



Australian Barramundi Farmers' Association

Submission to the Health and
Environment Committee:
Environmental and Other
Legislation (Reversal of Great
Barrier Reef Protection
Measures) Amendment Bill
2021

22 June 2021

Submitted via email: hec@parliament.qld.gov.au

June 22, 2021



Submission to the Health and Environment Committee: Environmental and Other Legislation (Reversal of Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) Amendment Bill 2021

The Australian Barramundi Farmers' Association (ABFA) is the peak representative organisation for the Australian farmed barramundi industry. We exist to facilitate the profitable and sustainable development of the Australian Farmed Barramundi industry.

Over the past five years, farmed barramundi production has been growing at an average rate of 14% p.a. The estimated 2020-21 value nationally is \$108 M, and we anticipate industry value will reach \$200 M pa by 2025.

Our Queensland members are responsible for approximately 40% of the national production of farmed barramundi, with most operating in reef catchments and impacted by reef protection measures.

In making our submission to the Amendment Bill we wish to bring to the attention of the Health and Environment Committee the following points:

1. ABFA supports appropriate controls to manage the real risks to the reef.

All our members rely on a clean and healthy environment for their operations. Pesticides, herbicides, and soil run off have the potential to seriously impact the health of fish and crustaceans and reduce farm productivity. Additionally, we rely on the clean-green reputation of our product. ABFA therefore supports evidence-based, appropriate, and efficient regulation that addresses the real risks to the reef.

2. Aquaculture is bearing a disproportional burden with reef regulations

The high conservation value of the reef is respected, but CSIRO research has demonstrated that most nutrients from aquaculture are assimilated in the receiving environment, far away from the reef, and have had no adverse impacts, and at times discharge from barramundi farms can be demonstrably better quality than intake water. Yet regulations do not allow for local environmental assimilation, or intake loads.

3. Weakening of regulation for diffuse source pollution must not increase the burden on aquaculture farmers to achieve 'no net decline' in water quality

The aquaculture industry is consistently penalised to an extent far beyond other land and water users purely because we are new sector, and discharge occurs through a pipe and is therefore easy to monitor and target.

In this submission we are not challenging the agricultural sector, rather we are stressing that any amendments must not mean that aquaculture bears even more of a burden in achieving no net decline in a catchment.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jo-Anne Ruscoe
CEO, Australian Barramundi Farmers' Association

