

### 3. JURISDICTIONS AND BOUNDARIES IN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

The Great Barrier Reef extends offshore from the tip of Cape York Peninsula to just north of Bundaberg and is composed of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, the Great Barrier Reef Region and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area encompasses all land and seas within the proclaimed World Heritage Area. The GBR Region encompasses all Commonwealth-owned lands and seas in the area, except land above low water mark on Queensland-owned islands. The Marine Park covers nearly all the Great Barrier Reef Region except for various inshore areas precluded when the Marine Park was first declared. The Commonwealth and Queensland Governments are negotiating to incorporate these excluded areas within the Marine Park. In total, over 20 State and Commonwealth agencies have some interest in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (Lucas et al. 1997).

Marine turtles provide a classic example of the complexities associated with management in the Marine Park because throughout their life cycle, they cross many jurisdictional boundaries. Kenchington (1990) described the complexities of managing turtle populations in the Marine Park. They *'hatch from nests on land under Queensland jurisdiction, move to the sea across the intertidal areas under state jurisdiction, cross the low water mark to enter Commonwealth jurisdiction, and then move on to feed and grow for years in international waters. Eventually they return to the Great Barrier Reef to mate in areas under Commonwealth jurisdiction and for females to lay eggs on Queensland territory'*.

All marine turtles must come ashore to lay eggs; they often nest on islands and cays in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Of the approximate 600 continental islands and 300 coral cays in the World Heritage Area (Lucas et al. 1997), fewer than 50 (less than 10%) are owned or leased by the Commonwealth. The remainder is State of Queensland lands (often as National Parks), or owned privately. Although many of the Commonwealth-owned or leased islands provide beaches for low density nesting by marine turtles, none are critical key nesting sites for the turtle populations in the World Heritage Area. Nevertheless, management strategies are required for these sites. Actions taken at these sites should complement the conservation requirements of the turtle populations in the Marine Park.