



CLARENCE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

31 Skinner Street

South Grafton 2460

Phone/ Fax: 02 6643 1863

Web site: www.cec.org.au

E-mail: admin@cec.org.au

Date: 16th December 2013

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
info@gbmpa.gov.au

Dear GBRMPA Committee members

The Clarence Environment Centre (CEC) has maintained a shop-front in Grafton for close to a quarter of a century, and has a proud history of environmental advocacy. The conservation of the Australia's natural environment, both terrestrial and and marine, has always been a priority for our members, and we believe the maintenance of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity is of paramount importance.

Therefore, we are appalled at the Federal Minister for the Environment's decision to approve the Abbot Point coal loading facility, which will see some three million cubic metres of sea-bed material dredged from site, and dumped directly onto the World Heritage Reef.

“Coral reefs live in very precise, fragile and balanced marine environments, even the slightest change can have a huge impact on an entire coral ecosystem”. (University of Michigan), so to suggest this can be done without significant impact to the reef's priceless ecosystems, is ludicrous. The Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest and best known, is unique, described by Time Magazine (March 2011) as *“one of the world's natural wonders”*,

“Time” also reports that the Great Barrier Reef: *“covers an area larger than Italy and draws nearly 2 million tourists every year to boat, swim, snorkel and dive amid its elaborate flora and fauna. It generates some \$6 billion in revenue for Australia annually and provides employment to more than 50,000 people. It's also one of the planet's most fragile ecosystems, home to more than 11,000 species that live, if not necessarily in harmony, in a carefully orchestrated symbiotic balance.”*

According to the Michigan University research, *“Without the coral reefs, the entire oceanic ecosystem will be thrown off-balance”*, showing that the impacts of the Curtis Island proposal have the potential to be felt far beyond the reef itself.

Not only will the reef be polluted by the dredged material, but the eventual burning of the coal that will be exported from the site, said to become Australia's largest export terminal, will undoubtedly add to global warming, identified as one of the greatest threats to the Reef's long-term survival.

Therefore we urge the GBRMPA to refuse to grant permission for the dumping, and lobby the Federal Government to reverse this senseless decision.

Yours sincerely
John Edwards
Honorary Secretary