Ports and the Great Barrier Reef

Simona Duke
Senior Manager Sustainability
North Queensland Bulk Ports
Australia

sduke@nqbp.com.au
Who is NQBP?
Abbot Point

No. of ships

324

Throughput in tonnes

2015-16

27,053,965
From 1 July 15 – 30 June 16

- Total Trade – 178 Mtpa
- Total Ships - 2280
So what about the Reef?
348,000 km²
GREAT BARRIER REEF WORLD HERITAGE AREA

116,530 km²
GREAT BARRIER REEF GENERAL USE AREA

322 km²
NQBP PORT AREA
Controls
Strong Legislation

Federal
• Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.
• Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act.
• Environmental Protection (Sea Dumping) Act.
• Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution of Ships) Act.

State
• Marine Park Act.
• Sustainable Planning Act.
• Environmental Protection Act.
• Fisheries Act.
• Coastal Management Act.
• Nature Conservation Act.
• Vegetation Management Act.
• Transport Infrastructure Act.
• Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act.
Designated Shipping Areas through the Reef.
Covers 6000 km (~3700 miles) of coastline.

World leading (and one of the largest).

24/7 operation.

Reef pilots.

Joint Federal and State Government Operation

~ 4200 vessel movements annually
Challenges of recent years
2012 UNESCO monitoring mission and report increases focus and scrutiny on port development in Queensland…
Complex Stakeholder Issues – Ocean Planning

**GOVERNMENT**
- Federal + Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- State
- Local

**GREEN GROUPS**
- Greenpeace
- World Wildlife Fund
- Get Up
- Australian Marine Conservation Society
- Local Activist Groups
- Etc, Etc, Etc

**UNESCO**
- 23 World Heritage Committee Members

**SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY**
- Australian Institute of Marine Science
- Researchers
- Universities

**GREAT BARRIER REEF STAKEHOLDERS**
- Tourism
- Fishing
- Recreation
- Agriculture
- Aquaculture
Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan

- Government’s response to the UNESCO review and decision.
- Best managed reef in the world.
- Balance environmental management with economic and social prosperity.
- Commitment to future research to improve overall environment.
- 139 specific actions
So what does this all mean?
Great Barrier Reef Policy

- Ban on capital dredge material disposal in World Heritage Area (incl within port limits)
- Increased restrictions on maintenance dredging
- Increased offsets and net benefits
- Mandatory port master plans (new legislation)
Our Proactive Approach
Leading Practice in Ocean + GBR Port Planning

- Port representation in Reef 2050 Advisory Committee + NE Shipping Mgmt Plan.
- Lead Ports Australia Dredging Code of Practice (Released Sept 16).
- Input into Port Master Planning Guidelines and Environmental Management Frameworks.
- Input into Federal Reef Trust offsets and net benefits calculator + CIA Guidelines.
- Lead role in the development of Reef Integrated Environmental Monitoring + Reporting.
- Environmental Report Cards.
Integrated Monitoring
Environmental monitoring program captures ambient & can be scaled up for projects. Robust & well thought out program. Significant data set on seagrass, coral and water quality.

- As we are recognised experts through EcoPorts program, we have a seat at the table /technical input into regional partnerships (MWHR2RP). Help design regional monitoring programs and broader reef programs.

- RIMRep (Reef Integrated Monitoring and Reporting) – broader reef wide scale, integrated monitoring.

- NQBP is a key partner along with researchers (JCU, AIMS, CSIRO), government departments (GBRMPA, EHP), other industry (agriculture, tourism) and NGO (WWF, AMCS).
SUSTAINABLE PORTS

Economic Prosperity

Social Responsibility

Environmental Quality
Demonstrates strong action and alignment with Government policy direction:

- Reef 2050
- Queensland’s Sustainable Port Development Bill, 2015
- Improved efficiencies and strong commitment to ‘sustainable operations’ at key port nodes along the GBR coast
In Closing

• Avoidance and minimisation of impacts is a priority consideration in ocean planning.

• Proactive, communication with stakeholders is imperative.

• Ocean planning must be informed by rigorous and recognised science.

• Policy and decisions must balance the science, community views and economic needs.

• NQBP will continue to:
  - Demonstrate strong environmental and sustainability credentials;
  - Lead efforts to demonstrate that port activities have and can continue to occur adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef.
Questions??