

19/10/2016

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**[for immediate release]**

## **The Port's muddy plan for local waters just got bigger**

Townsville and Magnetic Island face a mind-blowing ten years of new dredging in Cleveland Bay under revised plans for the expansion of Port of Townsville. This is a massive blow-out from the 4 years proposed in the original 2013 plans.

"More damaging and infinitely longer lasting, maintenance dredging – which also muddies the waters and smothers coral and sea grasses, but is repeated forever - is now set to increase by 17%!" said North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) Coordinator Maree Dibella.

The amount of spoil dredged would also be greater than planned in the EIS, despite the extension of the Sea Channel being less. That's because the channel will be almost twice as wide. Increasing from 92 metres width to 180 metres. Reclaimed land would increase from 100ha to 152ha and the revetment wall would be 15% longer.

"To change the project to this extent at this late stage is outrageous," said Ms Dibella.

"The scale of work is unnecessary, wasting money, muddying the waters and choking local reef tourism by further jeopardising the marine life of Cleveland Bay and its local fishing hotspots.

"All this for a port that is nowhere near in peak demand. Even the Department of State Development questioned the need for this project in its response to the 2013 report.

"The Port claims that berth usage is not a good measure of the need for expansion, but the AEIS reports the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics as stating '... a berth utilisation at or exceeding 80 per cent is an indication of a berth close to, or at, full capacity'. In comparison, in 2014/15, Port berth occupancy was just 40.2% – just half of BITRES's 'full capacity'.

"The proposed expansion must be re-thought – so to, the whole process of environmental assessment" Ms Dibella said.

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*NQCC is the voice for the environment in North Queensland, campaigning as the peak non-government environmental organisation in our region since 1974.*

*We protect the environment through advocacy and education, promote the values of the natural environment, and engage with policy and planning processes to advocate ecologically sustainable development.*