



Seabed Mining threatens the Top End coasts

Mining the seabed for minerals is a very damaging activity - it is akin to bulldozing the seafloor. It has never occurred in Australia before. But we know that there are many locations across the Territory coast where seabed mining has been approved or where applications to mine exist. These include some of our most special places like Fog, Anson and Hyland Bays, the Wessel islands, Limmen Bight, and Blue Mud Bay. So far, no mining has occurred yet.

A new report titled '***Seabed mining threatens Top End treasures***' and produced by the Keep Top End Coasts Healthy campaign, following information revealed in documents obtained from the NT EPA under Freedom of Information laws, found that the introduction of seabed mining to the Top End would create unacceptable environmental, cultural and social costs to the Territory.

The report found that the Territory's mangroves, seagrasses, tidal flats, coral reefs and estuaries would be devastated by seabed mining. Furthermore, marine animals, including threatened species of marine turtles, dolphins, dugongs, migratory shorebirds would suffer from habitat destruction and fragmentation, reduced water quality and the general decline in the health of the marine environment.

The report also found that the economic benefits from seabed mining would be relatively small compared to its negative economic impact on tourism, recreational and commercial fishing, and ecosystem services. Furthermore, laws for mining have been designed around land-based mines and are ill-equipped to cope with the very different circumstances of seabed mining in dynamic marine environments.

Destructive seabed mining is a huge risk to our coasts, fishing, marine industries and our Top End lifestyle.

A Moratorium on seabed mining was first declared by the NT Government in March 2012, and has since been extended twice under both CLP and Labor governments, but it ends in March 2021. Without a permanent ban, many locations across the Territory coast remain at significant risk from seabed mining.

Mining the seafloor would decimate our marine life, pollute our waters, threaten our fishing and destroy sites of cultural significance. It's too risky for our precious Top End coasts.

We call on all parties to commit to a ban on seabed mining in the Territory.

Will your party commit to a permanent ban on seabed mining in Top End waters?