

## The Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Aspirations Project

The Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) formally recognises that “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) area and have a continuing connection to their land and sea Country” (Commonwealth of Australia 2015, ii). Furthermore, the Plan explicitly recognises that inherent in the effective long-term management of the GBR are the cultural and economic aspirations of the Indigenous communities of Queensland where strong connections with Country continue. “The cultural and ecological knowledge of Traditional Owners will be essential in delivering this plan” (Commonwealth of Australia 2015, 3). Traditional Owners were broadly engaged in the development of the Reef 2050 Plan, including the development of the various outcomes, objectives, targets and actions.

### Project Summary

The Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Aspirations Project is led by Traditional Owners to better understand and reflect aspirations for the protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef and provide this input to improve the Reef 2050 Plan. The Reef 2050 Plan contains Traditional Owner commitments and the Investment Framework identifies Traditional Owner actions as one of six priority areas for future investment.

There are seven themes in the Reef 2050 Plan. Within each of these themes there are actions that relate specifically to engagement with Traditional Owners.

- Ecosystem Health: Six Traditional Owner actions
- Biodiversity: Four Traditional Owner actions
- Heritage: Eight Traditional Owner actions
- Water Quality: One action that is very broad and engages all stakeholders.
- Community Benefits: Three Traditional Owner actions, these actions are very broad and can be made more specific
- Economic Benefits: Two Traditional Owner actions, this can range from ecotourism to environmentally sustainable services
- Governance: Two Traditional Owner actions, the project teams want to know what governance is going to look like going forward, what structure is best suited for the mob inside the GBR.

### Actions

This project is coordinating and consulting with Traditional Owners to make clear the priority actions and funding needed for Traditional Owner involvement in implementing the existing commitments under the Reef 2050 Plan. This project will build on previous work that Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners have undertaken with their partners and will help to create a shared understanding of Traditional Owner rights, responsibilities and aspirations, as presented throughout the Reef 2050 Plan.

The opportunity now is to take another look at the existing actions in the Reef 2050 Plan to see if it meets Traditional Owner needs - now and into the future. The project is actively meeting with Traditional Owners along the length of the Great Barrier Reef from the Torres Strait to Bundaberg to talk about the existing actions in the Reef 2050 Plan and to understand if these actions are still important to Traditional Owners and their sea country. The Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Aspirations Project is also seeking to understand if there are any gaps, problems or worries that Traditional Owners may have about the Reef 2050 Plan that might need to be fixed up. The project will give Traditional Owners the opportunity to discuss larger policy issues concerning the future protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef.

### CONTACT US

**T: +61 (0)7 4050 7400    E: [enquiries@rrrc.org.au](mailto:enquiries@rrrc.org.au)**