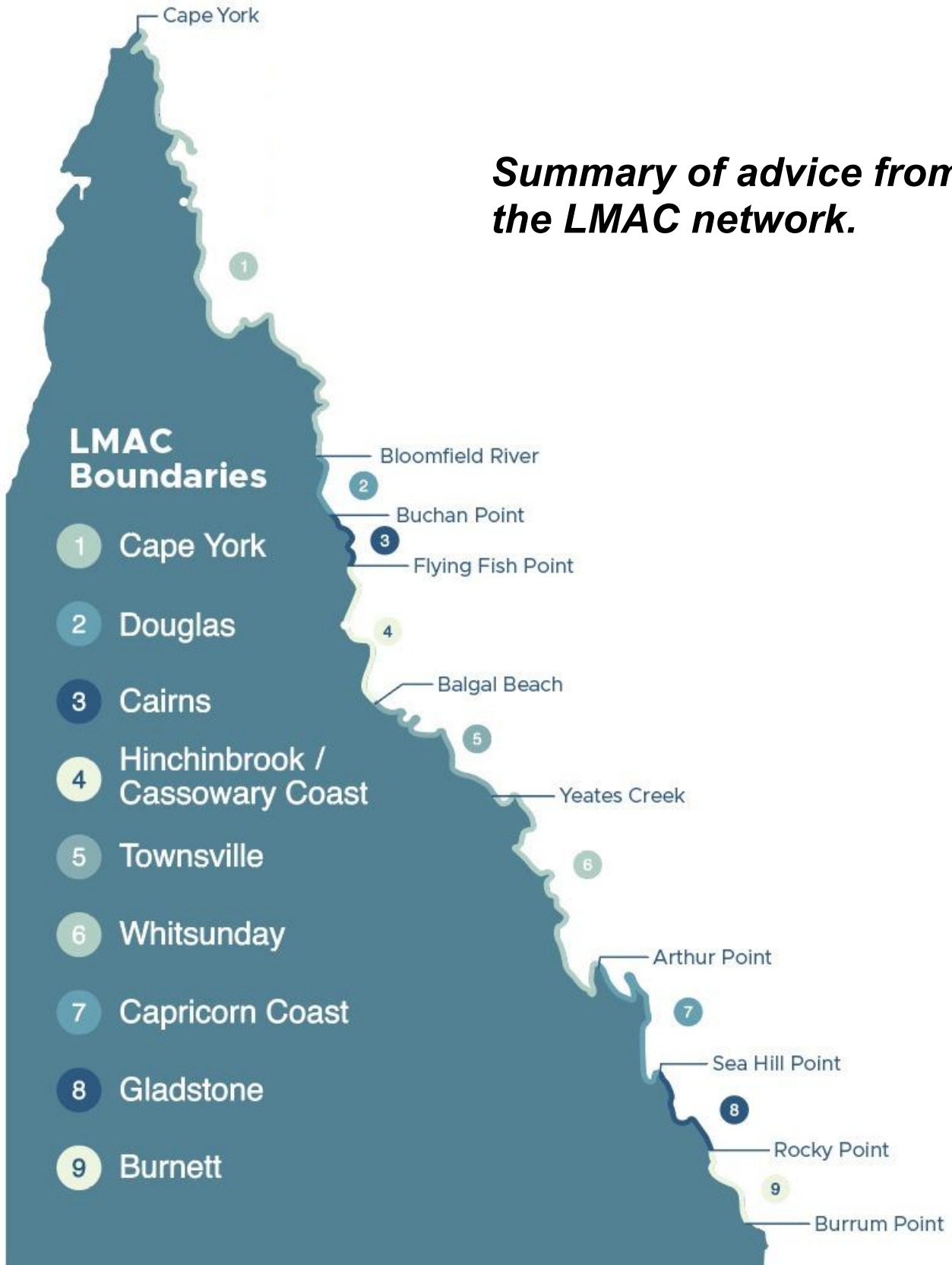


LOCAL MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

NOVEMBER 2025



Summary of advice from the LMAC network.



The sixth meeting of the Local Marine Advisory Committees (LMACs) for the 2024–2027 term were held in November 2025.

The Reef Authority provided an overview of the 2025 Reef Forum held in October 2025 and gave a presentation on strengthening Reef resilience.

The presentation included:

- Resilience-based management approaches
- The Reef Authority’s management toolkit, including statutory and non-statutory management tools
- A guide to the Resilient Reef Network, and an opportunity to use the tool to look at local areas.

The LMACs provided advice on the application of existing management tools and other management tools that could be investigated, used or upscaled across the Reef. A summary of this advice is provided below:

Reef-wide management tools summary

Do immediately

- Communication and education: Expand and target messaging (shipping lanes, zoning, climate impacts, Reef health and Reef Authority’s objectives).
- Compliance and enforcement: Increase presence and targeted enforcement, especially in high visitation areas.
- Monitoring and research: Expand Reef health monitoring, water quality, Reef use data, and baseline monitoring.
- Crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS) Control Program: Continue and expand to address outbreaks.
- Reef stewardship programs: Strengthen Reef Guardian Schools, Reef Guardian Councils, LMACs, citizen science, and community networks.
- Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreements (TUMRAs): Create new agreements and expand existing ones.
- Interventions and adaptation: Begin targeted restoration, resilience, and adaptation projects.
- Management actions: Introduce new actions where gaps exist.
- Partnerships: Expand collaborations with councils, Traditional Owners, dive clubs, citizen science, and government agencies.
- Plan of Management: Initiate new or amend existing plans to incorporate latest information.
- Regulations: Amend or introduce new regulations (e.g., 2019 framework).

Short term

- Fees and charges: Introduce recreational fishing licenses and other charges.

- Partnerships: Strengthen strategies with QPWS, councils, Department of Climate Change Energy Environment and Water (DCCEEW), and local groups to dilute fishing pressure and address erosion.
- Reef stewardship programs: Expand, evaluate to determine impacts of the program and expand and adapt the program as appropriate.
- Site-specific plans: Develop or update plans for priority reefs and regions.
- Special Management Areas (SMAs): Establish new SMAs for ecological integrity, visitor safety, and rapid response.
- Monitoring and research: Continue expansion, including integration of regional report cards and marine monitoring data.
- Regulations: Amend or introduce new frameworks to support adaptive management.

Long term

- Zoning Plan 2003: Amend to reflect new knowledge, flexibility, and adaptive management needs.
- Permits: Create new or amend existing permits to allow agile restoration and adaptive responses.
- Policies and Position Statements: Update or introduce new policies and statements for climate accountability, restoration, and resilience.
- Interventions and adaptation: Expand long-term restoration and resilience programs.
- Plan of Management: Develop new or amend existing plans (e.g., Cassowary Coast, Southern regions).
- Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreements (TUMRAs): Continue expansion and integration into long-term frameworks.

Other Reef-Wide recommendations (consolidated)

Protection and zoning

- Provide extra protection in sensitive regions.
- Expand or create SMAs, including emergency SMAs for rapid response.
- Protect mid-shelf reefs important for coral larvae dispersion.
- Restrict access to specific sites (e.g., turtle nesting areas) at certain times.
- Keep effective TUMRAs in place and create new ones to include all mobs in Far North.

Fishing and recreation

- Introduce recreational fishing licenses and fees.
- Limit fishing for specific species in certain areas.
- Stop take of herbivorous fish to support reef health.
- Spread recreational use to reduce pressure on the Reef via more usable boat ramps and increased moorings.

Water quality and catchment management

- Investigate catchment-based activities (wetland restoration, coastal ecosystem recovery).
- Manage sediment at source (e.g., degraded gullies in Burdekin River).
- Strengthen partnerships with government to address riverbank erosion.
- Support algae farms and use of bivalves (clams/oysters) to improve water quality.
- Redefine aquaculture to enable restoration efforts.

Climate change and adaptation

- Target industry to cut greenhouse gas emissions.
- Update the Act for Climate Change accountability. Noting, this is outside the Reef Authority's direct remit.
- Incorporate messaging into large-scale events (e.g., Olympics) to encourage sustainable practices.
- Ensure rapid response planning is included in the Reef 2050 Plan.

Monitoring, data and research

- Collect data for deeper water corals and add seagrass data to mapping tools.
- Include Marine Monitoring Program data and regional report card data.
- Provide public information on Commonwealth vs State powers.
- Prioritize restoration for reefs with higher resilience.
- Make mapping tools publicly available and usable for hypothetical scenarios.
- Ability to drill down on data layers (e.g., reef use by number of boats) in the mapping tool.

Compliance and enforcement

- Update coral harvesting regulations.
- Target compliance at high visitation regions.
- Revoke permits from repeat offenders.
- Concentrate COTS control in coastal areas.

Community, education and stewardship

- Expand communication and education (shipping lanes, zoning, pink zones, aquarium rebuild).
- Engage Traditional Owners and Native Title Groups in planning and stewardship.
- Build capacity through Reef Stewardship Programs and citizen science.
- Encourage voluntary local actions and voluntary codes of conduct.
- Provide clear education on pink zones to prevent navigation mistakes.

Restoration and rapid response

- Develop multi-agency rapid response plans for severe events.
- Make restoration permits more agile for emergency response.
- Support research and funding for species recovery and resilience.
- Promote site-specific plans for low recovery reefs and high-value reefs.



Reef
Authority

REEFAUTHORITY.GOV.AU