

Environmental Management System Coordination

Implementation of the initial EMS one-off actions and administrative tasks

Summary

The finalisation of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Environmental Management System (EMS) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategy, involved developing and completing the practical actions required to implement these strategies throughout the agency. The Green Office Committee led the launch and implementation of the EMS and GHG Reduction Strategy, with other GBRMPA internal groups providing advisory support as required.



Figure 1: Waste Management System

Background

In 2010, the GBRMPA developed an EMS and GHG Reduction Strategy to assess, monitor, report and improve environmental performance and to foster a culture of sustainability within the GBRMPA. A series of practical actions and administrative tasks were needed prior to further agency-wide incorporation.

Objectives

This final part of a three phase project was to engage an EMS Coordinator to carry out the one-off and administrative tasks required for the successful implementation of the GBRMPA EMS. The Coordinator also explored opportunities to engage with businesses and communities with similar environmental principles, to share ideas and showcase the GBRMPA's achievements.

Activities

A major task of the project was the integration of roles and responsibilities into individual work plans and day-to-day business operations of the GBRMPA. This involved changes to templates, guidelines, policy and internal processes, such as procurement and travel, all with the

view of ensuring enduring sustainable practices. In order to achieve this, certain process actions were made mandatory.

The Coordinator was on site to motivate and drive the cultural change needed to complete the tasks, integrate the EMS into staff roles and responsibilities and encourage staff to take up more positive environmental behaviour. This was achieved, with many staff switching off computer screens at night, reducing and sorting waste more effectively and making sustainable choices in their working decisions.

The Coordinator engaged many business and environmental networks within the local region (e.g. Townsville City Council's Queensland Smart Grid) to promote the GBRMPA's best practice environmental management guidelines, and foster its relationships within this network.

Outputs

An implementation report on the EMS Coordination was developed which addressed the issues and achievements of the project and identifies areas for improvement.

Project name: EMS Coordination
Project code: 009
Outcomes: D1.1 & D1.2
Years: 2009-10, 2010-11
Bulletin type: Final



The report specifically addressed the engagement of relevant parties, completion of EMS one-off actions, incorporation and delivery methods of ongoing responsibilities into roles, and recommendations for future expected issues or maintenance needs.

Other outputs include:

- Development of a number of communication products and activities, including a project bulletin, Corporate Services bulletin, open-information seminar and general staff visits and discussions at team meetings, and the drafting of an EMS Communications Plan.
- A special Green Office Committee meeting to discuss the EMS.
- Desktop Waste Management System, which formed part of the Green Office Action Group (GOAG) Staff Initiative for 2010
- Staff work-plan EMS additions - incorporating the principles of the EMS into individual staff work-plans.
- Templates, reporting tools and additions to current procedures and learning materials such as:
 - A Purchase Order 'Green Procurement Checklist'
 - Business Travel Guidelines additions
 - Office Refurbishment Checklist
 - EMS induction materials
- Review of the current GBRMPA Asset Management Plan 2010.

Outcomes

The implementation report provides evidence of the outputs and outcomes achieved throughout the project. Such outcomes include:

- Implementation of the EMS



Figure 2: Office operations covered by the EMS
Source: GBRMPA

- Strategies communicated to staff and stakeholders
- Staff are engaged and motivated to do more
- Management adapted its processes / roles / responsibilities
- Staff commitment to upholding the principles of the Environmental Management System
- Communications plan drafted
- Waste Management System upgraded
- GHG Reduction Strategy year one targets reached
- Government best practice guidelines met

In addition to these outcomes, earlier related projects saw dramatic improvements undertaken across the agency, including several activities to reduce the footprint of Reef HQ.



What did we learn?

Individual actions contribute to the cultural change required for the continuing success of the EMS. Without a dedicated EMS Coordinator to drive this change, the GBRMPA will have to rely solely on individual staff to drive actions to reduce their footprints.

The GBRMPA will benefit from directly communicating with staff about the effects that positive environmental behaviour can have on their footprint and providing the platform (through the GOAG) for the motivation to do so.

Future directions

To carry forward and build on the successes of this project and those undertaken before it, the Green Office Committee (GOC) and other internal groups will continue to promote the EMS and GHG Reduction Strategy

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