

Reef Guardian Council Program



Summary

The Reef Guardian Council Program was developed to achieve better environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef through local governments and communities. The Climate Change Module identifies a suite of best practice climate change adaptation and mitigation activities local government and their communities can take to help protect the Great Barrier Reef.

Background

The Reef Guardian Council Climate Change Module is an independent assessment of current and potential local government actions that can build community and local government capacity to maintain resilience in coastal and marine areas from climate change impacts.

The adaptation and mitigation activities identified in the module will raise awareness of climate change and progress a coordinated environmental planning and adaptive management approach for councils and their communities to address climate change in the Great Barrier Reef.

Local governments are viewed as critical partners for the delivery of federal priorities at a local level. By implementing the identified activities, local government programs can improve environmental practices in a consistent way, maximising the return on public investment.

Objectives

- The module benchmarks and incorporates best practice adaptation and mitigation activities into the Reef Guardian Council program. The partnership between the GBRMPA, councils and regional organisations improves local government and community capacity to effectively incorporate climate change into natural resource management.
- Mitigation activities decrease greenhouse gas emissions within the Great Barrier Reef catchment.

Outputs

- *The Best Practice Benchmark Report for Local Government* is a literature review that lists local government adaptation and mitigation activities with appropriate justification for recognition under the Reef Guardian Council Program.

Project name: Reef Guardian Council CC module
Project number: 3.2A.414.7.08
Objective: help local councils to tackle climate change issues
Year: 2008—2009



- The Workshop Report documents the outcomes of workshops and video conferences held with Reef Guardian Councils.
- The Climate Change Module integrates information from the Benchmark Report and the Workshop Report and other related information into the existing Reef Guardian framework (Box 1 summarises priority actions in the module).

Box 1: Climate Change Module Priority Actions

Organisational Planning & Policy:

Vulnerability Assessment
Strategic Land Management
Planning Scheme
Policy - climate change strategy
Systems improvement
Capacity building

Built environment:

Risk & Disaster Management
Buildings design
Public places

Community:

Education and awareness raising
Behaviour change
Biodiversity conservation policies

Land Management:

On ground actions
Adopt a cause

Waste & Water management:

Water demand management
Reviewing waste water systems
Planning Scheme Water infrastructure
Stormwater management
Community education & awareness raising

Outcomes

This project has achieved a number of positive outcomes. The produced module identifies best practice climate change activities available to local governments. The program has led to a more coordinated environmental planning and management approach to address climate change in the Great Barrier Reef. Raised awareness of climate change impacts within local communities has been an additional outcome. Through assisting Great Barrier Reef councils and communities in affecting change through local adaptation and mitigation, Reef resilience will be improved.

Way forward

The GBRMPA will continue to work with local governments and their communities providing guidance on the implementation of Climate Change Module activities. Delivery of the module will assist the expansion of the Reef Guardian Council Program throughout the Great Barrier Reef catchment area.

Implementation of Climate Change Module activities will continue to provide opportunities for the GBRMPA, Reef Guardian Councils and communities to collaborate on synergistic projects with partners such as the Local Government Association of Queensland, Regional Councils of Queensland and Natural Resource Management bodies.



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