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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Coal threatens reef and community

With the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* arriving in Townsville next Friday as part of its campaign to draw world attention to the impacts of Australia's coal industry on climate change and the Great Barrier Reef, North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) is warning of the impact of turning Townsville port into a coal export facility.

"Shipping coal through Townsville will have direct and indirect impacts on the Great Barrier Reef " said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

"It would result in more ships travelling the reef, with the increased risk of collisions and pollution of the waters and it would also exacerbate climate change – according to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, the greatest risk to the already degraded reef.

"But, on top of this, there is also the health risks to the community of Townsville. Unlike other ports, Townsville's port is slap bang in the middle of town. And areas suitable for stockpiling coal are a mere six kilometres downwind of the CBD.

"We have seen the health impacts of coal dust down south. In Newcastle there is huge community unrest and now a government inquiry into air quality. In Brisbane, Mackay and Bowen we are seeing similar concern.

"People living in coastal Townsville are already subject to the well-known black sticky dust that settles in and on homes around the CBD. They sure as eggs, won't want coal dust on top of that."

Ms Tubman also pointed to the work done by JCU researcher Kathy Burns in mapping the drift of coal dust from Abbot Point, just north of Bowen out to the outer reef.

She also noted that the EIS for the largely coal-driven port expansion has made no attempt to measure the highly dangerous very small particle matter which would be an inevitable consequence of the port expansion.

"The Queensland coast is becoming one big coal terminal. It's time we thought again about what we are doing to our greatest assets – our reef and our people. In Townsville we have an opportunity to stop at least some of this runaway industrialisation in its tracks."

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