



## MEDIA RELEASE #fightforthebight Gold Coast Rally

Dear Media, we need your assistance to get this valuable environmental action out to the Gold Coast public. This event should be an excellent visual like the more than 2500 people who paddled out at Torquay, Victoria weekend before last (see photos below)

**Event details:** Sunday 17th March, 10am Justins Park (Burleigh Beach)  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/669710270110417/>

To all ocean/beach users,

Oil giant [Equinor](#) wants to start drilling in the pristine waters of the Great Australian Bight and it's up to all of us (Australians) to reject this plan. The waters are rougher, deeper and more remote than the Deep Water Horizon rig which exploded and caused an environmental catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. It would take months for the necessary equipment to be shipped from the northern hemisphere to seal an oil blow out.

If we don't stop them, the same devastation could happen – spreading oil from southern WA to Port MacQuarie NSW (according to Equinor's own modelling) putting Surf Coast beaches and marine environment at risk. It would put vulnerable species like the southern right whale, who travel to the Bight to raise their calves, at risk along with the tourism and fishing industries, not to mention our coastal way of life.

This could set a dangerous precedence, what's next our Great Barrier Reef!

**The Great Australian Bight is no place for risky deepwater drilling. So tell Equinor to BACK OFF!**

The Surfrider Foundation speaker at the Burleigh Heads paddle out will be Damien Cole from the Surf Coast branch. Damo organised the Torquay paddle out on March 3<sup>rd</sup> which had about 2,500 people attend. He worked the crowd up into a frenzy as they chanted 'No Way Equinor' making it very clear where the oil company should stick their drill. He's been working on this issue tirelessly for the last 3 weeks and also organised a mock oil spill clean-up featuring Greens leader Richard Di Natalie at Bells Beach late last year to raise awareness of the issue.

Damo grew up in France where his father, renowned surfboard shaper Maurice Cole, started Surfrider Foundation Europe. Damo has always been a keen environmentalist, but got drawn into the mining and offshore industry for some time. After a few years he came to his senses and walked away from those destructive industries in favour of an Environmental Science degree. He is now running as an independent in the Federal election because he sees a growing disconnect between politics and our communities. Coming from the bottom up, his team is mobilising like-minded community orientated people who want to see our government steer us down a path which we can all be proud of, which at the moment doesn't seem to be happening.



**To speak to Damo 0422 576 527 & for more info go to:**

<https://www.facebook.com/DamienColeIndependentCandidate/>

[https://www.instagram.com/damiencole\\_independent/](https://www.instagram.com/damiencole_independent/)

<https://www.damiencole.id.au/about-me-1>

WHAT YOU CAN DO.

Read the environment plan here <https://www.equinor.com/en/where-we-are/gabproject.html#>

Provide feedback to Equinor here [https://www.nopsema.gov.au/environmental-management/open-for-comment-stromlo-1-exploration-drilling-program-draft-environment-plan/form-public-comment-on-draft-environment-plan-stromlo-1-exploration-drilling-program/?fbclid=IwAR3V7Ya59Dgw\\_0iesKRwlMaVPQcWgpLD1wi0VUiVq0Y9vsfURlyv9zcPG4](https://www.nopsema.gov.au/environmental-management/open-for-comment-stromlo-1-exploration-drilling-program-draft-environment-plan/form-public-comment-on-draft-environment-plan-stromlo-1-exploration-drilling-program/?fbclid=IwAR3V7Ya59Dgw_0iesKRwlMaVPQcWgpLD1wi0VUiVq0Y9vsfURlyv9zcPG4)

Let your Federal member know how you feel and ask the candidates in the Federal election where they stand on the issue.

Sign the Wilderness society petition here <https://fightforthebight.wilderness.org.au/>

Yours for clean oceans,

Greg Howell  
President & Sustainable Event Manager