



AUSTRALIA: SUPPORTING THE HEALTH AND RESILIENCE OF THE OCEAN

AUSTRALIA IS ACCELERATING ACTION TO PROTECT OUR UNIQUE OCEAN ENVIRONMENT AND MARINE SPECIES

The ocean shapes our climate and weather, and is essential to our future wellbeing. It provides food for half the world's population, and is an economic powerhouse that supports entire industries, generates millions of jobs, and helps to drive the global economy.

Australia has a deep connection to the ocean. It is an integral part of our lifestyle, with 85 per cent of our population living within 50 kilometres of the coast.

We have the world's third largest maritime jurisdiction stretching from the freezing waters in the Antarctic to our south, to the tropics in our north, and to the vast Pacific and Indian oceans to our east and west.

The health of the ocean is under growing pressure from overfishing, plastic pollution and other pollutants, coastal development, and the impacts of climate change – resulting in habitat and biodiversity loss.

Australia recognises the important link between the climate and the ocean and is committed to taking more ambitious action on climate change. We have a new 2030 target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels, putting us on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Maintaining a healthy ocean supports climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts – providing major opportunities for global action.



A WORLD LEADER FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE OCEAN



**AUSTRALIA
COMMITTED TO
SUSTAINABLY
MANAGE**

100%
OF THE OCEAN AREA
WITHIN OUR NATIONAL
WATERS BY 2025

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Strong international partnerships to protect and conserve ocean ecosystems are crucial to effective global action on climate change.

Australia is contributing to growing international action to build a sustainable blue economy and strengthen protection of our marine environments.

- » As a member of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, Australia has committed to **sustainably manage 100 per cent of the ocean area** within our national waters by 2025.
- » We support **strong action to protect our precious marine areas**, including through negotiations for the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction treaty.
- » Australia joined the call for a **global agreement to end plastic pollution** that was recently agreed at the UN Environment Assembly.
- » We support and are advancing **nature-based solutions** in the ocean and on land through initiatives such as the International Partnership for Blue Carbon, the Asia-Pacific Rainforest Partnership, and our commitment to the Global Ocean Alliance. We support nature-based climate action undertaken with environmental integrity.

- » As a signatory of the Clydebank Declaration to establish green shipping corridors, announced at COP26 in November 2021, Australia is committed to working towards establishing **practical zero-emission maritime routes**.

Australia is a global leader in ocean protection

- » Australia supports a global target to protect at least 30 per cent of the global ocean by 2030 and has committed to this through the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People and the Global Ocean Alliance.
- » Australia has **increased our marine park coverage to 45 per cent of our waters**.
- » In March 2022, Australia announced the establishment of two new marine protected areas – the Christmas Island Marine Park and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Marine Park.



INVESTING IN OCEAN ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE IN AUSTRALIA



\$4.4b

TO PROTECT THE GREAT BARRIER REEF THROUGH 2030

AUSTRALIAN AND QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENTS' INVESTMENT



INCREASED MARINE PARK COVERAGE TO 45% OF OUR WATERS

Investing in adaptation and resilience is critical in safeguarding the future of our oceans and anticipating and acting in response to the impacts of climate change.

- » Australia is a leader in sustainable ocean management. Our actions to create a sustainable ocean includes supporting marine park management, restoring blue carbon ecosystems like seagrass and mangroves and supporting marine species conservation to build resilience to climate change and help adapt natural, social and built systems.
- » We are committed to implement the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full, which renews our national commitment to Reconciliation and working in genuine partnership with First Nations people for better outcomes including for conservation of our land and waters.
- » By doubling the number of Indigenous Rangers, Australia recognises the importance of employing Indigenous knowledge and experience to protect and sustainably manage our precious marine environments

Protecting our coral reefs

Coral reefs are vibrant ecosystems that support at least 25 per cent of marine species and underpin the safety, coastal protection, wellbeing, food and economic security of hundreds of millions of people. Australia recognises the importance of protecting and building the health and resilience of our coral reefs in the face of climate change.

- » We are **taking action to build resilience of Australia's iconic Great Barrier Reef** with our \$1.2 billion commitment to protect and restore the Reef. This brings the Australian and Queensland Governments' total investment in the Reef to \$4.4 billion through to 2030.
- » We are **sharing our knowledge and expertise in coral reef science and management**, including through the International Coral Reef Initiative of which Australia is a founding member.



A KEY REGIONAL PARTNER

WORKING ACROSS THE REGION TO:



SECURE AND SUSTAINABLY
MANAGE FISHERIES

.....



SUPPORT CLIMATE
AND OCEAN SCIENCE
IN THE PACIFIC

.....



SUPPORT INNOVATIVE
TECHNOLOGY FOR
BUILDING CORAL REEF
RESILIENCE

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A healthy ocean is paramount for the Pacific

The ocean is central to our identity as a Pacific nation – it is a crucial source of food security and nutrition, it drives economies, provides us with natural resources, and it is a source of spiritual and cultural connections and human wellbeing.

As a member of the Pacific island family, Australia recognises the importance of adaptation and resilience to climate-induced events and is committed to maintaining a secure, prosperous and sustainable Blue Pacific.

» We are working in partnership across the region to **secure and sustainably manage fisheries**, take action to reduce ocean plastics, protect coral reefs and biodiversity, and support regional ocean governance.

- » We have provided decades-long **support for climate and ocean science** in the Pacific, including working together with Pacific meteorological services to monitor, analyse and communicate climate and ocean information.
- » We are **supporting innovative technology** in the Pacific to build capacity and strengthen information for building coral reef resilience. The Australian Institute of Marine Science, with support from the Australian aid program, is delivering the **ReefCloud platform** – an open-access, cloud-based platform that uses machine learning and artificial intelligence to analyse photographs of coral reefs to inform timely management action.



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Case study

Addressing marine pollution in the Pacific

Marine pollution is a global issue that negatively affects the environment, people, and coastal economies around the world.

Over 1,200 shipwrecks have been identified in the Pacific, a significant proportion from World War II. Each deteriorating wreck carries the risk of an oil spill as the wrecks age and corrode, posing significant threats to marine ecosystems and local communities.

Australia is proud to be supporting the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the not-for-profit Major Projects Foundation on an important project

to address oil spill risk from World War II wrecks in Chuuk Lagoon, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

The impact of oil spills constitutes a significant threat to Pacific Island countries, and this vital work will protect marine ecosystems and livelihoods. Working closely with the Governments of FSM and Japan, this project will enhance existing efforts to address this risk by reducing the likelihood and impacts of oil spills, developing capacity to manage the threat from these wrecks, and enhancing capability for contingency responses.



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Case study

Expanding Indigenous Protected Areas

Australia is engaging with Traditional Owners in expanding its world-leading network of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) to include additional Sea Country. The Australian Government is supporting this expansion, which will strengthen the conservation of marine biodiversity and provide a range of cultural, social and economic benefits for Indigenous communities.

Grant funding under this commitment is allowing for Indigenous-led consultation on the establishment of new Sea Country IPAs, as well as on-ground and on-sea activities such as turtle surveys, beach clean-ups, coastal patrols, and cultural site protection. Such engagement and co-governance with Traditional Owners are guiding principles of Australia's efforts to preserve our ocean for future generations.



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