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Thanks for the opportunity of making a submission on this revue.

I have for a long time been amazed at the lack of value placed on marine wildlife and habitat in Australia. For some strange reason the intrinsic value of marine wildlife here in Queensland is regarded by most people as "What does it taste like, how big was it, how many did you catch"

The real value of live animals versus dead ones is taken for granted as far as land based animals are concerned, and in certain cases such as whales, dolphins, seals, penguins etc. the real value in terms of tourism and the pleasure of watching these animals is now realised.

The immense potential and real income to Australia from protecting these marine animals versus killing for fun or food is now at long last appreciated and recognised.

However as far as fish are concerned it is an entirely different matter. The potential immense value of protecting our magnificent marine life on the barrier reef is just as important, but not yet realised by GBRMPA or the Australian public.

GBRMPA makes little or no attempt to educate or inform the public or try to change attitudes. The lets kill for fun attitude persists with long term dire consequences for the Reef.

The tourism industry on the reef already produces far more dollars for Australia than fishing, yet massive overfishing is rapidly killing off, not only the fish that live on the reef but probably the reef as well.

The ridiculous attitude to the reef of regarding coral as by far the most important issue and marine animals as virtually of no value still persists and is still part of GBRMPA thinking.

We know very little about the relationship of the coral to the animals that live on the coral. It is most likely and normal that there is a very complicated interspecies relationship between all the reef species of all kinds.

We are probably already paying the price for the mass killing of marine animals in the form of unusual large numbers of such species as, Crown of Thorns starfish, Irrukanji, Box jellyfish. Under normal circumstances the predators of these species would most likely keep the numbers under control. However we kill most of the predators for fun and then wonder why these "unusual" events occur.

Here at Cardwell, the new marina and boat ramp has dramatically increased fishing in the immediate vicinity with devastating results. Most people her fish; it's a great Australian tradition and a good healthy thing to do. You dare not question this, yet there are a large and growing number of people who dare not show their faces who are disgusted at the cruelty and mass destruction of one of our most valuable assets.

If the barrier reef was on and land then none of this would take place. If you did hunt and kill Kangaroos, Mahogany gliders. Wallabies or most land based animals at every opportunity you would be shunned, particularly if you used the barbaric methods of barbed hook, gaffs, gutting live animals, using live bait, in itself a practice that is banned in many countries in the world.

There should be public education by GBRMPA to start to change the attitude of Australians particularly young Australians that its not OK to kill everything in the water for fun. That there is immense value to all Australians in fully preserving our extremely valuable and very beautiful marine life.

The establishment of fully protected areas in the GBRMP was long long overdue, the Great Barrier Reef was one of the wonders of the world, without most of the animals that live on it, killed for fun and food mainly we have reduced it to a dying reef and perhaps just as important we have reduced Australia's income from tourism based industry to a fraction of its potential. We now risk losing our most valuable possession, our reef through mismanagement.

We do not deserve to keep the reef as a world heritage area until we fully protect it and all the magnificent animals that live in it.

The world has seen terrible destruction of life in the ocean but does not learn from the experience.

The Federal government is currently for instance refusing to protect another magnificent species from protection despite the risk of imminent extinction, the Southern Blue fin Tuna, a magnificent marine animal under dire threat from massive over fishing.

Our sharks are being relentless hunted to extinction mainly by Indonesians but also by many Asian countries, yet again the federal government, which should have banned shark fin products years ago sits on its back side and does nothing.

If it lives in the ocean its food first and nothing later.

The lost income to Australia from this mass killing of life in the ocean is immeasurable both in tourist dollar terms and in the destruction of the unique environment we are so privileged to live in.

We need to look at changing the attitude of the staff in GBRMPA to preservation of the entire ecosystem they are responsible for. Fishing for fun should be a banned pastime for GBRMPA staff. It should be a requirement of future employment at GBRMPA that you do not fish. Yes it's a laugh isn't, it fancy putting forward such absurd suggestions.

Perhaps you can tell me if Kangaroo and Wallaby hunting using hook line and gaff by National Parks and Wild Life staff in their spare time is allowed encouraged and admired.

I want to propose that

1. GBRMPA have a plan and a timetable to fully protect the barrier reef in exactly the same way as any land based National Park.
2. GBRMPA should start a public awareness campaign to educate young Australians that fishing on the reef is not OK
3. GBRMPA staff should be re-educated that GBRMPA staff are not permitted to fish on the reef and that this should be a future requirement of employment at GBRMPA.

Ian McCallan.