



Reef 2050 Plan

INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL - MINUTES

Date	Wednesday, 25 July 2018
Venue	QUT Gardens Point – Council Room (U Block Room 214)
Opened	8:00am
Closed	4:00pm

ATTENDEES

Members

Prof Ian Chubb AC, Chair	Dr Russell Reichelt
Dr Eval Abal	Dr Britta Schaffelke
Prof Damien Burrows	Adj Prof Natalie Stoeckl
Prof Bill Dennison (<i>videoconference</i>)	Ms Jane Waterhouse
Prof Ove Hoegh-Guldberg	Dr Stuart Whitten
Prof Terry Hughes	Prof Kerrie Wilson
Prof Helene Marsh	

Other

Mr Stephen Oxley	First Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Deb Callister	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
Dr Will Howard	Assistant Director, Department of the Environment and Energy
Ms Milica Milanja	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
Mr Scott Robinson	Director, Office of the Great Barrier Reef, EHP (<i>item 7a</i>)
Mr Matthew Fullerton	Manager, Office of the Great Barrier Reef, EHP (<i>item 7b</i>)
Ms Margaret Johnson	General Manager, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Dr David Wachenfeld	Chief Scientist, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Ms Jessica Hoey	Director, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (<i>item 1-6</i>)
Mr Shaun Barclay	Director, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Dr Mel Cowlshaw	Manager, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Dr Roger Shaw	Chair, Independent Science Panel (<i>item 6-7a</i>)

APOLOGIES

Members

Dr Andrew Ash
Adj Assoc Prof Stephan Schnierer



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 contribution they make to the region and paid respects to their Elders both past and present.

2 Welcome to Members

The Chair welcomed members and presenters to the meeting, noting apologies from Dr Andrew Ash and Adj Assoc Prof Stephan Schnierer. The Chair noted that Adj Prof Natalie Stoeckl would present on Indigenous and Community Reef Protection Actions in Prof Schnierer's absence.

The Chair welcomed new member Prof Kerrie Wilson and congratulated her on her appointment to the Panel.

The Chair noted the attendance of Dr Roger Shaw, Ms Jessica Hoey, Mr Scott Robinson and Mr Matthew Fullerton as presenters and observers for various agenda items.

3 Conflicts of interest

The Chair noted the summary of conflict of interests and addressed updates. Several members declared actual and perceived conflicts and provided written documentation to the Secretariat.

4 Panel business

The Panel endorsed the minutes of Meeting 10, which was held on 14 February 2018.

The Panel noted that the out-of-session advice provided to Ministers on the definition of resilience has been published on the Department of the Environment and Energy website.

The Chair noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 16 October 2018, but proposed rescheduling to allow the Panel to receive an update from the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program workshop and ensure alignment with the consultation timing requirements of the Reef Trust-Great Barrier Reef Foundation Partnership.

The Panel agreed to extend the duration of the next meeting to one-and-a-half days to accommodate a larger agenda. They noted that Secretariat would consult with members and confirm the meeting date in due course.

5 IEP membership and appointments

The Chair noted that all current Independent Expert Panel memberships (except new member Prof Kerrie Wilson) were due to expire on 30 June 2019.

The Chair proposed a new approach for staggering future appointments, to avoid all memberships expiring at the same time. The Chair suggested that in future half of the members would retire (or have the option to retire) on an alternating basis. He suggested that in future the Chair appointment be for a period of five years.

The Chair asked members to consider their preferences before the next meeting. He suggested that members contact him out of session to discuss whether they wish to continue their membership, or step down at the end of their current tenure. The Chair noted that membership would be discussed further at the next meeting.

6 Updates on recent meetings

The Panel received updates and discussed the following matters.

Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum

The Chair provided an update on matters discussed at the 44th meeting of the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum on 19 July 2018. The Chair advised the Panel that the Ministerial Forum had adopted the updated *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan*, the *Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan* and the cumulative impact and net benefit policies.

The Chair noted that he advised Ministers of the arrangements for the Panel to interact with, and provide advice to, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. He noted that both governments reiterated their commitment to addressing climate change through the Paris Agreement.

World Heritage matters

The Panel received and discussed updates from Mr Stephen Oxley and Prof Helene Marsh on the 42nd meeting of the World Heritage Committee (the Committee) in June-July 2018 in Bahrain. The Panel noted that:

- A highlight from the meeting was the removal of Belize barrier reef from the in-danger list.
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites held a two-day climate policy workshop in parallel with Committee meeting. This workshop included a discussion about what should be included in a revised climate change policy for World heritage properties, which is due to be considered in 2019.
- The Committee will have a future discussion about 'Outstanding Universal Value' in a changing climate.
- A side-event was held on the development of a climate vulnerability index, which would allow rapid assessment of a world heritage site, or class of sites, and could be used as a tool to identify priorities for future investment and raise awareness of climate change as a threat to world heritage areas.

Reef Restoration Symposium

The Panel received a presentation from Prof Damien Burrows on the Great Barrier Reef Restoration Symposium held in Cairns on 16-18 July. This was the first international conference on reef restoration and brought together a diverse audience of 300 attendees. The Panel noted that the presentations were recorded and would be made available on YouTube at a later date.

Coral Futures Symposium

Prof Terry Hughes presented on the Coral Futures Symposium, held in Brisbane on 19-20 July. Prof Hughes outlined the topics covered including global warming, coral bleaching and prospects for recovery of the Great Barrier Reef.

The Panel discussed the presentations, noting that was unlikely that coral reef systems in the Great Barrier Reef could be returned to their former composition. The Panel discussed reef composition, coral recruitment, and possible solutions to restore damaged parts of the reef. The Panel noted that it was important to focus on stewardship of the more healthy parts of the reef.

7a New Government funding

The Panel received an update on funding announcements from the Australian and Queensland governments.

On 29 April 2018, the Australian Government announced a \$500 million Reef Protection package that includes:

- A \$443.3 million Partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (the Foundation):
- A boost to the Joint Field Management Program of \$42.7 million for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority over five years and \$10.2 million each year beyond this.
- Approximately \$14 million over seven years to support delivery of the Reef Protection package including administration and communications.

On 23 May 2018, the Queensland Government announced an addition \$40 million for reef protection activities that includes:

- \$26 million for the Joint Field Management Program
- \$13.8 million to extend the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program to support the transition of graziers, and cane and banana growers to improved practices.

The Panel noted that while not reef specific, the Queensland Government's \$500 million Land Restoration Fund to support carbon reduction projects will provide co-benefits for the reef.

The Chair noted that the Foundation must consult with a range of stakeholders (including the Panel) in delivering the Partnership and that a consultation plan will be developed in due time. The Chair emphasised that projects funded by the Foundation must be delivered in accordance with the outcomes sought under the Reef 2050 Plan. The Chair noted that he met with Dr Paul Greenfield AO, Chair of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation's International Scientific Advisory Committee, to discuss future engagement arrangements for the Panel under the Partnership.

Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019

Ms Jessica Hoey updated the Panel on early findings of the 2019 Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report. The Panel discussed the early findings and provided feedback on the methodology and presentation of information that would be included in the Outlook Report. The Panel requested another update on the Outlook Report in late 2018 or early 2019.

Presentations on the five components under the partnership with the Foundation

The Panel received presentations on each of the five components of the Partnership as follows:

- Reef Restoration and Adaptation Science (presented by Prof Hoegh-Guldberg),
- Water Quality (presented by Ms Waterhouse)
- Crown of Thorns Starfish Control (presented by Prof Burrows)
- Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting (presented by Dr Reichelt),
- Indigenous and Community Reef Protection Actions (presented by Adj Prof Stoeckl).

The Panel was invited to discuss each of the five components of the Partnership.

The Panel identified a set of high-level principles to support delivery of the Reef Trust – Great Barrier Reef Foundation partnership.

- Rigorous principles of ethical, open, transparent and effective competition and value for money should be reflected in the investment strategy.
- The five investment themes should not be considered in isolation; consideration of linkages and co-benefits between the themes is encouraged.
- Innovation (but not gimmicks) is also encouraged across all five investment themes.
- Responsible research and innovation principles should be adhered to.
- Existing programs, such as the crown-of-thorns starfish control program, should be maintained and expanded with new, innovative methods and ideas. Calculated and evaluated risks should be taken where appropriate.
- The capacity for projects to be scaled up to maximise benefits and ensure cost effectiveness should be a criterion for investment decisions.
- Investment in short and long-term outcomes should be equally considered to recognise the need to tailor investments to target different issues across the full extent of the Reef.
- Investments into Reef protection should consider feasible and cost effective intervention options including prevention (reducing exposure) and repair (enhancing recovery).
- Monitoring and reporting requirements, consistent with the Reef 2050 Plan Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, should be included in all projects.
- Standards should be developed for the collection of long-term data and information that allows for information to be presented in an easily accessible format that is compatible with other data sources.
- All activities, including research, should be undertaken in close collaboration with relevant government agencies, key advisory bodies, delivery partners and technical experts to identify gaps in knowledge and avoid duplication of effort.

The Panel noted that these principles would be provided to the Foundation for consideration. The Chair noted that the Foundation would consider the Panel's advice when drafting the Strategic Investment Plan. The Chair noted that the draft Strategic Investment Plan would be provided to the Panel for comment at its next meeting. The Panel noted that it would provide comment on the draft Strategic Investment Plan directly to the Foundation and directly to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum as per existing advisory arrangements.

7b Reef 2050 Plan

The Panel noted the proposed approach to the comprehensive review of the Reef 2050 Plan. Panel members were asked to self-nominate for an out-of-session working group that would inform the review of the Plan's program logic.

Members noted that the working group would include members of the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee and the Joint Secretariat. An update on progress would be provided at the next Panel meeting.

Volunteers were Dr Stuart Whitten, Prof Kerrie Wilson, Ms Jane Waterhouse and Dr Will Howard (as the Department of the Environment and Energy's nominee), subject to timeframes and availability.

8 Other business

The Panel did not raise any other business.

9 Communiqué

The Panel agreed that a communiqué would be finalised out-of-session and published on the Department of the Environment and Energy's website.