

Queensland Ports Association

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Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Members

Inquiry into the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Amendment (Great Barrier Reef) Bill 2013*

This submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications is provided by the Queensland Port Association (QPA), which represents all Queensland ports.

Fundamentally, the QPA considers that the Bill preempts the findings of ongoing assessments by the Commonwealth and State Governments into management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) and associated World Heritage Area (WHA).

It is our view that the proposed amendments contemplated in the Bill would severely prejudice state and national economic productivity and undermine investment confidence in the minerals, resource and agricultural export sectors across the nation.

The QPA strongly believes that port growth can continue under established legislative provisions whilst ensuring the values of the GBRMP and associated WHA are protected.

Substantial progress has been made in addressing the recommendations made by the World Heritage Committee following the *Reactive Monitoring Mission* in 2012, including the Commonwealth and State managed *Great Barrier Reef Strategic Assessment*.

The *Strategic Assessment* is by far the largest, most wide-ranging and most complex strategic assessment ever undertaken. It covers not only the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA) but importantly, the adjacent coastal zone where a range of activities (viz: agriculture, urban development and tourism uses etc) occur.

It will result in a range of recommendations regarding 'appropriateness' of development siting and the need for any amendments to existing regulatory protection measures and governance frameworks for development assessment.

It is through this process that any necessary legislative amendments must be based – not the preemptive measures as proposed by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Amendment (Great Barrier Reef) Bill 2013*.

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Yours sincerely,

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Chair QPA Environment and Planning Committee

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