



Reef 2050 Plan

Reef 2050 Advisory Committee - Communique 26 May 2020

The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee (RAC) held its sixteenth meeting today, by videoconference, chaired by the Honourable Penelope Wensley AC. The RAC is one of two advisory bodies established in 2015 to facilitate engagement with industry and the broader community on the implementation and review of the Reef 2050 Plan and to provide strategic advice to the Australian and Queensland governments on reef policy matters.

The Reef 2050 Plan is the overarching framework for protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef from 2015 to 2050. It is to be reviewed at five yearly intervals. Following completion of a mid-term review in 2018, the first comprehensive review of the Plan is due in 2020. Work on this has been a major focus of the RAC's work since July 2018. The 26 May RAC meeting was scheduled to enable RAC members to discuss and provide stakeholder advice on a full draft of the revised Plan, before its release for public consultation. However, the disruption of government business caused by the COVID-19 pandemic meant the draft Plan could not be made available to the Committee. Instead, the Committee received a brief update on the status of the review and a summary of how the advice of the Reef 2050 Advisory bodies has been incorporated to date.

The Committee also received updates on:

- Reef health and the 2020 mass bleaching event
- World Heritage Committee processes, including progress on the World Heritage climate change policy
- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Policy and Planning Roadmap
- Review of Reef 2050 governance and the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement
- Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP)
- Reef 2050 Communications Network.

RAC comment was invited on the draft annual work plan 2020-2021 of the Reef Trust-Great Barrier Reef Foundation Partnership. Feedback focused on the importance of partnerships across various sectors, noting the positive progress in developing partnerships with Traditional Owners and the opportunity to strengthen partnerships with the tourism sector. RAC members also commented on the importance of innovation, including through the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program and in crown-of-thorns starfish control.

RAC members were also invited to comment on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and of the measures to deal with it, on their sectors and organisations, and the implications for Reef 2050 Plan delivery. All reported adverse impacts, with the tourism sector worst affected. The extent to which this could affect Reef 2050 Plan implementation is not yet clear.



RAC Members are: The Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO), the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA), Traditional Owner groups in the GBR, Queensland Resources Council,(QRC) Queensland Farmers Federation(QFF), AgForce, CANEGROWERS, Natural Resource Management Regions Queensland, Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), the Australian Committee of the International Union of the Conservation of Nature (AIUCN), the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), CAREFISH, CSIRO, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF), Local Marine Advisory Committees, Queensland Conservation Council (QCC), Queensland Ports Association and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The commercial fishing sector was not represented at the meeting.