



Budget 2020-21: Supporting healthy oceans

Australia is a world leader in marine protection and our marine industries have significant growth potential. The Australian Government's continuing investment in the health and management of our oceans ensures we can seize the opportunities of our precious ocean estates – which are expected to contribute \$100 billion to our economy annually by 2025.

Why is it important?

This package of measures represents significant investment in the oceans at Australian shores and across the world.

1. Removing ghost nets and marine debris in the Gulf of Carpentaria

- This measure will fund a clean-up of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear – or 'ghost nets' – in the waters and beaches of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

2. Managing our marine parks

- This measure is an investment in science and monitoring across our 2.8 million square kilometre network of Australian marine parks. It includes working with Traditional Owners on park management to protect our offshore marine environment.
- This funding enhances maintenance of the marine park network and enables more proactive enforcement of compliance with marine park rules.

3. Engaging in international forums

- This measure continues our support for Australia's engagement with the International Partnership for Blue Carbon and the Asia-Pacific Rainforest Partnership. These forums enable our governments, NGOs, scientists and businesses to collaborate on blue carbon and forest protection to address climate change.

4. Aiding the recovery of coastal communities with Reef Builder

- This measure invests \$20 million in at least 11 coastal communities to restore shellfish reef ecosystems, rejuvenate local fish stocks and create tourism dive sites to promote economic and environmental recovery in coastal communities. It will be delivered in partnership with The Nature Conservancy which is looking to secure co-investment from state governments and private partners.
- This initiative is part of the Australian Government's \$1 billion COVID-19 Relief and Recovery fund, which is supporting regions, communities and industry sectors severely affected by the pandemic.

Who will benefit?

Removing ghost nets and marine debris in the Gulf of Carpentaria will reduce some of the greatest threats to our endangered mammals and marine life. It will improve the overall health of our oceans while boosting Indigenous employment and contributing to Australia's crackdown on plastic waste.

Funding **marine park management** reinforces our international leadership position in marine park management. It also enhances Indigenous engagement and contributes to the Australian Government's 'Closing the Gap' agenda by supporting projects that train, employ and deliver cultural outcomes for regional Indigenous communities.

Australia's engagement in **international marine protection forums** contributes to the global transition to a sustainable ocean economy built upon a healthy and clean ocean.

Reef Builder will engage local industries in the construction of these Reefs, creating an immediate economic stimulus for coastal communities. This will include barge and excavator operators, truck drivers and aquaculture workers amongst others. The project is estimated to create 170 new direct and indirect jobs. Additionally, the boost to fish stocks will have long term benefits. Restoring local shellfish reefs – which provides additional nursery grounds for fish – will help grow the number of fish in the area and boost recreational fishing opportunities, which in turn supports local industries and creates jobs.

What will this cost?

Table 1 allocated budget

Measure	Amount
Removing ghost nets and debris in the Gulf of Carpentaria	\$ 14.8 million
Marine park management	\$ 28.3 million
International Partnership for Blue Carbon and the Asia-Pacific Rainforest Partnership	\$ 4.2 million
Reef Builder – aiding the recovery of coastal communities	\$ 20 million