

## Media Release

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### **New Fund launched to save Great Barrier Reef**

A new national campaign – the ZooX™ Fund – was launched today to instigate scientific research projects aimed at protecting the Great Barrier Reef from the ravages of climate change. The ZooX™ Fund is an initiative of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF), an independent organisation which brings together the financial strength of Australia's business community to assist eminent marine scientists find ways of preserving Australia's greatest natural wonder.

"The ZooX Fund is an opportunity for all Australians to contribute in a meaningful way to the protection of the Reef and its preservation for future generations", commented Dr John Schubert, the Chairman of the GBRF.

"We're calling on business and the community to give to the ZooX Fund so the Foundation can direct funding to scientific endeavours that will dramatically increase the level of knowledge required to take the fight to threats to the Reef.

"The threats are varied, real and frightening. Strategic and targeted scientific research projects offer the best hope for saving the Great Barrier Reef. This is a chance for every Australian to do something that will be of tangible benefit to the Reef."

Dr Schubert said there was compelling evidence that climate change was the most significant and immediate threat to the Great Barrier Reef.

"As water temperatures heat up, coral expels tiny microscopic organisms – zooxanthellae – which give the coral colour and life, or they disintegrate. The loss of zooxanthellae leads to coral bleaching. Coral loses its colour and, sometimes, dies," he said.

"We now know there are many kinds of zooxanthellae and that some are more thermally resistant than others. If we can map which organisms are the most robust and are best able to recover from a bleaching event, we will be able to better and more quickly work out how to positively protect the Reef."

Dr Schubert announced the Foundation had secured five inaugural patrons of the ZooX™ Fund.

They are:

- KPMG
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- Mulpha Australia Limited
- Myer Foundation
- Cato Counsel.



“We’re extremely excited about the direction, thrust and future outcomes of the ZooX Fund, and thank these visionary and concerned companies for kick-starting this initiative.

“It is a great start, and we are now calling on other businesses and organisations – and the public at large - to join them in giving to the ZooX Fund and supporting the Foundation’s efforts to save the Great Barrier Reef.

“The world is watching. The time to act is now,” Dr Schubert said.

**ENDS**

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