



# Media release

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection  
The Honourable Andrew Powell

## Reef facts campaign launched

A new *Reef Facts* campaign has been launched to cut through the misinformation about the Great Barrier Reef and put the truth on the table.

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, Andrew Powell, said the false and extreme claims had the potential to damage the state's reputation, if they weren't addressed.

"This Government is doing more to protect the Great Barrier Reef than any other government has before it – a simple fact that needs to be recognised," Mr Powell said.

"It is a vital and iconic natural wonder that is known around the world and one that we are proud of.

"That's why it is so important for people in Queensland, Australia and indeed the international community to have access to the facts.

"We are providing an open and transparent account of what is happening on the Great Barrier Reef because we believe Queenslanders deserve the truth.

"For years Labor's incompetence and inability to get basic state reporting right has caused much grief for the Reef.

"There were no long term plans in place, but the Queensland Government is finding the balance between protecting the environment and contributing to sustainable economic growth.

"Under the Newman Government the reef is in good hands, because we back science ahead of politics and facts ahead of opinion and hysteria.

"For example, we know from 29 years of monitoring by the Australian Institute of Marine Science the main causes of coral loss have been storms and cyclones (48%), crown of thorns starfish (42%) and coral bleaching (10%), not dredging or shipping.

"The Newman Government is committed to ensuring the Great Barrier Reef remains one of the best managed marine ecosystems in the world.

"That is why we are investing \$35 million a year on reef water quality initiatives.

"We want to reduce all impacts as much as possible, which is why the Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney, released the Queensland Ports Strategy last year restricting future port development to the long established major ports, consistent with what UNESCO has requested.

"The constant focus on Abbot Point and the impacts of dredging is completely out of proportion and not based on the facts.

"Most significant is the fact that the dredging that will take place there is less than eight per cent of what was proposed by the former Labor Government and will be carefully managed.

"Australia is an island and ports are the lifeblood of our economy. We can strike a balance between sensible and safe port development and continued protection of our precious reef.

"We are fully committed to protecting the reef and fulfilling our international obligations under the World Heritage convention.

"I am working closely with my Commonwealth counterpart, Greg Hunt, Minister for the Environment, to implement all of UNESCO recommendations.

"The Great Barrier Reef's outstanding universal value and integrity remain largely intact.

"I am confident that we have the appropriate processes, resources and environmental protection mechanisms in place to ensure that the Great Barrier Reef continues to be among the best managed and protected World Heritage areas in the world."

For more facts on the Great Barrier Reef see [www.reeffacts.qld.gov.au](http://www.reeffacts.qld.gov.au) ( <http://www.reeffacts.qld.gov.au/> )

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