



# North Queensland Conservation Council

... the voice for the environment in North Queensland

**Media Release: 2/11/2020**

## **Dams plan was a political fizzer**

**The outcome of last weekend's Queensland election shows that voters could not be swayed by the promise of the biggest dam building program in Australia's history.**

The LNP promised to build a major new dam on the Burdekin River to irrigate dry lands in the interior of Queensland. The scheme would have cost tens of billions of dollars and led to unsustainable reductions in freshwater flowing to coastal ecosystems, including estuaries that fisheries depend upon.

The policy was targeted at voters in key electorates in Townsville. In [an announcement in August](#), LNP leader Deb Frecklington said "the biggest benefit will be felt in Townsville" and "[the] project that will secure Townsville's economic future for generations to come".

Voters returned ALP candidates in all three Townsville seats with swings of about three per cent.

**"The election result shows that proposing to build new dams is not the sure fire winner that some politicians think it will be." said Simon Cheers, Coordinator of Townsville based North Queensland Conservation Council.**

**"In fact it turned out to be a political fizzer.**

"There is clear scientific and economic evidence that shows we should not be building new dams.

"Ample water is available in existing dams around the state, so spending vast sums of taxpayers money on new dams is a waste."

Mackay Conservation Group has been campaigning against the proposed Urannah Dam, also in the Burdekin Basin. The group is concerned about significant environmental impacts from the proposed dam.

"Apart from the Liberal National Party, it's hard to find anyone who supports building a dam that would flood the beautiful Urannah and Massey Creeks and pristine parts of the Broken River." said Peter McCallum, Mackay Conservation Group coordinator.

**"The LNP is also promising a jobs bonanza from this project. The Urannah Dam will end up becoming a drain on taxpayers for decades and there are many better ways to create jobs.**

"Not only that, we'll lose iconic species such as the Irwin's Turtle, discovered by famed naturalists Steve and Bob Irwin in the 1990s."

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Both Mackay Conservation Group and North Queensland Conservation Council are calling for a comprehensive review of the Burdekin River system to ensure the system remains sustainable into the future.

“We don’t want to see the Burdekin become the next Murray-Darling catastrophe,” said Mr Cheers. “There’s still time to establish a clear plan that identifies sustainable ecological, social and economic outcomes for both people and nature.”

## **ENDS**

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