Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg is Director of the Global Change Institute at The University of Queensland and has commented on the UNESCO report disagreeing with the notion that the QLD Government can get the misleading message out but developments need to go ahead for the sake of the economy.

**Duration:** 0.55

**Summary ID:** W00048951302

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UNESCO says further degradation of the Great Barrier Reef could put its World Heritage status into question. The Federal and State Government must act before February 2013 or the reef will be listed as endangered. 50% of the reef has died off in the last 50 years, with turtle and dugong populations put into question. Ecological economist Colin Hunt says coastal developments are the major concern for UNESCO, with the organisation asking the Australian Commonwealth to prohibit further developments along the Queensland coast. He explains the Gladstone Ports Corporation's dredging technique which creates a channel for boats. Hunt explains how this process impacts the underwater eco system. The technique has led to mass deaths of turtles and dugongs, with greater boat arrivals also impacting this. The Governments have supported 46m cubic mitres of dredging in Gladstone Harbour to secure liquefied natural gas exports. Hunt says the harbour has seen issues with diseased fish, with speculations this is due to dredging. The fishing industry claims a James Cook University report proves the Queensland Environment Department is wrong to blame these fish deaths on environmental phenomena as opposed to the dredging. Ted Whittington of the Gladstone Fish Markets believes all the fish in the harbour are unfit for consumption. Satellite images suggest dredging remains are being swept 35km out to sea. Aquatic medical expert Dr Matt Landos says the Queensland Environment Department's investigation into fish deaths was not extensive enough. Landos describes the effects of the disease on fish populations. UNESCO is also said to be annoyed at not being told of an LNG development on Curtis Island. The organisation was also not told about dredging and dumping. Despite the Government announcing the development of a series of marine parks this June, the Great Barrier Reef is still threatened by land related issues. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has no capacity to restrict happenings on Queensland beaches. Premier Campbell Newman says he will not restrict economic development for the sake of environmental protection. The Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association notes coal seam gas projects will provide numerous economical benefits for the region. These projects will last 30 years, with the fisheries and tourism sectors expecting to be impacted negatively due to poor media. The Gladstone development is expected to produce 39 million tonnes of CO2. UNESCO says the Federal Government is responsible for the Great Barrier Reef's wellbeing, with Andrew Powell and Tony Burke having signed a deal on rationalising projects around the reef. Greens MP Larissa Waters calls for dredging to be stopped in order to save the reef, considered a tourist hotspot. She notes the 'fly in fly out workforce' is hurting the environment. The Federal Government has not...
dismissed any of the 23 applications for developments at Gladstone in recent years. Hunt outlines the Government’s conditions on dredging deposits. He says Burke has been hypocritical in his criticisms of the environmental impact statement for mining at the Galilee Basin, considering his treatment of the reef. Hunt says the Government must prove it is capable at fulfilling environmental impact statements. Former Gladstone Ports Corporation chairman Ian Brusasco, Labor Party member, says his sacking by Premier Campbell Newman was politically motivated seeing he appointed friend and former National Retail Association chair Mark Brodie as his successor. Greenpeace activists were arrested after protesting against developments in the Gladstone Harbour and on Curtis Island. Global Change Institute director Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg says a sustainable answer needs to be sort.

**Interviewees:** Campbell Newman, Queensland Premier; Colin Hunt, Ecological Economist; Dr Matt Landos, Aquatic Medical Expert; Larissa Waters, Greens MP; Pot Striskle (*), Protester; Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, Director, Global Change Institute; Ted Whittington, Gladstone Fish Markets

**Duration:** 28.05

**Summary ID:** M00049398427

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**Press**

**UN set to condemn damage to Reef**

*Courier Mail, 02/06/12, General News, Page 17*

By: Brian Williams Peter Michael

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UN set to condemn damage to Reef

BRIAN WILLIAMS
PETER MICHAEL

AUSTRALIA is expected to avoid being placed on an international list of shame this weekend over its handling of contentious gas and coal development in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

But the Paris-based UNESCO mission which inspected the Reef in February is expected to take a dim view of potentially damaging development at places such as Gladstone.

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke said yesterday that a strategic assessment of the Reef to ensure development did not damage its World Heritage values was under way.

“(It) gives us an opportunity to take into account the cumulative impacts and any indirect impacts, such as increased shipping movement,” he said.

Australian Marine Conservation Society spokesman Darren Kindleysides said he would be surprised if UNESCO did not see through government “green-wash” and recognise the Reef’s future was severely threatened.

University of Queensland coral expert Ove Hoegh-Guldberg said he doubted the Reef would be stripped of its WH listing, but that he expected a warning on coastal development.

“We’ve had a pretty good track record until now,” he said. “But the Reef is still pretty delicate, and how we develop the coastline will be a big factor in its fate.”

Greens spokesman Andrew Jeremijenko said that even if the Reef was not declared in danger, it was disgraceful that Australia was so poorly managing it that UNESCO had to investigate.

UNESCO started its probe after the Government failed to inform it of the Gladstone port development.

Dr Jeremijenko said UNESCO had made it clear that oil and gas development was incompatible with world heritage status, and Australia should have honoured its international obligations by not approving the Gladstone expansion.