



ACS

Australian Coastal Society Ltd

PO Box 1984, Bondi Junction NSW 1355

10 June 2016

Premier and Minister for the Arts
The Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk

Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines
The Honourable Anthony Lynham

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef
The Honourable Steven Miles

Dear Premier

The Australian Coastal Society (ACS) was disappointed to hear of the decision by the Queensland Government to [award mining leases](#) for the Adani Carmichael Coal Mine Project. These approvals are in direct conflict with the stated intention of the Queensland Government to protect the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA), which is currently experiencing one of the [worst coral bleaching events on record](#). This bleaching event also coincides with the release of new research that [the burning of fossil fuels dominates the drivers of global mean sea-level](#) rise since 1970.

The Queensland Government's own Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, Hon Steven Miles, noted in a ministerial statement on 8 April 2016 (a mere five days after approval of the mining leases for the Carmichael Coal Project), the need to reduce emissions in order to protect the reef:

"We need to keep focusing on reducing as many pressures on the Reef as possible – reducing emissions and ensuring clean water for coral to thrive,"

It is difficult to see how this decision can be interpreted by the global scientific community and the UNESCO World Heritage Committee as being consistent with the [Queensland Government priorities](#) and the commendable actions undertaken to ensure that the GBRWHA avoided being added to the World Heritage In-Danger list a mere nine months ago, and to ensure that the reef is protected in the long term.

The mining lease approvals were also awarded despite the fact that the federal re-approval of the project is still subject to judicial review in the Federal Court of Australia, with a decision not anticipated before the second half of 2016, and an Indigenous Land Use Agreement has not been reached with the traditional owners of the land on which the mine would operate, the Wangan and Jagalingou Peoples. A [ministerial statement](#) on 3 February 2016 by Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Hon Anthony Lynham, suggested that mining leases

for the Carmichael Coal Project should not be granted without completion of the judicial review process:

To date this has included the advice that before I consider granting the lease, it would be appropriate for me to consider the certainty it would give government and Adani of having a High Court decision on a current application for judicial review of the key decision by the National Native Title Tribunal on the granting of the mining leases.

The ACS welcomes the reiteration by the Queensland Government that Queensland taxpayers will not fund infrastructure for the project, and that Adani will not be granted dredging permission without demonstrating financial closure. The ACS also acknowledges that the project would need to secure further approvals for associated infrastructure and to provide financial assurance to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

The ACS would like to highlight that the projected job figures and royalty estimates for the Carmichael Coal Project have been questioned in the Land Court of Queensland (*Adani Mining Pty Ltd v Land Services of Coast and Country Inc & Ors* [2015] QLC 48), and must be balanced against the \$5.68 billion in annual value-added generated by the GBRWHA (2012 figures), and the nearly 69,000 full-time equivalent jobs in the GBR region that can be linked to the health and beauty of the region.¹

The ACS would like to remind the Queensland Government when considering these further approvals that it has an obligation to ensure that it does all it can to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

Yours sincerely



Associate Professor Geoffrey Wescott
President, Australian Coastal Society Ltd

¹ Deloitte Access Economics, [Economic contribution of the Great Barrier Reef March 2013](#).