



Management Committee Meeting 41 Minutes

Embargoed until Report Card Launch – February 2021

Date: Wednesday 18th November 2020 **Time:** 9:45 – 11:45am

Location: Gladstone Ports Corporation Byellee Room – 21 Yarroon Street, Gladstone

Attendees:

Name	Position	Organisation
Community		
Mr Gerry Graham	GHHP Chair	Community
Ms Elyse Riethmuller (via Skype)	Chief Executive Officer	Fitzroy Basin Association
Government		
Ms Rachel D'Arcy (via Skype)	Manager, Reef Partnerships	The Office of the Great Barrier Reef, DES
Industry		
Dr Megan Ellis	Environment Specialist	Gladstone Ports Corporation
Ms Stacey Williams (via Skype)	CEO	Gladstone Industry Leaders Group
Mr Alan Hayter (via Skype)	Environmental Lead	ConocoPhillips Australia
ISP Members		
Dr John Rolfe	ISP Chair	GHHP Independent Science Panel
A/Prof Eva Abal (via Skype)	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Dr Jennifer Stauber (via Skype)	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Dr Melissa Dobbie (via Skype)	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Dr Roger Chong (via Skype)	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Staff		
Mrs Lyndal Hansen	GHHP Executive Officer	Amarna Consulting
Mrs Dana Iwanicki	GHHP Secretariat	Amarna Consulting
Dr Mark Schultz	Science Officer	Fitzroy Basin Association
Mr Mac Hansler	Science Officer	Fitzroy Basin Association
Observers		
Mr Chris Irving (via Skype)	Manager Environment & Conservation	Gladstone Regional Council
Ms Paulina Kaniewska (via Skype)	Senior Scientific Officer	The Office of the Great Barrier Reef, DES

Apologies:

Name	Position	Organisation
Mr Brent McLellan	PCCC TUMRA Manager	GIDARJIL
Mr Darryl Branthwaite	Councillor	Gladstone Regional Council
A/Prof Emma Jackson	Director, Coastal Marine Ecosystem Research Centre (CMERC)	Central Queensland University
Dr Richard Brinkman	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Ms Jane Waterhouse	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Dr Rob Coles	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel
Dr Erin Bohensky	ISP Member	GHHP Independent Science Panel

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Meeting Started: 9:45am

GHHP Chair welcomed all attending Management Committee members, staff, observers and ISP members attending in-person and over Skype and provided apologies. The Chair thanked everyone for their patience and flexibility as there were technical difficulties that delayed the start of the meeting.

1.3.1 Previous Minutes and Actions

The GHHP Chair reviewed the minutes and action items from the previous meeting.

The previous meeting minutes of Management Committee 40 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Agenda Item 2 – 2020 Report Card Results

2.1 What's changed for 2020

The Science Team presented the changes for 2020 and identified that some indicators and components were not assessed this year; in these cases, the 2019 grades were carried over into 2020.

Items to note:

- Mangroves, Social, Cultural and Economic were not assessed in 2020.
- It was a particularly dry year for the Gladstone region which has potentially influenced the grades in this year's Report Card.

2.2 Water

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Water.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Water Quality was very good (A – 0.89) for the first time since GHHP reporting began.
- Nutrient and turbidity scores improved compared to previous years.
- Within the sub-indicator levels, physiochemical scores were mostly very good, nutrient scores were mostly good and dissolved metal scores were all very good.
- Grades have been relatively consistent over the six reporting years.

2.3 Sediment

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Sediment.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Sediment Quality was very good (A – 0.95) which was identical to the previous two years.
- Sediment mercury was excluded this year as the limit of the reporting was above the guideline value.

2.4 Water and Sediment

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The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Water and Sediment.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Water and Sediment was very good (A – 0.92) with not many changes over the six years of reporting.

2.5 Coral Indicators

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Coral.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Coral was very poor (E – 0.14). This is the third consecutive year Coral has received an E.
- Very poor scores were reported for coral cover, macroalgal cover, juvenile density and change in hard coral cover.
- Results suggest that the cumulative impacts of the 2013 flooding, ongoing pressures like high macroalgae cover and acute disturbances like high water temperatures during the start of 2020 are slowing the recovery of corals.
- Corals in the Gladstone Harbour exhibited limited recovery potential in 2020.

2.6 Seagrass Indicators

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Seagrass.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Seagrass was good (B – 0.79). This is the second year that Seagrass has had a full letter grade improvement.
- 13 of 14 meadows were at a satisfactory or improved grade.
- 2019 had dry, benign weather conditions with minimal Calliope River discharge and very low rainfall.
- Seagrass meadows in the Gladstone Harbour are recovering after several years of poor condition.
- Overall, it was a good year for Seagrass in the Gladstone Harbour and the best in the past decade.

2.7 Habitats

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Habitats.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Habitats was satisfactory (C – 0.50). This is an improvement in grades from past years which were poor.
- Seagrass scores have improved in 2019 and 2020.

2.8 Mud Crab Indicators

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Mud Crabs.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Mud Crabs was poor (D – 0.39), continuing a downward trend.

- The Mud Crab score has decreased since 2019, mainly driven by prevalence of rust lesions. As the abundance score was taken from a small number of samples, it only takes a few rust lesions to result in a poor score. Abundance scores overall were poor.
- Sex ratio received very poor scores in five of the six zones where it could be calculated.
- Prevalence of rust lesions were good and very good in four zones where it could be calculated and poor in the other two zones.

2.9 Fish Health Indicators

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Fish Health.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Fish Health was good (B – 0.69). Fish Health has two measures – the Health Assessment Index (HAI) and Visual Fish Condition (VFC). The 2020 HAI score was good (B – 0.67) and VFC was good (B – 0.72).
- The confidence score for HAI was lower due to reduced sample size. Only one round was completed in 2020, resulting in less total number of fish sampled. Bream and mullet were excluded from the calculation as there were no bream caught and very few mullet.
- The inability to hold the Boyne Tannum HookUp in 2020 resulted in a decreased sampling size.
- The Fish Visual Assessment (FVA) showed the overall detection rate of visible damage was very low.
- Fish Body Condition (FBC) (length weight ratio) indicated that both species assessed recorded poor scores with a slightly lower score than the long-term average.
- In both studies, all fish showed very few signs of external health issues.

2.10 Fish Recruitment

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Fish Recruitment.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Fish Recruitment was satisfactory (C – 0.64) which is a considerable improvement from last year's grade of poor (D – 0.27).
- Although it was a very dry year overall, Fish Recruitment was measured between December 2019 to March 2020 which was the heaviest rainfall period for the year.
- The variation in scores over the last five years may be the result of variation in environmental conditions.

2.11 Fish and Crabs

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card results for Fish and Crabs.

Items to note:

- The overall grade for Fish and Crabs was satisfactory (C – 0.56) with an improvement from the 2019 result which was poor (D).
- Improvement in Fish Recruitment led to the improved Fish and Crab score.

2.12 Overall Environmental Scores

The Science Team presented the 2020 Report Card Environmental results.

Items to note:

- The overall Environmental grade was good (B – 0.66). This is the highest score so far for Environmental results and the first time it received a B.
- Water & Sediment Quality improved from 0.88 to 0.92.
- Habitats improved from 0.45 to 0.50.
- Fish and Crabs improved from 0.48 to 0.56.

Management Committee accepted the 2020 Environmental results.

2.13 Report Card Confidence Ratings

The ISP members reviewed the 2020 confidence ratings at their recent ISP Meeting. The ISP Chair presented the 2020 confidence ratings for the Environment component.

Items to note:

- Water = MODERATE
 - Only 'far-field' sites reported and there are only four samples a year
- Sediment = HIGH
 - Appropriate methodology and sampling frequency
- Seagrass = HIGH
- Coral = HIGH
 - Seagrass and Coral both have consistent methodology after six years of monitoring
- Mangroves = HIGH
 - Two years of monitoring, high quality data and consistent with other mangrove monitoring programs in QLD
- Fish Recruitment = HIGH
 - Five years of monitoring with consistent methods and data analysis
- Fish Health = MODERATE
 - Three years of monitoring and program is based on previous fish health studies. Benchmarks are preliminary and may need refining. Sample size for both fish health indicators was lower than the previous year due to reduced sampling in 2020.

The ISP Chair presented the confidence ratings for the Social, Cultural and Economic components of the Report Card which are used from 2019.

Items to note:

- Social = HIGH
- Cultural = MODERATE
- Economic = HIGH

Management Committee accepted the confidence ratings for all four components.

The GHHP Chair reinforced that this information is confidential and not to be shared until the Report Card is released in February 2021.

The ISP Chair thanked the Science Panel, Science Team and contractors for all of their work.

MC Questions/Comments:

- What is coral recovery being measured against?
There are four measures for coral – coral cover, macroalgal cover (measure of adverse pressure), juvenile density and change in hard coral cover (new coral coming through). The rates of change are very low and unlikely to improve dramatically in the next year. Up until about 2008 coral would have received a much better score than now, but conditions have really deteriorated since then.
- When the Report Card was first set up, they did not expect there to be such a contrast caused from natural weather events. As we get closer to ten years of data, we will be able to pick up on more of these impacts.

Agenda Item 4 – Items requiring decision

This agenda item was moved forward in the Agenda.

4.1 Draft 2020 Report Card

The GHHP Executive Officer provided a handout of the Draft 2020 Report Card on behalf of the Communications Team and screen-shared the electronic document with MC and ISP members attending via Skype. The EO advised that the Draft 2020 Report Card is strictly confidential.

Items to note:

- Similar layout to the 2019 Report Card with a Report Card Evolution header and information added in to explain the use of the 2019 results for Social, Cultural and Economic components.
- Felt rainfall was significant so a bar chart comparison for 2019/2020 was added to compare against the historical average rainfall from 1994-2020.

MC and ISP indicated the following changes to be made to the 2020 Report Card:

Page 2:

- Under Report Card Evolution add an additional (first) sentence to say: Not all indicators have been measured in 2020.
- Report Card Evolution has no environmental information included.
- Text for all four components to be updated as per ISP suggestions.
- Cultural Results confidence rating to change to moderate instead of medium.
- Replace 2019 circle under Social/Cultural/Economic with a symbol inside of a circle. Change it to read 'Uses 2019 results' instead of 2019 Results.

Page 3:

- Legend updated with symbol inside the circle and wording 'Uses 2019 results'.
- Remove – in Environmental Results text (Both the habitats and fish and crab indicator groups improved from the previous year, receiving – overall grades of C.)

Page 4:

- Under Highlights make it a capital C for Report Card.
- Picture of crab used in the Highlights section, but crabs were not actually a highlight for the Report Card year. Suggestion to use a seagrass picture.
- Do we need to mention more about fish recruitment under the Environmental highlights?
- Seagrass highlight should say Seagrass (not Seagrass meadows) in Gladstone Harbour were graded as good (B).
- Should seagrass communities in last sentence of Highlights just be seagrass?
- Seagrass condition in 2020 was the best of the past decade – should this be was the best in the past six years or since the Report Card began?
- First sentence under Gladstone Rainfall should read: Large rainfall events and extended dry seasons can impact the health of the harbour.
- Include ISP suggestions for an extra sentence in the Rainfall section.

The GHHP Chair thanked the ISP Chair, Science Team, MC members and staff for another excellent year despite the difficulties associated with COVID restrictions and alterations to how meetings were held.

The ISP Chair advised that the ISP is happy with how the Report Card has come out this year with a more constrained budget. He thanked the ISP members for their contributions throughout the year.

The ISP members (except for the ISP Chair) left the meeting at 10:45am so the Management Committee could move on to other business.

Action Items

41.1 ISP Chair/Science Team to send Communications Team the ISP's suggested Report Card edits.

41.2 Communications Team to make requested changes to the 2020 Report Card.

Agenda Item 5 – Items for consideration

This agenda item was moved forward in the Agenda order.

5.1.1 Budget Proposal for 2021/22

Alan Hayter presented a budget proposal for 2021/22 FY on behalf of the Subcommittee reviewing the GHHP Chair & EO positions.

Items to note:

- The paper provides an approach to bring GHHP back in to sound financial position without compromising the Science program or increasing membership contributions.

MC Comments/Questions:

- ISP accept the need to reduce the Science program budget and will review line items to see how they work it in to the cap of \$212,300. Will meet to review the budget and then bring a proposal back to the MC Meeting in March 2021.

- ISP Chair did identify that there was a discrepancy with ISP sitting fees and travel allocations within the budget. The proposed allocation is for \$10,000; however, in past years this figure has been more like \$40,000. The ISP Chair will review the ISP sitting fees and travel costs to submit to the MC.
- ISP is reluctant to take Coral out of Report Card monitoring.
- Website is designated \$5,000 in revised budget but will need closer to \$7,000. Possibility to give some from Graphic Design budget allocation.
- The 30% increase in Partners membership fees proposed earlier in the year will not go ahead for upcoming Partnership Meeting in December.
- It was recommended that the overall budget principles be accepted, but that the third recommendation in the proposal about specific line items in the Science program be set aside, pending recommendations from the ISP.

Management Committee approved to adopt the budget principles described in Section 4.1 for managing the GHHP budget.

Management Committee approved the budget allocations/caps for each area shown in Section 4.2 over the 2022-2024 FY (Operational, Communications, Science and Science Projects).

Alan Hayter advised these two approvals will give the MC a budget to proceed with the recruitment of the GHHP Chair & EO positions, keep GHHP from going in the negative and allow them to start establishing an operating reserve.

The GHHP Chair thanked the Subcommittee for their work to develop the Budget Proposal and advised it is good to continue to keep a review process in place.

Action Items

- 41.3 EO to develop a Policy with the Budget Principles outlined in the Budget Proposal paper.**
- 41.4 ISP Chair to present a proposal of Science Program and costs for the ISP line items at March MC Meeting.**

Agenda Item 3 – Reports

3.1 ISP Chair Report

The ISP Chair provided a verbal overview from the ISP Meeting held on 17th November reviewing the 2020 Report Card. Overall, the mechanics of the Report Card are flowing very smoothly and there is a good process in place. The ISP are preparing to adjust to a new budget in the future.

Items to note:

- It is expected that the intensive Fish Health Assessment Indicator will not be run every year in the future. Once three years of monitoring data area available after 2020-21, the ISP would like to set a baseline with the three consecutive years of sampling they will have after this financial year.
- Other Partnerships are interested in using Social, Cultural and Economic indicators in their report cards and a review and design process is currently being led by the Office of

the Great Barrier Reef to develop a consistent approach. This will provide new opportunities to assess these indicators.

- There is also current attention on assessment frameworks for Indigenous Cultural Heritage across the Great Barrier Reef, with greater focus on Indigenous-led assessments that have a more qualitative focus. It will be valuable to review these activities in the future to reassess its inclusion in the GHHP Report Card. It may be more appropriate to include examples and stories about Indigenous Cultural Heritage instead of a directly assessed metric.
- ISP would like to run a Mud Crab Workshop at CMERC in February 2021. The ISP Chair proposed a three to four-hour session in conjunction with CMERC. This would be followed with an ISP Meeting held via Zoom in the afternoon to work through budget options.
- Waiting on methodology approval for Urban Water Stewardship. It has improved and will roll out across local government areas.

3.2 GHHP Executive Officer Update

The Executive Officer provided a verbal overview on the updates of her work.

Items to note:

- Annual Report and has been sent to Partners, ISP, Management Committee and staff and is also available on the GHHP website.
- GHHP Chair and EO have reached out to a few other potential Partners including Cement Australia and the Gladstone Airport.
- Started desktop research and reaching out to community as part of Stewardship Management Response Report. Will reach out to Partners, as well.
- Brief explanation of approval for Science Reports.
- EO and FBA have worked together to reissue invoices for outstanding membership contributions. GHHP will need to provide some justifiable narrative around what procedures were taken at the time to chase up the payments, in particular, why new invoices have been issued instead of the original issued invoices.
- Value Proposition Statements are finalised. They will be handed/posted out to Management Committee members and be distributed at the Partnership Meeting in December.
- The EO explained that the Great Barrier Reef Regional Report Card Network Terms of Reference is waiting to be signed off by all five relevant Report Card Partnerships. There are some concerns from other Partnerships regarding the TOR.

MC Comments/Questions:

- Can we reorganise the layout on the GHHP website so the Annual Reports are listed newest to oldest?

Management Committee approved to move forward with the collaboration of the Great Barrier Reef Regional Report Card Network.

GHHP Chair commended the EO on her work and especially with getting the Value Proposition Statement ready to utilise with potential Partners.

Agenda Item 6 – General/recurring business

6.1 Policy Register update

The Executive Officer gave a verbal update on the Policy Register noting that the table for the MC Representation of Partners has been updated to reflect that the EO will communicate with WICET and GAWB, but does not vote for or speak on behalf of those two Partners.

Next meeting date: Partnership Meeting 18

Wednesday, 2nd December 2020

Location: CQUniversity (maximum of 21 attendees due to COVID restrictions)

Meeting closed: 11:43am

Meeting Actions Register:

Action Number	Action	Who is responsible?	When it is due?	Status	Notes
MC Meeting 39					
MC 39.8	Science Team to contact current round of contractors regarding MC review prior to publishing. All future contracts to include a clause about GHHP MC with an opportunity to preview papers drawing on GHHP data prior to publication.	Science Team		To follow up	
MC 39.9	Subcommittee to work on draft Risk Assessment Framework for MC Meeting 40.	Risk Assessment Framework Subcommittee	For MC Meeting 40 in Oct	Ongoing	Refer to EO Update at MC Meeting 40
MC Meeting 40					
40.1	EO & Elyse Riethmuller to work together to follow up unpaid Partnership membership contributions from previous year.	EO & Elyse Riethmuller		In process	
40.3	GHHP Chair & EO to follow up with GAWB re their representation on the MC.	GHHP Chair & EO			
40.4	ISP Chair to prepare a Proposal to run a Mud Crabs Workshop in 2021 to be presented to the Management Committee.	ISP Chair			
MC Meeting 41					
MC 41.1	ISP Chair/Science Team to send Communications Team the ISP's suggested Report Card edits.	ISP Chair/Science Team & COMMS	Before Partners Meeting on 2 nd Dec		
MC 41.2	Communications Team to make requested changes to 2020 Report Card.	COMMS	Before Partners Meeting on 2 nd Dec		
MC 41.3	EO to develop a Policy with the Budget Principles outlined in the Budget Proposal paper.	Executive Officer			
MC 41.4	ISP Chair to present a proposal of Science Program line items including the costs of the ISP sitting fees and travel costs at March MC Meeting.	ISP Chair	For March MC Meeting		