

The New York Times

The Opinion Pages | LETTER

Preserving the Great Barrier Reef

DEC. 12, 2016

To the Editor:

Re "[The Great and Dying Barrier Reef](#)" (editorial, Dec. 7):

The Great Barrier Reef is a natural wonder of the world. Stretching about 1,400 miles long, it is larger in size than Italy.

The Australian government recognizes the significant environmental challenges faced by the reef and is determined to protect it for future generations. This is why federal and state governments have committed more than \$3 billion to carry out more than 150 initiatives over the next decade to prevent sediment runoff, improve water quality and tackle the coral-eating crown of thorns starfish.

The significant bleaching event that occurred earlier this year had a mortality rate across the reef of 22 percent and was due to a combination of climate change and El Niño effects. In the three years leading up to this event, coral cover increased by 19 percent.

The Australian government recognizes that climate change is the single most important threat to the reef and is committed to global action to reduce emissions, having already ratified the Paris Agreement, whereby Australia will reduce its emissions by more than 50 percent on a per-capita basis by 2030.

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