



OUR GREAT BARRIER REEF

PROTECTING THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Who protects the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area? The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) in Townsville holds prime responsibility for managing the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

It works in partnership with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), which is primarily responsible for the day - to - day management of activities that occur on the water and the land within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The rangers we meet in Queensland Parks and on the water are QPWS staff.

Other organisations that play an important role in protecting the Reef include Customs Coastwatch, the Australian Federal Police, Department of Primary Industries, Queensland Fisheries, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, Water Police, and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

There are also community-based groups that work with the Commonwealth and State agencies to protect the Reef.

Local Marine Advisory Committees (LMAC) centers have been established in 10 regional centers along the coast of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

They are made up of representatives from many different groups, including Indigenous peoples, commercial and recreational fishers, agriculturists, and representatives from the wider community.

These committees advise the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on issues affecting local communities, and provide a vital communication link between local communities and management agencies.

How is the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area protected?

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority uses a number of methods to protect the reef.



Zoning is one of the methods used to protect the Reef. Zoning gives legal protection to areas that are very important for maintaining a healthy environment. Colours are used to show zones on maps. The zones tell people which activities are allowed to happen in particular areas.

The GBRMPA also uses management plans to control activities in the Marine Park. These plans deal with important issues like the size of tourist boats and the number of people they can carry. They also regulate access to special areas which include seabird nesting sites and whale protection areas.

For many activities people need a permit. Permits help people and companies use the Marine Park. They also help protect the Reef by regulating the number of people and activities that can take place at particular locations on the Reef

It is a legal requirement to obtain a permit to conduct many activities, such as scientific research in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Permits tell people which reefs and islands they can visit, the type and number of boats they can use, the number of visitors they can take to any one site and the types of activities they can take part in at the site.

The Great Barrier Reef and the waters that surround it are directly affected by coastal towns and cities, which discharge stormwater and wastewater into the coastal zone.

Many activities carried out onshore can impact directly on the Great Barrier Reef. To minimize these impacts, the Great Barrier Reef, Marine Park Authority works closely with City Councils and other management agencies to help protect the Reef.

Kids are the future. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority supports programs, such as the Future Leaders Congress for Sustainable Seas and Reef Guardians Schools Program, to encourage and empower young people to become involved in protecting the Great Barrier Reef.

Ask your teacher to contact the Education Team at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to find out more about these special programs and you too can do your bit to help 'keep it great'.

1. Mark Read and Ian Bell from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service release Larry the adult green turtle back into Cleveland Bay.

Photo: Ned Kelly 08/03/03

2. Senior Constable Glenn Lawrence from the water police with a flare.

Photo: Eash Muggan 08/03/02

3. Junior anglers Kirsty and Matthew Nelson with Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol education officer Karl Roebuck

