



Australian Senate

Larissa Waters

Australian Greens Senator for Queensland

media release

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UNESCO determined to investigate Great Barrier Reef dredging

UNESCO has sent a clear message that they are taking the threat of mass dredging to the World Heritage status of the Great Barrier Reef seriously, setting out comprehensive terms of reference for their Reactive Monitoring Mission.

The Australian Greens have welcomed the Mission's intention to help the Government develop 'a long-term plan for sustainable development', and strongly endorse the need for UNESCO to be actively involved in the Government's strategic assessment of the Reef.

"It was revealed in Senate Estimates this week that the Government still won't review or suspend any of the mass dredging currently approved or applied for, when doing the strategic assessment," Australian Greens environment spokesperson Senator Larissa Waters said.

"Project-by-project approval will be the death of a thousand cuts for the Reef.

"More than 112 million cubic metres of dredging, or 65 Melbourne Cricket Grounds, are planned for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area – if we go down this path, there is the real danger that the Great Barrier Reef will lose its World Heritage status.

"The Government should say no to any more mass dredging before our iconic and unique Great Barrier Reef becomes a coal and gas highway."

The terms of reference for the UNESCO mission can be found at:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/pubs/gbr-terms-of-reference.pdf>

Media contact: Elissa McKay 0419 626 725