



08 OCT, 2019

HOW I'LL FIX REEF

Cairns Post, Cairns

PARLIAMENTARY
LIBRARY
INFORMATION | ANALYSIS | ADVICECopyright Agency Limited (CAL) licensed copy
or Copyright Act 1968 (Cwth) s. 48A copy

Page 1 of 4

Entsch claims he's already making waves as envoy

HOW I'LL FIX REEF

CHRIS CALCINOchris.calcino@news.com.au

THE Federal Government's Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef Warren Entsch is vowing that the position is more than just a public relations exercise.

Four months into the job and he says he has launched a second Reef-Clean effort to remove tonnes of rubbish from the sensitive ecosystem and established a bipartisan parliamentary support group.

Mr Entsch plans to bring VIPs to see how healthy the Reef is too.

FULL STORY P4-5

A PR exercise or saving the Reef?

Entsch's Special Envoy role raises many queries

CHRIS CALCINOchris.calcino@news.com.au

WARREN Entsch's first four months as Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef have raised questions over whether the position is more than just a PR exercise.

The Leichhardt MP has been afforded two extra staff members at an estimated cost of \$200,000 to help carry out the job, although the Federal Government is keeping their



08 OCT, 2019

HOW I'LL FIX REEF

Cairns Post, Cairns

PARLIAMENTARY
LIBRARY

INFORMATION ANALYSIS ADVICE

Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) licensed copy
or Copyright Act 1968 (Cwth) s. 48A copy

Page 2 of 4

wages under wraps.

His own \$200,000-plus salary has not changed — however, special envoys have access to greater funds and departmental resources.

Barnaby Joyce claimed \$675,000 in expenses during his nine-month tenure as special drought envoy, a figure which included his normal work as a backbencher.

Following criticism of Mr Joyce's record as a special envoy and the absence of any final report produced by him, the *Cairns Post* asked Mr Entsch to define his job expectations and how he would measure his success.

He accepted there was a public relations element to the position but said there was much more to the story — and he already had the ball rolling.

The born-and-bred Far Northerner wants to bring some of the world's most influential people to “come put their head under the water” to get a first-hand view of the true health of the Reef, away from the influence of a screeching international media.

“It's about making sure I can connect people, inviting people to come up here to look at the Reef so they can talk fac-

tually — not just jump at shadows,” Mr Entsch said.

“Of course it's a PR job ... making sure people acknowledge what is being done.

“We are the best reef managers in the world and we will also do the same thing with plastics ... people will come to us to learn how to do it.”

Mr Entsch has vowed to achieve a national policy on removing plastics from the ocean as his final political crusade before bowing out next election.

The most positive step so far came at the Council of Australian Governments meeting in August in Cairns, where the heads of every state and territory agreed to work towards banning plastic waste exports.

“What you will see in the future is all local, state and federal contracts will include a recycling component,” he said.

“So if you want to win a contract, you will need to include an element of recyclables or you won't win.”

Mr Entsch has launched the second ReefClean effort, with volunteers hoping to remove 20 tonnes of rubbish from the sensitive ecosystem.

He has also set up a parliamentary friendship group for the Great Barrier Reef with 23 members aimed at encouraging bipartisan support for the natural wonder, but his environmental credentials are up for debate.

His refusal to push for the abandonment of fossil fuels has been a chief criticism among protesters who regularly camp outside his office.

Mr Entsch said he did not think it worthwhile to extend an invitation to visit to young climate activist Greta Thunberg, who “thinks the world as we know it is dead tomorrow”.

“Unfortunately a lot of these young ones are getting a one-sided argument,” he argued.

Mr Entsch said he would be measured on what he had achieved at the end of his term.

His bosses are happy so far.

“Mr Entsch has, and will continue to, provide valuable counsel to the Minister for the Environment and the Prime Minister relating to strategies for the Reef,” a spokesman for Environment Minister Sussan Ley said.

“He has already devoted considerable time to working with the Minister for the Environment on both Reef and plastics issues and his success in the role is already apparent.”

PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF THE REEF

Coalition

Warren Entsch — co-chairman
Trevor Evans
Dave Sharma
Senator Paul Scarr
Anne Webster
Craig Kelly
Senator Anthony Chisholm
Phillip Thompson
George Christensen
Senator Amanda Stoker
Senator Simon Birmingham
Senator Susan McDonald

Labor

Graham Perrett — co-chairman
Senator Nita Green
Amanda Rishworth
Susan Templeton
Luke Gosling
Milton Dick
Matt Keogh
Patrick Gorman
Senator Louise Pratt

Greens

Senator Peter Whish-Wilson
Senator Janet Rice



NOT WANTED: Plastic pollution around a coral reef with sea anemones and clownfish.

@editorial@cairnspost.com.au

f facebook.com/TheCairnsPost

www.cairnspost.com.au

twitter.com/TheCairnsPost



08 OCT, 2019

HOW I'LL FIX REEF

Cairns Post, Cairns

PARLIAMENTARY
LIBRARY
INFORMATION | ANALYSIS | ADVICE

Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) licensed copy
or Copyright Act 1968 (Cwth) s. 48A copy



GOOD WORK: Member for Leichhardt Warren Entsch hugs Cairns student Molly Steer who led a Straw No More campaign.



PROTEST ACTION: Outside Warren Entsch's office. Picture: ANNA ROGERS



08 OCT, 2019

HOW I'LL FIX REEF

Cairns Post, Cairns

PARLIAMENTARY
LIBRARY
INFORMATION | ANALYSIS | ADVICE

Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) licensed copy
or Copyright Act 1968 (Cwth) s. 48A copy

Page 4 of 4



ENOUGH PLASTIC:
Member for
Leichhardt Warren
Entsch, with his
wife Yolande, has
made it a priority
to campaign for a
national policy on
plastic.
Picture: BRENDAN RADKE