



# Reef 2050 Plan

## Reef 2050 Advisory Committee - Communique 11 October 2016

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee (RAC) met today in Brisbane—the seventh meeting of the Committee since its establishment in 2015. Chaired by The Honourable Penelope Wensley AC, former Governor of Queensland, the RAC is one of the two principal advisory bodies established to provide strategic advice to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum on implementation of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050).

The Committee focused its discussion at the meeting on critical issues, including the Reef 2050 Investment Framework and the Northern Great Barrier Reef Response Plan.

The Committee had emphasised at its last meeting the importance of boosting recovery of the Northern GBR following the 2016 bleaching event. A draft Northern Great Barrier Reef Response Plan was provided to the Committee for review, which outlined current and future actions to reduce pressures on the northern Great Barrier Reef and give it the greatest chance of recovery. RAC members welcomed the draft and provided comments, including suggesting a clearer line of sight between pressures and the responses proposed in the Plan. The Committee noted that the aim was to finalise the Northern GBR Response Plan by the end of 2016.

Mr Tony Weber, Alluvium Consulting, and Mr Jim Binney, Economist, Mainstream Economics, gave a presentation on the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce's report on the costs of achieving the water quality targets. The Committee was impressed with the work and supported further refinement and development of the costings model over time to ensure it could be used to inform future investments from a range of programs.

The presentation was followed by a workshop discussion on developing the Reef 2050 Plan Investment Framework. Members discussed the six key priority areas for investment that had been identified through the prioritisation process – water quality, crown of thorns, Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting, marine park field management program, fisheries and Traditional Owner actions. The Committee discussed strategies for diversifying future funding sources to boost effort in these priority areas and provided comments on the draft material to be incorporated into the Investment Framework. The importance of clarifying and filling funding gaps for the priority areas over coming years was emphasised by the Committee.

The Committee received presentations on a number of issues including implementation of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce recommendations and the Ports Australia Environmental Code of Practice for Dredging and Dredged Material Management. Updates were provided on the Reef 2050 communications network and the review of the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and the latest Reef Report Card which is due to be released soon.

The Committee also received an update from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Deputy Director-General, Mr Scott Spencer, on the Queensland Government fisheries management reform process. Members welcomed the Green paper as a frank and honest assessment of the need for reform and for



sufficient funding to support implementation. It was noted that more than 5000 submissions have been received, which will inform the government's long term position on reform.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority briefed members on progress with the development of draft policies on cumulative impact, net benefit and offsets. RAC members noted that the latest drafts represented a significant advance on earlier work and agreed to provide further feedback following the meeting in order to finalise the documents for public consultation, for consideration at the next Ministerial Forum.

The Committee was briefed on preparation of the Progress Update on implementation of the Reef 2050 Plan to be provided to the World Heritage Centre at the beginning of December, 2016. Members agreed that overall there had been some positive progress in the first 18 months and that momentum is starting to build, but reiterated the urgency to address key issues to accelerate progress towards the targets and outcomes of the Reef 2050 Plan.

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee is not scheduled to meet again in 2016. The Chairman will provide a report to the Ministerial Forum in November. Meetings for 2017 are currently planned to be held in March, August and October.

Membership of the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee includes the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators, the Queensland Seafood Industry Association, a traditional owner representative, Queensland Resources Council, Queensland Farmers Federation, AgForce, Queensland Regional Natural Resource Management Groups Collective, Local Government Association of Queensland, Australian Committee of International Union of the Conservation of Nature, Australian Institute of Marine Science, CareFish, CSIRO, Great Barrier Reef Foundation, Local Marine Advisory Committees, Queensland Conservation Council, Queensland Ports Association and the World Wildlife Fund.