

## Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, 17 March 2019 6:38 AM  
**To:** Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** REEF POLLUTION  
  
**Categories:** Submission CSO to process

I strongly support new laws to ban outdated polluting farm practices that are harming our Reef. Give the Reef the clean water it needs to recover and protect it for future generations.

Half the corals on the Great Barrier Reef were lost in back-to-back bleaching events of 2016 and 2017, driven by climate change. When water temperatures in the sea are too warm, corals expel algae that live in their tissues, causing them to turn white.

Though corals can survive bleaching events, the survivors become more vulnerable to crown of thorns starfish, disease and mortality.

Farm pollution is one of the greatest blights on water quality... but how can farming practices have an impact on the Great Barrier Reef?

Chemical run-off from farming practices end up in the waters of the Reef. The pollution blocks sunlight and smothers corals and seagrass beds. Fertiliser run-off can also fuel algal blooms which overtake coral and drive crown of thorn starfish outbreaks.

Algae that feeds off nitrogen run-off are the prime food source for juvenile crown of thorns starfish large numbers of starfish to become adults, which then feed on coral and eat their way through huge sections on the outer Reef.

The fourth recorded outbreak of crown of thorns starfish is currently underway and is eating corals which survived recent bleaching events. By reducing fertiliser run-off, we can give our Reef the best chance for recovery.

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