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MEDIA RELEASE

Budget delivers lifeline for Cleveland Bay

North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) applauds the Federal Government's decision not to fund the Townsville Port expansion in this year's budget.

"This is a win worth \$75 million for taxpayers, who will not have to fork out money for a port for which there is limited demand", said NQCC's Campaigns Manager, Tarquin Moon.

"We agree with Senator Ian Macdonald's assessment that the details of the port expansion proposal, including a compelling business case, are just not there.

"Furthermore, the port expansion, through greatly increased dredging and maintenance dredging, increased shipping, increased risk of accidents and further deterioration of water quality and marine habitat is a risk to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

"Cleveland Bay, which is acknowledged by all as an area of significant biodiversity within the World Heritage Area, and the local tourism industry and lifestyle would suffer.

"Let's not threaten the natural wealth of our city, let alone the tourism industry that benefits from these natural values."

Townsville is the largest regional centre in Queensland with the Great Barrier Reef and Magnetic Island as its backdrop. Townsville's natural location constrains the size of ships that can be catered for, and the demand from super-large ships to use Townsville as a port is small.

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NQCC is the voice for the environment in North Queensland, campaigning as the peak non-government environmental organisation in our region since 1974.

We protect the environment through advocacy and education, promote the values of the natural environment, and engage with policy and planning processes to advocate ecologically sustainable development.