawl Ecological Risk Assessment).

4. Recommended developing a number of milestones that underpin the monitoring evaluation of the Strategy. This should be done as part of the process of developing the priorities for action and implementation. Milestones could include ones relating to status, pressure, management processes and implementation.
5. Agreed the Strategy must include a monitoring and evaluation framework that incorporates the proposed milestones.
6. Recommended developing a summary of proposed engagement and communication steps and timeframes (identifying who, how and when) and circulating for advice to the ERAC out-of-session. This should include key stakeholders (government, industry, NGOs and research partners), ERAC and nominees of other RACs.
7. Noted the relationship of the implementation of this Strategy to the development of the next Outlook Report, thus timely finalisation and implementation of this Strategy is important.

### SUSTAINABLE FISHING IN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF WORLD HERITAGE AREA

Members were provided an overview of the draft Position Paper titled 'Ecologically Sustainable Fisheries'.

While this Position Paper provides a very strategic approach to fishing in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, it is non-technical and is designed for the general public.

The Committee:

1. Endorsed the position paper and considered it provides the right level of information given its purpose;
2. Agreed there should be links with the sustainable fishing guidelines under the EPBC Act;
3. Agreed with the inclusion of a brief overview of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, its scale, and multiple-use management arrangements; and
4. Recommended that as relevant documents/reports/action plans are finalised, the appropriate hotlink is inserted in this document, or other information sheets be produced.

## ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT FOR TRAWL

Members were updated on the progress of the Trawl Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) Project.

The Committee:

1. Endorsed the initiative to undertake the ecological risk assessment for trawl and the process used to engage relevant experts and peer review;
2. Noted the importance of the timing of the ERA relative to the review of trawl plan;
3. Endorsed the approach to characterising ecological processes and implications on the trawl fishery;
4. Supported the communication products prepared including the bulletins; and
5. Recommended that, where appropriate, similar processes be undertaken as part of the review of management arrangements for other fisheries in the Marine Park.

## HERITAGE

Members were updated on Heritage activities, including the preparation of the Periodic Report for the World Heritage Area. Members noted each World Heritage Area is required to prepare a Periodic report every six years, and agreed the importance of this document should not be underestimated.

The Committee recommended that:

1. The GBRMPA prepares the draft Periodic Report for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area;
2. The ERAC peer reviews the draft Report; and
3. Other RACs be invited to nominate a couple of experts to be involved in the peer review process.

## DRAFT RETROSPECTIVE STATEMENT OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Members were provided a presentation on the development of the draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Once endorsed by the World Heritage Committee, the information contained within the Statement will become the baseline against which future deliberations by that Committee or IUCN will be assessed.

The Committee endorsed the draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and congratulated the GBRMPA on the work done to develop the Statement.

## REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Members were provided a presentation on the review of the Environmental Impact Management Policy.

The policy was developed to provide a consistent and transparent framework to the environmental

impact management of developments in the Marine Park.

The Committee:

1. Endorsed the inclusion of climate change as part of the review, and emphasised the importance of addressing cumulative impacts in any revision to the policy and its implementation;
2. Noted a number of key points were raised in the discussion at the meeting and recommended that these are addressed when developing the work program for phase 2; and
3. Requested further involvement following the audit of management tools and the development of phase 2.

## DRAFT RECREATION STRATEGY

Members were provided a presentation on the draft Recreation Management Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

The Strategy will provide an overarching framework for the management of recreation by the GBRMPA, and help to better co-ordinate management with the GBRMPA's management partners.

The Committee recommended its continued involvement in the development of the Strategy, noting the links to the Biodiversity Strategy. The Committee also noted the current high levels of recreational use, projected growth and issues including the cumulative impacts being driven by population growth.

## NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to be held in March 2011.

### Current Membership of the Committee 2009-2012

Dr Andrew Ash	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
Mr Graeme Devin	Queensland Game Fishing Association (QGFA)
Dr Peter Doherty	Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS)
Mr Shaun Hanson	Commercial fisheries
Mr Terry Harper	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), Department of Environment and Resource Management
Mr Winston Harris	Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA)
Mr Darren Kindleysides	Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS)
Dr Gilly Llewellyn	WWF Australia
Professor Helene Marsh	Species ecology conservation
Dr Barry Pollock	Sunfish Queensland
Mr Nigel Routh	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPC)
A/Professor Stephan Schnierer	Indigenous fisheries and conservation research and policy
Mr Lyle Squire Jnr	Dive-based fisheries
Mr Bruce Stobo	Charter fisheries
Ms Diane Tarte	Independent Chairman
Mr Ian Yarroll	Fisheries Queensland, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)

Supported by:

Mr Peter McGinnity	General Manager, GBRMPA
Mr Jon Day	Director, Ecosystem, Conservation and Sustainable Use, GBRMPA