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# Reef 2050 Plan

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## INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL – COMMUNIQUÉ 19 NOVEMBER 2021

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The twenty-first meeting of the Reef 2050 Plan Independent Expert Panel was held on 19 November 2021 by videoconference.

The Panel reiterated concerns raised at its last meeting about delays in releasing the updated Reef 2050 Plan. The Panel unanimously agreed that it should be released immediately as a final version, with the condition that it can be amended as more information or evidence becomes available.

The Panel received an update on World Heritage Committee matters, including Australia's proposed amendments to the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage, and work underway to prepare the State Party Report on the State of Conservation of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The Panel noted that Minister Ley has invited a joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Reef, but that timing of the visit is still to be confirmed.

The Panel received an update from the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on the *Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027* and discussed the impacts of commercial and recreational fishing activities on species and ecosystems in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

The Panel received an update on recent meetings of the Reef Water Quality Independent Science Panel (ISP). Members discussed the process and timeframes for the development of the 2022 Scientific Consensus Statement and the review of Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan land management target for agricultural practice adoption. The Panel provided advice on the Scientific Consensus Statement 'draft list of questions for consultation'.

The Panel continued its discussions on how changes in weather, sea temperature and level, cloud cover and ocean currents will affect Reef water quality (and the Reef more generally) as the planet warms, and identified some key themes and priorities for future discourse.

The Panel received a presentation on the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Implementation Plan Project, which will identify a pathway forward for Traditional Owner implementation of the Reef 2050 Plan.

The Panel endorsed updates to its governance documents, including the Panel's Terms of Reference and Operating Protocols.

The next meeting of the Panel is proposed for February/March 2022.

## Panel members

**Professor Ian Chubb AC FAA FTSE FACE  
FRSN (Chair)**

Former Australian Chief Scientist

**Dr Andrew Ash**

Research Consultant and Advisor  
AJ Ash and Associates

**Dr Richard Brinkman**

Research Program Director  
Sustainable Coastal Ecosystems and Industries  
in Tropical Australia, Australian Institute of  
Marine Science

**Professor Damien Burrows**

Director of TropWATER  
James Cook University

**Dr Romy Greiner**

Environmental Economist  
Director, River Consulting

**Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg**

Professor of Marine Studies  
Deputy Director of the Australian Research  
Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef  
Studies  
University of Queensland

**Professor Terry Hughes**

The Australian Research Council Centre of  
Excellence for Coral Reef Studies  
James Cook University

**Professor Catherine Lovelock**

School of Biological Sciences  
The University of Queensland

**Professor Helene Marsh AO FAA FTSE**

Emeritus Professor  
James Cook University

**Dr Russell Reichelt AO FTSE**

Environmental science and sustainable use

**Dr Britta Schaffelke**

Research Program Director  
Australian Institute of Marine Science

**Adjunct Associate Professor Stephan  
Schnierer**

Southern Cross University  
University of Canberra

**Ms Jane Waterhouse**

Senior Partner, C2O Consulting  
Senior Research Officer, TropWATER, James  
Cook University

**Dr Stuart Whitten**

Institutional and Environmental Economist  
CSIRO Land and Water

**Professor Kerrie Wilson**

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\* Apologies