



Reef 2050 Plan

INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL – COMMUNIQUÉ 14 FEBRUARY 2018

The tenth meeting of the Reef 2050 Plan Independent Expert Panel was held today in Brisbane.

The Panel agreed that it would produce a paper that provides a description of what is meant by a resilient Reef and ecosystem resilience.

The Panel discussed and provided feedback on the draft revised Reef 2050 Plan. The Panel understands that because of human induced changes to the Reef and its environment, the Reef of the future will be different from the Reef of the present and the past. The Panel agreed that transformational change to management and policy is necessary to secure the future of the Reef; the time has passed for relying only on incremental change.

Because of the compelling evidence of the impact of climate change on the Reef, the Panel reiterates its previous [Advice on coral bleaching and climate change](#) and [Advice on responding to mass coral bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef](#). It is essential that the narrative in relation to these matters in the mid-term review be strong.

The Panel agreed that the mid-term review should lay the foundations for addressing all these issues in the 2020 review.

The Panel discussed and provided feedback on the draft Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017-2022. The Panel commended the progress in developing the revised Water Quality Improvement Plan, in particular incorporating human dimensions and developing quantitative targets. The Panel advised that the Plan should lay the foundations for future innovations and the step change required to meet the revised catchment targets. The Panel advised the Plan should further acknowledge the climate challenges that impact land management and where there is uncertainty in the current knowledge base.

The Panel received a presentation and provided positive feedback on a project underway to support increased Traditional Owner involvement in implementing the Reef 2050 Plan.

The Panel endorsed the proposed process for the development of a new phase of Reef Trust investment to improve Reef water quality and boost progress towards high priority draft Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017-2022 targets.

The Panel is scheduled to next meet on 25 July 2018.



Panel members

Professor Ian Chubb AC (Chair)

Australia's former Chief Scientist.

Dr Eva Abal

Adviser – Strategic Partnerships and Projects, International Water Centre.
Adjunct Associate Professor, Advanced Water Management Centre, UQ.

Dr Andrew Ash

Chief Research Scientist.
CSIRO Agriculture.

Professor Damien Burrows

Director of TropWATER.
James Cook University.

Professor Bill Dennison

Professor of Marine Science and Vice President for Science Applications.
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science.

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

Dean of Graduate Research Studies and Professor of Environmental Science.
James Cook University.

Dr Russell Reichelt

Chairman and Chief Executive.
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

Dr Britta Schaffelke

Research Program Leader.
A Healthy and Resilient Great Barrier Reef, Australian Institute of Marine Science.

Adjunct Associate Professor Stephan Schnierer

Southern Cross University.

Adjunct Professor Natalie Stoeckl

College of Business, Law & Governance.
James Cook 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.

* Apologies, Wednesday 14th February 2018.