



LOCAL MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chairs' Meeting – 21 and 22 October 2017 – Townsville

COMMUNIQUE

Chairs and members of the 12 Local Marine Advisory Committees (LMAC) met in Townsville on 21 and 22 October as part of their official meeting schedule for the 2015–2018 LMAC term.

The two-day meeting is held twice every LMAC term (three years) and provides an opportunity for networking across the LMACs as well as with Authority staff.

Welcome

Russell Reichelt, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Chairman, welcomed attendees to the meeting and paid respects to the Wulgurukaba and Bindal Traditional Owners and acknowledged their traditional lands and sea country.

He also introduced meeting facilitator, Terry Harper from Terra Form Design.

Agency overview

Russell Reichelt updated the attendees on the independent review of the Marine Park Authority's governance arrangements, commissioned by the Minister for Environment and Energy earlier this year. The review focused on the role and composition of the Authority's Board in supporting the functions of the Authority. The review was led by Dr Wendy Craik AM, reporting to the Minister for the Environment and Energy.

The Minister is considering Dr Craik's final report and recommendations which are available on the Department of Environment and Energy's [website](#).

While Dr Reichelt's official term as Authority Chairman concluded on 31 October, he has been asked by the Minister to remain in the role for up to one year until a replacement is found

As General Manager for the Policy and Stewardship branch, Margaret Johnson spoke about the achievements and actions over the previous 12 months. These included:

- the Reef Summit from which 10 initiatives focusing on actions which deliver maximum benefits for Reef resilience were formulated
- Reef 2050 Plan for which the Authority is the lead agency for delivering and reporting on 74 of the 151 actions to build reef resilience
- The design of the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program with working groups in program design, synthesis and reporting and data management and systems
- the expansion of the Marine Monitoring Program to include additional integrated data from the Australia Institute of Marine Sciences (AIMS), James Cook University, University of Queensland, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Meteorology
- the development of an Reef Discovery course for the tourism industry, with modules expanded from four to 10
- the good environmental work undertaken by the community and industry and promoted through the Reef Guardians program
- the expanded crown-of-thorns control program and its effectiveness in protecting coral cover with the data collected through the Eye on Reef program, in particular during the 2016 and 2017 bleaching events .

Bruce Elliot talked about the activities and achievements across the Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use branch, including:

- Permits online and enhancements to the permissions processing

- the work conducted on Reef Explorer, a simple on line mapping tool that allows access to geospatial datasets.
- the Authority's sustainable fishing team's work on the Queensland fishing strategy to incorporate priorities to achieve conservation outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef
- continued work by the Authority's coastal ecosystems team to embed whole-of-catchment understanding in Queensland's catchment programs and healthy waterways plans
- the Authority's response to the 2017 bleaching event
- work has commenced on the next Outlook Report with a team assembled and director appointed
- the Australian Government is considering banning the use of microbeads to protect marine life.

The achievements from the Great Barrier Reef Operations branch were highlighted by General Manager Simon Banks. These included:

- finalising the Whitsundays Plan of Management following extensive stakeholder consultation
- the settlement of Shen Neng litigation which resulted in the Authority being awarded \$35 million to clean-up Douglas Shoal where the ship grounded
- the Specialised Indigenous Ranger program has come to an end with 26 trained rangers, who may now be appointed as Marine Park inspectors
- the Authority has drafted a Reconciliation Action plan which was submitted to Reconciliation Australia in June
- Reef HQ has embarked on a capital works program which
- the Joint Field Management Program continues to evolve the program, in particular with communication and education strategies targeting non-compliance in recreational fishing .

LMAC Chairs' reports

Members representing each of the 12 LMACs gave a presentation on the activities undertaken by their committee members as well as priority issues in their region.

Highlights of these reports included:

Cape York — this LMAC covers a large area which has gone from very good condition to damaged due to mass coral bleaching. The LMAC purchased a data logger which is stored at the council for community members to use.

Douglas — Coral bleaching and climate change are a major concern with the mass coral bleaching event dominating discussion at meetings during the last two years. The LMAC has been promoting bait netting best practices through local media advertising.

Cairns — The group's diverse membership is what gives it strength. They are looking at how to increase the Reef's recovery capacity after regional disturbance.

Cassowary Coast — Concerned about the conflicting messages and reports on Reef health from various organisations. The LMAC supported Seabed Watch (in Mission Beach) to monitor recovery, which they have done for several years.

Hinchinbrook — The Queensland Fishing Strategy was well received. The LMAC would encourage a new water quality improvement plan. It has also supported local actions around marine debris and engaged the broader community by holding clean-up events.

Townsville — as this LMAC has a small membership it focuses its efforts where it can be most effective. It recently supported a 'Deadly Science' project that encourages women from remote communities to explore careers that inspire them.

Bowen Burdekin — The LMAC is concerned about the number of abandoned vessels in the region and supported Reef Check to inform the community about best practices when walking in the intertidal areas.

Whitsunday — Although Cyclone Debbie reduced the impacts of coral bleaching in the

region, the cyclone caused a lot of damage. The LMAC produced a video to encourage boaties to travel slowly in shallow waters.

Mackay — The region has the highest number of boat registrations and a new net free zone which has increased the number of recreational fishers. With this regional focus, the LMAC supported the local recreational fishing group to run an angler education program through the schools.

Capricorn Coast — The amount of marine debris, single use plastic bags and microbeads are a concern in the region. There is recognition of refugia element of the corals in the Keppel Islands, but a need for building local resilience measures to keep and maintain them.

Gladstone — The LMAC has had a decline in the membership, so produced a video to promote the committee to attract more interested people.

Burnett — Support for the LMACs to act as a key player in Reef 2050 by activating their networks. The committee supported a local tag and release program.

Regional resilience to climate change

Capricorn Coast LMAC Chair, Michael McCabe spoke about an idea to develop a presentation tailored to specific audiences to educate and inform people, empowering them to discuss global, local and regional issues with regard to climate change and possible actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Reef Guardian Grants

Authority director Fred Nucifora explained the agency's grants funding framework is driven by whole-of-government procurement requirement. These grants focused on Reef 2050 targets and outcomes and will foster community partnerships on a local level.

He mentioned that an applicant can combine project areas/categories to increase funding through the stewardship, community and possibly research grants, but each project must be endorsed by the LMACs in order to be able to receive the \$2,000 allocated for each LMAC.

The stewardship and community Grants will be made available in February–March 2018.

Field management update

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Regional Director, Damien Head spoke about the achievements of the Joint Field Management program, administered by the Marine Park Authority in cooperation with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

This included: the Raine Island Recovery Project, conservation actions on islands, restoring habitats and fringing reef, species mapping, incident response and the re-profiling Whitehaven Beach following severe tropical cyclone Debbie, upholding compliance and marine intervention actions.

He also mentioned that in the year ahead there would be: a second Reef Ranger compliance patrol vessel in southern end of the Great Barrier Reef, increased crown-of-thorns starfish surveillance and control, \$7.3 million to improve visitor facilities in Whitsunday, expansion of mooring installation to double number of moorings and reef protection markers and adoption of vessel tracking on the commercial fishing fleet in the Great Barrier Reef.

Reef 2050 Plan

As the LMAC representative on the Reef 2050 Reef Advisory Committee, Sue Sargent spoke about the Reef 2050 plan.

The Reef 2050 Plan is undergoing a mid-term review which will revise information to include a strengthened climate change section and an update on Reef health.

Sue spoke about the various Reef 2050 reports and the many positive actions undertaken to date through this initiative. She noted that community empowerment was featured in a media release by Ministers Frydenberg and Miles in July 2017, "Fast forward action to preserve the Reef".

A recent Reef 2050 communication workshop highlighted the lack of connection to place, and how many people were first time visitors and did not recognise the issues we see every day.

LMAC reflections

Authority Director Karen Markwort opened this session emphasising the importance of the LMACs in the Authority's community engagement strategy. A key focus for the weekend was providing input into the next term of LMACs, which commences in July 2018.

Karen mentioned there is a strong support across agency for LMACs — for the advisory function they provide as well as their role in connecting the Authority with local communities. It was noted that many committees are also active stewards of the Reef, engaging in on-ground activities to support Reef health.

In this session, the members were invited to explain what has worked well, what has been learnt and how the Authority can work with the LMACs to achieve more effective advisory and stewardship outcomes.

At each table, the attendees made a list of what was positive, negative and interesting and reported their notes back to the entire group.

Reef Blueprint

Key initiatives resulting from the Reef Summit held by the Authority in May 2017 were presented by Director, Josh Gibson.

These initiatives included: building a resilience network, expanding and intensifying crown-of-thorns starfish control, improving compliance, protecting key species for Reef recovery, active and localised restoration, accelerating actions to address climate change and fostering partnerships for local action and innovation.

The key message from the Summit was that 'Together we can secure the future of the Reef but we need to try harder, do more, and act now'.

Future directions of LMAC

Chairman Russell Reichelt set the scene for this session outlining how the Authority sees the LMACs working, what we learn from them and how this knowledge can empower LMACs to help us help the Reef.

He encouraged local stewardship with LMACs and explained how the Authority engages in issue debates.

Terry Harper then suggested the ideas identified in the Saturday closing discussion to be broken into four sections: communications, strategic direction, roles and relationships and community engagement.

It was suggested that on the back of the successful Reef Summit that was held earlier this year, a Youth Summit be organised to discuss similar ideas that were mentioned in the Reef Summit.

Expanding recreational fisheries monitoring and stewardship

Authority Manager, Randall Owens spoke about the commercial fishers' resistance to net free zones and how it had challenged fishers to look after the areas they'd been given.

He mentioned that Info Fish, a collaboration with Fisheries Queensland, collects analyses and monitors recreation catch and promotes stewardship 'putting something in and getting something out' and has identified a gap in Reef 2050 data capture

A code of practice has been developed among Rockhampton recreational fishers.

Randall also paid tribute to commercial fisher Ben Leahy who died in the *Diane* boat tragedy off the township of 1770 recently.

Next meeting

The next round of LMAC meetings will be held in November 2017 at various locations throughout Queensland.

LMAC Members

Alice Taylor	Cape York LMAC
Harry Ludwick	Cape York LMAC
Robert Hanan	Douglas LMAC
John Romney	Douglas LMAC
Ryan Donnelly	Cairns LMAC
Terry Cummins	Cairns LMAC
Bill Shannon	Cassowary Coast LMAC
Peter Reed	Cassowary Coast LMAC
Michael Nash	Hinchinbrook LMAC
Vern Veitch	Townsville LMAC
Blanche D'Anastasi	Townsville LMAC
Joe Linton	Bowen/Burdekin LMAC
Lyn McLaughlin	Bowen/Burdekin LMAC
Tony Fontes	Whitsunday LMAC
Charlie Morgan	Whitsunday LMAC
Caitlin Davies	Mackay LMAC
Amanda Lavarack	Mackay LMAC
Michael McCabe	Capricorn Coast LMAC
Maggie Inglis	Capricorn Coast LMAC
Megan Ellis	Gladstone LMAC
Sue Sargent	Burnett LMAC
Brett Gamlin	Burnett LMAC

Management Partners

Russell Reichelt	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Simon Banks	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Bruce Elliott	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Margaret Johnson	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Roger Beeden	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Kirstin Dobbs	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Josh Gibson	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Matt Goodall	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Althea Harding	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Jessica Hoey	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Belinda Jago	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
David Leverton	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Karen Markwort	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Fred Nucifora	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
David Wachenfeld	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Liz Wren	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Randall Owens	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Doon McColl	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Carolyn Thompson	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Rhianna Rickard	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Kellie Davis	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Damien Head	National Parks Recreation Sport and Racing

Facilitator

Terry Harper	Terra Form Design
--------------	-------------------