



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

The Hon Jim Chalmers MP
Treasurer
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Via email: [REDACTED]

Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher
Minister for Finance
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Via email: [REDACTED]

Dear Ministers

Economic Reform Roundtable – Regulatory reform opportunities

Thank you for the opportunity to provide advice on how the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Reef Authority) can support the Australian Government's regulatory reform agenda to bolster productivity growth.

As the lead agency responsible for the protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef, our regulatory role directly affects marine tourism operators, commercial and recreational fishers, port operations, Traditional Owners, researchers, the Queensland State Government and local communities. Strong Marine Park management supports a healthier reef, strong tourism visitation, business certainty, and sometimes exclusivity of use for commercial enterprise. A regulatory reform agenda presents opportunities to continually improve the way our agency interacts with our regulated communities – reducing unnecessary or excessive requirements without diminishing the Australian Government's commitment to world class conservation standards on the Great Barrier Reef.

Recent examples of regulatory-related improvements delivered by the Reef Authority include:

- Improving the Eye on the Reef App – providing instant access to information and zoning maps that support responsible Reef practices by Marine Park users.
- Amending the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations to complement the Queensland Government's gillnet ban; providing clarity and consistent application of State and Federal legislation to the fishing industry.
- Deploying autonomous drones to improve surveillance in the Marine Park.

Our agency has long been committed to continuous improvement of our regulations and related frameworks. Currently, our continuous improvement activities are focused on delivering reforms that are unlikely to require change to the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Act 1975*. For example, in 2025/26 we will:

- Further streamline permit conditions, to improve compliance with standards and reduce complexity for users of the Marine Park.
- Support the marine tourism industry with environmental stewardship programs that improve commercial outcomes and enhance Australia's reputation as a world-class

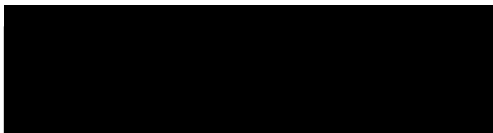
tourism destination. These programs include Master Reef Guides and the Tourism Reef Protection Initiative.

- Revise Marine Park policies and guidelines to strengthen alignment with other guidelines and policies, reducing confusion and administrative burden for all parties.
- Consider using artificial intelligence for rapid synthesis of information to improve responsiveness to community needs or changes on the Reef.

We will also remain engaged with the Australian Government's direction in relation to broader national environmental legal frameworks, including potential changes to the *Environment, Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The Reef Authority is committed to developing and maintaining an environmental regulatory system that is best practise by global standards — not only protecting an iconic World Heritage asset, but also enabling more inclusive, resilient and productive Reef communities.

Yours sincerely



Josh Thomas
Chief Executive Officer

31 July 2025

cc:

Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Minister for the Environment and Water

Mr Mike Kaiser, Secretary, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water