



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

CORPORATE PLAN 2018–19



Traditional Owner acknowledgement

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority acknowledges the continuing sea country management and custodianship of the Great Barrier Reef by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners whose rich cultures, heritage values, enduring connections and shared efforts protect the Reef for future generations.

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Australian Government

**Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority**

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Page 21 Nathan Cook (GBRMPA). Page 22 Joint Field Management Program.



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Chairman's foreword

Australia is custodian of the Great Barrier Reef. The Reef was listed on the World Heritage register in 1981 for its superlative natural beauty and is celebrated as an integral part of Australia's identity.

The health of the Reef is essential to the Australian and Queensland economies, supporting a range of uses as well as 64,000 full-time jobs, and contributing \$6.4 billion per year to the economy, mainly through tourism. It is critical to the cultural, economic and social wellbeing of the more than one million people who live in its catchment and to Australians and the international community more generally. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef Region and evidence of their sea country connections goes back more than 60,000 years. The future of the Great Barrier Reef is a priority for the Australian Government.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority was established in 1975 following a Royal Commission into mineral and petroleum exploration on the Great Barrier Reef. For more than 40 years the Authority's purpose has been to ensure 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.

Like tropical coral reefs around the world, the Great Barrier Reef is under significant pressure from climate change. When combined with the additional pressures associated with declining water quality; coastal development; and direct use, particularly illegal fishing, we are witnessing dramatic system-wide declines in the Reef's condition.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's management of the Reef is supported by a strong knowledge base built from scientific research and information from reef industry operators, traditional owners and the public. This knowledge drives our plans, policies and field operations focussed on sustaining the Reef's health in the face of cumulative impacts caused by global climate change and the regional and local effects of human activities.

While continuing to strengthen our existing protective measures based on planning, education, regulation and compliance, we are now increasing our focus on more active interventions on the islands and reefs throughout the World Heritage area. This includes exploring innovative approaches to enhance the resilience of these critical habitats.

After the mass coral bleaching events of 2016 and 2017, in December 2017 the Authority launched its *Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Resilience* which draws on the input to the Great Barrier Reef Summit convened by the Authority in May 2017.



The blueprint outlines 10 initiatives with actions that deliver maximum benefits for Reef resilience, with a clear message, 'Together we can secure the future of the Great Barrier Reef — but we need to try harder, do more and act now'. In 2018, the International Year of the Reef, there is accelerated action across both the public and private sectors to protect the Reef.

Implementation of the blueprint initiatives is now underway — for example, the Australian Government has committed substantial new funding for expansion of our field management program and increasing efforts to control outbreaks of crown-of-thorns starfish.

As managers of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the Authority works closely with many other people to accelerate efforts to reduce impacts and improve the Reef's resilience. We have strong links to coastal communities, the reef tourism sector, the Queensland Government and traditional owners to name just a few.

The *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan* is the national framework for all our efforts to ensure the future of the Great Barrier Reef. The Authority works with its government and non-government partners to implement this strategic framework for managing the Reef and its catchment.

We value our relationships with Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner groups and we aim to expand our co-management arrangements for the care and protection of the Great Barrier Reef. Such arrangements will further protect cultural and heritage values, conserve biodiversity, and enhance the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

This Corporate Plan 2018–19 has been prepared for the Ministers responsible for the Environment and Finance portfolios in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. It has been endorsed by the Board of the Authority which is responsible for implementing the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

The plan guides our staff and informs the public and stakeholders about our objectives, the scope of our work and our priorities in fulfilling the Authority's responsibilities under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

Dr Russell Reichelt FTSE
Chairman
August 2018



Introduction (Statement of preparation)

I, Russell Reichelt, as the Chairperson of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the accountable authority, present the Authority's four-year Corporate Plan, as required under paragraph 35 (1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The plan is prepared in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

Dr Russell Reichelt FTSE
Chairman and Chief Executive
August 2018

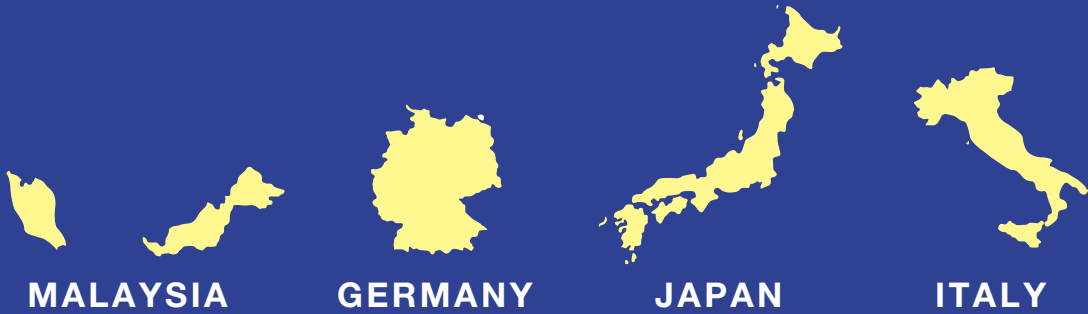
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park



LENGTH
2300 km

AREA
344,400 km²

ROUGHLY THE SAME AREA AS...



MALAYSIA

GERMANY

JAPAN

ITALY

70 MILLION FOOTBALL FIELDS

THE REEF IS HOME TO:



600
TYPES OF SOFT
AND HARD CORALS



3000
CORAL REEFS



600
CONTINENTAL
ISLANDS



1625
TYPES
OF FISH



133
VARIETIES OF
SHARKS AND RAYS



Vision

**A healthy
Great Barrier Reef
for future generations.**

Purpose

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.

The Authority achieves its purpose by focusing on three goals:

- protect and restore the Reef's ecosystem health, resilience and biodiversity
- safeguard the Reef's heritage
- ensure ecologically sustainable use and benefits for current and future generations.

To enable the effective measurement of success against its goals and purpose, the Authority prepares the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report* every five years. This includes an assessment of the condition and trend of the Reef's values and an independent review of management effectiveness. The five-yearly assessment process acknowledges the lag time between the implementation of actions and subsequent results when operating in marine environments.

Role

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is established under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* and is the Australian Government statutory authority responsible for protecting and managing the environment, biodiversity and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef Region.

The Authority reports to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Energy and advises the Minister on a range of matters relevant to the care and development of the Great Barrier Reef, including: day-to-day park management; development and implementation of policies, plans and programs to protect biodiversity; capacity building through stewardship and education; and synthesised knowledge to guide adaptive management.

Values

The Authority is visionary, demonstrates leadership and integrity, embraces innovation, and fosters partnerships with stakeholders in its management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.



How the Authority operates

To achieve its purpose the Authority will deliver its work under four main program areas with a focus on protecting, managing and restoring the Great Barrier Reef's ecosystem health, resilience, biodiversity, and heritage values; while working with others to reduce the effects of an accumulation of impacts on this iconic natural wonder (as shown in Figure 1).

Program area 1: Providing expert knowledge to influence and advise key decision-makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef.

Program area 2: Regulating and ensuring Marine Park user compliance.

Program area 3: Educating and fostering stewardship to enhance protection of the Reef.

Program area 4: Enhancing reef resilience through continuous improvement and new initiatives across all aspects of management.

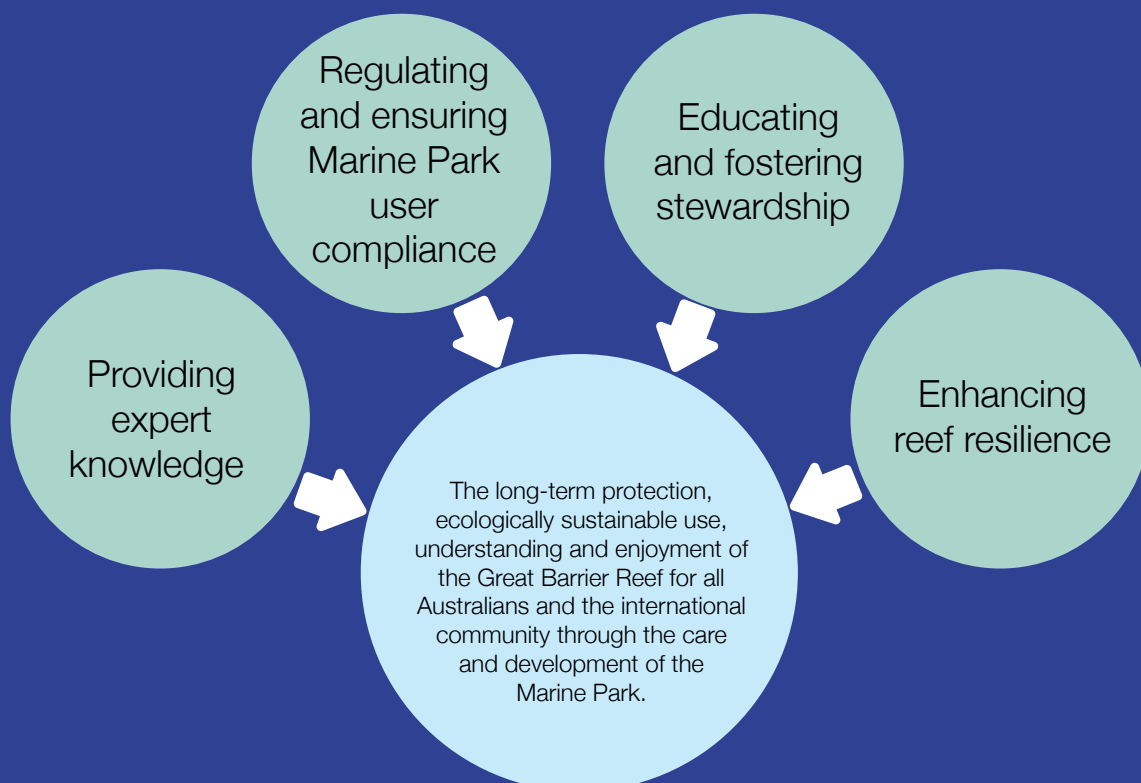


Figure 1: The four program areas that contribute to the long-term goal of the Authority.

Working in partnership to improve Reef resilience

The Authority has managed a number of different threats over the last four decades. Today, the most significant threats to the long-term health of the Great Barrier Reef are outside the Authority's direct control.

Climate change remains the most significant threat to the Great Barrier Reef. Global action to reduce human-caused greenhouse gas emissions is essential to slow global ocean warming which has already caused widespread oceanic heat-waves and the consequential loss of corals world-wide over the past three decades.

The Reef experienced two extreme weather events during 2017: the second consecutive year of ocean heat waves causing mass coral bleaching, and the damaging effects of category 4 tropical cyclone Debbie which crossed reefs in the Whitsundays region of the Marine Park. Other threats outside the Marine Park boundary come from human activities relatively more local and manageable — for example, unsustainable land use practices leading to water pollution and habitat losses.

In order to address these significant challenges, the Authority has stepped up its efforts to raise awareness of the effects of activities outside the Marine Park. Increased work with key partners and decision-makers in state and Australian government agencies, particularly in activities associated with climate change, marine debris and coastal ecosystems aims to create positive influence to improve the health of the Reef.

The Authority's management approaches include developing and implementing conservation actions to build the Reef's resilience; empowerment of others to protect the Reef through education and stewardship programs; and providing expert knowledge to influence and advise key decision-makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef. These are supported by a range of marine park planning, policy and regulation tools, which include zoning plans, plans of management, permits, policies and strategies, formal agreements, site management arrangements and compliance and enforcement.

The Joint Field Management Program is the Authority's key strategic partnership with the Queensland Government and is essential for the effective management of the marine parks (including protected islands) and a large, diverse and complex World Heritage Area. It is integral to the delivery of actions under all the Authority's program areas.

As part of its world-leading zoning plan, the Authority ensures commercial use of the Marine Park remains ecologically sustainable through a comprehensive joint permissions system with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. The Authority also receives regular advice and guidance from the Tourism Reef Advisory Committee on matters relating to the conservation and ecologically sustainable tourism use of the Marine Park.

The Authority's comprehensive management is underpinned by a knowledge base that drives its adaptive approach, focusing on managing for resilience in the face of cumulative impacts, particularly climate change. It uses the best available information to inform its management approaches and report on their effectiveness, including scientific, monitoring and modelling data, together with Traditional Owner and stakeholder knowledge. The Authority works with the scientific community to influence research priorities and address gaps in its knowledge.

In delivering its work the Authority continues to build effective relationships with Traditional Owners who are the traditional custodians of the Great Barrier Reef with connections to the area dating back more than 60,000 years. Major projects taking place in close partnerships with Traditional Owners include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy, and continuation of the land and sea country partnerships program, including the successful Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreement program. The Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee also provides important advice and guidance on sea country management issues, building a greater understanding of Traditional Owner values associated with Marine Park management.

As part of their \$500 million funding announcement in April 2018, the Australian Government committed \$443 million to be administered by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation for activities to enhance Reef resilience. The Authority already has a strong partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and this relationship will be enhanced through the Foundation's delivery of the funding, as together we build on existing programs and expertise to boost reef protection.

Operating environment

Legislation

The Authority's legislative operating environment is shaped by the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, the *Public Service Act 1999*.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act provides for the long-term protection and conservation of the environment, biodiversity and heritage values of the Region. It allows for ecologically sustainable use and encourages stakeholder engagement in protecting and managing the region. The Act sets out the Authority's role and, through its objects, provides the basis for the region's management.

Planning and reporting

The Authority has an integrated planning, budgeting and reporting process. This corporate plan is directly aligned to the relevant outcome, programs and performance criteria set out in the *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018–19 Budget Related Paper No 1.6 Environment and Energy Portfolio*.

The Portfolio Budget Statement and this corporate plan complement each other to provide a consistent performance story from vision to implementation.

The Authority's purpose is consistent with its outcome represented in the 2018–19 Portfolio Budget Statement.

Performance measures are grouped under the four program areas detailed in this corporate plan and the 2018–19 Portfolio Budget Statement. This will inform reporting on Program 1.1 *Improving the Outlook for the Great Barrier Reef* associated with Outcome 1. This information will be reported collectively in the Authority's annual report, specifically in the annual performance statement.

Outcome 1: 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.

Program 1.1: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Protects and manages the environment, biodiversity, and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef region, and ensures the ecologically sustainable use and benefits of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park for current and future generations.

Delivery

1. Program 1.1 will be delivered by four program areas:

- providing expert knowledge to influence and advise key decision makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef
- regulating, and ensuring Marine Park user compliance
- educating and fostering stewardship to enhance protection of the Reef
- enhancing reef resilience through continuous improvement and new initiatives across all aspects of management.



Condition and trend of the Reef

The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2014* found the overall outlook for the Reef had worsened since the previous report in 2009 and was likely to deteriorate in the absence of action to address threats, including at local and regional levels. The report found the most significant factors influencing the values of the Marine Park were climate change, water quality, coastal development and some fishing impacts.

In 2017, a second consecutive year of mass coral bleaching occurred on the Great Barrier Reef due to ocean warming caused by climate change. The 2017 bleaching impacts add to those from 2016 and extend the cumulative footprint of severe bleaching further south. These events have resulted in an unprecedented level of bleaching-related coral die-off in the Great Barrier Reef.

In addition to these severe bleaching impacts, large portions of the Reef were subjected to other impacts in early 2017 which occurred simultaneously. Ongoing outbreaks of coral disease and crown-of-thorns starfish, and damaging seas from a severe cyclone and flood plumes all continued to affect the Reef from January 2017. The cumulative impact of these disturbances has likely reduced overall coral condition and severely diminished the resilience of many reefs north of Mackay.

The cumulative impacts are not only on the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem, but also affect nationally important and regionally vital industries, particularly tourism and commercial fishing. These sectors are acutely aware they are also vulnerable to the effects of a changing climate. Similarly the effects extend to the cultural and heritage values of Traditional Owners, social values for communities along the coast for whom the Reef is part of their enjoyment and daily life, and the broader Australian and international community who consider it to be an irreplaceable icon.

The community is becoming increasingly concerned about the long-term health of the Reef. This has been confirmed through recent market research commissioned by the Authority which found people felt a sense of shame and sadness about the idea of losing the Reef.

Bleaching events are expected to increase in frequency and severity as a result of climate change, making resilience (including recovery processes) increasingly important for reefs to persist as coral dominated systems. The Authority's priority is supporting the Reef's resilience and recovery in the wake of the mass coral bleaching which has affected reefs worldwide over the past three years.

These bleaching events highlight the dire need for strong action by the Authority, its partners and stakeholders to support the Reef's natural ability to recover from impacts.

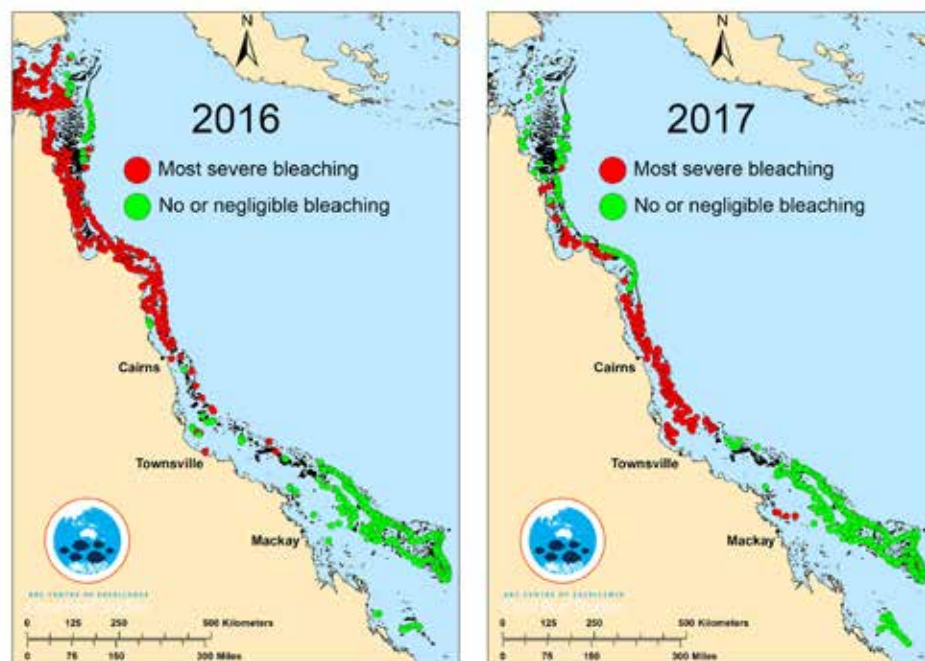


Figure 2: Areas affected by coral bleaching in 2016 and 2017.

Source: Australian Research Council, Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies.



Reef 2050 Plan – coordinating actions

The Australian and Queensland governments responded to increased concerns about the health of the Reef with the *Reef 2050 Plan* – an overarching strategy and approach for the management of the Reef. The plan is based on the best available science and expert advice and defines outcomes, objectives, targets and actions for seven themes including water quality, biodiversity, ecosystem health, heritage, community benefits, economic benefits and governance.

The *Reef 2050 Plan* builds on the findings of the Outlook Report 2014 and the Strategic Assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and adjacent coastal zone, and provides a high-level strategy to guide investment and actions required to continue building Reef health and resilience. A mid-term review of the *Reef 2050 Plan* in 2017 consolidated and added additional actions to respond to bleaching and severe weather events.

The Authority continues to work closely with the Australian Government's Department of the Environment and Energy, and the Queensland Government, as well as Traditional Owners, industry and community stakeholders in the delivery of the *Reef 2050 Plan*.

The Authority's Reef Integrated Monitoring and Report Program will inform adaptive management responses and evaluation of progress against *Reef 2050 Plan* targets and objectives.

International focus on the state of the Reef

The World Heritage Committee, at its 41st annual meeting in Krakow, Poland in July 2017, welcomed the progress made on implementation of the *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan*. Since 2012 the World Heritage Committee has focused public attention on the health of the Reef including widespread media attention and public scrutiny on Reef management, particularly the actions of the Australian and Queensland governments.

As a founding member of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Australia has a long-standing commitment to the preservation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems around the world. From mid-2018 to mid-2020 Australia, through the Authority, will partner with Monaco and Indonesia to jointly host the ICRI Secretariat. ICRI remains the premier global coral reef management forum for highlighting the shared nature of the impacts of climate change on coral reefs and coral reef nations, and to emphasise the need for global action on climate change.



Program areas and performance

The Authority's work program has an emphasis on protecting, managing and restoring the Great Barrier Reef's ecosystem health and resilience, biodiversity and heritage values. Implementing intervention actions and investigating innovative tools and policy approaches to assist with Reef recovery is an increasing area of focus.

The Authority delivers its work program by providing expert knowledge to influence and advise decision-makers, regulating use of the Marine Park, educating and fostering stewardship and enhancing reef resilience through continuous improvement in Marine Park management.

Program area 1: Providing expert knowledge to influence and advise key decision-makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef.

The Authority continues to work with stakeholders and partners to manage threats to the Reef's resilience, including climate change, water quality, coastal development and fishing.

Although these threats originate from sources outside the Authority's jurisdiction it provides expert technical and policy advice to partner organisations in relation to avoiding, mitigating and managing these Reef-related threats.

The Authority's involvement in the *Reef 2050 Plan* in particular provides it with an opportunity to influence the coordinated response to key Reef threats in partnership with other Australian Government agencies, the Queensland Government and other parties.

Information collected through the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, as well as the best available information and knowledge from Traditional Owners, scientists, stakeholders, and the Authority's own staff, will form the basis of the Authority's advice.

Information from the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program will also underpin the assessment of *Reef 2050 Plan* effectiveness and the plan's review in 2020.

The Authority will also develop its own policies and position statements on key threats to the reef and recommendations on how to best avoid, mitigate and manage these threats.

With an increasing number of government and non-government organisations involved in Reef protection, the Authority will focus its involvement to where it can have the greatest impact.

Program area objective: As the authoritative voice of the Reef, the Marine Park Authority's positions on values and threats to the Reef shape its priorities and investments and those of its key stakeholders.

What will the Authority do to focus effort?

- **Strategic advice:** Provide strategic advice, including the development of targeted position statements, to promote key issues, values and threats. Implement Marine Park Authority actions under the *Reef 2050 Plan* and International Engagement Strategy.
- **Reef knowledge and information:** Develop and provide Reef knowledge and information, including the delivery of marine monitoring and reporting, as well as continued progress towards a framework for Reef knowledge.
- **Reef outlook:** Develop and deliver the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019*.

What does success look like?

- Key stakeholder's policies, positions and priorities are influenced by the Authority's strategic advice and position statements on critical issues, values and threats.
- The Reef knowledge framework delivers improved access to data to support adaptive management of the Great Barrier Reef, incident response, reporting and Reef 2050 planning.
- The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019* is delivered by June 2019 and recognised as the authoritative source of information on the state of the Reef.



Performance

	Performance criteria	Target	Evaluation
Strategic advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marine Park Authority is seen as the authoritative source of advice on the Reef. Consistent, clear messaging around key values and management of threats. Marine Park Authority positions influence key stakeholder's policies and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic advice and position statements developed and promoted for key issues, values and threats. Australia partners effectively with Monaco and Indonesia to co-chair the International Coral Reef Initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of web hits on position statements. Uptake of position statements across the agency (e.g. Reef Guardian's materials accurately reflect the position). Increased understanding by stakeholders of the Authority's role as evidenced in media and feedback from meetings. Review of impact of position statements through targeted engagement with identified key stakeholders. International Coral Reef Initiative secretariat duties are conducted in accordance with its management procedures. International Coral Reef Initiative members and related entities acknowledge and seek the input and advice of Australia in relation to coral reef science and management.
Reef knowledge and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved data collection, access to monitored and modelled information, and synthesis that better supports resilience-based management, incident response, and reporting (including Outlook Report 2019 development and <i>Reef 2050 Plan</i> tracking). Final design of integrated Reef knowledge system is endorsed by, and secures investment from, key stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific components of Reef knowledge system continue to deliver the data required in the monitoring program as the process of final design and integration is worked towards. The initial integrated Reef knowledge system brings together and helps synthesise data from a purpose designed, management-focused, integrated monitoring program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2017 and 2018 information from several key long-term monitoring programs (e.g. Marine Monitoring Program, dugong surveys, zoning) is available to Reef managers and the public, and is used to inform the Outlook Report. The overarching monitoring program design process and associated trade-off analysis has helped to guide investment decisions in practice. A prototype online Reef knowledge system is up and running.
Reef outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlook Report 2019 recognised as the authoritative source on the state of the Reef by key partners, stakeholders and international bodies. Internal and <i>Reef 2050 Plan</i> programs and activities successfully use Outlook Report 2019 to prioritise work and leverage change and investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlook Report 2019 delivered by June 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Outlook Report 2019 is downloaded at an equivalent or higher rate to the 2014 report. The Outlook Report is cited by other agencies, researchers and stakeholders. Key information gaps that the Outlook Report identifies are partly or wholly addressed by the reviewed <i>Reef 2050 Plan</i> in 2020 and the agency's science information needs

Program area 2: Regulating and ensuring Marine Park user compliance

The Authority is the primary environmental regulator for protecting the Great Barrier Reef. Its role is to set the standards necessary to achieve its purpose and goals and provide certainty about where uses may occur, the types of activities allowed and the conditions under which activities may proceed.

In delivering its work under this program area the Authority uses a combination of management tools and approaches including zoning plans, plans of management, site-specific arrangements, agreements, permits, education, compliance and enforcement.

The Authority's world renowned regulatory framework and Zoning Plan are effective in managing use of the Marine Park and the foundation for protecting its values and enhancing the resilience of the Reef.

Despite this success, external pressures on the Marine Park present ongoing risks. To improve ecosystem resilience in the face of known challenges, such as the effects of climate change, the Authority continues to refine and focus its regulatory effort on activities presenting the highest risks to the Reef. Key aspects to our regulatory approach include:

- 1) developing regulatory solutions that take a risk-based approach to achieve the intended outcome
- 2) implementing an effective and efficient regulatory system
- 3) encouraging leading practices in responsible use of the Reef
- 4) responding through our enforcement activities proportionate to the risk, severity and attitude
- 5) continuously improving our regulatory practice to achieve outcomes for the Reef.

The implementation of this program area will see the Authority progress forward-looking, risk-based Marine Park and sea country planning, and update relevant policy and regulation in line with strategic priorities.

Program area objective: Planning, permissions and compliance activities enable use of the Marine Park that is ecologically sustainable

What will the Authority do to focus effort?

- **Marine Park policy and planning:** Maintain a complementary management approach and joint regulatory framework across the World Heritage Area. Deliver a roadmap for a proactive, risk-based planning approach.
- **Permissions and authorisations:** Implement a risk-based approach to assessments and decisions. Maintain and continually review the permit system to ensure design is optimised to act as an efficient and effective manager of user risk.
- **Marine Park compliance:** Ensure risk-based compliance occurs across the World Heritage Area in conjunction with the re-evaluation and refinement of future compliance framework and approach.

What does success look like?

- A Reef-wide, risk-based planning approach for regulation and management of Marine Park activities is developed, implemented and accepted by a majority of reef stakeholders.
- Permissions and authorisations enable sustainable use in the Marine Park.
- Reduced non-compliance of Marine Park users.

Performance

	Performance criteria	Target	Evaluation
Policy and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marine Park Authority regulations and management of activities are effective and efficient in reducing risks to the Reef. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A risk-based planning approach for regulation and management of Marine Park activities is developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans, policies and regulations take account of the health of the Reef and target priority areas and issues. Medium and high risk activities are appropriately managed through a risk-based planning approach.
Permissions systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permissions facilitate sustainable activity in the Marine Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit system supports sustainable use through a risk-based approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in the proportion of routine permissions granted. Low risk permissions have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a reduction in time taken to process - longer operating terms. Increase in guidance material available for applicants.
Marine Park compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased compliance with protection measures increases resilience of the Reef. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk-based compliance occurs across the World Heritage Area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness and engagement around obligations associated with permissions. Increased monitoring and auditing of medium and high risk non-compliances.



Program area 3: Educating and fostering stewardship to enhance protection of the Reef

The Authority implements a wide range of education and stewardship programs across the Great Barrier Reef catchment and beyond. These include Reef Guardians, Local Marine Advisory Committees, industry training and the management and operation of the Authority's national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef, Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium.

The Authority's Reef Guardian program facilitates adoption of environmentally sustainable best practices by the community, local government and industry to achieve environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef.

Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium, the Authority's national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef also fosters community and stakeholder behaviour change and participation in actions to address threats to the Reef by communicating the value of the Great Barrier Reef, the threats to its sustainable future and the actions people can take to protect it.

Through these programs the Authority provides technical expertise and advice to its stakeholders including local government, volunteer groups, schools, tourism operators, fishers, farmers, and natural resource management bodies.

The aim of these programs is to raise awareness, influence best practice and find pragmatic solutions to achieve the Authority's purpose and goals. Ultimately, these programs are aimed at building a sense of collective responsibility and care for the Reef.

Education and stewardship programs will continue to play an important role in the Authority's comprehensive management program for the protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef. Through working with partners,

the Authority will seek to strengthen collaborative arrangements to deliver these programs.

The Authority will focus on empowering stakeholders to take action by providing the tools and building the capacity of others to be champions for the Reef.

Program area objective: Empower others to protect the Reef through education and stewardship.

What will the Authority do to focus effort?

- **Education:** Deliver community education and outreach activities as well as public education through the national education centre for the Great Barrier Reef, Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium.
- **Stewardship:** Foster and support partnership programs and networks as well as deliver stewardship activities.

What does success look like?

- Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium exhibitions, formal and community education activities improve awareness, attitudes and aspirations for positive environmental behaviour change.
- Partnerships foster action and innovation through empowering a network of informed, and connected environmental stewards, influencing community stewardship of the Reef consistent with the Marine Park Authority's priorities and positions.



Performance

	Performance criteria	Target	Evaluation
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved awareness, skills, attitudes and aspirations for the Reef from participants. Improved awareness, skills, attitudes and aspirations for specifically targeted stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential learning, industry and community education activities delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal (k – tertiary) and community education programs facilitated through Reef HQ Aquarium are recognised for their educational benefit; and increase understanding of the Reef and how to protect it. Participants of education programs, including Reef HQ programs, report improved awareness of the Great Barrier Reef’s values and threats through Reef HQ visitor satisfaction surveys. Increased awareness and adoption of responsible reef practices by people visiting the Reef; and greater advocacy for the management and protection of the Great Barrier Reef achieved through the reef tourism industry.
Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowerment of, and action by, stewardship network delivers actions in line with the Marine Park Authority’s positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An empowered network of environmental stewards contributing to increasing adoption of ‘Reef friendly’ behaviours and practices within their community. Stewardship leaders inspire and empower others to change behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stewardship leaders have the knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA) to enable stewardship (measured by evaluation methods appropriate to the activity and audience). Demonstrated adoption of the stewardship principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CARE for and respect the Reef, its catchment, culture and community LEARN and improve ACT to minimise environmental impacts and conserve resources SHARE knowledge and collaborate. Evidence reported/indicated through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reef Guardian action plans and associated activity reporting Reef Guardian Stewardship Grants and their outcomes Local Marine Advisory Committees. Trend in stewardship adoption reported via the Social and Economic Long-Term Monitoring Program, and Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program’s ‘human dimensions indicators’ is improving.

Program area 4: Enhancing Reef resilience through continuous improvement and new initiatives across all aspects of management

In addition to its strategic planning for the Reef, the Authority has a history of undertaking significant interventions and other activities to enhance Reef resilience, including the implementation of the crown-of-thorns starfish control program, island conservation projects (such as the Raine Island turtle conservation project), and the Douglas Shoal remediation project. These actions highlight the Authority's responsiveness in adapting its management approach to address new threats and incidents which affect the Reef's resilience.

In light of recent bleaching, coral disease and severe weather events we have revisited and adjusted our strategic plans for managing the Reef, with an increased emphasis on developing, implementing and enabling interventions to build the Reef's resilience in the face of climate change.

In December 2017, the Authority released the *Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for Resilience* which signalled a change in the future management of the Reef. The blueprint draws on input to the Great Barrier Reef Summit – Managing for Resilience, convened by the Authority in May 2017.

Building on existing management arrangements — such as crown-of-thorns starfish control and fishing compliance — to protect the Great Barrier Reef, the blueprint outlines additional actions and innovative approaches the Authority will pursue with its partners to better support and protect coral reefs in the face of a changing climate. Its explicit focus on coral reefs reflects both their critical state, and the fact that coral reefs are the cornerstones of the Reef's broader ecological, social, economic, cultural and heritage values.

The blueprint builds on many foundational activities which contribute to Reef resilience, including the Zoning Plan, Joint Field Management Program, crown-of-thorns starfish control, incident response and remediation, and stewardship activities.

The Authority has worked with the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre and the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators for a number of years to protect coral cover by culling the crown-of-thorns starfish at priority reefs, particularly at key tourism sites. In 2018-19, an increase in the number of control program vessels will reduce the cumulative impact of the starfish on additional priority coral reefs throughout the Reef, improving the Reef's opportunity to recover and setting the foundation for increased Reef resilience.

The Authority is using the best available information and improving its use of spatial tools to identify specific locations that require priority management and interventions using existing programs, such as field management activities, as well as trialling innovative new approaches such as removal of macro-algae. The Authority is also reviewing its permitting arrangements to facilitate the implementation of conservation actions and interventions that could be delivered by the Authority and other parties to improve Reef recovery processes.

Program area objective: Incident responses and interventions by the Authority and partners improve Reef health and enhance knowledge and capability.

What will the Authority do to focus effort?

- **Incident response:** Reef health and maritime incident responses are delivered, in conjunction with ongoing monitoring of reef health and the maintenance of systems supporting operational readiness for incident response.
- **Conservation action:** Build a resilience network for the Great Barrier Reef in addition to developing, planning, preparing and undertaking conservation interventions and ongoing management activities.

What does success look like?

- Incident response is timely, effective, efficient, and mitigates damage to the Reef.
- Partners and stakeholders are aware of and understand future intervention priorities and locations and partner with the agency to trial and deliver some of these initiatives
- Management activities and priority conservation actions are delivered on budget, provide the intended impact and inform future activities.
- Capability is developed to effect new approaches to conservation.

Performance

	Performance criteria	Target	Evaluation
Incident response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An efficient and effective incident response restores Reef health as soon as possible following the incident. Improved Reef health through remediation of damage caused by incidents. Learnings from each incident inform operational preparedness for future responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reef incident response framework delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestones are met in delivering the incident response framework.
Conservation actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Resilient Reef Network drives future regulations, plans and actions. The condition of values in the resilience network are maintained or improved. Resources are coordinated and focused on resilience network. Stakeholders and partners are aware of, and understand, future intervention priorities and partner with the agency to trial and deliver some of these initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilient Reef Network mapped and management actions identified to support resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress of management actions being implemented for Resilient Reef Network Future plans and management actions take account of the Resilient Reef Network.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crown-of-thorns starfish management and other ongoing management programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are delivered to budget have their intended impact have learnings captured and applied to future initiatives. Capability is developed to implement effective new approaches to conservation actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority conservation actions and ongoing management activities are delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction and maintenance of crown of thorns starfish abundance below outbreak status levels on priority reefs. Planning and monitoring of proposed remediation of Douglas Shoal is well advanced and consistent with objectives of project. Reef intervention guidelines are finalised.







Joint Field Management Program: Implementation

This program — which operates across the Commonwealth Marine Park and the Queensland Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park — is responsible for management of the marine and island national parks and marine parks in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Delivery of the program is principally through the joint operations of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Joint Field Management Program delivers services across the program areas, particularly program areas 2, 3 and 4.

Implementing on-ground conservation actions, monitoring ecological and heritage values, responding to incidents, welcoming people and upholding compliance with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan are priorities for the program. Engaging with and involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in field management is an intrinsic part of service delivery.

Patrolling the waters and islands of the World Heritage Area, the program delivers a range of crucial activities including user compliance, monitoring internationally-important turtle and seabird breeding islands, eliminating island pests, and developing walking tracks, camping areas and lookouts. In-water activities include installing reef protection markers and moorings, and surveying reefs to help us understand and manage the impact of cyclones, crown-of-thorns starfish and bleaching on our coral ecosystems.

Following recent Australian Government funding announcements the Joint Field Management Program will scale up over the coming five years through:

- the purchase of a second state-of-the-art patrol vessel (*Reef Resilience*) to boost field capacity in the southern region of the Great Barrier Reef, enabling improved enforcement of Marine Park zoning requirements of the Marine Park, particularly against illegal fishing
- expanding the Authority's component of the key investment areas identified in the periodic review of the Joint field Management Program adopted by the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum in 2017.

Capability: Supporting a high performing organisation

The Authority is supported in delivering its core objectives through a number of corporate and enabling functions, which help ensure available resources are directed to the highest priority areas that we are accountable for what we do, and we continue to invest in the productivity of our workforce. Ultimately, the corporate and enabling services are focused on providing efficient and effective services and support to optimise outcomes for the Authority, and the Reef.

The Authority has a budgeted staffing level of 222 for 2018-19 and an annual budget of \$77.029 million, including \$20.877 million for the Joint Field Management Program, co-funded by the Queensland Government.

Objective: Efficient and effective support for the organisation.

The Authority's corporate and enabling functions are organised into seven activity areas, set out below.

Communication

The communication function provides strategic communication and engagement advice, planning and activities across the Authority. Responsibilities include brand management and positioning, media and issues management, and internal communications. The function also maintains corporate communication and engagement channels, including digital and social media platforms, and coordinates event management and publication production. In 2018–19 key deliverables will include:

- finalising and implementing the corporate communication and engagement strategy
- implementing the Authority's brand strategy
- reviewing and updating corporate communication channels, including the Authority's website, to maximise accessibility and effect.

People

The human resources function provides the systems and services required to support the Authority's most valuable asset – its people. This ranges from strategic outputs, such as workforce planning to develop organisational capability in a systematic way, to operational outputs such as recruitment, performance management, and learning and development. In 2018-19 particular areas of focus for the human resources function will be:

- improving the work health and safety management system
- building a strategic workforce planning process to enhance the Authority's capability to meet emerging needs and respond to a dynamic operating environment
- enhancing the Human Resources Information Management System to facilitate more effective and efficient management reporting.

Legal

Legal services enhances the capability of the Authority by providing professional, responsive legal advice and related legal support services. Those services include assisting with contractual and other arrangements, administering and managing delegations under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983*, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and a range of other legislative instruments, guiding necessary legislative amendments, and ensuring compliance with legislated requirements of Government, such as the Freedom of Information scheme and the Privacy Act 1988.

In 2018–19 key areas of focus for legal services will include:

- implementing the Australian Government Agencies Privacy Code, commencing from 1 July 2018
- remaking the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park regulations to address sun-setting as required by the *Legislation Act 2003*
- providing advice and support for a range of contracted delivery arrangements overseen by the Authority.

Finance

Financial services supports the Authority through input to the strategic Budget process, settling internal operating budgets, ensuring prudent financial management, providing advice and services related to procurement and travel, thereby enabling the Authority to manage its resources in an efficient and effective manner. Key areas of focus for 2018–19 will include:

- further enhancing procurement capability within the Authority to ensure purchasing strategies deliver fit-for-purpose outcomes which are value for money
- assisting the Authority's asset managers in having the necessary plans and resources to ensure the safety of the asset base and to maximise the performance of those assets
- refining the Authority's approach to risk management, with a sharper focus on strategic risks.

Governance

During 2017, the Australian Government commissioned an independent *Review of Governance of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority*. The Government released its response to this review in November 2017, accepting all 24 recommendations. The Authority continues to work closely with the Department of the Environment and Energy in implementing recommendations.

Key amongst the recommendations is the establishment of a part-time independent Chairperson, a full time Chief Executive Officer and increased number of positions on the Marine Park Authority Board, all of which are expected to take effect in 2018–2019.

The Marine Park Authority Board will be supplemented with skills and expertise, and it will meet more often. The CEO will be the Accountable Authority and Agency Head for the purposes of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Key areas of focus for 2018–19 will be:

- Supporting the induction of a new Chairperson and CEO
- Supporting the Marine Park Authority Board by:
 - developing and implementing a skills matrix to ensure the Board membership reflects recommendations in the Governance Review
 - providing additional resources and tools to conduct effective meetings.
- Supporting the CEO by continuing to maintain and develop organisational planning and operational processes to ensure that Accountable Authority and Agency Head obligations are met effectively and efficiently.

Information technology and information management systems

Information technology (IT) and information management systems (IMS) enhance the capability of the Authority by providing secure, reliable, fit-for-purpose information technology solutions, spatial data, and records management and library services.

In 2018–19, key areas of focus in order to further enhance IT and IMS will include:

- system enhancements to improve accessibility and user experience in records management
- reviewing and enhancing the Reef Explorer spatial tool to enable staff access to self-service map creation
- reviewing the ICT components of the Authority's business continuity plan to ensure it takes account of latest developments in the risk profile, and mitigation options.

Property and security

Property services and security support the Authority by providing timely, accountable and responsive advice and related services. These services include property and facilities management and maintenance, fit-for-purpose office accommodation solutions, and coordination and management of our protective security arrangements.

In 2018–19 key focus areas will be:

- managing the Authority's transition to the new Protective Security Policy Framework, including by developing and implementing a security plan, policies and procedural manual
- delivering security awareness training for all staff (including contractors)
- managing and coordinating the relocation of the Authority's main office site, in Townsville, to a temporary accommodation solution
- implementing the Whole of Australian Government facilities management arrangements.

	Performance criteria	Target	Evaluation
Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective and efficient delivery of capability services as associated with each of the seven enabling and corporate services functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of identified plans, products and services for each of seven enabling and corporate services functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Operating Plan inclusions for the seven enabling and corporate plan functions are delivered according to identified resourcing level and timeline.

Risk oversight and management

The Authority recognises risk management as a critical component of good regulatory and corporate governance. The Authority's framework for the management of risks is governed by the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy, is consistent with the principles and processes of the Australian risk management standard (AS/NZS 31000:2009), and is supported internally by a policy, guideline, and operational tools and templates.

This risk management framework explains the Authority's approach to risk and the responsibilities all workers have for effective risk management so that:

- decisions are transparent, defensible and contribute to organisational viability and development
- resources are directed towards threats to the achievement of strategic and operational objectives
- the quality of the Authority's work and internal controls continuously improves
- exposure to possible litigation, operational disruption and other losses is minimised
- we promote a culture that rewards risk reporting and prudent management
- people are safe in undertaking their work
- the Authority's world-leading reputation as trustee of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area is sustained.

The Authority's approach to risk management includes cultivating inherent controls, and establishing formal ones through strategic oversight and informed decision-making across the types of consequence that could impact its objectives.

The Authority's peer-reviewed five-yearly Outlook Report provides an assessment of risks to the ecosystem and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef Region. This report and the associated independent assessment of management effectiveness, provide the mechanisms through which risks to the region and the way they are managed are strategically identified and addressed. Actions to manage these risks (where jurisdictionally applicable), are integrated into the Corporate Plan and operationalised through the Authority's Operating Plan.

To address identified knowledge gaps critical to management, a 'science and information needs strategy' is also developed in response to the Outlook Report findings. This is used to inform the scientific community, research funding providers, monitoring programs and other relevant stakeholders of the prioritised information requirements to meet the objects of the Act.

The Authority identifies and regularly monitors management of serious strategic risks which may impact the achievement of program objectives. The Authority's risk management maturity is assessed and independently verified each year and assurance of its internal control environment is sought via internal review and auditing practices.

Purpose: 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.

<p>Program Area 1: Providing expert knowledge to influence and advise key decision makers on managing, reducing or avoiding significant threats to the Reef.</p> <p>Objective: The Marine Park Authority is the authoritative voice on the Reef and its position on values and threats to the Reef shapes its priorities and investments and those of its key stakeholders.</p> <p>Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic advice • Reef knowledge and information • Reef Outlook <p>Performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Marine Park Authority is seen as the authoritative source of advice on the Reef consistent, clear messaging around key values and management of threats • the Marine Park Authority's positions influence key stakeholder's policies and priorities • improved data collection, access to monitored and modelled information, and synthesis that better supports resilience-based management, incident response, and reporting (including Outlook Report development and Reef 2050 Plan tracking) • final design of integrated Reef Knowledge System is endorsed by, and secures investment from, key stakeholders • Outlook Report recognised as the authoritative source on the state of the Reef by key partners, stakeholders and international bodies • internal and Reef 2050 programs and activities successfully use Outlook to prioritise work and leverage change and investment. <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic advice and position statements developed and promoted for key issues, values and threats • specific components of Reef Knowledge System continue to deliver the data required in the monitoring program as the process of final design and integration is worked towards • the initial integrated Reef Knowledge System brings together and helps synthesise data from a purpose designed, management-focused, integrated monitoring program • Outlook Report delivered by June 2019. 	<p>Program Area 2: Regulating and ensuring compliance.</p> <p>Objective: Planning, permissions and compliance activities enable use within the Marine Park that is ecologically sustainable</p> <p>Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Park policy and planning • Permissions and authorisations • Marine Park compliance <p>Performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Authority's regulations and management of activities are recognised as efficient and effective in reducing risks to the Reef • permissions facilitate sustainable activity in the Marine Park • increased compliance with protection measures increases resilience of the Reef. <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a risk based approach for Regulation of Marine Park activities is developed • permit system enables sustainable use through a risk based approach • risk-based compliance occurs across the World Heritage Area. 	<p>Program Area 3: Educating and fostering stewardship to enhance protection of the Reef.</p> <p>Objective: The Marine Park Authority, its partners, and the public improve stewardship of the Reef through their commitment to, and adoption of, sustainable behaviours and best practices relevant to the Reef.</p> <p>Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Stewardship <p>Performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved awareness, skills, attitudes and aspirations for the Reef from participants • improved awareness, skills, attitudes and aspirations for specifically targeted stakeholders • empowerment of, and action by, stewardship network delivers actions in line with the Marine Park Authority positions. <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiential learning, industry and community education activities delivered • stewardship partnerships, networks and programs are fostered and supported. 	<p>Program Area 4: Enhancing reef resilience through continuous improvement and new initiatives across all aspects of management.</p> <p>Objective: Incident responses and interventions by the Marine Park Authority and partners improve Reef health, and enhance future knowledge and capability.</p> <p>Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation actions • Incident response <p>Performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crown-of-thorns starfish management and other ongoing management programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are delivered to budget - have their intended impact - have learnings captured and applied to future initiatives. • capability is developed to implement effective new approaches to conservation actions • Resilient Reef Network mapped • an efficient and effective incident response restores Reef health as soon as possible • improved Reef health through remediation of damage caused by incidents • learnings from each incident inform operational preparedness for future responses. <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Resilient Reef Network drives future regulations, plans and actions the condition of values in the resilience network are maintained or improved. • resources are coordinated and focused on resilience network • stakeholders and partners are aware of, and understand, future intervention priorities • reef incident response framework delivered.
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Joint Field Management Program

Deliver Joint Field Management Program services with the Queensland Government. The program is responsible for management of the marine parks and island national parks in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. From 2018-19 the Authority will scale up the program to deliver key investment areas identified in the Periodic Review Report.

Efficient and effective support for the organisation

Capability: Corporate functions which improve the delivery of programs
Programs: communications, people, legal, finance, governance, IT and information management, property and security

Values

The Authority is visionary, embraces innovation, demonstrates leadership and integrity, and fosters partnerships with stakeholders in its management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Risk management and oversight

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority applies a framework of principles and processes to the management of risks, so decisions can be systematic, transparent and credible. The Authority's risk management framework consists of: risk management policy, framework guideline, templates (such as risk assessment templates and risk management plan templates), tools (such as the risk register and risk/hazard reporting tools).







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