

## Epilogue and acknowledgements

The Great Barrier Reef (GBR) has been an important part of Australia's identity and has become an international icon. So much has happened since we published the first edition of this book. The concern about degradation of the GBR has encircled the globe. Reports of record levels of mass bleaching and mortality have had special traction worldwide and the increased frequency of major bleaching events has concerned people that our precious reef will be lost as predicted almost 20 years ago. Climate change and a related cascade of impacts can no longer be ignored. Furthermore, other types of impacts have not abated including managing runoff from the land, fisheries, continued coastal development and the activities of mining companies continue to threaten the reef.

Australia has the oldest coral reef society in the world, namely the Australian Coral Reef Society (ACRS), which was founded in 1992. This Society began as a Great Barrier Reef Committee. The Committee instigated the first major expedition on the GBR 1927–1928. We are pleased that members of the Society have continued to provide leading roles in describing the patterns of biodiversity and impacts on reefs, as well as the processes that underlie the patterns. The engagement of stakeholders and their connected research and learning initiatives with others worldwide is critical for the GBR and the future of all coral reefs.

We, as scientists and conservationists, have been motivated by the desire to ensure that we continue to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the GBR. The Society sponsored this book and most of the contributing experts have been, or are, members. As a result, all proceeds from the sale of this book go to ACRS for the promotion and support of

further efforts to understand and manage coral reefs not only in Australia but worldwide, especially through postgraduate students. The details for how to join ACRS can be found at its website <http://www.australiancoralreefsociety.org/>.

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### Further reading

Hill D (1985) The Great Barrier Reef Committee, 1922–82. Part 11: The last three decades. *Historical Records of Australian Science* 6(2), 195–221. doi:10.1071/HR9850620195

