



Reef 2050 Plan

Reef 2050 Advisory Committee - Communique 9 June 2016

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee (RAC) met for the fifth 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.

The Committee received an update on the current Great Barrier Reef coral bleaching event from Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority scientist Dr David Wachenfeld, Director Reef Recovery. Noting that the bleaching event is still unfolding and surveys ongoing, Dr Wachenfeld presented results of the surveys conducted to date along the length of the Reef. There is significant variation in both bleaching and coral mortality, with the northern reefs most seriously affected and a lessening of impact moving south. In discussion, RAC members focused on the issue of resilience and the question as to whether cumulative impacts had reduced the Reef's recovery capacity. In this regard, it noted Dr Wachenfeld's advice that an anticipated milder winter may exacerbate the coral's susceptibility to disease next summer.

The meeting was structured around two major discussion sessions, the first on the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP) and the second on delivering water quality outcomes through communication programs that encourage behaviour change.

The Committee welcomed progress with RIMReP development since its last meeting and provided stakeholder views on end user needs and on a range of existing Reef reporting products, including report cards, websites and other material, to assist the development of new information products to communicate the data from RIMReP to the wider community. RAC members provided advice on the importance of understanding the target audience and tailoring information to best engage various stakeholder groups. The advice will complement a market research project that will inform the development of future reporting products and ensure alignment between different programs.

In the second workshop, RAC members discussed the ways different industries and sectors could change behaviours to reduce their impact on Reef water quality, and provided stakeholder advice on the identification of barriers to achieve behavioural change and on ways to encourage adoption of change. This advice will inform future scoping of communications programs to encourage behaviour change and improve water quality.

In addition, the Committee received an update from the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan (RWQPP) Partnership Committee Chairman, Dr Wendy Craik AM. Members were also briefed on the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce Final Report, launched at the end of May.

Updates were also provided on the development of the Reef 2050 Annual Report and the progress report to be presented to UNESCO World Heritage Centre at the end of the year.

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet twice more in 2016, in 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, 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.