

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 330

Hearing: Additional Estimates

Outcome: Agency

Program: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Topic: Ocean temperatures in the southern GBR

Hansard Page:

Question Date: 6 March 2017

Question Type: Written

Senator Roberts asked:

Is CSIRO accurate in portrayal of ocean temperatures on any given day being 4-5°C cooler in the southern GBR compared with the northern GBR?

Answer:

The Great Barrier Reef stretches 2,300 kilometres along the coast of Queensland, from latitude 10°41' S (Cape York) to 24°30' S (just north of Bundaberg). Due to this latitudinal range, average sea surface temperatures on the Great Barrier Reef vary by several degrees between the southern and far northern regions of the Marine Park.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority relies on data from in-situ temperature loggers and satellites for information about sea surface temperatures throughout the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Sea surface temperature data confirms that, on any given day, the southern Great Barrier Reef may be up to 4-5 degrees Celsius cooler than sea surface temperatures in the far northern region. Conditions may also vary at regional and local scales due to factors such as local weather conditions, upwellings and ocean current circulation.