



# Reef 2050 Plan

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## INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL – COMMUNIQUÉ 13 NOVEMBER 2019

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The sixteenth meeting of the Reef 2050 Plan Independent Expert Panel was held on 13 November 2019 in Brisbane.

The Panel discussed aspects of reef science, including water quality science and the scientific consensus statement, and the metrics and definitions used to determine coral cover. The Panel emphasised the importance of communicating science in simple language and providing context and descriptions of methods used where possible. The Panel agreed to convene a working group to review and synthesise recent reports on Reef science—and coral cover in particular—and to produce a short information document.

The Panel discussed its current membership vacancies and the skills and expertise to be considered for new appointments to the Panel.

The Panel received a presentation on the Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS) and discussed the observations of ocean currents, temperatures, chemistry and salinity in the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea.

The Panel provided strategic advice on the 2020 Review of the Reef 2050 Plan, including on the draft objectives and targets designed to measure ecosystem functions and services under the revised Reef 2050 Plan. They also reviewed the outcomes of the joint Plan review workshop, held with the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee in October.

The Panel endorsed the proposed approach to future Reef Trust investment, noting final decisions on investments will be made by the Minister for the Environment.

The Panel received updates on:

- progress on the *State Party Report on the State of Conservation of the Great Barrier Reef*, due to the World Heritage Committee on 1 December 2019
- progress on implementation of Reef 2050 actions.

The next meeting of the Panel is proposed for March 2020.

## **Panel members**

### **Professor Ian Chubb (Chair)**

Australia's former Chief Scientist

### **Dr Andrew Ash**

Research Consultant and Advisor

AJ Ash and Associates

### **Professor Damien Burrows**

Director of TropWATER

James Cook University

### **Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg**

Director of the Global Change Institute and Professor of Marine Science

The University of Queensland

### **Professor Terry Hughes\***

Director of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies

James Cook University

### **Professor Helene Marsh**

Emeritus Professor

James Cook University

### **Dr Russell Reichelt**

Environmental science and sustainable use

### **Adjunct Associate Professor Stephan Schnierer**

Southern Cross University

### **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\***

\*Apologies