



## KIMBERLEY CORAL MONITORING

by Alan Kendrick

The health of the world's coral reefs has been a recent focus in marine science because of increasing incidences of coral bleaching caused by elevated sea temperatures. DBCA undertakes coral monitoring in marine parks and reserves, including the recently created Kimberley reserves, as part of the department's State-wide Marine Monitoring Program that measures long-term trends in the condition of ecological values in relation to pressures that include climate change. Research has focussed on establishing coral monitoring sites across the huge area of the Kimberley reserves by identifying reef habitats and photographing the corals with a drop camera. Thousands of images are being analysed and archived by our marine scientists to determine measurements of coral cover and coral community composition that can be compared over time.

This monitoring is a collaboration between DBCA science and regional staff and traditional owner joint managers, who participate in the monitoring and management of this key ecological asset which holds great cultural value and interest. The collaborative implementation of the department's Marine Monitoring Program provides managers and traditional owners with opportunities to develop and share practical science skills that inform management.

