

To whom it may concern,

I would like to strongly recommend that the existing position for an indigenous person on the great barrier reef marine park authority be maintained and **not** deleted.

I make this recommendation for the following reasons;

(i) there are 70 traditional indigneous owner groups within the gbrmp and if the commonwealth government wants to maintain good working relations with them then the government needs to show that they respect the right for indigenous participation at all levels of governance and management of the gbr.

(ii) gbrmpa has made a lot of headway in working with indigenous people in the gbrmp through it approach which involves ensuring participation of indigenous people in decision making processes, advisory committees etc.

(iii) the epbc act 1999 states in it's objects;

(d) to **promote a co-operative approach to the protection and management of the environment involving governments, the community, land-holders and indigenous peoples;** and

(e) to assist in the co-operative **implementation of Australia's international environmental responsibilities;**

(f) to **recognise the role of indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity;** and

(g) to **promote the use of indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in co-operation with, the owners of the knowledge.**

(iv)A ustralia's obligations under the united nations convention on biological diversity (see object e in (ii) above) to which we are a signatory. i refer here to article 8(j), 10(c). as well as the work plan adopted by the conference of the parties which Australia has signed to, specifically to ensure participation of indigenous peoples at all levels of decision making regarding the management of biodiversity,

(v) the authority has to show leadership in recognising and ensuring participation so that other relevant/connected bodies do the same.

**A/Prof Stephan Schneirer
School of Environmental Sciences and Management,
Southern Cross uUniversity**

Former member of the **National Biodiversity Advisory Committee** to the Minister for DEWR

Current member of the **GRMPA Conservation Reef Advisory Committee**