

# Great Barrier Reef Tourism

## A Review of Visitor Use

Sally M. Driml

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main aim of this report is to present information on tourism to the Great Barrier Reef. The report focuses on the three major modes of tourism in the Great Barrier Reef, these are: tourism on commercial passenger vessels, island resort tourism and recreational use of private boats.

Information on tourism in Australia, Queensland and mainland North Queensland adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef is included in order to place Great Barrier Reef tourism in context.

Data show that tourism in Australia both from international and domestic sources is increasing. International arrivals grew by 12.5 percent from 1985 to 1986 while domestic tourism measured by visitor nights grew by 3 percent in the same year. (Section 2).

The Great Barrier Reef and adjacent mainland attracted around 182 700 international visitors and 2 290 000 domestic trips in 1985. This was 16 percent of international visitors to Australia and 4 percent of Australian domestic trips. (Section 2)

There were around 275 commercial passenger vessels operating in the Great Barrier Reef Region in 1984/85. These vessels carry passengers for 1.2 million visitor days per annum. Expenditure by charter boat passengers was \$35 million in 1984/85. (Section 4)

Island resorts catered for around 151 000 visitors staying for 790 000 visitor nights in 1984/85. Tourists spent around \$84 million in that year. (Section 5)

Private motor boats provide around 690 000 visitor days access to the reef. Boat owners spent approximately \$68 million per annum on recreational boating in the Great Barrier Reef Region in 1984/85. (Section 6)

The total expenditure by tourists visiting the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and islands was around \$187 million in 1984/85. Tourism expenditure is increasing in real terms by about 10 percent each year. (Section 3)

Keywords: Tourism, Great Barrier Reef, island resorts, charter boats, private boats.

Please address all comments and requests for copies to:

The Executive Officer

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

PO Box 1379, TOWNSVILLE, AUSTRALIA, QLD, 4810