

Fishing, Marine Debris and the Great Barrier Reef!



Photographer: D. Chaplin, Pine Creek Pictures

- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority lists plastic marine debris as one of the main threats to the reef.
- Fishing waste and lost or discarded tackle have a large impact on the ocean, wildlife and the Great Barrier Reef.
- Marine debris poses threats to the economy, tourism and the fishing industry.
- MARPOL Annex V prohibits the discharge of all types of garbage into the sea including fishing tackle, nets, floats, fishing line and bait bags.
- Large plastic items cause death and injury to animals from entanglement, smothering, and ingestion as well as accumulation of toxins attached to the plastic.
- Microplastics in the marine ecosystem present serious threats to the health of marine animals and can affect the health of people who eat them.
- The Reef Guardian Fishers program recognises commercial fishers who are fishing sustainably and maintaining the health of the Great Barrier Reef while building the future of their fishery, their business and the Reef.

Fishers can reduce tackle and fishing related litter on the reef. Fishers can do this by:

- Reducing overall plastic use
- Use reusable items instead of disposable
- Responsible disposal including recycling
- Keeping plastics out of waterways
- Use biodegradable & compostable alternatives
- Retrieving lost and discarded litter, tackle & nets
- Joining in clean-up efforts.

For more information, resources and references go to: <https://www.tangaroablue.org/reefclean-news/fishing-marine-debris-and-the-great-barrier-reef/>

Did you know?

- 80% of marine debris on the reef is plastic
- on beaches 80% of plastic marine debris is from land-based sources.
- in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch 52% of plastics is from marine based sources.

ReefClean is funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust



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