

# Traditional Owners protecting our heritage in the Great Barrier Reef

For decades, Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners have been calling for our monitoring, based on millennia of caring for the Reef, to be recognised in formal monitoring programs.

Now, a partnership program between Traditional Owners and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation is making this happen.

## Making our monitoring aspirations real

The Traditional Owner-led Integrated Monitoring and Reporting (TOIMR) Program puts us in the driver's seat to achieve our monitoring aspirations.

It recognises that:

- We have been looking after Sea Country since time immemorial, and its health and wellbeing is connected to ours
- Our culture and heritage are unique and irreplaceable
- Our sacred places include landscapes, sites and areas that are part of our lore, traditions, history and current practices
- We need better ways to partner with scientists and government agencies.

## A new era of working together

Our communities can be part of this monitoring partnership, starting with pilot projects to try out monitoring using the *Strong Peoples-Strong Country* framework. The Great Barrier Reef Foundation (via the Reef Partnership Trust) will fund these projects until 2024. The pilot projects will:

- Test out new and traditional ways of monitoring and reporting
- Bring together science, innovation and community
- Build on all the work Traditional Owners have done before and continue to do.

## Strong Peoples-Strong Country monitoring framework

The pilot monitoring projects will use the *Strong Peoples-Strong Country* framework, which was developed by Traditional Owners in 2017–2018 and has now been recognised as part of the formal Reef-wide monitoring program. The *Strong Peoples-Strong Country* framework:

- Will guide how we monitor the health and condition of People and Country connected to the Great Barrier Reef and Catchment areas, through pilot projects, according to our values and priorities
- Reflects a Traditional Owner worldview that the quality of life of our People is deeply connected to the health of our Country.

## Integrated monitoring and reporting

*This symbol looks at the importance of sharing and storing knowledge for future generations.*

*The symbol has two representations: the first being the literal idea of keeping track of life within the Reef (the cycle of life); the second being knowledge from past, present and future working together to care for the Reef.*

*The dots represent the importance of the cycle.*



## How monitoring data will be used and shared

Traditional Owners can use the data collected to inform our own decision-making and planning for our People and Country. The pilot project will support Traditional Owners in the negotiation of sharing your data with Great Barrier Reef management and partnering agencies as agreed.

- This will make sure our values, priorities, and perspectives are reflected in Reef monitoring and reporting to inform management
- Importantly, Traditional Owner groups will be supported to protect your data, negotiate how your data will be shared using agreements, and to make sure that only the data you want to share will be shared with others.

## More information

To find out more about the program, who we are, the *Strong Peoples-Strong Country* Framework, and how to get involved, see these resources:

- [Traditional Owner section on the Great Barrier Reef Foundation website](#)
- Traditional Owners leading monitoring in the Great Barrier Reef and Catchment (Fact Sheet 2)
- *Strong Peoples-Strong Country* Framework (Fact Sheet 3)

## Contact us

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