Gladstone Conservation Council is a community based environmental group whose focus is currently on energy transition and a future for our community.

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Gladstone Ports Corporation have today released their finalised EIS for the Port of Gladstone Gatcombe and Golding Cutting Channel Duplication Project.

We will be looking carefully at the finalised EIS in the next few days but the fundamental objections remain.

This is effectively a repeat of the notorious Western Basin Dredging and Disposal project. There are clear signals that the lessons of the past dredging programs have not been learned. We should not accept that things are going to be different unless clear controls are in place and the authority to halt activities is given to an independent community body.

We will permanently lose a total of 327ha of wetland, which is important to both birds and fish, and 156 ha of Seagrass meadow, which is what dugongs, turtle and many other sea creatures need to survive.

For the area of Gladstone Harbour from Hamilton Point to Graham's Creek, this proposed project plus the previous Western Basin Dredging and Disposal Project cumulatively remove around 50% of the seagrass from the northern section of the harbour. This is a very serious and substantial loss of habitat within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. It can't be replanted, the loss is permanent.

Given what happened to our harbour the last time that capital dredging occurred, we believe it is in the communities best interest to consider very carefully the need for this proposal.

Any new development in our region needs to be future focused and not taking our community backwards.

The whole process is an unnecessary waste of resources which could be better spent reviewing the Port to transition to the renewable economy - which is inevitable given current and predicted global trends in the energy market.

A quick look at the justification seems to suggest that all of this expansion will be for an increase in coal export vessels and to alleviate the danger of LNG vessels. It is inappropriate to only now raise LNG vessel risk and the mere suggestion of facilitating coal export expansion is unconscionable.
The continued economic expansion of Gladstone Port is incompatible with the World Heritage Values of Gladstone harbour.

Ultimately we must acknowledge that there are limits to growth and that we have already lost very sensitive and valuable areas. It is time to stop eroding the viability of our harbour’s ecosystems.

It's time for change – it's time to Repower Gladstone