

# WATER QUALITY AND COASTAL DEVELOPMENT REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting

31 August and 1 September 2000 – Townsville

## SUMMARY DOCUMENT

A summary document is prepared after each meeting of the Reef Advisory Committee to inform other advisory committees serving the Authority, and persons generally (including the public) of business of the RAC. The documents form part of the records of the meeting and so its content is limited to matters raised in the meeting, and, where necessary, background details given to the meeting.

Any inquiries should be referred to the Authority's Secretariat, or to the appropriate member.

### REPORT TO GREAT BARRIER REEF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (GBRCC)

The Chair advised the Committee that the Chair of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) had advised the GBRCC that water quality is one of the top priorities for the GBRMPA.

Both the WRAC Chair and the Director of the GBRMPA's Water Quality and Coastal Development Issues Group attended the 64<sup>th</sup> meeting of the GBRCC and provided a progress report of the WRAC and a paper discussing catchment issues in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA).

After hearing the presentations, the GBRCC decided to liaise closely with the WRAC and develop a submission with input from both committees.

The Committee discussed the liaison of the GBRCC and the WRAC and members outlined the following concerns:

- There is concern that there may be a duplication of work;
- There is concern that WRAC issues do not reflect the GBRMPA's priorities; and
- If the two Committees are going to be linked, it is important that the actual link is identified as well as the roles of each Committee.

The Committee agreed that the Chair raise the issue of coordination at the meeting of GBRMPA Chairs of Committees.

### PLANNING PROCESS

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> WRAC meeting, the Committee requested a representative from the Department of Natural Resources attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> WRAC meeting and discuss the Water Allocation and

Management Planning (WAMP) process, and a representative from the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) attend and discuss the coastal planning process.

### WAMP Planning Process

The Committee heard a presentation from the Department of Natural Resources on the Water Resource Planning process.

Through discussion of the water resource planning process, the Committee identified the following stages in the process in which the WRAC and the GBRMPA could provide input:

- Technical advice and assistance through Technical Advisory Panel;
- Public submissions; and
- Establishment of Community Reference Panel.

The Committee decided to:

- Monitor involvement in plans to ensure the GBRMPA is adequately represented; and
- Consider actions to ensure that impacts on water quality and aquatic life are considered as part of the assessment process.

### Coastal Planning Process

The Committee heard a presentation from the Environmental Protection Agency, outlining the current actions undertaken in the Coastal Management planning process. The members agreed that there are opportunities for the GBRMPA to be more involved in the coastal planning process and provide submissions.

### STRATEGY FOR INVOLVEMENT IN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

The Committee was advised of what actions the Water Quality and Coastal Development

(WQ&CD) group are undertaking in order to advance their role in catchment management. These were as follows:

- 1) The group has employed a researcher to synthesise a proper assessment of existing catchment plans and strategies.
- 2) The GBRMPA is developing a Master Plan on Water Quality in the Great Barrier Reef. This document will be a synthesis of GBRMPA's knowledge of water quality.
- 3) At the last Landcare and Catchment Management Council (LCMC) meeting, the Council asked their Action Committee for advice on how the GBRMPA's concerns can be addressed and to develop Performance Indicators for management catchment strategy and implementation.
- 4) The WQ&CD group is also working closely with the Local Marine Advisory Committees (LMACs). The LMACs are in the process of providing information on what they think are the local water quality problems.

There are also a number of processes that the WQ&CD group are involved in concurrently:

- Coastal process;
- Regional and local planning process;
- Land and Water Audit at a Commonwealth level;
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Bilateral arrangements (State level);
- Agricultural accreditation process (State level);
- Shipping Memorandum of Understanding (with Queensland Department of Transport) concerning oil responses and prevention;
- Sewage review; and
- IUCN and World Heritage Council meeting in Cairns in November.

#### **KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION – CATCHMENT IMPACTS PLANNING GROUP PROPOSAL**

The Committee was advised that the proposal for a workshop on managing regional catchment impacts on the aquatic and marine environments was endorsed by the LCMC.

After discussion, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- An organising committee to prepare a document of the proposed conference outlining the synthesis, recommendations and outcomes of the conference;
- The organising committee to link with other water quality conferences that may be happening around the same time; and

- The organising committee, through the RAC Chair, to formalise funding promises.

#### **LAND AND WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LWRRDC) REPORT**

The Committee discussed the outcomes of the LWRRDC Source to Sea Workshop held in Rockhampton on 7 June 2000, and raised the following issues:

- The provision of incentives for land owners;
- The issue of should compensation be provided to land owners where resource use is restricted to protect water quality or the environment; and
- The need to implement a review process including performance indicators.

Taking these issues into account the Committee recommended that the Chair write to Land and Water Australia recommending that the LWRRDC should include further work on the value of improved incentives, regulation and compensation. The Committee also recommended that the GBRMPA write to the EPA seeking that they undertake further work on the development of improved performance assessment processes of codes of practice for agriculture.

#### **STRATEGIC WORK PROGRAM**

The Committee discussed the Strategic Work Program (SWP) and endeavoured to ensure that the issues outlined by the WRAC in their first meeting were reflected in the strategies outlined in the SWP for the WQ&CD Group.

The Committee worked through the document the Chair presented to the GBRCC (outlining the WRAC issues and priorities for actions; analysis of causal effects, current actions and possible solutions; and current actions and possible strategic focus). They identified additional issues, cross checked these with the Strategic Work Program and provided some strategic actions for the GBRMPA.

Additional items to be considered were:

- 1) Crown-of-thorns starfish research and development issues (information not available as yet); and
- 2) Set Performance criteria for WRAC and the GBRMPA.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

It was proposed that the next meeting be held in January 2001.