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MEDIA RELEASE

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Dredging and dumping at Abbot Point to triple

Developers of the controversial Abbot Point coal terminal have been hiding the true long term impact of the port according to environmental organisations.

'The Abbot Point terminal will require considerable dredging to maintain the depth of the shipping channels. A total of 8.5 million cubic metres is expected to be dredged over the next 25 years', said North Queensland Conservation Council coordinator Wendy Tubman.

"Abbot Point has always been touted as a port that will need negligible maintenance dredging. But this report suggests the opposite, with maintenance dredging being almost double the initial capital dredging of 3 million cubic metres, over which there is already so much community concern".

A report funded by the Federal Labor government in 2013 and published by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority lists estimates of proposed dumping for six Queensland ports and notes that the estimates 'were developed in consultation with the port authorities'. The list includes both capital (new) dredging and maintenance dredging.

'The numbers are staggering. In total we are looking at over 165 million cubic metres for the six ports over the next 25 years. This compares with the 14 million cubic metres that was dumped in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park between 2001 and 2012. It is astounding that neither the department nor GBRMPA have seen fit to acknowledge this anticipated massive insult to the Park that they are supposed to be protecting' said Ms Tubman.

Ellen Roberts from Mackay Conservation Group said the experience at the Port of Hay Point in Mackay demonstrated the impact of maintenance dredging.

'The Port of Hay Point requires regular maintenance dredging, placing the marine environment here in Mackay under ongoing stress, and minimising the chances of recovery for corals and sea grasses.

'Unfortunately the impact of maintenance dredging is not adequately taken into account in assessing whether or not new ports should be built' Ms Roberts said.

'UNESCO is due to make its decision about whether or not the GBR World Heritage Area will be placed on the 'in danger' list over the coming week. This information will no doubt give them enormous cause for concern', she said.

Further information:

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The full report, *Improved Dredge Material Management For the Great Barrier Reef Region* can be downloaded [here](#):

The table of anticipated dredging is at page 51.

The 14 Mm³ figure was provided by Senator Carr in response to a question on notice from Senator Waters (Senate Question 2898)