1. The Great Barrier Reef (GBR) is an outstanding World Heritage site contributing 63,000 jobs and nearly $6 billion annually to the State economy, mainly from tourism. Agriculture in the GBR catchment, primarily cattle grazing and cane farming, is the major source of nutrients, sediment and pesticide run off to the Reef lagoon; the primary drivers of long term decline in Reef health.
2. In October 2008, the Premier announced that the government would develop regulations to protect the Great Barrier Reef from the impacts of pollution from broadscale agriculture. The Queensland Government has committed to a 50% reduction within four years in the discharge of dangerous pesticides and fertilisers capable of killing the GBR.
3. The Great Barrier Reef Protection Amendment Bill 2009 (the Bill) amends the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.The purpose of the Billis to reduce the impact of agricultural activities on water quality entering the GBR and contribute to achieving Reef *P*lan targets. The Bill contains both prescriptive requirements and a risk management approachthat apply to specified agricultural activities (cattle and cane production) located in the priority catchments of the Burdekin Dry Tropics, Mackay-Whitsunday and the Wet Tropics. These activities are called agricultural environmentally relevant activities.
4. The Bill contains the following requirements:
	1. Operators must record and report upon certain management practices.
	2. Operators applying fertiliser must calculate the optimum amount for application using a soil test and apply no more than the optimum amount to prevent over-fertilisation and reduce poor water quality run-off.
	3. Property owners above a certain threshold must prepare and implement an Environmental Risk Management Plan to entrench the adoption of best management practices and continuous improvement.
5. A public benefit test was prepared to assess the impact of the proposed regulatory measures.
6. Cabinet approved that the Great Barrier Reef Protection Amendment Bill 2009 be introduced into the Legislative Assembly as soon as possible.
7. Cabinet noted that the Public Benefit Test would be tabled in Parliament.
8. Attachments
* [Great Barrier Reef Protection Amendment Bill 2009](Attachments/Bill.pdf)
* [Explanatory Notes](Attachments/ExNotes.pdf)
* [Public Benefit Test](Attachments/PBT.pdf)