



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority



GREAT BARRIER REEF
MARINE PARK AUTHORITY
CORPORATE PLAN
2019-20

Traditional Owner acknowledgement

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority acknowledges the continuing sea country 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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General comments on this document are welcomed.

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Statement of preparation

I, Josh Thomas, as the Accountable Authority of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, present the Authority's Corporate Plan 2019-20, which covers reporting periods 2019-20 to 2022-23, 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*.

The Authority's Board has endorsed the plan, as it is responsible for implementing the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials 'JTH' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Josh Thomas
Chief Executive Officer
August 2019



Dr Ian Poiner
Chairperson



Mr Josh Thomas
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

Foreword

The Great Barrier Reef (the Reef) is an important part of Australia's national identity, a global environmental icon, and a key part of the cultural identity of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the Authority) is responsible for the management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (the Marine Park). Through our management approaches, the Authority ensures the ecologically sustainable use and benefits of the Marine Park continue for current and future generations.

The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019* (Outlook Report 2019) will inform our management, providing critical information to guide strategic priorities ensuring we focus on the key risks affecting the outlook of the Great Barrier Reef.

While accelerating global actions to address climate change is critical to ensure the future of the Reef, it is also critical the Authority continues to adaptively manage the Marine Park to build the Reef's resilience so it can better tolerate the increasing levels of risk posed by human activities at global and local scales. Guided by the *Great Barrier Reef blueprint for resilience*, the Authority will continue to support a range of initiatives in the Marine Park, including the development of a Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, which will inform our adaptive management into the future.

The Authority continues to draw on its strong and effective partnerships to reduce cumulative impacts, deliver conservation actions and encourage stewardship of the Reef. The Authority acknowledges the sea country management and custodianship of the Reef by Traditional Owners and we will work together to deliver actions under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park*.

As well as increasing protection measures for the Reef, we will also focus on continually improving our organisational capabilities. The Authority is future-oriented and collaborative, and we will continue to provide expert advice on the Reef as a world leader in transformative and agile marine park management.

The Marine Park Authority Board will continue to lead the strategic direction of the Marine Park Authority, driving us to innovate and develop increasingly effective ways to deliver on our aspirations for a healthy Marine Park.

We look forward to working with the Authority's executive and staff to realise this plan.

An underwater photograph of a mangrove ecosystem. In the foreground, there are mangrove plants with reddish-brown stems and green, oval-shaped leaves. The water is clear, and the background shows more mangrove structures and a sandy or rocky seabed. A large, silver fish with a dark stripe is swimming in the middle ground. The top of the image shows the surface of the water with reflections of trees and a bright blue sky.

Vision

A healthy Great Barrier Reef for future generations.

An underwater photograph of a mangrove forest. The scene is dominated by thick, gnarled mangrove roots that rise from the seabed. The water is clear, and sunlight filters through from above, creating a dappled light effect on the roots and the sandy bottom. A single fish is visible in the lower left corner, swimming towards the left. The overall color palette is a mix of browns, greens, and blues.

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.

Role

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

We will achieve this by being a strong and efficient organisation that is the world leader in transformative, agile marine park management.

Values

The Authority is committed to:

- excellence in all that we do
- inspiring all to take action to protect the Reef
- being decisive and innovative when applying the best available science and knowledge to address the challenges facing the Reef
- continuous improvement in our systems, processes and people's capabilities.

Operating environment

The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (the Marine Park Act) establishes the Authority as the manager of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

The main object of the Marine Park Act is to provide for the long-term protection and conservation of the environment, biodiversity and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef Region (the Region).

Other objects are to allow for sustainable use, encourage engagement in protection and management by Traditional Owners and stakeholders, and assist in meeting Australia's international responsibilities in relation to the Great Barrier Reef's World Heritage listing.

The Authority reports to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and is the leading source of advice on a range of matters relevant to the control, care and development of the Marine Park.

The Authority has a budgeted staffing level of 224 for 2019–20 and an annual budget of \$74.407 million, including \$25.45 million for the Reef Joint Field Management Program, co-funded by the Queensland Government.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), *Environment Protection Act 1981* (Sea Dumping Act), the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, and the *Public Service Act 1999* are key pieces of legislation that guide our operating environment.

Legislation

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975

The 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 partnerships with Traditional Owners and stakeholder engagement in protecting and managing the Region. The Marine Park Act sets out the Authority's role and, through its objects, provides the basis for the Region's management.

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981

The Marine Park along with other world heritage properties, are matters of national environment significance under the EPBC Act. The Authority works closely with the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy for a streamlined assessment process when both EPBC Act and Marine Park Act approvals are required. The Authority may provide formal advice in relation to referrals for activities outside the Marine Park that may impact on the Marine Park. For sea dumping within the Marine Park, the Authority administers the Sea Dumping Act.

Intergovernmental Agreement

The Authority's operating environment is shaped by the *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement* (IGA) entered into by the Australian and Queensland governments in 1979. The IGA continues the complementary and cooperative approach between the Australian and Queensland governments to manage the jurisdictional complexity of the Great Barrier Reef including managing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Commonwealth) and adjoining Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park (Queensland).

The IGA (as updated in 2015) reflects the shared vision for the future outlined in the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 Plan), and renews the Australian and Queensland governments' commitment to protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, including its Outstanding Universal Value.

Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan

The Australian and Queensland governments' Reef 2050 Plan provides an overarching strategy for managing the Great Barrier Reef. The Reef 2050 Plan outlines short-term and long-term management measures through to 2050, including clear actions, targets, objectives and outcomes to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the Reef.

The Reef 2050 Plan builds upon, and does not replace, the existing statutory and foundational management arrangements for the World Heritage Area, such as the Authority's permissions system and the Reef Joint Field Management Program.

The Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP) is a key part of the Reef 2050 Plan. RIMReP will track the progress of the Reef 2050 Plan's outcomes and targets and provide up to date information to adaptively manage the Marine Park.

World Heritage

The Great Barrier Reef received World Heritage status in 1981, the first coral reef ecosystem to have this distinction. The World Heritage Committee inscribed it for its Outstanding Universal Value.

In managing the Marine Park, the Authority must have regard to, and seek to work in a way that is consistent with the objects of the Marine Park Act, the protection of the World Heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and the principles of ecologically sustainable use.

Outlook – Summary from the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019

The Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report, published every five years, is an evidence-based report prepared by the Authority in accordance with the Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (section 54); it looks at the Great Barrier Reef's health, management, pressures, and likely future.

The Outlook Report 2019, the third in a series since 2009, found the condition of the Reef has continued to deteriorate overall. This is not surprising given the multitude of pressures the Reef has faced, and continues to face.

The condition of natural values were assessed, including species, habitats and ecosystem processes. Overall, habitats are assessed as being in poor condition given habitat loss, degradation and alteration have occurred in a number of areas, substantially affecting populations of some dependent species. For example, the significant and large-scale impacts from record-breaking sea surface temperatures have resulted in coral reef habitat transitioning from poor to very poor condition. However, not all habitats have been equally affected and their condition varies across the Region. Concern for the condition of the Region's species is also high. Species assessments reflect both ongoing effects of past significant population declines (for example, from historical commercial harvesting of dugongs and turtles) and current impacts that add further pressure. Humpback whales and the southern green turtle population continue to recover, and the breeding rate of urban coast dugongs has improved since the impacts of cyclone Yasi and floods in 2011.

Many of the Region's heritage values are closely tied to the condition of the ecosystem, particularly Indigenous heritage value. Overall, many heritage values remain in good condition. Community awareness and appreciation of the Region's Indigenous and historic heritage values are important to their protection and resilience. While the property's outstanding universal value as a World Heritage Area remains whole and intact, its integrity is challenged and deteriorating. Climate change is the key threat driving this and is a key issue for coral reefs around the world.

As part of the Outlook Report 2019, an independent assessment of management effectiveness found that management of the Region is good, particularly for less complex-more localised activities such as ports and tourism. However, for more complex and broad scale issues, such as threats from climate change and land-based run-off, management is not yet achieving the required outcomes.

A comprehensive risk assessment of 45 threats to the Region's ecosystem and heritage values considered the residual risk, after taking into account the current management regime. Threats to the Reef are multiple, cumulative and some of these are increasing. The report finds the greatest threat to the Reef is climate change. The other main threats are coastal development and human use of the Reef, such as coastal habitat modification, land-based run-off, illegal fishing and incidental catch of species of conservation concern.

The Reef has shown the ability to recover from impacts if disturbance-free periods are long-enough. As part of its adaptive management cycle the Authority will use the findings of the Outlook Report 2019 to deliver strong, effective and responsive marine park management to protect values, reduce threats and improve the long-term outlook for the Reef and the communities which depend on it.



A multiple-use marine park



Length:
2300km

Area:
344,400km²



Defence activities



Commercial fishing



Ports/shipping



Recreational fishing



Traditional use

Recreation

Commercial
marine tourism



Research and
educational activities



Managing a multiple-use marine park

As well as management tools and stakeholder partnerships within each program area, the Authority has arrangements (tools and partnerships) that reach across the four program areas.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003 (Zoning Plan) provides for a range of ecologically sustainable recreational, commercial and research opportunities and for the continuation of traditional use activities.

Zoning helps to manage and protect the heritage, social and economic values of the Marine Park. Each zone has different objectives and rules for the activities allowed 'as of right' and those purposes for which specific permission under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 2019 is required.

The Zoning Plan expressly acknowledges the rights and interests of Traditional Owners in the Marine Park by providing for the management of the traditional use of marine resources, including traditional hunting, in accordance with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custom and tradition. The Zoning Plan also explicitly states that it is not intended to affect the *Native Title Act 1993*.

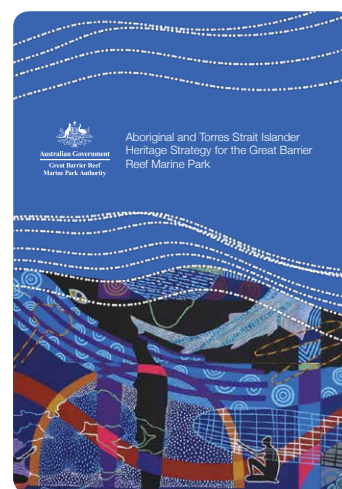
Traditional Owners

The Authority works in close partnership with Traditional Owners and acknowledges their continuing connection to the Marine Park encompassing tens of thousands of years. Establishing effective and meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners are essential to protect cultural and heritage values, conserve biodiversity and enhance the resilience of the Reef.

The Authority collaborates with Traditional Owner groups to develop sea country management arrangements including Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements. A focus for program area 2 is to continue strengthening our sea country planning and co-management arrangements with Traditional Owners.

Developed in partnership with the Authority's Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee and guided by sea country Traditional Owner groups, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park* commits to 30 actions under 12 strategic objectives to achieve:

- Outcome 1: Keeping heritage strong – respect, recognise and promote the connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the Reef.
- Outcome 2: Keeping heritage safe – protect Indigenous heritage values through Authority processes.
- Outcome 3: Keeping heritage healthy – partnering with Traditional Owners and others in Reef management.



Great Barrier Reef blueprint for resilience

The *Great Barrier Reef blueprint for resilience* (the Blueprint) is the primary output of the 2017 Reef Summit, that was attended by 70 regional, national and international delegates representing Traditional Owners and stakeholders; marine park managers, government agencies, research institutions, industry groups and Reef users.

The Blueprint signals the actions the Authority is taking with its partners to strengthen the Marine Park's resilience, its capacity to recover after disturbances and return to a healthy state, and the challenges it faces now and in the future.

The Blueprint is designed around 10 key initiatives focused on delivering maximum benefits for Marine Park resilience. These initiatives fall into four broad areas: building a Reef Resilience Network, delivering on-ground actions to enhance resilience, empowering people to be part of the solution, and fostering change.

Released in late 2018, *From Blueprint to action: Great Barrier Reef Blueprint for resilience: progress report* outlines the successes 12 months on from the launch of the Blueprint. The Blueprint has been critical in guiding the direction for funding commitments to address the key threats to the Marine Park.



Education

The Authority complements its regulatory tools through a strong focus on education across its program areas, consistent with its role under the Marine Park Act. This includes facilitation of formal, outreach and community focused education programs at Reef HQ Aquarium, tourism industry training, and capacity building in both the Master Reef Guides and Eye on the Reef programs and inspiring future generations through the Reef Guardian Schools program.

Reef Joint Field Management Program

The *Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement* provides for the governance and management of the Reef Joint Field Management Program, with shared funding on a 50:50 basis for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Queensland marine and national parks within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The Authority is responsible for the administration of the joint funding provided by the Australian and Queensland governments under the IGA.

The Reef Joint Field Management Program:

- **delivers conservation** actions to protect and recover important natural and cultural values, including coral reefs, seagrass meadows, mangrove forests, coral cays, continental islands, threatened species and cultural heritage
- **responds to incidents** involving groundings and sinkings, pollution spills, wildfires, coral bleaching, island and marine pest incursions, stranded marine animals and severe weather events
- **checks for change** on islands and in the water using innovative approaches and technology to monitor reef and island condition and the extent of existing or emerging threats
- **welcomes people** by fostering responsible behaviour, providing visitor facilities and working with partners to deliver in field activities
- **upholds compliance** by ensuring compliance activities are risk-focused and well-planned with intelligence-driven patrols to deter and detect illegal activity and that Traditional Owner rangers build their compliance capacity.



Program areas and performance

The Authority has an integrated planning, budgeting and reporting process. This corporate plan is aligned directly to Outcome 1, Program 1.1, the Authority's Outcome Statement, and four program areas set out in the *Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20 Budget Related Paper No 1.6 Environment and Energy Portfolio*.

Performance measures are grouped under the Authority's four program areas and inform reporting in the annual performance statement within the Authority's annual report. The Authority will seek to develop more holistic performance measures over the long-term to capture how we deliver value beyond the outcome level, core activities, and supporting enablers.

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	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	Program 1.1 will be delivered by four program areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Priorities for next four years

The Reef has changed and is continuing to change. The Authority has an important role to influence and adapt management to support resilience of the Reef in the face of climate change and other key threats. Our strategic priorities and priority outputs are outlined below.

1. Strategically advise on the policy settings and governance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area

Our focus is on reviewing and implementing the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan*; embedding the *Great Barrier Reef blueprint for resilience* and delivering adaptive management in response to the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019*.

2. Modernising our approach to managing risks

Our focus is on ensuring our efforts are directed towards the highest priority risks and making risk-based decisions. We will develop a Reef Resilience Network, streamline our permissions system, and ensure we use the best science and information to inform our management of the Marine Park.

3. Transforming policy, planning and our regulatory approach

Our focus is on implementing the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP) to inform adaptive management and the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan* and getting the settings right for the future through the implementation of the Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap. We will work with Traditional Owners and deliver actions under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park*.

4. Delivering conservation actions and expanding our in-park presence

Our focus is on increasing delivery of practical conservation actions, checking for changes in the Marine Park, responding to incidents, welcoming people and upholding compliance.

5. Fostering partnerships

Our focus is on partnering with Traditional Owners, the tourism industry, research providers, government agencies, Reef users and interested stakeholders to deliver education activities that encourage stewardship actions. We will enhance delivery of Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreements (TUMRAs), host the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), educate through the Reef HQ Aquarium, and work with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

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

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is a world leader in transformative, agile Marine Park management. As the lead management agency for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the Authority has a critical role in providing expert technical and policy advice to relevant organisations to help them take action to avoid, mitigate and manage threats to the Reef. The Authority's involvement in the Reef 2050 Plan provides it with an opportunity to influence the overall response to key Reef threats in partnership with other Australian Government agencies, the Queensland Government and other parties.

Information collected and synthesised through the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, Outlook Report 2019 as well as the best available information and knowledge from Traditional Owners, scientists, stakeholders, and Authority staff, forms the basis of advice.

The Authority targets its engagement with key stakeholders responsible for critical response plans, frameworks and actions to focus its involvement where it can have the greatest impact, taking into account the increasing number of government and non-government organisations that are now involved in Reef protection.

Program area objective

The Authority's position on values and threats to the Reef shapes its priorities and investments, and those of its key stakeholders.

Key initiative: Deliver a Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report and integrate findings into management

The Outlook Report is one of the Authority's key management tools. As required by the Marine Park Act (section 54), an Outlook Report is published every five years and examines the Great Barrier Reef Region's health, pressures, and likely future. It aims to provide a regular and reliable means of assessing Reef health and management, and informs government actions associated with the Reef.

The Outlook Report 2019 underwent a comprehensive peer review process and was approved by the Authority's Board, and was provided to the Minister for the Environment in June 2019.

Performance

Deliverables and evaluation				Portfolio Budget Statement performance information	
Outputs (2019-2020)	Short-term outcomes (2019-2020)	Medium-term outcomes (2019-2023)	Evaluation of success	Performance criteria	Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Outlook Report 2019. Review Outlook Report methodology to transition to an online product by 2024. Implement the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, including the visualisation tool (Reef Knowledge System). Co-host the International Coral Reef Initiative with Monaco and Indonesia. Review and implement <i>Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan</i> with our management partners, including the Reef Trust Partnership. Develop position statements on key issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlook Report 2019, position statements and responsibilities under the Marine Park Act guide the review and implementation of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (including Reef Trust Partnership). Authority's management decisions and advice are informed by the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program and the best available science. Overarching monitoring program design process and associated trade-off analysis has helped to guide investment decisions. Information from several key long-term monitoring programs is available publically. International Coral Reef Initiative members and related entities acknowledge and seek input and advice of Australia in relation to coral reef science and management. Clear consistent messaging around the key values and threats influence key partner and stakeholders' communications, policies, priorities and communications. Review Outlook Report findings and identify improvements to management and future reef reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers, pressures and impacts on the condition (state) of Reef values and processes drive the Authority's responsibilities, priority setting and investment. Improved data collection, access to monitored and modelled information, and synthesis that better supports resilience-based management, incident response and reporting, including <i>Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan</i> tracking. Collaborative advice into broader policy settings and governance. Reputation in the international community is maintained and strengthened. Future outlook reporting: undertake a methodology review to ensure reporting and adaptive management remains world leading and best practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan</i> is underpinned by Outlook Report 2019. Other agencies, researchers and stakeholders cite Outlook Report 2019. Key information gaps that the Outlook Report 2019 identifies are addressed in the 2020 review of the Reef 2050 Plan and the Authority's science information needs. Increased understanding by stakeholders of the Authority's role as evidenced in media and feedback from meetings. The Outlook Report is recognised nationally and internationally as best-practice, cutting edge and a trusted and informative source that improves management and protection of the Regions values. Key end users are using the Reef Knowledge System as their primary source of monitoring and modelling data and analysis to underpin their management decisions. Expert advice from across the Authority informs delivery of the Reef Trust Partnership grant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority is the authoritative voice on the Reef; its positions on values and threats to the Reef shape its priorities and investment, and that of its key stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key stakeholders policies, positions and priorities are influenced by the Authority's strategic advice and position statements, for key issues, values and threats. The Reef Knowledge System framework delivers improved access to data to support reporting, incident response and Reef 2050 planning and adaptive management of the Great Barrier Reef. Reef Outlook Report is delivered by June 2019 and recognised as the authoritative source on the state of the Reef, and utilised by key partners, stakeholders and international bodies and internal and Reef 2050 programs and activities.

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

The Authority is the primary environmental regulator for protecting and managing the Marine Park, and uses a combination of management tools and approaches to provide certainty about where use may occur, the types of activities allowed and the conditions under which activities may proceed. These tools include a Marine Park-wide zoning plan, plans of management, site-specific management arrangements, and agreements for traditional use, permits, education, compliance and enforcement.

Our world-renowned regulatory framework and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003 manage use of the Marine Park, protecting its values, and enhancing biodiversity benefits and resilience. Our management must continually evolve to focus effort on activities presenting the highest risks to the Reef and to improve ecosystem resilience in the face of known and emerging challenges, such as the effects of climate change and increasing visitor numbers.

External pressures on the Marine Park present ongoing risks. To improve ecosystem resilience in the face of known challenges, the Authority continues to refine and focus its regulatory effort on activities presenting the highest risks, including through the Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap. 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 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.

The Authority's Reef Joint Field Management Program delivers compliance that is risk-focused and well-planned, and intelligence-driven patrols or deployments to deter and detect illegal activity. The zoning plans manage in-park pressures and are foundational to protect marine habitats and the species they sustain. The full benefits of the zoning plans are achieved through a strong, ongoing compliance program that upholds the integrity of marine protection. The compliance program reduces the threats that some direct users pose, enables improved resilience to withstand other threats, and delivers Blueprint initiatives and Reef 2050 Plan actions.

Program area objective

Planning, permissions and compliance activities enable use of the Marine Park that is ecologically sustainable.

Key initiative: Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap

The Authority is transforming its policy, planning and regulation. A roadmap has been prepared to deliver a proactive, contemporary and risk-based approach to planning. Success of the roadmap would be working in partnership with Traditional Owners, industry and stakeholders, to deliver a contemporary management framework that protects key values and enables ecologically sustainable use.

Performance

Deliverables and evaluation				Portfolio Budget Statement performance information	
Outputs (2019-2020)	Short-term outcomes (2019-2020)	Medium-term outcomes (2019-2023)	Evaluation of success	Performance criteria	Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver permissions system. • Implement Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap. • Deliver compliance management and surveillance. • Scope co-management options. • Implement <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy</i>. • Facilitate Traditional Use Marine Resource Agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence and satisfaction with the permissions system. • Permissions and authorisations enable sustainable use of the Marine Park. • Permittees understand conditions of permissions resulting in increased compliance. • Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap identifies contemporary tools that enable ecosystem based management. • Majority of stakeholders accept risk-based planning approach for regulation and management. • Plans, policies and regulatory amendments take account of the health of the Marine Park and target needs in high use and high value areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, world-leading approach to managing risks to the Marine Park. • Adaptive management that integrates the best scientific advice into management policy. • Expanded in-Park presence and user compliance. 	<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. • Increased awareness and engagement around obligations associated with permissions. • Increase in guidance material available for applicants. • 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. • Increased monitoring and auditing of medium and high risk non-compliances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, permissions and compliance activities enable use of the Marine Park that is ecologically sustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A risk-based approach for regulation of Marine Park activities is developed. • Permissions facilitate sustainable use in the Marine Park. • Reduced non-compliance of Marine Park users.

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

Through targeted education and stewardship programs, the Authority works to establish mutually beneficial relationships with Traditional Owners, regional councils, Queensland and Australian government agencies, students at all stages of learning, Reef-dependent industries, community groups, and the community more broadly.

These programs aim to raise awareness, influence best practice, foster innovative actions, build a sense of collective responsibility to care, and empower others to contribute to Reef protection and resilience.

Key aspects to our education and stewardship approach include:

- facilitation of external formal education programs at the Reef HQ Aquarium and through the Reef Guardian Schools program
- outreach education utilising cutting-edge videoconferencing technology through online educational resources
- community education through regional engagement activities and the Reef and tourism industry
- user and stakeholder education through the Reef Joint Field Management program
- high levels of best practice and industry stewardship fostered through the High Standard Tourism Operators and Reef Guardians Programs.

Program area objective

Empower others to protect the Reef through education and stewardship.

Key initiative: Empowering Reef Guardians

The Reef Guardians program is the Authority's most widely recognised stewardship and education program. Its purpose is to build a sense of collective stewardship within Reef communities through activities that foster care for the Reef. The program works with schools, councils, and fishers to engage with and influence stewardship in the wider community. These activities are a component of our investment in on-ground stewardship actions that support Reef 2050 Plan outcomes and targets.

Performance

Deliverables and evaluation				Portfolio Budget Statement performance information	
Outputs (2019-2020)	Short-term outcomes (2019-2020)	Medium-term outcomes (2019-2023)	Evaluation of success	Performance criteria	Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Reef HQ Aquarium forward strategy. • Deliver Reef Guardians Program. • Provide education offerings and resources. • Deliver High Standard Tourism Operator Program. • Implement Reef Discovery Course and Master Reef Guide Program. • Provide knowledge and advice to inform Queensland's fisheries reforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education programs increase awareness, and resources are accessible. • Partnerships to foster action, collaboration, compliance and innovation. • Reef Guardians and the tourism industry adopt best practice actions. • Reef Guardian Stewardship grants and Sea Country grants positively influence the resilience of the Reef. • Funding secured for Reef HQ Aquarium refurbishment. • Increased stewardship and monitoring at high-value tourism sites. • Queensland fisheries reforms incorporate Authority advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target audiences adopt responsible practices and promote friendly behaviours. • Advocates share their stewardship achievements and aspirations, inspiring others to do the same. • Reef-dependent industries and the community are taking voluntary stewardship actions with a collective sense of responsibility and care. • High Standard Tourism Operators recognised for their contributions to environmentally sustainable and culturally responsible tourism. • Innovative outreach education technologies extend the reach of education programs. • Formal (foundational – 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. • Fishing in the Marine Park is ecologically sustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants of education programs, report improved awareness of the Reef's values and threats through Reef HQ visitor satisfaction surveys. • Increased awareness and adoption of responsible practices by people visiting the Reef; and greater advocacy for the management and protection achieved through the Reef tourism industry and local government. • Demonstrated adoption of 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. • Reef Guardian Fishers exemplify best practice, share knowledge and positively influence their peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority, its partners, and the public improve stewardship of the Reef through their commitments to, and adoption of, sustainable behaviours and best practices relevant to the Reef. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reef HQ exhibits, public and community education activities improve awareness, attitudes and aspirations. • Stewardship partnerships, networks and programs deliver outcomes informed by and consistent with the Authority's positions.

4 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 Marine Park, the Authority undertakes significant interventions and other activities to enhance Reef resilience. Current examples include 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 Environmental Remediation Project. These actions highlight the Authority's responsiveness in adapting its management approach to address new threats and incidents that affect the Reef's resilience.

In light of coral bleaching, the ongoing crown-of-thorns starfish outbreak and severe weather events the Authority has revisited and adjusted its strategic plans for managing the Reef, with an increased emphasis on developing, implementing and enabling innovative intervention activities such as coral re-seeding and coral gardening to build the Reef's resilience in the face of climate change.

The Authority continues to work across government and with partner organisations to support the Marine Park including the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program.

Program area objective

Incident responses and interventions by the Authority and partners improve Reef health and enhance knowledge and capability.

Key initiative: Building a Reef Resilience Network

The Authority will continue to build a reef-wide 'resilience network'. This allows us to strategically target efforts on coral reef areas that are of greatest value. The priority is to identify coral reefs that make up the resilience network and actions at these sites to build resilience. Additional actions will be designed to reduce local pressures and support recovery from specific incidents, such as coral bleaching, damage from cyclones or outbreaks of crown-of-thorns starfish.

Performance

Deliverables and evaluation				Portfolio Budget Statement performance information	
Outputs (2019-2020)	Short-term outcomes (2019-2020)	Medium-term outcomes (2019-2023)	Evaluation of success	Performance criteria	Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to environmental and maritime incidents. Implement the Blueprint. Implement a Reef Resilience Network. Engage with the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program. Deliver Crown-of-thorns Starfish Control Program. Deliver Douglas Shoal Environmental Remediation Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authority's management and incident response is focused, timely, effective and mitigates damage to the Reef. Stakeholders and partners are aware of, and understand, future intervention priorities. Reef Resilience Network is identified through the RIMReP Reef Knowledge System and visualisation maps, to inform future regulations, plans and actions. Authority develops capability to effect new approaches to conservation. Restoration and adaption programs are delivered to budget, have intended impact and inform future activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions and incident responses by the Authority and its partners improve the ability of the Reef to resist and recover from disturbances. Enhanced capabilities for reef conservation are identified through the RIMReP Reef Knowledge System and implemented through the Reef Resilience Network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestones are met in delivering the incident response framework. Learnings from each incident inform operational preparedness for future responses. Progress of management actions being implemented for Reef Resilience Network. Priority conservation actions and ongoing management activities are delivered Future plans and management actions are guided by the RIMReP Reef Knowledge System. Performance of the Reef Resilience Network is evaluated through the RIMReP Knowledge System. 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident responses and interventions by the Authority and partners improve Reef health, and enhance future knowledge and capability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident response is effective and efficient, and mitigates damage to the Reef. Stakeholders and partners are aware of and understand future intervention priorities and locations. Management activities and priority conservation actions are delivered on budget, provide the intended impact and inform future activities. Capability is developed to implement effective new approaches to conservation.



Capability: Supporting a high performing organisation

The Authority is supported in delivering its core objectives through seven corporate and enabling functions focused on providing efficient and effective services to support and optimise outcomes for the Authority and the Marine Park.

Objective: Efficient and effective support for the organisation.

Corporate governance

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- implementing the remaining recommendations of the Review of the Governance of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority 2017
- establishing best-practice corporate governance and leadership in the Authority
- improving organisational planning and operational processes

Communication and engagement

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- implementing the corporate communication and engagement strategy, particularly:
 - informing and educating Authority staff, stakeholders and the public on the current condition and threats of the Reef (The Outlook Report 2019, and Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program will both underpin this communication)
 - communicating and celebrating the good work of the Authority, its partners, stakeholders and the community to protect the Reef.

Human resources

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- continued emphasis on building a positive workplace health and safety (WHS) culture, improving the WHS management system and maturing our administration of the system
- workforce planning, including supporting analytics, to enhance the Authority's capability to meet emerging needs and respond to a dynamic operating environment
- increasing the capability of our people through investment in them and their development.

Legal

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- continuing to implement the requirements of the Australian Government Agencies Privacy Code
- supporting the development of regulatory maturity and legal literacy by working with our internal clients and decision-makers to embed an awareness of legal risks and to develop and implement tools to manage those risks effectively.

Finance

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- 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
- review and update the Authority's risk management policy and framework, and further refine risk reporting.

Information technology and information management systems

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- continuing to develop a robust information governance framework to support the requirements of the *National Archives of Australia Digital 2020 Policy*, including the development of appropriately skilled information management professionals
- reviewing and consolidating current digital platforms to optimise information system use, including an upgrade of the existing electronic document and records management system
- adopting cloud services in line with the Australian Government's Digital Transformation Agenda which encourages agencies to consider cloud-based services first, where appropriate.


Property and security, including Reef HQ Aquarium operations

Key areas of focus in 2019-20:

- in collaboration with the Finance area implement an asset management system which meets the Authority's business needs, and informs the property management plan
- ensuring the Authority meets the requirements of the Protective Security Policy Framework including developing and delivering security awareness training to continue to mature the Authority's security culture
- coordinating and managing the Authority's new Townsville main office solution, and developing a transition plan for the remaining Authority properties into the Whole of Australian Government facilities management arrangements
- planning toward delivery of a contemporary National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef.

Performance

	Criteria	Target	Evaluation
Capability	Effective and efficient delivery of capability services as associated with each of the seven enabling and corporate services functions.	Delivery of identified plans, products and services for each of seven enabling and corporate services functions.	Annual Operating Plan inclusions for the seven enabling and corporate services functions are delivered according to identified resourcing level and timeline.

An underwater photograph of a coral reef. The water is clear and blue, with sunlight filtering through from the surface. The coral is diverse, with prominent yellow and brown branching corals in the foreground and other types of coral and sea fans in the background. A dark teal semi-transparent box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

Risk oversight and management

The Authority operates in a complex and challenging environment to manage the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, involving responsibilities to maintain the area's natural and cultural integrity while allowing ecologically sustainable use. The size and diversity of the Reef ecosystem, its economic importance, state, local, national and international interests, and jurisdictional, biophysical and social complexities require a flexible approach to the management of risk.

Risk management is considered by the Authority as a critical component of good regulatory and corporate governance, and a risk management framework consistent with the principles and processes of the Australian risk management standard has been established.

Every five years the Authority's peer-reviewed Great Barrier Reef 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 understood. Actions to manage these risks (where jurisdictionally applicable) are integrated into the corporate plan and operationalised through the Authority's annual operating plan.

The Authority identifies and regularly monitors strategic and operational risks that could have a serious impact on progress toward the achievement of its corporate plan and broader purpose. The potential strategy-altering risks to which the Authority is exposed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- effects of climate change on the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef's values
- effects (singularly or cumulatively) of catchment run-off, coastal development, some direct use and crown-of-thorns starfish on the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef's values
- loss of the Australian and Queensland governments', or the World Heritage Committee's confidence
- losing support from Traditional Owners, key stakeholders and partners of the Great Barrier Reef Region
- communication and engagement approaches may not sustain a unified understanding of the actions that should be implemented to support the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef
- innovations and adjustments made to how the Great Barrier Reef is managed and its sustainable use regulated, may not be enough to maintain the Reef's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing environment.

Each year the maturity of the Authority's risk management framework is verified independently and assurance of its internal control environment sought via internal review and auditing.

Summary of priority outputs 2019-20 to 2022-23

Strategic priorities	Program Area	Priority outputs	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Strategically advise on the policy settings and governance of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area	1	Deliver Outlook Report 2019	✓			
	4	Implement Blueprint	✓			
	1	Review and implement Reef 2050 Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1	Finalise implementation of Governance Review	✓			
Modernise our approach to managing risks	4	Implement a Reef Resilience Network	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1	Incorporate the best science to inform management	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	Streamline permission system	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transform policy, planning and our regulatory approach	2	Implement Policy and Planning Strategic Roadmap	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1	Implement Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	Implement <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deliver conservation actions and expand in-Park presence	2, 4	Implement expanded Field Management Program	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4	Deliver conservation actions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foster partnerships	3	Develop Reef HQ Aquarium forward strategy	✓			
	1	Co-host International Coral Reef Initiative	✓			
	2	Enhance delivery of Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1	Work with Great Barrier Reef Foundation to implement Reef Trust Partnership Grant	✓	✓	✓	✓



Australian Government

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