

# SEA COUNTRY

INDIGENOUS ISSUES OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK

NUMBER 11

JUNE 2004

The eleventh issue of Sea Country was compiled by staff of the Indigenous Policy and Liaison Unit of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). If you have any questions or would like to go on our mailing list, contact us at the address on the back.

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**Facilitating the Traditional Use of Marine Resources**

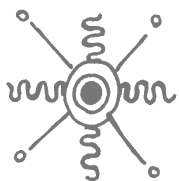
**CRC Reef Co-operative Management Research**

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## NOTICE BOARD

The master plan for the Townsville Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre was launched in December 2003. The centre will be located in the Reef HQ building, right next to the GBRMPA.



Illustrations by Lockhart River Art Gang.

## Representative Areas Program – The Revised Zoning Plan

The draft zoning plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park was developed using the best available information from scientists, government agencies, local communities, Traditional Owner groups and representative bodies, industry groups and other individuals, together with information from the 10,190 submissions received during the first community participation phase of the Representative Areas Program (RAP).

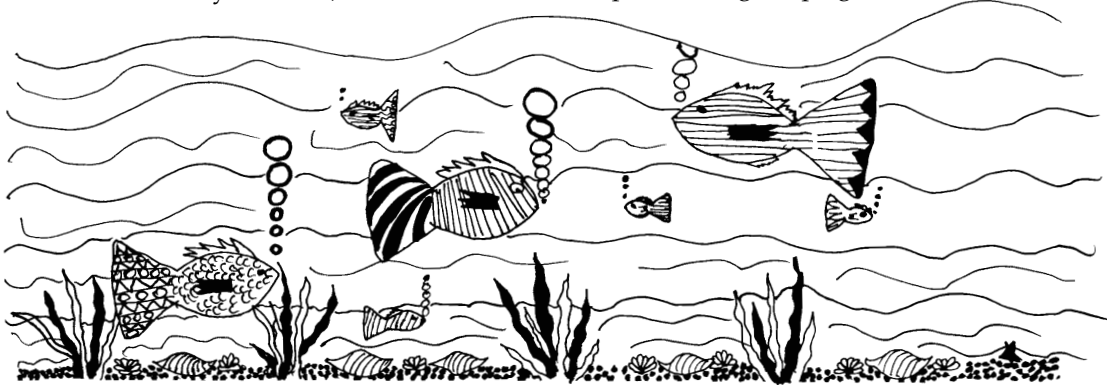
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the GBRMPA) released the draft zoning plan for public comment from 2 June to 4 August 2003. At the commencement of this second formal phase of community participation for RAP, staff of the GBRMPA again met with as many communities as possible. Over fifty workshops specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were conducted with almost 700 people attending the meetings.

The second formal phase of RAP turned out to be one of the biggest public involvement exercises on any environmental issue in Australian history. Over 21,300 submissions

on the draft zoning plan were received and methodically analysed. A revised zoning plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park was produced using this comprehensive information.

The Minister for the Environment and Heritage, the Honourable Dr David Kemp MP tabled the revised zoning plan in Federal Parliament. On 24 March 2004, the zoning plan received Parliamentary approval. The Minister will now officially launch the zoning plan to come into effect, together with the supporting regulations on 1 July 2004. An outcome of RAP is a better way of doing future business with Traditional Owners through Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements, which allow for the co-operative management of a wide range of sea country issues. The Traditional Use of Marine Resources article in this edition describes this framework in more detail.

The revised zoning plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is now a public document, which is available on the GBRMPA web site (<http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au>).



Australian Government  
Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority

## SEA COUNTRY

An education initiative from the Indigenous Policy and Liaison Unit.

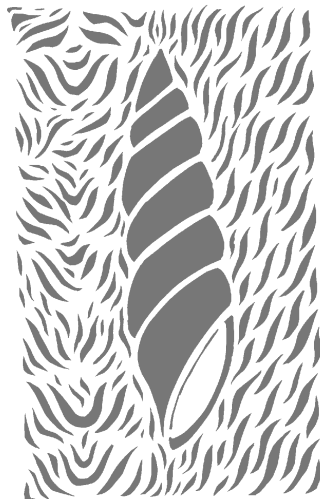
# Facilitating the Traditional Use of Marine Resources

## INFO

GBRMPA's Climate Change Program provides regular reports on conditions on the Reef throughout summer and publishes early warnings of increases in levels of stress or widespread bleaching of corals. The Current Conditions Reports for the summer of 2003/04 are available from our website by clicking on the 'Climate Change' link on our homepage at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)

### Lockhart River Art Gang Illustrations this issue:

Cover:	Larry Koto
	David Michael
Page 2.	Silas Hobson
Page 3.	Silas Hobson
Pages 3&4	Steven Short
Page 5.	Daniel Hobson
Page 6.	Silas Hobson
	David Michael



The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the GBRMPA) recognises that 'traditional use of marine resources' is more than just traditional hunting, fishing and collecting activities. The term traditional use of marine resources is defined in the zoning plan as "the undertaking of activities in accordance with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custom or tradition, for the purposes of satisfying personal, domestic or communal needs".

Traditional use of marine resources, including traditional hunting, is one of several human-related species mortality

issues in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which Government agencies are addressing in collaboration with many groups, industries and the wider community. There is a need to ensure that such use of marine resources, including hunting of green turtles and dugongs, occurs at sustainable levels.

As part of the recent rezoning of the Marine Park, the GBRMPA has put in place a range of management procedures that encompasses Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values, conservation biodiversity interests and current native title law.

## Zoning

Under the new zoning arrangements:

\* Traditional use activities that are not 'as of right' in the zone, or that involve the take of protected species, require either a permit or an accredited Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement (TUMRA). Nothing in the Zoning Plan affects the operation of section 211 of the *Native Title Act 1993*.

\*\* In addition to any *Native Title Act 1993* s211 right that may apply, the zoning plan provides for access by a Traditional Owner for an activity not involving the taking of plants, animals or marine products, for the purposes of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custom or tradition.

General Use Zone (Light Blue) ✓*	Habitat Protection Zone (Dark Blue) ✓*	Conservation Park Zone (Yellow) ✓*	Buffer Zone (Olive Green) ✓*	Scientific Research Zone (Orange) ✓*
Marine National Park Zone (Green) ✓*	Preservation Zone (Pink) X**	Commonwealth Islands ✓*		

Traditional use of marine resources activities may be conducted in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park:

- (1) As an 'as of right' activity consistent with the Zoning Plan for the Marine Park; or
- (2) In accordance with an accredited TUMRA for a site or area within the Marine Park; or
- (3) As a permitted activity with the written permission of the Authority.
- (4) In accordance with Native Title Rights under s211 of the *Native Title Act 1993*.

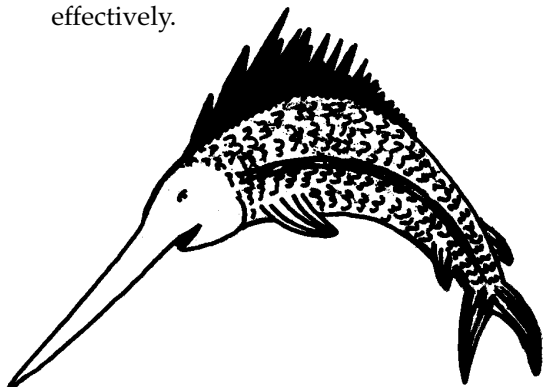
## What is a Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement?

A Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement or TUMRA is a document that describes how Traditional Owners wish to manage the traditional use of marine resources in their sea country.

TUMRAs will benefit the conservation of a range of marine animals by better regulating sustainable harvesting through culturally appropriate methods. Both the GBRMPA and Traditional Owners will benefit from a process that will be consistent, transparent, and enforceable.

In order to set the system up, the GBRMPA will initially focus on the management arrangements for the traditional hunting of dugongs and turtles. TUMRAs may over time, be used to manage other traditional activities, such as traditional fishing in zones that would usually further restrict such activities.

The TUMRA approach recognises and addresses a complex array of Indigenous rights and interests, marine management and legislative issues in a culturally appropriate and scientifically valid manner. It is also consistent with the *Native Title Act 1993*. The GBRMPA wishes to work with all Marine Park users to ensure that the new arrangements for TUMRAs work effectively.



# Longer Permits for High Standard Tourism Operators

Marine Park tourism operators who have demonstrated a high standard of operation will soon be eligible for longer-term permits from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the GBRMPA). To be awarded a longer-term permit, tourism operators will need to be certified with an external certification scheme. These schemes will check an operator's commitment to best practice protection of the Marine Park and the quality of their education programs and client services.

High standard operators will also have to show that they are supporting local and Indigenous communities through such things as employing locally, providing accurate information about Indigenous heritage and culture, and consulting and involving Indigenous communities in the tourism operation.

Permit terms for these high standard operators will increase from the current six years to a maximum of 15 years. This initiative is part of a policy on managing tourism permits that has been adopted by the GBRMPA. Comments on the proposed policy were widely invited in early 2003.

For further information please contact Hilary Skeat on (07) 4750 0842 or email [h.skeat@gbrrmpa.gov.au](mailto:h.skeat@gbrrmpa.gov.au)

## DID YOU KNOW?

Crocodiles have a see-through third eyelid, which is closed when it swims underwater.



## INTERESTING WEBSITES

**Aboriginal Tourism Australia**  
[www.ataust.org.au/](http://www.ataust.org.au/)

**Bangarra Dance Theatre**  
[www.bangarra.com.au/](http://www.bangarra.com.au/)

**Garma Festival**  
[www.garma.telstra.com](http://www.garma.telstra.com)

**Keriba-Mina Torres Strait Islanders Corporation – Arts & Craft Gallery**  
[www.keribamina.com.au/page1.html](http://www.keribamina.com.au/page1.html)

**Internet Forum on Australian South Sea Islanders**  
[www.humanrights.gov.au/racial\\_discrimination/Erace/](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/racial_discrimination/Erace/)

**Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation**  
[www.lumbu.org/](http://www.lumbu.org/)

**Murrin Bridge Vineyard Aboriginal Corporation**  
[www.murrinbridgewines.com.au](http://www.murrinbridgewines.com.au)

**Skinny Fish Music**  
[www.skinnyfishmusic.com.au](http://www.skinnyfishmusic.com.au)

**Tourism Queensland**  
[www.tourism.qld.gov.au/](http://www.tourism.qld.gov.au/)



## CRC Reef Co-operative Management Research

The issue of co-operative management between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the GBRMPA) has been discussed for several years. The CRC Reef is currently supporting two collaborative research projects that examine co-operative management on the Great Barrier Reef.

The first Co-operative Management project promotes informed decision-making and provides research, information and knowledge-building services to negotiating parties that are considering a co-operative management approach. The objectives of the project are:

To provide information and relationship-building support to the GBRMPA and Traditional Owners who wish to develop a process and structure for future co-operative management arrangements of areas and natural resources within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park area.

To help develop a framework for co-operative management and other forms of partnership in management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP), suited to Traditional Owner management and potentially involving in the future, the participation of other stakeholder groups.

Emphasis is placed on providing information and supporting mutual learning, towards the best possible design and implementation of future co-operative management arrangements. The project did not attempt to collect or disseminate Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge.

The first stage set up a management committee comprising two representatives of the Southern Great Barrier Reef Sea Forum, a representative of Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, two representatives of the GBRMPA, and the three-member research team, jointly managed the research project. This itself was an experiment in the co-operative management of research, which brings the

users of the information together with the researchers to decide the research directions jointly (Innes and Ross 2001).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation is important and input has occurred in: the design of the research which will aid in fulfilling the aims of the research; decision-making elements of the project through membership by Sea Forum and Balkanu representatives on the Research Management Committee; and in the research itself through Melissa George, a Wulgurukaba Traditional Owner of the Townsville-Magnetic Island area. Budgets were also provided to Indigenous people for 'case study' tasks. The research project is now in its final stage with publications due out later this year.

The second research task commenced in the latter part of 2003. Like the first task, it is a co-operative management research task with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners and GBRMPA representatives on the research committee. The research task also provides the opportunity for Traditional Owners to document their management issues and aspirations for their sea country. The task will provide a well-researched information base and procedural frameworks that demonstrates how the co-operative management concept can improve marine environmental management.

**For further information**, the research team members are:

**Professor Helen Ross**, School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland, Gatton  
(Phone 07-54601648, [hross@uqg.uq.edu.au](mailto:hross@uqg.uq.edu.au))

**Ms Melissa George**, Wulgurukaba Traditional Owner and (in 2002) member of Sea Forum working group

**Dr Cathy Robinson**, School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland, Gatton

**Mr Arturo Izurieta**, School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland, Gatton

# Reef tourism – What's happening?

## Cruise ship anchorages north of Lizard Island

There are 11 cruise ship anchorages north of Lizard Island:

Boydong Cays;  
Piper Island - 2 anchorages;  
Night Island;  
Morris Island;  
Creech Reef;  
Pipon Island;  
Flinders Island Group - 2 anchorages;  
Bathurst Bay; and  
Ingram Island.

A draft code of conduct has been developed to encourage cruise ship operators to do the right thing when they are in sea country.

The draft code includes suggestions that cruise ship operators respect the cultural values of Traditional Owners by: giving 24 hours notice of their visit; asking the communities what information they should tell their passengers; and informing their clients about what is culturally appropriate (for example, some areas should not be accessed without endorsement from the Traditional Owners).

The draft code of conduct is currently going through an endorsement process with the peoples of Yadhaigana, Kuuku Ya'u, Uutaalnganu, Umpila, Ambiiil Mungu Ngarra and the Aba Yalgayi.

If you would like a copy of the draft code please contact Vicki Bonanno on (07) 4750 0868 or email [v.bonanno@gbmpa.gov.au](mailto:v.bonanno@gbmpa.gov.au) Otherwise, speak with one of the GBRMPA officers next time they visit your community.

## SEA SPY



Chicka Turner

In November 2003, Chicka Turner was invited on a trip as part of the Giru Dala Council of Elders Turtle Research Project. So far, the project has involved catching and tagging over 155 turtles in Upstart Bay, Abbot Point and Edgumbe Bay near Bowen.



Jim Gaston and Chicka Turner

## Standard Mooring Buoys

The GBRMPA is committed to the introduction of standard mooring buoys in the Marine Park. Permitted mooring owners will be advised directly of the standards required for mooring buoys, the unique reference number assigned to each of their moorings and will be encouraged to install standard mooring buoys at the earliest opportunity.



The standards allow for a range of moorings including public moorings

For further information please contact Carol Honchin on (07) 4750 0715 or email [c.honchin@gbmpa.gov.au](mailto:c.honchin@gbmpa.gov.au)

## Vessel Sourced Sewage

New laws relating to vessel sourced sewage in Queensland waters came into effect on 1 January 2004. From the 1 January 2004, vessels owners can no longer discharge sewage in certain areas such as marinas, boat harbours and parts of State Marine Parks. By 1 July 2004, boaters will not be able to discharge untreated sewage in rivers, creeks and smooth waters. The GBRMPA will apply similar rules from 1 January 2005.

Further information can be located at [www.transport.qld.gov.au/maritime](http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/maritime)



A special thanks to the Lockhart River Art Gang for letting us use their artwork in the *Sea Country Newsletter*.

## SOMETHING TO SAY ?

We welcome your contributions to *Sea Country* – talk or write to **Holly Savage** at the **Indigenous Policy and Liaison Unit**, PO Box 1379, Townsville Qld 4810 Phone (07) 4750 0716

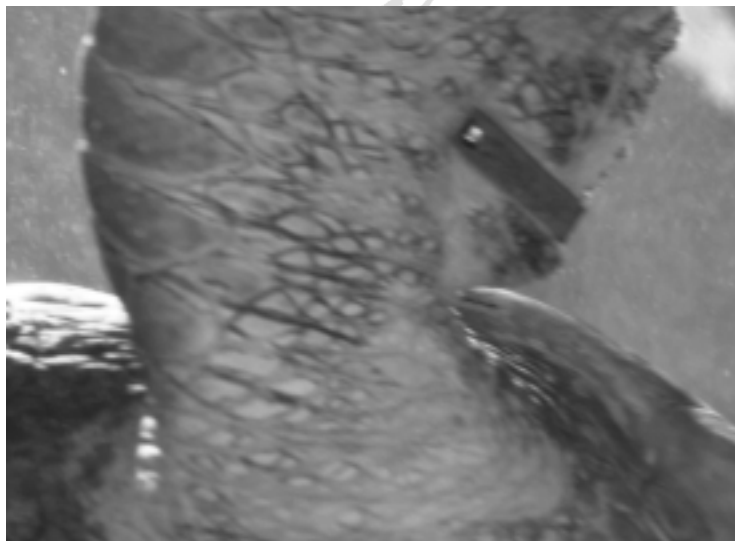
These articles are the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of GBRMPA

# Turtle Tags

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) staff and volunteers tag turtles in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area to study their migration patterns and various aspects of their life cycle. Like giving a person a name, a tag identifies the individual turtle.

Individual turtles are tagged using numbered titanium tags. These tags are self-piercing, self-locking and are applied to the rear edge of either or both front flippers, using specifically designed tag applicators.

Tags are attached through the scale closest to the turtle's body using the pliers



A turtle with a tag attached to its flipper

If you find a sea turtle with a tag clamped on its flipper, write down:

the number stamped on the tag;

when, how and where the turtle was seen or caught;

what happened to the turtle;

your name and address; and

your phone number if you would like a QPWS ranger to talk to you more about sea turtles.

Don't remove the tag from the turtle unless it has died!

Send this information (with the tag if recovered from a dead turtle) to:

Queensland Turtle Research  
Environmental Protection Agency  
PO Box 155  
Brisbane Albert Street Qld 4002

Please report all sightings of any sick, injured or dead sea turtles by calling the Marine Wildlife Hotline on 1300 360 898 at any time.



Titanium tags and specially designed pliers



The specially designed pliers