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MEDIA RELEASE

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Government's coal decision risks the Great Artesian Basin and the Reef

The Federal government's approval of the 60 million tonnes a year Carmichael thermal coal mine in the Galilee Basin has the potential to damage the Great Artesian Basin as well as the Great Barrier Reef, and makes a mockery of the Environmental Impact Assessment project, according to North Queensland Conservation Council.

Coal from the proposed mine would be exported by way of an expanded port at Abbot Point by the Indian-based company Adani.

'The Federal Minister for the Environment claims that he has put 'strict conditions' on this approval but, when many of these conditions call for basic research on the impact of the mine, one questions why approval was given in the first place', said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman. 'Conditions are a smokescreen. How many approvals are withdrawn in the light of post-approval research? How many projects shut down if conditions not met?

'The increasing trend for government approval being given before the impacts of proposals are well understood must be of concern to all Queenslanders and Australians.

'In this case we are looking at a huge coal mine with the known potential to damage our major water supply, the Great Artesian Basin, much of our valuable agricultural land, as well as the Reef.

'The proponents claim that the mine will have a 90 year life, but who really believes that the coal industry will last that long? The Australian Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis has recently reported that 'Global investment analysis from HSBC, Deutsche Bank, Citigroup, Bernstein Research, Standard & Poor's and Moody's have all confirmed that coal demand is slowing, and will continue to do so'.

'Why are our governments helping this dying, damaging industry destroy our natural assets and contribute significantly to global climate change?'

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