

NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub – Project 10.1 Factsheet

SELTMP 2013: Coastal Communities in the Great Barrier Reef

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Background

Coastal communities and the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) have a mutually beneficial relationship: proximity to the GBR allows easy access and a sense of connection to reef ecosystems. Coastal residents and organisations are often best-placed to serve as the GBR's custodians, due to their knowledge of and identification with the reef. On the other hand, these communities can also have negative impacts on the reef. These varied relationships are underpinned by community perceptions and motivations, as well as drivers of change that originate outside the community.

Report summary

"SELTMP 2013: Coastal Communities in the Great Barrier Reef" is part of a series of technical reports from the *Social and Economic Long Term Monitoring Program* (SELTMP; NERP Project 10.1) for the GBR region. This report presents a picture of the GBR community at large, mainly through secondary socio-economic data collected for Local Government Areas (LGA), and provides context for survey data presented in other reports in this series. This report depicts the current state of coastal community characteristics and relationships with the GBR, and drivers of change.

Key findings

Key findings in this report include:

- Stakeholders identified demographics, climate change and variability (including extreme weather), and economics as three top drivers of change in coastal communities.
- Growth patterns in the GBR region are highly diverse, with some areas experiencing high population growth (e.g. Gladstone LGA at 3% p.a.) while others shrink (Hinchinbrook LGA at -0.4% p.a.)¹. Net out-migration in 2011 was greatest from Cassowary Coast LGA.
- Effects of resource industries with fly-in fly-out work arrangements are especially pronounced in the southern part of the region. In 2011, Isaac LGA had the highest non-resident population, population mobility in the five preceding years, income and median house price, and the lowest SEIFA index value (a measure of socio-economic disadvantage)².

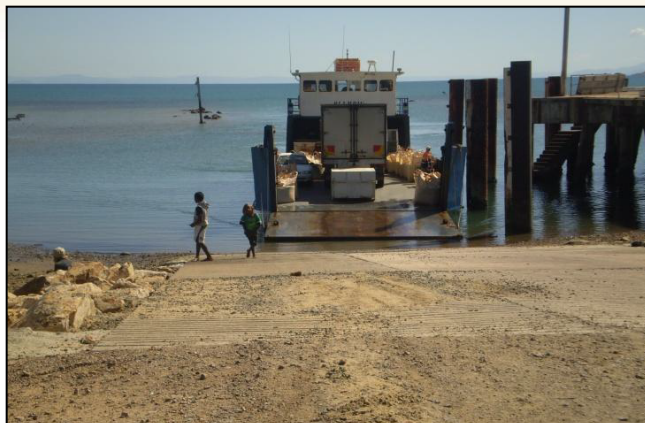


Photo: K. Alexandridis

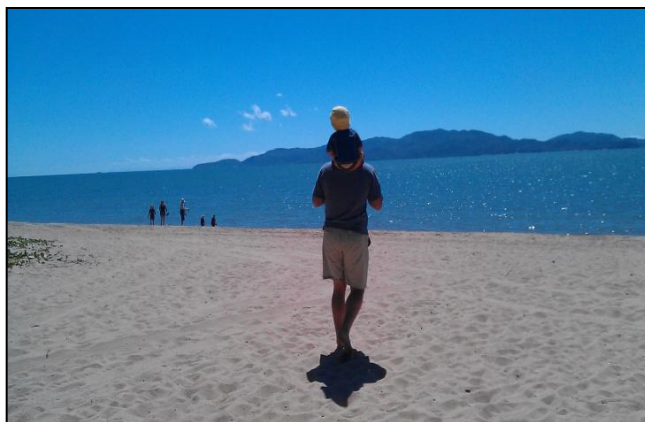


Photo: E. Bohensky

Outcomes

- Results from SELTMP 2013 have assisted the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority with their preparation of the 2014 Outlook Report and the Strategic Assessment of the GBRWHA. Consultation with Reef and other natural resource managers, Traditional Owners, industry and community groups is continuing through 2014 to ensure findings from SELTMP are available to address information needs, to improve management of the GBR, and to enhance the wellbeing of Reef users and coastal communities.

References:

¹ ABS 2012. Average annual population growth, 2011-2012.

² ABS 2011. Census of Population and Housing; ABS 2006, 2011.

Find this project at www.nerptropical.edu.au
Theme 3: Managing for resilient tropical ecosystems
Program 10: Socio-economic value of GBR goods and services
Project: 10.1 Social and economic long-term monitoring program

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