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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NQCC flags risks at Abbot Point's Caley Valley wetlands**

The risk analysis undertaken for the proposed dumping of dredge spoil in the Caley Valley wetlands at Abbot Point was limited and faulty according to North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC).

'In our submission on the proposal, we flagged a number of deeply concerning issues with the way in which the risks of the project had been assessed. We are looking at a proposal to dump dredge spoil in a wetland listed as nationally important on the shore of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, yet the risks were dismissed in a 17 page 'memo'' said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

'According to the risk assessment, no risk, not flooding, not sea level rise, not storm surge, not failure of the embankment, not even an earthquake, was assessed as representing anything greater than a low residual risk.

'Disconcertingly, even the leaking of contaminate dredge water through the walls and floor of the unlined ponds was deemed a low risk.

'Some claims are just plain bizarre' said Ms Tubman. 'They claim there is 'no reported or known habitat down-gradient of the containment ponds and hence there is no population at risk' while explaining that the land slopes gently from the ponds towards the wetlands.

'This project is being rushed through for what can only be political reasons. There is no environmental or economic imperative for construction to start in early January, which is what the State government is pushing for.

'There is, as yet, no mine and no railway line – so no coal needing export through Abbot Point. According to mining company Adani, that won't come on stream until 2017. And given the state of the coal industry worldwide, it may never happen.

'When things are rushed, mistakes happen. And a mistake in the Caley Valley wetlands on the Great Barrier Reef coast would be catastrophic.

'NQCC's detailed submission has joined tens if not hundreds of thousands of submissions from concerned Australians, calling for more time for a more considered assessment and no dumping in the wetlands' Ms Tubman said.

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