

Technical Information Sheet #7

>> Representative Areas Program background and history

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The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is implementing the Representative Areas Program to help ensure better protection of the Marine Park's biodiversity. This will involve a review of the existing zoning throughout the Marine Park. This information sheet is part of a package of materials that help explain various technical elements of the Representative Areas Program and the zoning review.

Social, economic, cultural and management feasibility operational principles

As part of the zoning review to implement the Representative Areas Program, two independent steering committees were formed to provide expert advice to the GBRMPA about the:

- biological and physical aspects of the Great Barrier Reef Region; and
- social, economic, cultural and management feasibility aspects of human use and values of the Marine Park.

The selection of new no-take areas will be guided by the operational principles developed by both these committees. These principles will help protect biodiversity whilst maximising beneficial and minimising detrimental impacts to local communities and stakeholders.

A summary of the social, economic, cultural and management feasibility operational principles developed by the Social, Economic and Cultural Steering Committee is given below. These will apply, as far as possible, to the Representative Areas Program. Another technical information sheet is available detailing the biophysical operational principles.

Operational principle	Explanation
1. Maximise complementarity of no-take areas with human values, activities and opportunities	<p>This is achieved by placing Green Zones (or no-take areas) in locations that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have been identified through a consultative process that is participatory, balanced, open and transparent;• Traditional Owners have identified as important and in need of high levels of protection;• minimise conflict with Indigenous people's aspirations for their sea country;• protect areas that the community identifies as special or unique, e.g. places of biological, cultural, aesthetic, historic, physical, social or scientific value;• minimise conflict with non-commercial extractive users such as recreational fishers;• minimise conflict with commercial extractive users; and• minimise conflict with all non-extractive users.

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2. Ensure that final selection of no-take areas recognises social costs and benefits	<p>This will include recognition of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• relative social costs and benefits, including community resilience;• spatial equity of opportunity within and between communities, including clan estates;• planned and approved future activities; and• consider requirements for monitoring the effectiveness of the zoning plans.
3. Maximise placement of no-take areas in locations which complement and include present and future management and tenure arrangements	<p>These arrangements include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• existing or proposed zoning plans, management plans or other related management strategies for marine areas by federal, state or local government authorities;• existing or proposed tenure and management strategies for coastal areas (mainland and islands) in the region; and• Native Title claim areas and issues.
4. Maximise public understanding and acceptance of no-take areas, and facilitate enforcement of no-take areas	<p>This is achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• having Green Zones that are simple shapes;• having Green Zones with boundaries that are easily identified; and• having fewer and larger Green Zones rather than more and smaller Green Zones.

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