



GBR Catchment Loads Monitoring Program –Where there's a will there's a way - Positive impacts of extension on pesticide risk

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**CATCHMENT
WATER QUALITY
ALLIANCE**



The Catchment Water Quality Alliance is a collaboration between the DETSI - Water Quality & Investigations, The University of Queensland - Reef Catchment Science Partnership and the James Cook University - TropWATER



**Reef Catchments
Science Partnership**
DATA TO CHANGE



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Who's part of the Alliance: Christian Witte, Reinier Mann, Ryan Turner, Zoe Bainbridge, Celine Clech-Goods, Rochelle Wessels, Melanie Shaw, David Orr, Ben Ferguson, Angela March, Richard Gardiner, Rae Huggins, Kylee Welk, Jennifer Strauss, Shaun Fisher, Stephen Wallace, Cameron Roberts, Joe Versace, Justin Mendelow, Eloise Wilson, Mika Rowston, Hannah Mitchell, Ben Houseman, Hayley Kaminski, Steph Atkinson, Zach Stibbard, Cheng Lu, Joseph McMahon, Payton Te Ngaio, Chalier Ortiz





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Are Pesticides Concentrations Increasing
or Decreasing in Waterways that
Discharge to the Great Barrier Reef
Lagoon?

Heinrich Rass

Supervised by Associate Professor Michael Warne, Dr. Ryan Turner, and Dr. Alan Huang



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Assessing long temporal trends of time-
series Potentially Affected Fraction (PAF)
on the Great Barrier Reef rivers

Nattapat Attagad

Supervised by Dr. Ryan Turner, Dr. Reinier Mann, Catherine Neelanjaru, Hayley Kaminski, and Alan Huang



Hannah Mitchell



Water Quality & Investigations Digital Products

Tahbil - Water Quality Data Portal

Pesticide Reporting Portal

Pesticide Risk Metric

Pesticide Risk Metric Calculator

Condition Report 2022-2023

Condition Report 2021-2022

Condition Report 2020-2021

Condition Report 2019-2020

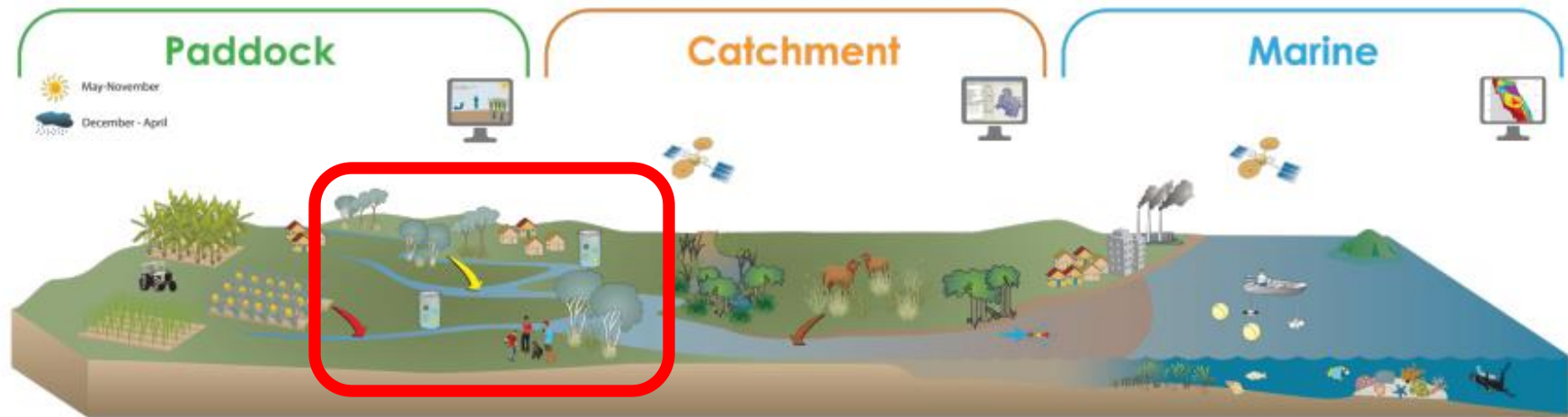
Condition Report 2018-2019

Condition Report 2017-2018

Condition Report 2016-2017



There are 14 program components, which are integrated through a common assessment and reporting framework.



Stewardship

- Agricultural land management practice adoption
- Social factors influencing agricultural land management practice adoption
- Economic benefits of agricultural land management practices
- Non-agricultural management practice adoption

Marine condition

- Marine monitoring program
 - Water quality monitoring
 - Seagrass monitoring
 - Coral monitoring
- eReefs marine modelling

Management practice effectiveness and paddock pollutant delivery (agricultural land uses)

- Paddock monitoring of water quality benefits
- Paddock modelling of practice effectiveness (water quality)

Catchment pollutant delivery

- Catchment loads monitoring
- Catchment loads modelling

Catchment condition

- Ground cover monitoring
- Riparian vegetation extent monitoring
- Wetland extent monitoring
- Wetland condition and pressure monitoring

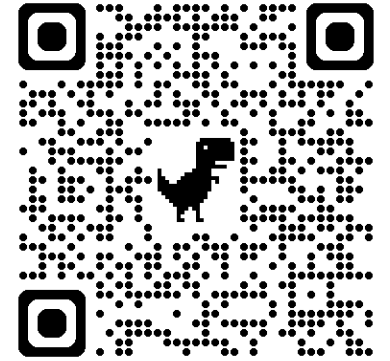
P2R Program

- 14 components
- Loads monitoring
- Catchment scale (with some fine scale projects)

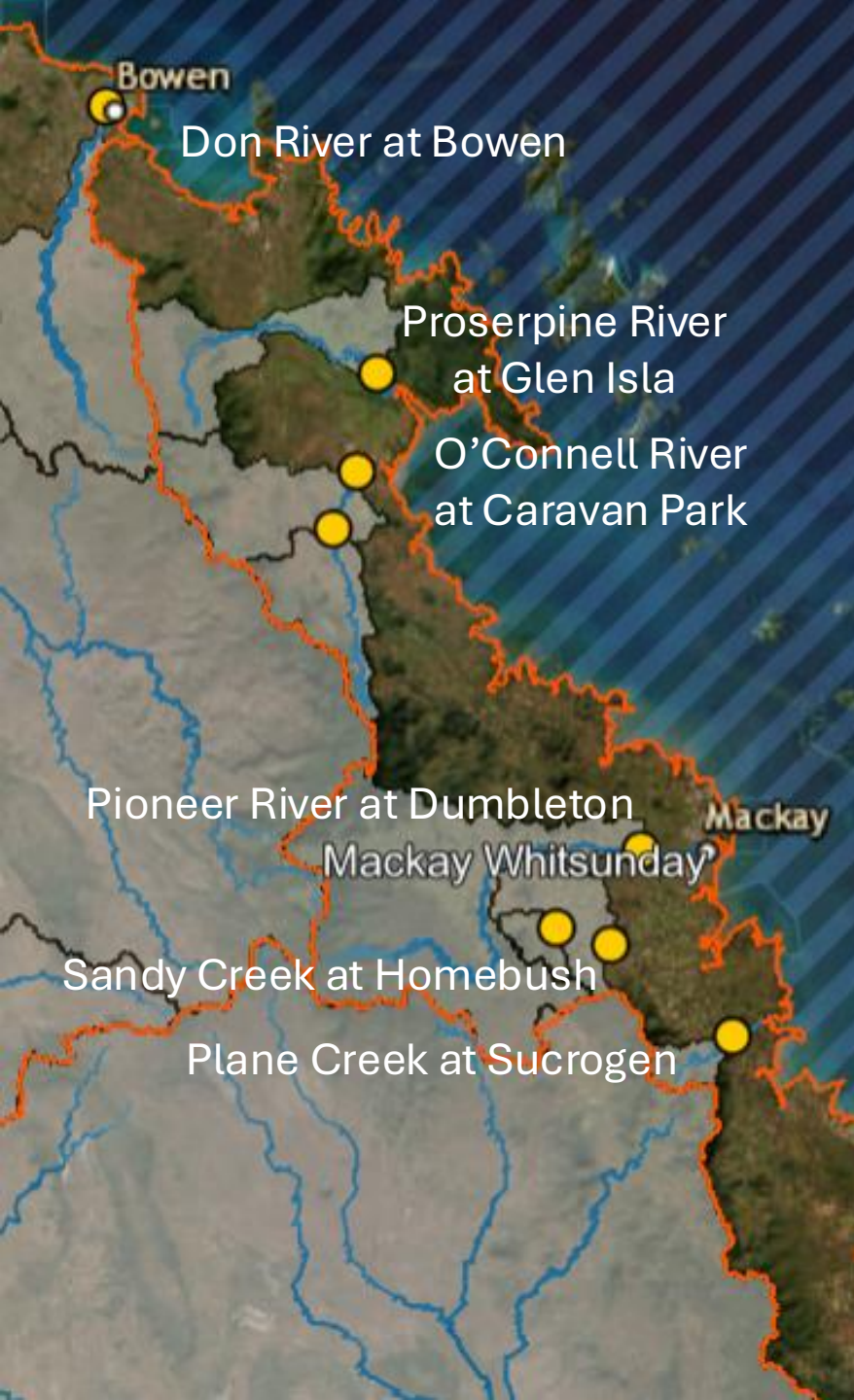




Monitoring Sites (2022 -2023)



- 68 sites were monitored within 25 basins.
- Total suspended solids and nutrients were monitored at 26 end-of-catchment sites, 22 sub-catchment sites and 8 fine-scale monitoring sites.
- Pesticides were monitored at 27 end-of-catchment sites, 9 sub-catchment sites and 9 fine-scale monitoring sites

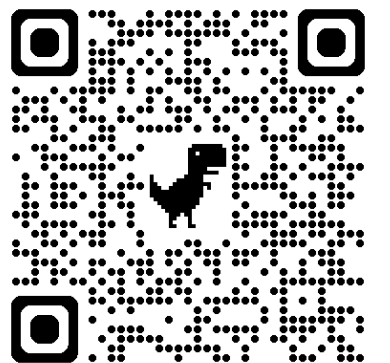
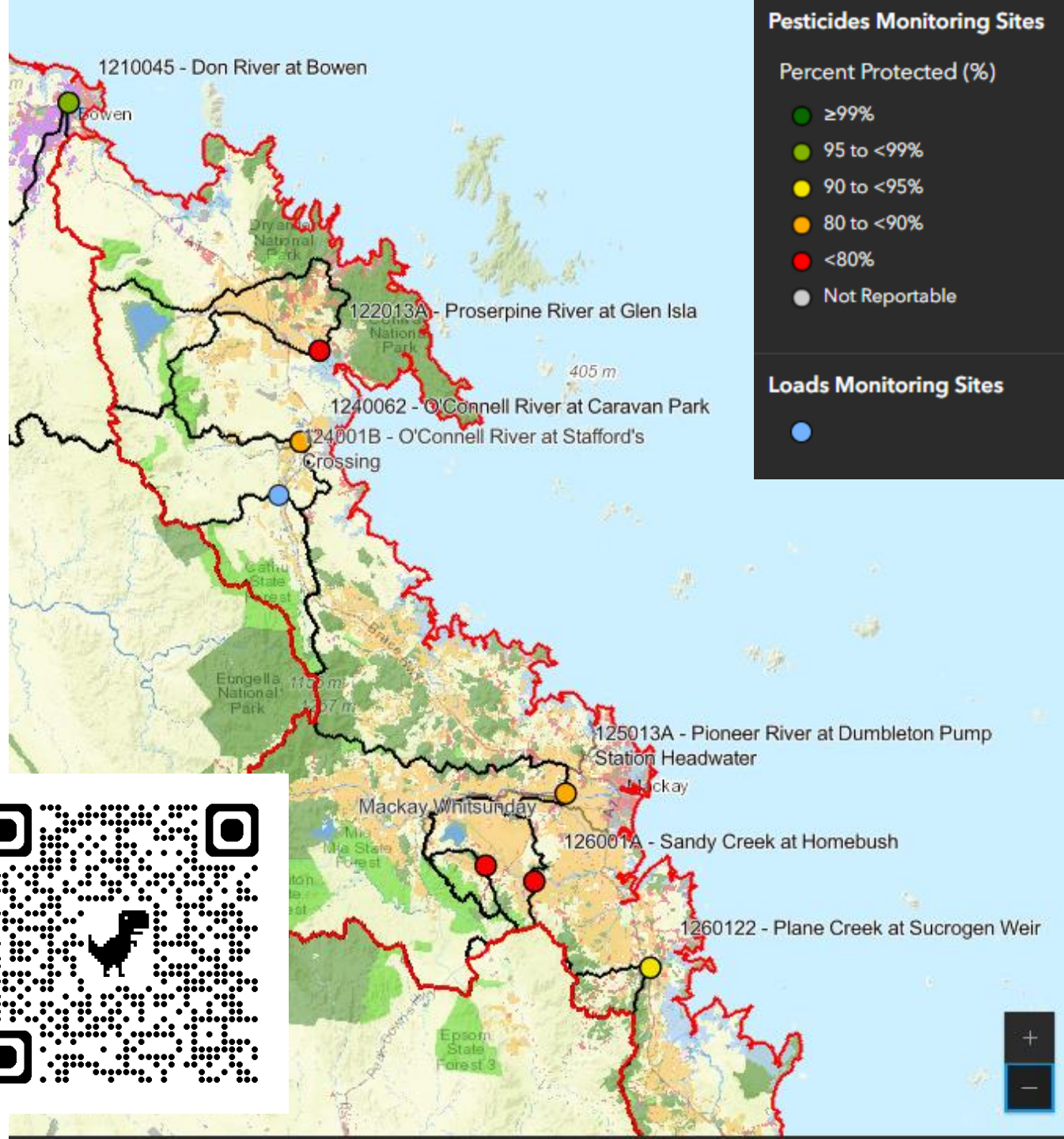


Monitoring Sites in Mackay Whitsunday

- 4 sites have long temporal data sets



Pesticide Risk in Mackay Whitsunday

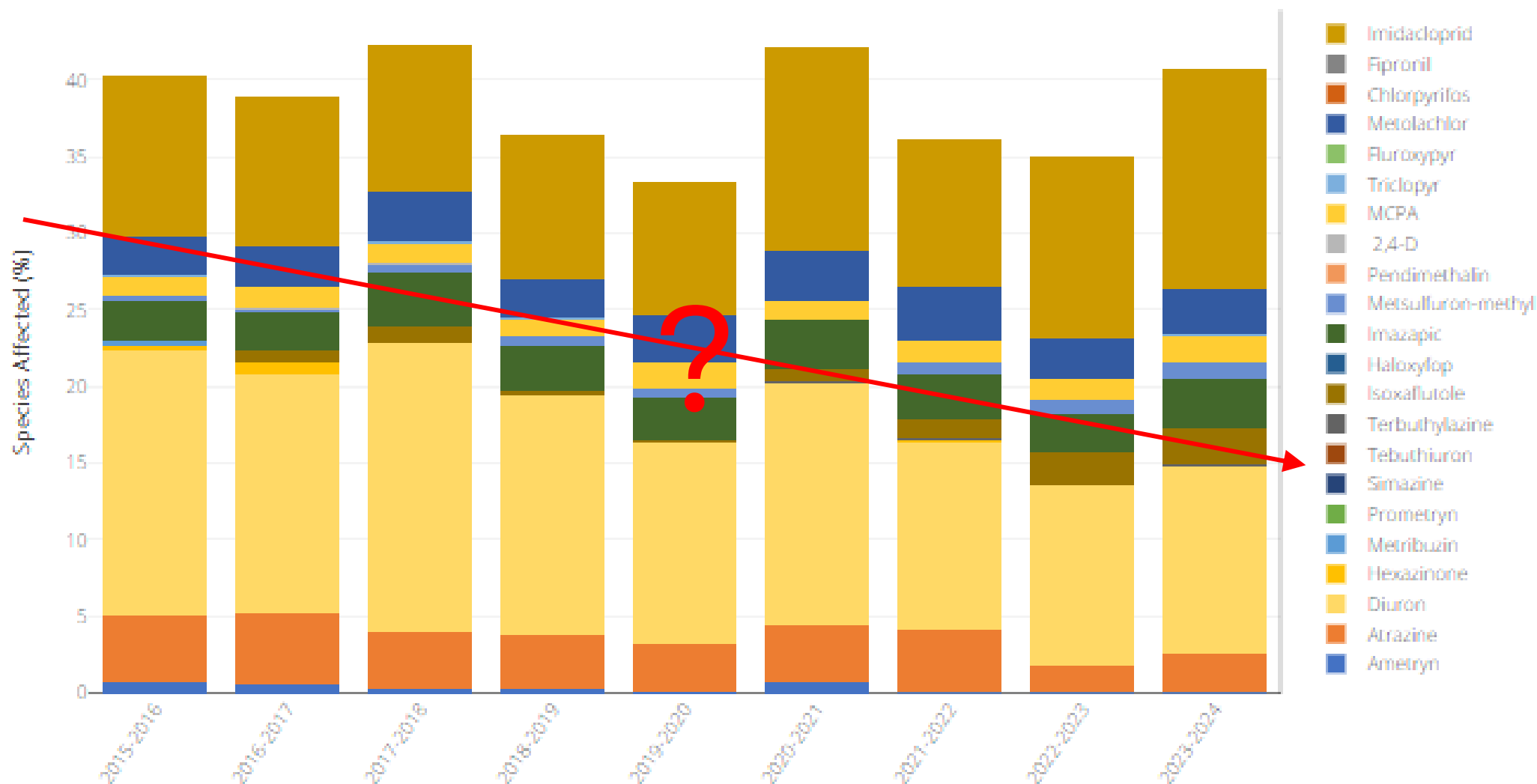


Pesticide Risk in Mackay Whitsunday



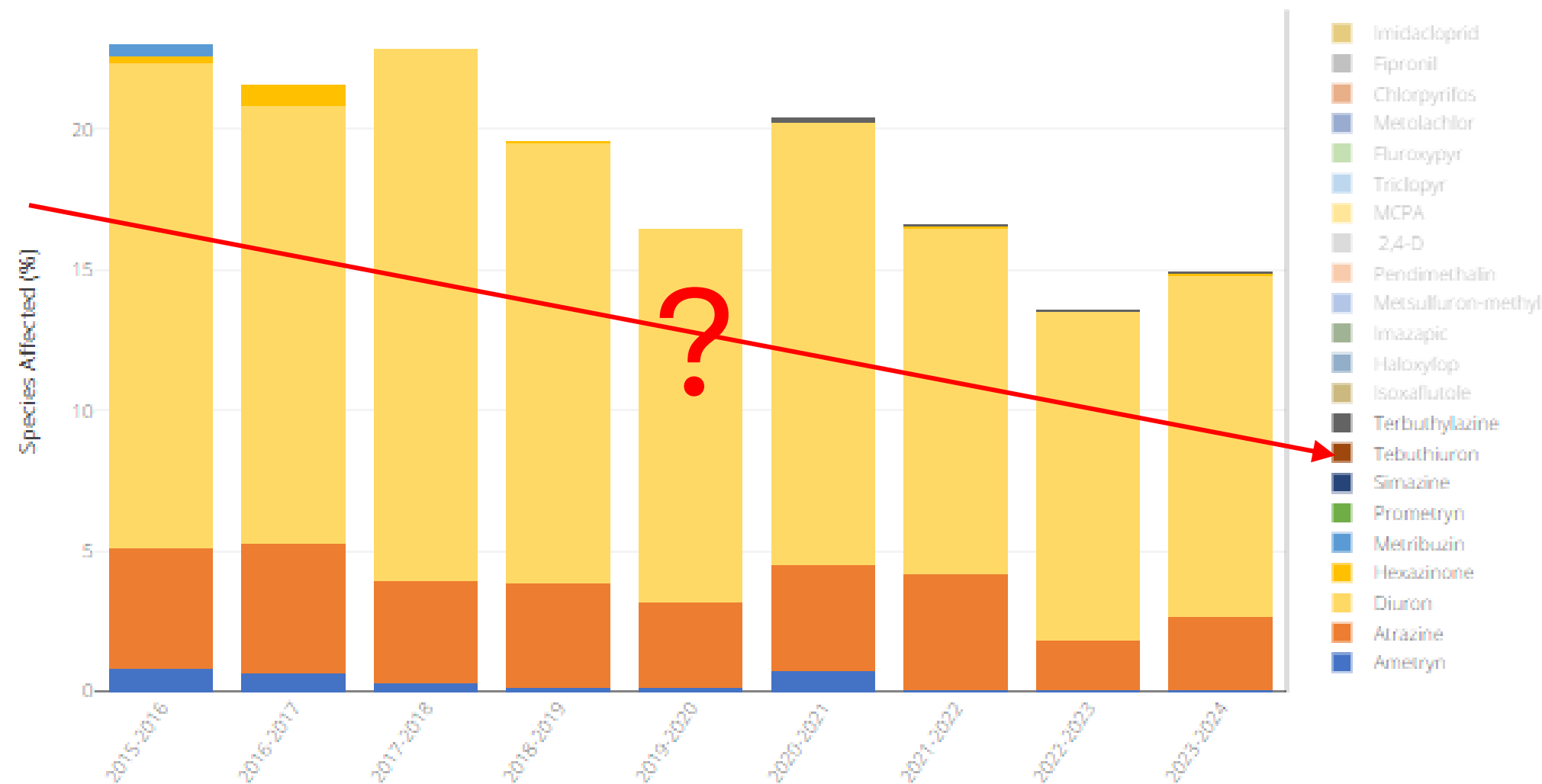
Region	Site Name	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Mackay Whitsunday	O'Connell River at Caravan Park	92.3	87.6	92.1	91.9	92.3	87.1	89.8	88.2	92.8
Mackay Whitsunday	O'Connell River at Stafford's Crossing		87.8	91.7	92.5	89.7				
Mackay Whitsunday	Pioneer River at Dumbleton Pump Station Headwater	81.9	83	75.1	84.6	78.5	76.9	85.5	83.4	80.3
Mackay Whitsunday	Pioneer River at Forgan Smith Bridge				87.3					
Mackay Whitsunday	Plane Creek at Sucrogen Weir			93.1	95.9	94.2	95.3	92.8	93.4	95.7
Mackay Whitsunday	Proserpine River at Glen Isla		73	70.6	65.9	70.8	73.6	65.4	72	65.9
Mackay Whitsunday	Sandy Creek at Bruce Highway				66.4					
Mackay Whitsunday	Sandy Creek at Homebush	59.7	61.1	57.7	63.5	66.6	57.9	63.9	64.9	59.3
Mackay Whitsunday	Sandy Creek South Branch at Downstream Sorbellos Road							77	71.9	

Contributions to Pesticide Risk in Mackay Whitsunday



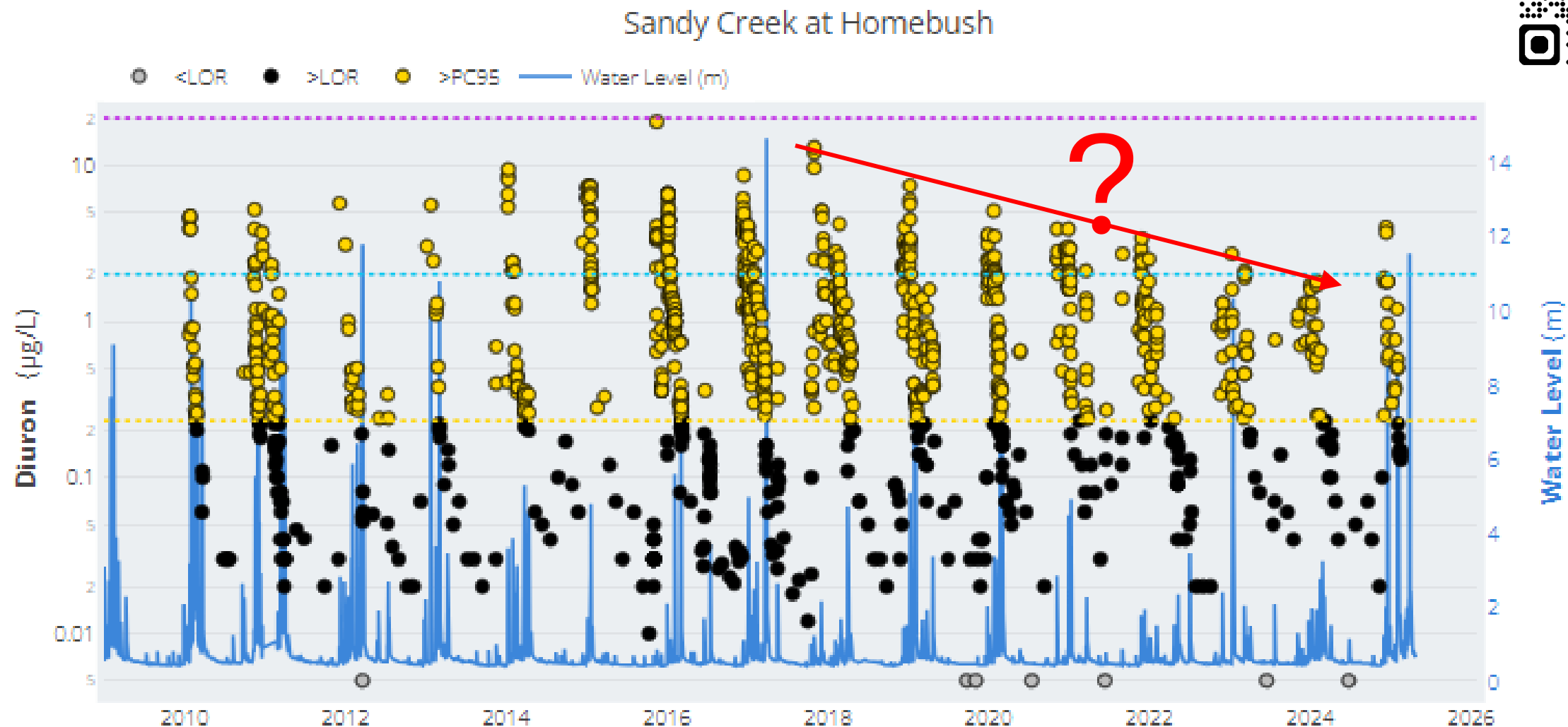
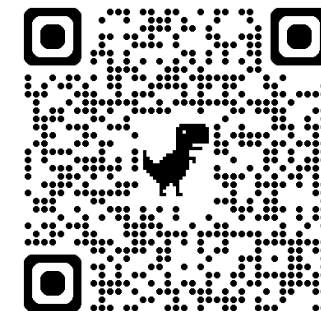
Sandy Creek at Homebush

PSII contributions to Pesticide Risk in Mackay Whitsunday



Sandy Creek at Homebush

Diuron concentrations in Sandy Creek



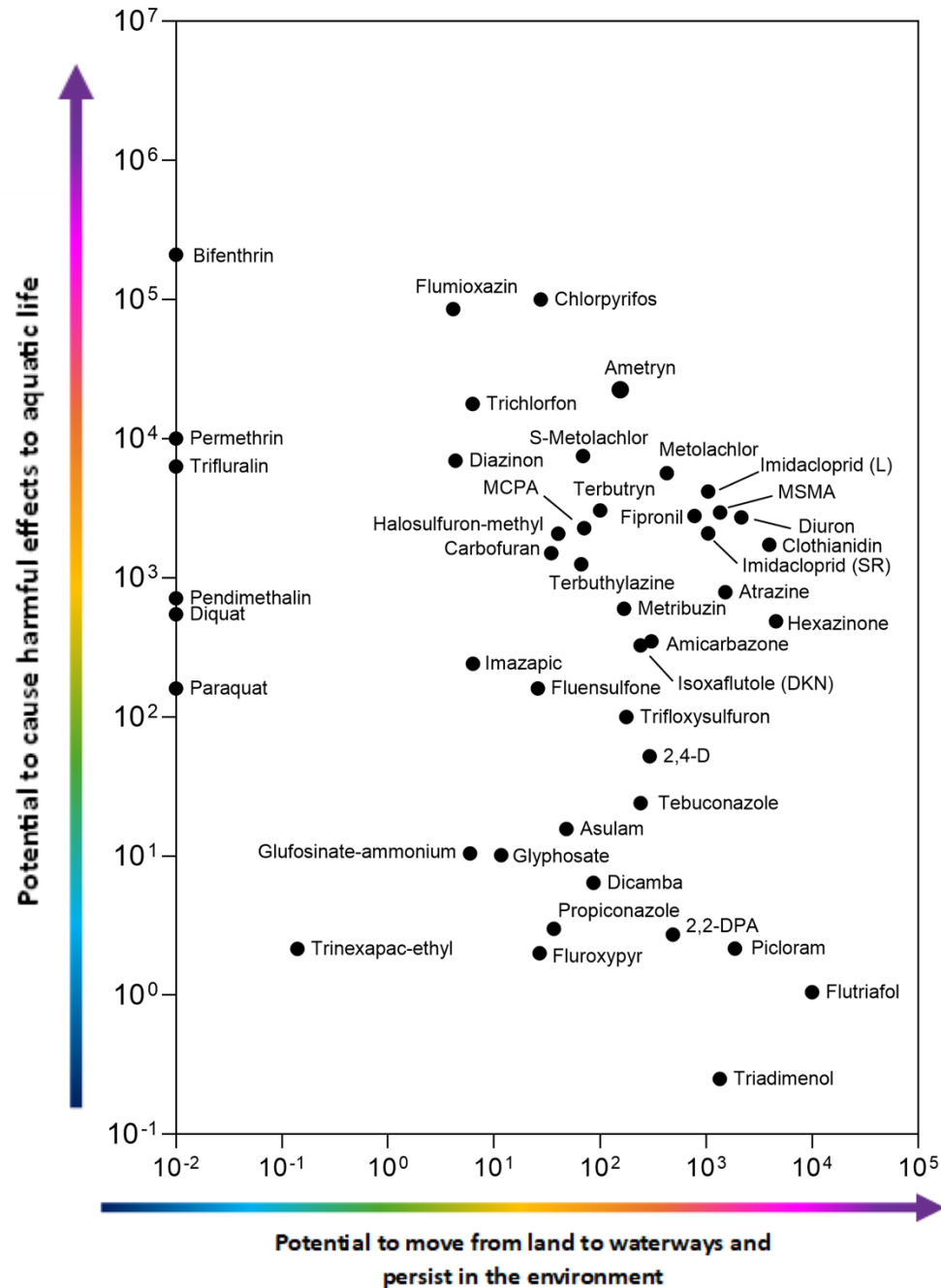
Diuron

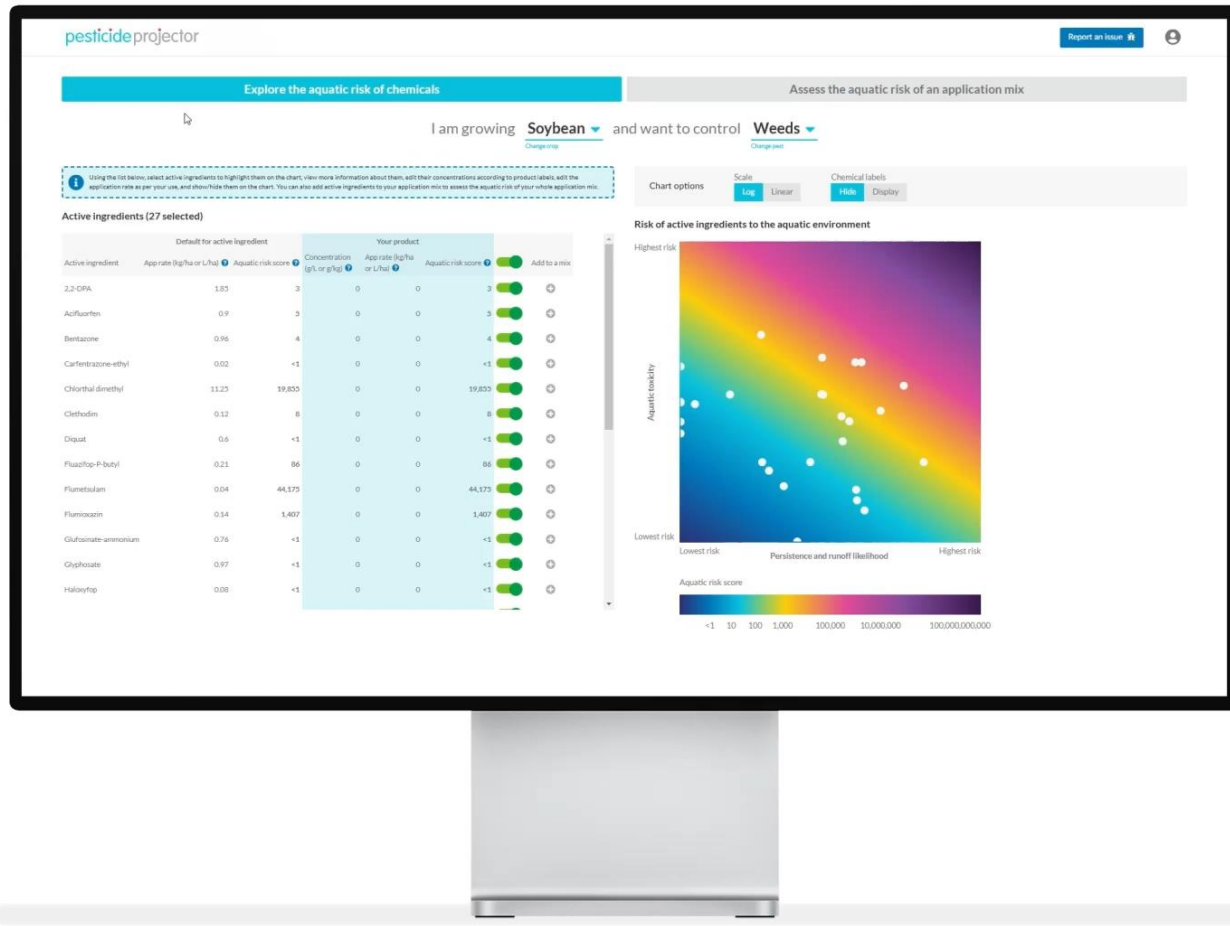
Interventions

- APVMA changes to diuron labels in 2012
- Promotion of the use of non-residual knockdown herbicides in preference to residual PSIIIs since 2009
- Sandy Creek Projects between 2015 and 2020 – increased awareness
- WQI released new guidelines for chemicals like diuron and imidacloprid
- Publication of guideline exceedances by WQI and later the publication of the Pesticide Reporting Portal
- Development and Adoption of the Pesticide Risk Metric
- Awareness programs and field trials for products containing imidacloprid
- Bluewater 1 and Bluewater 2 – Farmacist
- Pesticide Decision Support Tool (Michael Warne & Farmacist) and the Pesticide Projector (RCSP & TRUII)
- Biosecurity Queensland have recently run compliance & awareness programs

Pesticide Decision Support Tool for sugarcane

- 45 active ingredients registered for application on sugarcane.
- Based on maximum application rate and broadcast spray regime.

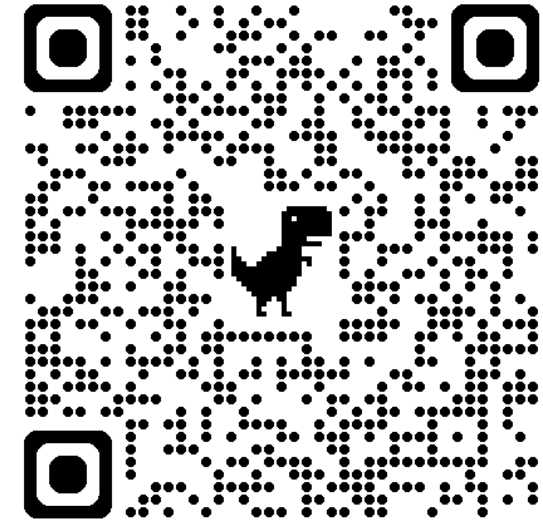




- User-friendly platform that can be tailored to actual individual farm practices, dealing with:

- ✓ User application rates
- ✓ Tank mixes
- ✓ Different spray methods

- Includes active ingredients applied on **sugarcane**, **rotation crops** and **bananas**.



pesticideprojector.net.au

Project Bluewater



Great Barrier
Reef Foundation



- Implementing the **Pesticide Decision Support Tool** in the field
- 10,500 hectares in predominant sugarcane growing areas in Mackay, Queensland.
- Sprayer assessments and upgrades.
- Used the Pesticide Decision Support Tool in pesticide management plans for each block, based on pest and site-specific characteristics (e.g., soil type, slope, proximity to sensitive sites).



Sandy Creek at Homebush – Total (22) Pesticides

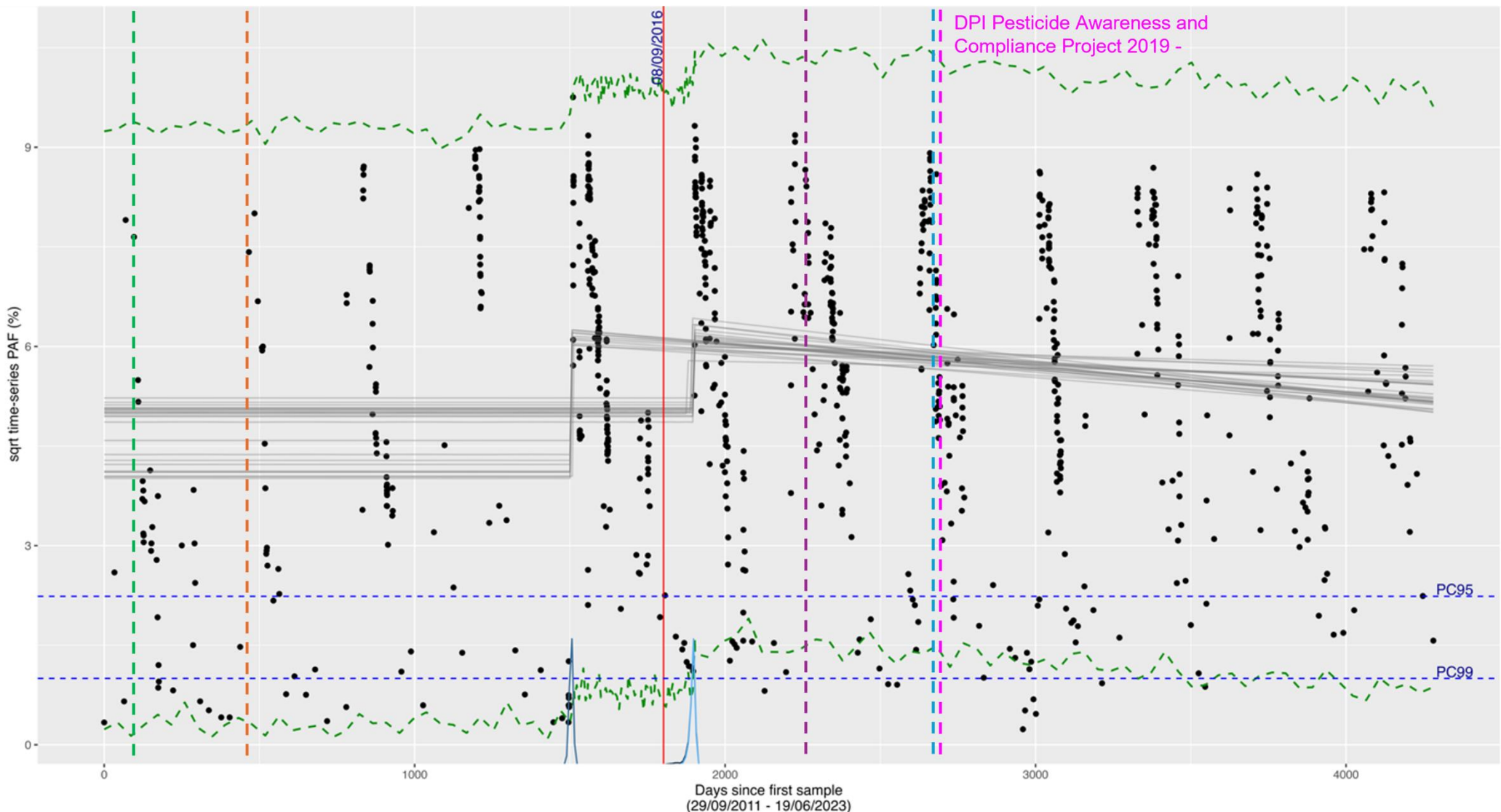
APVMA Diuron
Label Changes
2012 -

GBRCLMP
data available
2013 -

Nufarm Edu. Programs
(Imidacloprid) 2018 -

Farmacist Edu. Programs
(Project Bluewater) 2019 -

DPI Pesticide Awareness and
Compliance Project 2019 -



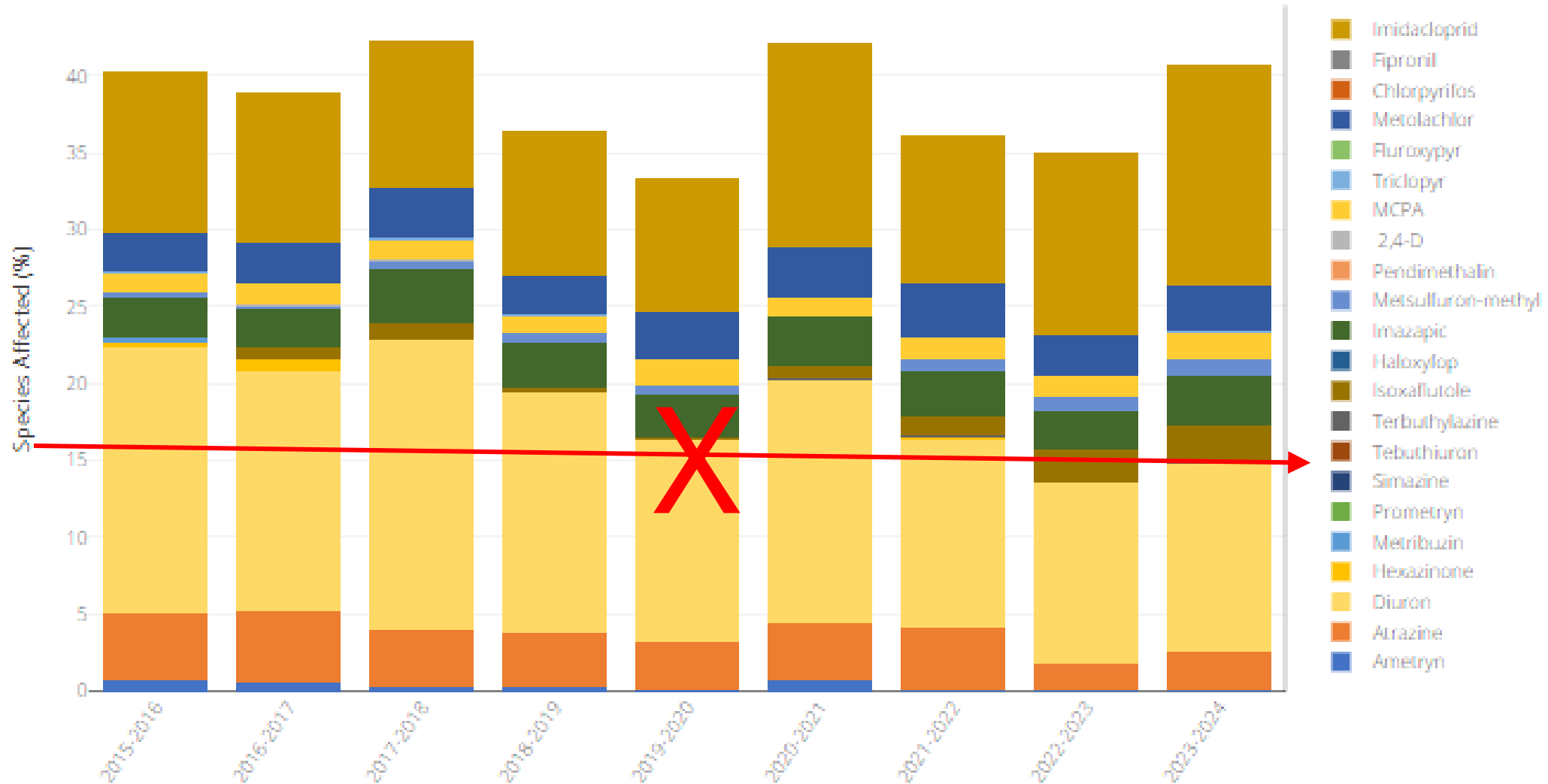
Seasonal Mann-Kendall Analyses

Non-significant trend for Total Pesticides ($p = 0.085$)

Statistically significant decrease in PSII herbicides ($p = 0.021$)

Attagad, Nattapat (2024). Assessing long temporal trends of timeseries Potentially Affected Fraction (PAF) on the Great Barrier Reef rivers. Honours Thesis, School of the Environment, The University of Queensland. <https://doi.org/10.14264/2da064b>

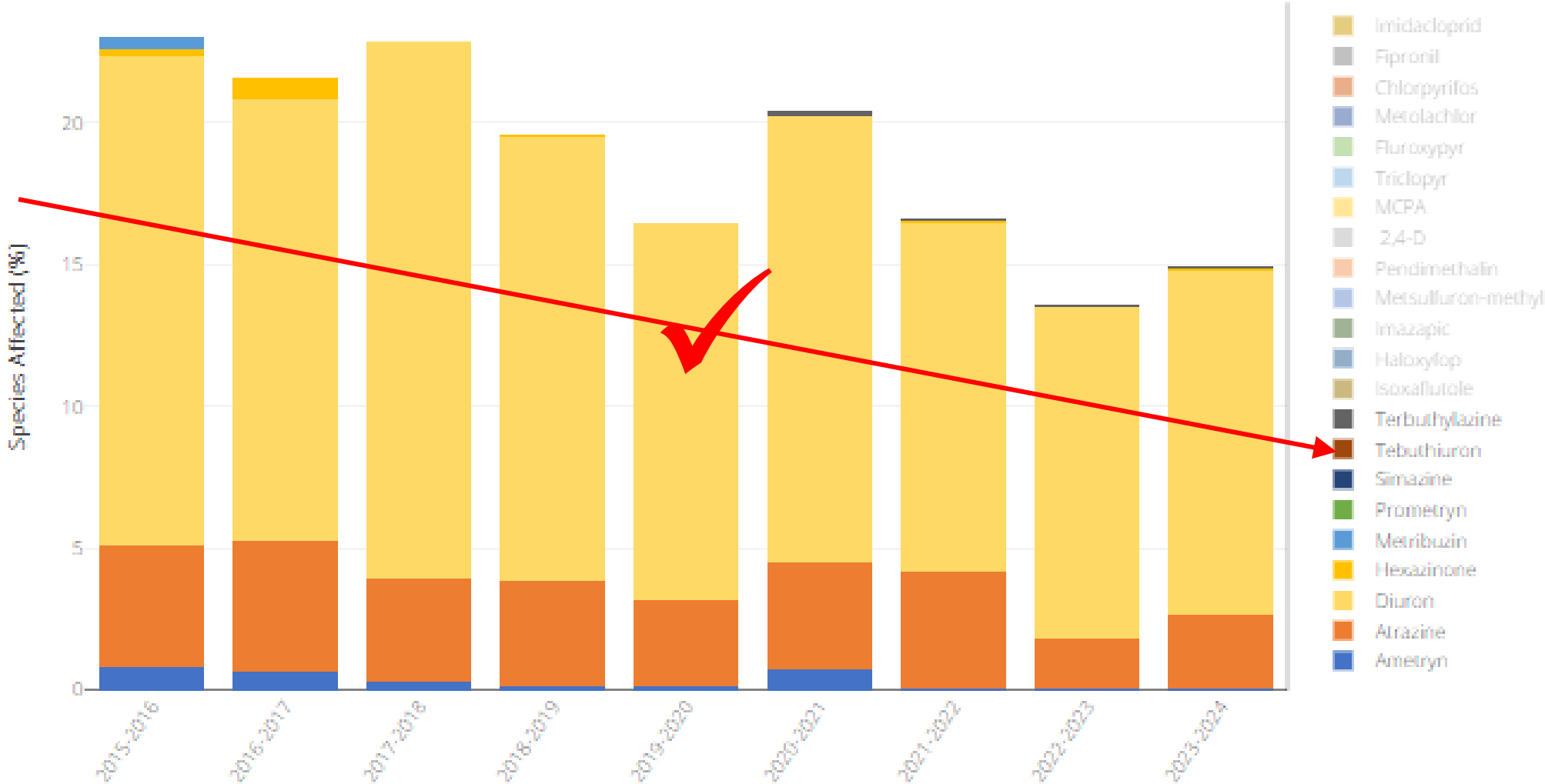
Total Pesticides in Sandy Creek



Sandy Creek at Homebush

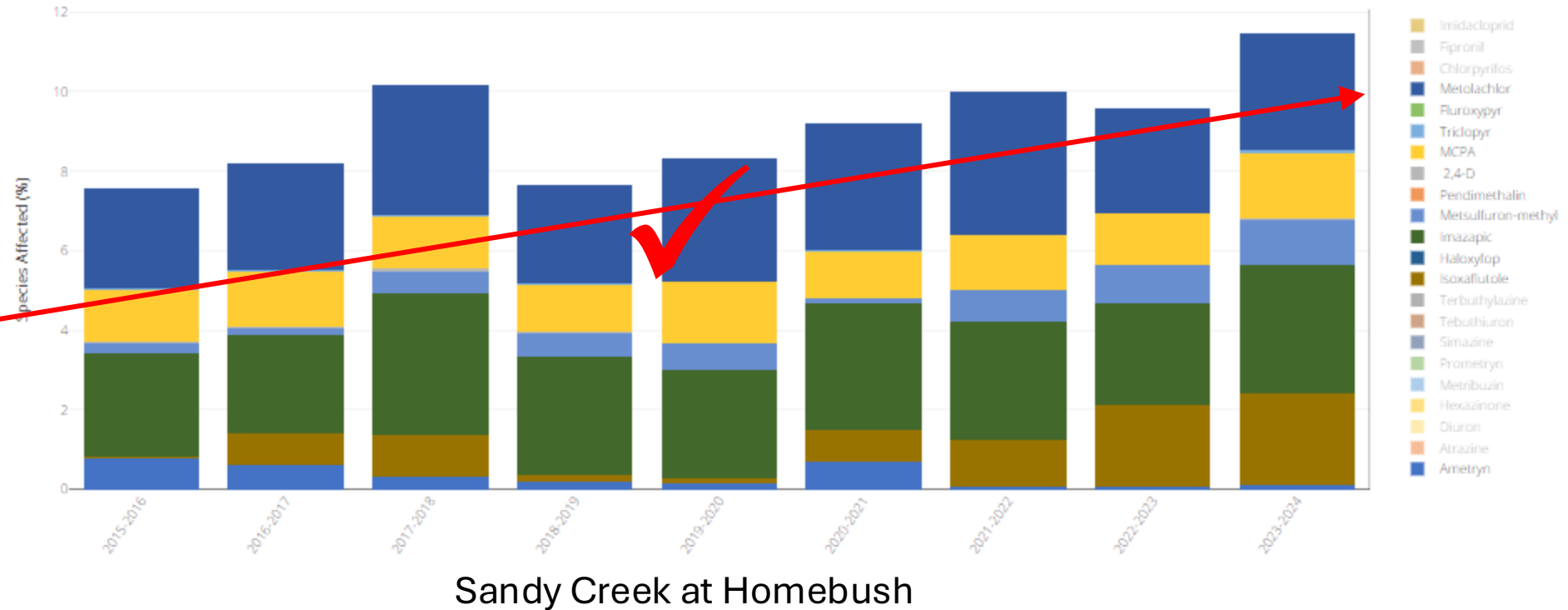
P = 0.085

PSII Herbicides in Sandy Creek



Sandy Creek at Homebush

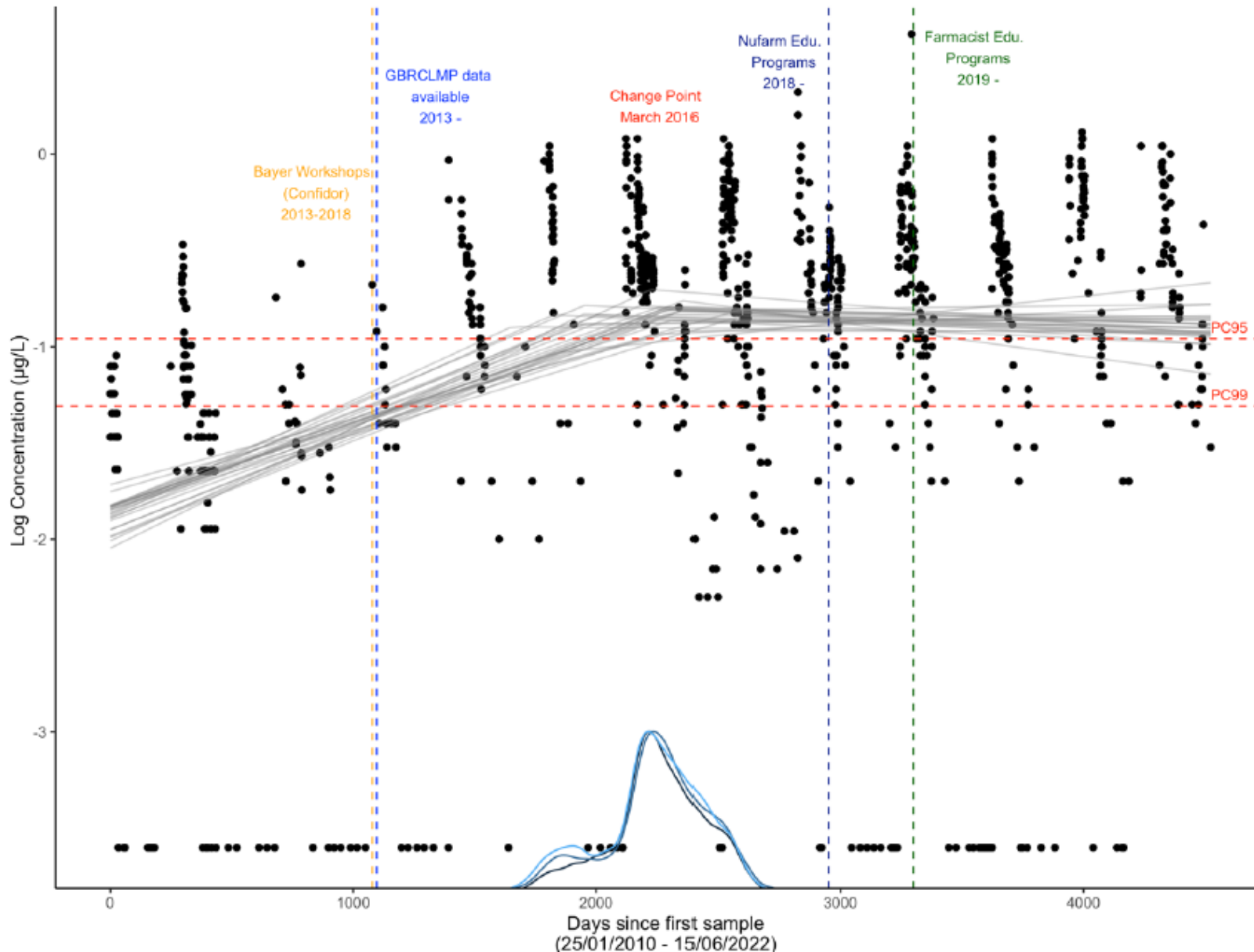
Other Herbicides in Sandy Creek



Over whole time-scale (2011/12 – 2022/23) there is statistically significant increase in other herbicides ($P < 0.0001$)

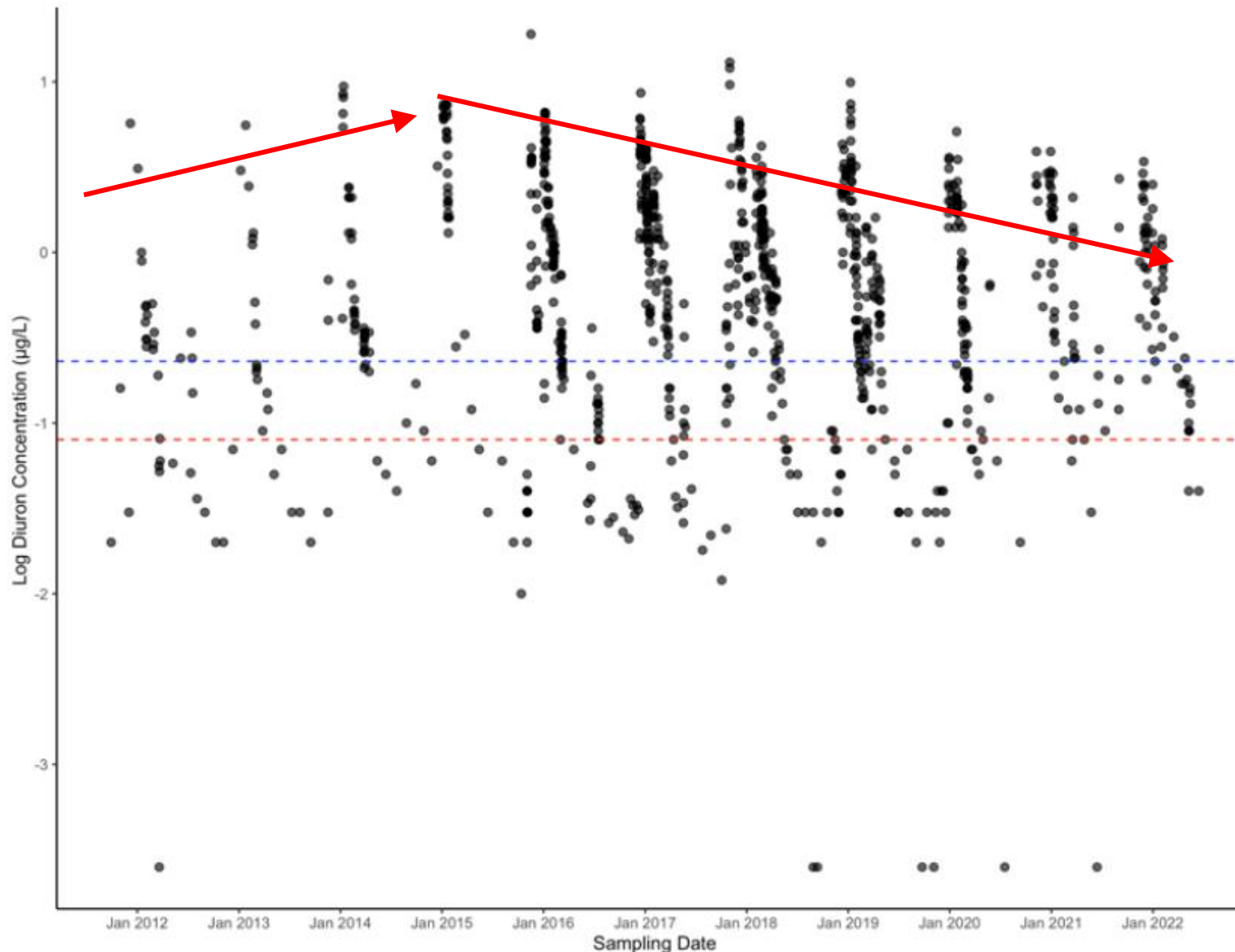
After the change point (August 2016), there is no statistically significant increase in other herbicides ($p = 0.943$)

Sandy Creek at Homebush - Imidacloprid



Significant increase ($p < 0.0001$) and then plateau ($p = 0.864$)

Sandy Creek at Homebush - Diuron

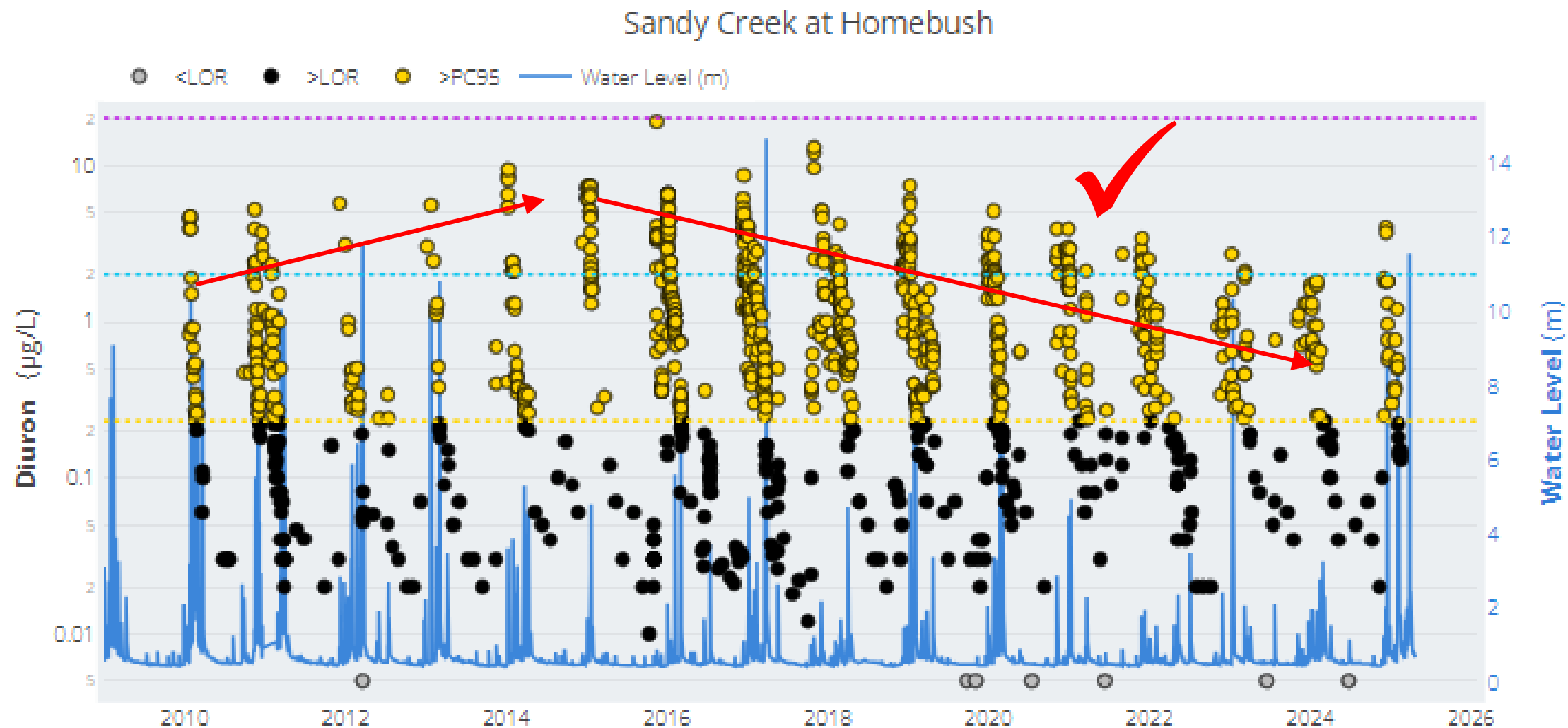


No Change point analysis

No significant trend
($p = 0.438$) over
entire time-scale

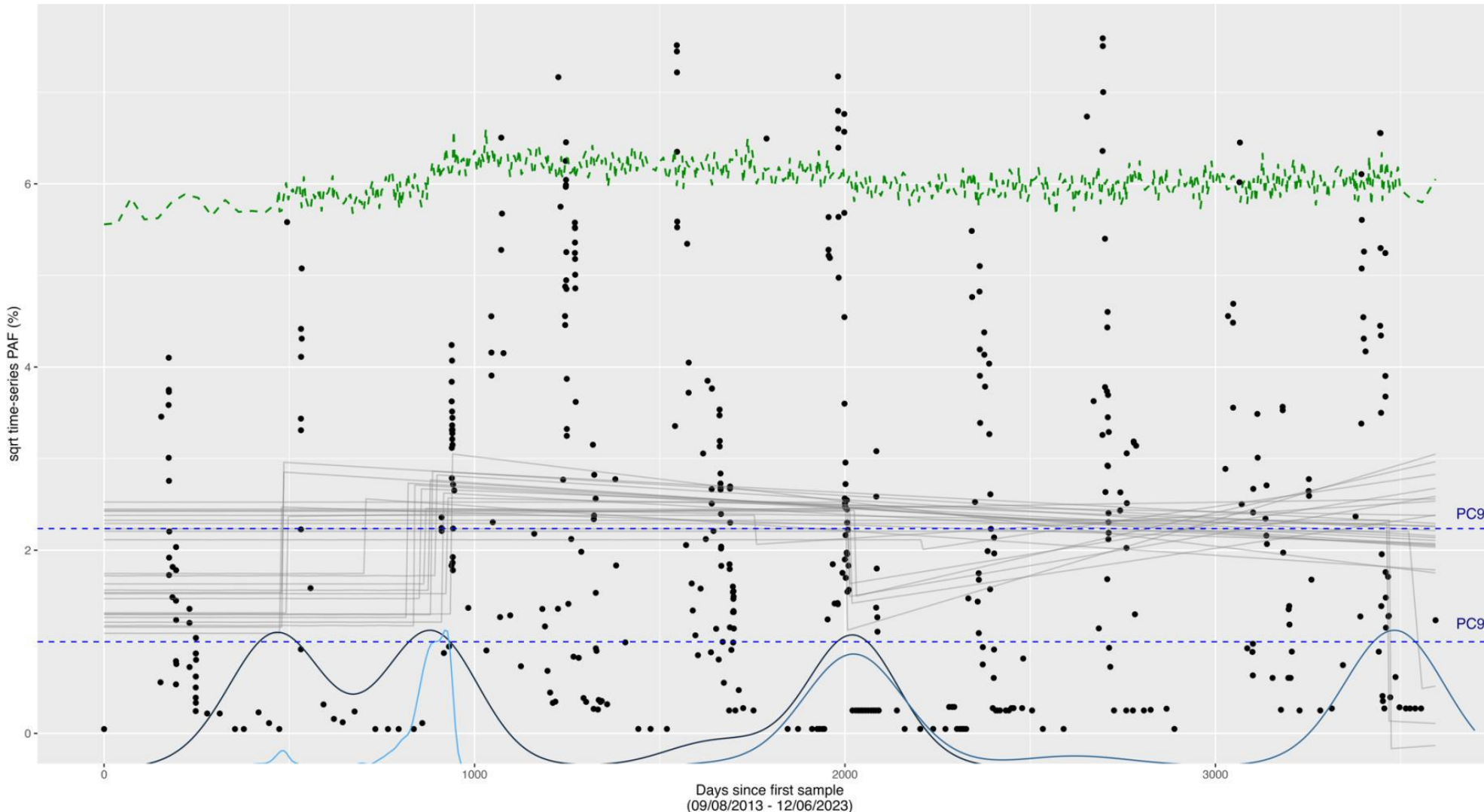
Significant decrease
from 2015 - 2022
($p = 0.019$)
Significant increase
from 2011 – 2015
($p = 0.034$)

Diuron concentrations in Sandy Creek



Diuron

O'Connell River (Caravan Park) – Total Pesticides



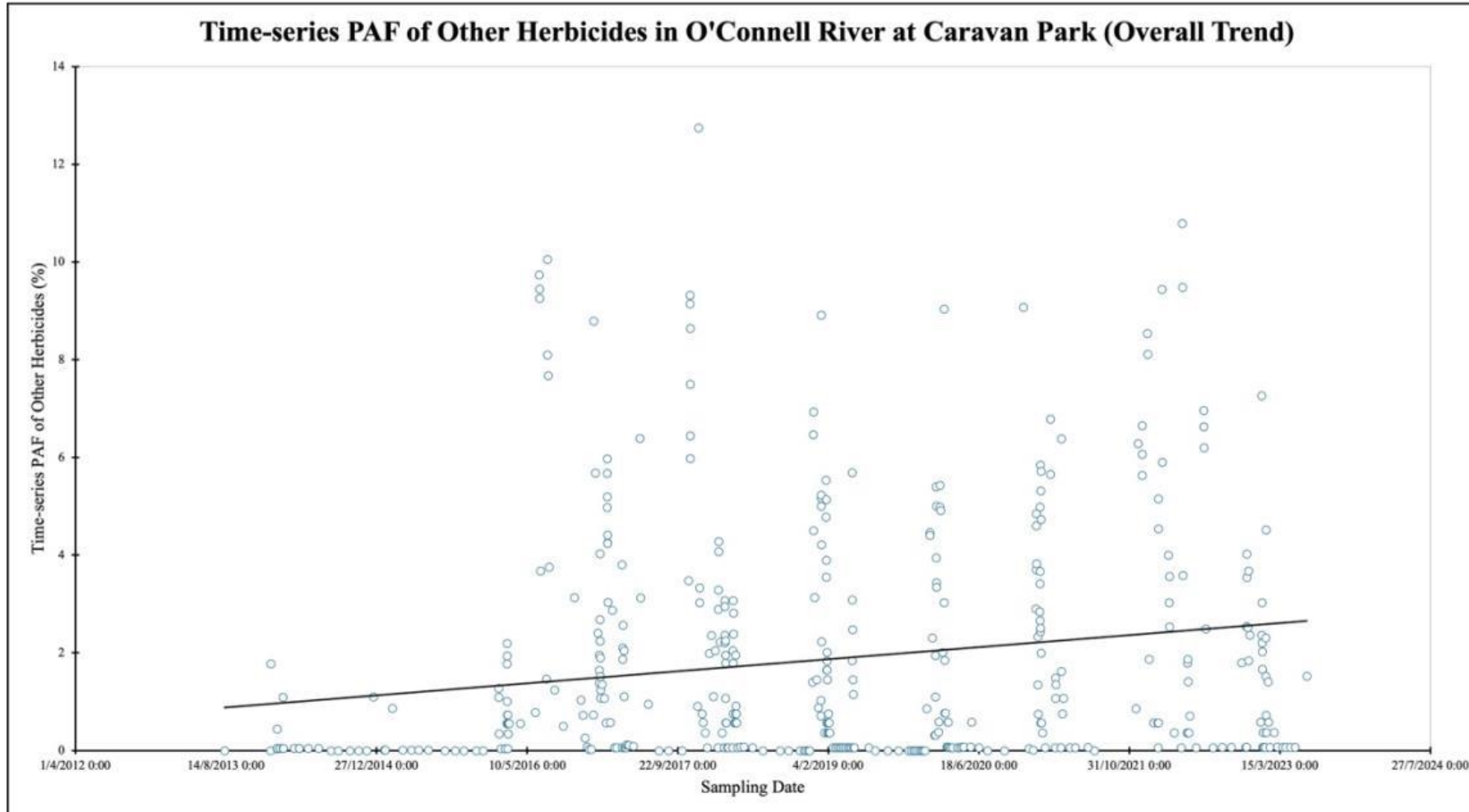
No clear change points

No significant trend for total pesticides ($p = 0.992$),

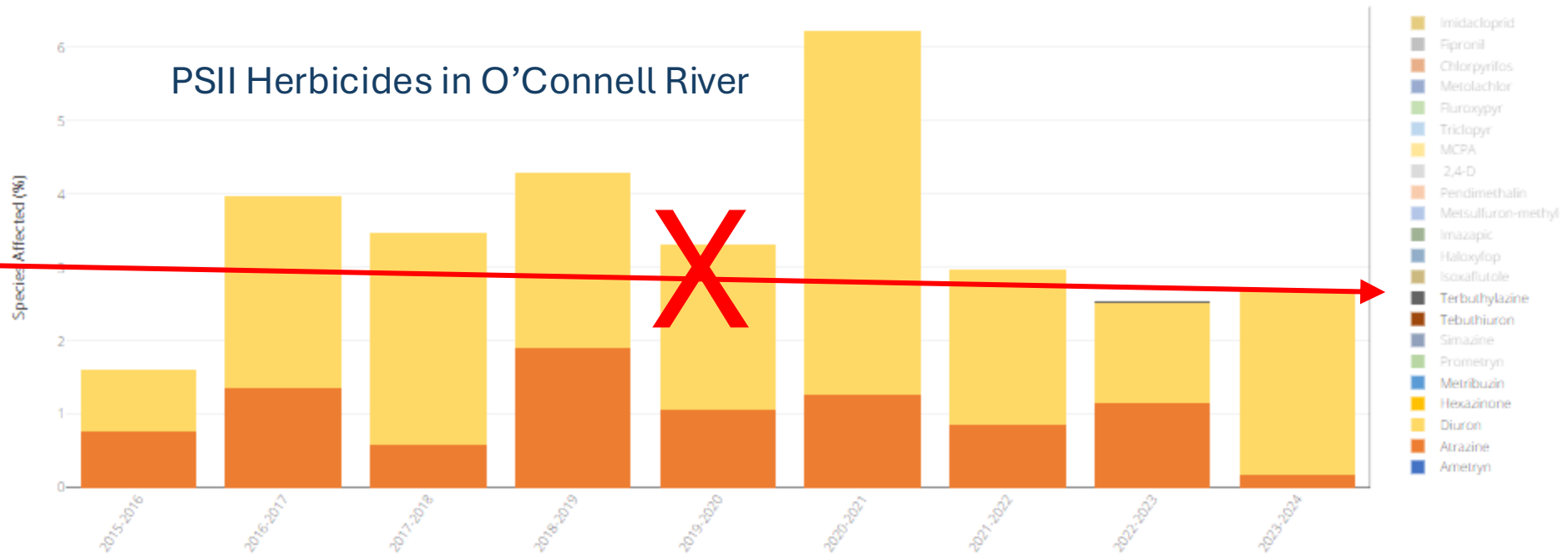
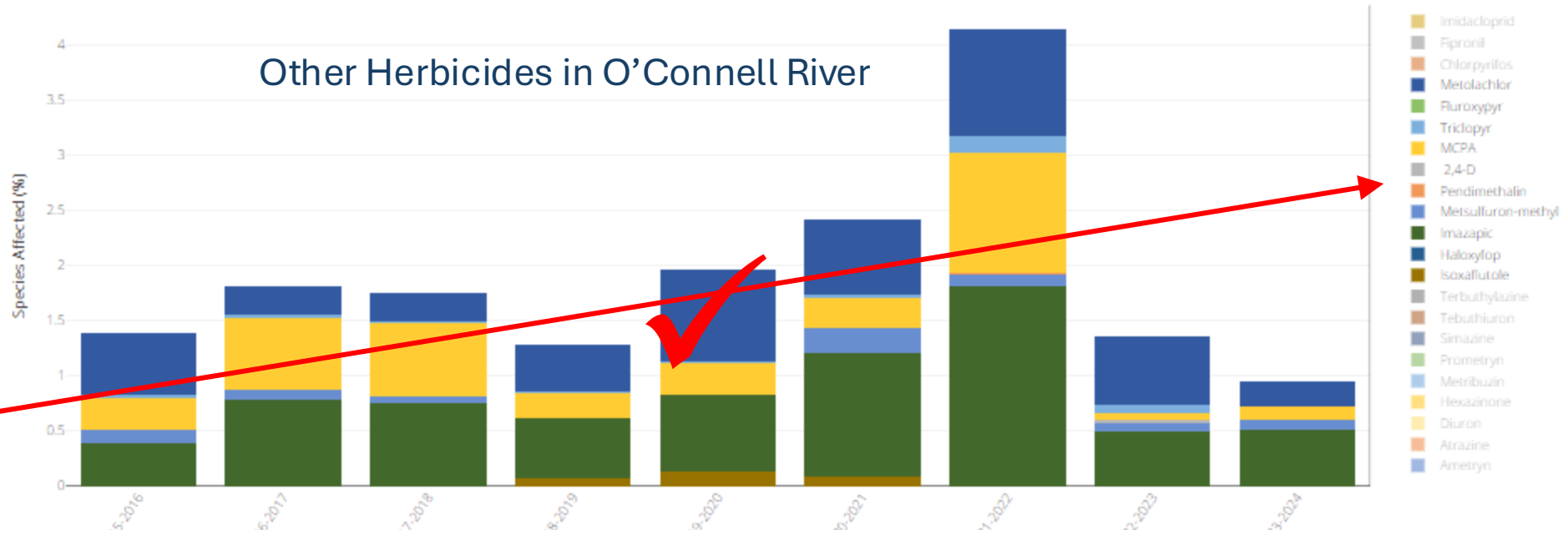
PSII herbicides ($p = 0.237$)

Insecticides ($p = 0.243$)

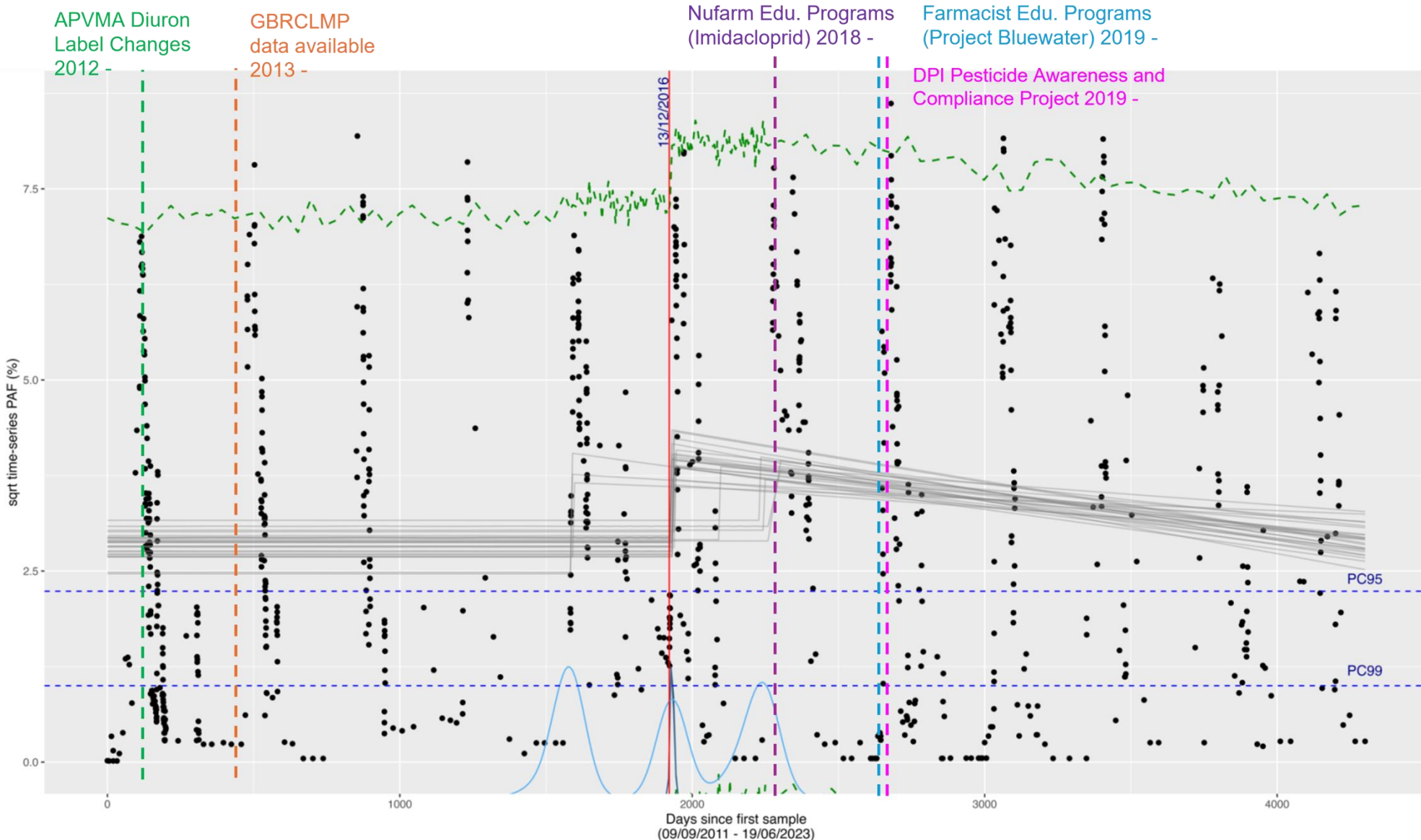
O'Connell River (Caravan Park) – Other Herbicides



Other Herbicides -
Statistically
significant increasing
trend ($p = 0.001$).



Pioneer River – Total Pesticides

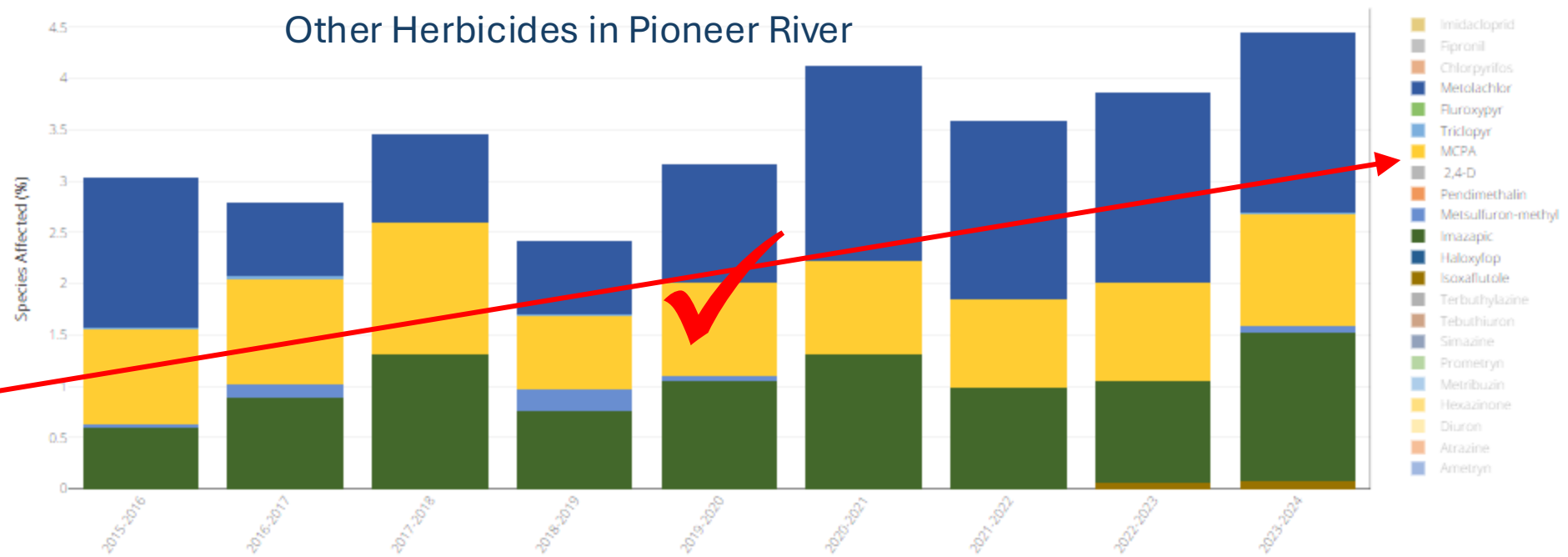


No significant trends for total pesticides
($p = 0.225$)

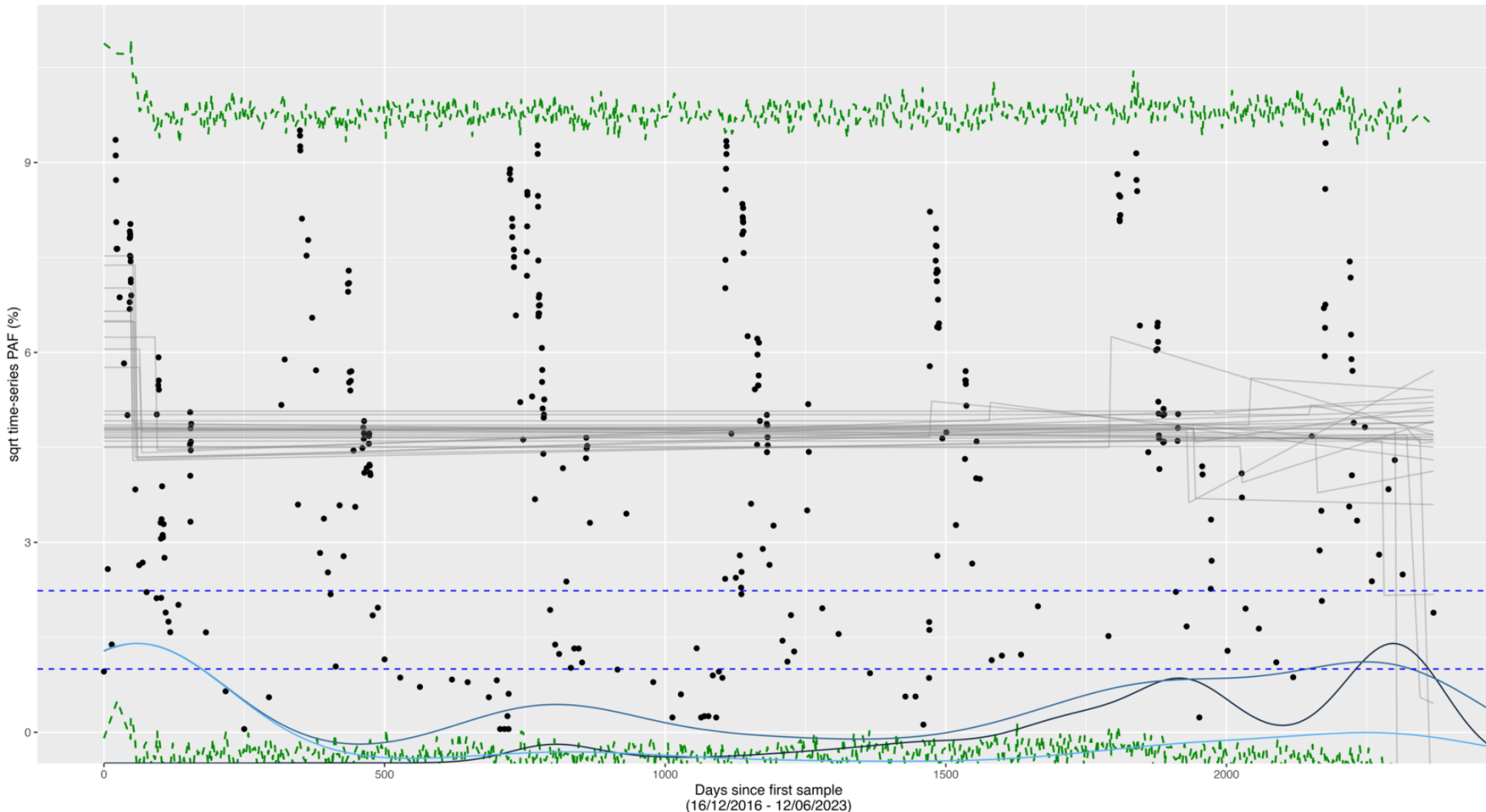
PSII herbicides ($p = 0.182$)
Other Herbicides ($p = 0.950$)
Insecticides ($p = 0.155$)

Significant increase in Other herbicides over entire time-scale ($p < 0.0001$)

Attagad, Nattapat (2024). Assessing long temporal trends of timeseries Potentially Affected Fraction (PAF) on the Great Barrier Reef rivers. Honours Thesis, School of the Environment, The University of Queensland. <https://doi.org/10.14264/2da064b>



Proserpine River – Total Pesticides



No significant trends

Summary

- Intensive education and extension programs in Sandy Creek catchment has seen a decrease in the losses of PSII (diuron) from farms and a stabilisation of imidacloprid losses and therefore an overall reduction in risk.
- Where extension is less prevalent (e.g. Proserpine River catchment), no change in risk can be found.
- Increases in Other herbicides (i.e. in Sandy Creek, Pioneer and O'Connell catchments) suggests that the message about swapping PSII for alternatives has received traction.
- In Mackay Whitsunday, other herbicides present a toxicity risk in themselves, and choosing chemicals with lower risk needs to go hand in hand with practices that reduce application (e.g. as advocated by Project Bluewater)

Water Quality & Investigations Digital Products

Tahbil - Water Quality Data Portal

Pesticide Reporting Portal

Pesticide Risk Metric

Pesticide Risk Metric Calculator

Condition Report 2022-2023

Condition Report 2021-2022

Condition R

Condition Report 2018-2019

Condition Report 2017-2018

Condition R



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Extra slides

Appendix C. A Summary of SMK Tables

Table C1. A summary of SMK assessing overall trends of every group of pesticide mixtures in 13 monitoring sites. All yellow-highlighted cells indicate significant trends (when the p-value is less than 0.01). Kendall's tau indicates the strength and direction of the trends; positive tau is an increasing trend while negative one is a decreasing trend.

Site Name	Total Pesticides		PSII		Insecticides		Other Herbicides	
	Kendall's tau	P-value	Kendall's tau	P-value	P-value	Kendall's tau	Kendall's tau	P-value
Barratta Creek at Northcote	0.030	0.567	-0.030	0.569	0.008	0.855	0.206	<0.0001
Burdekin River at Home Hill Inkerman Bridge	0.087	0.142	0.038	0.490	0.431	<0.0001	0.197	0.002
Comet River at Comet Weir	0.001	0.996	-0.072	0.366	0.480	<0.0001	0.061	0.435
Herbert River at John Row Bridge	0.134	0.001	0.085	0.036	0.216	<0.0001	0.359	<0.0001
Johnstone River at Coquette Point	-0.157	0.002	-0.056	0.265	-0.221	<0.0001	-0.054	0.335
Mulgrave River at Deeral	-0.087	0.061	-0.132	0.006	-0.078	0.110	-0.044	0.348
North Johnstone River at Goondi	-0.272	<0.0001	-0.154	0.014	-0.281	<0.0001	0.120	0.153
O'Connell River at Caravan Park	-0.001	0.992	-0.065	0.237	-0.065	0.243	0.189	0.001
Pioneer River at Dumbleton Pump Station Headwater	0.079	0.115	-0.008	0.874	0.279	<0.0001	0.336	<0.0001
Proserpine River at Glen Isla	-0.040	0.552	-0.056	0.437	-0.059	0.378	0.015	0.820
Russell River at East Russell	-0.147	0.002	-0.139	0.005	-0.297	<0.0001	-0.035	0.406
Sandy Creek at Homebush	0.029	0.556	-0.032	0.176	0.094	0.053	0.200	<0.0001
Tully River at Euramo	-0.025	0.541	0.064	0.120	-0.224	<0.0001	0.113	0.005

Table C2. A summary of SMK assessing the trends before change point according to the location of change point in total pesticides (output from CPA). All yellow-highlighted cells indicate significant trends (when the p-value is less than 0.01). Kendall's tau (Tau in this table) indicates the strength and direction of the trends; positive tau is an increasing trend and vice versa.

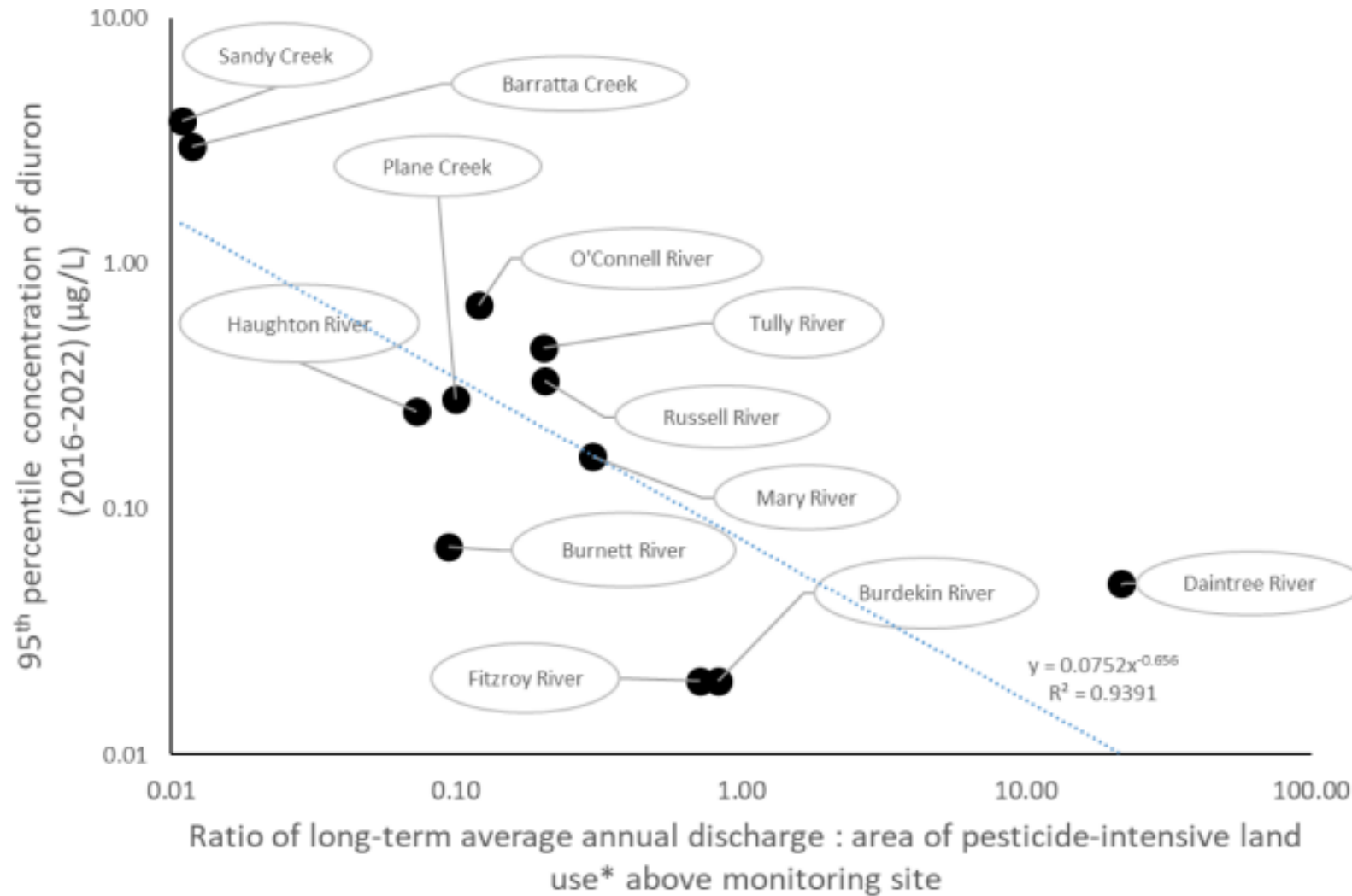
Site Name	SMK Before the Change Point							
	Total Pesticides Tau	Total Pesticides P-value	PSII Tau	PSII P-value	Insecticide Tau	Insecticide P-value	Other Herbicide Tau	Other Herbicide P-value
Barratta Creek at Northcote	-0.019	0.765	-0.095	0.128	0.108	0.030	0.201	0.001
Burdekin River at Home Hill Inkerman Bridge	0.059	0.363	-0.083	0.216	0.480	<0.0001	0.161	0.029
Comet River at Comet Weir	0.030	0.815	0.018	0.900	0.614	0.003	0.065	0.579
Herbert River at John Row Bridge	0.069	0.409	-0.039	0.652	0.244	0.019	0.219	0.039
Johnstone River at Coquette Point	0.158	0.107	0.157	0.112	0.176	0.087	0.405	0.002
Mulgrave River at Deeral	0.123	0.120	0.067	0.416	0.144	0.062	0.178	0.035
North Johnstone River at Goondi	0.070	0.546	-0.002	1.000	0.053	0.645	0.711	<0.0001
O'Connell River at Caravan Park	0.152	0.092	0.022	0.796	0.142	0.132	0.428	0.000
Pioneer River at Dumbleton Pump Station Headwater	0.106	0.144	0.005	0.951	0.458	<0.0001	0.419	<0.0001
Proserpine River at Glen Isla	-0.051	0.566	-0.062	0.516	-0.053	0.536	-0.069	0.435
Russell River at East Russell	0.068	0.323	-0.021	0.760	0.191	0.002	0.221	0.001
Sandy Creek at Homebush	0.095	0.293	-0.013	0.891	0.231	0.011	0.344	0.000
Tully River at Euramo	0.133	0.026	0.084	0.166	0.162	0.011	0.222	0.000

Table C3. A summary of SMK assessing the trends after change point according to the location of change point in total pesticides (output from CPA). All yellow-highlighted cells indicate significant trends (when the p-value is less than 0.01). Kendall's tau (Tau in this table) indicates the strength and direction of the trends; positive tau is an increasing trend and vice versa. ND or no trend detections is due to some sequences in the data are constant, so the test cannot be computed.

Site Name	SMK After the Change Point							
	Total Pesticides Tau	Total Pesticides P-value	PSII Tau	PSII P-value	Insecticide Tau	Insecticide P-value	Other Herbicide Tau	Other Herbicide P-value
Barratta Creek at Northcote	-0.091	0.382	-0.104	0.314	-0.134	0.238	0.020	0.825
Burdekin River at Home Hill Inkerman Bridge	0.455	0.001	0.389	0.001	ND		0.460	0.001
Comet River at Comet Weir	0.385	0.000	0.291	0.008			0.401	0.000
Herbert River at John Row Bridge	0.046	0.324	0.099	0.037	-0.098	0.048	0.137	0.005
Johnstone River at Coquette Point	-0.179	0.004	-0.082	0.188	-0.264	0.000	-0.155	0.017
Mulgrave River at Deeral	-0.154	0.009	-0.137	0.028	-0.225	0.001	-0.230	0.000
North Johnstone River at Goondi	-0.359	<0.0001	-0.243	0.002	-0.401	<0.0001	-0.229	0.028
O'Connell River at Caravan Park	0.048	0.517	-0.014	0.864	-0.029	0.700	0.089	0.209
Pioneer River at Dumbleton Pump Station Headwater	-0.089	0.225	-0.099	0.182	-0.104	0.155	-0.004	0.950
Proserpine River at Glen Isla	-0.032	0.818	0.009	0.954	-0.059	0.700	0.056	0.607
Russell River at East Russell	-0.054	0.411	-0.017	0.817	-0.374	<0.0001	0.070	0.229
Sandy Creek at Homebush	-0.105	0.085	-0.144	0.021	-0.031	0.601	0.004	0.943
Tully River at Euramo	-0.094	0.109	0.023	0.693	-0.473	<0.0001	0.031	0.623

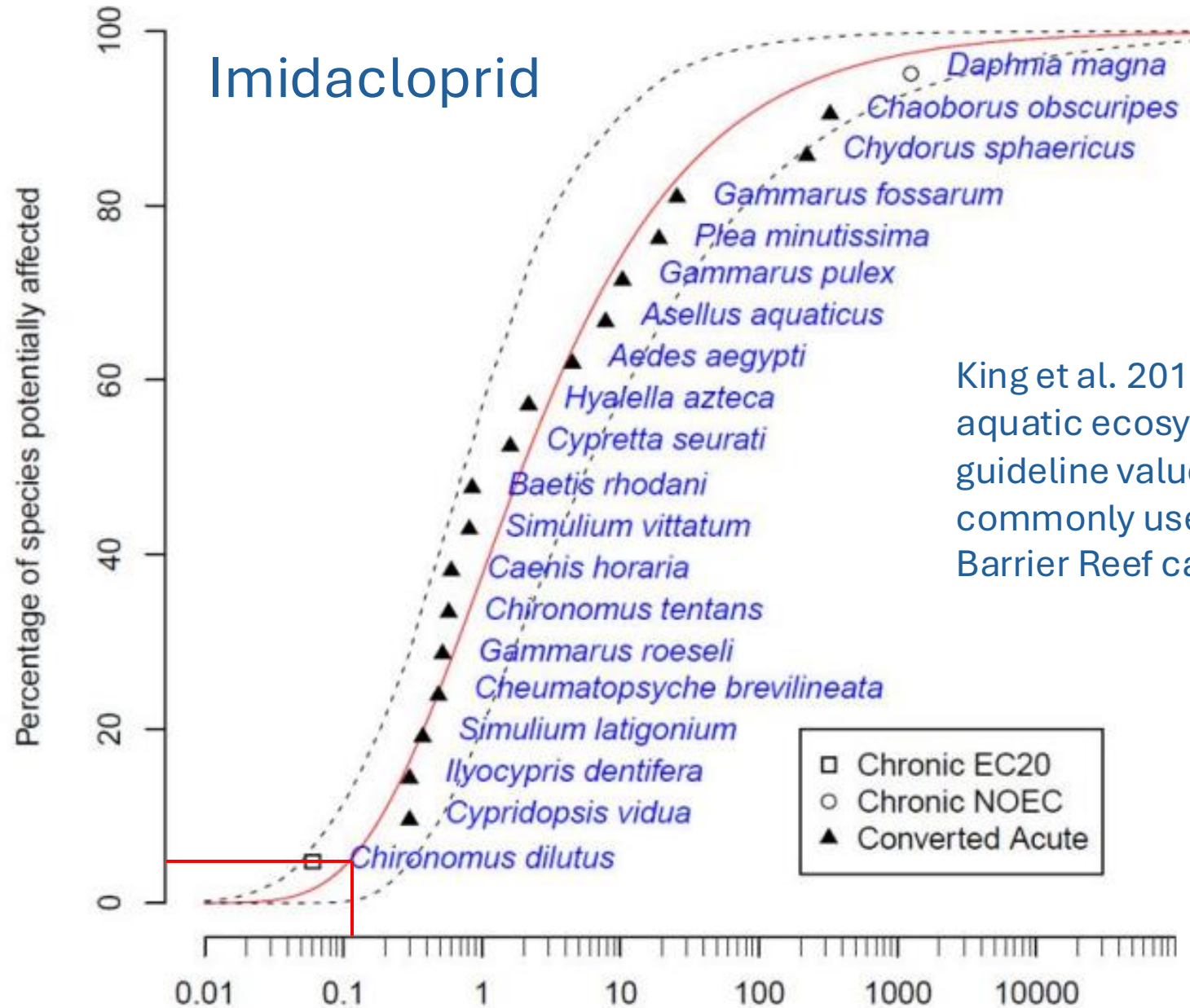
Table C1. Extended Seasonal Mann-Kendall statistics for diuron concentrations. Values in bold indicate statistical significance (P=0.05)

SITE	Start date (mm/dd/YYYY)	Trend - Tau (significance)	2013 -	2014 -	2015 -	2011- 2013	2011- 2015	2013- 2015
Tully River	24/2/2011	0.055 (0.208)	0.14 (0.763)		-0.37 (0.463)	-0.230 (0.074)	0.94 (0.252)	
Sandy Creek	29/9/2011	-0.038 (0.438)	-0.078 (0.123)		-0.123 (0.019)	0 (0)	0.275 (0.034)	0.263 (0.047)
Russell River	23/1/2014	-0.108 (0.042)		-0.108 (0.042)				
Proserpine River	16/12/2016	-0.040 (0.605)						
Plane Creek	30/1/2017	-0.247 (0.029)						
Pioneer River	15/9/2011	-0.010 (0.843)	-0.093 (0.1)		-0.08 (0.234)	-0.126 (0.232)	0.050 (0.550)	
O'Connell River (Staffords Crossing)	26/9/2016	-0.169 (0.022)						
O'Connell River (Caravan Park)	9/8/2013	-0.102 (0.097)	-0.102 (0.097)		-0.113 (0.101)			
Barratta River	1/8/2011	-0.069 (0.207)	0.077 (0.205)		-0.001 (0.987)	-0.441 (0.004)	-0.010 (0.926)	



Negri AP, Taucare G, Neale P, Neelamraju C, Kaminski H, Mann RM, Warne M St J (2024) Question 5.1 What is the spatial and temporal distribution of pesticides across Great Barrier Reef ecosystems? What are the (potential or observed) ecological impacts in these ecosystems? What evidence is there for pesticide risk? In Waterhouse J, Pineda M-C, Sambrook K (Eds) 2022 Scientific Consensus Statement on land-based impacts on Great Barrier Reef water quality and ecosystem condition. Commonwealth of Australia and Queensland Government.

Pesticide Guidelines for protection of ecosystems



King et al. 2017. Part 1—Proposed aquatic ecosystem protection guideline values for pesticides commonly used in the Great Barrier Reef catchment area

Wet season average Pesticide Risk Metric (PRM)

Independent Action (IA) model of joint toxicity

$$PAF_{RA} = 1 - \prod_i (1 - PAF_i)$$

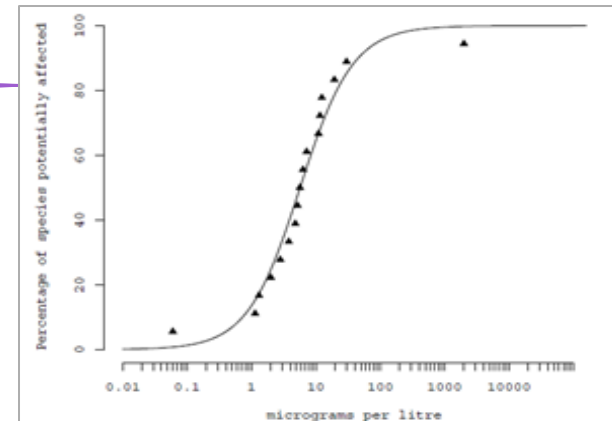
Toxic effects are added together using this formula

for $i = 1$ to n substances, with PAF_{RA} representing the msPAF of various compounds calculated by response addition assuming $r = 0$.

$$PAF_{IA} = 1 - (1 - PAF_{Ametryn}) \times (1 - PAF_{Diuron}) \times (1 - PAF_{Imidacloprid}) \dots$$

$$\begin{aligned} PAF_{IA} &= 1 - (1 - 0.05) \times (1 - 0.336) \dots \\ &= 0.371 \\ &= 37.1\% \text{ species affected} \end{aligned}$$

0.336 = 33.6%
species affected





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Ecotoxicity threshold values for 4-hydroxychlorothalonil, carbendazim, dimethoate and methoxyfenozide in fresh and marine waters: Part 1. Derivation of threshold values

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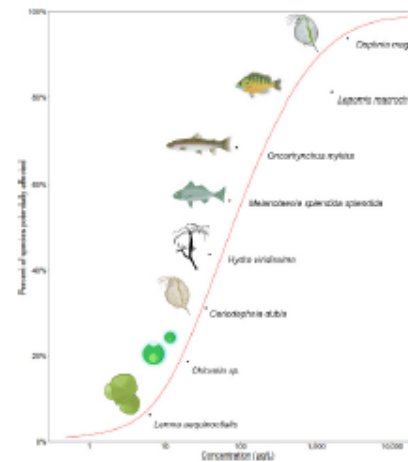
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HIGHLIGHTS

- Pesticides pose a hazard to aquatic ecosystems of the Great Barrier Reef.
- Ecotoxicity threshold values derived for three pesticides and a pesticide degradate.
- Used nationally endorsed method and species sensitivity distribution approach.
- The threshold values should protect 99, 95, 90 and 80 % of aquatic species.
- Values can be compared to monitoring data to assess hazard to aquatic ecosystems.

GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT



The expanded Pesticide Risk Metric

PSII herbicide	Other Herbicide	Insecticide	Fungicide
Ametryn	2,4-D	Chlorpyrifos	<i>4-Hydroxy Chlorothalonil</i>
Amicarbazone	Acifluorfen	Acetamiprid	Carbendazim
Atrazine	Flumetsulam	Bifenthrin	Epoxiconazole
Bromacil	Flumioxazin	Chlorantraniliprole	Flutriafol
Diuron	Fluroxypyr	Clothianidin	Mancozeb
Fluometuron	Glyphosate	Diazinon	Propiconazole
Hexazinone	Halosulfuron-methyl	Dimethoate	
Metribuzin	Haloxypop (acid)	Dinotefuran	
Prometryn	Imazamox	Fipronil	
Simazine	Imazapic	Flupyradifurone	
Tebuthiuron	<i>Isoxaflutole metabolite (DKN)</i>	Imidacloprid	
Terbuthylazine	MCPA	Methomyl	
	Metolachlor	Methoxyfenozide	
	Metsulfuron methyl	Spinetoram	
	Paraquat	Tetraniliprole	
	Pendimethalin	Thiacloprid	
	Picloram	Thiamethoxam	
	Triclopyr		



Changes to the PM

- The new PRM is applicable to a broader range of land uses, both in Australia and overseas
- The number and type of pesticides detected at a site will depend on upstream land use
- For the 22 pesticides with revised SSDs, our understanding of toxicity has improved
- Where possible, data for local species like corals has been added (e.g. NESP project)
- Therefore, the revised risk metric is more relevant to the waters we need to protect

Name of pesticide	Ms-PAF category	Prev PC95 (µg/L)	New PC95 (µg/L)	Toxicity
Chlorpyrifos	Insecticide	0.016	0.018	➡
Fipronil	Insecticide	0.01	0.01	➡
Imidacloprid	Insecticide	0.13	0.008	⬆
Haloxypop	Other Herbicide	1969	124	⬆
Imazapic	Other Herbicide	0.44	2.0	⬇
Metsulfuron-methyl	Other Herbicide	0.033	0.015	⬆
Pendimethalin	Other Herbicide	0.27	0.25	➡
Metolachlor	Other Herbicide	0.4	0.25	⬆
2,4-D	Other Herbicide	17	71	⬇
MCPA	Other Herbicide	1.5	11.3	⬇
Fluroxypyr	Other Herbicide	275	301	⬇
Triclopyr	Other Herbicide	4.2	7.03	⬇
Isoxaflutole	Other Herbicide	0.69	0.68	➡
Ametryn	PSII Herbicide	0.36	0.36	➡
Atrazine	PSII Herbicide	1.2	4.7	⬇
Prometryn	PSII Herbicide	0.43	0.5	⬇
Terbuthylazine	PSII Herbicide	1.4	1.4	➡
Tebuthiuron	PSII Herbicide	11	13	⬇
Simazine	PSII Herbicide	33	13	⬆
Diuron	PSII Herbicide	0.22	0.44	⬇
Hexazinone	PSII Herbicide	2.5	2.5	➡
Metribuzin	PSII Herbicide	2.6	1.1	⬆



Acknowledgement of Country

- I would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which we meet.
- We recognise their connection to land, sea and community.
- We pay our respects to them, their cultures, and to their Elders, past present and emerging.