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Environmental Impacts - Toondah Harbour Development Proposal

The Moreton Bay wetlands are Internationally protected under the Ramsar Convention. This binding agreement has been signed by Australia and 169 other nations, and because we are a signatory, we have committed to maintain the ecological character of Moreton Bay. But this development would put us in contravention of that commitment by causing “permanent and irreversible damage” to the wetlands.

Wetlands are important because:

- They provide food and water to humans and fauna, protect from floods, droughts and other disasters, and support biodiversity
- We are rapidly losing wetlands, at a rate far higher even than natural forests
- We know that that loss of wetlands is having a serious impact on many species, particularly in the last 50 years or so where we’ve lost 35% of wetlands
- Tidal wetlands such as this are important carbon sinks to protect against climate change

The Moreton Bay wetlands support nationally threatened wetland-dependent plant species including the endangered swamp daisy; home to humpback whales, dolphins, dugong, grey nurse shark, and other threatened animals.

The site also supports more than 33,000 wintering and staging migratory shorebirds during the non-breeding season, including the critically endangered Eastern Curlew and Great knot, the vulnerable Bar-tailed Godwit, and the Grey-tailed Tattler.

Some of these birds fly more than 10,000km each year without a rest, before roosting and feeding at Moreton Bay. These wetlands are vital for them to recuperate before journeying to breeding grounds in Korea, China, Russia and the Arctic.

Internal advice from the Federal Department of Environment warns that the development would destroy the foraging and roosting habitat of migratory shorebird species.

The development will require extensive dredging (about half a million cubic metres of seabed and

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wetland), leading to issues with sedimentation and water turbidity and its possible effects on corals in Moreton bay. Dredge spoil would seriously impact water quality and threaten a number of turtle species.

The impact of pollution, vegetation clearing, 15-20 years of construction (noise) and an influx of 10,000 people would have serious impacts on the local koala population.

On top of all of these potential impacts, it's worth noting that the developer already has a number of convictions for environmental offences, including for unlawful tree clearing.