



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority



Queensland
Government



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Research permissions

Research plays an important role in contributing to our understanding of the Great Barrier Reef (the Reef). Research provides the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Reef Authority) and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, as the managing agencies for the Reef, with a scientific basis for management decisions, helping us protect the environment and biodiversity and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Parks.

The Zoning Plans and regulations set out the way research activities are managed in the Marine Parks.

The [guidelines](#) for managing research in the Marine Parks outline our approach to managing research activities and key considerations and limitations in relation to research.

When is a permit needed?

Most research requires a permit issued jointly by the Reef Authority and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Research under accreditation

Limited impact research (non-extractive and extractive) may be conducted under a letter of authority issued by an accredited educational or research institution.

Limited impact research can only be carried out in General Use, Habitat Protection, Conservation Park, Scientific Research, Buffer (non-extractive only), and Marine National Park (non-extractive only) zones of the Marine Parks and is further restricted by methods and equipment that may be used and by sampling (take) limits.

Sections 19 and 20 of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 2019, define limited impact research, and the research guidelines outline important standards, limitations and considerations regarding limited impact research.

See the Reef. Love the Reef. Protect the Reef.

Research activity	Zone							
	General Use	Habitat Protection	Conservation Park	Scientific Research	Buffer	Marine National Park	Preservation	Commonwealth Island
Limited impact research (non-extractive)	No permit required	No permit required	No permit required	No permit required*	No permit required	No permit required	Permit required	Permit required
Limited impact research (extractive)	No permit required	No permit required	No permit required	No permit required*	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required
All other research	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required	Permit required

* If an approved Environmental Management Plan (EMP) is in place then research must be conducted in accordance with the relevant EMP.

These educational and research institutions are currently accredited by the managing agencies:

- University of Queensland
- Australian Museum
- Queensland Museum
- Central Queensland University
- University of Sydney
- University of Technology, Sydney
- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- James Cook University

For information on obtaining a letter of authority for limited impact research, please contact your university faculty.

Applying for research permits

Research that does not comply with the requirements for research under accreditation requires permission. Researchers should submit their application via the [online application portal](#).

Research [permission applications](#) must:

- include the names of proposed taxa (to the lowest relevant taxonomic level) and sampling numbers
- include information on the relative abundance of the species or habitat and

the species conservation status or vulnerability to over-collecting (including localised depletion)

- describe the level of environmental impact that may result from the research activity, including in the context of the state of the environment at the proposed sites.

Guidance on the minimum information required for research permissions is provided in the application [guidelines](#) and [checklist](#).

The Authority's website also includes [Permit application guidelines](#) for restoration/ adaptation projects to improve resilience of habitats in the Marine Parks.



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Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

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