

NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub – Project 10.1 Factsheet

SELTMP 2013: Drivers of Change in the Great Barrier Reef

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Background

The Great Barrier Reef (GBR) region, including the people and industries it supports, is influenced by a range of drivers from global to local scales. A driver is any natural or human-induced factor that directly or indirectly causes a change in the GBR system¹. Drivers are important to monitor so that we can: 1) understand how and why the variables we monitor may change over time; 2) anticipate and better manage outcomes; 3) document the context or “backdrop” of change as we track social and economic trends into the future. This is especially critical given the rapid pace of change today.

Report summary

“SELTMP 2013: Drivers of Change 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 drivers identified through a “bottom up” approach involving end user workshops and a “top down” approach based on scientific frameworks and literature. It highlights six categories of drivers of high relevance to the variables being monitored in SELTMP: 1) *Economic* 2) *Social and Cultural* 3) *Demographic* 4) *Politics, Management, and Governance* 5) *Communication and Media* and 6) *Science and Technology*. Indicators in these categories collectively provide a picture of the broad forces shaping the GBR and peoples’ relationships with it.

Key findings

Key findings in this report include:

- Drivers exert their influence in numerous ways; for example, a rise in the value of the Australian dollar may benefit some GBR users but be detrimental to others. Other technical reports in this series detail how drivers play out for the GBR’s diverse end user groups.
- Perceived importance of different drivers tends to change over time. Workshop participants’ views of drivers elicited in workshops in 2011 and 2013 reflect different issues of concern.
- An analysis of news media as part of this research is enabling us to track changing patterns in coverage of high-profile drivers such as climate change, port development and shipping.

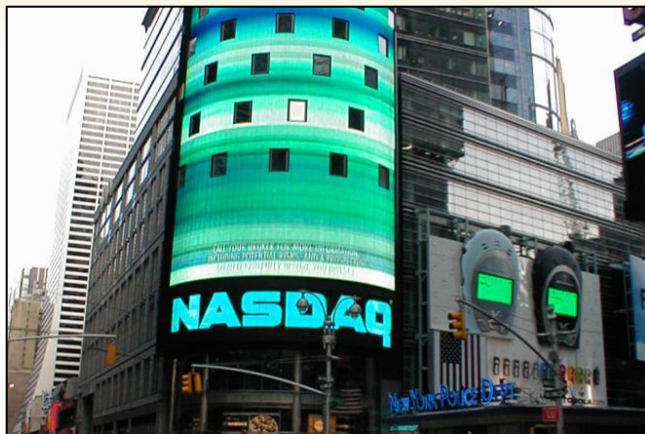


Photo: E. Bohensky

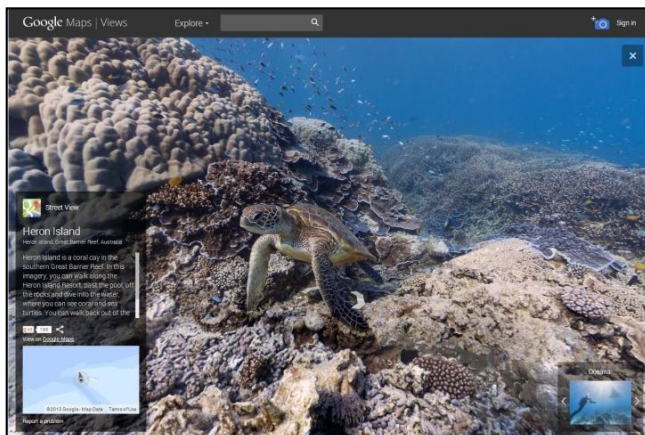


Image: Google Maps/Caitlin Seaview Survey

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:

¹Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2003. Ecosystems and Well-being: A Framework for Assessment. Island Press, Washington D.C.

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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