

TURNING THE TIDE

Spring 2017, Volume 18 #2

Record rollbacks:

Marine sanctuaries on the chopping block

Fight For Our Reef goes to the UN

Plastics: Australia turns the tide!

Seafood switch: sustainability guide update

Meet Gillian – next generation Reef warrior!

Australian
Marine
Conservation
Society



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From the **DIRECTOR**
Darren Kindleysides

Time to buy some
INSURANCE

You have heard this story before.

Our oceans are under increasing pressure. The symptoms are unmissable; mass coral bleaching, unprecedented mangrove and kelp forest die offs, less fish and more plastic. Our seas need our help now more than ever.

So how is it that rather than offering more help, our Australian Government is planning to offer less – much less?

Marine conservation in Australia been progressing until now. For decades successive governments from both sides of politics had shown real leadership, taking us forwards rather than backwards. Australia led the world with our national network of marine reserves that was set up at the end of 2012, but that has since changed.

The current Australian Government under Malcom Turnbull's leadership is looking to gut what was a world-best network. They are proposing to revoke 40 million hectares of fully protected marine sanctuaries, which are our national parks in the sea. Think about an area the size of Victoria, then double it. That is how big the proposed cuts are.

Yet across our blue planet more and more nations are expanding marine reserves to give their seas, and the people who rely on them, a fighting chance. So at a time when nations are advancing marine protection, why is Australia going backwards?

It feels like it is time to buy some insurance. Not life insurance, but marine life insurance. And I know the best policy. It is not a new product. It is tried and tested. It comes recommended by scientists and ocean users the world over.

Marine sanctuaries are an insurance policy for marine life and people. There is overwhelming scientific evidence that they allow marine species to recover and rebuild. They protect the health and balance of marine ecosystems, which in turn protects us as a coastal nation. In Australia alone, tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars or revenue depend on healthy oceans.

Life insurance premiums are cheaper the earlier we take up a policy. And there can come a point when it is too late. You cannot insure the patient after they've been declared ill. Protecting our oceans is no different. Investing in marine sanctuaries today is a far better, cheaper and easier option than waiting until our oceans collapse and trying to fix the problems later. And the longer we delay the greater the price we will pay. It cannot be a price we leave for our children and our grandchildren to meet.

Marine sanctuaries work. Establishing a scientifically solid national network of marine reserves throughout Australia's waters creates a legacy of ocean health. Winding the network backwards radically and recklessly, creates a litany of problems deferred and oceans damaged. It will also perpetuate one the greatest inequalities we face today – the inequality that exists between current and future generations. I will not sit idly by and leave a broken ocean legacy to my kids. Thank you for standing with us as we fight on.



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We deserve better than this fudging
and scheming, and so do our seas.
It's not too late for excellence.
Or a legacy to be proud of.

Sanctuaries and science can still be restored to
marine parks. But that will take statesmanship,
principle and courage.

TIM WINTON, Acclaimed author and AMCS Patron



Read Tim's full Op Ed: marineconservation.org.au

OUT OF THE

News from around our shores



#STOPADANI momentum continues!

The movement to #StopAdani is gathering pace – with millions of Australians taking action to stop Adani’s dangerous coal mine inland from our Great Barrier Reef. No financial lenders will touch it, with CommBank recently joining the other ‘big four’ banks to rule out funding for this controversial coal mine. Now the Northern Australian Infrastructure Fund (NAIF which has the power to loan Adani \$1 billion of our taxes) is under investigation.

Incredibly, Adani is challenging the fine that it received from the Qld Environment Department for spilling massive amounts of coal-laden water right next to the Reef during Cyclone Debbie. This is a stark reminder that Adani can’t be trusted with our Reef or even respecting our laws.

The priority of our federal and state governments should be protecting our Great Barrier Reef and the 64,000 workers who depend on its health, not propping up a billion-dollar international corporate giant intent on damaging it further. With record-breaking temperatures year upon year, mass coral bleachings and a tourism industry under pressure, we need clean sustainable jobs, not dirty subsidised coal mines like Adani’s Carmichael coal mine. Thank you for being part of the movement to Fight for our Reef and Stop Adani.

GOVERNMENT’S charity attack Our right to speak out threatened – again

The attack on charities who stand up for nature continues, following the Australian government’s inquiry into charitable organisations in 2015. While some politicians have spoken out in our defence (including some within government), the inquiry’s most controversial recommendations have now been proposed in a government Discussion Paper.

Think of the places we love in Australia; The Great Barrier Reef, Ningaloo, Fraser Island, the Blue Mountains. None of these places would have been protected without the advocacy from environmental groups, staffed by passionate Australians. Our seas, coasts, land, air and water are healthier, better managed and protected thanks to environmental charities around the country. Yet these very groups have been singled out in this Paper, which proposes to introduce reams of additional red tape and dictate how we work.

The motivation for this continued attack is hard to fathom. In inquiry evidence neither the federal environment department nor Australia’s charity regulator the ACNC raised significant concerns. With mounting threats to our natural world, our government should be supporting our important work, not silencing us.



Vicious Marine Park CUTBACKS PROPOSED

Unbelievable plans to slash our national network of marine sanctuaries have been released by the Federal Government. They are proposing shocking cutbacks to Australia’s sanctuary zones, putting our rare dolphins, dugongs and turtles at risk and paving the way for destructive commercial fishing methods and oil and gas giants.

The proposed changes would be the largest wind back of conservation protection in Australia’s history – *an area equivalent to revoking every second national park in Australia.*

Our national marine sanctuary network took more than a decade of science, overwhelming community support and bipartisan political work. We must defend it.

Head to page eight to read a synopsis on the cutbacks from two of Australia’s leading marine scientists.



BLUE



Check us out on twitter for live updates & news: @AustMarConsSoc

AMCS takes **BLUE** nationwide

This winter AMCS and our partners in the Save Our Marine Life Alliance took the stunning new documentary **BLUE** on a roadshow to five cities around Australia. **BLUE** is a provocative journey into our oceans, witnessing this critical moment when our marine world is on a precipice.

Filmed over two years in Indonesia, the Philippines, Hawaii and Australia, **BLUE** comes at a time in human society when we are making decisions that will decide the legacy we leave for our children.

The sold-out crowds loved this powerful movie and responded passionately to its strong message: our oceans are in trouble and we all need to join the fight to save them.



WA leads shark control **INNOVATION**

Great white sharks have been demonised in parts of the media, but this threatened species remains in urgent need of protection and our Minister for the Environment refuses to act. Rather than proposing protections, Minister Frydenberg stirred up the shark cull debate again when he called for the Western Australian government to catch and kill sharks following a fatal encounter earlier in the year. Our hearts go out to the family and friends of the young surfer, but culls are not the answer.

The WA McGowan Government is actively looking at smarter

shark controls. They’ve installed electromagnetic barriers off Cottesloe Beach – a measure used successfully in South Africa. There are other non-lethal measures to reduce our interactions with sharks, with the NSW government also testing drones, Artificial Intelligence and shark buoys.

The Federal Environment Minister should be standing up for threatened species. We have the technology to co-exist with these apex species. We just need the action and political will.

Supermarket giants **#BANTHEBAG**

Six billion plastic bags are given out by Coles and Woolworths every year. One of the deadliest types of plastics, their lightweight design means that every single bag eventually ends as tiny pieces. Used for just 12 minutes on average, that same bag takes an incredible 1,000 years to break down.

But take heart, because our fight to ban the bag has made giant leaps forwards! By mid 2018 all Coles, Woolworths, Harris Farm and IGA stores will no longer stock single-use bags. In further progress, both Queensland and Western Australia will have state-wide bans by mid 2018! Now we just need Victoria and New South Wales to follow the trend and we will have a nationwide ban.

SAVING OUR REEF

requires more than local action

AMCS travels to Poland to join UNESCO's annual World Heritage Committee meeting as they confirm the climate change threat to global coral reefs

By Imogen Zethoven, AO,
Great Barrier Reef
Campaign Director



In the lead up to the World Heritage Committee meeting we created *Our Reef – A Love Story*, a book collating your personal, beautiful and concerned stories, poems and photos which we delivered to Minister Josh Frydenberg. The book featured representatives from faith communities, schools, writers, activists, the health and environment sector and many more. Thank you to everyone who contributed and made this possible to ensure the pressure is kept on our leaders to protect our Reef.



Charlie Veron
© Bartłomiej Banaszak,
World Heritage Committee.



THE GODFATHER OF CORAL SPEAKS

The legendary Charlie Veron joined us in Krakow to speak for our Reef. With his inimitable passion, commitment and knowledge, here is his speech to the Committee.

My name is Charlie Veron. I am former chief scientist of the Australian Institute of Marine Science.

It has been the privilege of my life to have identified and named a fifth of the world's reef coral species. It has been the tragedy of my life to realise that no one living today will experience the majesty of coral reefs as I have.

In the two years since the Committee last examined our Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, 49% of its coral have died due to a global mass global coral bleaching event.

Mr Chair, coral bleaching is the most visible evidence of climate change. There is no doubt that in the last two years, the Outstanding Universal Value of our Great Barrier Reef has been severely diminished.

I commend the work of IUCN, UNESCO and this committee in recent years to secure significant outcomes to build the resilience of our Reef.

This year's draft decision should be supported. The World Heritage Centre rightly identifies that implementing strong laws in our Reef

catchments that clean up farm water pollution and stop excessive tree clearing are vital.

But sadly, the last two years have shown that the impacts of climate change are vastly outpacing local management efforts.

Mr Chair, climate change is a global problem. Every country must do its fair share to keep global temperature rise below 1.5°C. Australia is not close to doing its fair share.

If all countries make the same level of effort as Australia in reducing emissions, global temperature will rise by 3-4°C by the end of the century. This would kill all our Reef corals worldwide.

Australia is also actively supporting a proposal to develop one of the world's largest coal mines next to our Great Barrier Reef.

To be a true custodian of this global treasure, I urge this committee to call on Australia to dramatically lift its level of ambition to reduce carbon pollution and to cease support for dirty fossil fuel development.



Fight For Our Reef Campaign Director, Imogen Zethoven, and Godfather of Coral, Charlie Veron speak to the World Heritage Committee © Bartłomiej Banaszak, World Heritage Committee.



Inside the plenary session at Krakow © Shannon Hurley, Fight For Our Reef



Campaign Director, Imogen Zethoven, and Campaigner, Shannon Hurley, spoke to delegates from every country to urge climate action for global corals © Fight For Our Reef

damaged by climate change in the coming decades. Most importantly, it called on all state parties to undertake the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement: limit global temperature rise to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Australia has committed to the 1.5°C target, but the Government's contribution is woefully weak. We are not doing our global fair share to reduce carbon pollution. If an Australia-equivalent level of action was undertaken by other countries, global temperatures would rise by 3.5-4°C this century. This would doom all coral reefs.

After Krakow, Australia must take action to protect our Reef – not just from farm pollution and coastal development, but most importantly from global warming.

We cannot stop there. Our government needs to consider the Great Barrier Reef when assessing new coal mines – even when resources are destined for export. Our Reef does not care if coal is burnt in Australia, India or elsewhere. It does the same harm. If built, Adani's monstrous Carmichael mine will burn 4.7 billion tonnes of carbon over its lifespan – creating enormous damage.

While the Australian government continues to embrace Adani's proposed coal mine, it has no credibility on Reef matters. While it refuses policies and programs to drastically reduce carbon pollution, it has no credibility on Reef matters. While it continues to flirt with a new coal-fired power station in North Queensland, it has no credibility on Reef matters. Words and deeds must be aligned to achieve credibility.

Under the World Heritage Convention, our government has a legal and moral duty to protect our threatened Reef. In Krakow, for the first time ever, the World Heritage Committee demonstrated that this duty extends to tackling climate change – which even our government now recognises as the biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef.

The message is clear: Australia must do its global fair share to reduce carbon pollution. Or we face the international embarrassment of having our Reef listed as 'in danger' in a future World Heritage assessment. We can, and must, do better future for our Reef.

Go to fightforourreef.org.au for the latest on how you can get involved.



We took our ask for urgent climate action to world leaders in Krakow © Fight For Our Reef

Australia’s new marine parks plan is a case of the **EMPEROR’S NEW CLOTHES**

The federal government’s new draft marine park plans are based on an unsubstantiated premise: that protection of Australia’s ocean wildlife is consistent with activities such as fishing and oil and gas exploration.

By Jessica Meeuwig, Professor and Director, Marine Futures Lab, UWA and David Booth, Professor of Marine Ecology, UTS

Under the proposed plans, there would be no change to the boundaries of existing marine parks, which cover 36% of Commonwealth waters, or almost 2.4 million square kilometres. But many areas inside these boundaries will be rezoned to allow for a range of activities besides conservation.

The plans propose dividing marine parks into three types of zones:

- GREEN:** “National Park Zones” with full conservation protection
- YELLOW:** “Habitat Protection Zones” where fishing is allowed as long as the seafloor is not harmed
- BLUE:** “Special Purpose Zones” that allow for specific commercial activities.

Crucially, under the new draft plans, the amount of green zones will be almost halved, from 36% to 20% of the marine park network, whereas yellow zones will almost double from 24% to 43%, compared with when the marine parks were established in 2012.

The government has said that this approach will “allow sustainable activities like commercial fishing while protecting key conservation features”.

But like the courtiers told to admire the Emperor’s non-existent new clothes,

we’re being asked to believe something to be true despite strong evidence to the contrary.

THE EMPEROR’S UNROBING

The new plans follow on from last year’s release of an independent review, commissioned by the Abbott government after suspending the previous network of marine reserves implemented under Julia Gillard in 2012.

Yet the latest draft plans, which propose to gut the network of green zones, ignore many of the recommendations made in the review, which was itself an erosion of the suspended 2012 plans.

The extent of green zones is crucial, because the science says they are the engine room of conservation. Fully protected marine national parks – with no fishing, no mining, and no oil and gas drilling – deliver far more benefits to biodiversity than other zone types.

The best estimates suggest that 30-40% of the seascape should ideally be fully protected, rather than the 20% proposed under the new plans.

Partially protected areas, such as the yellow zones that allow fishing while protecting the seabed, do not generate conservation benefits equivalent to those of full protection.

While some studies suggest that partial protection is better than nothing, others suggest that these zones offer little to no improvement relative to areas fully open to exploitation.

Environment minister Josh Frydenberg has pointed out that, under the new plans, the total area zoned as either green or yellow will rise from 60% to 63% compared with the 2012 network. But yellow is not the new green. What’s more, yellow zones have similar management costs to green zones, which means that the government is proposing to spend the same amount of money for far inferior protection. And as any decent sex-ed teacher will tell you, partial protection is a risky business.

WHAT DO THE DRAFT PLANS MEAN?

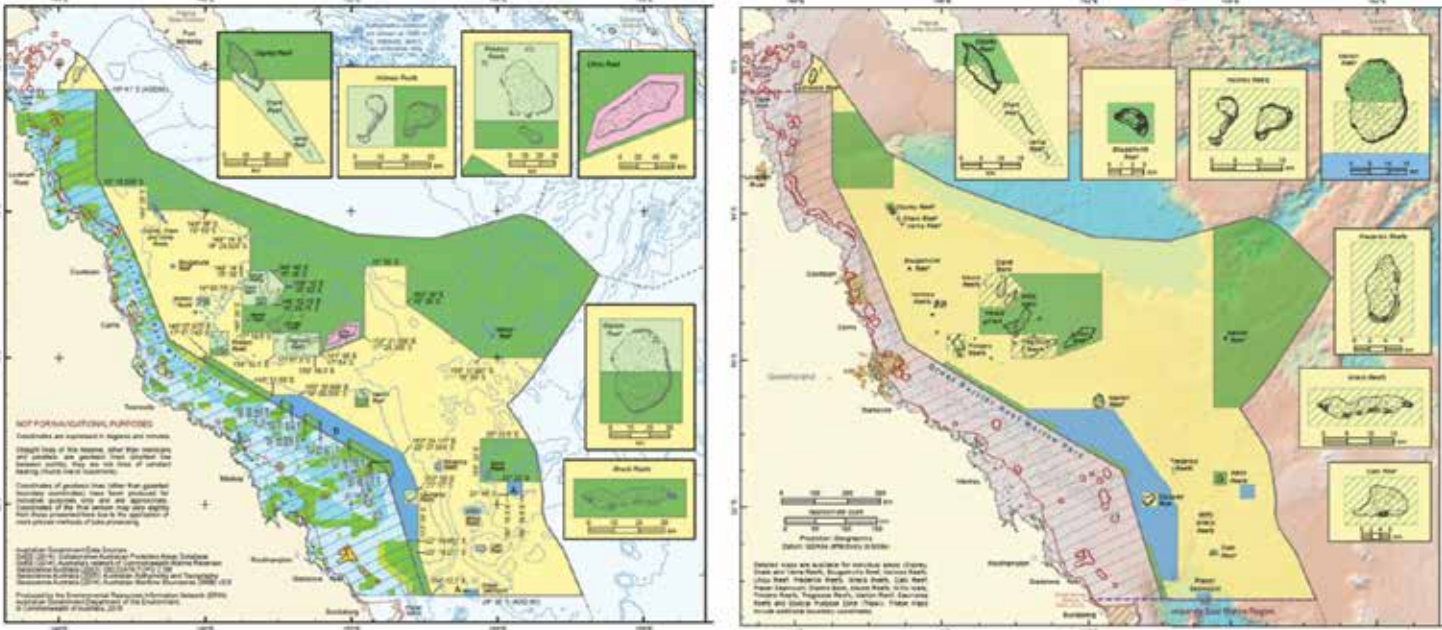
Let’s take a couple of examples, starting with the Coral Sea Marine Park. This is perhaps the most disappointing rollback in the new draft plan. The green zone, which would have been one of the largest fully protected areas on the planet, has been reduced by half to allow for fishing activity in a significantly expanded yellow zone.

This yellow zone would allow the use of pelagic longlines to fish for tuna.



Endangered dugongs are on the rise thanks to marine sanctuaries © Troy Mayne / Oceanic Imagery

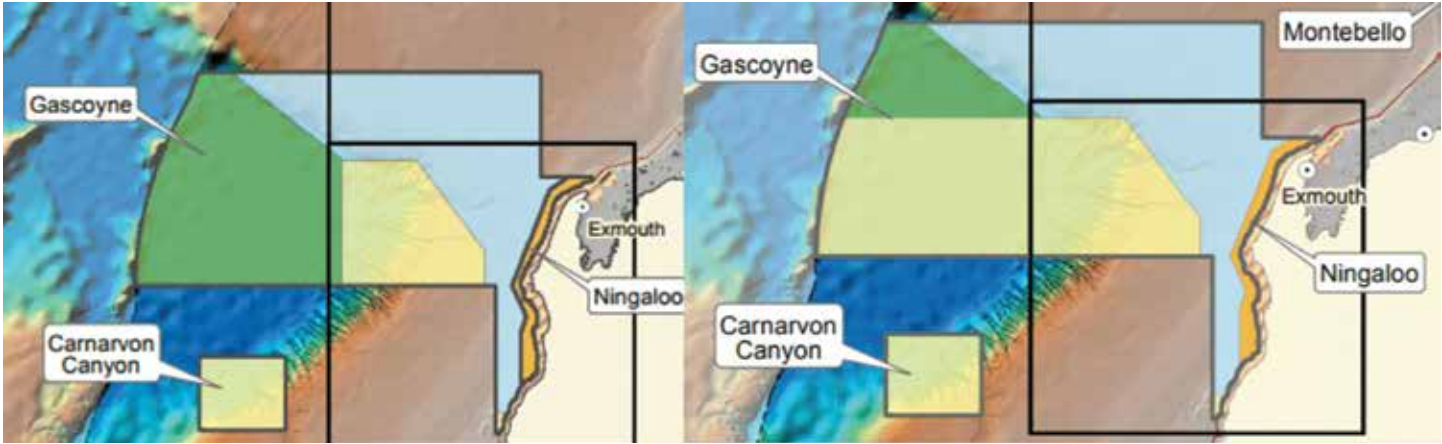
BELOW: Coral Sea Marine Park zoning, as recommended by Independent Review (left) and in the new draft plan (right), showing the proposed expansion of partial protection (yellow) vs full protection (green). Source: Parks Australia



This is despite government statistics showing that around 30% of the catch in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish fishery consists of species that are either overexploited or uncertain in their sustainability, and the government’s own risk assessment that found these types of fishing lines are incompatible with conservation.

What this means, in effect, is that the plans to establish a world-class marine park in the Coral Sea will be significantly undermined for the sake of saving commercial tuna fishers A\$4.1 million per year, or 0.3% of the total revenue from Australia’s wild-catch fisheries.

Contrast this with the A\$6.4 billion generated by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in 2015-16, the majority of which comes from non-extractive industries. This same erosion of protection is also proposed in Western Australia, where the government’s draft plan would reduce green zones by 43% across the



Zoning for the Gascoyne Marine Park as recommended by the Independent Review (left) and the new draft plan (right). Source: Parks Australia

largest marine parks in the region.

Again, this is despite clear evidence that the fishing activities occurring in these areas are not compatible with conservation. Such proposals also ignore future pressures such as deep-sea mining.

The overall effect is summarised neatly by Frydenberg’s statement that the government’s plans will:

...increase the total area of the reserves open to fishing from 64% to 80% ... (and) make 97% of waters within 100 kilometres of the coast open for recreational fishing.

BUILDING OCEAN RESILIENCE

Science shows that full protection creates resilience by supporting intact ecosystems. Fully protected green zones recover faster from flooding and coral bleaching, have reduced rates of disease, and fend off climate invaders more effectively than areas that are open to fishing.

Green zones also contribute indirectly to the blue economy. They help support fisheries and function as “nurseries” for fish larvae. For commercial fisheries, these sanctuaries are more important than ever in view of the declines in global catches since we hit “peak fish” in 1996.

Of course it is important to balance conservation with sustainable economic use of our oceans. Yet the government’s new draft plan leaves a huge majority of Australia’s waters open to business as usual. It’s a brave Emperor who thinks this will protect our oceans.

So let’s put some real clothes on the Emperor and create a network of marine protection that supports our blue economy and is backed by science.

THE CONVERSATION

Originally published by theconversation.com



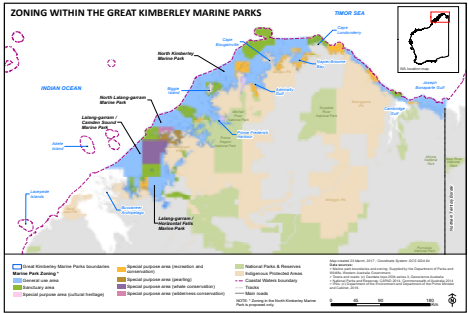
Much of the Kimberley’s waters are now protected in a marine park. © Glenn Walker

By Adele Pedder,
Marine Parks
Campaign Manager



A new Kimberley Marine Park shows there is appetite for ambition when it comes to protecting our marine life.

The Kimberley Coast is one of the most intact marine environments left on Earth. Unsurprisingly, this coastline of outstanding natural beauty is also a refuge for threatened and vulnerable species; the breeding ground for 30,000 humpback whales, six of the world’s seven marine turtle species, dugongs, snubfin dolphins and endangered sawfish.



In response to overwhelming demand from Australian ocean lovers, and recognising the national significance of this region, a Great Kimberley Marine Park was declared in December 2016.

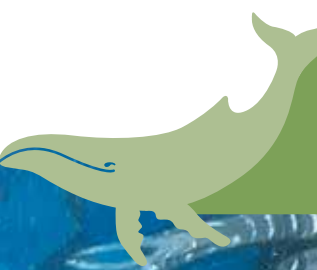
This significant new marine park contains four adjacent, constituent marine parks that cover a total of three million hectares of the Kimberley’s coastal waters – roughly half the size of Tasmania. All of the zoning schemes for the parks are now finalised and on average a fifth of the area’s waters are designated sanctuary zones, offering the highest protection for our threatened marine life.

This achievement wouldn’t have been possible without strong public support and significant work by conservation organisations based in WA, including the Pew Charitable Trust and Environs Kimberley; and of course you – AMCS ocean lovers around Australia. Together we mobilised to champion the park to key decision makers and stakeholders.

Together we secured an extraordinary marine park.

Our work does not end here. The new Western Australian government made election commitments to further protect the waters of the Kimberley. We will be working to ensure these commitments are met, working with partners in the West to promote southern extensions to the marine park including thousands of islands such as the Buccaneer Archipelago, home to some of the Kimberley’s most diverse coral reefs.

With the development of the Great Kimberley Marine Park by the previous Barnett Government in WA, the West has taken the lead in Australia at a time when progress has stalled nationally. It is a major step forward, setting important benchmarks for the protection of our sea life, coasts and oceans around Australia.



YOU CAN HELP: If the proposed cutbacks to our marine sanctuaries go ahead, it will be the biggest loss in marine protection in Australia’s history. Contact your local Member of Parliament and ask them not to support ANY cuts to Australia’s marine sanctuaries.

Endangered whale sharks will suffer if our marine parks are cut © Troy Mayne / Oceanic Imagery



We put ocean SUSTAINABILITY in your hands



By Tooni Mahto,
Senior Marine Campaigner


Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide is the only independent guide to choosing sustainable seafood in Australia. Laid out in a simple traffic light system, it shows what seafood is a better choice, what to eat less of, and what is best to avoid for our oceans. The Guide provides green, amber and red ratings for over 90 species caught in Australia and imported from around the world.

Our ratings are based on an extensive analysis of a wide range of information including fisheries reports, actual catch results of endangered and protected marine animals, and feedback on how the fishery itself is managed. Experts at AMCS distill all this data then provide the answers to people who love seafood but also love their oceans.


Access to this information is easy. Just go to sustainableseafood.org.au, or download our free, dedicated and simple to use smartphone app. The Guide was created in response to public demand, and makes it easy to make an informed decision when eating fish and other seafood.

To make sure seafood lovers have the best and most up to date information at their fingertips, AMCS is undertaking a thorough review of Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide. Every fish in the Guide is being looked at, plus many more that have not yet been assessed. We are digging out the latest information on Australian-caught, fish-farmed and imported species to include in the new release of the app and online guide early next year. Watch this space for more on the update!

FIND OUT MORE: sustainableseafood.org.au



Get the seafood guide App
on Android or iPhone



Queensland's bright FISHERIES FUTURE

The sunshine state finally moves from mismanagement to modernity.

By Tooni Mahto,
Senior Marine
Campaigner



Queensland has a checkered history when it comes to commercial fishing. It's home to our most iconic seafood. It is also home to the Great Barrier Reef and amazing marine life. Done well, fishing here can provide Australians with fantastic fresh seafood. Done badly, that seafood leaves a hefty death toll on dolphins, dugongs, turtles and sharks.

Queensland's commercial fisheries are found right around the coast, from our reefs, inshore estuaries, mangrove-lined coastlines and waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria to busy Moreton Bay. Mullet, whiting, barramundi, prawns, snappers, bugs and more are caught using everything from trawls and gillnets, to tunnel nets or hook-and-line. Seafood is intrinsically linked to the state.

But over time these fisheries have become complicated and mismanaged. Overfishing has threatened some stocks and the longevity of the industry itself. Some fisheries continue to catch threatened dugongs, turtles, snubfin dolphins and multiple species of endangered sharks. We've seen poor

monitoring and failure to report dugong and dolphin bycatch – until the fatal evidence washes up on shore, bearing gillnet marks. We've also seen catch quotas set using back-of-the-envelope calculations and creative accounting.

Over the past year, thousands of you told the Queensland Government that you want seafood that doesn't have a massive cost on our marine life. Your hard work has paid off. The Palaszczuk Government has announced a massive \$20 million commitment to transforming Queensland's fisheries over the next decade. They've promised to reform how all fisheries are managed, to collect better information for better decisions, and to monitor fisheries so that what fishers actually catch is the same as what they tell their managers.

Queensland had reached a crossroads with its fisheries: condemn our threatened marine life with further captures or modernise and become a leader in sustainable fishing. Thankfully they chose the latter. We're working with the Government to ensure they make good on their commitments to deliver real, long-lasting change. Our goal: that all Queensland's seafood moves out of Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide red list and onto the green!



Queensland bugs for sale at market.



Turning the tide on **PLASTIC POLLUTION**

Every minute an entire rubbish truck worth of plastic is dumped into our oceans. The tide of plastic pollution is choking our oceans. A third of all of our turtles have plastic in their stomachs, and half of all seabirds.



By James Cordwell
Marine Campaigner

And yet we've never seen more progress. This July we were blown away by thousands of AMCS supporters who took up the fight and joined with us for the first time, choosing to refuse plastic for Plastic Free July. Through thousands of small actions, saying no to plastic bags, bottles, coffee cups, straws and microbeads in cosmetics, these amazing people have become part of the solution.

The change is palpable. The Queensland Government just passed

new laws banning single use plastic bags, and introducing a container deposit scheme from July next year. Hot on their heels, Western Australia announced they would be banning plastic bags too, and the big supermarkets have joined the movement – phasing out single use bags! Together we are creating real change.

It has never been more important to fight the plastic scourge on our oceans.

An alarming one million plastic bottles are purchased every minute – and only 40% are recycled. Meanwhile, a team of scientists has discovered the beaches of the remote, World Heritage-listed Henderson Island (in the Pacific Ocean's Pitcairn Islands) contains an estimated 37.7 million items of debris, most of it everyday household items.

Each of these items gradually break down into microplastic pieces which are ingested by

animals of all sizes – from the largest whales to the smallest plankton. Plastic lives on, and will continue to outlive every animal alive right now on our blue planet.

So where to from here?

With your help we must show an entire nation how much plastic we are using, where it is going, and the devastating impacts on our marine life. By supporting our work and choosing to refuse single use plastic items every day, you can help us create the ripples and waves of change.



LEARN MORE about plastic pollution in our oceans and what you can do at marineconservation.org.au/plasticpollution





Our Ocean’s SILENT KILLER

It is estimated there will be more plastic than fish in the world’s oceans by 2050.

Plastic pollution is having devastating impacts on our marine life and oceans. Plastic bags, easily mistaken for jellyfish, are ending up in the stomachs of dolphins and turtles leading to suffocation and starvation. Our marine life can’t take much more! Your donation today will help educate the public on the issue of plastic pollution and allow us to continue pressing for nation-wide removal of plastic bags and implementation of container deposit schemes. Please make an urgent tax deductible donation today to help turn the tide on plastic pollution.

Donation Details

Make a one-off donation of: ☐ \$55 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ My choice \$

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☐ Yes, I would like to receive marine conservation news!

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If donating by cheque, please make cheque payable to Australian Marine Conservation Society.
Return your donation form to PO Box 5815 West End QLD 4101, amcs@amcs.org.au or fax to 07 3846 6777.

Thank you for all that you do.

FAST FACTS

Taxonomy: Risso’s dolphin is the only species of its genus. Its scientific name *Grampus griseus* can be loosely translated as ‘big grey fish’. Risso’s dolphin is named after Antoine Risso, who first described it in the early nineteenth century.

Average size: Risso’s is one of the largest species of dolphin – weighing up to 500 kilograms and with males reaching 4 metres, females 3.7 metres.

Lifespan: Up to 40 years, with an average of 30.

Food: Squid is the Risso’s main food source, with some octopus, cuttlefish and fish such as anchovies.

Habitat: Risso’s are found in temperate, subtropical and tropical waters (waters with a temperature range of 10-30°C). In Australia they’ve been found in the waters of all states bar Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Fraser Island is believed to host the only ‘resident’ Aussie population. Globally, the northern Gulf of Mexico and shallower waters off northern Europe coasts appear to be particularly important for this dolphin.

Threats: The most significant threat to Risso’s dolphin is illegal capture and hunting – especially in parts of South-East Asia. In Australia, they are vulnerable to being caught as bycatch in fishing nets and to pollution – including plastic, oil and industrial waste – which can lead to toxic bioaccumulation.

Growth: Risso’s vary in size across regions, but newborns are about 59 kg and 1-1.5 metres in length. They finish weaning at about 2.1 metres.

Life history: Pregnancy is for about one year. Calving occurs in summer, with no key breeding areas yet identified. The age and size of a mature Risso is also a mystery, as is the time between calving and mating. Like most cetaceans, Risso’s Dolphin have a low reproductive rate (one offspring every two to three years), which makes them particularly vulnerable to threats due to their slow recovery.

Breaching Risso’s Dolphin © DR Artie Kopelman / CRESLI



RISSEO’S DOLPHIN

THE MYSTERIOUS DEEP OCEAN INHABITING CHEEKY MONK DOLPHIN

Risso’s dolphins are elusive dolphins, preferring the steep banks of the continental shelf between 400 and 1000 metres deep. Much mystery remains about these quirky critters, with detailed studies only begun recently.

Known as the Monk dolphin by Taiwanese fishermen, Risso’s have an unusual bulbous, round head with no beak, and a mouth that appears to be smiling. They’re also the only cetaceans to have a prominent vertical crease along their forehead, more obvious in calves. Naturally grey, their skin becomes covered in a pattern of unique scars as they age, accumulated from tussles with other whales, especially adult males, or their prey – squid. Older animals can even have white heads, after years of battling large-bodied squids and their suckers.

Baby Risso’s dolphins have a white belly, while their back changes to olive or chocolate as a juvenile, then grey as they mature. Their dorsal fin is tall, much like bottlenose dolphins, and they have long flippers. Combined with their unique mottled skin, it’s easy to identify individuals.

The cheeky appearance of Risso’s dolphin is mirrored by their behaviour. Highly active at the surface they often breach, spyhop and surf waves or ship wakes. They’re also social, travelling in pods of 10 to 50 animals, with up to 4000 reported in single pods. Group dynamics are fluid, but they have been spotted hunting in lines, and socialising with bottlenoses and pilot whales.

Their population numbers are unknown, but Risso’s are not believed to be rare, with their conservation status listed by the IUCN as ‘Least Concern’. Risso’s dolphin is still particularly vulnerable to human threats however. Intentional capture, destructive fishing and pollution are all increasing pressure on populations of this wonderful dolphin.

By Imogen Zethoven,
Great Barrier Reef
Campaign Director



**A living legacy for a
treasured Australian
conservationist.**

Felicity Wishart Reef ANNOUNCED

In recognition of Felicity Wishart's dedicated efforts to preserve and protect Australia's precious ocean treasure, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has announced that a reef located about 50 km north-east of Hinchinbrook Island will become Felicity Wishart Reef.

Flic dedicated her life's work to protecting some of the most treasured places in Australia. From the Wet Tropics, to the forests of Tasmania to the Great Barrier Reef, Felicity worked with passion, grace and resolve to overcome the odds and protect these magnificent icons for future generations.

Flic cared deeply about people and the environment. Where she saw injustice, whether it was through desecration of the environment, or exploitation of people, she would step in and fight for those who couldn't speak or needed help. She could never stand idly by, when an injustice was occurring. This announcement is a touching testament to Flic's lasting legacy.

FELICITY WISHART TRAINING PROGRAM LAUNCHES

In partnership with Essential Media Communications, Australian Marine Conservation Society was proud to announce a new campaign training and mentorship program for a young woman passionate about the environment. As our Reef Campaign Director, Felicity worked closely with Essential to spearhead the Fight for the Reef campaign.

The training program has been designed to reflect Felicity's role as a mentor to young women. The successful candidate will be mentored by experienced Essential staff in communications strategy, digital tactics and research.

FIND OUT MORE:
fightforourreef.org.au



The late Felicity Wishart, an inspirational leader and much loved mentor © AMCS



HOW TO SAVE THE GREAT BARRIER REEF,

by Gillian, aged 7

The story behind this young ocean warrior – and her passion for our Reef.

Brilliant young Reef warrior Gillian
© Nick Fletcher
© Story Media



Earlier this year we engaged a remarkable young girl from Victoria to star in a short film to spread the word about Fight For Our Reef. Completely unscripted, Gillian's words came from her heart. Our supporters were moved, sharing the film in their thousands. We wanted to know more about this eloquent Reef defender, so we interviewed her mum, Sophie Sandaver.

Sophie, your daughter Gillian is so articulate and eloquent. Are you and your husband proud of this short film?

Very. Gillian has quite a depth of thinking and understanding, plus a beautiful ability to converse. So to use that skill to help a worthwhile cause is wonderful.

Gillian knows a fair bit about the state of the Great Barrier Reef?

Gillian loves to read, so when her younger sister was doing a school project on sea life and coral, Gillian read all her books! We often talk at home about the importance of the natural world. I've worked for many years in environment and sustainability consulting, so it's normal for us to talk about this and the issues it faces.

Some of the statistics about the state of our Reef are pretty confronting, but Gillian seems fairly educated about climate

change and its impacts on our coral reefs. Is it important that your kids know about the challenges facing our Reef and the seas around us?

Absolutely, we all need to know. I don't want to overburden the kids with a harsh reality while they are so young but when they pose the hard questions or bring thoughts or learnings home from school, it's pretty clear when they are ready for more information and I don't shy away from that.

Shortly after filming your family went on holiday to the Reef. How was that?

It was fabulous to make it 'real' for the girls. The weather wasn't on our side, but the glass bottomed and semi-submersible boats were great.

After learning about coral cays finally walking around Green Island was exciting. They are looking forward to returning, getting to the outer Reef and snorkelling.

Do you worry about what sort of world Gillian's generation will inherit?

Yes, all the time. But I try to ensure that our girls learn about, see and appreciate our natural environment. And that they understand what people, such as AMCS, are already doing to help preserve it. I try to give them the tools so that they can, and want to, help too. It may be small now, but there's no limit to what they can do in the future. Thank you Sophie and Gillian for your passion for our Reef and our oceans.



WATCH THE FILM: fightforourreef.org.au/gillian

PEOPLE TO PLANET: connecting deep

Wordsmith and passionate eco-warrior Jess Newman was guest editor for this Turning The Tide. Here this plastic-fighting, talented young creative speaks on her ocean love and volunteering.



Jess was the driving force behind this issue © Jess Newman



Jess is a priceless part of our Brisbane team © AMCS

So, Jess, what motivated you to volunteer with AMCS?

I have always been a nature-girl. Dad is a horticulturalist so blame him! In recent years I've followed numerous environmental organisations, been on petition signing sprees, showed up for events and became a regular donor. But, despite this investment, emotionally and financially, I was not fulfilled. After stumbling on a book about compassion I took the plunge (pun intended) and attended an AMCS volunteer meeting!

What draws you to conservation, in particular of our oceans?

My study and professional background is in marketing and wellness coaching, which calls upon a keen interest in people. But my first love is the Earth. I am more environmentalist than humanitarian. Why marine conservation? My innate introversion and insatiable curiosity are at play here. I love the solitude I experience under water. Nothing commands my attention other than the beauty in front of me. I hear nothing but my own breath and am forever mesmerised by the magic below

the ocean's surface. A passion for diving was more reason to take a deep breath and dive in!

What skills and background do you bring?

AMCS relies on dedicated volunteers to support their important work. I love understanding and helping motivate people. I make it my business to uncover what each volunteer hopes to get from their relationship with the organisation through inquiry, empathy, clear communication and organisation.

Standout moments?

Undoubtedly the recent screening of the shocking documentary about the loss of the world's reefs Chasing Coral. As breathtaking fluorescent fields of coral flash across the screen, the narrator states, *"it's as if they are saying 'please look at me' as they die."* There was barely a dry eye.

What are you most excited about helping to achieve?

Human acknowledgment that we are the Earth's inhabitants, students and caretakers. Our disconnect with the planet needs healing fast. I want to be part of the message that change is possible and all it takes are small actions from each of us.

BECOME AN AMCS VOLUNTEER!
Sign up at fightfourourreef.org.au/volunteer



Shop for the SEAS

SAVE OUR SHARKS T-SHIRT

Support our shark conservation efforts with AMCS' brand new Save Our Sharks 100% cotton tee. Sharks are a keystone species and extremely important in maintaining the balance of marine ecosystems. Wear yours with pride, knowing it was created by our certified ethical manufacturer.



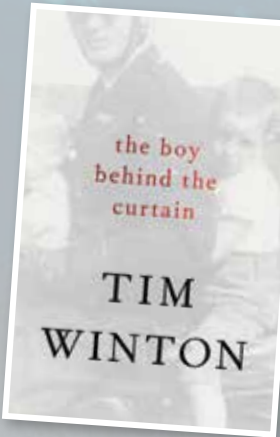
CALICO BAGS

Help keep plastic bags from polluting our oceans and harming marine wildlife. Grab yourself one of these reusable, washable bags for shopping, school, work, the beach or wherever you are – plastic free!



THE BOY BEHIND THE CURTAIN BY TIM WINTON

Enjoy the latest offering from Tim Winton – one of Australia's most beloved authors and Patron of AMCS. The extraordinarily powerful true stories of The Boy Behind the Curtain take us behind the scenes of Winton's life revealing the accidents, serendipitous and traumatic, that have influenced his view and fuelled his distinctive artistic vision.



CORAL SEA DREAMING:

The Picture Book by Kim Michelle Toft

A stunning new children's book from Kim Michelle Toft and David Hannan, the beautiful silk illustrations reveal a coral reef teeming with colourful wildlife. Educational info on featured species from David's Coral Sea Dreaming film are an added bonus to help budding reef enthusiasts discover the wonders of this underwater world.



For orders visit our online shop
www.marineconservation.org.au or call 1800 066 299.

Devotion to our **OCEANS**

As a non-profit charity with minimal government support, AMCS relies almost entirely on the financial support from passionate people across Australia. You put wind in our sails and funds in the kitty to power the campaigns for our precious oceans. Here's a taste of some of the highlights from the high seas this year.



MARRIED to the Ocean

Dave Coles is a fabulous Sea Guardian who contacted us to let us know that he recently married Stef (Hapke) Coles. For their wedding they wanted to do something special for the ocean, so they generously donated \$1,000 from their wedding gift fund to AMCS and our oceans. They made this gift as they “both love the sea and think AMCS is doing a great job at protecting our oceans for future generations!” Thank you Dave and Stef! We wish you a long and wonderful life together, from the crew at AMCS.

Donation in memory of **DAVID RUMSEY**

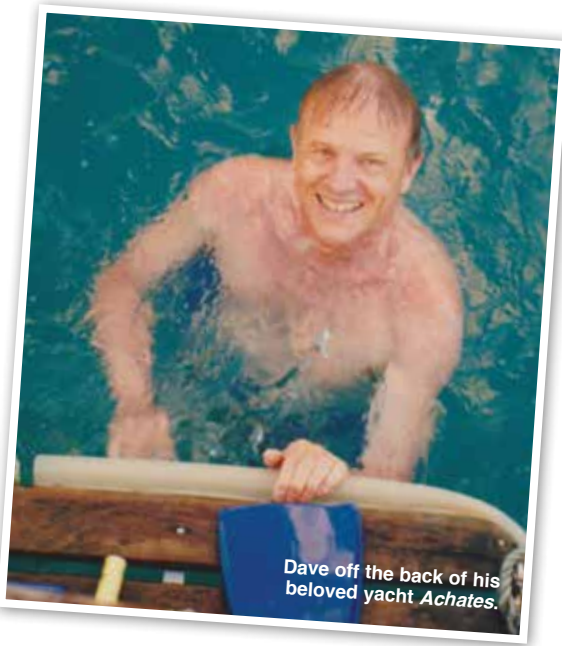
By Elizabeth Rumsey

I recently donated to AMCS, thanks to a collection taken at a concert in Switzerland. The concert was in memory of my husband David Rumsey, who died in February 2017 from a cancer which left him just enough time to prepare the concert programme. An organist, his choice of music was driven by the repertoire for his instrument, performed by friends and colleagues in the church where he played for the last 12 years.

When the priest asked if we would take a charity collection, David's daughters and I decided to split it between the Climate Council and AMCS. David and I felt that you are the most directly focused on saving our Great Barrier Reef – a place he loved.

David loved all aspects of these islands, especially the mangroves – exploring Gulnare as often as the crew would allow. He had favourite places to snorkel, especially Cateran Bay on Border Island.

I cannot think of a better way to honour his memory than to help rescue this marvellous place. Not only because of personal associations but because of it's importance in our planet's ecology. David's daughters and I recently had a conversation about what headstone would endure long enough for his granddaughters' descendants. How much more important then, that the headstone has a flourishing world in which to stand.



The future artists and marine advocates of **MACQUARIE ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

The Years 5 and 6 students at Macquarie Anglican Grammar School, in Dubbo, have donated the \$900 winnings from their incredible entry to the Waste to Art competition to AMCS! Their jellyfish-inspired light chandelier made of plastic bottles, and titled Elysian Dreaming, was created to help raise awareness about the impact of plastic packaging on marine life. It also highlights the ways we can upcycle to make objects of use or even great beauty.



© Macquarie Anglican Grammar School

Our Great Barrier Reef Community Campaigner Sandra Williams, led a bright but powerful float for Airlie Beach Reef week!



REEF FESTIVAL and Sandra's Float

The Whitsundays annual Reef Festival took place in July. Our Reef Community Campaigner, Sandra Williams, led an attention-grabbing healthy versus bleached coral-coated float through the Airlie Beach streets. A crew of volunteers from the local Fight For Our Reef volunteer group helped build the float and spread the word during the parade. After two years of back-to-back coral bleaching on the Reef, our float was a poignant conversation starter and one of the most memorable.



Ryan raised funds for AMCS and our oceans to 'Save the Blobfish'.

Ryan Saving the **BLOBFISH**

Here is an adorable story about Ryan King, an 11 year old who became enchanted with the Blobfish. When he learned that this odd looking fish was endangered, he took it upon himself to start a campaign called Save the Blobfish. Ryan designed this flyer and started spreading the word about the Blobfish and their plight. He gathered signatures and donations from his classmates and friends. Unable to find an organisation specifically dedicated to saving Blobfish, Ryan decided to donate the \$213 raised to AMCS. Thank you Ryan. You are a Blobfish saving legend!



Mosman High school went Bake Off to fundraise for Fight For Our Reef © Mosman High School

MOSMAN HIGH Environment Group gives us more than the munchies!

A committed collective of students at Mosman High School Environment Group were inspired to dedicate their fundraising efforts to protecting the Great Barrier Reef. After presenting to their peers on the issues facing our Reef, they ran a lunchtime cake stall. Many of these students live near the sea and are witnesses to the saddening impacts of litter on marine life. They are also worried that they may never get to see our Reef in all its glory. Raising money for AMCS is one small thing they believe will help protect it!

TARANGANBA

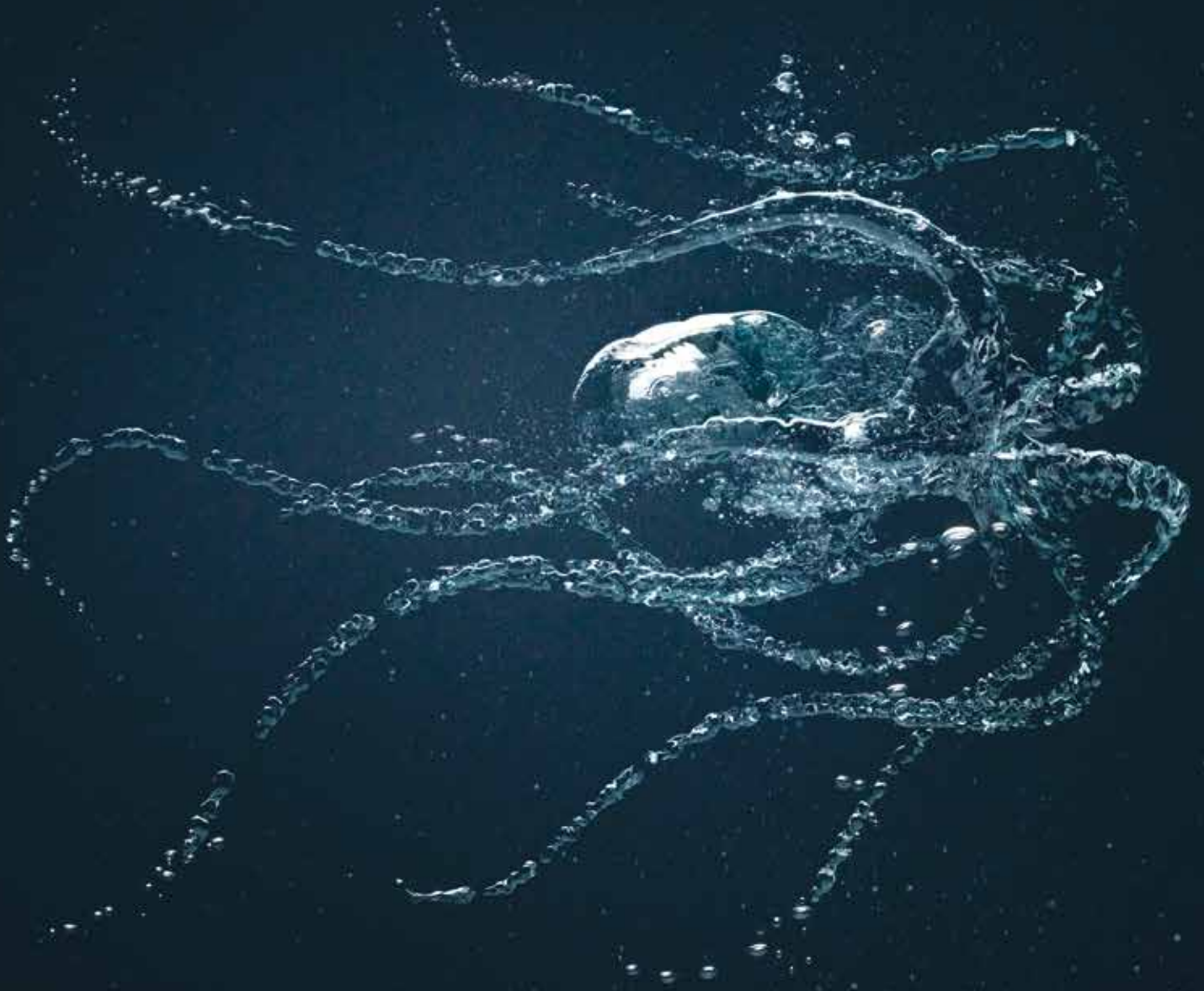
Students Fighting For Our Reef

AMCS was delighted to receive a donation of \$553 from the students of Taranganba State School – a Reef Guardian School for many years. Meg, Jordan and Saige encouraged students to wear green and make a gold coin donation on free dress day. As part of the initiative, Meg presented a compelling speech explaining the impacts on reefs of the damaging chemical oxybenzone that is found in some sunscreens. They are calling for the school to promote reef friendly sunscreen school-wide.



Meg, Jordan and Saige raised \$553 for our Reef © Taranganba





Our seas are fragile. So please help us
protect them while there's still time,
before all our treasures are just memories.

TIM WINTON, Author, Patron of the Australian Marine Conservation Society

Love our oceans? Join us today
seaguardsians.org.au