



Priority Projects

1. Restoring island ecosystems at Ashmore Reef Marine Park

This project will eradicate invasive species to restore Ashmore’s islands and ecosystems and protect vital populations of seabirds, turtles and other native species.

Ashmore Reef Marine Park is an internationally significant biodiversity hotspot in the remote Indian Ocean, 650 km north of Broome, WA. It is the only emergent reef in the region with vegetated islands able to support terrestrial animals and plants.

The Park’s important wildlife and island habitats are threatened by introduced insect, vertebrate and plant species.

Ashmore’s fragile ecosystems and species like nesting seabirds and their habitat are suffering. Surveys in 2019 found that trees and large shrubs are dying, with 72% of remaining individuals sick or dead.

This will be achieved through strategic partnerships and innovation – including exploratory research to develop a new genetic based (RNAi) bait.

Seeking contributions of \$1.5m plus
Time: 5 years
Resource requirement: to deliver this project we need a suitable vessel, funding, scientists to undertake the research.

2. Managing marine debris to protect seabirds on Coral Sea islands, cays and oceanic reefs

This project will reduce the impact of marine debris on seabirds in the Coral Sea Marine Park by trialing novel technology methods alongside tested methods, removal of marine debris, and analysing the flow of marine debris to the Park to establish a long-term plan.

The Coral Sea Marine Park lies off the coast of Queensland and is one of the largest marine parks in the world. It provides breeding habitat for internationally important seabird populations.

Seabirds are vulnerable to the impacts of marine debris such as single-use plastics and discarded fishing equipment. These can lead to death through entanglement, suffocation, or starvation.

The volume of marine debris in the Coral Sea is increasing, threatening iconic species including the red-tailed tropic bird, masked booby and greater frigatebird.

Seeking contributions of \$500k plus
Time: 5 years
Resource requirement: to deliver this project we need a suitable vessel, funding, scientists, rangers, tools to collect marine debris, communications expertise.



3. Connecting cultural and natural values of Australia's southern ancient coastline

Co-designed and delivered in partnership with Traditional Owners, voyages of discovery would explore the ancient coastline within largely unmapped marine parks in the South-west Network supporting meaningful contemporary connections for communities with deep history with these environments.

The ocean along Australia's southern coast consists of some of the most biologically diverse temperate marine habitats in the world.

These ecosystems support an extraordinary range of species, many that are not found anywhere else, making it appealing to explore, discover and integrate with the traditional knowledge along the ancient coastline.

Due to the remoteness of the region there has been limited coordinated investment in

research in offshore marine parks, with large knowledge gaps and no baseline established on natural and cultural values, which is needed to support effective marine park management decisions.

Seeking contributions of \$1.2m plus

Time: 3 years

Resource requirement: to deliver this project we need a suitable vessel, funding, cultural specialists, scientists, rangers, venues, facilitator.

Ideas supporting nationally significant outcomes for our oceans are welcomed through partnerships.

Email ODR.partnerships@environment.gov.au to organise an informal discussion about your suggestions.

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