



s22

Director
Queensland South and Sea Dumping Section
Assessments and Governance Branch
Department of the Environment and Energy
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear s22

Proposed approval decision Port of Townsville Expansion Project (EPBC 2011/5979)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed approval decision to expand the Port of Townsville, by undertaking dredging, land reclamation and construction of infrastructure at Townsville, Queensland.

Consistent with the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is supportive of:

- all material from the capital dredging associated with this activity to be deposited in a reclamation area outside of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- the active engagement with the Traditional Owners of the Cleveland Bay area during the development of management plans and strategies associated with the action
- the offsets management strategy that is to be developed to compensate for residual significant impacts of the action and to achieve a net benefit for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

The Authority acknowledges the real potential for increased maintenance dredging from the channel expansion and encourages the continued exploration of beneficial reuse options as part of future disposal activities for maintenance dredge material, consistent with the Queensland Maintenance Dredging Strategy.

The requirement for a reduction of sediment entering the marine environment from the Burdekin, Ross and Black River basins should assist with better understanding the port sediment characteristics and risks and how they interact and contribute to:

- broader catchment contributions
- the World Heritage Area,
- maintenance dredging requirements
- reducing impacts to coral reef habitats.

Please contact me if you need further information for clarification of this letter.

Yours sincerely

s22

Director, Environmental Assessment and Protection
15 November 2017

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From: s22
To:
Cc:
Subject: FW: Port of Townsville expansion, proposed offset conditions [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Friday, 19 January 2018 9:10:32 AM

From: s22 [mailto:s22@gbmpa.gov.au]
Sent: Monday, 15 January 2018 9:17 AM
To: s22
Subject: RE: Port of Townsville expansion, proposed offset conditions [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Hi s22

As we discussed Friday afternoon, I note that the offsets work won't begin until after each phase of the dredging as it will be based upon the actual impacts from the action. It is unclear the trigger points associated with the acute and sub-lethal impacts from the action vs anything else. Also how action related impacts will be differentiated from impacts arising from another source.

What certainty is there if the offsets are provided to Reef Trust that they will still be used in the Burdekin, Ross and Black rivers as originally intended in the approval i.e. sediment reduction?

Cheers!

s22

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For-Official-Use-Only

From: s22 [mailto:s22@environment.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 12 January 2018 12:07 PM
To: s22 [mailto:s22@gbmpa.gov.au]
Subject: FW: Port of Townsville expansion, proposed offset conditions [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s22

As discussed, we have been in discussion with the Port of Townsville about the draft conditions for sediment offsets. As you'd be aware, the proposal involves around 11m m3 of capital dredging, with placement of the dredged material on-shore in a reclamation area. There will be

an amount of fine sediment that is however released into the marine environment as a result of the dredging and placement in the reclamation area (tailwater).

We have proposed an approach to offsetting fine sediment, under which the Port would be required to:

1. Quantify and offset the amount of fine sediment released back into the sea that was not previously available for resuspension (new sediment that the action will create through dredging activities)
2. Through monitoring, identify and report actual impacts on sensitive receivers due to dredging
3. If actual impacts are detected, the Port would also be required to offset the fine sediment that was previously available for resuspension. We think this additional requirement is consistent with references in the last Outlook Report.

This approach has been tested with the Port and the Department's Reef Branch, and they agree in principle. Before we finalise this approach, we wanted to GBRMPA's view on it. We're hoping to make the decision next week so would be great if you are able to get to it today, or early next week.

A copy of the proposed approval conditions is attached, with changes in track changes on the current changes we are proposing to make to finalise it. Conditions 26-28 are the main requirement that reflects the offset requirements.

Happy to discuss. I'm around this afternoon but away Monday and Tuesday. Back on Wednesday.

Cheers

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Director – Queensland South and Sea Dumping Section
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The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.