



REEF CHECK AUSTRALIA

STRATEGIC PLAN

2008

Reef Check Australia is part of an international network of survey volunteers that monitor the health of coral reefs in over 90 countries. Our survey volunteers are recreational scuba divers and snorkelers who care for the reefs around Australia and the Indo-Pacific. We partner with leading marine research organisations, tourism companies, dive operators, universities, government, and a variety of other businesses and groups. Our globally-accredited training program provides our volunteers with the tools to gather high quality data that are useful to coral reef managers. We aim to educate the public about the value of coral reefs and the crisis facing the world's reefs. The information we collect is used by stakeholders to design and implement ecologically sound and economically sustainable coral reef management. Our projects stimulate local action to protect remaining pristine reefs and rehabilitate damaged reefs worldwide.

Vision

Our vision at Reef Check Australia is the promotion of healthy coral reefs throughout the Australia and Indo-Pacific regions.

Core Values

- Raising awareness of the value and sustainability of coral reefs.
- Improving management of coral reefs in Australia and the Indo-Pacific region.
- Empowering local communities in the conservation of their own reefs.
- Maximising stakeholder benefits with minimal cost.
- Acting with professionalism and integrity at all times.

Mission Statement

To promote healthy local coral reefs through scientific research, community education and marine conservation.

Objectives

- The production of select coral reef data that is of the highest standardised quality and valued by scientists and marine managers.
- The establishment of alternative reef monitoring programs that are accessible to a wider range of the population and yet still produce valuable data.

- The establishment of a coral reef health database for Australia and the Indo-Pacific region that is integrated into the global Reef Check network.
- For the majority of Australian adults and children to understand the importance of coral reefs and be able to tell you what they can do to help protect them.
- Development and implementation of cutting edge training programs to enhance the value of the data collected by volunteers.
- Quality marine based education programs for local communities.
- Meaningful participation by local communities in the promotion and maintenance of coral reefs through Reef Check Australia programs or use of the database.
- Promotion of the sustainable use of coral reefs through partnerships with governments, researchers, businesses and community groups.
- Raising public awareness of the economic, ecological and social value of coral reefs.
- Promotion of the Reef Check Australia brand.
- Financial sustainability of Reef Check Australia.

Action Plan

1. The integration of Reef Check Australia data into all coral reef management processes within Australia by 2020.
2. The online accessibility of Reef Check Australia data to all stakeholder groups.
3. Widespread availability by 2020 of educational programs for both school children and adults to enhance their involvement in coral reef conservation.
4. By 2020, Reef Check Australia is a world's best practice "Training Hub" within the Indo Pacific.
5. From 2009-2020 Reef Check Australia will develop strategic partnerships with corporations to enable sustainable financing of Reef Check programs.
6. The ongoing identification of simple actions that the general public can take to minimise global threats to coral reefs.
7. The ongoing development of tools and skills with local communities and volunteers to aid coral reef monitoring, conservation and management.

Queensland Tasks

1. By 2009 Reef Check Australia has an online data reporting system that is linked to a spatial database. The reporting system enables community scientists, managers and other stakeholders to access metadata and raw data on request.
2. By 2011 Reef Check Australia has finalised a proven system for training community volunteer scuba divers to safely collect precise data on coral reef health from sites that would otherwise not be monitored by current Government programs. This system is already in a very advanced stage and simply needs periodic review and improvement before being available state-wide.

3. By 2011 scuba divers, snorkelers and recreational fishers, throughout the state, have opportunities to become involved in Reef Check activities. This has already been achieved in North Queensland.
4. By 2011 Reef Check Australia data quality is known and is used by coral reef managers to make management decisions.
5. By 2011 Reef Check Australia data is used by community members for their participation in coral reef management.
6. By 2011 Reef Check Australia has a network of Reef Check teams throughout Queensland, which include teams in Far North QLD, Burdekin, Whitsunday Region, Fitzroy Basin, Burnett Mary, SEQ Region (Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and Gold Coast).
7. By 2011 Reef Check Australia has Indigenous community participation.
8. By 2013 25-50% of Queensland-based school-aged children aged 10 and above can tell you how they can become involved in coral reef monitoring and conservation, and can explain why this is important.
9. By 2013 25-50% of Queenslanders will have heard of Reef Check.

Australia Wide Tasks

By 2015 the Queensland objectives will be achievable at a national level.

Indo Pacific Tasks

By 2015 there will be a minimum of two annual Reef Check expeditions to the Indo Pacific region. These expeditions will enable Reef Check Australia volunteers to help educate local communities in the monitoring of their coral reefs in addition to collect valuable data.

Time Line

2009

- Completion and full operation of Reef Check Australia database.

2011

- Proven training system in place throughout Queensland, with a periodic review and improvement process established.
- Opportunities for involvement for scuba divers, snorkelers and recreational fishers throughout Queensland.
- Widespread use of Reef Check Australia data by marine managers and community members.
- Network of Reef Check teams throughout coastal Queensland.
- Indigenous community participation.

2013

- 25-50% of school children above 10 years can understand coral reef conservation and can explain their potential involvement.
- 25-50% of Queenslanders will have heard of Reef Check.

2015

- Queensland tasks rolled out nationally.
- Two expeditions per annum to the Indo Pacific region by Australian volunteers.

2020

- Integration of Reef Check Australia data into all marine management processes within Australia.
- Australia wide Reef Check programs for school children and adults.
- Widespread awareness of the value and protection of coral reefs throughout the population.
- Recognition of Australia as a best practice training hub.