

# UNESCO recommends Australia's Great Barrier Reef should be listed as 'in danger'

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A United Nations committee's proposal to downgrade the Great Barrier Reef's World Heritage status has irked Australia, which said the recommendation was politically motivated.

The UN World Heritage Committee on Monday said in a draft report that "there is no possible doubt" that the network of colourful corals off Australia's northeast coast was "facing ascertained danger".

## **Key Highlights**

- Scientists say that the coral reef ecosystem has suffered three major bleaching events since 2015 due to severe marine heatwaves.
- The report recommended that the world's biggest coral reef ecosystem should be added to Unesco's list of World Heritage in Danger when the committee considers that question in July.
- As many as 53 sites are currently on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The latest recommendation by the UN committee comes as a setback as Australia lobbied furiously for years to stay off the endangered list.

- The Great Barrier Reef losing its World Heritage Site status list could potentially reduce its attraction to tourists.
- Australia, one of the world's largest carbon emitters per capita, has remained reluctant to commit to stronger climate action and its conservative government has cited jobs as a major reason to back the country's fossil fuel industries. It has not updated its climate goals since 2015.
- But the threat of losing the World Heritage Site could also impact thousands of jobs dependent on about 5 million people who visit the Great Barrier Reef each year.

**SOURCE:** *Hindustan Times*