



Reef 2050 Plan

Reef 2050 Advisory Committee - Communique 3 August 2016

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee (RAC) met for the sixth time today in Brisbane. The Committee is chaired by the Honourable Penelope Wensley AC, former Governor of Queensland. The RAC was established in 2015 to facilitate engagement with industry and the broader community on the implementation and review of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050) and provide strategic advice to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum on reef policy matters.

Following on from the workshop at the June RAC meeting, the Committee received an update on progress with development of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP) and with Reef communication and behaviour change programs.

The Committee discussed the timing and content of the Progress Report on the Reef 2050 Plan to be delivered to the World Heritage Centre by December 2016. It emphasised the importance of addressing the implications of the current bleaching event and its impact. In relation to the bleaching event, the Committee supported the consolidation of a northern GBR response / action plan to outline commitments to reduce other pressures and give the northern GBR the greatest prospects of recovery.

The meeting included two major discussion / workshop sessions focusing on prioritising funding gaps for the development of the Reef 2050 Investment Framework and consideration of three draft policy papers on Offsets, Net Benefits and Cumulative Impacts.

The first discussion session was informed by a presentation by Mr Kym Whiteoak, Senior Consultant, RM Consulting Group, on the methodology used and outcomes of a gap analysis project conducted to identify funding gaps for implementation of Reef 2050 Plan actions. Using this information, the Committee sought to identify the actions or groups of actions that would best achieve the targets and outcomes of the plan and agreed that the key priorities for filling funding gaps are water quality improvement programs, Crown of Thorns starfish control activities and fisheries management. The Committee deferred providing its advice or suggestions for strategies to meet funding shortfalls, noting that more information was required to do this effectively. In particular, it judged that further information in relation to costings for water quality activities, following the work of the GBR Water Science Taskforce and information on innovative financing mechanisms would be essential inputs. The Committee noted that the Queensland Government has issued a Green Paper on fisheries and that the results of public consultation would also be relevant in assisting with determination of funding priorities. It was suggested that fisheries management could usefully be the focus of discussion at a future RAC meeting.

The Committee agreed that the mid-term review of the Plan should aim to consolidate actions in the Plan and present commitments in a consistent, achievable and measurable format.

In the second workshop, following a briefing from Mr Jason Vains, Project Manager, GBRMPA, on the development of the principles in the draft Offsets, Net Benefits and Cumulative Impacts policy papers, RAC members offered comment on ways the papers could be refined and improved and discussed how the



principles might be applied in practice. The Committee noted the challenges in developing and implementing these policies and note that further consultation will occur.

The Committee also received updates on progress with implementation of the recommendations of the Queensland Government Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce and on development of the Reef 2050 Plan Annual Report, scheduled to be released in the coming weeks.

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet next in 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, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, 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.