

From: Sharon Wilson
To: [environment policy](#)
Subject: Public Comment Closes response on Draft Declaration to Prohibit Seabed Mining
Date: Friday, 11 June 2021 4:22:13 PM

Dear Minister

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the recently circulated proposed draft declaration to permanently prohibit Seabed Mining in Northern Territory Coastal waters, which includes Darwin Harbour.

We have over the past seventeen plus years taken the time to be part of many submissions, interest groups, surveys, discussions groups and one on one meetings around the subject of Darwin Harbour. We are on record that we have been, and remain still today, supporters of taking care of this unique region.

We do however continue to believe that there needs to be open and frank further discussion about the potential for future sand mining in Darwin Harbour. Since 2007 the NT Government has had a blanket ban on all mining in the area, however there has often been various disturbances and random dredging to waste around Cullen Bay and other shipping channels in the Port and Blaydin Point areas. This is not only a waste of what is a worldwide scarce resource, but potentially far more damaging to the environment that removal of this sediment transported within and across the harbour by the strong tidal movements, or terrestrial mining.

We had applications to mine in two separate locations in Darwin Harbour rejected in 2007 on the basis of the blanket bans introduction, not on our merit.

The Darwin Harbour Strategy 2019 -2024 has a purpose to "Advocate a consistent, coordinated approach to stewardship and decision making related to resource use in the region".

The Darwin Harbour Strategy has a guiding principle of "policy settings and regulation must be supportive of the Harbours beneficial uses in a manner that achieves mutual and balanced recognition of economic, social, cultural and environmental considerations"

The Darwin Harbour Strategy has a goal " To protect and enhance economic value of Darwin Harbour in accordance with ecologically sustainable principles".

The proposed declaration to prohibit subsea mining would seem to totally disregard this strategy, by putting in place a permanent ban on mining sand in Darwin Harbour, while at the same time allowing a large list of exclusions on the basis that these activities already exist. Our applications already existed but we received no such consideration. The irony of the exclusions too, are that most of the organisations benefiting from the exclusions, are the biggest users of natural resources in the area.

We ask that further consideration be given to the blanket ban proposed and that applications, as with terrestrial mining, are looked at on a project by project basis, with the appropriate, and to be expected, checks and balances in place to monitor any approvals.

Your sincerely