



Submission No: 23
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Secretary: <i>[Signature]</i>

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Resources
PO Box 6021
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Dear Sir

Re: - Inquiry into the Draft Offshore Petroleum Amendment (Greenhouse Gas Storage) Bill

We wish to commend the Government for its foresight in the introduction of the above Act.

Our concern is however that the Act in its present form could allow future drilling within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) and this could have potentially disastrous consequences for the Reef. We ask that the following be taken into consideration.

- The GBRMP is of enormous importance to Australia, it has World Heritage listing and tourism in the area alone contributes in excess \$5.4 billion to the Australian economy and employs over 54,000 people.
- Its survival is dependent on a range of environmental factors and to leave open the possibility of carbon sequestration in the region is considered to be reckless, any leak would increase the acidity of the ocean and destroy the coral.
- It is our fear that if drilling were permitted and oil were discovered as a result, then in the current economic climate it would be difficult to prevent it being developed, with all the inherent risks that would pose to the Great Barrier Reef
- This possibility simply cannot be left to the whim of any future government.
- Drilling for any reason should be specifically prevented by legislation.
- We would recommend and support an amendment to the Bill which incorporates an appropriate exclusion clause for Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Thank you for your consideration of AMPTO's submission.

Yours faithfully

DAVID WINDSOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



THE MARINE TOURISM INDUSTRY

According to the latest Access Economics report, commissioned by the Commonwealth Government, tourism in the Great Barrier Reef region is worth \$5.1 billion and employs 54,000 people. It is a major export earner and dwarfs other industries in the area (for example commercial fishing contributed \$120m and employed 640 people.)

This is an increase from 1999, when a Productivity Commission estimated that revenue raised by tourism within the GBR catchment was in excess of \$4.3 billion and created 37,000 jobs.

Also in 1999, Productivity Commission figures demonstrated that tourism was the largest employer in the region and second only to mining in value to the economy.

A study commissioned by AMPTO, Tourism QLD and the Cairns City Council and conducted by Hassals and Associates in 2001 showed that the value of the Marine Tourism Industry in the Cairns/Port Douglas area was \$736 million in the previous year.

A further study by Hassals and Associates, commissioned by Tourism Queensland, shows the marine tourism industry in 2001 paid the following major taxes:-

- a. \$187.5 million in income tax,
- b. \$8 million in EMC, and,
- c. \$19.9 million in company tax.

This makes a total of \$215.4 million in revenue to the Commonwealth who pay out \$30 million for the GBRMPA. A net gain of \$185.4 million for the Commonwealth!

The Queensland State Government receives approximately \$124 million of this Federal revenue through GST and collects another \$19 million in other taxes paid by the Marine Tourism Industry. It spends about \$23 million on the GBR.

Through the payment of the EMC, industry contributes \$8 million per year to the GBRMPA budget of which \$1.2 million was paid to the CRC Reef for applied research.

There are over 2 million visitors to the GBR each year and research shows that the GBR is the most significant attraction for tourism within the North QLD region with about 80% of tourists visiting the GBR at least once.