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MEDIA RELEASE

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NQCC SEA-DUMPING CHALLENGE UP AND RUNNING

North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) will today be filing its legal challenge to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's (GBRMPA's) decision to grant a permit for the dumping of 3 million cubic metres of dredge spoil in the GBR Marine Park and World Heritage Area. The application will be filed in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in Brisbane under the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981* by lawyers from the Environmental Defenders Office Queensland acting for NQCC.

The permit had been requested by North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation as part of its proposal to make the port of Abbot Point the biggest coal export facility in the world. Abbot Point lies between Bowen and Townsville.

The permit approval triggered enormous community outrage in Australia and overseas, and the NQCC challenge is being supported by way of a fighting fund collected from the public by GetUp and Fight for the Reef.

'We are proud to be leading this fight on behalf of so many who share with us well-founded concern about the impact of the dumping on the precious World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef' said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

'With GBRMPA, and Federal and State governments determining only last year that the condition of the inshore GBR World Heritage Area south of Cooktown is 'poor and declining', this decision to allow the dumping of dredge spoil is shocking and bewildering.

NQCC Abbot Point campaigner Jeremy Tager noted, 'As far back as 2009, GBRMPA was warning that pressures on the Reef must be removed if the world heritage icon is to have a chance of surviving climate change. Yet not only does this dumping permit add pressure, it is being

done so that vast quantities of climate change exacerbating coal can be exported through the Reef. This can only contribute to climate change.

'NQCC has been working with the Environmental Defenders Office Queensland for some time now on the off-chance that a permit would be granted. We will now be presenting our case in court.

'We will be presenting on behalf of the community the very best case we can so that the GBR World Heritage Area is less likely to be given an 'in danger' listing by the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO, and will be around to delight future generations.'

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