PeerJ Reviewer, IWH. Comments to Jessen *et al*.

I am very much in favour of applied and experimental ecological publications – and in my view, this work adds to current coral-reef research. The work is innovative, engaging and insightful. Furthermore, it addresses prominent issues related to current exploitation of ecosystem resources. I do, however, have one 'gripe'. I would suggest that it may not be immediately obvious to non-marine ecologists that the caged tile samples signify 'over-fishing'. The manuscript may benefit by adding a few sentences on how you classify or deem 'over-fishing'. In my opinion, this paper is of a quality that should be published.

Line 19 (comment): 'relatively' a bit vague.

Line 23: please remove 'Findings revealed that…'

Line 24: full stop after 'tiles'. Remove, 'indicating that'

Line 33: perhaps, after 'if', add 'the'

Line 36: remove 'local'?

Line 37: Change 'threats' to 'stressors'? (keep same as previous sentence)

Line 38: change, 'substrate', to, 'substratum'

Line 40: maybe remove, '…reproduction, feeding, and survival of invertebrates', and replace with, 'invertebrate life-cycles.'

Line 48: after'Eutrophication' place a comma, and remove 'or'

Line 52: after, 'invertebrates' place a comma and remove, 'and'. Change, 'allow' to 'allowing'

Line 53: remove, 'settlement'. Remove, 'substrates' replace with, 'substrata'

Line 55: What is suppressed? The CCA or the coral recruits? – **Sorry, whole sentence a bit clumsy:** In contrast, some slow growing algae such as crustose coralline algae (CCA) can trigger coral recruitment (Harrington et al. 2004; Heyward & Negri 1999), though they can be suppressed through reduced grazing (Jessen et al. 2013a).

Line 71: remove, 'available'

Line 73: perhaps remove brackets?

Lines 78 – 81: How about this (changes in bold), ‘This study simulated overfishing and eutrophication over 4 months in an offshore reef in the Central Red Sea - to answer the question**;** which **stressors, either** the individual **or** combined effects **from** overfishing and eutrophication **impact the** settlement of main sessile invertebrate groups**?’**

Line 88: Perhaps, remove this entirely? ‘…and presumably low impacts from potential fishing and land-derived nutrient import’

Lines 94 – 95: Am I right in thinking you used a total of 160 tiles (10 tiles each on 16 PVC frames)?

Lines 106 – 107:

Line 131: Perhaps move to line 90 (the first mention of): ‘…dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN =NH_4^++NO_3+NO_2)’

Line 135: in front of, ‘to’ add-in, ‘In order…’

Line 137: remove, ‘Briefly’

Line 140: after Bryozoa add, ‘and’

Line 141: remove brackets. Before polychaetes add, ‘and’. Remove, ‘like’ but add a comma and include, ‘such as’

Lines 141 – 142: capitol B on ‘bivalvia’ and ‘bryozoa’, and S on ‘scleractinia’

Line 142: remove brackets. Before, ‘other’ add, ‘and’. After polychaetes add a comma. Remove, ‘like’ then add, ‘such as’. Remove, ‘assess’, replace with, ‘quantify’

Lines 144 – 146: How about this: ‘Thus, we minimized potential biases as much as possible, by considering only sessile and calcareous organisms by thoroughly searching the surface using a dissection microscope.’

Line 151: remove, ‘in’ replace with, ‘using’

Line 163: ‘underdispersion’ or ‘under-dispersion’ ?

Line 164: Capitol ‘B’ on ‘bivalvia’ and ‘bryozoa’

Line 173: remove comma after ‘treatments

Line 178: remove, ‘Therefore’

Line 185: remove, ‘in’ replace with, ‘on’

Line 189: before, ‘significantly’ add, ‘but’. After ‘(Fig. 1G)’ remove comma, replace with full stop. Remove, ‘but’ add, ‘However, simulated overfishing…’

Lines 206 – 207: Sentence reads like results? Either re-write, or remove. Sentence also needs restructuring, ‘Sessile invertebrate groups responded heterogeneously..’ or, ‘A varied response of invertebrate settlement was observed with…’?

Line 208: remove, ‘simultaneous’ replace with ‘combined’?

Line 209: it seems as though this paragraph is unfinished, ‘stressors compared to the single treatments **suggesting that….’** Remember, this is the discussion, not results section.

Line 218: after, ‘bivalves’ add a comma and include ‘which’ before, ‘started’

Line 236: remove, ‘as’ replace with’an’?

Lines 236 – 241: This is one whole sentence – very difficult to digest. Please break-up or condense.

Line 242: new paragraph?

Line 253: remove, ‘substrates’ replace with, ‘substratum for e.g.’ and remove ‘such as’

Line 256: replace, ‘substrate’ with ‘substrata’

Line 258: remove, ‘settling tiles’ replace with ‘similar’

Line 261: replace, ‘substrate’ with ‘substrata’

Line 268: after, ‘review’ add a comma

Line 269: after, ‘quality’ add a comma

Line 271: remove, ‘haven’t been’ replace with ‘were not’. Remove, ‘At least for the study area,…’

Line 273: ‘bioindicator’ should be ‘bioindicators’ . Remove, ‘it’ replace with ‘that’

Line 280: remove ‘(under overfishing)’ and ‘(combination with eutrophication)’

Line 282: after, ‘area’ remove comma, replace with full stop.

Lines 282 – 283: Last sentence is almost cryptic, ‘This can lead to potential alternative stable states as described for other invertebrates in (Norström et al. 2009).’ Be more direct – say what you mean e.g. ‘**This can lead to phase-shifts, potential alternative stable states that may impact the ecology of coral reefs**.’

Lines 414 – 415: italicise genus and species

Line 435: italicise genus and species