



Reef 2050 Plan

INDEPENDENT EXPERT PANEL – COMMUNIQUÉ 29 OCTOBER 2015

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

The panel had a full agenda, discussing a range of topics including implementation of Reef 2050 Plan actions, development of whole-of-government reef policies, proposed projects for Reef Trust investment and the work to date by the *Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce*.

The panel discussed and provided advice on priority Reef 2050 Plan actions and endorsed the process used to categorise actions as immediate (to begin by December 2016), medium-term (to begin by June 2018) and future (to begin by June 2020) priorities. Final results of the prioritisation process will be presented to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum in December 2015. Results will also inform the development of a Reef 2050 Plan investment framework in 2016. The panel noted that whilst additional resources are likely to be required, the magnitude of investment required has not been calculated and is not a simple figure to estimate at this point.

The panel provided advice on proposed projects under Phase 3 of the Reef Trust targeted at improving water quality through supporting cane farmers to move beyond best practice, improving grazing land management and maintaining water quality improvement momentum in Reef catchment grains, dairy and horticulture industries. The panel noted progress made to identify a range of funding approaches to deliver the Reef 2050 Plan and Reef Trust outcomes, and advised on project ideas and high-level project themes proposed for inclusion in a Reef Trust investment prospectus. It noted that government investment is expected to build partnerships with private and philanthropic investment.

Panel members reviewed a draft *Reef 2050 Plan - Policy guideline for decision makers* focussed on how to take account of the Plan when reviewing or developing new agreements, policies, plans, strategies and programs. They also discussed the development of whole-of-government policy and guidance documents for cumulative impacts, net benefits and offsets.

The preliminary draft *Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce Interim Report* was discussed and it was noted that the panel will provide further input on the draft before the final version is provided to the Queensland Government by May 2016.

The panel were provided with a number of updates on progress and activities from key groups including the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan Independent Science Panel, Reef 2050 Advisory Committee and the National Environmental Science Programme Tropical Water Quality Hub. The panel were also provided with an update on the Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, noting the release of the Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program Strategy.

The Chair of the Independent Expert Panel will report to the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum in December 2015. The next Independent Expert Panel will be held in April 2016.



Panel members

Professor Ian Chubb AC (Chair)

Australia's 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.

Dr 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 Geoff Garrett AO*

Queensland Chief Scientist.

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, Thursday 29th October.