



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority



Reef
Authority

SCIENCE STRATEGY

Prioritising Science for Reef Management



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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised this publication may contain names and images of deceased persons.

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Comments and questions regarding this document are welcome and should be addressed to:



Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
235 Stanley Street
(PO Box 1379)
Townsville QLD 4810, Australia

Phone: (07) 4750 0700
Fax: (07) 4772 6093
Email: info@gbbrmpa.gov.au
www.gbbrmpa.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

The Reef Authority acknowledges the expertise, wisdom, and enduring connections that have informed the guardianship of the Reef for millennia. We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners as the first managers of this Land and Sea Country, and value their traditional knowledge which continues to inform the current management and stewardship of the Reef for future generations.



Nautilus Shell Artwork © 2023 by Laurence Gibson,
Yalanji Arts, Mossman Gorge

Our challenge

Climate change is accelerating pressures on the Great Barrier Reef (the Reef), undermining its resilience and putting the values the Reef Authority works to protect at risk. The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan sets the outcomes required to safeguard these values. Our Science Strategy **guides investment and focuses collaborative science effort** towards achieving those outcomes, ensuring management decisions are timely, evidenced-based and responsive to emerging challenges.

Our strategy's

Purpose

To bring science, Traditional knowledge, industry and innovation together to guide evidence-based management actions that protect the Great Barrier Reef's values for future generations.

Mission

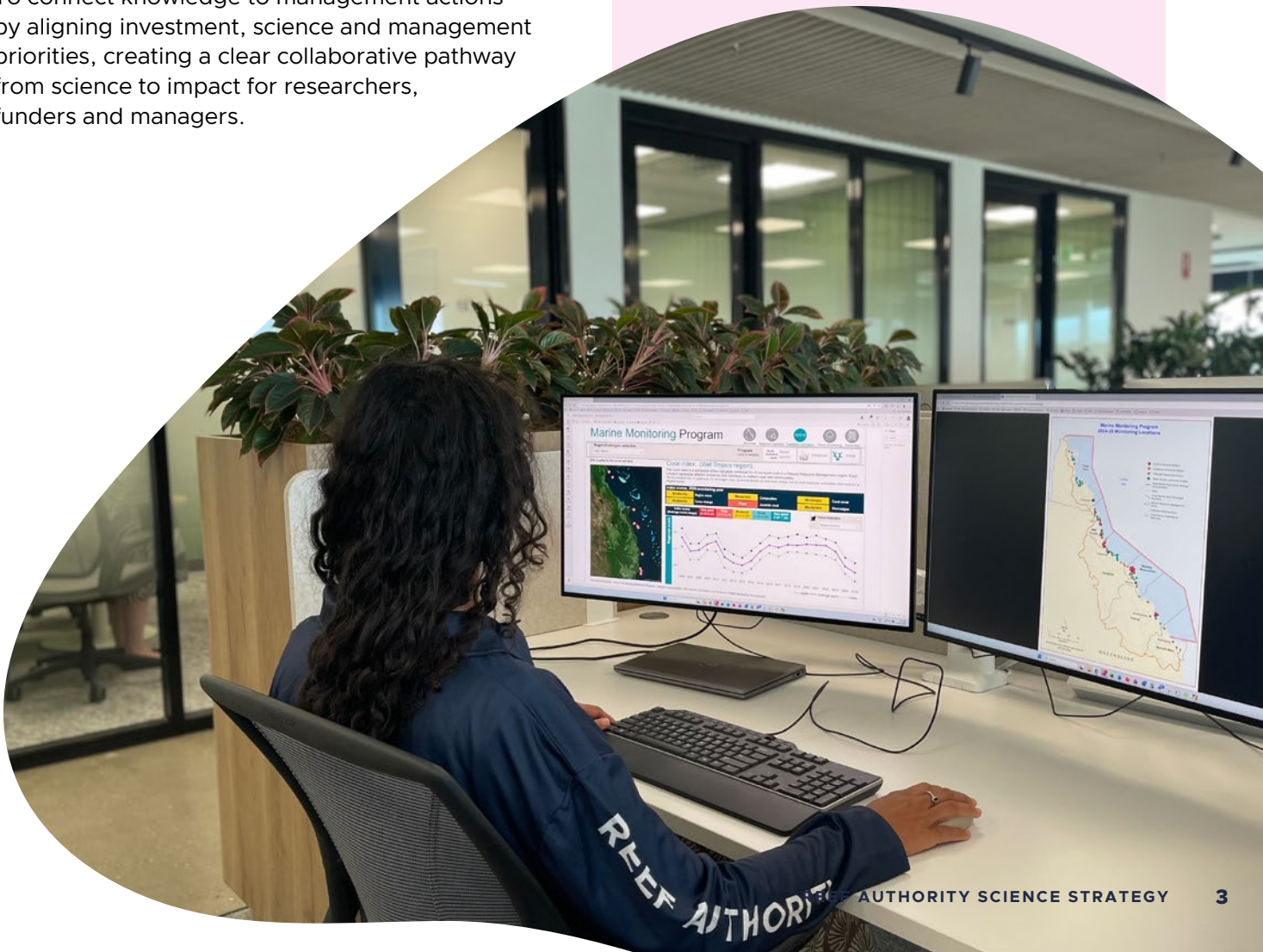
To connect knowledge to management actions by aligning investment, science and management priorities, creating a clear collaborative pathway from science to impact for researchers, funders and managers.

Our invitation

"Together, we can ensure science and innovation underpin management of the Great Barrier Reef, for a resilient future – please join us."



Josh Thomas
Chief Executive Officer
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority





There are many valuable assets to build on – existing scientific, local, and Traditional knowledge, and strong partnerships. We will complement these enablers by improving our decision support tools, embedding robust data governance, and investing in innovation to ensure the evidence needed for effective management decisions is readily available.

Guiding principles

Be climate-conscious: Purposefully plan for the Reef's future climate and emerging challenges^{1,2}.

Be adaptive: Continuously adapt and evolve through evidence-based actions.

Be innovative: Embrace new technologies, methods, and creative approaches.

Be relevant: Stay focused on what matters most for management needs.

Be rigorous: Apply high standards of quality, credibility, and scientific integrity.

Be cooperative: Share information, knowledge, and data openly.

Be ethical: Work together with integrity, inclusivity and respect.

Be mutually beneficial: Ensure relationships create value for all parties.

Be purposeful: Communicate with clarity, intent, and impact.

Be transparent: Build processes based on openness, accountability, and shared understanding.

¹ Australian Climate Service. (2025). *Australia's national climate risk assessment report* (280 pp.).

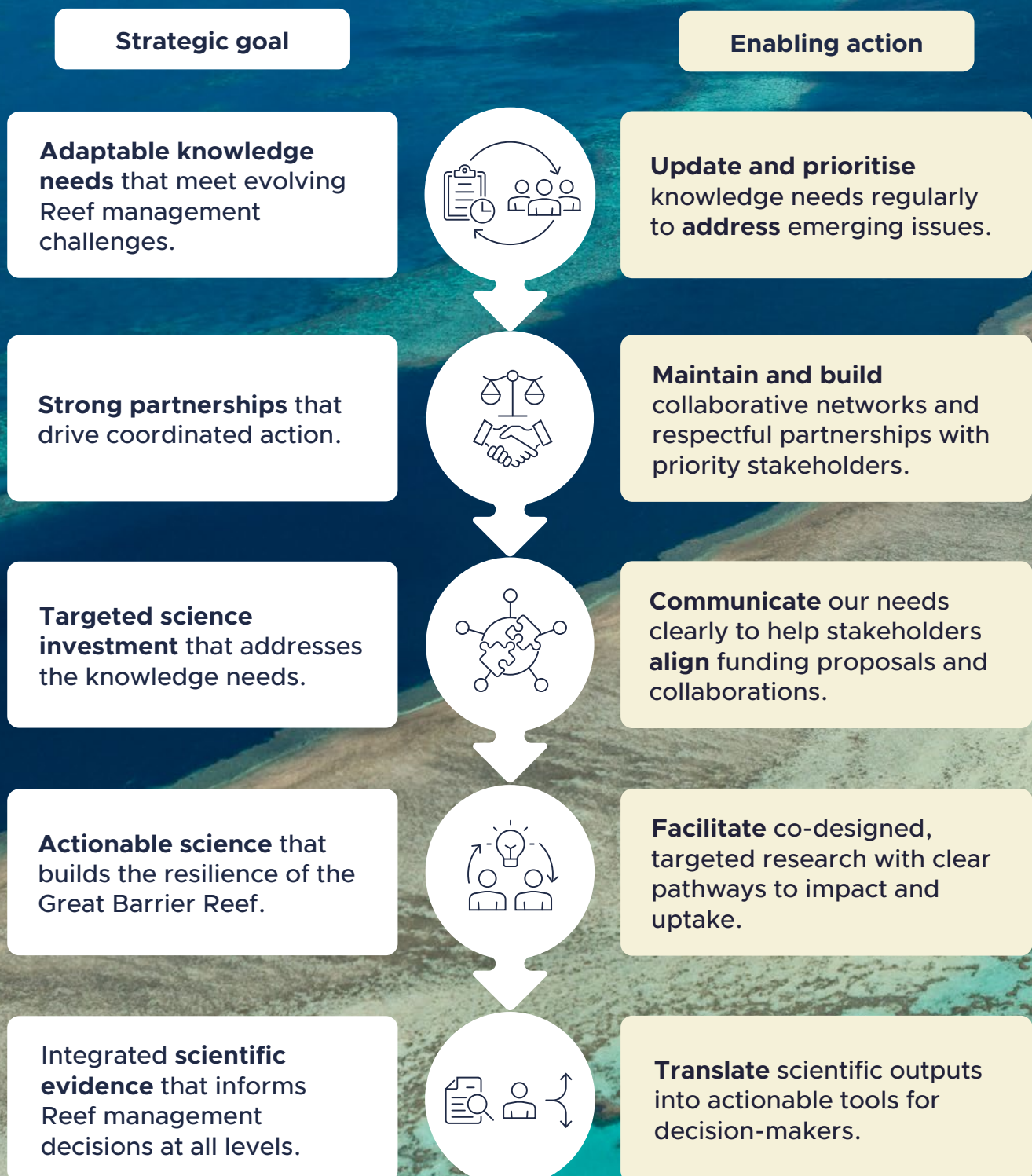
² Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. (2024). *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2024*. Reef Authority, Townsville.

Our pathway to impact

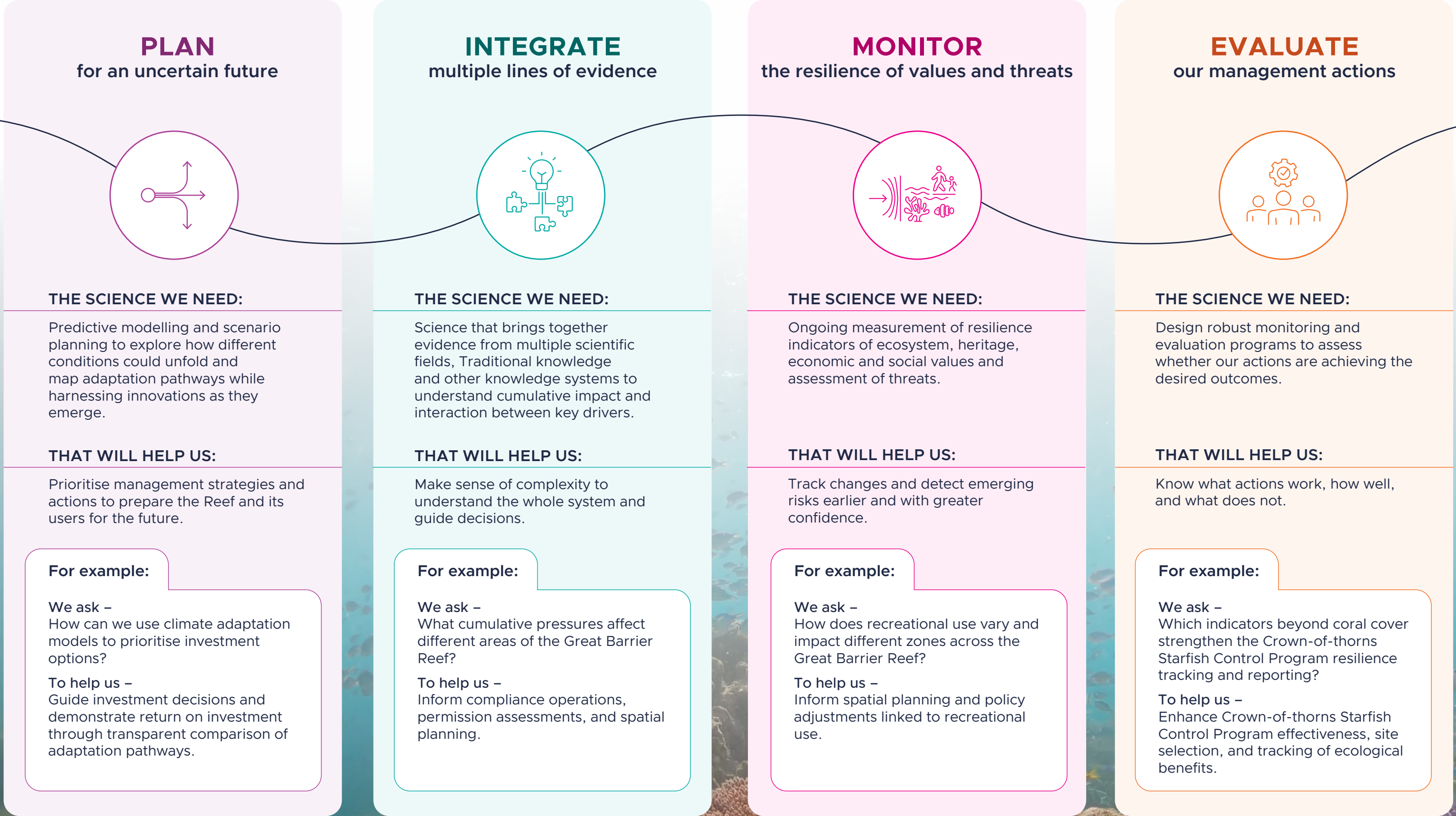
The Reef Authority will continue to deliver world-leading Marine Park management of the Great Barrier Reef through regulatory tools, education and engagement, and targeted in-water actions, supported by co-management with Traditional Owners and expert science synthesis.

To meet the current and emerging challenges, we are strengthening and adapting these functions to ensure they continue to protect the Reef's values and support effective evidence-based management.

Turning science into action is key to this approach: knowledge informs decisions, decisions underpin management, and management contributes to the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.



Our knowledge needs map to our adaptive management cycle



Explore our most critical knowledge needs and discover where your science, investment or industry interest can have the greatest impact. Your work could align with one or more knowledge needs, whether you are developing a single project or shaping a multi-year science portfolio. Go to our website or scan the QR Code for more details.



Collaborating to deliver the Science Strategy

Delivering the Science Strategy is a shared endeavour. We invite funders, researchers, Traditional Owners, government agencies, innovators and industry partners to work with us.

By engaging early and working in ways that suit the needs and capacity of each partner, we align investment with priorities, accelerate knowledge generation, reduce duplication, and ensure that science informs actions that supports resilience and protects the values of the Great Barrier Reef.

What do we mean by collaboration?

Collaboration can take many forms and sits along a spectrum of engagement. At one end, it may involve project co-design and co-investment. At the other end, it may be as simple as keeping us informed of emerging science, sharing data and information, or providing access to expertise.

Would you like to get involved? To discuss opportunities, contact science@gbrmpa.gov.au

For more information, see our [Collaboration Guidelines](#).

