



Reef 2050 Plan

INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL - MINUTES

Date	Tuesday, 1 August 2017
Venue	QUT Council Room, Level 2 U Block, QUT Garden Point Campus, Brisbane
Opened	9:00am
Closed	5:00pm

ATTENDEES

Members

Prof Ian Chubb AC, Chair	Prof Helene Marsh
Assoc Prof Eval Abal	Dr Russell Reichelt
Dr Andrew Ash	Dr Britta Schaffelke
Prof Damien Burrows	Adj Assoc Prof Stephan Schnierer
Prof Ove Hoegh-Guldberg	Adj Prof Natalie Stoeckl
Prof Terry Hughes	Dr Stuart Whitten

Other

Mr Stephen Oxley	First Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Rachel Parry	Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Angela Cameron	Director, Department of the Environment and Energy
Mr Craig Moore	Director, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Stefanie Lowe	Secretariat, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Kelly Fitzsimons	Secretariat, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Elisa Nichols	Executive Director, Office of the Great Barrier Reef, EHP
Ms Louise Smyth	Director, Office of the Great Barrier Reef, EHP
Ms Margaret Johnson	General Manager, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Ms Josh Gibson	Director, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Mr Ben Hammill	Principal Project Officer, Office of the Great Barrier Reef, EHP (9:30am-2:40pm)
Ms Jennifer Black	Manager, Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation (9:30am-2:40pm)
Mr Bradley Morton	Assistant Director, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (9:30am-2:40pm)
Mr Will Schmitt	AECOM Consultant, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (9:30am-2:40pm)
Dr Roger Neill	Research Leader, Department of Defence (9:30am-2:40pm)
Dr Christian Roth	Senior Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO (2:40-3:40pm)

APOLOGIES

Members

Prof Bill Dennison	Ms Jane Waterhouse
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DISCUSSION

1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair acknowledged the Turrbal and Yaggera Peoples as the traditional custodians of the area. He acknowledged their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the region and paid respects to Elders both past and present.

2 Welcome to Members and feedback from GBR Ministerial Forum

The Chair welcomed members and presenters to the meeting, noting Prof Bill Dennison and Ms Jane Waterhouse as apologies.

The Chair welcomed Dr Stuart Whitten and Ms Jane Waterhouse as new members to the Panel and thanked Prof Mike Bell, Dr Stefan Hajkowicz and Dr Roger Shaw for their contribution to the Panel.

The Chair thanked the Panel for their work on [Advice on responding to mass coral bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef](#). The advice will be published online in the coming days.

The Chair provided feedback to the Panel from the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum on 28 July 2017 ([Media Release](#)). The advice was presented to Ministers and received well. The Panel was specifically asked to develop problem statements that could be tackled through an Innovation Challenge.

3 Conflicts of interest

The Chair noted the summary of conflict of interests and called for any updates.

4 Scenario for the Great Barrier Reef

The Panel discussed the importance of scenario planning and modelling, and how this can best be utilised to inform the mid-term review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

The Panel agreed that considering climate-weather scenario planning, the likely ecological impacts on the Great Barrier Reef and the plausible socio-economic impacts of a diminished Great Barrier Reef, will assist in the development of forward-looking policies for the management of the Great Barrier Reef, and assist with the programmed review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

5 Workshop: Open Innovation challenge: defining problem statements

The Chair welcomed participants Ben Hammill, Jen Black, Bradley Morton, Will Schmitt and Dr Roger Neil and thanked them for coming to Brisbane to participate in the workshop.

Mr Craig Moore presented the agenda paper. At the previous meeting the Panel agreed to discuss the concept of an innovation challenge. This was reinforced by the request from the Ministerial Forum for the Panel to develop problem statements that could be tackled through an innovation challenge.

The Panel noted that a number of innovation challenge mechanisms exist to test the feasibility of new approaches to protecting the Great Barrier Reef.

The Panel broke out into three groups to workshop ideas for problem statements.

The groups reported back and discussion was focused on prioritising four problem statements. The Panel agreed on four challenge areas: boosting coral recruitment, better managing water run-off,

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working with communities to manage reef use, and reducing crown-of-thorns starfish.

The Panel agreed to draft the problem statements out of session, with finalised statements due back to the Chair by 15 August 2017. Final advice on the problem statements would then be provided to Ministers.

The Panel noted that they will be briefed on the outcomes of any Innovation Challenge process.

6 Key Action: Reef 2050 Plan Mid-term review

Ms Rachel Parry presented the paper, outlining the consortium that has been commissioned to assist with providing options for the scope of the Reef 2050 Plan mid-term review.

Dr Christian Roth provided an update on the scoping process to date. The mid-term review is intended to look at what gaps to address and where it can be streamlined. It is intended that the Outlook Report in 2019 will be the trigger for a full review of the plan when there is a more substantial scientific basis for assessing progress and the state of the reef.

The Panel welcomed the decision by the Ministerial Forum to immediately commence the mid-term review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

The Panel recommended that in light of recent global bleaching events the review of the Reef 2050 Plan should be considered as a staged review over two years, including a proper consultation process, rather than a mid-term followed by another review exercise in 2020.

The Panel agreed that the revised Plan needs to be consider the potential impacts of plausible climate and weather scenarios as a priority action. The Panel also agreed that by 2020, actions within the Plan should be prioritised and hierarchical.

The Panel reiterated recommendation 4 from [Advice on responding to mass coral bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef](#):

Revision of the Reef 2050 Plan

4. *Revision of the Reef 2050 Plan is critical and should be completed as soon as practicable. The revised Plan should:*

- a. *accommodate possible global warming of at least 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels – managing the Reef and building capacity to adapt to present circumstances, let alone anticipated conditions, will be central to any response.*
- b. *focus on minimising the cumulative impacts of multiple stressors.*
- c. *encourage research into the differences in vulnerability between reefs to inform management of the Reef and to prioritise actions to regionally important areas.*
- d. *focus on the ecological functions of the Reef.*
- e. *be aimed at identifying and targeting the functions (e.g. herbivory, larval connectivity, reef building capacity) that are required to maintain Reef ecosystems.*
- f. *identify the key species that support the Reef's ecological processes, and target interventions to support those species.*
- g. *emphasise actions that can be implemented at scale, according to priority and with*

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urgency.

- h. *continue to be built around themes and the interplay between them (e.g. ecosystem health and social and community benefits).*

7 Administration

The Panel noted the update on the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan review and update from the Independent Science Panel.

The Panel noted the update on the Reef 2050 Plan cumulative impact management and net benefit policies which are currently out for public consultation.

The Panel endorsed the minutes from the seventh meeting on 5 May 2017.

The Panel drafted a communiqué and agreed to its release on the Department of the Environment and Energy's website.

The Panel is scheduled to next meet on 24 October 2017 in Brisbane.