

Coral Sea Marine Park Advisory Committee

Meeting #5 Communique

8 June 2021, MS Teams

The Coral Sea Marine Park (CSMP) Advisory Committee held a virtual meeting on Tuesday 8 June 2021.

The Committee was briefed by Dr Barbara Musso (Acting Assistant Secretary, Marine and Island Parks Branch) on key issues.

- The Ocean Leadership Package, announced by the Prime Minister on 23 April 2021 is an additional \$100 million investment towards managing ocean habitat and coastal environments, and contributing to the global task of reducing emissions.
- The Government has appointed a [Senior Advisory Group on Joint Management Arrangements](#) to provide independent advice on the governance, structure and culture of the management of jointly managed National Parks.

The Committee was given an overview of fisheries managed by the Queensland Government in the CSMP by Fisheries Queensland. Sea cucumber, coral, aquarium fish, trawl, charter and recreational fisheries are to be managed under [harvest strategies](#).

Parks Australia provided an update on key management program activities. A summary of these actions is provided:

Attendees

Russell Gueho (Chair)
Andrew Hoey
Clive Wilkinson
Col McKenzie
Craig Stephen
Doug Sanderson
Michelle Grady

Apologies

Chrissy Warren
Russ Babcock
Ryan Donnelly
Larissa Hale (resigned)

Observers

Chris Cochrane (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority)
Tina Alderson (Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service)
Melinda McLean (Torres Strait Regional Authority)
Darci Wallis, Steve Bolton and Saiful Marbun (Australian Fisheries Management Authority)

Guests

Barbara Musso (Assistant Secretary, Marine and Island Parks Branch, Parks Australia)
Kimberly Foster and Tony Ham (Fisheries Queensland)

Assessments and Authorisations Program

Nine authorisations have been issued since Meeting 4: research and monitoring (4), use of a drone or other non-commercial remote piloted aircraft (1), commercial tourism (3), and commercial media (1). Since July 2018, 55 authorisations have been issued.

The Committee was presented the draft Australian Marine Parks (AMP) Authorisations and Assessments Policy. The policy is a guidance tool for assessment of proposed activities in AMPs.

Compliance Program

Three compliance incidents were recorded in the CSMP since November 2020. The incidents related to commercial tourism and charter operations occurring without authorisation. Quarterly reports documenting incidence of non-compliance observed across the Australian Marine Parks network are available on the [Compliance webpage](#).

Marine Science Program

Coral Sea Coral Reef Health: 2020-2021 project

In response to the 2020 severe coral bleaching event in the CSMP, Parks Australia contracted

James Cook University to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the condition of coral and fish communities. A report is expected in August 2021.

Coral Sea Island Health Project

Parks Australia is working closely with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, researchers, and volunteer botanists to assess the health of islands in the Coral Sea.

Reports from two *Coral Sea Island Health* assessment voyages are now available on the Parks Australia website:

[Environmental Assessment of the Coringa Islets and Herald Cays in the Coral Sea Marine Park](#)

[Vegetation Assessment and Mapping of South Islet \(Willis Islets\), Coral Sea Marine Park](#)

The next voyage is planned for mid-2021 to survey 25 islands and cays in the central region of the CSMP.

Indigenous Engagement Program

Parks Australia is taking a co-design approach to developing an Indigenous engagement and cultural heritage strategy for Australian Marine Parks. The strategy aims to improve understanding of cultural heritage in the parks, link management with sea country plans, and maximise employment and enterprise opportunities for Traditional Owners.

Parks Protection and Management Program

The [Australian Marine Parks Guideline for the authorisation of commercial tourism and general use activities on islands in the Coral Sea, Ashmore Reef and Cartier Island Marine Parks](#) is available on the website.

Communication, Education and Awareness Program

The fourth *Australia-New Caledonia Coral Sea Newsletter* is available at: [Coral Sea - discover](#).

Tourism and Visitor Experience Program

The draft Australian Marine Parks Tourism Strategy was shared with the Committee for comment. The Strategy will be finalised later in 2021.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held in November 2021. For more information about the Coral Sea Marine Park or the Committee:

Visit parksaustralia.gov.au/coralsea

Email marineparks@environment.gov.au