

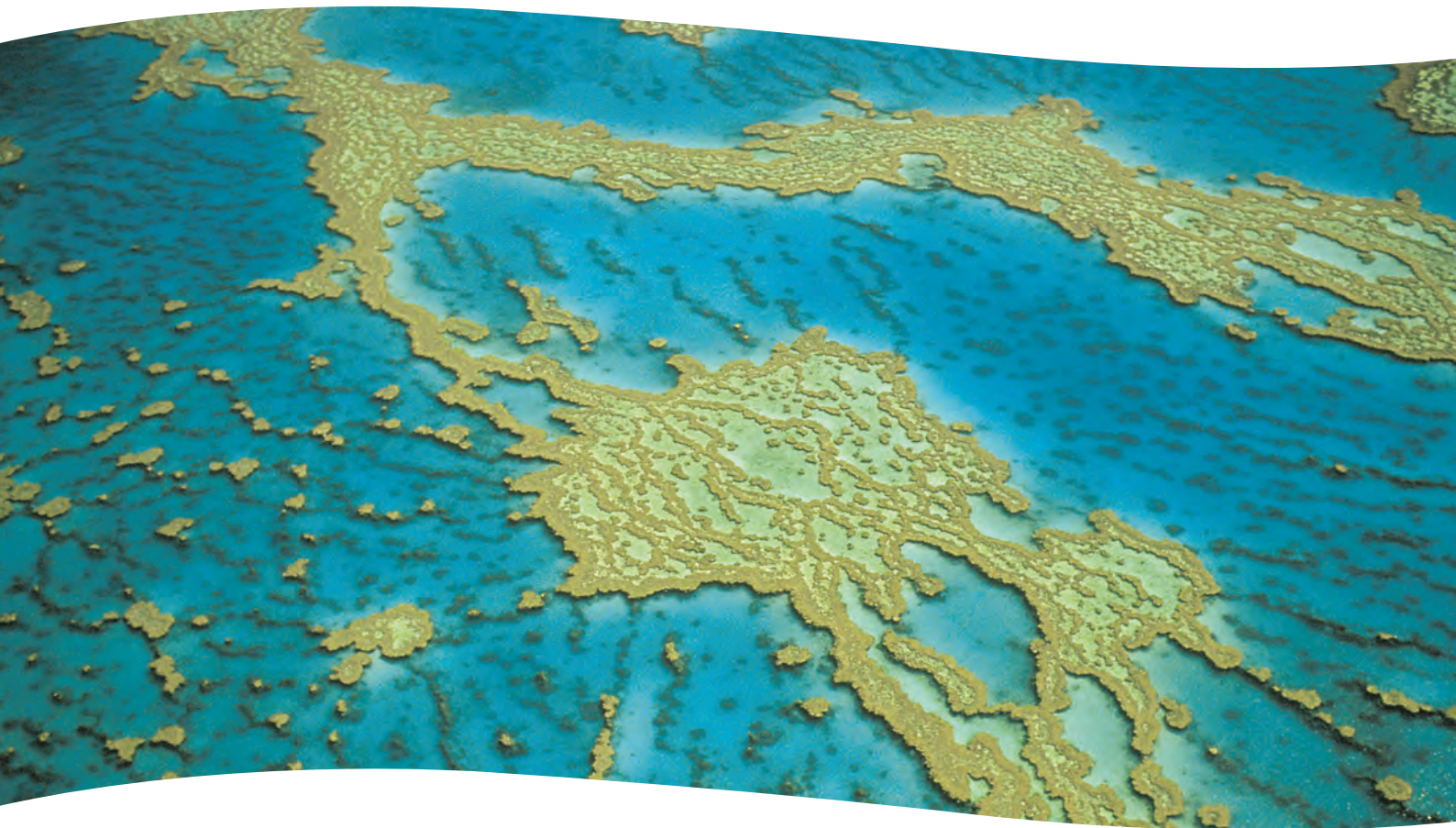


Final Report

National Environmental Science Programme

Traditional Owners and Sea Country in the Southern Great Barrier Reef – Which Way Forward?

Allan Dale, Melissa George, Rosemary Hill and Duane Fraser



Traditional Owners and Sea Country in the Southern Great Barrier Reef – Which Way Forward?

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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AG Australian Government
CSIRO Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CYP	..... Cape York Peninsula
DEH	..... Department of the Environment and Heritage
GBR	..... Great Barrier Reef
GBRMPA	..... Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
IRAC	..... Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee
IPAs	..... Indigenous Protected Areas
ISCSPG	..... Indigenous Sea Country Strategic Policy Group
LG	..... Local Government
LMAC	..... Local Management Advisory Committee
LIMAC	..... Local Indigenous Management Advisory Committee
LTSP	..... Long Term Sustainability Plan
MACC	..... Marine and Coastal Committee
NAILSMA	..... Northern Australia Land and Sea Management Alliance
NESP	..... National Environmental Science Programme
NHT	..... National Heritage Trust
NRM	..... Natural Resource Management
PBC	..... Prescribed Body Corporates
QG	..... Queensland Government
REP	..... Representative Area Program
RRRC	..... Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited
SFWG	..... Sea Forum Working Group
TO	..... Traditional Owner
TSRA	..... Torres Strait Regional Authority
TUMRAs	..... Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements
TWQ	..... Tropical Water Quality (Hub)
UN	..... United Nations
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHC World Heritage Committee

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Co-author contributions: Melissa George of NAILSMA has provided overall project leadership and Duane Fraser has led and facilitated the wide Traditional Owner engagement and discussion that has been undertaken. CSIRO's Rosemary Hill has led project management, contributed to writing the report and helped to facilitate the engagement and analysis approach with respect to the Long Term Sustainability Plan and TWQ Hub Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy. James Cook University's Allan Dale has led the development of this key discussion paper and final project report. Katrina Keith of The Cairns Institute has provided editorial assistance and Jenny McHugh administrative support.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For over 20 years, Traditional Owners (TOs) from across the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) have been coming together to explore and call for a collective approach to achieving their aspirations for ownership, access to, and involvement in the management of sea country. Over these years, people have made real progress in securing improved recognition of their rights and developing local capacities to govern and manage their sea country. Despite these wins, and good engagement by Commonwealth and State governments on occasions, there has been no lasting, continuously improving GBR-wide approach to engaging TOs.

With the future health of the GBR under threat, the current *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050)* recognises the significance of Traditional Owner rights and interests in the management of sea country and the Marine Park. There are considered and significant Indigenous implementation actions embedded right across *Reef 2050*. Implementation, however, lies ahead. Given the long history of Traditional Owner attempts to influence sea country management across the GBR, they consider that, without strong partnerships, there could be a real risk of implementation failure. At this point, the mechanisms for cohesive and coordinated implementation of the *Reef 2050* do not yet fundamentally engage Traditional Owners as real partners in the long-term management of sea country, consistent with international guidelines for their engagement in protected area management, which emphasise the required for prior informed consent and ongoing equity.

This report explores the history of Traditional Owner attempts to secure a more “joined-up” approach across the GBR and revisits their core aspirations regarding the management of sea country. It then presents the results of consultation with Traditional Owners regarding the effective implementation of *Reef 2050* and of the Tropical Water Quality Hub’s Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy. This report provides the key output required from the research project, detailing “the coordinated Indigenous framework that has been developed” and showing “how Indigenous participation in sea country management can be increased”.

The key components identified for this framework are:

1. The core task is to the build strength and capacity of local Indigenous land and sea management organisations through Traditional Owner-driven:

- Sea-country planning;
- Knowledge management systems, sharing of Traditional Owner technologies;
- Greater use of Rangers for on-ground work;
- Business planning and development for Indigenous institutions; and
- Network building across Indigenous organisations

2. Partnership frameworks are required for the engagement of government and non-government organisations that include:

- Local Indigenous Marine Advisory Committees (LIMACs);
- A Big-MAC that links LIMACs together to create a GBR-wide forum;
- Continued support for the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee (IRAC); and
- The development of planning, management and compliance agreements.

3. Support for open engagement with information and knowledge generation is critical by:

- Information-provision to Traditional Owners;
- Research (monitoring, values of sea country management, impact assessment); and
- Implementation of TWQ Hub Indigenous Engagement Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In mid-2015, the World Heritage Committee¹ (WHC) decided against declaring the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) as being "in danger", noting the actions by the Australian Government to address major threats from climate change, poor water quality and impacts from coastal development. The WHC had examined the state of conservation of the GBR in 2011, and expressed extreme concern about the decline of its condition, and the approval of industrial facilities within the GBR World Heritage Area. As a result, the Australian Government invited a reactive monitoring mission to assess the site; their report confirmed serious conservation issues and triggered the consideration of in-danger listing. It was recognition of these World Heritage Committee concerns that led to joint development by the Queensland and the Australian Government of the "*Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan: a shared strategy to secure the World Heritage values of the Reef*" (hereafter *Reef 2050*). The World Heritage Committee remains very concerned about the long-term health of the Reef and requires specific reports on the implementation of the *Reef 2050* and the effectiveness of management in reducing threats. Traditional Owners from the Torres Strait to the southern end of the GBR are also very concerned about the effectiveness of management.

While critically important, the *Reef 2050* planning process exposes two long-standing concerns held by Traditional Owners about the management of the GBR. The first is that the rights and responsibilities of Traditional Owners for sea country estate (and coastal catchments) need to be understood, and recognised (to greater or lesser degrees) through native title, cultural heritage and other arrangements—underpinning a new relationship between Traditional Owners and government managers as equitable, foundation partners, in any strategy focused on GBR protection. The second is the need for GBR management partnerships to provide for Traditional Owners to own and share the policy problem and be empowered them to deliver solutions, drawing on their own knowledge, institutions and organisations. While the *Reef 2050* prominently recognises that "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the GBR's Traditional Owners and have a continuing connection to their land and sea country" (Department of the Environment, 2015), the strategies within remain some way from turning this recognition into meaningful action.

As a result, while over the last 20 years many Traditional Owner groups have been consolidating their local rights and building the governance of their land and sea management through organisations and institutions, there remains no broad agreement between them and Commonwealth and State governments about GBR management.

This project aims to detail a coordinated Indigenous framework and show how indigenous participation in sea country management can be increased to address these gaps. The project has facilitated consultations with Traditional Owners and their key partners to analyse, further develop and support the parallel development and subsequent implementation of a sector specific (Indigenous) implementation plan under *Reef 2050*

¹ The World Heritage Committee (WHC) consists of 21 members of the 191 State Parties to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/>, commonly known as the World Heritage Convention). The WHC is elected at the General Assembly of State Parties to the Convention, held biennially during sessions of the General Conferences of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

(Department of the Environment, 2015)². An earlier draft of this paper was used to stimulate a conversation among Traditional Owners about the key issues and needs that should inform such an implementation plan.

1.1. Traditional Owners in the GBR

There are at least 44 Traditional Owner groupings with interests in sea country across the length of the GBR, including, but not limited to: Darnley Island (Erub), Ugar and Masig groups; Murray Island (Mer) groups; Kaurareg; Gudang; Yadhagana; Wuthathi; Kuuku Ya'u; Kanthanumpun; Uutaalgnunu (Night Island) group; Umpila; Angkum; Lama Lama; Paal Paal; Guugu Yimithirr Warra; Ngulan people; Yuku Baja Muliku; Eastern Kuku Yalanji; Wanyurr Majay; Yirriganydji; Gimuy Yidinji; Gurabana Gunggandji; Guru Gulu Gunggandji; Mandingalbai Yidinji; Lower Coastal Yidinji; Mamu; Djiru; Gulnay; Girramay; Bandjin; Warrgamay; Nywaigi; Manbarra; Wulgurukaba; Bindal; Juru; Gia; Ngaro; Yuibera; Dharumbal; Woppaburra; Taribelang Bunda; Bailai; Gooreng; and Gurang³.

All of these groups have been working hard towards increasing their ownership of and access to both land and sea country since the original formation of the Marine Park in 1975 (see Figure 1). Indeed, since the mid-1990s, Traditional Owners have been coming together in attempts to reach broad frameworks with the Australian and Queensland Governments for genuine partnership in managing GBR catchments and sea country. Securing real Commonwealth and State commitment to such an approach, however, has been extremely difficult to achieve at all levels (from GBR to sub-regional to tribal and clan levels).

² Development of the Indigenous-specific Implementation Plan is being led by Gidarjil Aboriginal Corporation.

³ <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/our-partners/traditional-owners/traditional-owners-of-the-great-barrier-reef>



Figure 1: Timeline of significant events in Indigenous sea country management

Since people first started coming together in the mid-1990s, Traditional Owner organisations generally have had very meagre resources to sustain such a campaign at the whole of GBR level. Many groups have needed to focus local efforts on securing their rights and interests in the GBR. However, in the last 15 years, much has changed in the Traditional Owner landscape, and this has renewed the desire for people to revitalise with negotiated approaches from GBR to local scales. These changes have included:

- Some 20 years of the active progression of native title rights/interests through the determination of claims and the negotiation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements under the *Native Title Act 1993*, historic sea country determinations (e.g., Torres Strait and Blue Mud Bay⁴), and other related land-rights legislation and programs;
- Across the native title estate, the formation of various Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs), Land Trusts or aligned/alternative Traditional Owner-led land and sea organisations;
- An increasing call from Traditional Owners to be involved in all (tenure-blind) aspects of planning, development and conservation of their sea country estates;
- More than a million hectares of sea-country Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) declared in the wet tropics coastal regions;
- Significant developments in the negotiation of Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements (TUMRAs) across many parts of the GBR, combining both good

⁴ See <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/ILB/2008/27.html> for details

Traditional Owner governance, stronger compliance and partnerships with regulatory agencies;

- A general increase in public support in the Australian community for Traditional Owners to be more actively and respectfully engaged in all matters land and sea; and
- An improving global environment that is increasingly recognising the important place Traditional Owners hold in extensive landscape and protected area management.

The recognition of native title in the Torres Strait in particular signals the need for reconsideration of the approach Australia has taken more broadly to Indigenous marine governance (Butterly, 2015). Overall, while the status of sea country claims across the balance of the GBR remains quite weak, this remains an area of future growth in the testing and expansion of Indigenous rights. These developments all suggest that, for the future, all major policy and delivery agenda in catchments and sea country must recognise the relationship with Traditional Owners as rights-holders, requiring action between the nation-state and first-nations to be framed on a government-to-government basis.

1.2 The Struggle of Traditional Owners in Securing Sea Country Interests in the GBR

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the GBR region initiated refreshed sea-management activities as soon as some rights were recognised, albeit to a limited extent, under the Queensland *Community Services Aborigines Act (1984)*. The Palm Island community, for example established the first Community Sea Rangers group in 1983, equipped with a boat to conduct patrols. Kowanyama hosted the Northern Fisheries Conference in 1989, including attendees from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). Some 20 years ago, a conflict over dugong management sparked further action from the region's Indigenous communities. As a result, Traditional Owners of the southern GBR⁵ and relevant Native Title representative bodies met on Magnetic Island on the 9th and 10th December 1997. This meeting became the first Sea Forum (Sea Forum I).

Sea Forum I was convened to enable Traditional Owners in the southern GBR to consider and to discuss the implications of the Queensland Department of Environment's Draft Dugong Conservation Plan (released in November 1997). Discussion at Sea Forum I focused on the Plan's perceived shortcomings, particularly the inadequate involvement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander organisations in its development. While the Plan's intention to arrest the decline of dugong populations was welcomed, its failure to recognise Indigenous rights and responsibilities for the use and management of dugongs was a particular concern. Sea Forum I resulted in requests for meetings with government ministers to express serious concerns with the Plan, and called for a 6 month moratorium on its implementation. Resources were also sought to undertake consultation with Indigenous groups about the Plan's implications. A subsequent delegation from the Sea Forum met with key agencies in February 1998 to discuss this and the broader issue of sea country co-management (Sea Forum Working Group, 1999). The outcomes were:

⁵ Southern GBR here refers to the area from the tip of Cape York Peninsula south, excluding the Torres Strait.

- Agencies acknowledged that recognition of Indigenous rights and interests in dugong management was part of the broader issue of Indigenous involvement in management of Queensland's marine environment; and
- A cross-agency commitment was made to participate in further Sea Forums to consider the possibility, and a preferred process, for developing a framework agreement recognising Aboriginal rights and responsibilities in management (Sea Forum Working Group, 1999).

As a result, a second Sea Forum was held in Cairns in June 1998. Sea Forum II focused its attention on the merits of starting broader negotiations that might lead to a framework agreement on Aboriginal involvement in marine management in the southern GBR. It was considered that such an agreement would avoid the problems with the Draft Dugong Conservation Plan's development, local level planning activities, and other environment and resource management policies which failed to recognise Aboriginal rights and interests. Through Sea Forum II, Traditional Owners from across the southern GBR coast prepared a Discussion Paper (in partnership with CSIRO) seeking to establish processes for developing region-wide frameworks that would fully incorporate Traditional Owner management rights and responsibilities into the planning and management of the GBR (Sea Forum Working Group 1999). An abridged statement of Sea Forum is outlined below in Box 1:

Box 1: Excerpt from the Sea Forum Working Group Statement

Indigenous peoples are the custodians of this country (the Southern GBR). Whether we like it or not, we are responsible for not only our own but for all people, and if we are to have a healthy (sea) country we will all have to work together. This Discussion Paper and (the Sea Forum) process belong to the Indigenous peoples who make up the Southern Great Barrier Reef Sea Forum. The process ... (seeks to move) ... towards a regional framework agreement (about the management of the reef and with the State and Commonwealth Governments): a process that the Aboriginal peoples involved in this project are proud of. Indigenous Peoples are also secure in the knowledge that they still have the customary rights and are responsible for management of their own country.

(Sea Forum Working Group, 1999, p. 3).

The Sea Forum agenda marked the start of a long and difficult process for Traditional Owners seeking genuine involvement in management of the GBR from the local (family, clan or tribal) level to the sub-regional or even whole of GBR level. The difficulty of securing cohesive government responses commenced with the failure of the then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission to stand firmly behind structuring, investing in, and supporting the Sea Forum approach. Without adequate capacity to take these structured negotiations forward, this point in history marked the start of an extensive period since the late 1990s in which Traditional Owners have had to make much more fragmented progress through various stop-and-start opportunities.

Picking up on the Sea Forum intent, and on the back of significant politics about turtle and dugong management, the Northern Australia Land and Sea Management Alliance

(NAILSMA) developed a cross-northern Australian approach to progressing regionalised management effort; particularly in the Northern Territory, the Gulf of Carpentaria, Torres Strait, and Cape York Peninsula. The resultant NAILSMA project agreements led to several important initiatives, including:

- The development of regional action plans by Indigenous communities across north Australia as part of a National Heritage Trust (NHT) funded initiative;
- Self-imposed moratoria on the take of dugong where numbers had declined;
- Marine debris surveys and clean-ups;
- Community involvement in turtle and dugong tagging programs; and
- Support for communities who were proactive in addressing illegal take such as poaching (DEH, 2005).

Emerging from the NAILSMA projects, momentum sustained through the “Managing Sea Country Together” Project⁶ (via a partnership with the Reef Collaborative Research Centre, the Southern GBR Sea Forum Working Group and Balkanu Cape York Development Agency) provided a policy focus; progressing ideas for achieving sea country co-management across the GBR (George, Innes & Ross, 2004). The project emphasised the need for the GBRMPA to provide relevant information to Traditional Owners and to support mutual learnings with management agencies and people working together towards the best possible design and implementation of future co-management arrangements. On the back of this work and Traditional Owner involvement in the GBRMPA’s extensive engagement on the Marine Park’s Representative Areas (REP) Program, GBRMPA invested increased resources in the coordination of Indigenous engagement and focused on the development of Traditional Use Marine Resource Agreements (TUMRA’s).

While some of these early wins grew new outcomes for Indigenous communities, so too did the significant progression of Traditional Owner native title right determinations. Additional triggers for change were won through the success or otherwise of water-mark native title decisions (e.g., the Torres Strait decision). In that case, the High Court delivered an appeal decision in favour of the native title claimants, unanimously upholding native title rights to commercial fishing. Now that appeal has been successful, the Torres Strait Sea Claim should open up a national conversation on the broader issue of Indigenous communities being more involved in making decisions about their own sea country (Butterly, 2013).

As recognition of the important rights of Traditional Owners grew, by January 2004 the Marine and Coastal Committee (MACC), a body of the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, established a Taskforce on Marine Turtle and Dugong populations (Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2005). The purpose of the MACC Taskforce was to engage Traditional Owners and others to develop a national partnership approach to assist Indigenous communities to achieve sustainable turtle and dugong harvests. Traditional Owner groups, community-based rangers and native title representative bodies already involved in the community created, owned and drove new initiatives to achieve effective and long-term arrangements for the sustainable management of turtles and dugongs.

⁶ See <http://rrrc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Technical-Report-50.pdf>

Helping to keep a strong policy consistency through these initiatives and over time was the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) required and operating under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)*. There was strong membership consistency and cooperation across the Northern Territory, Torres Strait and Queensland, leading to turtle and dugong management issues becoming an important policy focus of the IAC from 2002. Some years later, on the back of IAC responses to the MACC, the Australian Government committed some \$5 million to targeted turtle and dugong management in Cape York (managed by Balkanu) and the southern GBR (managed by the Queensland Government). While Balkanu focused effort on a Cape York-wide Turtle and Dugong Regional Plan (via the Cape York Peninsula (CYP) Turtle and Dugong Taskforce), the state set out to establish a small sea country grants program approach. Concerns about this approach in the southern GBR led to the formation of an Indigenous-led Sea Country Policy Group. The group specifically looked (with its Cape York Partners) at a range of planning and legal solutions to enhance Traditional Owner leadership and control over effective turtle and dugong management. There was not, however, significant and structured negotiation with the Commonwealth and State with regard to the further development of appropriate policy, planning and legal options; ones that would enhance the ability of Traditional Owners to work in partnership with enforcement agencies to deal effectively with complex and contentious issues such as poaching within sea country estates.

It is also worth noting that Queensland and Northern Territory efforts at the time were providing demonstrated national leadership in the management of sea country. This process, in turn, helped Queensland Traditional Owners to focus attention on efforts to secure more control and capacity in the management of their sea country estates. The first National Indigenous Land and Sea Country workshop was held Alice Springs (Ross River) in 2005, while the second was hosted by Giringun Aboriginal Corporation in Cardwell in 2007. The third was held in Broken Hill in 2010; starting a new impetus for the development of a national Sea Country Management Framework. Ranger groups from across the country in particular were looking towards greater consistency in accreditation in compliance and enforcement, while others were seeking strong national policy frameworks.

As new and initial Australian Government investments for sea country declined, the Queensland Traditional Owner Sea Country Turtle and Dugong Workshop occurred in October 2011 in Cairns. Over fifty delegates representing numerous regions, communities and organisations attended. Amongst the outcomes documented were a number of strategic items for action. Markwell (2011) provides a summary of outcomes and key messages from participants at the state-wide workshop. The workshop was organised by the Giringun Aboriginal Corporation for and on behalf of Queensland Saltwater Traditional Owners. The workshop aimed to provide improved direction on the \$5m worth of funding made available by the Australian Government (and in the south administered by the Queensland State Government) for better management of dugongs and marine turtles. These action items eventually formed a large part of the forward agenda for the newly emerging Indigenous Sea Country Strategic Policy Group (Indigenous Sea Country Strategic Policy Group, 2014).

A second forum took place on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) from the 11th to the 13th of November 2013. The Queensland Indigenous Sea Country Management Forum saw over sixty delegates and more than a dozen departmental representatives attended. The 2013 forum was an initiative of the Indigenous Sea Country Strategic Policy Group (ISCSPG). The

2013 forum revisited in more detail, some key result areas from the 2011 Cairns workshop, examined important aspects of this framework, and sought a renewed mandate to maintain and support the ISCSPG. Progression and finalisation of a Sea Country Management Policy Framework reflected the views of the group regarding the role of Indigenous Queenslanders in the management of sea country and their aspirations (Indigenous Sea Country Strategic Policy Group, 2014). The final policy framework incorporated some elements that were already in place through past investments but also suggested that new linkages be established to enhance overall efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, the framework proposed that other missing elements be developed and implemented, creating an overarching strategy for sea country management across Queensland. An outcome of the policy framework was to “establish an inter-agency, joint Commonwealth-State project to develop a regional planning and coordination model for Indigenous sea country management” (Indigenous Sea Country Strategic Policy Group, 2014, p. 9).

The special place of the Torres Strait in the development of a cohesive approach in sea country and turtle and dugong management needs mention. Efforts in the Torres Strait were closely inter-twined between the legal efforts of Torres Strait Islanders to secure rights to sea country after initial successes on Murray Island led to the passing the *Native Title Act 1993*. Substantive steps were also made later through the original NAILSMA turtle and dugong project investments. Greater capacities, however, have also been built through several years of cohesive Commonwealth investment through the Land and Sea Management Unit within the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). Torres Strait Treaty arrangements also specifically empower Traditional Owners in respect to sea country management. These efforts have been supported via intensive, regionally engaged research undertaken through Australian government funding supported through the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC). A particular focus of that effort has been on the development of locally-owned Community Based Management Plans (Torres Strait Regional Authority, 2015). While tensions between the improving rights of Traditional Owners and the coordinative responsibilities of the TSRA increasingly need resolution, overall, effective foundations for Traditional Owner driven sea country management are in place.

Across the balance of the eastern coast of Queensland, however, below the wider and collective efforts of Traditional Owners at the whole of GBR level, at regional and local scales, the GBRMPA has been progressively building its own capacity to partner Traditional Owners. In recent years, it has primarily engaged since 2008 through the Land and Sea Country Indigenous Partnerships Program. As a keystone within this the TUMRA approach has itself delivered significant sub-regional and local benefits in supporting Traditional Owner aspirations. In early years, TUMRA efforts primarily focused on relationship development and the building of the governance capacities of land and sea management organisations and institutions. As high profile problems associated with the poaching of turtle and dugong emerged, a new focus emerged on building stronger compliance capabilities, and indeed genuine co-management approaches with regulatory agencies.

An important summary point emerging from this history is that support for a cohesive framework for sea country management has been based on a high level of collective agreement and active networking across GBR Traditional Owner groups. The language around these issues has also tended to shift from the narrower concepts of joint or co-management of protected areas towards shared or co-governance of wider Traditional

Owners estates. We also find that many of the key mechanisms for implementing co-governance approaches are also increasingly in place through stronger Indigenous institutions and co-management frameworks such as TUMRAs. What remains missing is a stronger GBR-wide legal foundation and higher level co-governance agreement with Commonwealth and State governments about a regular framework for supporting and resourcing implementation, review and continuous improvement. Hence, a new focus on progressing implementation of the *Reef 2050* presents an opportunity for review.

1.3 Traditional Owner Aspirations for Land-Sea Country in the GBR

The aspirations of Traditional Owners in sea country are expressed most clearly at the local estate (family, clan or tribal level). These aspirations have been articulated through the original work of the Southern GBR Sea Forum Working Group (1999), the Cape York Turtle and Dugong Taskforce (2011) and other cross-GBR processes. Through these processes, Traditional Owners have broadly, consistently and collectively said these aspirations include:

- 1. Recognition and respect for Indigenous aspirations in sea country management**
 - Management agency recognition and accommodation of rights to co-governance of sea country (and catchment) resources at the estate level, as embodied by native title and other rights-related mechanisms;
 - Communities developing and implementing their own plans/aspirations for sea country and catchments as a basis or framework for negotiation of management;
 - Indigenous peoples and their interests providing the catalyst for legally sound, integrated and coordinated management between agencies; and
 - A negotiated level of Indigenous control and influence over all levels of management decisions within the GBR.

- 2. Sustainable resource use management through cooperation**
 - Sustainable natural resource management achieved by a link between Western and Indigenous knowledge and science and based on mutual respect and understanding;
 - Acknowledgment and accreditation of Indigenous knowledge of natural resource use that can improve existing resource management methods;
 - Sustainable resource use outcomes being facilitated by the use of best practices;
 - Protection of Indigenous intellectual property used in resource co-management;
 - Protocols established with other resource users for all dealings affecting sea country; and
 - Full engagement of Traditional Owners in the restoration and protection of catchments and ensuring that what happens on land has minimal effect on sea country.

- 3. Education**
 - Education of the wider community about culture and sustainable resource management (e.g., through tourism);
 - Education at a planning and policy level about Indigenous culture and associated management goals through indigenous involvement in decision making and management;

- Education for Indigenous peoples (young and old) about current resource management methods, applications, and planning policy structures; and
- The use of wider education resources as a means for promoting recognition of Indigenous rights.

4. Cultural practice and regeneration

- The use of land and sea country as a medium for resolving historic conflict;
- The use of marine resources for cultural maintenance and restoration;
- The recording, protection and management of places of cultural significance;
- Indigenous control and management of cultural property and heritage;
- Resource management/ownership continuing as a basis for Indigenous lore; and
- The supported development of Indigenous knowledge systems under Indigenous control.

5. The generation of sustained socio-economic benefits

- Securing, enhancing and exercising (legal) economic rights;
- Structuring sustainable economic benefits to address the contemporary socio-economic disadvantage of Indigenous peoples (e.g., health/living standards, economic dependence, etc.);
- Recognition and enhancement of Indigenous subsistence economies;
- The use/management of resources as a basis for employment and training; and
- Establishing Indigenous businesses to promote education and economic development.

While there are many common aspirations, all Traditional Owner groups continue to agree that it is up to individual groups to determine and to promote their own aspirations at the country-based scale. These local aspirations form the basis for co-governance within principles/guidelines that can be negotiated at the subregional or whole-of-GBR level.

2. REEF 2050 BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Current Structural Arrangements for the Reef 2050

The *Reef 2050* plan sets out the long-term focus for protecting and enhancing the key values of the GBR. As a foundation for doing so, *Reef 2050* explicitly recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the GBR's Traditional Owners and that they have continuing connection to country. The Plan seeks to achieve seven key outcomes, related to:

- Water quality;
- Ecosystem health;
- Biodiversity;
- Heritage;
- Community benefits;
- Economic benefits; and
- Governance for plan delivery.

Reef 2050 sets a series of objectives, targets and actions (management guidance, on ground effort, stewardship, community participation, research and information management). Those that relate directly to the interests of GBR Traditional Owners are outlined in Appendix 1.

Traditional Owners were broadly engaged in the development of these outcomes, objectives, targets and actions. Specific Traditional Owner advice also remains structured into the *Reef 2050* national advisory arrangements (chaired by Penny Wensley). For the first time, Indigenous actions are embedded right across the Plan's scope, and Traditional Owners recognise this as a major *Reef 2050* achievement. Beyond this, there are no clear structures for the ongoing engagement of Traditional Owners to support implementation and monitoring of the Plan. The Plan is generally not visionary about the role of Traditional Owners in the management of the GBR. Most objectives are set at quite a high level, are vague with respect to Traditional Owner roles, and may be difficult to measure. Accountabilities for implementation of these objectives, targets and actions are also generally weak.

Given that the *Reef 2050* presents a new opportunity, and with the focus now turning to the implementation of the *Reef 2050* and its actions, Traditional Owners from across the GBR again have an opportunity to engage with the new governance arrangements going forward. These current *Reef 2050* workshops specifically presents an opportunity for Traditional Owners in the southern GBR (but linked to efforts in Cape York and Torres Strait) to do this through response to the proposed implementation strategies and governance arrangements for implementation of the Plan.

With respect to wider Traditional Owner interests in GBR governance however, Traditional owners may want to keep two formal reporting timelines in mind. These include the requirement of the Australian Government to:

- Submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2016, an update on progress with implementation of the *Reef 2050* to confirm that the inception of the plan has been effective, and the Investment Strategy has been established; and

- Submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2019, an overall state of conservation report, including a summary, on the state of conservation of the property. This will need to demonstrate effective and sustained protection of the property's Outstanding Universal Value and effective performance in meeting the targets established under the *Reef 2050*.

These reporting efforts will also be linked to the findings of the 2014 and anticipated 2019 GBR Outlook Reports. While the Reactive Monitoring Report painted a positive (Commonwealth-led) view of Traditional Owner engagement (UNESCO 2012), it should be noted that the international standards on this subject have since changed. At the Bonn meeting of the WHC in July 2015, there was recognition of the need for securing the free, prior and informed consent Indigenous peoples in protected area management (UNESCO, 2015). As a consequence of this meeting, the World Heritage Committee's Operation Guidelines were updated to be more consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, although this is an ongoing process. Clause 123 of the Operational Guidelines now says "States Parties are encouraged to prepare nominations with the widest possible participation of stakeholders and to demonstrate, as appropriate, that the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous peoples has been obtained"⁷. No such consent for the establishment of the GBRMPA or the World Heritage Area has been obtained.

This change and other UN-related developments may encourage:

- Pressure for the Australian and Queensland Governments to retrospectively improve their foundations for the engagement of Traditional Owners in GBR governance; and
- Consideration of the value of supporting Traditional Owners as they consider the value of relisting the World Heritage Area for its cultural values.

It is also worth noting that UNESCO recently held a workshop on "How to ensure that the implementation of the World Heritage Convention is consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples"⁸. The results may have implications for Traditional Owners in developing their policy positions on long-term approaches to co-governance.

2.2 Research methods

Above we have revisited the history of Traditional Owners seeking greater control over and involvement in the management of their sea country estate and the common aspirations of different groups across the GBR. With this in mind, this Project has aimed to develop a coordinated Indigenous framework as a key output, including the investigation and analysis of the Indigenous-specific targets within *Reef 2050* and of Traditional Owner perspectives on the NESP Tropical Water Quality (TWQ) Hub Indigenous Engagement Strategy.

Our engagement approach draws on the "Indigenous Yarning" method; an approach founded in the Indigenous method of storytelling, knowledge creation and conversation. 'Yarning' allows two-way learning in a transparent and participatory manner. Similar to a deliberative

⁷ See <http://whc.unesco.org/document/137844>

⁸ See <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/906>

dialogue, yarning is distinguished by being an *Indigenous-led* discussion, aimed at empowering people from their own standpoint (Fredericks et al. 2011; Geia et al. 2013; Nursey-Bray et al. 2009). Indigenous-led dialogue methods provide a response to the challenges of aligning worldviews that arise during formal research; finding appropriate engagement processes; protecting cultural and traditional ecological knowledge and responsibilities to country; and recognizing existing Indigenous knowledge and governance systems (Hankins and Ross 2008; Liddle and Young 2001; Simonds and Christopher 2013).

The engagement process was initiated by the establishment of a data-base of contacts and email and telephone contact was made with representatives of 41 Traditional Owner groups (Table 1). Initial contact was made to raise awareness about the project goals and to seek involvement in consultations workshops originally planned for 2015. However, these workshops had to be cancelled due to slow ethical approval processes. The Project received Ethical Clearance number 085/15 from the CSIRO Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee and was conducted in accordance with the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#). Project commencement was delayed due to the CSIRO Committee's slow consideration of a number of issues regarding the extent of consultation involved in the research method. While these issues were ultimately resolved, the slow responses of the Committee precluded significant data collection occurring during 2015. This experience highlights the need for the AIATSIS (2012) Guidelines on Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies to become more widely accepted in research institutions. These Guidelines highlight the close connection between consultation and research in all stages. The Tropical Water Quality Hub also expects these Guidelines to be used as part of their Indigenous Engagement Strategy. Further discussion is required between the TWQ Hub and research organisations, including CSIRO, regarding their ability to meet these Guidelines.

Table 1: Traditional Owner groups in the project contact database

1. Gudang	New Castle Bay region
2. Yadhaigana	Captain Billy Landing region
3. Wuthathi	Cape Grenville region
4. Kuuku Ya'u	Portland Road region
5. Kanthanumpun	Claude River region
6. Uutaalgnunu	Night Island region
7. Umpila	Cape Sidmouth South region
8. Angkum	Cape Sidmouth region
9. Lama Lama	Princess Charlotte Bay region
10. Pul Pul	Cape Sidmouth region
11. Guugu Yimithirr Warra Nation	Lizard Island to Hopevale region
12. Ngulan people	Starke River region
13. Yuku Baja Muliku	Walker to Walsh Bay region

14. Eastern Kuku Yalanji	Cedar Bay to Port Douglas region
15. Wanyurr Majay	Fishery Falls, Babinda, Miriwinni, Mt Bellenden Kerr region
16. Yirriganydji people	Cairns to Port Douglas region
17. Gimuy Yidinji	Cairns/Trinity Inlet region
18. Gurabana Gunggandji	Kings Beach/Fitzroy Island region
19. Guru Gulu Gunggandji	Yarrabah/Green Island region
20. Mandingalbai Yidinji	Cooper Point region
21. Lower Coastal Yidinji	Russell River region
22. Mamu people	Innisfail region
23. Djiru	Mission Beach region
24. Gulnay	Tully region
25. Girramay	Cardwell to Murray Upper area
26. Bandjin	Hinchinbrook region
27. Warrgamay	Lucinda region
28. Nywaigi	Edmund Kennedy National Park
29. Manbarra	Palm Island region
30. Wulgurukaba	Magnetic Island/Townsville region
31. Bindal	Townsville region
32. Juru	Ayr region
33. Gia	Whitsunday region (Mainland)
34. Ngaro	Whitsunday region (Islands)
35. Yuibera people	Mackay region
36. Dharumbal	Rockhampton-Shoalwater Bay region
37. Woppaburra	Yeppoon region
38. Taribelang Bunda	Gladstone/Bundaberg region
39. Bailai	Gladstone/Bundaberg region
40. Gooreng Gooreng	Gladstone/Bundaberg region
41. Gurang	Gladstone/Bundaberg region

As a consequence of these delays, a revised consultation process was developed that included the hosting a workshop of key Traditional Owners at a time prior to, but separate from a meeting of the IRAC (with generous assistance from the GBRMPA). This workshop was followed by on-ground consultation and face-to-face meetings with Traditional Owner groups across the GBR region. These meetings were arranged through phone calls, emails and face-face conversations with the aim of distributing meetings across the region. A

number of small meetings resulted, which enabled better communication with key persons, organisations and university staff involved in sea country management. Despite time limitations, some 28 individuals were engaged, including representation from:

- Gungandjii/ Mandingalby Yidinji People PBC;
- Mandingalby Yidinji PBC;
- Gudjuda Reference Group;
- Palm Is – Manbarra;
- Giringun;
- Woppaburra;
- Gawula;
- Yuibera Aboriginal Corporation;
- Wulgurukaba;
- Bindal;
- Mamu;
- Dharumbal;
- Wulgurukaba;
- Yuku Baja Muliku; and
- Nywaigi.

The main workshop was held in Townsville on the 16th February 2016 (see Appendix 2) with the analysis led by Duane Fraser, a GBR Traditional Owner, who focused ‘yarning’ to:

- Look at what GBR Traditional Owners have said and done previously;
- Listen to people at workshops and through direct engagement;
- Work closely with other relevant agency projects (e.g. with the GBRMPA); and
- Provide guidance to Australian Government agencies regarding the moves needed to implement some 24 Indigenous Actions in the Reef 2050 effectively.

This combined methods approach ensured that the project was able to:

- Increase Indigenous capacity and engagement;
- Support NESP Indigenous engagement in the TWQ Hub;
- Progress development and implementation of *Reef 2050* Indigenous-specific targets;
- Determine any gaps between current *Reef 2050* actions and implementation; and
- Contribute to the development of the Indigenous-specific Implementation Plan project being led by Gadarjil.

Input from all these forms of consultation were then integrated into this report and the project findings. Outcomes from these efforts have included:

- Determining steps to implement Reef 2050 targets (short, medium, long-term);
- Determining capacity gaps that need to be filled to enable implementation;
- Reporting on outcomes to support the development of an Indigenous-specific Implementation Plan and to report to the Australian Government; and
- Providing information for Gadarjil to develop and finalise an Indigenous-specific Implementation Plan and to also provide information to the Australian Government.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Past Recorded Issues Concerning Traditional Owners in Sea Country Management

In framing the response to *Reef 2050* implementation, it is useful to look at the core reasons why, 15 years ago and since, Traditional Owners started agitating for a move towards a more cohesive GBR wide framework agreement to help secure the aspirations, interests and rights of Traditional Owner tribes and clans across the GBR. Based on the deliberations of the original Sea Forum Working Group and additional findings from later processes, these recorded issues are outlined here to assist ongoing Traditional Owner-led discussions:

- *The degree to which Indigenous interests are marginalised by the sheer weight of other interests in marine resources:* Indigenous people recognise that non-Indigenous parties have an interest in management of their traditional resources and seek to negotiate co-management arrangements within their sea estates. However, because of the range of established commercial and non-commercial uses, Traditional Owners feel that their perspectives are marginalised, viewing them as *just* another stakeholder. It is important that future management GBR planning acknowledge the pre-eminent position of Traditional Owners when examining management options;
- *The complexity and lack of integration of the management arrangements covering sea estates:* Resource management structures in the GBR are complex and often difficult to understand. The integration of land and marine resource management to address land-based impacts adds more complexity. Dealing with these complicated and fragmented structures presents complications for all agencies and stakeholders;
- *The significance of resource use problems:* The GBR is of outstanding environmental, cultural and economic significance. To accommodate economic *and* conservation goals, the region is managed as a multiple-use area. The consideration of land-based impacts is also important. The lack of baseline information about the composition of, and interaction among, reef ecosystems is a problem;
- *The lack of effective recognition of existing Indigenous rights and interests:* The recognition of native title in common law is arguably the most significant institutional change with respect to its impact on natural resource management in Australia. The *Native Title Act 1993* and subsequent *Native Title Amendment Act 1998* establish the legislative framework for native title. While the *Native Title Act 1993* can prevent the exercise of native title rights in certain circumstances, native title holders generally are entitled to the same procedural rights as owners of onshore freehold. In addition to native title, there is a plethora of legal, policy and international commitments to the protection of Indigenous rights. Many of these rights and interests, however, remain poorly recognised in marine resource management practice;
- *The social and economic impacts accruing from limited Indigenous involvement:* Another reason for agreement between Traditional Owners and government arises from a need to resolve the socio-economic impacts experienced by Indigenous peoples as a result of the continued barriers to the achievement of their local aspirations for sea country. Effective Indigenous involvement in management of sea country could provide an opportunity to alleviate many of these problems, and provide a basis for the continued vitality of culture;

- *The lack of progress towards co-governance:* Co-governance is aimed at establishing fair mechanisms for sharing power and incorporating stakeholder interests in resource governance, planning and management. To date, however, while TUMRAs have made excellent progress as a co-management tool, there remain few positive examples of wider co-governance approaches in marine resource management (inclusive of co-management approaches). For clarification purposes, Figure 2 outlines the difference between governance and management; and
- *Lack of recognition of successes in turtle and dugong management:* There are emerging signs that Traditional Owner-led management of turtle and dugong populations and their stewardship are resulting in the re-emergence of sustainable populations, particularly in the northern GBR. Marsh, Grayson, Grech, Hagihara and Soltzick (2015) use several lines of evidence to re-evaluate the sustainability of dugong harvest in the north in the absence of robust data on the absolute population size or the harvest. Overall, their evidence suggests that the harvest is sustainable. This policy and management success needs to be significantly celebrated and further supported to ensure the future survival of both the species and culture.

Management	is about ...	What is done in pursuit of given objectives The means and actions to achieve such objectives
Governance	is about ...	Who decides what the objectives are, what to do to pursue them and with what means How those decisions are taken Who holds power, authority and responsibility Who is (or should be) held accountable

Figure 2: The difference between the wider concept of governance and the narrower concept of management (Borrini-Feyerabend & Hill, 2015, p. 171)

3.2 Workshop Results and Analysis of Reef 2050 Targets

Workshop participants analysed all relevant *Reef 2050* actions by focusing on two questions”

- What does it require to deliver the action in practice?
- What capacities are needed to deliver the target?

Appendix 3 presents a Summary Table of outcomes. The following provides detail on Traditional Owner responses to these questions for each.

Action 1

Acknowledge Traditional Owners in new and existing policy and plans.
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What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Adjustments across numerous plans and policies to incorporate Traditional Owner sea country business. Action implementation will also need to be framed through the overarching “closing the gap” policy and Reconciliation Action Plans of agencies.
- Overarching consideration and leverage of “closing the gap” issues will be a real opportunity for change if implementation of this action is taken seriously.
- Traditional Owners remain concerned that there may be limited opportunity for them to have a say across government/s, and that there is currently limited government policy framing to support this action in readiness for implementation.
- The Reconciliation Action Plans of each agency will be very important documents that Traditional Owners will have to use to achieve implementation.
- Traditional Owners cited examples within GBRMPA, for example, of permits being issued without any consultation with Traditional Owners, reflecting this problem.
- Relevant plans and policies were considered to include:
 1. Reef Trust
 2. River Improvement Trusts
 3. Reconciliation Action Plans
 4. GBR Permits
 5. Regional Park Management Plans
 6. Coastal Management Plans (now being re-invigorated)
 7. Vegetation Management Plans
 8. Water Resource Plans
 9. The Regional NRM budget from the State Government
 10. The current Qld Fisheries Management Review, with recent workshops with Traditional owners leading to recommendations in relation to Fisheries Management Plan approached based on the New Zealand model
 11. Reviews of recreational fishing in the World Heritage Area
 12. The allocation of GBR user charges
 13. Any reconsideration of National Heritage Values
 14. River works permits
 15. Any review of the Native Title Act
 16. Any review of local government drains moving out into the reef
 17. Local Government Planning Act reform (including investments into the Shire Councils needing to be better directed to native title planning)
 18. Local government permits for resource extraction
 19. Local government resource reserves and employment strategies
 20. GBRMPA permits, shipping rules (TO pilots), dredging/port developments.
 21. Rural Fire Brigade burning rules for asset protection
 22. Any development of a heritage strategy in GBRMPA
 23. Any acts that might over-ride the Queensland *Cultural Heritage Act*
 24. Any EPBC Act review, including listing species for their cultural values
 25. The Commonwealth Marine Reserve declaration in the northern Coral Sea (particularly consultation).

What capacities are needed to deliver the target?

- Capacities in the agencies to undertake necessary policy adjustments.
- The need to build Traditional Owner capacity to respond to all these initiatives.

Action 2

Incorporate and prioritise Traditional Owner's planning into existing and future ecosystem policy and programs.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- This requires Traditional Owner-led sea country plans to be developed/renewed: Plans that can guide others to support and fit in with Traditional Owner priorities, actions, etc.
- Traditional Owners consider implementation of this action will require a real turn around from the status quo. It will require high quality Traditional Owner-led planning.
- Sometimes there will be a real need for mobs to negotiate among themselves to share resources and influence across the landscape.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- Additional capacities needed will include a 'SWAT' (Special Weapons and Tactics) team to visit communities and catalyse sea-country planning.
- Traditional Owner peer-exchange about planning will also be needed through workshops to build on existing initiatives in sea country planning.
- Good quality people will be needed for high quality plans, with strong teams or networks of people possibly required.
- Responsible Traditional Owner leadership to bring about change.
- The need to identify and support all good initiatives that have already been started.
- It may be possible to start a private foundation for youth leadership to grow experience (e.g. consider Indigenous Leadership Awards in Canada⁹).

Action 3

Support Traditional Owner stewardship activities that contribute to Reef health and resilience, including removing and, where possible, identifying the sources of marine debris.

What does it require to deliver this action in practice?

- Rangers and others (e.g. Traditional Owner-led school groups) cleaning up marine debris, collecting, analysing, synthesising and reporting on data about it.
- Empowerment benefits that come to Traditional Owners from identifying where marine debris is coming from. This knowledge, managed by Traditional Owners, will increase Traditional Owner negotiating power.
- Doing this sort of marine debris work will increase the credibility of groups and lift people's pride. The concept of marine debris management reflects people's long history of waste management (e.g. middens).

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- The capacities needed are essentially there in Rangers and school groups, but effectiveness is limited by the lack of resources.

⁹ See <http://www.ecotrust.org/project/indigenous-leadership-award/> and the Buffet Endowment at https://www.google.com.au/search?q=Buffet+Indigenous+Leaderships+Award&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&qws_rd=cr&ei=Tb6VtzfKc3EjwO5vKDYBQ#q=Buffet+Indigenous+Leaderships+endowment

- Additional capacity is needed to resource Ranger groups (and there needs to be a compelling argument for greater investment).
- New capacity is needed to develop greater support for Traditional Owner-led knowledge sharing, analysis, reporting, etc.
- Reef-wide coordination of data bases is needed to tell the story of strong Traditional Owner led management of sea country, which is not expensive.
- There will need to be real coordination among Working on Country (WoC) and other programs, particularly within the Commonwealth Government.
- A compelling argument for a cohesive coinvestment approaches is required across government programs and agencies.

Action 4
Develop further agreements with Traditional Owners addressing management of ecosystems within their traditional estates.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Traditional Owner-led agreements (e.g. sea-country IPAs, TUMRAs, ILUAs, MoUs, industry agreements, research agreements) that ensure there are ongoing opportunities and resources for sea country management.
- These agreements will need to be based on sea country plans through which necessary agreements are identified and prioritised, etc. Options for developing agreements should come out of developing sea country plans and relate to them.
- While a range of agreement types may be useful, it should be remembered that it is important to avoid agreements that might become toothless tigers.
- Joint management can be negotiated through agreement, but should mean joint management from the planning to delivery phases.
- There should be more agreements that enable Rangers to do more management on the Reef (e.g. AMPTO to do Crown of Thorns works).
- TUMRA agreements will need to be flexible (e.g. cover compliance in some areas and not in other areas). Agreements can always be developed in a staged approach.
- It will be good to involve universities more in agreement making.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- This action first requires the resources/capacity for all groups to develop Traditional Owner-led sea country plans that identify partnership opportunities. Additional capacities are needed for Traditional Owners to conduct conversations with partners to enable the development of the relevant agreements.
- Signed agreements need to come with funding (e.g. like some TUMRAs).
- Greater capacities will be needed in partner agencies to ensure they are willing to engage.
- Land Council support for PBCs needs to get up and running. They currently only get some \$50 000 a year to continue to support PBC development. Land Councils also are looking at supporting and playing an increased brokerage role.
- All agreement options have to be decided by the local Traditional Owners.
- After sea-country planning, agreement development should encourage a conversation among Traditional Owners about whether and what sort of agreements (e.g. TUMRA, IPAs, MOU) could support their management of country.

Action 5

Develop, implement and coordinate a protocol and knowledge management system for recording, storing, protecting, and where appropriate, sharing of knowledge, innovations and practices; conserving and cultural use of bio cultural diversity; and use in decision-making.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- A protocol (by each agency that is engaged with Indigenous knowledge) that ensures all knowledge is collected and managed under Indigenous governance in ways that provide appropriate legal protection for intellectual and cultural rights. This includes engaging Traditional Owners in prior and informed consent for any knowledge collection and for ongoing engagement for further consent and for any sharing of the knowledge within or beyond the agency that collects it. Such work needs to be followed by open evaluation and review of protocol implementation.
- This approach means supporting every Traditional Owner group to have their own database systems (including non-indigenous collections).
- Clear governance mechanisms for intellectual property management are needed.
- GBRMPA's knowledge management systems will need to be better linked internally and Traditional Owner-based knowledge will need to be better protected.
- There is a general mistrust of government databases and this needs to be better managed.
- Data base efforts will need to better translate Traditional Owner aspirations and lore into management implications (e.g culturally important no-go areas).

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- This action will require an initial audit to determine what agencies have knowledge management systems in place that are relevant to the GBR (GBRMPA and others), and to determine how these are being developed and managed.
- Further capacity is needed to engage with Traditional Owners about the protocols required and the implementation and evaluation processes needed.

Action 6

Where agreed through Traditional Owner engagement frameworks, apply traditional knowledge and customary use of biological diversity, including the use of community protocols in managing protected areas.
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What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Traditional Owners to have the mechanisms in place (plans, rangers, community protocols, elders roles etc., engagement frameworks) and to be properly resourced to apply their traditional knowledge and customary use of biological diversity.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- The resources/capacity for all groups to develop Traditional Owner-led sea country plans that identify where community protocols and Traditional Owner engagement frameworks are needed. Additional capacities are needed for the development of the community protocols/engagement frameworks and resources for implementation.
- Where governments are developing "Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks", additional capacities and resources will be needed to validate and ground-truth these with Traditional Owners. This will require the development of community protocols. These will need to be developed through the IPA plans and sea country plans.

- The Commonwealth Government has a “Traditional Owner engagement framework” across the environment portfolio. This needs to be better understood. Any use of government-driven Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks must be approved and ground-truthed by Traditional Owners.
- Further advice must be sought from Traditional Owners about their own engagement frameworks and how these are best integrated into government engagement.

Action 7
Work with Traditional Owner groups to identify biocultural resources within their sea country and develop plans of management for conservation and use of those resources.

See same results as for Action 2.

Action 8
Improve Traditional Owner engagement to strengthen participation in decision making at all levels relating to the conservation and cultural use of biodiversity.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Expanding the current role of Traditional Owners through: (i) expanding representation at local scale; (ii) appropriately constituted “Local Indigenous Management Advisory Committees” (LIMACs), at approximately the same scale as current Local Marine Advisory Committees, developed together with local Traditional Owners and Indigenous groups; (iii) coordination staff/resources to liaise across the LIMACs and bring them (e.g. Chairs) together for meetings; and (iv) expanding the Traditional Owner representation on the GBR Board to include 2 women and 2 men.
- There is a need to maintain and broaden the role of IRAC, including increasing its ability to advise both the State and the Commonwealth Governments with an expert (cultural, policy practice) advisory role.
- Bringing together local Traditional Owner groups in an advisory group analogous to Local Management Advisory Committees (LMACs) will be important. This would provide a wide information-gathering mechanism. This could effectively be seen as a sea forum in each local region.
- Strong links could also be drawn between LMACs and LIMACs. Currently, there are about 11-13 LMACs and LIMAC boundaries could be broadly similar, but might need some finer-scale adjustment or fine-tuning. A nominated person from the LIMACs could be the key to integrate effort across the LMAC and the LIMAC.
- LIMAC Chairs could be brought together as a Big-MAC. IRAC would need to remain as an expert (cultural, policy, practice) advisory group. The collective of LIMAC chairs would be a representative group able to support GBR-wide dialogue.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- The capacity currently exists for Traditional Owners to be part of this approach. No payment for time is envisaged. Additional capacity/resources are needed for discussions/ engagement to establish LIMACs, and support for transport and accommodation for meetings will be needed.

Action 9

Work with Traditional Owners to build capacity to record and manage traditional knowledge, and prioritise research to address key Indigenous gaps.
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What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Support for every Traditional Owner group to have their own knowledge management systems, including recording trips on country, systems that help collect data (e.g. video cameras, drones, tablets, computers, GIS and other software), cultural camps, monitoring, data analysis, and research about best ways to bring knowledge into management.
- Diverse systems will be needed for diverse groups and knowledge-sharing approaches.
- Elders being healthy to share their knowledge of country is a key requirement from this type of system. To achieve this, such systems can facilitate trips on country, but also develop systems that help bring country into the room (e.g. via videos etc.).

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- The resources/capacity for all groups to have TO-managed Traditional Ecological Knowledge management systems, including data-bases and other components listed.
- The health and well-being of the elders to go onto country is important and support for systems are needed that bring the knowledge to them (e.g. video streaming).
- The technical capacity and training to operate the systems is needed.
- Research to identify best ways to bring this knowledge into management (including for example, indicators for monitoring Traditional Owner Reef 2050 outcomes) and the sharing of Traditional Owner-developed technologies (e.g. forms to assist monitoring, participatory tools like 3D modelling, specific knowledge e.g. “nets with no knots”).
- Biennial knowledge-sharing workshops among Traditional Owners across the GBR.
- GIS and data management training.
- Knowledge research and monitoring.
- Knowledge development programs that suit the country (e.g. turtle data recording).
- Real opportunities to network and share knowledge across groups (e.g. data collection, creating new forms for compliance, sharing of forms, etc.).
- Support for learning from each other (e.g. Working on Country Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers Forums (Qld) as a once or twice a year get together).
- Priority research to identify gaps: (e.g. sharing of cultural practices such as net weaving with no knots, keeping language strong, hunting practices, etc.).
- Gap analysis to understand what more is needed to support knowledge building.
- The development of participatory 3D modelling as a useful tool (e.g. as is being done at Mission Beach and Cape York). The modelling process brings together the community so that people can see their country and where cultural sites are located. This improves GIS skills, and can map ranger activity and record photos. This approach is especially good for those who lack computer skills, and it helps people to open up about their knowledge of country and builds respect between people.
- More maps that can help people talking about where they have been camping and hunting. This can also provide for yarns about places people do not have access to.
- Traditional Owner-driven mapping can appropriately consider tenure, the movement of animals and other things where privacy is important.

Action 10
Build capacity for the involvement of Traditional Owners and community members in cooperative management, planning and impact assessment.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Traditional Owner groups to be running country themselves through effective Indigenous organisations, sea country plans, rangers and knowledge management systems.
- A Traditional Owner-developed “GBR-wide Traditional Owner Engagement Framework” that guides agencies and businesses (e.g. in planning and impact assessment).
- The better use of technical opportunities to lever off native title without extinguishment (e.g what types of partnerships would be required and with whom).

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- Capacities/resources for effective Traditional Owner sea country organisations, with effective Indigenous leadership, sufficient resources, technical expertise, and access to training. Additional resources will be required for Traditional Owners to develop the necessary “GBR-wide Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks” and to find resources for their implementation and evaluation activities.
- This approach could be partly made available through the Northern development agenda, with some \$20 million now available for PBC capacity building and \$10 million for “innovative tenure resolution” and problem solving.
- Investment into Traditional Owner engagement frameworks for the GBR (rather than just a national engagement framework). If the agencies can get the engagement framework right they can start to address each action in the *Reef 2050*.

Action 11
Work with and support Traditional Owners to collect, store and manage their own cultural heritage information.

This Action was addressed in responses to Actions 5 and 9

Action 12
Improve engagement processes for assessment of cultural heritage values to inform decision-making.

This Action was addressed in the Engagement Frameworks as per Actions 8 and 10.

Action 13
Update the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Heritage Strategy 2005 to more comprehensively address Indigenous and non-indigenous heritage.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Completion by the GBRMPA of the updating the GBRMP Heritage Strategy, including establishing work/path towards World Heritage Listing of Indigenous cultural values (and ensuring Outstanding Universal Value). This work requires appropriate engagement by GBRMPA with Traditional Owners.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- GBRMPA have funded this strategy and are seeking to deliver on the commitment now. This task will need to engage well with Traditional Owners.

Action 14
Develop impact assessment guidelines for cultural heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef region.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Completion of the tasks under Actions 9 and 13, and then Traditional Owner-led development of the ‘impact assessment guidelines’

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- This first requires capacities/resources as per Actions 9 and 13, followed by capacities/resources for the development and implementation of the guidelines

Action 15
Identify and action opportunities for Traditional Owners, industry and community engagement in on-ground water quality improvement and monitoring programs.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Traditional Owners to (continue to) be monitoring their country using their own Traditional Ecological Knowledge together with science where appropriate. This requires development of two-way monitoring systems for data collection, management, interpretation and reporting and building the legitimacy for these systems to recognised by GBRMPA.
- Training of Traditional Owner groups to pursue opportunities in water quality monitoring. People are getting heavily involved in research (e.g. mussels) and monitoring activities across the GBR catchments.
- Action on the serious concerns held by Traditional Owners about the health of rivers.
- Development of this agenda as a research priority for NESP and the development of a two-way water quality monitoring program. Such programs need to be respectful of traditional knowledge of water quality issues (e.g. recognising species “discovery”, avoiding the mis-use of long term ecological knowledge, etc.). People are deeply concerned about traditional ecological knowledge being appropriated by science.
- Two-way water quality monitoring at the local level can flow on to two-way monitoring approaches emerging more broadly across the country.
- Flow on implications flowing into emerging Actions 18, 19 and 20.
- Traditional Owners to make linkages in their monitoring from the top and bottom of their catchments.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- Capacities/resources for Traditional Owners to continue their current monitoring activities. This requires further investment in the development of two-way systems (Traditional Owner-led research into data management, interpretation and effective reporting).
- Further investment in developing ways for ensuring research permitted by the GBRMPA, and other relevant research, is returned to Traditional Owners. There may

need to be a relationship between Land Council, IRAC and GBRMPA so all agree/know how to get the information back to the Traditional Owners.

- Research guidelines for data management and returning data to Traditional Owners.

Action 16
Review current mechanisms and processes to improve benefits to Traditional Owners engaged in sea country management.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Currently mechanisms and processes are not very extensive so would need to involve a review of: (i) IRAC; (ii) the relationship between IRAC and the GBRMPA Board; (iii) review of Indigenous Partnerships activities in GBRMPA; (iv) review of opportunities foregone (e.g. dugong/turtle harvests); (v) review of potential economic development mechanisms under development (e.g. native title, TUMRAs, etc.).
- Further research to measure economic benefits (broadly to include employment, social and community benefits) and to build on growing social return-on-investment policy work within State and Commonwealth Governments.
- A revamped GBR Indigenous Engagement Framework that ground-truths the concept of the LIMACs and the BigMAC concept.
- Progression of the building of evidence to support sea country claims and general support for looking at native title determinations.
- Research on investigating market-based instruments, social bonds, etc. to support Traditional Owners in benefiting from the Reef Trust. Social bond approaches could be applied at the centre of the land and sea funding model. Jacobs Marsden are doing work on this for the Reef Trust. Benefits could include kids going to school, being well fed, etc. and there could be a ripple effect through the whole community.
- The development of a serious argument for funding these social outcomes. Such things could be considered as compensation for decisions about reduced hunting.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- Capacities/resources for the required review and the research.

Action 17
Work with Traditional owners to identify world's best practice in agreement making, strategic planning, and management and implementation of Indigenous programs in relation to the GBR sea country estate.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Implementation of the tasks for Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- As well as the capacities needed for Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9, this Action requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the journey towards best practice in agreement making approaches.

Action 18
Develop collaborative working arrangements with Traditional Owners which establish mutual trust and build Indigenous capacity.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Implementation of the tasks for Actions 5, 6, 8 and 10.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- As well as the capacities needed for Actions 5, 6, 8 and 10, implementation of this Action requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the levels of mutual trust and Indigenous capacity.

Action 19
Develop and implement an Indigenous Business Development Plan including a comprehensive review of baseline data, processes and systems to identify existing and potential economic benefits to Traditional Owners.
Action 20
Assist Traditional Owners to be business ready and have improved capacity to generate economic benefits from use and management of their traditional estates.

What does it require to deliver these actions in practice?

- An audit of baseline data on current and future economic opportunities facing Traditional Owner-group and GBR-wide scales.
- This further requires developing Business Plans for Indigenous institutions.
- Further evaluation and analysis of new and innovative business models (e.g. cluster models, supply-chain networks).

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- Forecast and economic modelling, business planning, comprehensive community planning, profiling, scenario planning.

Action 21
Support cross cultural training in relation to Traditional Owner culture and perspectives.
Action 22
Work with Traditional Owners, industry, regional bodies, local governments, research institutions, and the community to inform the delivery of local and regional actions.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Implementation of the tasks for Actions 1, 5, 6, 8 and 10.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- As well as the capacities needed for Actions 1, 5, 6, 8 and 10, implementation of this Action requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the journey towards best practice (Action 17) .

Action 23
Improve Traditional Owner participation in governance arrangements for protection and management of the Reef.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- Implementation of the tasks for Actions 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10.

What capacities are needed to deliver this action?

- As well as the capacities needed for Actions 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10, implementation of this action requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the journey towards best practice (17).

Action 24
Prioritise and develop specific implementation plans and reporting protocols addressing the Plan's targets and actions in consultation with the community.

What does it require to deliver the action in practice?

- The development of an Indigenous-specific Implementation Plan will be required for this Action, and also can address the other actions, through a focus on:
 1. TO-led sea country planning (what).
 2. Rangers (how).
 3. TO-led Agreement making (TUMRA, native title).
 4. GBR Frameworks to guide govt/ngo engagement with mob
 - Protocols for agencies engaging with Indigenous knowledge (also as for Actions 11, 18, 21, 22).
 - GBR-wide Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks (also as for Actions 12, 18, 21, 22, 23)
 - Improved governance through BigMAC concept (LIMACs) and existing mechanisms
 - Local Indigenous Marine Advisory Committees (LIMAC) and GBR-wide network capability (also as for Actions 12, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23).
 - Effective TO sea country organisations.
 - Tools for supporting knowledge management (e.g. data bases such as 3DM).
 - Filling research gaps in knowledge and decision tool development (including dollars to measure benefits, evaluation methods and impact assessment).
 - TO-led two-way (Indigenous and scientific knowledge) monitoring systems.
 - Measuring multiple benefits from TO sea country management.
 - Review and evaluation towards best practice (also for Action 18, 21, 22, 23).
 - Impact Assessment Guidelines.
 - Implementing institutional reform to support GBR-wide negotiations
 - Adjusting policies and plans to recognise TO in sea-country business across local, state, national and particularly GBR instruments (also as for Action 17, 21, 22, 23).
 - TO-driven Business development planning etc (peer-to-peer exchange, SWAT) (also as for Action 20).

3.3 Workshop of Suggested Scheduling of Tasks

As part of the analysis, the workshop considered which dependent tasks relied on the others being completed first (core tasks) and which tasks could be completed in parallel (Table 2).

Table 2: Suggested scheduling of tasks for the coordinated Indigenous framework to increase engagement in sea country management of the Southern GBR

Core tasks	Parallel tasks (urgent priorities that can be advanced in parallel with core)	Dependent tasks (depend on core tasks being well developed)
(TO-led) Sea country plans (what)	Improved governance through Big MAC (network of LIMACs) and existing mechanisms	Agreements (TUMRA, native title) identified through plans
Rangers (how)	TO knowledge-management systems sharing TO-developed technologies .	TO-driven Indigenous business planning and development
Effective TO sea country organisations	Research gaps ; \$ worth of benefits, monitoring methods, impact assessment	GBR partnerships Frameworks to guide govt/NGO engagement with Traditional Owners

3.4 Workshop Results on TWQ Hub Engagement and Participation Strategy

With respect to Traditional Owner feedback on the current TWQ Hub Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy, a detailed discussion session was held within the IRAC Workshop in Townsville in February 2016. Overall, there was strong support for the broad engagement strategy that has been established and the process leading to its development.

Key specific findings emerging from that workshop were that Traditional Owners considered:

- Guidelines developed by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) should have more standing beyond the Engagement Strategy into the research organisations;
- That the governance considerations with the Strategy were good, providing for Traditional Owners to have roles at all levels of the research process;
- That the articulated three levels for different types of engagement in research projects is a strong component of the Strategy;
- That the Key Performance Indicators approach taken within the Strategy was good;
- There was a need to know whether the Strategy supported researchers enough to be able to contact the right people/Traditional Owners and that protocols supported this;
- There was a need for the Strategy to recognise that Traditional Owner Groups have their own research strategies and engagement protocols; and
- That there was a need to have clearer processes for review and feedback of the Strategy if researchers do not follow it.
- Finally, Traditional Owners questioned the compliance aspects of the Strategy, which are not clear. They questioned what the consequences of researchers not following the intended approach would be?

3.5 Further Consultation Outcomes

Further targeted on-ground consultations were conducted, based on the advice of Traditional Owners who attended the above workshop in Townsville. The purpose of the consultation was to seek feedback on the the results of the workshop analysis, and to further articulate current issues of Traditional Owners regarding *Reef 2050* and related processes.

The main topics raised by Traditional Owners were directly related to the Tropical Water Quality Hub Indigenous Engagement Strategy, the project's draft discussion paper on Traditional Owner initiatives and issues, and workshop analysis on Indigenous actions within the *Reef 2050* plan. Given the limited opportunities that people have to hear about what is happening more generally, a substantial amount of time was spent talking to and answering specific questions relating to broader GBR management issues. Key specific findings to emerge from these wider consultations where that Traditional Owners considered:

Draft Discussion Paper

- Report showed clear picture of Indigenous environmental policy within the GBRWHA.
- Diagrams (e.g. Figure 1) are useful for training new staff (indigenous and non-indigenous) on history of sea country management within the GBR.
- Report will have greater use and benefit for departmental staff to understand the history of the GBR sea country policy and programs.

Reef 2050 Actions Analysis

- *Reef 2050* Actions are difficult to understand without the analysis.
- *Reef 2050* Actions were previously worded differently, this more detailed analysis allows for better understanding of what they mean.
- *Reef 2050* won't mean anything without significant investment into Traditional Owners business.
- Actions require an implementation strategy.

Other Feedback and Discussions

- While there have been numerous *Reef 2050* consultations, there has been misunderstanding and a lack of information around *Reef 2050*, the process of developing the plan and what is taking place to deliver the plan.
- Frustrations with continued consultations – people have been overwhelmed and outlined the need for Government and GBR partners to get on with business, strategic investment and on-ground activities.
- Concerns with short term non-strategic funding of programs

- Creation of jobs/employment opportunities that only last 12 months (or term of project funding).
- Perception of Traditional Owners Harvest of Marine Resources
 - Conflict with the tourism industry
 - Conflict with environmental activists
 - Lack of community cohesion, distorting community aspirations on harvest quotas
- Frustration with lack of communication from Government departments and programs to access funding, namely:
 - Reef Trust
 - Department of the Environment and Heritage (QLD)
 - Department of the Environment (Commonwealth).
- Concerns with gender balance of GBRMPA Indigenous Advisory Committee

Traditional Owners also had a number of question regarding general issues around the management of the GBR and how these would potentially impact on their ability to manage their sea country. These issues included:

- Status of the Reef 2050 Plan;
- Status of UNESCO decisions regarding World Heritage in-danger listing;
- Required reporting periods for the Reef 2050 Plan;
- Future of the GBRMPA Indigenous Advisory Committee;
- Mechanisms under Reef 2050 to facilitate Traditional Owner involvement in the IRAC, Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program, Water Quality Taskforce and Independent Expert Panel;
- Status of the Interim Report of Water Quality Task-Force;
- Process for implementation of the Indigenous-specific Implementation Plan;
- The status of current Government and Reef Trust funding programs;
- The status of international forums on conservation and the Reef (i.e. IUCN Conservation Congress in 2016, Conservation of Biological Diversity, etc); and
- The Reef 2050 Plan Investment Framework.

Traditional Owners overwhelmingly outlined the need for Government and GBR partners to get on with business of implementation. They stressed their frustrations with further repeated consultation over on-ground activities and the lack of direct strategic investment.

3.6 Importance of Open Engagement

The *Reef 2050* Plan articulates strong engagement of Traditional Owners in its development - making up one sixth of the overall actions expressed in the Plan. The World Heritage Committee's decision in Bonn, Germany demonstrates a need to continue this work. Traditional Owners are not yet positioned with either a peak organisational body or reef-wide representative structures; and do not have the level of finances needed to resource this work independently. Historically there has been an oversight by consecutive governments in recognising the complexity of Traditional Owner engagement and the lack of resources at their disposal to undertake reef-wide strategic work. It is clear that government departments and agencies, both State and Federal, needed to articulate the positioning of Traditional Owners in the management of the GBR World Heritage Area and Marine Park.

Continued investment in this work is critical. All partners need to recognise the need for long-term support of Indigenous-specific actions across the Reef 2050 themes and understand the complexity of Traditional Owner involvement in the management of the GBR. The *Reef 2050* process importantly provides the policy framework for Traditional Owners and management agencies to enter into future dialogue around co-management arrangements. Both the Department of the Environment and the GBRMPA will need to investigate how best to support appropriate forms of communication to achieve an improved level of policy understanding amongst Traditional Owners.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This Project has helped support Traditional Owners across the GBR to contribute to the development of a coordinated framework for increasing Indigenous participation in sea country management. It has also provided information relevant to the development of an Indigenous-specific Strategy for progressing the Implementation Actions of the Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan (the *Reef 2050*).

This final report reflects on the long history of Traditional Owner advocacy for greater control over and involvement in management of the GBR, consistent with their ever-increasing recognition of their existing rights and interests with respect to land and sea country in the region.

This final report reminds us all of the strong and long-standing desire of Traditional Owners to have a much stronger say in the overall management of the GBR. Traditional Owners see the development of an Implementation Strategy for Indigenous-specific Actions in the *Reef 2050* as being critical to taking forward cohesive reef-wide negotiation about implementation with the Commonwealth, the State and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

In considering such a strategy, Traditional owners have been particularly clear that implementation must deliver real capacity and benefit to supporting the aspirations and development of strong Traditional Owner based land and sea institutions at local scales.

Consequently, a coordinated framework that will increase Indigenous participation in sea country management of the GBR needs to focus on three major tasks: building Indigenous land and sea management organisations; building partnerships frameworks for engagement; and effective information and knowledge generation (Box 2).

Outcomes from this final report can now provide further input into the development of an Indigenous Sector Specific Implementation Plan for the *Reef 2050* being led by Gidarjil. Implementation of this framework for building Indigenous capacity would also support the delivery tasks identified through this project's analysis of requirements to implement the TO-specific actions in *Reef 2050*.

Box 2: Coordinated Indigenous framework for increasing Indigenous participation in sea country management

1. Focussing most attention on building the strength and capacity of local Indigenous land and sea management organisations including:
 - **Sea-country planning**, supported by strong planning, institutional, **knowledge management systems** and partnership capabilities within these organisations;
 - **Investments in Rangers and on-ground** works to more heavily involve Traditional Owners in the major business ahead of repairing GBR catchments to improve water quality flowing into the Reef;
 - **Business planning and development** for (country-based) economic opportunities for Indigenous land and sea institutions and members/affiliates;
 - **Building strong networks** across Traditional Owner land and sea management institutions and organisations across the GBR, including for knowledge sharing about **TO-developed technologies** (e.g. forms to assist monitoring, participatory tools like 3D modelling, specific knowledge “nets with no knots”).

2. Building the **partnership frameworks** required for a range of government and non-government organisations to more fully involve Traditional Owners, their institutions and organisations in:
 - Engaging TOs in the business of planning, management and compliance at different scales across the GBR, including through **agreements**;
 - Supporting new local/sub-regional engagement frameworks (Local Indigenous Management Advisory Committees or **LIMACs**) as a key part of the GBR-wide Indigenous engagement system;
 - Continuing to broaden the scope and role of the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee (IRAC) as a technical/ professional advisory body; and
 - Linking LIMACs together through a **GBR-wide representative forum (Big MAC)**, enabling strong foundations for GBR planning and negotiation to progress.

3. Information and knowledge generation:
 - Ensuring Indigenous organisations and LIMACs are supported to play a key role in **information provision to Traditional Owners** regarding the raft of new GBR initiatives (Reef 2050, Reef Trust etc) and their opportunities to engage in them.
 - Addressing identified **research gaps** including best ways to TO knowledge into management (e.g. indicators for monitoring TO-actions in Reef 2050, valuing sea country management benefits)
 - Supporting implementation of compliance with the TWQ Indigenous Engagement Strategy, including broader uptake of the AIATSIS Guidelines for Research in Indigenous Studies within the GBR science community.

Potential effective scheduling of the key activities highlighted in bold is set out in Table 2.

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APPENDIX 1: INDIGENOUS STRATEGIES ASSOCIATED WITH REEF 2050 LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Table A1: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Water Quality targets

Objectives	
Nil	No specific TO objectives
Targets	
WQT4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Owners are engaged in on ground water quality improvement and monitoring.
Actions	
Management guidance	
None TO specific	
On-ground actions	
WQA11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and action opportunities for Traditional Owner engagement in on-ground water quality improvement and monitoring programs. (NRMs, GBRMPA, GBR Traditional Owners).
Stewardship and community participation	
Nil	None TO specific
Research and information management	
Nil	None TO specific

Table A2: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Ecosystem Health targets

Objectives	
EHO4	To respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous communities relevant for the conservation and cultural use of biocultural diversity.
Targets	
EHT4	Traditional Owners have developed Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Management Systems for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting, and where appropriate, sharing of knowledge, innovations and practices • Conserving and cultural use of biocultural diversity • Use in decision making
Actions	
Management guidance	
EHA5	Acknowledge the unique and long-term presence of Indigenous Australians in Great Barrier Reef ecosystems in policy and planning documents aimed at the conservation and cultural use of biodiversity (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, AG, QG).
On-ground actions	
EHA7	Improve protection, restoration and management of Reef priority coastal ecosystems including islands through innovative and cost-effective measures. (AG, QG, LG, Reef Guardian, stewardship programs, NRMs, Industry).
EHA14	Invest in building Traditional Owner capacity in planning and managing the conservation and sustainable use of the Reef's biological resources. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, AG).
Stewardship and community participation	
EHA15	Support best practice and community stewardship activities that contribute to Reef health and resilience, for example through Reef Guardian programs, Natural Resource Management plans, industry Best Management Programs and Stewardship programs, Reef Plan and High Standard Tourism Operators. (AG, QG, LG, GBRMPA, Industry).
EHA16	Support Traditional Owners and stakeholders, including Reef Guardians, to clean up and, where possible, identify the sources of marine debris. (GBRMPA, GBR Traditional Owners, Industry, NRMs, QG).
EHA17	Increase engagement and participation of Traditional Owners in joint management of existing and new protected areas in the Great Barrier Reef coastal zone and region. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, QG).
Research and information management	
EHA21	Develop, implement and coordinate a protocol and knowledge management system for collecting, handling and sharing culturally sensitive information, and its integration in decision making. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, AG, QG)

Table A3: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Biodiversity targets

Objectives	
BO5	Traditional Owners are engaged and participate in the conservation and sustainable use of cultural keystone species and biocultural resources.
Targets	
BT4	Customary use of biological resources, in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or cultural use requirements are formally recognised and adopted in management arrangements.
Actions	
Management guidance	
Nil	None TO specific
On-ground actions	
BA9	Where agreed, apply traditional knowledge and customary use of biological diversity, including the use of community protocols for managing protected areas. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, QG).
BA12	Work with Traditional Owner groups to identify biological resources within their sea country and develop plans of management for conservation and use of those resources. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, QG).
Stewardship and community participation	
BA15	Improve Traditional Owner engagement to strengthen participation in decision making at all levels relating to the conservation and cultural use of biodiversity. (GBRMPA, AG, GBR Traditional Owners, QG).
Research and information management	
BA20	Invest in research to address key Indigenous knowledge gaps identified in the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report, in particular an assessment of Traditional Fisheries. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA).

Table A4: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Heritage targets

Objectives	
HO1	Traditional Owners have joint management responsibilities for the documentation and conservation of Indigenous heritage values.
Targets	
HT1	Identification, documentation, and long-term protection of Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage values are embedded in decision-making and planning processes
HT2	The number and effectiveness of cooperative management practices for protection and conservation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage is increased.
Actions	
Management guidance	
HA1	Update the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Heritage Strategy 2005 to more comprehensively address Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage. (GBRMPA).
HA2	Complete heritage management plans for Low Isles and North Reef light stations. (GBRMPA).
HA4	Develop impact assessment guidelines for cultural heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef region. (AG, QG, GBRMPA, LGAQ).
HA5	Facilitate robust consideration of heritage values in planning and port development and associated activities (including dredging). (AG, QG, GBRMPA, Ports Australia, NRMs, GBR Traditional Owners).
On-ground actions	
Nil	None TO specific
Stewardship and community participation	
HA7	Build capacity for the involvement of Traditional Owners and community members in cooperative management (AG, QG, GBRMPA, NRMs, GBR Traditional Owners) and port planning. (Industry, GBR Traditional Owners)
HA8	Increase community awareness and appreciation of heritage values. (AG, QG, GBRMPA, LG).
Research and information management	
HA9	Work with and support Traditional Owners to collect, store and manage their own information, including cultural heritage value assessments. (GBRMPA, GBR Traditional Owners, AG, QG).
HA10	Further identify, map, monitor and report on key Reef heritage values and sites, including comprehensive maritime surveys in priority sections of the Reef. (GBRMPA, QG, AG).

Table A5: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Community Benefits targets

Objectives	
CBO3	The rights of Traditional Owners to derive benefits from the conservation and cultural use of biological resources are recognised.
Targets	
CBT3	The number of sea-country initiatives, including benefit-sharing agreements with Traditional Owners is increased.
Actions	
Management guidance	
CBA5	Review current mechanisms and processes to improve benefits to Traditional Owners engaged in sea country management. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA).
CBA6	Work with Traditional Owners to identify world's best practice in agreement making, strategic planning, and management and implementation of Indigenous programs in relation to the Great Barrier Reef sea country estate. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, QG).
On-ground actions	
Nil	None TO specific.
Stewardship and community participation	
CBA9	Improve the involvement and support of local communities in protecting, managing and sustainably using the Reef, including through Local Marine Advisory Committees. (GBRMPA).
Research and information management	
Nil	None TO specific.

Table A6: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Economic Benefits targets

Objectives	
EBO3	Traditional owners derive economic benefits from conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.
Targets	
EBT4	Traditional Owners' business capacity to generate economic benefits from effective use and management of Traditional land and sea country estates is increased.
EBT5	The number of employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians in sea country management is increased.
Actions	
Management guidance	
EBA6	Develop and implement an Indigenous Business Development Plan including a comprehensive review of processes and systems to identify existing and potential economic benefits to Traditional Owners. (GBR Traditional Owners, QG, AG, GBRMPA).
On-ground actions	
EBA9	Implement the Queensland Ecotourism Plan: 2013-2020 ¹⁰ . (QG).
Stewardship and community participation	
Nil	None TO specific.
Research and information management	
Nil	None TO specific.

¹⁰ <http://rti.cabinet.qld.gov.au/documents/2013/aug/ecotourism%20plan/Attachments/Plan.PDF>

Table A7: Indigenous strategies in Reef 2050 LTSP Governance for Plan delivery

Objectives	
Nil	No specific TO objectives.
Targets	
Nil	No specific TO objectives.
Actions	
Management guidance	
EHA5	Acknowledge the unique and long-term presence of Indigenous Australians in Great Barrier Reef ecosystems in policy and planning documents aimed at the conservation and cultural use of biodiversity. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, AG, QG).
On-ground actions	
EHA7	Improve protection, restoration and management of Reef priority coastal ecosystems including islands through innovative and cost-effective measures. (AG, QG, LG, Reef Guardian, stewardship programs, NRMs, Industry).
EHA10	Establish a baseline for marine debris on the Great Barrier Reef's islands, beaches and coastlines and reduce debris by 20 per cent from this baseline. (GBRMPA, QG, GBR Traditional Owners).
EHA14	Invest in building Traditional Owner capacity in planning and managing the conservation and sustainable use of the Reef's biological resources. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, AG).
Stewardship and community participation	
EHA15	HA15 Support best practice and community stewardship activities that contribute to Reef health and resilience, for example through Reef Guardian programs, Natural Resource Management plans, industry Best Management Programs and Stewardship programs, Reef Plan and High Standard Tourism Operators. (AG, QG, LG, GBRMPA, Industry).
EHA16	Support Traditional Owners and stakeholders, including Reef Guardians, to clean up and, where possible, identify the sources of marine debris. (GBRMPA, GBR Traditional Owners, Industry, NRMs, QG)
EHA17	Increase engagement and participation of Traditional Owners in joint management of existing and new protected areas in the Great Barrier Reef coastal zone and region. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, QG)
Research and information management	
EHA21	Develop, implement and coordinate a protocol and knowledge management system for collecting, handling and sharing culturally sensitive information, and its integration in decision making. (GBR Traditional Owners, GBRMPA, AG, QG)

APPENDIX 2: INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION WORKSHOP AGENDA – FEBRUARY 2016

Time	Agenda item	What will happen
9:00	Introductory session	Welcome to country Introductions around the room Melissa George, Project Leader
9:15	Project Introduction	Ro Hill will talk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is NESP, the project • Informed consent, IP other details Questions and discussion
9:45	Traditional Owners and Sea Country in the Great Barrier Reef – Which Way Forward	Allan Dale will talk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of TO sea country initiatives • Aspirations and capacity issues • A more joined-up approach Questions and discussion
10:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reef 2050 	Duane Fraser will talk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Reef 2050 • What are the Indigenous-specific targets • What does the analysis require • Questions and discussion
10:45	Smoko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink tea and coffee
11:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of small group work on actions • Outcomes and activities • Costs and capacity • Sequencing
12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back from small groups discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back from small groups to plenary.
12:30	Lunch	
1:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second small group work on actions • Outcomes and activities • Costs and capacity • Sequencing
2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back from small groups discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back from small groups to plenary.
2:45	Smoko	
3:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NESP TWQ Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of NESP TWQ Hub Indigenous engagement strategy • Plenary feedback, issues, gaps, next steps
3:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where to next • Concluding comments • Meeting close at 4 pm

APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP ANALYSIS OF REEF 2050 TRADITIONAL OWNER-SPECIFIC TARGETS

The summary of the results of the analysis is presented below.

Table A8: Delivery and Capacity requirements

#	Delivery	Capacity	In short
1	Requires adjustments across numerous plans and policies to incorporate TO sea country business; framed through the “closing the gap” overarching policy and Reconciliation Action Plans of agencies.	Capacities in the agencies to undertake necessary adjustments; also to build the TO capacity to respond to all these initiatives.	Adjust policies and plans to recognise TO in sea-country business across local, state, national and particularly GBR instruments (also for 17, 21, 22, 23).
2	Requires TO-led sea country plans to be developed/renewed - plans that can guide others to support and fit in with TO priorities, actions etc	Additional capacities needed include a ‘SWOT’ team to visit communities and catalyse sea-country planning; TO peer-exchange about planning through workshops to build on existing TO initiatives in sea-country planning.	TO-led sea country plans (also for 17, 23).
3	Requires Rangers and others (e.g. TO-led school groups) cleaning up marine debris, collecting, analysing, synthesis and reporting on data about it.	Capacity essentially there in Rangers, school groups, but effectiveness limited by lack of resources; additional capacity needed to resource Ranger groups (needs a compelling argument for greater investment); new capacity needed to develop greater support for TO-led sharing, analysis, reporting etc.	Ranger groups (to implements plans on-ground) (also for 17).
4.	Requires TO-led agreements (e.g. sea-country IPAs, TUMRAs, ILUAs, MoUs, industry agreements, research agreements) that ensure ongoing opportunities and resources for sea country management; based on sea-country plans through which necessary agreements are identified, prioritised etc.	First requires the resources/capacity for all groups to develop TO-led sea country plans and within them identify partnership opportunities. Additional capacities needed for TOs to conduct conversations with partners to the relevant agreements, and to ensure that these agreements come with resources for implementation.	To-led agreement-making (23).

5	Requires a protocol (by each agency that is engaged with Indigenous knowledge) that ensures all knowledge is collected and managed under Indigenous governance in ways that provide appropriate legal protection for intellectual and cultural rights; this includes engaging TOs in prior informed consent for any collection and ongoing engagement for further consent for any sharing of the knowledge within or beyond the agency that collects it; followed by evaluation of protocol implementation.	Requires an initial audit to determine what agencies have knowledge management systems in place that are relevant to GBR (GBRMPA and others), and how these are being developed and managed; further capacity needed to engage with TOs about the protocols and the implementation and evaluation processes.	Protocols for agencies engaging with Indigenous knowledge (also for 11, 18, 21, 22).
6.	Requires TOs to have the mechanisms in place (plans, Rangers, community protocols, elders roles etc., engagement frameworks) and be properly resourced to apply their traditional knowledge and customary use of biological diversity	First requires the resources/capacity for all groups to develop TO-led sea country plans and within them identify where community protocols and TO engagement frameworks are required. Additional capacities needed for the development of the community protocols/engagement frameworks, and resources for implementation. Where governments are developing “Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks”, additional capacities and resources will be needed to validate/ground-truth these with TOs.	TO-led local community protocols for engagement (also for 17, 18, 21, 22, 23).
7.	As for 2 above	As for 2 above	TO-led sea country plans (also for 17).
8.	Requires expanding the current role of TOs through (1) expanding representation at local scale, through appropriately constituted (developed together with local TO/Indigenous groups) “Local Indigenous Management Advisory Committees (LIMACs)” at approximately same scale as current Local Marine Advisory Committees; coordination staff/resources to liaise across the LIMACs and bring them (e.g. Chairs) together for meetings; expanding the TO representation on the GBR Board to include 2 women and 2 men; retain IRAC with an expert (cultural, policy practice) advisory role	The capacity currently exists for TOs to be part of this. No payment for time is envisaged. Additional capacity/resources for discussions/engagement to establish LIMACs, and for transport and accommodation for meetings.	Local Indigenous Marine Advisory Committees (LIMAC) and GBR-wide network capability. (also for 12, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23).
9.	Requires every TO group to have their own knowledge management system, including trips on country, systems that help collect data e.g. video cameras, drones, tablets, computers, GIS and other software, cultural camps, monitoring, data analysis, research	First requires the resources/capacity for all groups to have TO-managed Traditional Ecological Knowledge management systems, including data-bases and other components listed above; requires health and well-being of the elders to go onto country and support for systems that	TO knowledge-management systems. (also for 11, 14, 17)

	about best ways to bring knowledge into management; diverse systems for diverse groups, knowledge-sharing.	bring the knowledge to them (e.g. video streaming); technical capacity and training to operate the systems; research to identify best ways to bring this knowledge into management (including for example, indicators for monitoring TO Reef 2050 outcomes) and sharing of TO-developed technologies e.g. forms to assist with monitoring, participatory tools like 3D modelling, specific knowledge e.g. “nets with no knots”; biennial knowledge-sharing workshops between TOs across the GBR.	
10.	Requires TO groups to be running their country themselves through effective TO organisations, sea-country plans, Rangers, knowledge management systems. Additionally, a Traditional Owner-developed GBR-wide “GBR-wide Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks” that guides agencies and businesses e.g. in planning and impact assessment.	First requires capacities/resources for effective TO sea country organisations, with effective Indigenous leadership, sufficient resources, technical expertise, and access to training. Additional resources required for TOs to develop the “GBR-wide Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks” and resources for its implementation and evaluation.	Effective TO sea country organisations. GBR-wide Traditional Owner Engagement Frameworks (also for 12, 18, 21, 22, 23)
11	As for Actions 5 and 9	As for actions 5 and 9	
12	As for actions 8 and 10	As for actions 8 and 10	
13	Requires completion by Authority of the updating the GBRMP Heritage Strategy, including establishing work/path towards World Heritage Listing of Indigenous cultural values (ensuring Outstanding Universal Value); requires appropriate engagement by GBRMPA with TOs in this work.	GBRMPA have funded this and are delivering on that now. Task for them, they will need to engage with people	GBRMP Heritage Strategy, including pathway to relisting for cultural values. (also 14,
14	Requires completion of the tasks under Actions 9 and 13, and then TO-led development of the ‘impact assessment guidelines’	First requires capacities/resources as per Actions 9 and 13, followed by capacities/resources for the development and implementation of the guidelines	Impact Assessment Guidelines
15.	Requires TOs to (continue to) be monitoring their country using their own Traditional Ecological Knowledge together with science where appropriate; requires development of two-way monitoring systems for data collection, management, interpretation and reporting; legitimacy for these systems recognised by GBRMPA.	First requires capacities/resources for TOs to continue their current monitoring activities; requires further investment in development of two-way systems (TO-led research into data management, interpretation, effective reporting); requires further investment in developing ways that research permitted by the GBR, and other relevant research, is returned to TOs.	TO-led two-way (Indigenous and scientific knowledge) monitoring systems
16.	Currently mechanisms and processes are not very extensive so would involve a review of: IRAC; relationship between IRAC, the Board; review of	Requires capacities/resources for the review and the research.	Measuring multiple benefits from TO sea country management.

	Indigenous Partnerships activities in GBRMPA; also opportunities foregone e.g. dugong and turtle harvests; also potential mechanisms under development need to be reviewed including native title, TUMRA collective. Further requires research, priority here to measure benefits (broad, to include exposure and input, employment, social and community benefits) e.g. build on Social Return on Investment work		
17.	Requires implementation of the tasks for Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9	As well as the capacities needed for Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9, requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of best practice.	Review and evaluation towards best practice (also for 18, 21, 22, 23).
18.	Requires implementation of the tasks for Actions 5, 6, 8 and 10	As well as the capacities needed for Actions 5, 6, 8 and 10, requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the levels of mutual trust and Indigenous capacity (part of 17).	
19	Requires an audit of baseline data on current and future economic opportunities at TO-group and GBR-wide scales; further requires developing Business Plans; further requires evaluating and generating Business Models (e.g. cluster models, supply-chain networks).	Requires an audit of baseline data on current and future economic opportunities at TO-group and GBR-wide scales; further requires developing Business Plans; further requires evaluating and generating Business Models (e.g. cluster models, supply-chain networks).	TO-driven Indigenous plans and business models (also for 20)
20	As for 19	As for 19	
21	Requires implementation of the tasks for Actions 1, 5, 6, 8 and 10	As well as the capacities needed for Actions 1, 5, 6, 8 and 10, requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the journey towards best practice (17)	
22	As for 21	As for 21	
23	Requires implementation of the tasks for Actions 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10	As well as the capacities needed for Actions 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10, requires capacities/resources for the ongoing review and evaluation of the journey towards best practice (17).	



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