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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **'Think again, GBRMPA' says NQCC**

North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) has formally asked the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) to reconsider its decision to approve further dumping of dredge spoil in the Marine Park, this time off Hay Point.

"This new permit to dump flies in the face of GBRMPA's acknowledgement of the poor and declining condition of the Reef" said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

"It was only late last year that the GBRMPA delegate who approved this latest permit responded to questions from the Minister for the Environment about the 2006 dredging campaign at Hay Point, saying that the dredge plume was 'greater than predicted in the EIS' and extended over an area of 'approximately 600 sq km'.

"The GBRMPA officer told the Minister 'Water quality trigger levels were exceeded on multiple occasions' and 'the density of sediment damaged corals increased significantly ... between three and six months after the start of the dredging'. By 2013, GBRMPA surveys showed that 'there had been a very large decrease in coral cover' in the area of the dredging and dumping.

"The GBRMPA officer concluded that 'the nearshore marine community and habitats around Hay Point have changed dramatically and are now in a very poor condition'.

"Everyone knows that the role of GBRMPA is to provide for the long term protection and conservation of the Marine Park, yet, over and over again and more and more frequently we are seeing decisions that run counter to that" said Ms Tubman.

NQCC is challenging in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal the GBRMPA decision to allow dumping of 3 million cubic metres of dredge spoil in the Marine Park off Abbot Point, north of Hay Point.

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