



PLANT aMillionCorals

To: Dan Knorr, Tropical Seas Inc.
Re: Reef Safe Sun

January 7, 2019

Dan,

It has come to my attention again, that the usage of all sunscreens is coming under attack because of the mis-information that all sunscreens are detrimental to coral reefs. While I applaud any efforts to lower the stressors on coral reefs, I am concerned when all products are lumped together to be banned from use. Even when it is discrimination of one or two ingredients as not all ingredients are put together the same or involve binders or are non-active.

It was very apparent to me personally, (while working at Mote Marine Lab, in the Florida Keys) during the time I got to observe the performance of “Reef Safe” in controlled tests with live corals over an extended period of time and with concentrations much higher than would be realized in the ocean. While no observable impacts were seen for different coral species, most would have thought that this would have proven enough information to show that “not all sunscreens with oxybenzone” are necessarily bad. And some sunscreens, like Reef Safe, would be preferable for the public to use.

We know that climate change issues, bleaching and diseases are the biggest threats to corals around the world. And that people are trying to do anything they can to try and help out our declining coral reefs. But banning one or two ingredients in sunscreens, may not be the best answer as ingredients are not always applied in the same form, fashion or concentration to allow for a broad reaching regulation. I would hate to see a good product like Reef Safe be caught up in a ban that it has been tested for and performed well in.

Obviously more work needs to be done to test all products of how well they perform rather than banning the ingredients. And tests with the ingredients alone need to include a real-life delivery system and not a DMSO solvent administration experiment, which is skeptical at best.

Hopefully, all good intentions to protect the coral reefs will lend itself to better testing protocols, and show which products should be promoted for use.

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