



Australian Government



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# Reef 2050 Mid-Term Review

Report From The Reef 2050  
Traditional Owner Project

June 2018



# REEF 2050 MID-TERM REVIEW

## REPORT FROM THE REEF 2050 TRADITIONAL OWNER PROJECT

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Wren, L.<sup>1</sup>, Hill, R.<sup>2</sup>, Evans-Illidge, E.<sup>3</sup>, Dale, A.<sup>4</sup>, George, M.<sup>5</sup>, Fraser, D.<sup>1</sup>, Winer, M.<sup>6</sup>,  
Talbot, L.D.<sup>2</sup> and Morris, S.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), Cairns

<sup>2</sup> CSIRO Land and Water, Cairns

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Marine Science, Townsville

<sup>4</sup> James Cook University's Cairns Institute, Cairns

<sup>5</sup> Northern Australia Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance

<sup>6</sup> Cape York Institute



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## ACRONYMS

<b>AIMS</b>	..... Australian Institute of Marine Science
<b>CSIRO</b>	..... Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
<b>CYI</b>	..... Cape York Institute
<b>DoEE</b>	..... Department of Environment and Energy
<b>GBR</b>	..... Great Barrier Reef
<b>GBRMPA</b>	..... Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
<b>IRAC</b>	..... Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee
<b>JCU</b>	..... James Cook University
<b>NAILSMA</b>	..... North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance
<b>NESP</b>	..... National Environmental Science Programme
<b>RRRC</b>	..... Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited
<b>TO</b>	..... Traditional Owner
<b>TWQ</b>	..... Tropical Water Quality

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), along with key partners North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), Cape York Institute (CYI), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and James Cook University (JCU) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners' continuing sea country management and custodianship of the Great Barrier Reef, as well as their rich cultures, heritage values, enduring connections and shared efforts to care for country for future generations.

Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef welcome the acknowledgement made by partners in identifying Traditional Owner actions as one of six key priority areas for investment under the Reef 2050 Plan's Investment Framework, including the funding provided by The Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP Minister for the Environment and Energy; and supported by Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion Minister for Indigenous Affairs to undertake the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Project.

The RRRC led Consortium members and report authors thank the invited members of the Reef Advisory Committee and the Reef Independent Expert Panel for their feedback and support to date on the commencement of the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Project. We also thank the members of the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee (IRAC) to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) for their insight and constructive feedback towards the project and its engagement processes. Their feedback has been taken on board resulting in the re-casting of critical components of our project implementation.

The authors also thank staff within the Department of the Environment and Energy (DoEE) who contributed to the consolidated review comments on an earlier draft of this report, along with peer reviewers Dr Pethie Lyons and Dr Cass Hunter from CSIRO. Comments received have been incorporated into and improved this final report. We acknowledge the support of our partners, and funding providers from the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy (DoEE), in particular Ms Angela Cameron and Ms Emma Warren from the Reef 2050 Plan Section for their assistance to the RRRC led Consortium.

Consortium members also thank the supporting staff that exist within our organisations for their help provided to us on this project.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Traditional Owners from the Great Barrier Reef have been coming together for many decades to discuss key matters of importance, including exploring larger policy issues concerning their future and the management of their traditional land and sea estates.

The ongoing responsibility under customary lore of Traditional Owners, to continue to govern and manage their sea country and catchments of the Great Barrier Reef, provides the foundational agenda for these deliberations and shapes consistent recommendations put forward to key partners and stakeholders.

Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef are bound to a set of inherent rights and interests that govern all ways of life on Country. The expression of these rights and interests are held specifically and purposefully within the Reef 2050 Plan – Australia's strategic response to the management of the Great Barrier Reef.

There is a need for greater clarity in the linkages between the Reef 2050 Plan, implementation approach, the current Actions and the foundational agenda of Traditional Owners - established through decades of sea country planning and management.

The Australian Government committing to investing in and progressing the current RRRC-led consortium is a major step forward in adopting a more cohesive engagement and ownership approach from Traditional Owners to actions outlined in the Reef 2050 Plan. At this stage of the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Project (Phase1), the key priority is to improve the relationships (and understanding of these relationships) between the Actions, the Implementation Approach, and both the Australian and Queensland governments' and the Traditional Owners agenda's across the Great Barrier Reef region.

While recognising the leadership and responsibility of governments for some of the Traditional Owner Actions is useful, ensuring that these are developed and implemented together with Traditional Owners going forward is vital. Traditional Owners' Actions in the Reef 2050 Plan include 29 Actions that Traditional Owners perceive themselves to have been instrumental in developing and holding key interests in; not only those 27 Actions which they lead, or the 23 specific Actions that are included in the Indigenous Implementation Strategy and listed within the Reef 2050 Investment Framework.

Our initial analysis into the Reef 2050 Mid Term Review (MTR) (March 2018) advised that no Traditional Owner driven Actions were identified as able to be consolidated; easily simplified; or reworded without broad scale consultation with GBR Traditional Owners. It was also recognised that the current actions, while not comprehensive or highly implementable, do target key interests of Traditional Owners.

In response to the Consortium's initial advice of March 2018, the Reef 2050 Joint Team advised that four Traditional Owner Actions will be marked as completed, with a further two Actions identified to be assigned as Principles.

In response to this, further analysis identifies that in the majority of cases, ongoing work is still required to fulfil Traditional Owner goals in relation to these Actions.

We therefore make the following six key recommendations:

1. *Three of the four Traditional Owner Actions currently marked as complete under the Mid Term Review require further work (see also Section 1.3 for detail):*



- RRRC led Consortium agrees with current proposed treatments for HA4 to move to MTR HA2 and MTR HA3
  - RRRC led Consortium does not agree with current proposed treatments for HA5, HA7 (as critical priorities) and GA2; and present revised wording for three new MTR Actions to be included, based on these existing Actions.
    - Replace HA5 with new MTR Action: Implement impact assessment guidelines for Indigenous heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region to ensure effective protection and proper consideration of Traditional Owner advice.
    - Replace HA7 with new MTR GA4: Advise additional (fourth) point: Consolidate Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner heritage data and identify priorities for protective action
    - Replace GA2 with new MTR Action: Facilitate better engagement with Traditional Owners regarding the implementation and review of the Plan's multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee
2. *Two Actions (WQA24 and GA10) proposed for elevation to Principles in how we manage the Reef require further consideration with respect to Traditional Owner interests.*

RRRC Led Consortium would like to understand from the Reef 2050 Joint Team how effective implementation of Principles (as opposed to Actions) will be achieved. What reporting and review processes are/will be put in place to measure effective implementation of Principles?

- WQA24 is a Traditional Owner driven Action. If this treatment is agreed there will be no specific water quality action for Traditional Owners in the revised Reef 2050 Plan (head document); concerns remain that the reclassification of this Action will demote the critical importance of this action to Traditional Owners in the primary strategic plan by redirection through the Reef 2050 WQIP. RRRC Led Consortium advice remains that at this stage this Action is best unchanged until further broad scale consultation with GBR Traditional Owners can inform on appropriate treatment.
- GA10 is an Action that specifies and directly impacts on Traditional Owners and is therefore covered under this review, although not technically considered a Traditional Owner driven Action. Concern remains that reclassification of this Action will simply result in lack of any strategy for implementation.

3. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be Further Tested and Expanded at the May Reef-wide Traditional Owner Workshop and subsequent engagement with Traditional Owners:*

Our analysis suggested that the main problem with the current list of Traditional Owner Actions was that they were rapidly developed to ensure some Traditional Owner influence in the Reef 2050 Plan. Consequently, real ownership and responsibility for oversight and implementation of the actions was poorly developed, leading to limited traction. Traditional Owners, however, have long expressed their desire, and the need for, a far more co-managed and adaptive approach to the governance of the Great Barrier Reef and oversight of these Actions. The May

Reef-wide Traditional Owner Workshop delivered an opportunity and time required to more fully develop the logic and cohesion of these actions, as well as the processes required to ensure implementation. Options for prioritisation and sequencing, including identification of the Actions that are considered a priority for immediate implementation which emerged from the Reef-wide Traditional Owner Workshop, will be further tested through the planned engagement to arrive at a final set of recommendations.

4. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be revised, then endorsed and finalised by Traditional Owners as a key set of recommendations to DoEE in contributing to the commencement of the comprehensive 2020 Review of the Reef 2050 Plan, including recommendations on how Traditional Owners wish to be engaged on the biannual Reef 2050 reporting cycle:*

By the end of this Consortium Project, Traditional Owners will have a clear view and voice concerning the need for revision of the Reef 2050 Plan actions and the processes for progressing more co-managed approaches to governing the GBR into the longer term. Parties with responsibility and accountability for actions will be identified, and the links between individual actions, the Reef 2050 plan and the implementation approach will be clarified, including recommendations made on prioritisation of actions. At this point, there would be value in DoEE considering and communicating potential timelines for the Government (together with the State) negotiating the agreement possible around these actions and processes. These negotiation approaches should be completed in time for consideration under the planned 2020 review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

A much stronger focus on setting up the longer-term co-governance arrangements associated with further planning and implementation of Traditional Owner needs will also emerge through this project and will be included in the final reports.

5. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be supported, in the RIMReP context, through the finalisation and testing of the Traditional Owner-led “Strong Country – Strong People” framework and indicators for monitoring the long term success of Traditional Owner aspects of the Reef 2050 Plan. Further work to scope out the costs of Traditional Owner-driven objective indicators and to support the potential contributions of Traditional Owners to monitoring of biophysical aspects of Reef health be undertaken in this project and provided in the Final Report.*

The Indigenous Heritage Expert Group, supported by CSIRO, is currently leading the development of the Indigenous Heritage component of RIMReP. The IHEG has developed a *Strong People – Strong Country* framework and an initial set of (subjective) indicators. Data to test the framework and provide a baseline of information about the status of Indigenous Heritage and its links to Traditional Owner Wellbeing was collected at the Reef-wide Workshop jointly hosted by the IHEG and RRRC projects from May 1-3 2018. The IHEG has recommended to AIMS that a future monitoring program be adopted that gathers longitudinal data on the subjective views of Traditional Owners of the GBR region using the **Strong Peoples – Strong Country** framework and indicators and has provided an annual costing for this to AIMS. We support this recommendation.

The IHEG project identified that future work is needed to provide Traditional Owner-driven objective indicators and to support the potential contributions of Traditional Owners to

monitoring of biophysical aspects of Reef health. Work will occur in this RRRC project to scope out and cost these further requirements, which have been identified to at least include:

- Providing training and employment for Traditional Owners to collect indicators for a range of the RIMReP monitoring activities
- Supporting Traditional Owner Groups to prepare and update sea country plans, and to engage in joint management of sea country through these plans and other processes
- Supporting Traditional Owners in development of appropriate Traditional Owner-driven participatory two-way indicators in these plans, and through building on their current monitoring of cultural sites, traditional foods and other heritage assets
- Negotiating data sharing agreements with Traditional Owner Groups to enable relevant data to be collected, analysed and scaled across the Reef region.

6. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be supported, in the RIMReP context, through the continuance, finalisation and testing of the **Safeguarding of Indigenous Heritage and Knowledge Project** (DMS4: Develop protocols for managing culturally sensitive information, including negotiating Data Sharing Agreements with Traditional Owners and implementing appropriate storage and handling of this information with Traditional Owners).*

It is strongly recommended this project continues as a focal point to establish best practice standards for actualising information sharing between Traditional Owners and their partners under the Reef 2050 Plan Framework. Further work to scope out next steps for Reef 2050 Partners to enter into and negotiate Data Sharing Agreements with Traditional Owners' is provided for in the Final Project Report by *Markwell and Associates* (June 2018) to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The RRRC led Consortium sees this work as foundational and to be shared and applied across all Reef 2050 Partners and GBR Traditional Owners.

# 1.0 CONTEXT OF THE REEF 2050 TRADITIONAL OWNER ACTIONS

## 1.1 Genesis of the Indigenous Targets and Actions in Reef 2050

In November 2014, the Indigenous Sea Country Policy Group and the Cape York Turtle and Dugong Taskforce Steering Committee (ISCPG and CYTDTSC 2014) provided a report to the Australian Government<sup>1</sup> about ways to support a stronger role for Traditional Owners in achieving sustainability for the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) into the future. In this report, titled *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan Indigenous Targets*, Traditional Owners acknowledged the positive benefits from the Long Term Strategic Plan (LTSP) process that provided another opportunity for dialogue with governments.

The *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan Indigenous Targets* were developed over a six-month period. In July 2014 the Australian Government Department of the Environment engaged Girringun Aboriginal Corporation to develop Indigenous targets for inclusion in the LTSP. Girringun then engaged Ms Melissa George and Mr Gary Lui to develop and manage the project. With the addition of Ms Liz Wren from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority - a Project Steering Committee was established.

Within government, a multi-agency partnership group was established to facilitate the development and implementation of the Reef 2050 LTSP. Ms George, in her capacity as chair of the Reef Indigenous Advisory Committee, was invited to participate in the partnership group as an Indigenous representative. These arrangements provided a flexible and responsive way to ensure Indigenous leadership of the project and resulting report. The final Project Steering Committee comprised; Ms George, (Chair Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee), Mr Lui, (Coordinator/Policy Officer Indigenous Sea Country Policy Group), Ms Wren, (Director Indigenous Partnerships, GBRMPA), A/Prof. Stephan Schnierer (Southern Cross University, Lismore, NSW) and Mr Duane Fraser (Project Coordinator). The Committee met on numerous occasions via teleconference and on a small number of occasions in person. Face-to-face and telephone discussions were also held with Traditional Owners across the GBR region.

The report *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan Indigenous Targets* provided a step in the right direction for Traditional Owner input, but ultimately the necessary timelines were insufficient to support full and effective consultation with Traditional Owners and other Indigenous peoples. As a result, the report was not based on a fully developed and socialised strong platform for delivering the resultant targets and actions in Reef 2050 with strong ongoing support from Traditional Owners and their links to sea country. Nevertheless, Traditional Owners have been involved for many years in sea country management and planning activities, which have provided important opportunities for them to plan how to carry out their cultural and legal responsibilities to manage their sea country. These activities have occurred as a result of their ongoing cultural and customary institutions, and in

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<sup>1</sup> Report was submitted to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Department of Environment and Energy

some cases with the support of government programs. Gunggandji People<sup>2</sup>, for example, explain in their Plan is an expression of their commitment to their country and their culture, to the future generations of Gunggandji People, and to others who depend on their sea environments and resources<sup>3</sup>. By capitalising on this very large body of work done by Traditional Owners over a significant time period, a coherent and robust set of Targets and Actions were identified and aligned with the seven themes of Reef 2050 (ISCPG and CYTDTSC 2014).

## 1.2 Foundational agenda provided by Traditional Owners' Sea Country Planning and Management in the GBR region

While the report *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan Indigenous Targets* clearly stated that the identification of targets and actions built on a foundation of Traditional Owner based sea country planning and management, it was beyond the scope of the report to document that foundation. The National Environmental Science Program's Tropical Water Quality Hub subsequently supported this process of documentation as part of their *Project 3.9: [Indigenous Capacity Building and Increased Participation in Management of Queensland Sea Country](#)*.

Management and governance of sea country are closely related but distinct phenomena (Table 1, Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013; Borrini-Feyerabend and Hill 2015).

**Table 1: The difference between management and governance**

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 Who holds power, authority and responsibility Who is (or should be) held accountable

Co-management refer broadly to situations where two or more actors (for example a government agency and a Traditional Owner group) are working together in the pursuit of an objective such as protecting sea grass beds. Co-governance, on the other hand, refers to situations where two or more actors are sharing power over decisions, such as whether to protect a sea grass bed or use it for marine aquaculture. Traditional Owners hold accountability under customary law for many decisions that affect key places (such as sacred sites), animals (such as totems) and culture (such as whether and how to keep alive knowledge about hunting dugong). The investigation of building Indigenous capacity and participation

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<sup>2</sup> A number of Sea Country Plans have been prepared by Traditional Owners in the GBR region with support from the Australian Government. According to the [Australian Government](#) "Sea Country Plans help Indigenous communities describe their objectives for the use, conservation and management of sea country and to work with others to achieve them."

<sup>3</sup> See [Gunggandji Land and Sea Country Plan](#).

therefore found that issues related to both co-management and co-governance are critical for Traditional Owners in the GRB region.

In the final project report (Dale et al. 2016a), five components were identified as comprising the foundational agenda to advance co-governance and co-management:

**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 possible 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 people (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.

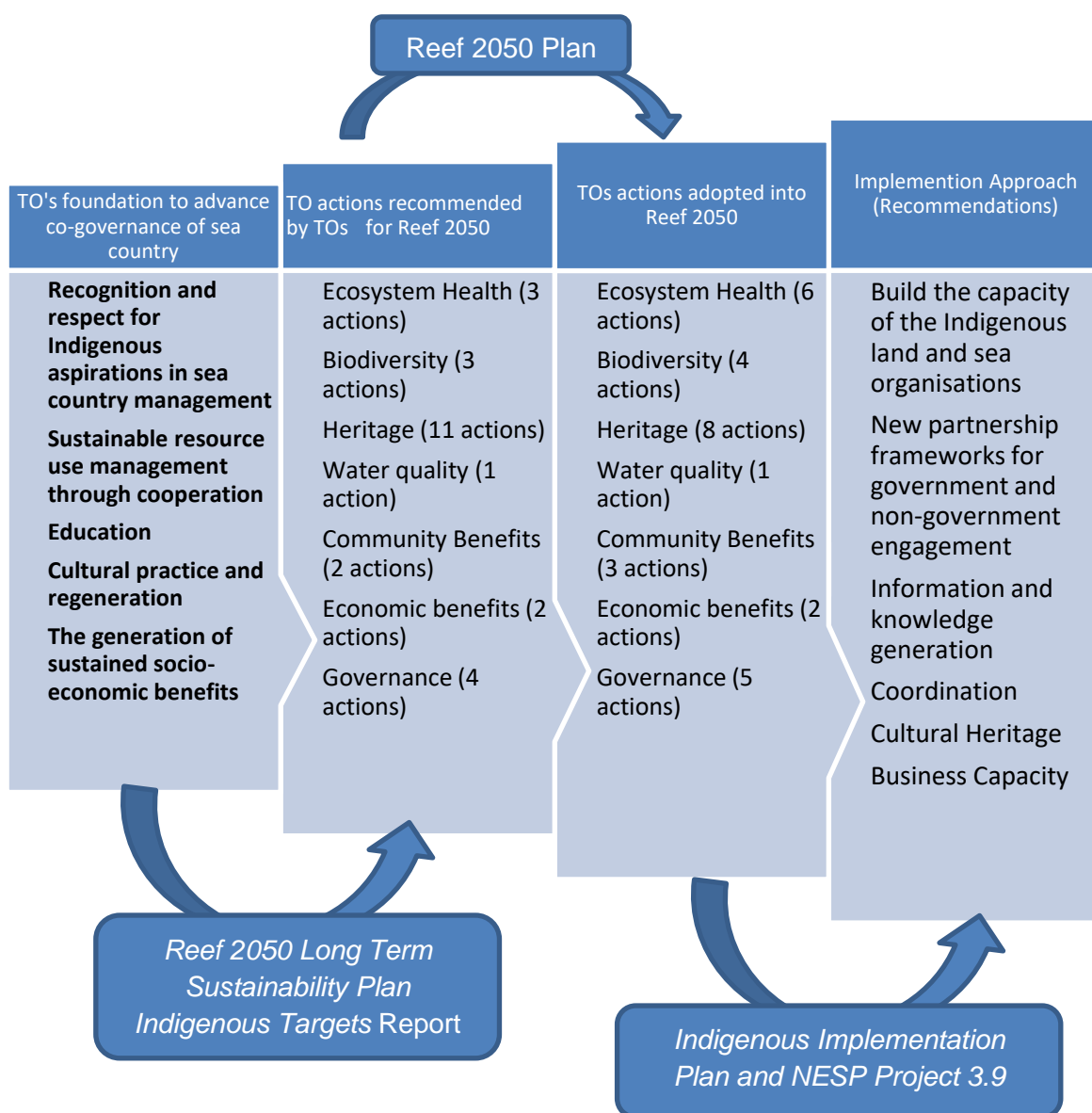
## **5. The generation of sustained socio-economic benefits**

- 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 and 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 part of the poly-centric co-governance system that needs to be able to operate within principles/guidelines that can be negotiated with clusters around nodes at the subregional or whole-of-GBR level.

## **1.3 From the Foundational agenda provided by Traditional Owners to the Implementation Approach**

The sets of actions set out in the *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan Indigenous Targets* were taken forward through a three-step process outlined in Figure 1. The first step was that taken by Indigenous Sea Country Policy Group and the Cape York Turtle and Dugong Taskforce Steering Committee (ISCPG and CYTDTSC 2014) translating the long-term agenda of Traditional Owners into 27 actions spread across the seven themes of the Reef 2050 Plan



**Figure 1: Three steps taking forward the recommended actions in the *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan Indigenous Targets***

The second step involved the re-formulation of these into an agreed set of 29 TO Actions that were included in Reef 2050 (Reef 2050 Advisory Committee completes Indigenous aspirations for effective and adequate representation to a multi-sectoral advisory committee (GA2) is not supported. The establishment of the RAC does not address the issues of Traditional Owners around governance arrangements that recognise their cultural and legal responsibilities in relation to the Reef 2050 Plan. Traditional Owners have identified issues of equity, balance, representation and selection processes to ensure appropriate roles for them within the existing Reef 2050 governance arrangements. While the establishment of the RAC and the IEP are excellent steps forward - having one Indigenous male representative on both (based on expertise) signals that more work is needed to address the issues of governance and representation for Traditional Owners within Reef 2050 arrangements. The RRRC led Consortium acknowledges the comprehensive review of the Plan in 2020 will investigate effectiveness of existing governance arrangements and memberships to inform future



improvements. However, the RRRC led Consortium proposes the Joint Team consider an interim treatment that looks to ensure Traditional Owners of the GBR will be effectively engaged (beyond the resident member(s)) in the process of *implementation* and *review* of the Plan's multi-sectoral RAC. This is to address the fact that the current Indigenous RAC member is independently appointed and not representative.

We therefore recommend that GA2 remains ongoing and to this end recommend a new Mid-Term Review Action is applied to address this:

- Replace GA2 with new MTR Action: Facilitate better engagement with Traditional Owners regarding the implementation and review of the Plan's multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee.

In summary, the changes made by the Reef 2050 Joint Team have not fully addressed our concerns, and we continue to recommend the following (see

Table 2):

Table 2. For the mid-term review, these actions have been reviewed by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and a number of changes proposed.

We strongly recommend that the *intent* of these Actions remain unchanged at this point. The first important reason for this recommendation is that these proposals for change have been made without consultation with Traditional Owners—starting this consultation process by announcing that the decisions have already been made would very much undermine the credibility of the Joint Team and Reef 2050 Partners, as well as the work of the Consortium. The second important reason is that the proposals do not take account of the Traditional Owners' goals and perspectives in relation to these Actions. For example, the GBRMPA proposal is that Action HA4 be marked as complete because of the Commonwealth Heritage Listed Places and Properties Heritage Strategy 2018-2021. However, this Strategy essentially does not address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage in the Marine Park as it focuses on those heritage values that are registered on the Commonwealth Heritage List under the *EPBC Act* – comprising mostly historic heritage values associated with lighthouses. The only mention of Indigenous heritage is concerning the value recognised for Low Isle Light station. Furthermore this is a foundational activity for the Authority and mandated under the *EPBC Act*.

The Authority's Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy does signal the objectives to deal comprehensively with heritage of significance to Traditional Owners – however this Strategy is not yet finalised - recently concluding its public consultation period (closed 26 April 2018). Even once completed, the implementation of such a Strategy (particularly its prioritisation) is of ongoing interest to Traditional Owners, who are very likely to consider the Action ongoing. In any case, the completion and implementation of the Strategy itself is work to be conducted into the future and therefore the Action cannot logically be considered complete. In addition, this Draft Strategy only addresses the heritage issues in the GBR Marine Park, and not across all the GBR catchments. Queensland Government and Local Government Indigenous heritage strategies and actions are not addressed by Authority's Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy. During the course of this project the RRRC led Consortium will seek to understand in deeper detail how other relevant Reef 2050 Partners are also reporting progress against these Traditional Owner Actions.

We welcome the DoEE's decision to include two new actions:

- MTR (Mid-Term Review) HA2 – Implement the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Commonwealth Heritage Listed Places and Properties Heritage Strategy 2018—21*.

- MTR HA3 – Finalise and implement the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park*.

Similarly, the proposal that HA5 is considered complete due to the publication of Guidelines is problematic. These guidelines have been developed by GBRMPA to cover the jurisdiction of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. However do not consider those aspects of impact assessment for cultural heritage that relates to the Great Barrier Reef Region – inclusive of the adjacent coastal areas. Whilst a step in the right direction, it does not meet Traditional Owners' requirements for increased protection of their heritage through effective assessment processes and therefore should remain ongoing.

The current system for assessing whether an action(s) will have an impact on Traditional Owner heritage falls well short of Traditional Owners requirements. RRRC led Consortium advises that whilst GBRMPA Guidelines are completed, Traditional Owners articulate ongoing problems with (effectiveness) impact assessments and permitting processes across the Marine Park and related catchment areas (ie Region). It is acknowledged that solid improvements have been realised for the Woppaburra Traditional Owners (Keppel Islands area of the Marine Park), in partnership between the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Woppaburra Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement (TUMRA) Steering Committee, for development of specific guidelines that assists permit applicants consider how their activities impact on Traditional Owner values. However, we report that significant problems persist for a majority of other Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners across the Reef. Traditional Owners seek impact assessments for both land and sea (across **both** Commonwealth and State jurisdictions) be made to account as an **effective process** that properly considers their decision-making processes, advice and increases protection of their heritage values. At present, with the Guidelines in place, this is not happening to a satisfactory level outside of the specific Woppaburra Guidelines. Traditional Owners are looking to their partners to ensure that benefits of impact assessment practices for Indigenous cultural heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region demonstrate effectiveness - not simply that a product has been developed. For these reasons, Traditional Owner Heritage Action HA5 is not considered complete.

We recognise the positive benefits of the decision of DoEE to keep HA6 as ongoing, and furthermore that work to address Traditional Owner's concerns about impact guidelines (HA5) aligns to this action (HA6), but are not duplicative. These actions should continue to stand alone until further advice can be sought from Traditional Owners. We also recognise that the Authority's Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy does include relevant Outcomes and Actions for HA 6:

O2.4 Integrate Traditional Owner knowledge and input into our environmental assessment and permitting process

A2.4.1 Develop and implement place-specific Assessment Guidelines which outline and map Indigenous heritage values for specific Traditional Owner sea country and groups, and establish engagement protocols for consultation on permit applications.

O2.1 Incorporate Indigenous heritage information into our processes

A2.1.1 Develop and implement information sharing agreements and cultural protocols with Traditional Owner organisations to allow culturally appropriate access to traditional knowledge for management.

With respect to HA7, this action is considered by the RRRC led Consortium to not be addressed by a combination of HA1; HA3; nor superseded by MTR HA3 and MTR GA4, and strongly recommends its retention in the Revised Reef 2050 Plan. It is an important this Traditional Owner Action is retained as stand alone. Whilst capacity building and engagement processes (HA1, HA3) are important components to this work, they do not adequately cover the intent for data consolidation and prioritisation for protective measures (HA7).

There is insufficient/limited (if any) reef wide Indigenous heritage data generated/stored to date that meets specified data standards (based on required uses e.g. this is currently being designed under RIMREP) that would satisfy the process of 'consolidation'. Nor is there sufficient reef wide Indigenous heritage data stored and/or maintained now that would establish management ability to comprehensively identify and prioritise heritage value place-based protective action. We acknowledge and support two current projects under RIMReP that are in design phases, scheduled for completion by 30 June 2018, as being essential to achieving implementation of all Reef 2050 Heritage Traditional Owner Actions, including HA7. These are: 1) Program Design Indigenous Heritage Indicators and 2) the Data Management System Project 4 (DMS4 Protocol; Guidelines and Data Sharing Agreements). These projects are without doubt critical to establish purposeful data standards and enable ethical and culturally appropriate sourcing of data and information, which is required for synthesis and analysis, for the purpose of improved management and protection. These two projects have started to establish foundational systems/procedures to source/negotiate information that is structured to meet specified data standards and management uses. MTR GA4 is currently not worded adequately enough to effectively cover off on this Traditional Owner Action (HA7). It requires the addition of a specified point about Traditional Owner heritage data.

We also advise that HA5 and HA7 need to be classified as ongoing in recognition that reporting on these Actions as complete appears to have only been considered within the GBR Marine Park, and does not address the full geographical footprint of the Reef 2050 Plan or the full set of relevant Queensland and Local Government legislative and regulatory instruments. In addition, we suggest the addition of two Mid-Term Review Actions that focus specifically on the Indigenous heritage aspects of HA5 and HA7:

- Replace HA5 with new MTR Action: Implement impact assessment guidelines for Indigenous heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region to ensure effective protection and proper consideration of Traditional Owner advice..
- Replace HA7 with new MTR GA4: Advise additional (fourth) point: Consolidate Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner heritage data and identify priorities for protective action

The proposal to change WQA24 is also not supported by our analysis. WQA24 was submitted as part of the original documentation from Traditional Owners to inform development of the Reef 2050 Plan. Traditional Owners have a significant interest in water quality and increased inclusion of and recognition for their interest and work around water quality is a key objective. Removal of this Action to a Principle will result in a lack of appropriate monitoring and reporting, with a risk their work will be rendered invisible. In addition, removal of this Action will greatly undermine Traditional Owner confidence in the process leading to the 2020 Review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

We do however welcome DoEE's advice the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (Reef 2050 WQIP) incorporates specific Traditional Owner actions. We aim to respond positively in

our later reports to the request for advice from the Consortium on what other activities could be included.

Similarly the proposal that the establishment of the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee completes Indigenous aspirations for effective and adequate representation to a multi-sectoral advisory committee (GA2) is not supported. The establishment of the RAC does not address the issues of Traditional Owners around governance arrangements that recognise their cultural and legal responsibilities in relation to the Reef 2050 Plan. Traditional Owners have identified issues of equity, balance, representation and selection processes to ensure appropriate roles for them within the existing Reef 2050 governance arrangements. While the establishment of the RAC and the IEP are excellent steps forward - having one Indigenous male representative on both (based on expertise) signals that more work is needed to address the issues of governance and representation for Traditional Owners within Reef 2050 arrangements. The RRRC led Consortium acknowledges the comprehensive review of the Plan in 2020 will investigate effectiveness of existing governance arrangements and memberships to inform future improvements. However, the RRRC led Consortium proposes the Joint Team consider an interim treatment that looks to ensure Traditional Owners of the GBR will be effectively engaged (beyond the resident member(s)) in the process of *implementation* and *review* of the Plan's multi-sectoral RAC. This is to address the fact that the current Indigenous RAC member is independently appointed and not representative.

We therefore recommend that GA2 remains ongoing and to this end recommend a new Mid-Term Review Action is applied to address this:

- Replace GA2 with new MTR Action: Facilitate better engagement with Traditional Owners regarding the implementation and review of the Plan's multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee.

In summary, the changes made by the Reef 2050 Joint Team have not fully addressed our concerns, and we continue to recommend the following (see

Table 2):

**Table 2: Traditional Owner actions in the Reef 2050 Plan according to Themes**

Reef 2050 Theme	Traditional Owner Actions	Australian Govern. MTR.	RRRC Recomm.
Ecosystem Health	EHA1 Acknowledge Traditional Owners in new and existing policy and plans	Ongoing	Ongoing
	EHA2 Incorporate and prioritise Traditional Owners' planning into existing and future ecosystem policies and programs.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	EHA3 Support Traditional Owner stewardship activities that contribute to Reef health and resilience, including removing and, where possible, identifying sources of marine debris.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	EHA4 Develop further agreements with Traditional Owners addressing management of ecosystems within their traditional estates.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	EHA 5 Develop, implement and coordinate a protocol and knowledge management systems for: recording, storing,	Ongoing	Ongoing

Reef 2050 Theme	Traditional Owner Actions	Australian Govern. MTR.	RRRC Recomm.
	protecting, and where appropriate, sharing of knowledge, innovation and practices; conserving and cultural use of biocultural diversity; and use in decision making.		
	EHA 27 Implement on-ground activities to reduce the volume of debris generated in or entering the WHA, and undertake education and awareness raising activities to minimise the source and occurrence of marine debris. (not a specified TO activity but included in the Reef 2050 Indigenous Implementation Plan)	Ongoing	Ongoing
Biodiversity	BA1 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.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	BA2 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.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	BA3 Improve Traditional Owner engagement to strengthen participation in decision making at all levels relating to the conservation and cultural use of biodiversity.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	BA4 Work with Traditional Owners to build capacity to record and manage traditional ecological knowledge and prioritise research to address key Indigenous knowledge gaps.	Ongoing	Ongoing
Heritage	HA1 Build capacity for the involvement of Traditional Owners and community members in cooperative management, planning and impact assessment.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	HA2 Work with a support Traditional Owners to collect, store and manage their cultural heritage information.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	HA3 Improve engagement processes for assessment of cultural heritage values to inform decision making.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	HA4 Update the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Heritage Strategy 2005 to more comprehensively address Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage.	Complete <sup>4</sup>	Agree <sup>5</sup>
	MTRHA2 Implement the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Commonwealth Heritage Listed Places and Properties Heritage Strategy 2018—21.	New Action	Agree
	MTRHA3 Finalise and implement the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Aboriginal and Torres Strait	New Action	Agree

<sup>4</sup>The Australian Government notes as complete because the Commonwealth Heritage Listed Places and Properties Heritage Strategy 2018-2021 and accompanying suite of documents was been approved by the Australian Heritage Council and Department of the Environment and Energy in January 2018.

<sup>5</sup> RRRC recommends this as ongoing. Although relevant work will occur through MTRHA3 to finalised and implement Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. In addition, TOs have aspirations to continue to more comprehensively address Indigenous heritage outside the geographical and institutional footprint of the Marine Park.

Reef 2050 Theme	Traditional Owner Actions	Australian Govern. MTR.	RRRC Recomm.
	Islander Heritage Strategy for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.		
	HA5 Develop impact assessment guidelines for cultural heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region.	Complete <sup>6</sup>	Ongoing <sup>7</sup>
	MTR to replace HA5 <i>Implement impact assessment guidelines for Indigenous heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region to ensure effective protection and proper consideration of Traditional Owner advice</i>		New Action
	HA6 Facilitate robust consideration of heritage values in planning processes, including port development and associated activities.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	HA7 Consolidate Reef heritage data and identify priorities for protective action	Complete <sup>4</sup>	Ongoing <sup>5</sup>
	MTR GA4 (to replace HA7) addition to include as a fourth point: <i>Consolidate Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner heritage data and identify priorities for protective action</i>	New Action	Additional point
	HA11 Further identify, map, monitor and report on key Reef heritage values and sites, including comprehensive maritime surveys in priority sections of the Reef.	Ongoing	Ongoing
Water Quality	WQA24 Identify and action opportunities for Traditional Owners, industry and community engagement in on-ground water quality improvement and monitoring programs.	Principle <sup>8</sup>	Ongoing
Community Benefits	CBA1 Review current mechanisms and processes to improve benefits to Traditional Owners engagement in sea country management	Ongoing	Ongoing
	CBA2 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.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	CBA3 Develop collaborative working arrangements with Traditional Owners which establish mutual trust and build Indigenous capacity.	Ongoing	Ongoing
Economic Benefits	EBA1 Development 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.	Ongoing	Ongoing

<sup>6</sup> The Australian Government comments recommend this be classified as complete because the guidelines were published in 2017 and can be found here: <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/zoning-permits-and-plans/permits>.

<sup>7</sup> Initially recommended as ongoing, RRRC now accepts this as complete because HA6 provides opportunities for Traditional Owners to work on improvements that bring their knowledge and values into impact assessment. These aspirations are not fully implemented in the guidelines but can continue to be addressed under HA6.

<sup>8</sup> The Australian Government comments recommend this as a Principle in Reef 250, as the planning components are replaced by the Reef Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP).

Reef 2050 Theme	Traditional Owner Actions	Australian Govern. MTR.	RRRC Recomm.
	EBA2 Assist Traditional Owners to be business-ready and have improved capacity to generate economic benefits from use and management of their traditional estates.	Ongoing	Ongoing
Governance	GA2 Convene a multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee to facilitate engagement with industry and the broader community regarding the implementation and review of the Plan.	Complete <sup>9</sup>	Ongoing <sup>10</sup>
	MTR Action to replace GA2 Facilitate better engagement with Traditional Owners regarding the implementation and review of the Plan's multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee		New Action
	GA7 Support cross-cultural training in relation to Traditional Owner culture and perspectives	Ongoing	Ongoing
	GA10 Work with Traditional owners, industry, regional bodies, local governments, research institutions, and the community to inform delivery of local and regional actions.	Principle	Ongoing <sup>11</sup>
	GA11 Improve Traditional Owner participation in governance arrangements for protection and management of the Reef.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	GA12 Prioritise and develop specific implementation plans and reporting protocols addressing the Plan's targets and actions in consultation with the community	Ongoing	Ongoing

## 1.4 Developing the Implementation Approach

The third step involved consideration of how these actions might be implemented by Traditional Owners and their partners. This third step of developing the “Implementation Approach” occurred in two parts. The National Environmental Science Program’s Tropical Water Quality Hub *Project 3.9 [Indigenous Capacity Building and Increased Participation in Management of Queensland Sea Country](#)* worked with Traditional Owners across to GBR region to answer two questions:

- i) what does it require to deliver this action in practice?
- ii) what capacities are needed to deliver the target?

From responses to these questions, and consideration of the foundational agenda of Traditional Owners (Dale et al. 2016b), three key actions were identified, each with a number of sub-actions.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Government notes that the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee has been established. This action was marked as complete in the [2016 Annual Report](#).

<sup>10</sup> RRRC recommends this remains ongoing as the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee arrangements do not meet Traditional Owner Aspirations.

<sup>11</sup> RRRC identified risks in moving this to a Principle, including lack of clarity of how it will be implemented. In addition, such a change at the beginning of our consultation with Traditional Owners is likely to undermine the credibility of this Project.

1. The core task is to build strength and capacity of local Indigenous land and sea management organisations through Traditional Owner driven:
  - a. Sea-country planning
  - b. Knowledge management systems, sharing of Traditional Owner technologies
  - c. Rangers and on-ground work
  - d. Business planning and development
  - e. Network building across Indigenous organisations
2. Partnership frameworks are required for government and NGO engagement that include:
  - a. Local Indigenous Marine Advisory Committees (LIMAC)
  - b. A Big Marine Advisory Committee that links LIMACs together for GBR-wide forum
  - c. Continued support for the Indigenous Reef Advisory Committee
  - d. The development of planning, management and compliance agreements
3. Support for open engagement with information/ knowledge generation is critical by:
  - a. Information-provision to Traditional Owners
  - b. Research (monitoring, values of sea country management, impact assessment)
  - c. Implementation of TWQ Hub Indigenous Engagement Strategy.

The other part of developing the implementation approach occurred through the formulation of the “Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan - Indigenous Implementation Plan” (Commonwealth of Australia 2016). The development of this Plan was led by a team involving Traditional Owners and expert representatives, based on targeted and open consultations with Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef. The report highlights some general findings and identifies three key areas (which intersect with most of the Traditional Owner actions in the Reef 2050 Plan) to focus on as priorities for implementation:

1. Coordination
  - a. A coordinated approach for Traditional Owners to liaise with government and industry on Reef matters.
  - b. A coordinated approach for government and industry stakeholders to liaise with Traditional Owner groups on Reef matters.
  - c. Coordination of monitoring and reporting on delivery of Reef 2050 actions.
2. Cultural Heritage
  - a. Introducing a multi-tiered system with permissions will protect information
  - b. One-stop shop for Traditional Owners, governments and stakeholders to hold, access and share information safely.
  - c. Greater protection of cultural heritage and mitigation of potential impacts on cultural values.



- d. Traditional knowledge capture and sharing will facilitate partnerships with Western science, increase traditional knowledge involvement in planning and policies and most importantly protect and retain the knowledge for future generations.
3. Business Capacity
- a. Greater involvement and partnerships will increase the value of work being undertaken on country.
  - b. This will lead to greater opportunities and sustainability within the Ranger programs.
  - c. Greater business capacity will lead to more opportunities to deliver outcomes from actions in the 2050 Plan.

## 1.5 Monitoring and Reporting

As noted above, the Indigenous Heritage Expert Group is engaged in developing a framework and indicators for monitoring and reporting. The Indigenous Heritage Expert Group (IHEG) was created to advise on the design of the Indigenous heritage theme of the Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP), in a context where it has been recognised that the most striking gap in socio-economic monitoring was the absence of monitoring pertaining to Traditional Owner (TO) use, dependency and wellbeing. The IHEG reviewed a series of Traditional Owner-driven monitoring frameworks implemented throughout Australia. Many of these frameworks applied an inclusive definition of wellbeing, or the personal, physical, social, economic, and environmental factors of human life, as the focus of monitoring. However, the IHEG determined that the most successful frameworks were biocultural—connecting Indigenous community wellbeing with country wellbeing through stories and statistics. With this knowledge, the IHEG developed a unique framework, *Strong Peoples – Strong Country*, for Traditional Owners to monitor the Great Barrier Reef (GBR), and its catchments (GBR region); and thereby track Traditional Owners' perceptions of the status of Indigenous heritage, and progress on the Traditional Owner objectives, targets and actions in the Reef 2050 Plan. The framework and indicators provide for monitoring of the condition of the Indigenous heritage asset, and for monitoring progress on achieving the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner objectives, targets and actions.

The IHEG identified six key domains (or “hubs”) relevant to *Strong Peoples – Strong Country*: country health; people’s health; heritage and knowledge; culture and community; education; and empowerment and economics (Figure 2).



Figure 2: The *Strong Peoples – Strong Country* framework for monitoring Indigenous heritage in RIMReP

Together these hubs encompass Traditional Owners' understandings of the connections between the people and their country across, and underpinned by, the GBR Region. While there is no particular order of where to begin with the "hubs", Traditional Owners' connection to land and sea country is viewed as being primary to their heritage information. Everything else flows from the important consideration of the Country being healthy, including all other factors that contribute to Traditional Owner well-being. Forty-five 'Impact Measures' for each of these six hubs were uniquely described using the worldviews of Indigenous peoples in the GBR Region. For example, education is learning from elders, training, and a passion to learn; and health includes spirituality, access to traditional medicines, and access to medical services.

The intention was to cross-validate the *Strong Peoples – Strong Country* framework with statistical tests of perceived strength of linkages among Traditional Owner attendees at a Reef-wide Workshop held in Cairns on 1-3 May. However, the limited sample size restricted the statistical tests available. Nevertheless, the indicative results from our analysis are promising. Overall, the *Strong Peoples – Strong Country* framework was found to provide a good basis for future work. We mapped the Impact Measures against the Reef 2050 TO objectives and actions (Appendix One) and the Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy (Appendix Two) and found the framework to be capable of tracking trends in asset condition. We also identified an opportunity to spatially locate data from each Traditional Owner group, enabling us to map trends across the region, which will make the framework even more useful.

The IHEG project team also undertook an initial data collection at the Reef-wide Workshop held in Cairns on 1-3 May. Free, prior and informed consent was sought from Traditional

Owners prior to the survey completion, through provision of relevant information and a question on the front page for Traditional Owners to tick the box providing their consent. These data have the potential to provide a baseline assessment of the condition of Indigenous heritage once the Draft Strategy is finalised, and an appropriate dash-board has been developed to support Appendix Two. Currently the data demonstrate that there is dissatisfaction with the wellbeing of Traditional Owners of the GBR land and sea country, and thereby with the status of their Indigenous heritage, mainly relating to the Empowerment and Economics domain. Thus a clear message is highlighted – to improve the condition of Indigenous heritage, future actions should empower Traditional Owners, and improve their economic prospects.

The project identified that future work is needed to provide Traditional Owner-driven objective indicators and to support the potential contributions of Traditional Owners to monitoring of biophysical aspects of Reef health. The current contract between the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre and Australian Government's Department of Environment and Energy for the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Aspirations Project includes services to "Develop an approach to support Traditional Owner engagement in monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities as part of the Reef 2050 Plan reporting" with a final report due in October 2018. This project will therefore scope out and cost these further requirements, which we have identified to at least include:

- Providing training and employment for Traditional Owners to collect indicators for a range of the RIMReP monitoring activities
- Supporting Traditional Owner Groups to prepare and update sea country plans, and to engage in joint management of sea country through these plans and other processes
- Supporting Traditional Owners in development of appropriate Traditional Owner-driven participatory two-way indicators in these plans, and through building on their current monitoring of cultural sites, traditional foods and other heritage assets
- Negotiating data sharing agreements with Traditional Owner Groups to enable relevant data to be collected, analysed and scaled across the Reef region.

The IHEG recommends that a future monitoring program be adopted that gathers longitudinal data on the subjective views of Traditional Owners of the GBR region using the *Strong Peoples – Strong Country* framework and indicators and provides an annual costing for this (Table 13). Costing of the implementation of the objective indicators cannot be provided at this stage, but will be available upon completion of this Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Aspirations Project in October 2018.

## **2.0 WHAT IS BEHIND THE REEF 2050 TO ACTIONS**

The ongoing responsibility under customary law of Traditional Owners to continue to govern and manage their sea country and catchments of the Great Barrier Reef provides the foundational agenda, as outlined above. Substantial scholarship and policy action has been developed to support the interface between customary law obligations, and nation-state laws and policy. In addition, customary obligations overlap the obligations of governments within the context of the Reef 2050 Plan. In this section, we provide a table which details the policy and science background to the TO Actions, selected on the basis of their salience, and the points of overlap with other parts of the Reef 2050 Plan (Table 3).

**Table 3: Policy and science supporting the TO Actions in Reef 2050, and linkages with the Reef 2050 Actions**

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
Ecosystem Health (6)	Acknowledge Traditional Owners in new and existing policy and plans. [EHA1]	<p>Adopts best practice principles, that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the management of the Great Barrier Reef as Traditional Owners with inherent rights and interests</li> <li>• Respect Traditional Owners' cultural rights and responsibilities to protect country and practice Lores and custom</li> <li>• Respect the diversity of Traditional Owners' heritage values, knowledge, cultures, history, connections and aspirations</li> <li>• Recognise Traditional Owners assert the Great Barrier Reef is a living, cultural landscape</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgement/ public awareness of Traditional Owner groups' values/ connection to place</li> <li>• The Australian Government has now officially endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which establishes a set of principles for respecting Indigenous rights (United Nations 2008)</li> <li>• There are more than 70 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owner clan groups that have long continuing relationships with the Great Barrier Reef region and its natural resources. This unique relationship was recognised at the time of World Heritage inscription (1981) and forms an important part of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area</li> <li>• Identifies Traditional Owners as the first peoples of the Great Barrier Reef and provides recognition and respect for inherent rights</li> <li>• Traditional Owners' relationship with Country according to customary lore carries responsibility for managing those parts of the land or sea, and associated biodiversity</li> <li>• Drives change to improve broader partner (community, research, industry and government) understanding that Traditional Owners are not by-standers or stakeholders living on the Great Barrier Reef but an integral part of supporting the Reef's ecological, social, economic, cultural and heritage values.</li> <li>• Need to address the real impacts of exclusionary biodiversity conservation policies: (i) the denial of rights to land; (ii) restrictions on the use of and access to natural resources; and (iii) denial of political rights (Fortwangler 2003). Kinship systems are disrupted, local networks lost, traditional leadership systems disrupted or destroyed, and poverty further entrenched (Battiste 2000; Colchester 2004). Links to Governance.</li> <li>• Information for use in promotion and signage</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
	Incorporate and prioritise Traditional Owner's planning into existing and future ecosystem policy and programs. [EHA2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification and integration of relevant Traditional Owner aspirations, actions and targets (inclusive of community-based action planning) within reef 2050 agreements, policies, plans, strategies and programs to ensure integrated implementation (and not standalone/bolt on);</li> <li>• Improving awareness of Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners' and their role in protecting the Reef and its value, including active management of culturally significant species/ habitats;</li> <li>• Recognising and harnessing the significant capacity of Traditional Owners on-country to meaningfully contribute to and improve ecosystem policy and planning.</li> <li>• Promoting voluntary action under customary lore to protect reef recovery species, especially voluntary moratoria on take; and</li> <li>• Delivering improved compliance with measures to protect reef recovery species through Capacity Building of Indigenous Rangers Strategy (CBIRS) – joint partnerships with Australian and State government management agencies (FMP/PM&amp;C) and research organisations.</li> </ul>
	Support Traditional Owner stewardship activities that contribute to Reef health and resilience, including removing and, where possible, identifying the sources of marine debris. [EHA3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of Traditional Owners active participation in stewardship activities such as COTS management; marine-debris; restoration activities in the Great Barrier Reef Region (coastal catchment plus Commonwealth and State Marine Parks);</li> <li>• Establishment of restoration demonstration site(s), with supporting communication material, to test, improve and where appropriate scale-up restoration methods;</li> <li>• Develop guidance for partners to improve their engagement practices for the active participation of Traditional Owners in restoration activities.</li> </ul>
	Develop further agreements with Traditional Owners addressing management of ecosystems within their traditional estates [EHA4]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognised and respected as a legitimate partner in the management of the Great Barrier Reef based on inherent rights, interests and responsibilities to Country.</li> <li>• Traditional Owners incorporate specific management strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of key species and habitats; restoring and maintaining waterways and coastal ecosystems, maintenance and protection of significant heritage values including important places, traditional ecological knowledge, culture and language; research and monitoring of sea country.</li> <li>• In-situ Eyes and Ears for enhanced compliance efforts – improved intelligence; reducing risk of unlawful activities occurring in the Marine Park.</li> <li>• 17 Inspectors powers delegated to Indigenous community rangers within the Great Barrier Reef under the GBRMP Act.</li> <li>• Recognition that such collaboration as agreement making and partnerships are likely to improve the health of landscapes and biodiversity.</li> <li>• Indigenous engagement in biodiversity management activities is associated with better human health, including lowered rates of diabetes and cardio-vascular disease.</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
	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 [EHA5]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases opportunities for identification, documentation, storage, management and use of information to safeguard Traditional Owner Knowledge</li> <li>Recognise the valuable contribution that Traditional Owner Knowledge and its potential to improve planning and management of land and sea country.</li> <li>Ensure protection of heritage values through culturally tailored system design and user training - paramount to safeguarding Traditional Owner Knowledge</li> <li>Identification, documentation, storage, management and use of Indigenous Knowledge must be based on Free, Prior and Informed Consent</li> <li>Traditional Owner Knowledge is stored in a way that ensures proper recognition and attribution</li> <li>Access and use of Traditional Owner Knowledge must comply with the terms of the consent given</li> <li>RIMReP Data Sharing Agreement Project Number 4 is seen as critical to progressing this action</li> <li>RIMReP Program Design: Indigenous Heritage Indicators is critical to progressing this action</li> </ul>
	Implement on-ground activities to reduce the volume of debris generated in or entering the WHA, and undertake education and awareness raising activities to minimise the source and occurrence of marine debris. (not a specified TO activity but included in the Reef 2050 Indigenous Implementation Plan) [EHA 27]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several Indigenous communities are particularly adversely affected by marine debris due to the directions of sea currents resulting in large amounts of debris on their country</li> <li>Many Indigenous communities have been active and innovative in response to marine debris, including through artwork that raises awareness nationally</li> <li>Culturally significant species such as turtles, dolphins, dugong and others are adversely affected by marine debris</li> <li>Bringing Traditional Owner knowledge and perspectives into all marine debris programs will greatly strengthen those programs</li> </ul>
Biodiversity (4)	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. [BA1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural dimensions of Indigenous-biodiversity relationships are embedded in connections to place and place-based cultural practices that collectively represent the Indigeneity of that particular group (Posey 2002)</li> <li>Recognition of the value of traditional knowledge inherent in the customary use of biological diversity, and its contribution to improved protocols and protected area management outcomes.</li> <li>Improve shared understanding around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander techniques for sustainable harvesting of materials (plants and animals); including how knowledge may be incorporated into innovative technologies.</li> <li>Links Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements/Compliance Management Plans</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RIMReP DMS4 is seen as critical to progressing this action</li> <li>• RIMReP Indigenous Heritage Indicators is critical to progressing this action</li> <li>• Links to HA4: GBRMPA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy</li> </ul>
	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. [BA2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBR Traditional Owners practice a sustainable 'living maritime culture'; provide traditional food for families and educate younger generations about traditional and cultural rules, protocols and activities in sea country</li> <li>• Country is a term that includes land, sea, coast, air and water, and represents all the stories therein, charting the history of the people and the law pertaining to its management.</li> <li>• Identification of biophysical areas that are most culturally important</li> <li>• Information that can convert into spatial mapping</li> <li>• Protection of and recognition for species of plants and animals with medicinal, food or other cultural values</li> <li>• Cultural imperatives linking species to Traditional Owner roles and responsibilities drive use of the species. The preservation and assertion of the right to hunt/access resources are seen to affirm the environmental value of the species ((Nursesey-Bray et al. 2010) – links to heritage actions.</li> <li>• Links to Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements/Compliance Management Plans</li> </ul>
	Improve Traditional Owner engagement to strengthen participation in decision making at all levels relating to the conservation and cultural use of biodiversity. [BA3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The history of Indigenous peoples in both colonial and contemporary times has ramifications for Indigenous relationship to biodiversity. There are two elements to consider here: (a) the overwhelming socio-economic disadvantage arising from the historical legacy of colonisation; and (b) the disruption to Indigenous biodiversity relationships arising from many biodiversity management and conservation regimes. Indigenous peoples globally have experienced loss, dispossession, dislocation and endured attempts at genocide, assimilation and high rates of death and disease since colonisation (Nursesey-Bray and Hill 2010)</li> <li>• Traditional Owner voices to be heard at all levels (no barriers to age, gender, sexuality)</li> <li>• Greater Traditional Owner engagement will result in more traditional knowledge being made available for management, and improve decision making at all levels.</li> </ul>
	Work with Traditional Owners to build capacity to record and manage traditional ecological knowledge and prioritise research to address key Indigenous knowledge gaps. [BA4]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Owners are experts and owners of their heritage and knowledge</li> <li>• Greater Traditional Owner engagement will result in more traditional knowledge being made available for management, and improve decision making at all levels.</li> </ul>



Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RIMReP Data Sharing Agreement Project Number 4 is seen as critical to progressing this action</li> <li>• RIMReP Program Design: Indigenous Heritage Indicators is critical to progressing this action</li> </ul>
Heritage (8)	Build capacity for the involvement of Traditional Owners and community members in cooperative management, planning and impact assessment. [HA1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to Ecosystem Health (EHA2; EHA4)</li> <li>• Links to Biodiversity (BA3)</li> <li>• Links to Heritage (HA1; HA3; HA6)</li> <li>• Links to Community Benefits (CBA1; CBA2)</li> <li>• Links to Economic Participation (EBA1; EBA2)</li> </ul>
	Work with and support Traditional Owners to collect, store and manage their own cultural heritage information. [HA2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RIMReP Data Sharing Agreement Project Number 4 is seen as critical to progressing this action</li> <li>• RIMReP Program Design: Indigenous Heritage Indicators is critical to progressing this action</li> <li>• Link HA4</li> <li>• Links to foundational activities including Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements; Compliance Management Plans; Indigenous Rangers and Specialised Indigenous Rangers (Compliance)</li> <li>• Links to Sea Country Planning</li> </ul>
	Improve engagement processes for assessment of cultural heritage values to inform decision making. [HA3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of heritage values, through better practice (Traditional Owner) engagement inclusive of Free, Prior Informed Consent is required by Management Agencies to ensure they make informed decisions in accordance with legislation. Those heritage values of particular significance to Traditional Owners must be taken into account by regulatory agencies,</li> <li>• Identify locations of Traditional Owner heritage values for consideration in planning and permitting processes</li> <li>• Investigate both market and non-market valuation techniques for protecting cultural heritage sites and/or other new ways of valuing heritage for consideration in policy contexts such as net benefits and cumulative impacts.</li> <li>• Improved understanding about the significant differences in values/beliefs/customs/identify held between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples' towards natural and cultural heritage (Country).</li> <li>• Importance to maintain and/or re-establish links to Country.</li> <li>• Links to governance</li> </ul>
	Update the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Heritage Strategy 2005 to more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved understanding of oral histories</li> <li>• Intergenerational knowledge transfer through on Country exchange – Some Elders remember stories better when on Country, revisiting places, undertaking cultural activities</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
	comprehensively address Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage. [HA4]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved knowledge around heritage</li> <li>Improved management of knowledge and heritage</li> <li>Improved protection of knowledge and heritage</li> <li>Identifies criticality of access to heritage sites/Country</li> <li>Opportunity to collaborate with western science on value and monitoring</li> </ul>
	Develop impact assessment guidelines for cultural heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region. [HA5]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditional Owners have identified aspirations for improvements that bring their knowledge and values into impact assessment.</li> <li>Traditional Owners and partners acknowledge the failures in the Native Title Notification Processes and Traditional Owners wish to see better practice in place.</li> <li>These aspirations are not fully or effectively implemented in current guidelines (State and Commonwealth including GBRMPA)</li> <li>Particular issues are around how Indigenous world views and knowledge influence perceptions of what is a cultural heritage value, and what constitutes an impact on values</li> <li>Examples such as the Woppaburra Guidelines are required for negotiation with each Traditional Owner group of the Reef.</li> <li>Data Sharing Agreements underpin the ability for information to be ethically and appropriately be sourced/shared.</li> </ul>
	Facilitate robust consideration of heritage values in planning processes, including development and associated activities. [HA6]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aims to improve on current Environmental Impact Assessment legislation and policies, by taking into consideration the heritage value of a place in planning processes and development activities.</li> <li>Improves the worth that is placed (recognition/respect/value) on heritage values of significance to Traditional Owners by non-Indigenous people</li> <li>Improves understanding that Country needs its people – misses its people when not able to access or visit Country and its health is directly related to being visited by its people and plants/animals.</li> </ul>
	Consolidate Reef heritage data and identify priorities for protective action [HA7]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognises that Reef heritage data is held at multiple scales (from local to national); in varying quality and in multiple organisations.</li> <li>Recognises limited Reef heritage data stored that meets appropriate data standards (able to be synthesised and analysed) for management use.</li> <li>Recognises limited ethical and culturally appropriate systems and processes/procedures in place that enable Traditional Owner data/information to be sourced, stored and used (permitted) for management use/decisions.</li> <li>Use of Indigenous heritage data requires data-sharing agreements with Traditional Owners at the level where the data is owned i.e. including collective ownership through customary law systems and access to benefit sharing is established and agreed.</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidation and identification of priorities for protective action will need to occur through processes that recognise the context of diverse ownership, institutions and organisations</li> </ul>
	Further identify, map, monitor and report on key reef heritage values and sites, including completing maritime survey in priority sections of the Reef. [HA11]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the management effectiveness applied to Indigenous Heritage values of the GBR there is a need to identify, map and monitor these values over time. This work is yet to commence and requires a framework for data management, synthesis and reporting to be in place.</li> <li>The condition of heritage values important to Traditional Owners of the GBR ranges from healthy (good) to poor and/or deteriorating, especially in the more populated coastal areas, where human pressure is growing. In the Great Barrier Reef, the key drivers of change affecting heritage values important to Traditional Owners are population growth and economic activity.</li> <li>The extent to which these drivers lead to impacts on our heritage depends on a range of factors, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how many people live alongside the Great Barrier Reef and where and how does everyone live</li> <li>the goods and services that are produced (for both domestic and export markets) and consumed from our traditional sea country estates</li> <li>the technologies that people are using on our traditional estates to produce energy, food, materials and transport</li> <li>how waste that is produced is managed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>A critical action that links to other actions that enable other activities such as site protection, permit consideration in management actions. An important action to assist Traditional Owners protect Country and help keep it and people healthy.</li> </ul>
Water Quality (1)	Identify and action opportunities for Traditional Owners, industry and community engagement in on-ground water quality improvement and monitoring programs. [WQA24]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean saltwater and clean freshwater required for healthy animals, healthy Country, healthy people.</li> <li>Critical concern. Traditional Owners undertaking research activity relevant to healthy water (freshwater/saltwater) - maintaining a continual on Country presence versus researchers who attend monitoring points once a year.</li> <li>Represents the aspiration for Traditional Owners to be included in Water Quality Programs and also allows visibility to report on work already being undertaken by Traditional Owners in this area.</li> </ul>
Community Benefits (3)	Review current mechanisms and processes to improve benefits to Traditional Owners engaged in sea country management. [CBA1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three broad principles from the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are particularly relevant to the biodiversity conservation challenge: (1) the right to participate fully at all levels of the policy making process, (2) the right to self-representation and autonomy, and (3) the right to political, economic, and cultural self-determination and sovereignty (Brechin et al. 2002).</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To honour these principles, biodiversity protection can be conceived as the process of seeking answers to a series of questions related to social justice and democracy including: (i) who benefits from conservation? (ii) how can we ensure preservation of basic human rights is not superseded by the goals of biodiversity conservation? and (iii) how can the ideals of human dignity and nature protection be pursued in concert rather than through opposition to Indigenous rights? (Wilshusen et al. 2002)</li> <li>• Increases opportunities to identify the tangible benefits for Traditional Owner participation</li> <li>• The outcomes of engagement in sea country management is allocated fairly and equitably between the Authority and the Indigenous Knowledge holder(s)</li> <li>• Ongoing use of Indigenous Knowledge by the Authority should be predicated on achieving fair and mutually beneficial outcomes</li> <li>• Active measures to protect Indigenous knowledge should strive to facilitate opportunities for on-country protection of heritage and transmission of Indigenous Knowledge</li> <li>• RIMReP Data Sharing Agreement Project Number 4 is seen as critical to progressing this action.</li> </ul>
	<p>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. [CBA2]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Owner decision making, and self-determination is the cornerstone of excellence in engagement, actions for management, planning and agreement-making</li> <li>• Free, Prior and Informed Consent – applies to undertaking all business with Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners both at an individual and community level</li> <li>• Engagement to proceed on the basis of integrity, inclusion, deliberation of Traditional Owners – creating opportunities for positive influence and persuasiveness</li> <li>• Engagement should support the full and effective participation of Traditional Owners and to be considered, flexible and purpose led</li> <li>• Working on Country Indigenous Rangers (WoC) program across Australia (initiated in 2007) is recognised as one of, if not the most appropriate means of promoting employment and economic wellbeing within an Indigenous community. Program supports GBR TO groups employ rangers to deliver practical on ground management activities such as threatened species management; feral pest control, restorative/rehabilitation activities, marine debris collection and analysis; education/compliance programs, including with youth and/or junior ranger initiatives, culture and heritage protection and management, cultural maintenance and revival, monitoring and research.</li> <li>• Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) program across Australia (initiated in 1995) supports six IPAs in Queensland with four of these in the GBR (Eastern Kuku Yalanji; Kaanju Naanju Ngaachi Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers; Mandingalbay Yidinji and Girringun). This program has reported significant social justice outcomes including improvements in: (i) economic participation and development benefits from involvement with the Program; (ii) early childhood and early school engagement; (iii) the reduction of substance abuse; and (iv) more functional families via</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
		<p>restoration of relationships and reinforcement of family and community structures (Gilligan 2006, 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently nine Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements and one Indigenous Land Use Agreement in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; comprising 25% of the Marine Park coastline.</li> <li>• Enhanced opportunities for expansion to COTS control and Incident Management/Rapid Response Units (ie Emergency Services work natural disasters/significant weather events such as cyclones/ damage control and clean up)</li> <li>• There are clear synergies between the Working on Country, Indigenous Protected Area programs and implementation of TUMRA/ILUA agreements, with several organisations that manage IPAs/WoC (DoEE/PM&amp;C) to employ Indigenous rangers also receiving funding and in-kind support from (GBRMPA/FMP) to implement TUMRA/ILUA. Over 50% of the Traditional Owner groups in the TUMRA program have Working on Country and/or Indigenous Protected Area projects. These groups include Kuuku Yau, Umpila/Pul Pul; Lama Lama; Yuku-Baja-Muliku; Eastern Kuku Yalanji (Kuku Nyungkal); Giringun Aboriginal Corporation (Djiru, Gulnay, Girramay, Bandjin, Warragamay, Nywaigi) and Gidarjil Development Corporation (Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda)). These are critical programs that enable Traditional Owner capacity on ground and are required into the future to maintain and strengthen Traditional Owners' ability to implement the Reef 2050 Plan actions successfully.</li> </ul>
	Develop collaborative working arrangements with Traditional Owners which establish mutual trust and build Indigenous capacity. [CBA3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved inclusivity of Traditional Owners in management of the reef through collaborative partnerships</li> <li>• Development of more joint research projects between Traditional Owners and external research partners</li> </ul>
Economic Benefits (2)	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. [EBA1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fee for service - ongoing monitoring of condition of natural and cultural heritage values and participation in joint research projects and projects led by partners</li> <li>• Tourism/Arts opportunities and industries</li> <li>• Empowerment and Economics key domain/theme for Traditional Owners.</li> <li>• Ownership of land and businesses provides greater level of management authority and increases employment opportunities on Country.</li> <li>• Critical issue facing Traditional Owner communities</li> <li>• Caring for Country activities, such as rangers can be a male dominated area, so need to think about gender equity policies and targeted employment initiatives for women who do not want to be a ranger.</li> <li>• Addresses rights, interests and goals of Traditional Owners.</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
	Assist Traditional Owners to be business-ready and have improved capacity to generate economic benefits from use and management of their traditional estates. [EBA2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link to EBA1</li> <li>• Increases capacity for Traditional Owners to uptake opportunities presented through the Reef 2050 Plan.</li> <li>• Significant training occurring through multiple programs – TUMRA/IPA/WoC – generally between Certificate Level 2-4 and tickets.</li> </ul>
Governance (5)	Convene a multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee to facilitate engagement with industry and the broader community regarding the implementation and review of the Plan. [GA2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves opportunity for active participation in decision making and Traditional Owner leadership through effective governance model(s)</li> </ul>
	When reviewing relevant agreements, policies, plans, strategies and programs ensure they support the Plan's outcomes and targets. For example: (d) support cross-cultural training in relation to Traditional Owner culture and perspectives. [GA7 (d)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconciliation cannot be achieved without understanding recognition and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and non-Indigenous people</li> <li>• Insights from accessing cross-cultural training in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' culture and world views will lead to stronger partnerships, stronger relationships, stronger respect, stronger understanding and stronger appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' and our cultures.</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait voices and insights need to be heard.</li> </ul>
	<p>Work with Traditional Owners, industry, regional bodies, local governments, research institutions and community to inform delivery and local and regional actions. [GA10]</p> <p>Improve Traditional Owner participation in governance arrangements for protection and management of the Reef. [GA11]</p> <p>Prioritise and develop specific implementation plans and reporting protocols addressing the plans target and actions in consultation with the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Owners' goals for self-determination and rights-recognition are central to concept of biodiversity conservation (Schmidt and Peterson 2009).</li> <li>• In Indigenous communities, poverty is associated with colonisation, loss of traditional values, and the rising tide of modernity (Nurse-Bray and Hill 2010).</li> <li>• Indigenous specific and mainstream environment programs have been established that attempt to link poverty alleviation and conservation, however such partnerships with Indigenous peoples are often highly inequitable, skewed in favour of governments' terms of political power, economic resources, and cultural domination, and can result in further entrenching Indigenous marginalisation (Nepal 2002; Nygren 2004; Riseth 2007).</li> <li>• Biodiversity conservation efforts with Indigenous peoples cannot succeed through a focus on the concept of biodiversity alone—the politics of Indigenous rights and socio-economic upliftment are key factors and determinants of success (Palmer 2006; Davidson and O'Flaherty 2007).</li> <li>• Traditional Owner-governed biodiversity initiatives respect and empower governance principles that include: networked models; nodal and gendered realms of leadership; locally-dispersed centres of authority; distribution of roles, powers and decision making across social groups and networks; cultural regions within the continental diversity; and emphasis on internal</li> </ul>

Theme	Action	Policy and science background of the Actions
	Community (Gidarjil Implementation Plan) [GA 12]	<p>relationships with shared connections as the means of determining group membership and representation (Smith and Hunt 2008). These enhance, rather than undermine, traditional owner authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority, empowerment and the ability to participate in decision-making over matters that have or may have an impact (positive or negative) on Traditional Owner lives is critical.</li> <li>• Concept of authority/ownership being directly linked to greater levels of management.</li> <li>• Cultural mentorship between Elders and Youth or Rangers and Junior Rangers; or between Business/Education/Sporting and Traditional Owners.</li> <li>• Importance of language/arts/song/dance to cultural maintenance/revival</li> </ul> <p>Critical links to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GA 13 (Investment): Develop an investment baseline and associated investment framework to inform future delivery and actions under the Plan (Investment Framework – 1 of 6 priority areas)</li> <li>• GA 14 (Investment): Develop and implement and maintain mechanism and policies to enhance investment in delivering on-ground activities based on good science and evidence that support the plans actions and targets. Contributes to NET BENEFITS policy. Curtis Island Offsets Agreement).</li> </ul>



## 3.0 WAYS FORWARD WITH THE TO ACTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW

### 3.1 Dynamic Context

The brief history above outlines the dynamic context in which the current set of TO Actions are placed. The GBRMPA contributed some analysis of the Actions in late 2017 and early 2018, that identified the need to re-allocate leadership roles.

The consortium's work on the TO Actions through this Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Project is primarily aimed at ensuring clarity in the linkages between the Reef 2050 Plan, implementation approach, the current Actions and the foundational agenda of Traditional Owners established through decades of sea country planning and management.

The mid-term review underway requires tasks that include (Roth et al. 2017):

- Review and update existing actions (consolidate where appropriate, potentially simplify or reword some);
- Incorporate new 'no regrets' actions for reef resilience under climate change, such as Crown of Thorns Starfish foundation for reef restoration etc. These will be new actions incorporated under relevant existing themes, not any new themes.
- Not change targets, objectives, outcomes or vision statements.
- Document the rationale for the new actions, but not attempt to develop program logics or theory of change (these should be done as part of the 2020 review process, involving a comprehensive review of actions, targets, and potentially the plan structure and vision).

While recognising the leadership and responsibility of governments for some of the TO Actions is useful, ensuring that these are developed together with Traditional Owners going forward is important. Traditional Owners' Actions in the Reef 2050 Plan are all those Actions that they have been instrumental in developing, not only those Actions which they lead.

The analysis of the TO Actions by the consortium supports the view that no TO Actions were identified as able to be consolidated or easily simplified or reworded without broad scale consultation with GBR Traditional Owners.

The focus of attention on the TO Actions should be extended to refining the relationships set out in Figure 1, and provide greater clarity to both governments and Traditional Owners about coordinated and effective next steps. In order to do this, a number of questions will be worked through with Traditional Owners at the Reef-wide TO Forum in early May:

- i) How can an Implementation Approach, bringing together the Implementation Plan and the framework [\*Indigenous Capacity Building and Increased Participation in Management of Queensland Sea Country\*](#) be aligned effectively with the Reef 2050 TO Actions?
- ii) How can we ensure as Implementation Approach effectively supports TO roles in delivering the outcomes sought by Reef 2050, and provides clarity that investment by governments and others will deliver effective, efficient results?



- iii) How can we ensure the Implementation Approach effectively supports the foundational agenda of TO for sustainable co-governance and management in the GBR?
- iv) How can we best take account of emergent issues that may not yet be fully developed e.g. TO roles in supporting reef restoration.
- v) What are the critical priorities and required sequencing for implementation?
- vi) How can we ensure effective arrangements that enable continued effective engagement with Traditional Owners to drive the implementation of and reporting on relevant Actions?

### **3.2 Recommendations regarding revisions of the TO Actions in the context of the mid-term review**

At this stage of the Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Project, the key priority in relation to Traditional Owner Actions has been to improve the relationships (and understanding of these relationships) between the Actions, the Implementation Approach, and both the governments' and the Traditional Owners agendas across the Great Barrier Reef region - this is not a trivial task.

A much stronger focus on setting up the longer-term co-governance arrangements associated with further planning and implementation of Traditional Owner needs will emerge through this current consortium-based project towards the end of 2018.

Our initial analysis into the Reef 2050 Mid Term Review (March 2018) advised that no Traditional Owner driven Actions were identified as able to be consolidated; easily simplified; or reworded without broad scale consultation with GBR Traditional Owners. It was also recognised that the current actions, while not comprehensive or highly implementable, do target key interests of Traditional Owners.

In response to the Consortium's initial advice of March 2018, the Reef 2050 Joint Team advised that four Traditional Owner Actions will be marked as completed, with a further two Actions identified to be assigned as Principles.

In response to this, further analysis identifies that in the majority of cases, ongoing work is still required to fulfil Traditional Owner goals in relation to these Actions.

We therefore make the following six key recommendations:

1. *Three of the four Traditional Owner Actions currently marked as complete under the Mid Term Review require further work:*

Our analysis identifies that ongoing work is required to fulfil Traditional Owner goals in relation to three of these Actions. RRRC recommends three further Mid-Term Review Actions relevant to the necessary ongoing work:

- RRRC led Consortium agrees with current proposed treatments for HA4 to move to MTR HA2 and MTR HA3
- RRRC led Consortium does not agree with current proposed treatments for HA5, HA7 (as critical priorities) and GA2; and present revised wording for three new MTR Actions to be included, based on these existing Actions.
  - Replace HA5 with new MTR Action: Implement impact assessment guidelines for Indigenous heritage values in the Great Barrier Reef Region to ensure effective protection and proper consideration of Traditional Owner advice.
  - Replace HA7 with new MTR GA4: Advise additional (fourth) point: Consolidate Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner heritage data and identify priorities for protective action
  - Replace GA2 with new MTR Action: Facilitate better engagement with Traditional Owners regarding the implementation and review of the Plan's multi-sectoral Reef advisory committee

2. *Two Actions (WQA24 and GA10) proposed for elevation to Principles in how we manage the Reef require further consideration with respect to Traditional Owner interests.*

RRRC Led Consortium would like to understand from the Reef 2050 Joint Team how effective implementation of Principles (as opposed to Actions) will be achieved. What reporting and review processes are/will be put in place to measure effective implementation of Principles?

- WQA24 is a Traditional Owner driven Action. If this treatment is agreed there will be no specific water quality action for Traditional Owners in the revised Reef 2050 Plan (head document); concerns remain that the reclassification of this Action will demote the critical importance of this action to Traditional Owners in the primary strategic plan by redirection through the Reef 2050 WQIP. RRRC Led Consortium advice remains that at this stage this Action is best unchanged until further broad scale consultation with GBR Traditional Owners can inform on appropriate treatment.
- GA10 is an Action that specifies and directly impacts on Traditional Owners and is therefore covered under this review, although not technically considered a Traditional Owner driven Action. Concern remains that reclassification of this Action will simply result in lack of any strategy for implementation.

3. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be Further Tested and Expanded at the May Reef-wide Traditional Owner Workshop and subsequent engagement with Traditional Owners:*

Our analysis suggested that the main problem with the current list of Traditional Owner Actions was that they were rapidly developed to ensure some Traditional Owner influence in the Reef 2050 Plan. Consequently, real ownership and responsibility for oversight and implementation of the actions was poorly developed, leading to limited traction. Traditional Owners, however, have long expressed their desire, and the need for, a far more co-managed and adaptive approach to the governance of the Great Barrier Reef and oversight of these Actions. The May Reef-wide Traditional Owner Workshop delivered an opportunity and time required to more

fully develop the logic and cohesion of these actions, as well as the processes required to ensure implementation. Options for prioritisation and sequencing, including identification of the Actions that are considered a priority for immediate implementation which emerged from the Reef-wide Traditional Owner Workshop, will be further tested through the planned engagement to arrive at a final set of recommendations.

4. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be revised, then endorsed and finalised by Traditional Owners as a key set of recommendations to DoEE in contributing to the commencement of the comprehensive 2020 Review of the Reef 2050 Plan, including recommendations on how Traditional Owners wish to be engaged on the biannual Reef 2050 reporting cycle:*

By the end of this Consortium Project, Traditional Owners will have a clear view and voice concerning the need for revision of the Reef 2050 Plan actions and the processes for progressing more co-managed approaches to governing the GBR into the longer term. Parties with responsibility and accountability for actions will be identified, and the links between individual actions, the Reef 2050 plan and the implementation approach will be clarified, including recommendations made on prioritisation of actions. At this point, there would be value in DoEE considering and communicating potential timelines for the Government (together with the State) negotiating the agreement possible around these actions and processes. These negotiation approaches should be completed in time for consideration under the planned 2020 review of the Reef 2050 Plan.

A much stronger focus on setting up the longer-term co-governance arrangements associated with further planning and implementation of Traditional Owner needs will also emerge through this project and will be included in the final reports.

5. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be supported, in the RIMReP context, through the finalisation and testing of the Traditional Owner-led “Strong Country – Strong People” framework and indicators for monitoring the long term success of Traditional Owner aspects of the Reef 2050 Plan. Further work to scope out the costs of Traditional Owner-driven objective indicators and to support the potential contributions of Traditional Owners to monitoring of biophysical aspects of Reef health be undertaken in this project and provided in the Final Report.*

The Indigenous Heritage Expert Group, supported by CSIRO, is currently leading the development of the Indigenous Heritage component of RIMReP. The IHEG has developed a *Strong People – Strong Country* framework and an initial set of (subjective) indicators. Data to test the framework and provide a baseline of information about the status of Indigenous Heritage and its links to Traditional Owner Wellbeing was collected at the Reef-wide Workshop jointly hosted by the IHEG and RRRC projects from May 1-3 2018. The IHEG has recommended to AIMS that a future monitoring program be adopted that gathers longitudinal data on the subjective views of Traditional Owners of the GBR region using the **Strong Peoples – Strong Country** framework and indicators and has provided an annual costing for this to AIMS. We support this recommendation.

The IHEG project identified that future work is needed to provide Traditional Owner-driven objective indicators and to support the potential contributions of Traditional Owners to monitoring of biophysical aspects of Reef health. Work will occur in this RRRC project to scope out and cost these further requirements, which have been identified to at least include:

- Providing training and employment for Traditional Owners to collect indicators for a range of the RIMReP monitoring activities
  - Supporting Traditional Owner Groups to prepare and update sea country plans, and to engage in joint management of sea country through these plans and other processes
  - Supporting Traditional Owners in development of appropriate Traditional Owner-driven participatory two-way indicators in these plans, and through building on their current monitoring of cultural sites, traditional foods and other heritage assets
  - Negotiating data sharing agreements with Traditional Owner Groups to enable relevant data to be collected, analysed and scaled across the Reef region.
6. *That Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Actions be supported, in the RIMReP context, through the continuance, finalisation and testing of the Safeguarding of Indigenous Heritage and Knowledge Project (DMS4: Develop protocols for managing culturally sensitive information, including negotiating Data Sharing Agreements with Traditional Owners and implementing appropriate storage and handling of this information with Traditional Owners).*

It is strongly recommended this project continue as a focal point to establish best practice standards for actualising information sharing between Traditional Owners and their partners under the Reef 2050 Plan Framework. Further work to scope out next steps for Reef 2050 Partners to enter into and negotiate Data Sharing Agreements with Traditional Owners' is provided for in the Final Project Report by *Markwell and Associates* (June 2018) to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The RRRC led Consortium sees this work as foundational and to be shared and applied across all Reef 2050 Partners and GBR Traditional Owners.

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