



Committee Secretary
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Email: ipnrc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Submission to the Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the inquiry into the Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. Although the greatest long-term threat to the health of the Great Barrier Reef (the Reef) is climate change, impacts on coastal ecosystems from coastal development have been a significant pressure since European settlement.

Coastal ecosystems and inshore biodiversity are sensitive to changes caused by modifications to the natural environment, in particular, land clearing and/or development.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the Authority) recognises that some of the greatest threats to the Reef originate from development in the catchment specifically as the result of modifications to catchment hydrological processes, both overland and subterranean (groundwater). Water and its sustainable use in the catchment is vital to a healthy Reef. Changing the way water flows and the quantity and quality of water is now well recognised as having direct and indirect impacts on the ecosystem services required for a healthy Reef.

The Authority acknowledges the consideration of water-related effects of climate change on water resources in the planning framework as an important step forward. These considerations have the potential to build resilience in the coastal waters of the Reef.

The Authority would also like to see the Reef recognised as a downstream value and any activity in the catchment should maintain and improve the capacity of coastal ecosystems to support the health of the Reef and the social and economic benefits derived from a healthy Reef.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Elliot'.

Bruce Elliot
General Manager

20 September 2017