



MEDIA RELEASE

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Tourism Whitsundays welcomes record reef funding

Tourism Whitsundays is celebrating following Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's announcement that State Government funding for the Great Barrier Reef would increase to a record \$330 million over five years.

The announcement was made today in the Whitsundays, on Langford Island, with an additional \$40 million allocated in next month's state budget to boost programs to restore, protect and build the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

Ms Palaszczuk, who was accompanied by Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef The Honourable Leeanne Enoch, said protecting the Great Barrier Reef was vital not just for the environment and tourism, but also to meet international commitments.

"Part of this \$40 million will include \$26 million in extra funding over the next four years for the Joint Field Management Program for reef protection measures," Ms Palaszczuk said.

"This is on top of the more than \$35 million already invested in this program. In addition, a further \$13.8 million over the next four years will be allocated to extend the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program to support the transition of graziers, and cane and banana growers, to improved practices through access to professional advice.

"This natural wonder is iconic for Queensland and for the world, and we need to do what we have committed to, to ensure it is protected."

Tourism Whitsundays General Manager Tash Wheeler said the additional funding was very welcome.

"Protecting the Great Barrier Reef is a priority for our tourism industry and this additional funding will certainly help to do just that," Ms Wheeler said.

"In the past year, around 1 million visitors have travelled into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park from the Whitsundays, and its importance to the region cannot be overstated.

"In fact, 86 per cent of all tourism visitation to the Great Barrier Reef occurs within waters adjacent to Cairns and the Whitsundays.

“We have to do everything possible to restore, protect and build the reef’s resilience, for the sake of our tourism industry and our region, and this funding will go a long way towards making this happen.”

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FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:

Deborah Friend

PR & Communications Specialist

Tourism Whitsundays

Ph: (07) 4948 5917 or 0417 765 736

Email: pr@tourismwhitsundays.com.au

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