

29th September 2005

Attn: Mr David Borthwick
Secretary, Department of Environment and Heritage

Dear Sir,

**GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK
ACT REVIEW**

I have been involved with Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for a number of years, primarily as chair of the Capricorn Coast Local Marine Advisory Committee. It is difficult as a private citizen to understand the details of the review as it appears you need a detailed understanding of a series of major Acts and something called the Uhrig review.

In spite of my shortcomings I would like you to consider some important aspects of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority that affect our central region of the Great Barrier Reef.

- The fundamental approach of the GBRMPA must be one of Regional Management based on good regional information and delivered in a timely fashion.
- Initiatives during the RAP process and after have opened up a new level of community partnerships and relationships. These are steps in the right direction. Contrary to some small, local interest groups the RAP process has created positive linkages with our stakeholder groups.
- Any retraction from openness, less regional delegation, reduction in locally based resources, increase in red tape or even a hint of more CENTRALISED decision making will ruin the recent gains the GBRMPA has made in respect and acknowledged management skills.
- The RAP process in our area did not cause great community outcry and in fact was quite well received by most stakeholders. This was due to two (2) fundamentals;
 - The stakeholder groups were well informed and well organised.
 - The GBRMPA took on board the sensible proposals submitted.

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- There is very little local support for alternatives to the zoning boundaries in our local area. Personally I have no desire to go through this process again. We received a pretty good deal and are now moving forward with monitoring the effects of the changes through the CAPREEF project with support from the GBRMPA. This initiative will in time provide information to better inform future management decisions.
- A lot of community effort is being put into a number of initiatives that will directly benefit the GBRMPA including CAPREEF, Reef Guardian Schools and community based water quality monitoring. The GBRMPA could not do this without community support. Any perceived centralisation in decision making will result in the community withdrawing its support. A lot of people are working hard to help The GBRMPA because they believe their efforts will make a difference.
- There might be opportunities through the review process to make the GBRMPA more flexible and responsive to issues. For example there are some very minor changes in zoning that currently cannot be altered by regulation. It also appears that all current additional zoning powers can only increase protection. Surely both increases and reductions should be possible.

I don't know much about Mr Uhrig, or Federal governance standards, but I do know that more than ever before the GBRMPA is respected in our community and has generated a lot of community participation in valuable projects for the GBRMPA the future management and sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef.

This review must not adversely affect this partnership. If it does, irreversible damage will be done.

Yours faithfully,

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Graham Scott