

More than a tonne of rubbish removed from islands

MACKAY // WEDNESDAY 5th June, 2019

More than a tonne of marine debris has been cleared from the islands off the Whitsunday as part of the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

This is the first year of a five-year, \$600,000 project, which is aimed at protecting, preserving and enhancing our islands.

Reef Catchments is delivering the islands project, along with key regional partners Eco Barge and Wild Mob.

Five trips out to the islands have been made so far and 42 volunteers with Eco Barge, an Airlie Beach-based not-for-profit environmental organisation which cleans up the marine environment, have visited 33.15ha of beaches throughout the Whitsunday islands and removed 1219kg of debris.

Eco Barge's efforts have been ongoing since 2009, and to date they have removed over 191,000kg of debris.

Since 2013, Reef Catchments has funded Eco Barge to remove more than 10,000kg of marine debris from over 460ha of island ecosystems.

The Mackay Whitsunday region is home to 204 incredible islands, primarily in the iconic Whitsundays. Through this project, Reef Catchments will also focus on invasive weed species, marine debris and threatened species.

The project includes the monitoring of turtle nesting and seagrass sites, to collect data in important habitat areas.

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For further information about the islands project, please contact Cass Hayward at Reef Catchments on cass.hayward@reefcatchments.com or (07) 4968 4206.

For further information on Eco Barge, please contact Libby (0417 642 815) or Fiona (0406 223 719).