



Australian Government

**Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority**

Corporate Plan 2011 - 2014



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Foreword

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is the Australian Government agency responsible for management of the Great Barrier Reef in order to ensure, among other things, its long-term protection and ecological sustainability.

The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2009* has provided a comprehensive assessment of what is known about the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem, its use, its management and the pressures it is facing. The Report states that while the Great Barrier Reef is one of the healthiest coral reef ecosystems in the world, its long-term outlook is now at a crossroad and the decisions made in the next few years are likely to determine its long-term future.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Corporate Plan informs our Minister, the Parliament and the public of our direction and our priorities for the next four years. It focuses the agency on delivering the outcomes required by legislation, especially the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*.

A key goal is to improve the outlook and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef by developing and implementing strategies to address the key pressures highlighted in the *Outlook Report 2009*.

I look forward to working with colleagues, stakeholders and partners in implementing the strategies in this Plan over the next four years to improve the outlook and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

Russell Reichelt
Chairman

Who we are

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) is an Australian Government statutory authority. The GBRMPA reports to the Australian Government Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and advises the Minister on the control, care and development of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Our headquarters are in Townsville and our staff work from Cape York to the southern Great Barrier Reef and also in Canberra.

About the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park stretches 2300 km along the Queensland coast and covers 344 400 km². It is the largest coral reef ecosystem in the world and supports an outstanding array of plants and animals. The Marine Park supports a variety of uses, particularly tourism, fishing, recreation and shipping. It is an integral part of the lifestyles and livelihoods of communities along the Great Barrier Reef coast.

Our outcome

The long-term protection, ecologically sustainable use, understanding and enjoyment of the Great Barrier Reef for all Australians and the international community, through the care and development of the Marine Park.

Our values

In addition to the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct, we value our people and endeavour to:

- Lead by example and strive for excellence
- Work collaboratively, be receptive and communicate openly with each other, and the community to achieve results
- Respond professionally to, and respect the needs and aspirations of the community and our stakeholders
- Put in place systems that support our people and our decisions
- Show respect, trust, honesty, accountability and integrity in our conduct - we encourage debate, but we speak with one voice
- Display innovation and objectivity in our decision making.

Our approach

1. We protect the values of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and World Heritage Area using an ecosystem-based management approach.
2. We promote ecologically sustainable use of the Marine Park and the coast and catchments adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef.
3. We use the best available science, knowledge and information to support environmental policy, regulation and conservation outcomes.
4. We actively engage and recognise that understanding and working constructively with others is essential in achieving our outcome.
5. We provide information and education programs to raise awareness and to encourage behaviour change within the community that will help protect the Great Barrier Reef.
6. We respect Traditional Owner culture, and recognise their cultural connections to Sea Country within the Marine Park.
7. We work collaboratively with many different organisations and groups to manage the Marine Park including Queensland Government agencies, other Australian Government agencies, Traditional Owners, scientists, industries, interest groups and the broader community.
8. We ensure we have expertise and field experience regarding issues of concern to the Marine Park and its stakeholders.
9. We use a risk management approach and the precautionary principle to manage the Marine Park.

Our governance and planning

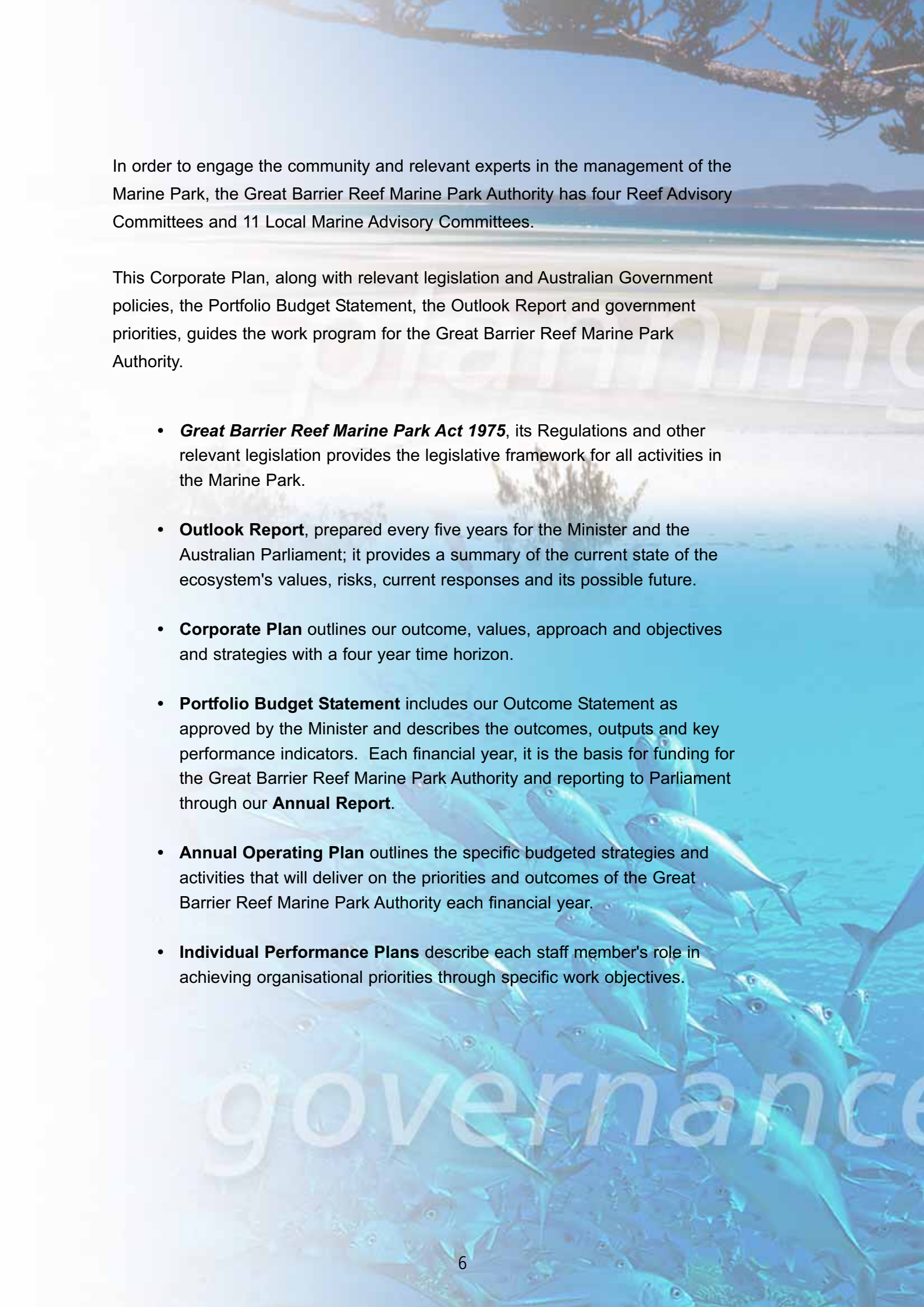
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's governance framework is based on the legislative requirements of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, the *Public Service Act 1999*, the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement with the State of Queensland, and a range of Memoranda of Understanding.

The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* provides for the establishment, control, care and development of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Act confers responsibility for management of the Marine Park to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, sets out our role and, through its objects, provides the fundamental basis for management of the Marine Park. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority comprises the Chairman and four additional members appointed by the Governor General on advice from the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is supported by staff who are employed under the *Public Service Act 1999* and are bound by the APS Code of Conduct and Values.

Objects of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*

- (1) The main object of this Act is to provide for the long term protection and conservation of the environment, biodiversity and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef Region.
- (2) The other objects of this Act are to do the following, so far as is consistent with the main object:
 - (a) allow ecologically sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef Region for purposes including the following:
 - (i) public enjoyment and appreciation;
 - (ii) public education about and understanding of the Region;
 - (iii) recreational, economic and cultural activities;
 - (iv) research in relation to the natural, social, economic and cultural systems and value of the Great Barrier Reef Region;
 - (b) encourage engagement in the protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef Region by interested persons and groups, including Queensland and local governments, communities, Indigenous persons, business and industry;
 - (c) assist in meeting Australia's international responsibilities in relation to the environment and protection of world heritage (especially Australia's responsibilities under the World Heritage Convention).
- (3) In order to achieve its objects, this Act:
 - (a) provides for the establishment, control, care and development of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; and
 - (b) establishes the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority; and
 - (c) provides for zoning plans and plans of management; and
 - (d) regulates, including by a system of permissions, use of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in ways consistent with ecosystem-based management and the principles of ecologically sustainable use; and
 - (e) facilitates partnership with traditional owners in management of marine resources; and
 - (f) facilitates a collaborative approach to management of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area with the Queensland government.



In order to engage the community and relevant experts in the management of the Marine Park, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has four Reef Advisory Committees and 11 Local Marine Advisory Committees.

This Corporate Plan, along with relevant legislation and Australian Government policies, the Portfolio Budget Statement, the Outlook Report and government priorities, guides the work program for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

- **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975**, its Regulations and other relevant legislation provides the legislative framework for all activities in the Marine Park.
- **Outlook Report**, prepared every five years for the Minister and the Australian Parliament; it provides a summary of the current state of the ecosystem's values, risks, current responses and its possible future.
- **Corporate Plan** outlines our outcome, values, approach and objectives and strategies with a four year time horizon.
- **Portfolio Budget Statement** includes our Outcome Statement as approved by the Minister and describes the outcomes, outputs and key performance indicators. Each financial year, it is the basis for funding for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and reporting to Parliament through our **Annual Report**.
- **Annual Operating Plan** outlines the specific budgeted strategies and activities that will deliver on the priorities and outcomes of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority each financial year.
- **Individual Performance Plans** describe each staff member's role in achieving organisational priorities through specific work objectives.

Our objectives and strategies

Objective 1:

Address key risks affecting the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef

- Generate, capture and apply the best available science to improve understanding of ecosystem resilience, risks to that resilience and response options
- Develop and implement responses (including adaptation strategies) to climate change, with Government, industry, reef users and the community
- Support initiatives to improve water quality entering the Great Barrier Reef
- Contribute to the protection of coastal ecosystems that support the Great Barrier Reef
- Partner with the Queensland Government, other governments, Traditional Owners and other relevant bodies to address the remaining impacts from fishing, and illegal fishing and poaching and other emerging risks using an ecosystem based management approach
- Deliver communication and education about the key risks affecting the outlook for the Great Barrier Reef and ways to mitigate these risks

Objective 2:

Ensure that management delivers ecologically sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef

- Provide effective legislative, policy, planning, assessment and permitting arrangements to achieve ecologically sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef
- Partner with Traditional Owners to ensure sustainable traditional use of marine resources and protection of Traditional Owner cultural and heritage values
- Partner with the Queensland Government to deliver an effective field management program
- Collaborate with industry, reef users, other governments and the community to implement best practice approaches and stewardship programs to ensure protection and sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef

Objective 3:

Maintain a high performing, effective and efficient organisation

- Provide timely, accurate and effective advice to Government
- Adhere to legislative, regulatory and reporting requirements, including heritage and World Heritage obligations
- Ensure processes and systems are in place to generate, capture and apply the best available knowledge, information and technologies to inform and support management of the Great Barrier Reef
- Provide for a safe, positive and supportive workplace environment
- Ensure we have skilled, professional and knowledgeable people who work well together and are focussed on our corporate priorities
- Ensure an accountable, responsive and adaptive organisation that maximises operational effectiveness and efficiency and plans for continuous improvement
- Ensure the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority remains a world leader in marine protected area management

Our priorities

In achieving our outcome and objectives over the next four years, the priorities of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority are:

- To assess and mitigate where possible the key risks identified in the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2009*, namely climate change, continued declining water quality from catchment runoff, loss of coastal habitats from coastal development and remaining impacts from fishing and illegal fishing and poaching
- To ensure we have the best possible management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- To have a collaborative approach to management, especially with Native Title holders and Traditional Owners, the Queensland and Australian governments, Reef industries, the scientific community and the broader community
- To evolve as a knowledge-based organisation, where decisions regarding the management of the Marine Park are fully informed by the best science and information.



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