



Australians For Animals

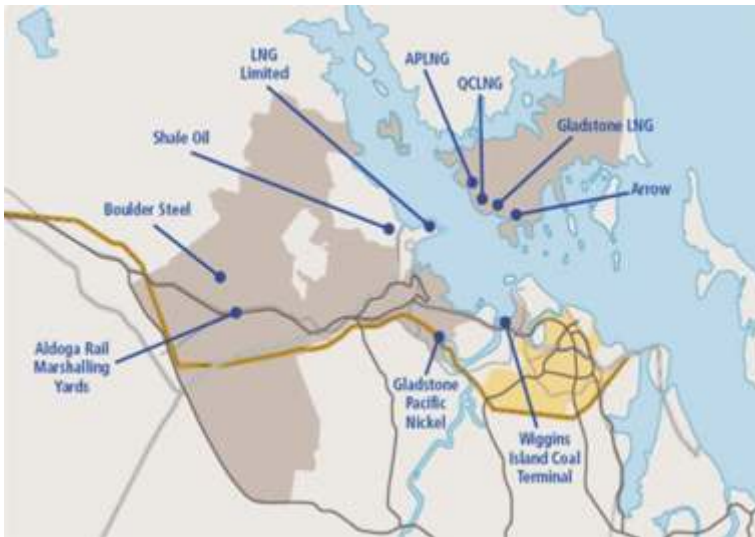
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THE GREAT BARRIER REEF NIGHTMARE UNFOLDS

Hopefully, some of you have seen the Four Corners documentary on the appalling situation in Gladstone Harbor and the impacts of the massive dredging operation on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. If you missed out on this excellent documentary, here's a website link to the entire program.

<http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/2011/11/03/3355047.htm>

The situation in Gladstone is nothing short of an international environmental emergency. Take a look at the extent of industrialisation planned for the area.



Right now there's massive problems with sick fishermen, diseased fish, dying dugongs, and green turtles. Dugong deaths are moving towards the 200 mark and green turtle mortality is continuing to rise. The latest figure around 1,200.

AFA has been told that sharks, prawns, crabs, pelagic

and benthic fish, sea snakes, estuarine and blue water species are all impacted with skin lesions and/or red eye. Included in this newsletter are photos of a shark and fish covered in skin lesions, so far at least 11 Bull sharks have been found dead – all of them a shade of pink.

Commercial fishermen have



been hospitalised with mysterious diseases. The Queensland and Federal governments are covering up an environmental catastrophe which has the potential to ensure that Australia loses World Heritage Status for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. As well, the tourism industry will be hard hit by the ongoing mortality of dugongs, turtles and dolphins. Sediment and turbidity in the waters are creating a very unappealing situation for snorkel fans and divers. The Queensland government claims parasites are the cause of the high mortality.

With a witches' brew of toxic chemicals, acid sulphate soil, agricultural run-off and coal dust (to name a few), the sickness across the board in the marine environment is no surprise and most unlikely to be caused by parasites.



PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY NOW



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AFA IS ON THE JOB

The resources of the charity are focused on the unfolding nightmare in Queensland. The Great Barrier Reef is an icon for all Australians and it must be protected. In the last couple of months the charity has undertaken major field trips in Far North Queensland holding endless discussions with scientists at James Cook University.

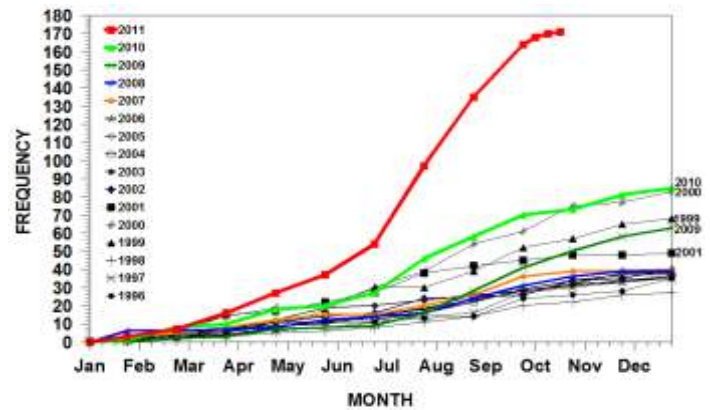
AFA has written and delivered an in-depth scientific submission to the World Heritage Secretariat, addressed to the Team Leader who is coming to Australia in March to investigate the denigration of Gladstone Harbor and the Great Barrier Reef.

Our Co-ordinator has just returned from a quick two week trip to the US where she met with marine toxicologists and marine biologists and experts at Stanford University and the University of California, Santa Cruz. AFA is fortunate to have the support of many world-class experts who had no idea how serious the situation is in the GBR. Almost no news of the damage wrought by the floods, Cyclone Yasi and the massive industrialisation

have reached the US. We have changed that situation.

AFA is trawling through thousands of pages of statements by Santos and its Malaysian partner who are dredging the Harbor so a pipeline can be set up from Gladstone to Port Curtis for liquefied natural gas (to China). We're in constant dialogue with the scientific experts who are giving unstinting help as we try to identify the toxins and to force government action.

AFA is working closely with the Sea Turtle Foundation in Townsville; the charity has a formidable legal advisor assisting our efforts. Our aim is to visit Gladstone before Xmas and to put plans in motion for a workshop in that town early in the New Year which will bring experts together to highlight the



Dugong mortality to October 2011

urgency of stopping the dredging. The dredging operation is using out of date technology with much more serious impacts on the environment than 21st century technology which is available and limits some of the damage.

AFA needs serious funding to fight the good fight. Bob Irwin and Colin Riddell

are doing a great job and as always, the Aboriginal elders who care deeply for the environment and work with AFA, are involved in a genuine David and Goliath battle. (But we know who won that one!)

Please give generously. And a blessed Christmas to you all.

Sue Arnold & Friends

A HUGE SLICE OF THE WET TROPICS GOES INTO ABORIGINAL OWNERSHIP

The Mandingalbay Yidinji people are celebrating the dedication of Australia's first Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) over multiple tenures and nearly 10,000 hectares at East Trinity near Cairns.

The Mandingalbay Yidinji Indigenous Protected Area (MY IPA) of 9738 hectares, about 30km south-east of Cairns, was the result of a groundbreaking agreement between Traditional Owners and government bodies. The MY IPA covers parts of the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park, Grey Peaks National Park, East Trinity Environmental Reserve, Malbon Thompson Forest Reserve, and Giangurra

Council Reserve.

“Mandingalbay Yidinji people are the Traditional Owners of country to the east of Cairns across Trinity Inlet and received native title recognition in 2006.

According to the Queensland government :- “It means Traditional Owners can return to country, manage the natural and cultural values across the landscape, improve surveillance and cooperate in

wildlife management.

“The partnerships under the IPA are already resulting in employment for Aboriginal people, and tourism opportunities.

“Mandingalbay Yidinji developed a management plan for the area with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), and created the Djunbunji Land and Sea program to put the management plan into operation”.

AFA continues to have grave concerns over Aboriginal management of

wildlife, particularly in Queensland where Indigenous people have exemption from the provisions of the Animal Cruelty Act. The charity is working with lawyers on this issue as AFA believes passionately that there can only be one set of wildlife and animal protection laws for every Australian.

Carving up country and setting different laws for different people is a recipe for disaster. As always, the animals cop the brunt of human and political mismanagement.

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