



Gladstone
Healthy Harbour
Partnership

CORAL



FIVE FAST FACTS

1. Coral reefs provide spawning, nursery and feeding areas for fish and other sea creatures like sea cucumbers, molluscs and turtles.
2. There were 21 different species of corals identified in the 2016 surveys of Gladstone Harbour.
3. Coral cover, coral cover change, juvenile coral density and macroalgal cover all determine the Gladstone Harbour report card score for coral.
4. Freshwater run-off (flooding) reduces salinity levels in the water and is a recognised cause of coral mortality.
5. Divers conduct surveys at each site in Gladstone Harbour in May each year.

THE GRADES

2015	2016	Grading system
E	E	A Very good (0.85 - 1.00)
		B Good (0.65 - 0.84)
		C Satisfactory (0.50 - 0.64)
		D Poor (0.25 - 0.49)
		E Very poor (0.00 - 0.24)

? HOW IS CORAL MEASURED?

Coral surveys in Gladstone Harbour are conducted by a team of scientists from the Australian Institute of Marine Science. Underwater divers conduct surveys at each site.

Three coral indicators are measured to calculate scores for the Gladstone Harbour report card:

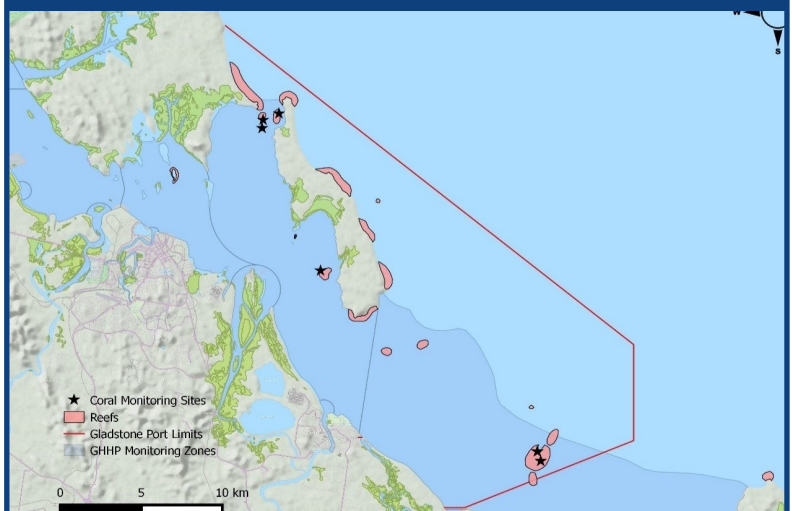
1. Coral cover– determines how much coral (hard & soft) are at each of the monitoring sites.
2. Macroalgal cover- large fleshy seaweeds (Macroalgae) compete with coral for space on the reef. The more macroalgae, the lower the report card score for corals .
3. Juvenile coral density– investigates the potential ability of a coral reef to recover from a disturbance. A high score for juvenile coral density indicates that a reef is growing.

? WHAT DO THE GRADES MEAN?

Coral communities in Gladstone Harbour remain in a very poor condition due to low coral cover and a high percentage of macroalgae cover. The current coral condition is a result of flooding in 2013. Freshwater run-off (flooding) reduces the salinity levels in the water and is a recognised cause of coral mortality.

Although coral is in a poor condition, the 2016 surveys found 17 species of juvenile corals within the six GHHP monitoring sites. This indicates that conditions for growth of juvenile corals has improved and that Gladstone's corals are slowly recovering from water quality impacts.

CORAL SITES MONITORED BY GHHP



Coral is monitored in six GHHP Zones: Rat Island, Facing Island, Curtis Island, Sea Rocks, The Narrows and Rodds Bay.