

PREFACE

This review is intended as a reference document covering the scientific and administrative aspects of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS) Program and the Australian Institute of Marine Science's COTS Study from July 1989 to June 1995. The two organisations have worked together closely over the past ten years to monitor COTS outbreaks on the Great Barrier Reef and to understand the causes of starfish outbreaks. This document reflects the complementary and cooperative nature of these endeavours.

The review is sufficiently detailed to enable a full appreciation of the basis of the programs, their structure and operation, the status of projects, funding, the major outcomes of funded research, and future research directions.

The review complements two earlier reports that documented an earlier phase of COTS research involving the Authority and the Australian Institute of Marine Science from 1985 to 1989. At that time research was divided into ecological research and management-related research and separate reports were written for each of these two general areas. Moran and Johnson (1989) reviewed the former and Lassig (1991) the latter.

This review is a single volume, reflecting tighter integration of projects, an even greater level of cooperation between the organisations involved, and a stronger recognition that directed ecological research, while advancing scientific knowledge, provides critical information for management.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIMS	Australian Institute of Marine Science
BMR	Bureau of Mineral Resources
COTS	Crown-of-thorns Starfish
COTSAC	Crown of Thorns Starfish Advisory Committee
COTSARC	Crown of Thorns Starfish Advisory Review Committee
COTSREC	Crown-of-Thorns Starfish Research Committee
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre for Ecologically Sustainable Development of the Great Barrier Reef (abbreviated title CRC Reef Research Centre)
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Organisation
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
ICLARM	International Centre for Living Aquatic Resource Management
JCU	James Cook University of North Queensland
NRIC	National Resource Information Centre
QDPI	Queensland Department of Primary Industries
R&M	GBRMPA Research & Monitoring Section
UQ	University of Queensland
VIMS	Victorian Institute of Marine Sciences