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MEDIA RELEASE

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Queensland's water resources at risk from Palaszczuk government proposal

The State government looks set to break a pre-election promise and introduce laws that would enable mining companies to take as much underground water as they want.

'This would have huge impacts for the Queensland environment, farmers and graziers and rural towns' said North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

'We know that mining uses massive amounts of water. Adani's proposed Carmichael mine alone would use 12 billion litres a year. And there is no guarantee that the mining companies could or would 'make good' any negative impacts for other users.

'The links between ground and surface water and between aquifers are poorly understood. To give unfettered access to groundwater for the mining of fossil fuels represents an immense threat to the State's precious and limited water resources.

'The timing of this proposal is also odd. The Department of Natural Resources and Mines yesterday announced that they were developing a new water plan to replace the Water Resource (Great Artesian Basin) plan 2006, which is due to expire on 1 September 2016.

'To give away rights to untold quantities of water before the development of the new plan for the Great Artesian Basin seems ludicrous.

'We have already done massive damage to the Great Barrier Reef as a result of thoughtless use and development. Is the Great Artesian basin the next Australian icon to be put a risk by ill-considered exploitation?

'The ALP government came in with a commitment to better respect the rights of the community and the environment. This backflip is appalling' Ms Tubman said.

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