



Reef 2050 Plan

INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL – COMMUNIQUÉ 28 MARCH 2017

The sixth meeting of the Reef 2050 Plan Independent Expert Panel was held today in Brisbane, chaired by Professor Ian Chubb AC, former Chief Scientist of Australia.

The Panel acknowledged Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie and the devastating impact it is having on the Queensland community today. The Panel wished safety to all in the path of the cyclone and in the clean-up efforts over the next few weeks and months.

Several members of the Panel were unable to travel from their homes and families in Townsville as Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie was descending on Queensland. As such, the Panel postponed a workshop discussion on the implications of bleaching events on the Reef 2050 Plan until April/May.

The workshop will be critical to develop advice to the Ministerial Forum on how to respond to coral bleaching.

The Panel received a number of briefings and updates on ongoing work and progress relating to the implementation of the Reef 2050 Plan including on:

- The ongoing progress in designing the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program and opportunities for Panel members to contribute to the program design
- The review of the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan
- The work of the Independent Science Panel to update the Scientific Consensus Statement and to develop load reduction targets for the 35 basins in the Great Barrier Reef catchment
- The design of Phase Six of Reef Trust investments.

The Panel expressed their appreciation for the presentations and briefings provided. The Panel agreed to meet again in late April or early May 2017 for a workshop dedicated to the implications of bleaching events on the Reef 2050 Plan; to evaluate current actions and strategic priorities to respond to the issues facing the Reef.

Following that workshop, the Chair of the Independent Expert Panel will report to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum in July and the Panel is scheduled to meet twice more in 2017, in August and October.



Panel members

Professor Ian Chubb AC (Chair)

Australia's former Chief Scientist.

Associate Professor Eva Abal

Program Director of the Global Change Institute's Sustainable Water Program.
Chief Scientific Officer of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

Dr Andrew Ash

Chief Research Scientist.
CSIRO Agriculture.

Professor Mike Bell

Chair of Tropical Agronomy.
University of Queensland.

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.

Dr Stefan Hajkowicz*

Natural resource policy and economic analyst.
CSIRO's Sustainable Regional Development.

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.

Dr Roger Shaw

Independent consultant.
Chair of Reef Water Quality Protection Plan Independent Science Panel.

Professor Natalie Stoeckl

College of Business, Law & Governance.
James Cook University.

* Apologies, Tuesday 28th March 2017.