

## **Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee**

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**To:** Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** Submission on Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures)

The Great Barrier Reef is an icon for Australians and people around the world. It is also a place of great beauty and biodiversity. However the Reef is in trouble because sediment, fertiliser and pesticides are flowing into the Reef waters.

When nitrogen and phosphorus fertiliser enters rivers and ends up in the Reef, it upsets the natural balance of the marine environment. Algae love nitrogen and phosphorus. In a high nutrient environment algae can then become so numerous that the sunlight that normally reaches the sea floor can no longer do so. That means seagrass and other light dependent bottom-dwelling organisms have trouble growing and reproducing. Crown of Thorns starfish that destroy hard corals also love nitrogen and that's one of the reasons they are in such large numbers on the Reef at present.

The scientific community has recognised the need to reduce fertiliser and sediment runoff to the Great Barrier Reef for decades. Many plans have been made with the noble aim of reducing runoff but they have not resulted in much change. In 2003 the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan set a goal of reversing the decline in water quality to the reef within ten years. By 2009 another plan called for nitrogen loads to be halved by 2018, the result was a 17 per cent reduction.

A couple of years ago UNESCO considered putting the Great Barrier Reef on the "in danger" list because we were doing such a poor job of managing it. That would have been an embarrassment for Australians as well as threatening our tourism economy. Millions of people visit Australia from overseas each year and their main destination is the Great Barrier Reef. Without them Queensland's economy would be in serious trouble.

I support the new laws the Queensland Government has recently proposed (Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection) Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 to ensure that the quality of water reaching the Reef is improved. The voluntary programs that have been in place for decades have been ineffective in reducing runoff. The new rules aren't about punishing farmers, they are about ensuring farmers know how much fertiliser is optimal for their land and applying no more than is necessary. That is going to be good for the Reef and it's also likely to save a lot of money for sugar farmers.

The following persons provided Form Submission 1 (or variations)

1	Josh Reinke	46	Patti Wilkins
2	Terry Spackman	47	Jan Cooke
3	Silvia Dumpmanis	48	Clay Bauman
4	Daniel Choo	49	Simon Gedda
5	Elsie Ward	50	Nick Veivers
6	Cyn Gold	51	Elizabeth Conlan
7	David Arthur	52	Sophia King
8	Julie Pratt	53	Bianca Bowie
9	Carolyn Emms	54	Jean Christie
10	Peter Heaphy	55	Anya Rowlands
11	Trish Kelly	56	Karen Tomlinson
12	Jailene Santana	57	Nathan Carruthers
13	Lynette Sinclair	58	Thomas Henderson
14	Chris Egginton	59	Nichola Hungerford
15	Susan Bowen	60	Angus Macqueen
16	Neil Brown	61	Joshua Grant
17	John Chadderton	62	Jakob Reimer
18	Dereka Ogden	63	Alice Harris
19	Lesley Keegan	64	Andrew Marshall
20	Kelly Tapim	65	Junahya Harrison
21	angela bennett	66	Rose Quadrio
22	Michael Sorokin	67	Jonathan Peter
23	Frank Ondrus	68	Michael Moller
24	Sylvia Ramsay	69	Wendy Flannery
25	Paul Sutton	70	Christine Carlisle
26	Natalie Smith		
27	Kevin Healy		
28	Dorin Preda		
29	Nick Curry		
30	Jayleigh Kemp		
31	Kylie Bickle		
32	L Milne		
33	Marilyn Wright		
34	Keeley Barber		
35	Greg Marks		
36	Ivy Dos santos		
37	Sean Corrigan		
38	Wayne Hankinson		
39	Vanessa Elwell-Gavins		
40	Joshua Whipps		
41	Liam Cox		
42	Michael Streatfeild		
43	Ingrid Marker		
44	Judy Rees		
45	Patricia Wiltshire		