



Australian Government



Queensland Government

Community groups helping protect the Great Barrier Reef

What is the Reef 2050 Plan?

The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) is Australia's overarching long-term strategy for protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef to support its health and resilience.

The Plan guides governments, key sectors, and individuals on actions they can take to improve the Reef's future.

Vision - The Great Barrier Reef is sustained as a living natural and cultural wonder of the world

Developed by the Australian and Queensland governments in 2015 in collaboration with partners, the Plan was updated in late 2021. Access the Plan [here](#).

The Australian and Queensland governments and Reef 2050 partners are investing substantially to deliver actions in the Plan, with the governments providing \$4 billion from 2014-15 to 2029-30, including more than \$1.68 billion to improve Reef water quality.

What does the Reef 2050 Plan mean for community groups?

Community groups are key to delivering the Reef 2050 Plan, taking practical action, and educating others to support a healthy Reef. The updated Reef 2050 Plan includes strategic actions and goals that guide the work that needs to be done. Community groups contribute under the Plan in many ways. For example:

- ▶ **Limiting the impact of climate change** – delivering education and practical initiatives to help communities and sectors reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change.
- ▶ **Reducing the impact from land-based activities** – undertaking revegetation, erosion control and pest and weed management activities to improve water quality entering the Reef.
- ▶ **Reducing the impact of water-based activities** – undertaking stewardship actions such as marine debris clean ups and educational initiatives to promote sustainable recreational fishing practices.
- ▶ **Protecting and restoring the Reef** – volunteering for environmental projects to protect sensitive shoreline ecosystems and cultural sites.
- ▶ **Collaboration and partnership** – using local networks to promote and encourage understanding of the Reef and how people can help build its resilience.
- ▶ **Science and monitoring** – conducting local environmental monitoring and contributing to citizen science.



Community action planning empowers community networks to protect the Reef

The Community Action Plan (CAP) Program is a pilot aiming to improve the engagement of the broader community in the protection of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The CAPs use a collaborative planning approach to connect community aspirations with regional and reef-wide priorities by establishing shared goals for community Reef protection, designing better ways to work together, identifying critical projects, and measuring and celebrating community outcomes.

In 2020-2021, community partners, Traditional Owners, scientists and Reef managers from Cape York to Burnett Mary were engaged to create a Community Action Plan for their areas. Six CAPs have been developed focusing on citizen science programs and on-ground activities in coastal, estuarine and marine areas. The program network is now working to translate plans into action with the implementation of projects ranging from local climate action to habitat rehabilitation and protecting cultural values.

For example, the Magnetic Island Community Development Association (MICDA) led the development of the Magnetic Island Reef Community Action Plan. This local scale CAP builds the leadership capacity of Magnetic Island residents through the collaborative design and implementation of a range of accelerated, targeted actions to reduce local and climatic impacts on the Reef.

Meanwhile the Cape York Natural Resource Management led the development of the Cape York Reef Community Action Plan in partnership with South Cape York Catchments. Engagements focused in the Bloomfield, Cooktown and Hopevale regions provided an opportunity to combine the voices of Traditional Owners, community members and youth, and brought together different views on actions to promote Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area resilience.

The CAP Program is funded by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation with Community Action Plan Leaders, Cape York NRM, Dry Tropics Partnership for Healthy Waters, Reef Ecologic, Magnetic Island Community Development Association, Reef Catchments, and Burnett Catchment Care Association .

Images top to bottom:

Cigarette butt source reduction project. © Credit Reef Catchments Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers sea bird monitoring. © The State of Queensland

Eco Ambassadors marine debris removal program.

© Eco Barge Clean Seas Inc.





Cleaning up Reef beaches and waterways

ReefClean, a marine debris program coordinated by the Tangaroa Blue Foundation, involves community volunteers cleaning up targeted beaches and waterways within Reef catchments and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. As of 30 September 2021, the ReefClean project had delivered 689 events with 6,472 volunteers removing over 62.4 tonnes of debris from beaches and waterways.

One of the main events is the annual Great Barrier Reef Clean-up, with community events ranging from multi-day clean-ups in the Torres Strait and the remote shores of Hinchinbrook Island, to day-long events targeting local beaches across Queensland’s eastern coast.

Data generated by community efforts can be used to calculate and estimate different aspects of marine debris including abundance, prevalence of different items and possible sources. This data is used to inform source reduction planning at a local level and enable the monitoring of government policies and initiatives at regional and higher levels.

ReefClean is funded by the Australian Government’s Reef Trust. Tangaroa Blue Foundation has partnered with several organisations to achieve success: Reef Check Australia, Capricornia Catchments, Eco Barge Clean Seas, OceanWatch Australia, South Cape York Catchments, AUSMAP, and Think Spatial.



Chilli Beach thong collection © Tangaroa Blue Foundation

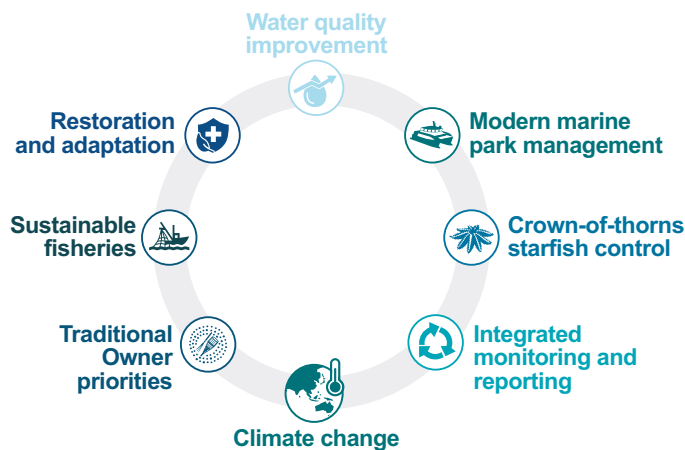
What’s next?

The Australian and Queensland governments will continue to work collaboratively with Reef 2050 Plan partners to implement the updated Reef 2050 Plan.

Through an increasing focus on partnerships and innovative financing, there are opportunities to boost and diversify investment for Reef protection and management.

There are eight priority areas for investment under the Reef 2050 Plan:

Investment priorities



Governments, industry, land managers, scientists, Traditional Owners and the community all have a role to play in helping to protect and sustain the Reef.

Get on board

Protecting and caring for the Reef is a collective effort. Dive into the Reef 2050 Plan to learn more about how we are working together to help support the Great Barrier Reef.

