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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **North Queensland Conservation Council calls for transparency over oil spill**

NQCC today called for more information on the recent oil spill that is polluting the GBR Marine Park and World Heritage Area to be made public.

‘The spill occurred ten days ago and a massive clean-up operation over a two hundred kilometre area from around Palm Island off Townsville north to Hinchinbrook Island, and from the coast to the islands is getting underway’ said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

‘It is still unknown how the oil has affected marine life.

‘The disaster appears to have been downplayed from the word go. When first reported the oil spill was 800 metres in diameter. That was quickly downgraded to patches of just one metre in diameter and then to palm or patty-sized patches.

‘But it is obvious from photos now becoming available that the oil covers large areas.

‘Environmental groups have been concerned about the increased risk of such spills as the number of ships plying Reef waters increases. Our fears are becoming a frightening reality.

“We know that many of the risk events occur quite regularly and are under reported.

‘The number of grounding or collision risk events was about ten times the number of those reported, according to the Australian Transport and Safety Bureau.

‘Australians, people around the world and UNESCO are deeply worried about the state of the Reef and this oil spill,” said Ms Tubman.

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