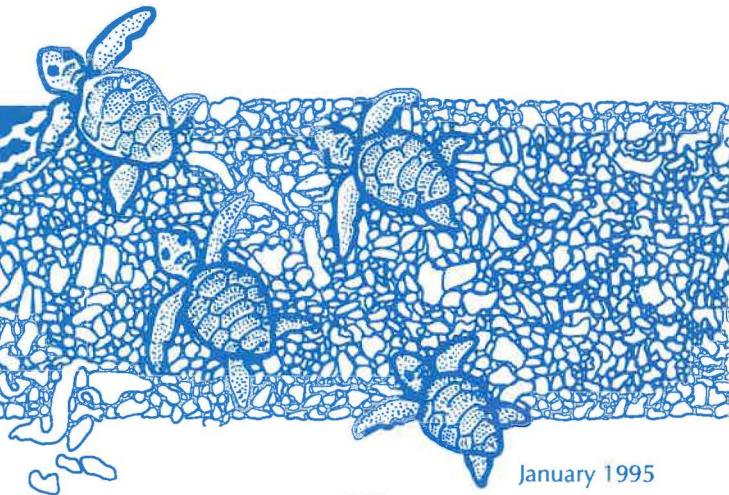


Bulletin

5



January 1995

REPLENISHMENT AREA CENTRAL SECTION GREAT BARRIER REEF BRAMBLE REEF



Replenishment Areas allow certain heavily used reefs to be closed to fishing for a specified time to allow stocks to replenish. On 20 October 1994, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority decided to renew the designation of a Replenishment Area at Bramble Reef over the area within 500 metres seaward from the seaward edge of the Reef (see map overleaf). The original designation expires on 31 January 1995. The new designation will operate from 1 February 1995 to 30 June 1995.

The decision to renew the designation was made in response to a recommendation from the Bramble Reef Replenishment Area Advisory Committee. The Committee has operated since 1992 to represent recreational and commercial fishing, tourism and aboriginal interests in the Reef. It has provided valuable community feedback on management at the Reef. Annual fish surveys since 1992 have also been considered.

Activities which will not be permitted at Bramble Reef until 1 July 1995, are:

- (a) fishing, other than trolling for pelagic species, which may be carried out during the period from the first day of May in a year to the thirty-first day of January in the following year;
- (b) spearfishing;
- (c) traditional fishing.

Bramble Reef is the closest mid-shelf reef to Lucinda, 38km away, and in 1991 appeared to be under considerable fishing pressure. This, in addition to the considerable impact of crown-of-thorns starfish in the mid-1980s, led to concern that the Reef needed an opportunity to recover. The reasons for the 5-month renewal of the closure period are to allow a further survey of fish stocks in May, to allow for further growth in **coral trout**, and to re-open at a time when inclement weather is more likely, thus prolonging the period of initial fishing when catches of **trout** should be good.

Related fishery management recommendations made by the Advisory Committee are that:

- as medium-to-long term solutions to overfishing at Bramble and nearby reefs, - seasonal closures for **coral trout** be considered and assessed for effectiveness on a reef-wide and regional basis ; and
- a system of annual rotational closures be considered during the next zoning of the Central Section of the Marine Park, particularly in areas near coastal development such as Townsville and Ingham.
- research priority be given to research into **sweetlip** biology and , the impact of fishing and appropriate management and monitoring strategies for **sweetlip** ;
- annual surveys of fish stocks at Bramble Reef and nearby reefs continue for at least 3 years following re-opening of the Reef; and
- the value of a socio-economic study of the Bramble Reef re-opening be recognised.

Management of the Replenishment Area

The designation of this Replenishment Area is in keeping with the Authority's goal of providing for the protection, wise use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef in perpetuity through the development and care of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Activities which may continue to be undertaken include snorkeling, SCUBA, photography and observation of marine life.

Further information may be obtained from : **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority**
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**BRAMBLE REEF
REPLENISHMENT AREA**
(Diagrammatic representation)

