



“Give aquaculture a fair go”

Letter to the Editor
21/07/2014

(In response to ABC’s Landline segment ‘Prawn Politics broadcast on 18/7/2015)

The original drafting of the Great Barrier Reef Aquaculture Regulations, did what they were meant to do - protect the Great Barrier Reef and the biosecurity for the aquaculture industry. As the then-Director for Water Quality at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, it was my job to draft these Regulations.

In response, the aquaculture industry also did what they were meant to do - develop innovative techniques to reduce the level of nutrients in the water discharged into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. This included practices like routing discharge through settling ponds and purpose-built mangrove systems.

The aquaculture industry has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to operating in a manner that recognises the importance of the Great Barrier Reef and the other industries, like tourism, that rely on the sustained health of the Reef.

Sustainable aquaculture has a strong potential for economic and employment growth for Northern Australia. The industry has done what the community expects in protecting the Reef and its associated ecosystems from poor water quality.

Now the Regulations need to be streamlined, and take account of the industry’s efforts. It’s possible to have good outcomes for both industry and the environment - not just one or the other.

It is time to give the aquaculture industry a fair go.

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