



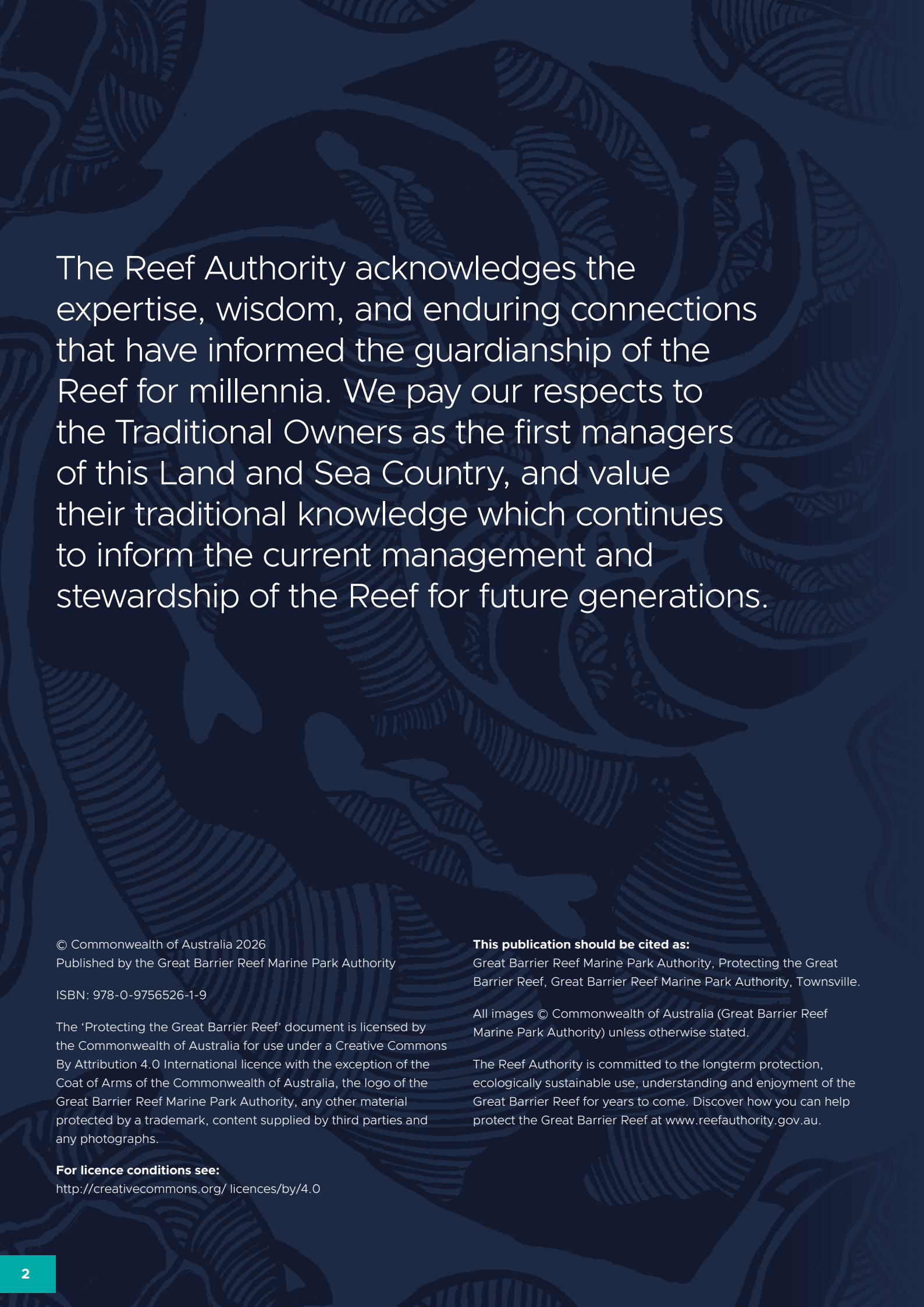
Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority



Reef
Authority

PROTECTING THE GREAT BARRIER REEF





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.

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The Reef Authority is committed to the longterm protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for years to come. Discover how you can help protect the Great Barrier Reef at www.reefauthority.gov.au.

Our role in protecting the Reef

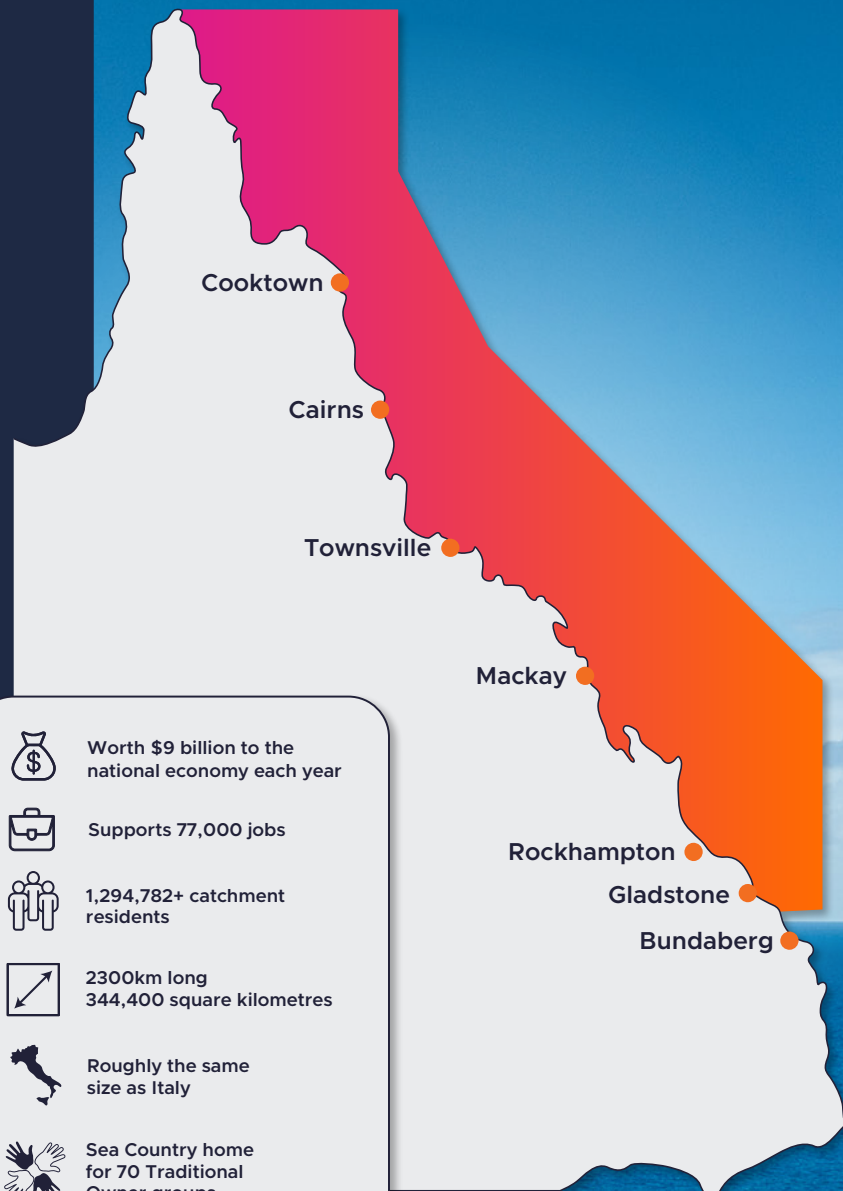
Our work

For over 50 years, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the Reef Authority) has had the privilege of managing the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Covering 344,400 square kilometres in area, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is one of the planet's most diverse and iconic ecosystems. As Australia's lead managers of the Great Barrier Reef, we work with government, industry and the community to protect this great natural wonder.

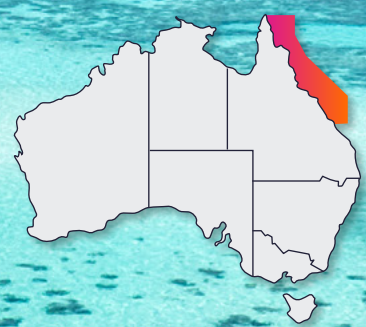
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 guides our management, balancing environmental protection with reasonable activities, such as tourism, shipping and fishing. We are Reef stewards, compliance officers, community educators, government advisors, data analysts, strategic policymakers, and science-led managers championing the Reef.

Using the best available science, we work to protect values, reduce threats, and improve the current and long-term outlook for the Reef and the communities that depend on it. A range of regulatory tools enable us to manage multiple activities in the Marine Park, including our Zoning Plan, plans of management, permits and policies, as well as a range of partnerships and management arrangements.

We are part of the Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water portfolio reporting directly to the Australian Government's Minister for the Environment.



-  Worth \$9 billion to the national economy each year
-  Supports 77,000 jobs
-  1,294,782+ catchment residents
-  2300km long
344,400 square kilometres
-  Roughly the same size as Italy
-  Sea Country home for 70 Traditional Owner groups
-  The world's largest coral reef ecosystem
-  Approximately 3000 coral reefs
-  1625 fish species, including 1400 coral reef fish
-  Six of the world's seven species of marine turtle



Our vision

A healthy Great Barrier Reef for future generations.

Our purpose

Provide for 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.

Why does the Reef need to be managed?

Given the vast size of the Great Barrier Reef, bigger than Italy, its condition is variable. Many areas continue to support beautiful corals and abundant marine life, and the Reef remains an extraordinary experience for visitors. However, pressures on the Reef are rapidly intensifying, and this ecosystem requires proactive management and protection. Our role as Reef managers is more crucial than ever.

As part of our management, we focus on building the resilience of the Reef in the face of climate change, its biggest threat. We work closely with Traditional Owners, other Australian and Queensland government agencies, industry, scientists, local councils, and the broader Reef community to drive action and support a more resilient Reef. We are internationally recognised for our expertise in marine protected area management and work with partners worldwide to share expertise and enhance coral reef protection.

The Reef has shown the ability to recover from impacts, if disturbance-free periods are long enough. The strongest and fastest possible global action on climate change is critical, and everyone can contribute and make a difference.



Reef Authority compliance officers patrol the Marine Park year-round from the sea and sky to protect the Reef from illegal activity.

Key programs

As Marine Park managers, we play a key role in preserving the Great Barrier Reef's World Heritage values and ensuring its sustainable use through in-water conservation programs, planning, permits, and regulation. Our key programs include:

Zoning

Zoning is one of the most important management tools available to safeguard the Reef. Across a network of eight zones, the plan specifies what activities can be undertaken in the Marine Park and where, and whether permission from the Reef Authority is required to use or enter a zone.

Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report

Every five years, we publish an Outlook Report that examines the Great Barrier Reef's health, pressures, and likely future. The report is required under the Marine Park Act and provides a regular and reliable means of assessing Reef health and management in an accountable and transparent way.

Reef Joint Field Management

In partnership with the Queensland Government, the award-winning Reef Joint Field Management Program monitors Reef health, delivers surveillance and compliance to uphold Marine Park zoning and management plans, deterring illegal activity. The Program responds to maritime incidents, implements conservation actions, maintains visitor infrastructure, and connects with Reef users.

Eye on the Reef

Our Eye on the Reef monitoring and assessment program enables anyone who visits the Reef to contribute to its long-term protection by collecting valuable information about reef health, marine animals and incidents. This data is used to understand the bigger picture and inform how we manage the Marine Park.



Science for Management

The Reef Authority works collaboratively with science and knowledge partners to ensure the management of the Reef is based on the best available science, and to improve management and protection strategies. Through partnerships and knowledge systems, the program helps enable the early detection of trends and changes in the Reef's environment.

High Standard Tourism Operators

High Standard Tourism Operators provide environmentally sustainable and high-quality visitor experiences on the Great Barrier Reef. All operators are independently certified as part of the High Standard Tourism Operator requirements, with operations spanning key locations across the Marine Park including the Far North, Port Douglas, Cairns, Townsville, the Whitsundays and the Capricorn Coast.





Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements

For more than 20 years, the Reef Authority has partnered with Traditional Owners through Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements (TUMRAs). There are 10 accredited TUMRAs, co-designed with the Reef Authority and Queensland Government, covering 43 per cent of Reef coastline, with a further three groups working towards a TUMRA. TUMRAs recognise and uphold Native Title rights, capturing the interests and responsibilities of Traditional Owners who possess an intrinsic spiritual connection to the Reef.

Southern Plan of Management

The Reef Authority, southern Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service are working collaboratively to develop a Southern Plan of Management for the area south of Midge Point to the southern boundary of the Marine Park. The Plan will complement the existing Zoning Plan and offers a finer scale of management, well suited to identifying and implementing localised solutions.

Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program

The program is one of the most effective, evidence-based, direct actions for coral protection across the Great Barrier Reef. Vessels with highly skilled dive teams are strategically deployed across the Reef to survey over 200 reefs annually and manually cull these coral-eating starfish to sustainable levels, saving thousands of hectares of coral reef habitat.

Great Barrier Reef Aquarium

For more than three decades, the aquarium has welcomed millions of visitors from around the world to experience the magic of the Great Barrier Reef. The facility is currently under redevelopment and is on track to open in 2029.

Local Marine Advisory Committees

Local Marine Advisory Committees are a network of community members and management partners who meet regularly to provide advice to the Reef Authority on Marine Park management.

Tourism Reef Protection Initiative

The Reef Authority harnesses tourism as a force for Reef protection through initiatives encouraging marine tourism operators to be ambassadors for the Reef. The Tourism Reef Protection Initiative engages local tourism operators to deliver Reef monitoring and protection services (including Eye on the Reef surveys), controlling and removing coral predators such as crown-of-thorns starfish and Drupella snails, and identified site stewardship activities across the Reef.

Reef Guardian Schools

Established in 2003, the Reef Guardian Schools program encourages teachers and students across the globe to take actions to help protect the Reef and its connected ecosystems.

Reef Guardian Councils

The Reef Guardian Councils program supports environmentally sustainable practices undertaken by councils in the Reef catchment. There are 21 councils involved in the program along the length of the Reef — from K’gari (Fraser Island) in the south and Cooktown in the far north. These councils represent more than one million people and cover some 75 per cent of the Reef catchment.





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