



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority



A Pathway to Stewardship

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Outline



- A big place – you need to start from somewhere
- The politics and challenge behind it
- The opportunity created – the key was collaboration
- Regional Council initiative –the smaller ‘t’ in tourism
- An ecosystem based approach – connectivity
- Monitoring and citizen science complementing the system
- The value of real-time data
- Enabling stewardship “the pledge”
- The tourism opportunity

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park



AREA

344,400 km²

LENGTH

2300 km long

70 million
football fields

Roughly the
same area as...



ITALY



JAPAN



GERMANY



MALAYSIA

3000



coral reefs

600



continental islands

1625



types of fish

133



varieties of
sharks and rays

600



types of soft
and hard corals

The challenge I want to talk about stems from

- The East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery (**ECIFF**)
- It occurs in the whole inshore area of the marine park in the most contested and multi jurisdictional areas, it is also the most contested and controversial fishery
- Approximately 600,000 recreational fishers
- Their take is roughly equal to commercial fish take
- It is also where many protected species occur
- It is a politically sensitive fishery with multiple impacts and challenging management issues



The Background

- GBRMPA supported a regional management approach to advance stewardship in this fishery
- Responsible commercial fishers who cared about what they did and how they did it were swamped by 'blow ins' and those who did not care
- Worked hard to get there with good people but 'in the end' although Fisheries Qld supported it in principle, the legislation to enable it did not.
- It came to stalemate and simmering division

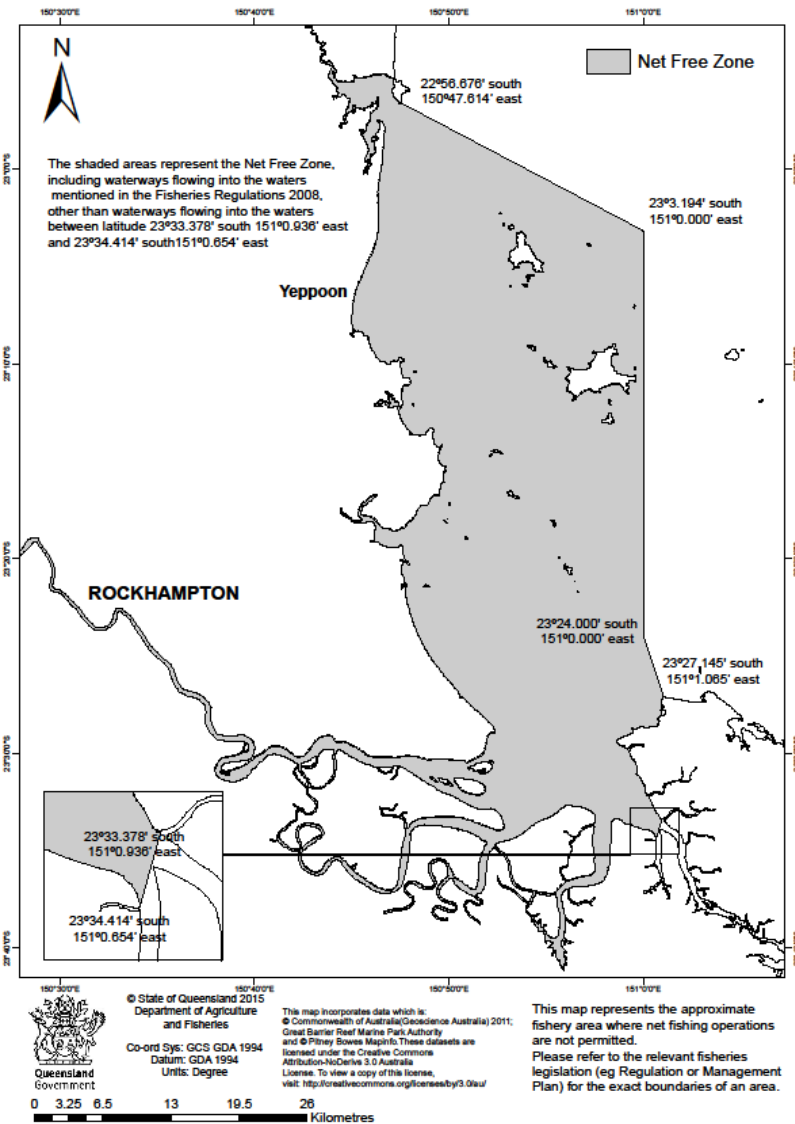


What developed

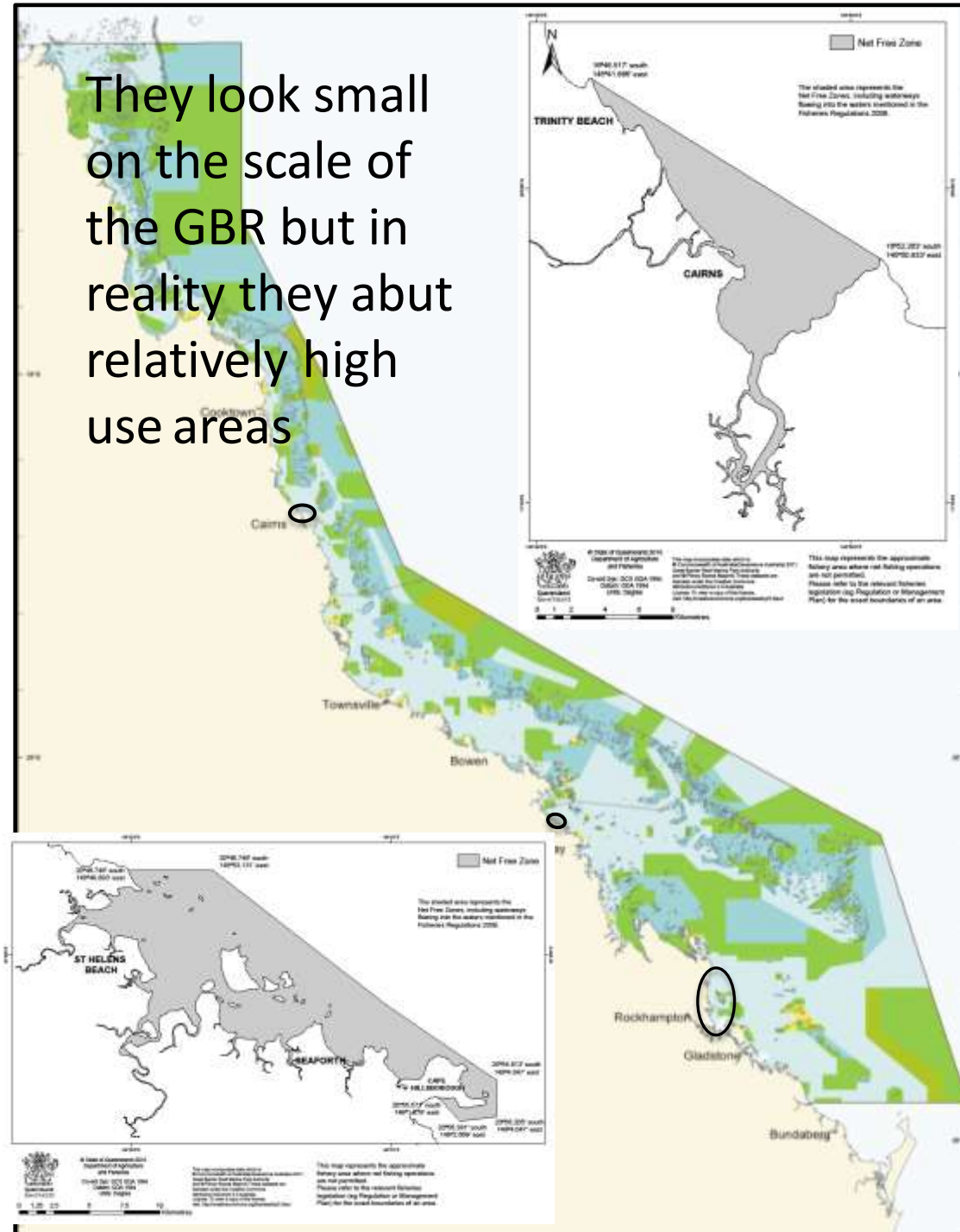
- Concurrently pressure (rightly or wrongly) from recreational fisher groups was growing for 'net free zones' (NFZs)
- On 1 November 2015 Fisheries Minister Byrne announced creation of 3 NFZs – Cairns, Mackay and the largest in Rockhampton.
- It was a blunt resource sharing tool bitterly resisted by commercial industry
- Government hoped it would encourage responsible regional tourism – that was a carrot for action and an opportunity



The 'Net Free Zones' in the GBRMP



They look small on the scale of the GBR but in reality they abut relatively high use areas



Putting the challenge out

- Coincidentally we had been working with the recreational groups in these areas to promote stewardship for some time
- Particularly in the Fitzroy with Bill and Stefan Sawynok (InfoFish)
- The creation of the NFZs provided an ideal opportunity to advance recreational fisheries stewardship in a more meaningful way.
- The challenge was put to the fishers “**OK, you have the areas, now prove you can look after them into the future and prove they work**”
- To their credit they took this challenge on and are gaining significant momentum – and this has enabled a ‘Pathway to Stewardship’
- Particularly in Rockhampton last year where Council took action with strong input and guidance from InfoFish ...and Mackay Council is now hanging onto Rocky’s coat tails with Cairns also showing interest



Meetings were happening, collaboration growing, council enabling

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The right people were getting together

- GBRMPA, InfoFish, recreational fishers with vision, NRM groups and later Fisheries Qld
- Really enthusiastic councillors and council staff willing to make things happen
- The right people with the right balance of drive, skills, networks and knowledge to achieve outcomes

Rockhampton recreational fishing development strategy

Rockhampton Regional Council created three taskforce groups to implement the fishing strategy

- They developed project plans and gave regular updates to a steering committee



**Marine Infrastructure
Taskforce**



**Fishery and Catchment Management
Taskforce (FCMG)**



**Business and
Marketing Taskforce**



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The Fishery and Catchment Management Group



- Drove the monitoring and stewardship outcomes and developed the Voluntary Code of Practice (VCoP)
- Ability of InfoFish to work productively with and be trusted by recreational fishers was pivotal
- They had the knowhow and technical ability to really get things happening
- This, and their 'real-time feedback', fostered stewardship
- It gave a sense of ownership and return on input effort:
 - *you put in, you got back, you cared*

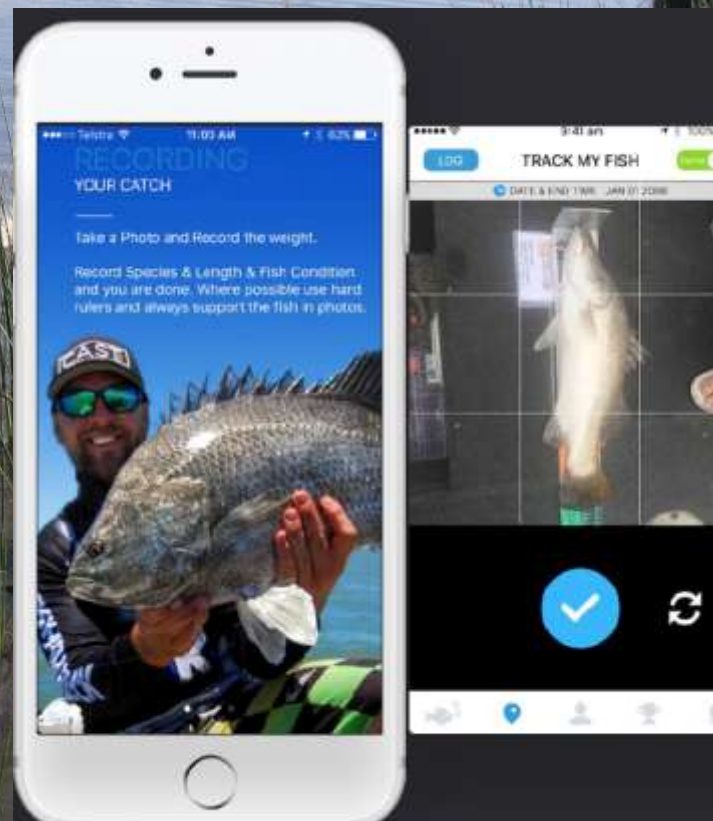
InfoFish objective

- Is to collect data from multiple sources to assist in the development of real-time monitoring of recreational fishing in both the GBR and NFZs. This is already happening in the Fitzroy River and Gladstone. InfoFish is deploying a range of new technologies for data collection and real-time delivery of information

Real World Applications for Track My Fish based Citizen Science

InfoFish collects, analyses and monitors recreational catch and effort and in some cases (barramundi) predicts catch rates

Through their 'crystal bowl' technique and their 'track my fish app' they collect data and provide information back in real-time and that is a key in promoting stewardship



So about stewardship



Land & Aquatic Projects

- 10 x Fish Hotels installed
- 3 x fish passages installed
- Pest control program on Fitzroy Floodplain
- Improved grazing projects...plus much more
- Habitat and Connectivity matter



Monitoring Program

Draft program was developed and presented to FCMG for feedback.

DRAFT: Options for a scientifically rigorous monitoring program for the Fitzroy River and Port Alma

Drafted by Dr Nicole Flint, Research Fellow
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The Fisheries and Catchment Management Group Goal/ Project: 2.3 is to "Recommend options for the development of a scientifically rigorous monitoring program (long term), to be developed within the Fitzroy River and Port Alma catchment areas for pests (e.g. tilapia), water quality, local fish stocks, local fishing effort, habitat health and recruitment of native fish."

The first step of this goal was for the Fishery and Catchment Management Group (FCMG) to agree upon a breakdown of actions. This step was completed at an FCMG meeting held on 29 July, 2016 (Table 1).

Table 1. Breakdown of actions for Goal 2.3

Timeframe	Action	Project Lead	\$/Support Options	\$ Estimate	Risks
Sep 2016	Draft a list of monitoring requirements, potential options for delivery and stakeholders (and prioritisation)	Nicole Flint	Time from participants	In kind contribution CQU	
Oct 2016	Circulate draft to	Nicole Flint	Time from	In kind from	Discussion



Voluntary Code of Practice

Value 1. Maintaining healthy fish stocks through sustainable harvest behaviours

Value 2. Proper care and handling of all fish being released to maximise survival rates

Value 3. Zero tolerance for Illegal fishing activities

Value 4. Care and Respect the environment and its plants and animals where we fish

Plus reduced bag and size limits (particularly on trophy fish)

Voluntary Code of Practice

- Draft was developed and distributed to local fishing community for feedback
- Council recently adopted the VCOP

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

THAT Council:

1. endorses the Draft Rockhampton Recreational Fishing Voluntary Code of Practice as an important measure in the management of the Fitzroy River / Fitzroy Delta Net Free Zone area;
2. support measures to maintain healthy fish stocks through the non-targeting of spawning areas for Barramundi, King and Blue Threadfin (Salmon) in the Region as set out in this report;
3. allocates \$12,500 towards promoting the Voluntary Code of Practice; and
4. allocates \$5,000 towards the Rockhampton Recreational Fishing Industry Forum.

Moved by: Councillor Williams

Seconded by: Councillor Rutherford

MOTION CARRIED



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The Clincher

making the VCoP more robust

- A number of Reef Guardian fishers in the program I manage adhere to an operational pledge
- This pledge concept was put to Council and all involved in Rockhampton and they took it up
- Council at its 25 July meeting
 - *“Agreed to ask fishers to take a (sign on) pledge to enact CoP values and behaviours”*
- ***This pledge equates to a public declaration of commitment to honouring the VCoP***



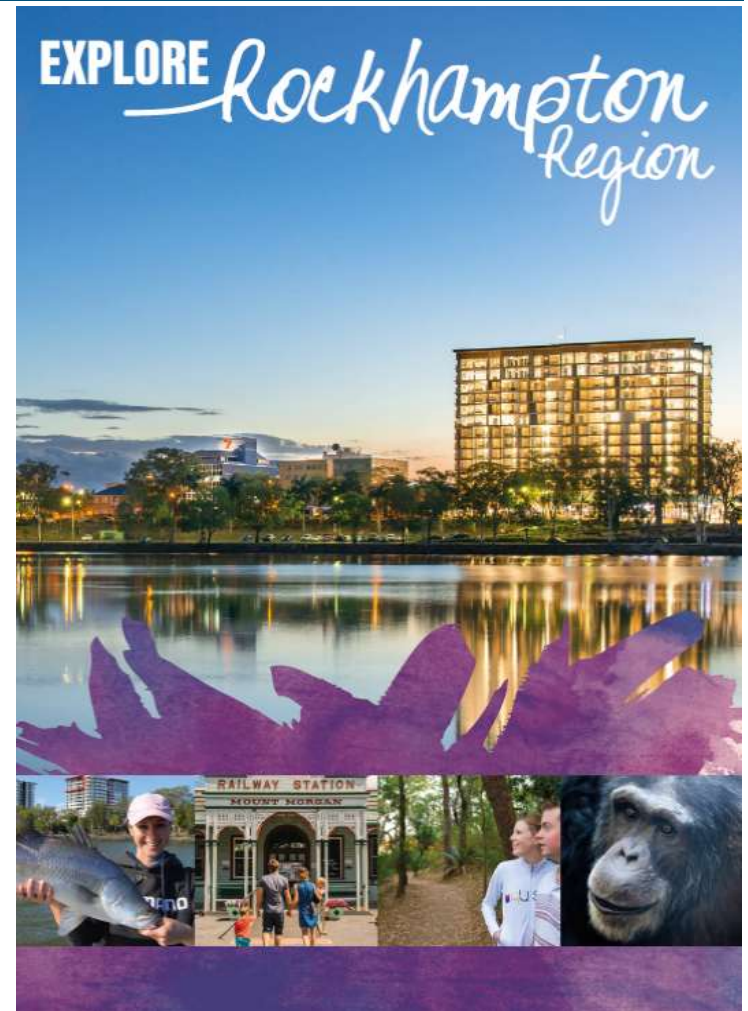
And the tourism angle

- Rocky is securing their fishery base and improving sustainability... they have a lot more to offer:
 - Inland adventures, gorges and freshwater fishing for iconic species
 - Coastal Islands, Keppel Bay and the Great Barrier Reef are all easily in the mix
 - They, the small 't' in tourism, are serious about creating a regional identity

An example of Explore Rockhampton

The new ***Explore Rockhampton Region Visitor Guide*** (print collateral) has Fishing as a hero experience.

Both the Guide and a website will allow visitors to view other services they (or their travelling companions may require) whilst travelling for their fishing holiday (e.g. accommodation, attractions, restaurants).



ADVANCEROCKHAMPTON.COM.AU



ADVANCE *Rockhampton*
Region

Rockhampton
Regional Council

Marketing Fishing – Regional Perspective

- Rockhampton Regional Council established a Tourism Unit within Council on 1 April 2017
- The Tourism Unit is undertaking a review and refresh of all existing tourism content and collateral, as well as identifying needs for new collateral
- **Fishing** has been identified as a prominent 'hero experience' for the Rockhampton Region as part of this review



EVENTS

BASS NATION ROCKHAMPTON RUMBLE

ANNUAL | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

Team based event, including two full days and one half day, to chase barra in Port Alma and other defined places.
fb.com/WTfAdmin

ROCKY BARRA BOUNTY

ANNUAL | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

The annual Rocky Barra Bounty is a tag and release event, the first to introduce photographing and releasing of fish. The Bounty is tracked in real time with information relayed among competitors and spectators. Proceeds go to enhancing recreational fishing on the Fitzroy River.
rockybarrabounty.com

WTF WOMEN THAT FISH

ANNUAL | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Founded in 2012, the Women That Fish Barra Classic (WTF) aims to empower women and build their confidence on the water as well as providing an amazing friendly atmosphere for all to enjoy. The Classic is open to ladies 18 years and over.
fb.com/WTfAdmin

HOME OF THE BARRAMUNDI

FISHING

Rockhampton is the only city in Australia where you can fly in, check in and boat out in less than an hour, thanks to the CBD's location along the mighty Fitzroy River! And, no matter who you are, how you want to fish, or what you want to catch, the Rockhampton Region is ready to welcome you.

CHOOSE YOUR FISHING ADVENTURE

For the recreational fisher that lives some distance away and is time poor, stay in one of our CBD hotels where fishing charters can ferry you quickly to a professional Barra boat for a day's fishing.

If you have your own boat, take advantage of the hotels, motels houses and caravan parks that are focused on providing security to the recreational fisher.

Central Queenslanders looking for a short trip should look to Rockhampton as a destination where the anglers in the family can go fishing on one day while the less inclined can enjoy a spot of shopping or inner city dining.

If you enjoy your annual caravan and camping trip, the Rockhampton Region has a variety of caravan parks including those close to or along the Fitzroy River, with

land based jetties available. Mount Morgan No.7 Dam is a great option, as it is continually being stocked with Yellow Belly. The Dam has a speed restriction on boats and with the town's facilities it is perfect for the kayak fisher.

DID YOU KNOW?

Since the time of the dreaming, the Darumbal people, Rockhampton's indigenous people, have called the fish with the large scales Barra-mundi (pronounced Budda-moon-de) – the Rockhampton Region is the home of Barramundi.

CHECK SEASONS, BAG AND SIZE LIMITS

EXPLOREROCKHAMPTON.COM.AU /FISHING

FISHING HOT SPOTS

SOUTH ROCKHAMPTON

BOAT RAMP – FRESHWATER

Ski Gardens
50 Herman Street, Wandal, 1 Boat Lane, 20 car and trailer parks, landing

JETTY – FRESHWATER

Sir Raymond Huish Drive
Wandal

BOAT RAMP AND PONTOON –
SALTWATER

Quay Street Boat Ramp
Littler Corn-Ingham Park
4 boat lanes, 1 pontoon

JETTY – SALTWATER

Queen's Wharf
Below the junction of William and Quay Streets

NORTH ROCKHAMPTON

BOAT RAMP – FRESHWATER

Larcombe Street
Access at the end of Larcombe Street via Glenmore Road and Macalister Street
1 Boat Lane, 30 car and trailer parks, landing

BOAT RAMP – SALTWATER

Reaney Street
1 Boat Lane, 8 car and trailers parks, Access at the end of Reaney Street, via Bridge Street and Goodall Street

PORT ALMA

BOAT RAMP – SALTWATER

Port Alma
2 boat lanes, 15 car and trailer parks

MOUNT MORGAN

BOAT RAMP – FRESHWATER

Mt Morgan No. 7 Dam
1 Boat Lane, 8 car and trailer parks

KEY SPECIES

BARRAMUNDI

The mighty Barramundi
Lates calcarifer
80cm common length
180cm max total length
100cm trophy fish
Grows to 58cm in three years

KING THREADFIN

Polydactylus macrochir
80cm common length
170cm max total length
100cm trophy fish
Pectoral filaments scan for prey



Hero Experiences

Taking the Monitoring into the whole of the Marine Park



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- Recreational fishing data is recognised as a gap in the Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan
- We now have the template and the right players connected
- The trick has been funding – it has been gained
- The complementary linkages with Fisheries Qld data are being cemented
- Agreement reached to expand InfoFish ‘real-time’ monitoring into the wider Marine Park on ‘to be agreed’ key target species.
- A major step forward for understanding recreational fishing and its linkage with sustainable regional tourism in the GBR



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The learning?



- An opportunity presented, born from argument
- The skill/knowledge base was there
- The vision formed
- The right people in the tent enabled it
- A dose of start-up funding was injected
- The example was set; its value recognised
- The sustainability and management benefit flows to the wider GBR

Since the time of the dreaming, the Dharumbal people have called the fish with the large scales the “*Bardda Moon Di*”, our home is where the name Barramundi was derived.

This fish has a significant cultural connection to the Dharumbal people and it is easy to see why; it is magnificent, it is tenacious and it never gives up without a fight.

And if you have ever wondered about barramundi?

Thankyou

