



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef Partnerships for the future

The World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef is the planet's greatest living wonder. A vibrant, resilient ecosystem, it supports 64,000 jobs and contributes an estimated \$6.4 billion to our economy.

\$500 million boost for Reef protection

Like reefs all over the world, the Great Barrier Reef is under pressure. A big challenge demands a big response and, during the International Year of the Reef, the Australian Government is investing **more than half a billion dollars** in its health and resilience.

It's the Australian Government's **largest ever single investment** in reef protection, aiming to spark new and innovative responses from private investors and philanthropists. It will expand actions which are proven to boost the health of the Reef.

It will build on the Australian and Queensland governments' **\$2 billion Reef 2050 Plan**. The World Heritage Committee has unanimously praised Australia's Reef 2050 Plan and our management of this global icon.

This is an investment not only in the future of the Great Barrier Reef, but also in **Australian jobs** and **our economy** as the Reef attracts tourists from all over the world.

It reinforces the environmental, economic, social and cultural importance of the Great Barrier Reef and that there is **a role for everyone** in protecting it for generations to come.

Great Barrier Reef Foundation Partnership for the Reef

At the centre of this new investment is a **\$444 million partnership** with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, a lead charity for the Great Barrier Reef. It includes:

- \$201 million to **address water quality** by further improving farming practices, reducing fertiliser use and increasing the uptake of new technology and land management practices.
- \$100 million to **harness the best science** in the implementation of reef restoration and adaptation and to fund innovative projects that support reef resilience.
- \$58 million to expand efforts in the **fight against the coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish**.
- \$45 million to support the other work of the Foundation, in particular increasing **community engagement** in reef protection through activities such as supporting Indigenous traditional knowledge for sea country management, coastal clean-up days and awareness raising activities.
- \$40 million to improve reef health **monitoring and reporting** that tracks progress and informs better management.

Boost for Reef management

Additionally, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Department of the Environment and Energy will be boosted with \$56 million over five years to expand **environmental management** and **compliance operations** and support this significant additional investment in the Reef.



Reef facts



- one of the richest and most diverse natural ecosystems on Earth
- inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981 for its unique natural attributes
- covers an area of 348,000 square kilometres
- consists of more than 1050 islands

It supports:



2500
coral reefs



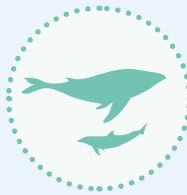
400
species
of coral



1500
species
of fish



Six of the
world's seven
species of
marine turtle



30
species of
whales and
dolphins



240
species of
birds

The Great Barrier Reef's economic contribution to Australia

- **\$6.4 billion** and **64,000** jobs
- Tourism **\$5.7 billion** and **59,000** jobs
- Fishing **\$162 million** and **814** jobs
- Recreation **\$346 million** and **3,281** jobs
- Scientific research **\$182 million** and **970** jobs





Photo: Project Catalyst saw 70 sugarcane growers partner with natural resource management groups, the Australian Government, WWF and the Coca-Cola Foundation to address run-off from farms.

Building resilience

It is no secret the Great Barrier Reef is **under pressure**. Cyclone Debbie, successive bleaching events and the insidious impact of the crown-of-thorns starfish have all taken their toll. But the Reef has proven to be resilient and there are already **signs of recovery** in some areas.

Much is being done, including development of a **ground-breaking blueprint for resilience** which builds on existing management arrangements to protect the Great Barrier Reef. This blueprint, the result of an international Reef summit, outlines a collaborative partnership approach to give the entire Great Barrier Reef ecosystem its best chance of coping with the challenges ahead.

The new investment will help **tackle crown-of-thorns starfish, reduce pollution** into the Reef and **mitigate the impacts** of climate change.

Improving water quality

When water carries increased loads of sediment, nutrients and pesticides from land catchments into the Reef, it damages the Reef and affects its ability to withstand disturbances. Farmers are **rising to the challenge**, with more than one million hectares of grazing land and 75,000 hectares of farmland in Reef catchments now accredited to Best Management Practice Standards.

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation will use **\$201 million** of the new investment to accelerate efforts to **improve land management practices** in Reef catchments.

Work is also being done to **recover gullies and streambanks** and **stop erosion** of sediment in Reef catchments. For example, Cape York Natural Resource Management is partnering with Indigenous land managers to manage significant erosion on grazing land in the Normanby catchment with fencing, revegetation and landscape engineering of gullies as well as training in erosion control.

Tackling crown-of-thorns starfish

Crown-of-thorns starfish are a **coral-eating predator** that in plague proportions can cause huge coral loss, driving coral decline on a scale comparable to cyclones and severe bleaching events. Thanks to technological developments crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks can be better predicted and controlled.

Populations can be reduced by **active culling** to keep large areas of living coral alive. More than 750,000 starfish have been culled so far to maintain high levels of coral cover on 57 high value reefs in the Cairns region.

The new **\$58 million** investment will **expand control of crown-of-thorns starfish**, increasing the protection of coral critical to reef resilience and recovery.

Putting science to work

Already, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, with the Queensland University of Technology and Google, are developing vision-enabled underwater '**RangerBots**' to see and safely inject the starfish autonomously while taking vital coral health and water measurements.

Science and research is at the centre of all our efforts to improve the Reef's resilience and improve water quality. This includes **59 research projects** by the National Environmental Science Program's Tropical Water Hub since 2014.

In January 2018 the Australian Government invested **\$6 million** for the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the CSIRO to scope and design a program of research and development in coral reef restoration.

The new investment of **\$100 million** will boost innovation in **reef restoration and adaptation**.



Photo: Reducing the potential for future crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks and reducing the impacts of current outbreaks through targeted starfish control is one of the most scalable and feasible actions for reducing coral mortality and preventing further declines in system resilience.



Photo: The Raine Island Recovery Project to restore the world's largest nesting ground for endangered green turtles involves the Wuthathi Nation from Eastern Cape York and the Kemer Kemer Meriam Nation (Ugar, Mer, Erub) from the Torres Strait working with government agencies, BHP and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

Meanwhile Reef Blitz gives everyone an opportunity to give the Reef a helping hand, from beach and creek clean ups on land, to coral, reef and seagrass cruises on the water.



Inspiring business support

Private investors and philanthropists have shown they are keen to take up the **opportunities for partnerships** presented under the Reef 2050 Plan and the Australian Government's Reef Trust. For example, the Trust's work with MSF Sugar Ltd on land management practices has seen an initial investment of \$4.5 million almost trebled with a \$12.8 million contribution from the sugar mill owner.

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation has significant experience **leading the collaboration** of business, science, government, philanthropy and community groups who may not otherwise come together for the benefit of the Reef. For example, the new \$14 million Reef Islands Initiative brings together global property company Lendlease, the Australian and Queensland governments and a private philanthropist.

Communities and Traditional Owners protecting the Reef

The Great Barrier Reef region includes 17 councils, covering 300,000 square kilometres and almost **900,000 people**, and Reef communities and Traditional Owners play a crucial role in reef protection.

The **Reef Guardian program** supports the good work schools, communities and industries do to protect the Great Barrier Reef. For example, more than 270 schools, 7,400 teachers and 120,000 students are involved in building reef resilience.

At least **\$22 million** in new funding will boost their engagement including increasing compliance and enforcement **action against poaching** and greater involvement in **sea country management**.

Tracking our progress

Formal **monitoring and reporting** against the priorities in the Reef 2050 Plan is a top priority for the Australian and Queensland governments and includes annual reporting. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority also assesses the Reef's health with a five-yearly Outlook Report.

Visitors can help through monitoring and assessment programs like the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Eye on the Reef. With **\$40 million** in new investment, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation will engage new partners and build on the great work already happening in collecting valuable information about reef health, marine animals and incidents. It will bring to life the Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, including eReefs, to support **better management and public awareness**.

Support for marine park management

There has never been a greater need to increase our field management of the Reef, extending our reach further and wider to **protect reef and island habitats**. For almost 40 years, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in partnership with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has operated the Joint Field Management Program to deliver essential marine park management activities.

The new investment includes **\$43 million** over six years and \$10 million each year beyond to **strengthen the program**, delivering practical conservation, checking for changes on the Reef, responding to incidents, welcoming visitors and upholding compliance across the far reaches of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.



About the Great Barrier Reef Foundation

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation is a **lead charity** for the Great Barrier Reef, funding solutions through science, technology, engineering and action to ensure its long-term conservation. It leads the collaboration of business, science, government and philanthropy to create **enduring strategic partnerships**, having generated around \$80 million from private and philanthropic sources.

From restoring the world's largest green turtle nesting ground, unlocking the complete genetic code for corals and developing the world-first eReefs monitoring and forecasting system, to piloting innovations like an ultra-thin sun shield for the Reef and restoring coral reefs with baby coral larvae (like IVF for coral) – every project funded by the Foundation helps fill gaps in our **Reef knowledge and management**.

About the Reef 2050 Plan

The Reef 2050 Plan is the centrepiece of Australia's efforts to **build the resilience** of the Great Barrier Reef. Delivered jointly by the Australian and Queensland governments, it guides management of the Reef through a **science-based approach** that enables strategies and actions to be adjusted based on the most up-to-date information.

The plan is **implemented in partnership** with Traditional Owners, industry, scientists and the wider community. It is **underpinned by established governance arrangements**, supported by advisory bodies that provide the Australian and Queensland governments with advice on scientific, economic and community matters relating to the Great Barrier Reef.

How can you help?

Together we can help keep this living wonder healthy for Australia and the world. To **see what you can do** or to find out more, visit:

- www.gbrmpa.gov.au
- www.barrierreef.org
- www.environment.gov.au/marine/gbr

