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Media Release

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Environment groups welcome temporary protection from seabed mining but call for permanent ban.

The Australian Marine Conservation Society, the Environment Centre NT and Traditional Land Owners of Junction Bay, Gubunbungwu, Goomardeer River - Gudwala clan group welcomed the Chief Ministers decision to extend the moratorium on seabed mining for an additional three years but call for a permanent ban.

With the support of the Minister for Mines and Energy, the Chief Minister made the announcement after the coalition of environmental groups called for a permanent ban on seabed mining.

Jacqui Taylor, Northern Campaigner with the Australian Marine Conservation Society said “we welcome the Chief Minister’s decision to extend the moratorium on seabed mining for an additional three years and congratulate him on listening to widespread community concern. We now call on the NT government to make this moratorium on seabed mining a permanent ban.”

“Seabed mining destroys marine habitat including mangroves and seagrass, and smothers fish feeding and nursery grounds. This habitat supports rich marine life such as fish, dugongs and turtles, and needs permanent protection from seabed mining,” Ms Taylor said.

Environment Centre NT Acting Director Anna Boustead said “it’s great to have the Chief Minister acknowledge the inherent impact that seabed mining has on our marine environment with support for an extended moratorium.”

“In the Territory we enjoy some of the healthiest tropical seas on the planet with unique marine life and great fishing. It is good to see our fisheries, coral reefs and marine life offered some protection from destructive open cut seabed mining practices but we need to ensure these aren’t at risk again in three years’ time.”

Helena Gulwa and Molly Yarrngu Senior traditional land owner and stakeholder from Junction Bay, Gubunbungwu, Goomardeer River - Gudwala clan group said “we are in this for the long term. We have been custodians of our land and sea country for millennia and will continue to protect our seas for future generations. Our cultural laws specify these requirements, and now we want to see the same level of protection for our sea country put in place by the Territory government.”

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