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MEDIA RELEASE

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Another new site proposed for Abbot Point dumping

North Queensland Conservation Council welcomes the new State government's early delivery on its commitment not to allow the dumping of dredge spoil from Abbot Point in the Caley Valley Wetlands.

'We are pleased that the government has announced they will be withdrawing the application submitted by the former government that would have seen environmental damage to the nationally significant Caley Valley wetlands. These are home to tens of thousands of birds, including threatened and migratory species, and a huge potential tourism drawcard' said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

'The new proposal is to dump the spoil on land that was to have been a terminal for BHP Billiton. Significantly, that major company pulled out of Abbot Point some time ago because of the poor prospects for the coal industry.

'Given that the new site is wedged between the waters of the Great Barrier Reef and the wetlands, it is vital that the proposal be subject to a full environmental impact statement with rigorous scientific assessment.

'However NQCC fundamentally questions a huge coal port on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage coast and the opening of the Galilee Basin. Both would mean a massive increase in Australia's contribution to carbon emissions at a time when world leaders and scientists are calling for coal to be left in the ground and when international markets are turning from coal to renewable energy.

'Given the global and long-term drop in the demand for thermal coal since the expansion of Abbot Point was first considered, a fresh look at the economics of the proposed expansion is essential. So it is important that the Premier has committed to fiscal responsibility in relation to Abbot Point.

'It is vital that Queensland does not allow dredging and industrial construction on the Great Barrier Reef coast only to see demand for the facility dry up.

'We also commend the government for reiterating its decision not to fund the dredging and disposal project, and are mindful that it has also committed to not allowing dredging to commence prior to Adani achieving financial closure on the whole project', Ms Tubman said. 'Financial closure means that Adani must have in place all the relevant legally binding contracts for off-take agreements, equity-raising and debt financing, insurance hedging, construction and equipment supply for all the elements of the project - including the rail, mine, port, power stations and water supply.'

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