



## AMATEUR FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF THE NT INC.

The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

Minister for the Environment

c/-Environment Assessment Branch

Department of the Environment Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Minister

### **RE: Port Melville-Referral under the EPBC Act**

AFANT has welcomed the opportunity to provide comment on the following referral:

EPBC reference number 2015/7510, Ezion Offshore Logistics Hub (Tiwi) Pty Ltd/Transport - water/Port Melville Marine Supply Base, Melville Island/NT/Operation of a marine supply base.

AFANT has strong concerns about the proposal to operate Port Melville as a marine supply base on Melville Island in the Northern Territory and believes it should be subject to the highest level of environmental assessment through undertaking a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the current facility and the proposed operation as a marine supply base.

The Tiwi Islands has been identified as an area of national and international environmental significance due to the presence of threatened and migratory species and sensitive coastal and marine habitats. The substantial amounts of fuel to be stored so close to the coastline, in an area highly prone to cyclonic activity and the potential for the port to be used as a major gas and fuel supply hub elevates the need for proper and transparent assessment and risk minimization.

The proposed operation of Port Melville poses potential risks to the coastal waters and marine life of the Tiwi Islands through:

- Increased potential for vessel strikes on marine threatened and migratory species, due to an increase in shipping (20%) during 2015 -2019 by vessels up to 200 m in length;

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***Representing recreational fishing in the NT and ensuring the quality of our sport***

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- Increased pollution and degraded water quality as a result of poorly managed runoff, spills associated with storage of 30.795 million litres of diesel on site and shipping, storage of fracking chemicals, soil fumigants and pesticides;
- Undetermined impacts of additional lighting on site within the vicinity
- Increased road traffic and potential spread of weeds,
- Undetermined impact of potential oil spills due to large-scale (200m) ships carrying high volumes of diesel with the narrow channel;
- Potential future dredging to broaden the shipping channel and dumping of dredge spoil in nearby waterways to facilitate access of large ships.

There is insufficient information provided in this referral to determine the level of impact to this Matter of National Environmental Significance. In the Commonwealth Assessment Framework, the unquantified risk to the marine life of the coastal waters and negative interactions with listed threatened and marine species present is unacceptable. Additional applied studies that would form part of an EIS such as hydrological and light modelling, benthic habitat assessment, water quality and marine megafauna monitoring would allow for an informed, risk-based approach to the assessment.

The Tiwi Islands and surrounding coastal waters are a popular and iconic location for the recreational fishermen of the Northern Territory and must not be placed at risk. AFANT urge you to give your full attention to this development. It is our view that the entire port development and its operation should have been referred under the EPBC Act and subject to a full EIS prior to its construction. It is only through the preparation of the highest level of assessment, namely an EIS, that important environmental impacts can be assessed and provide the opportunity to put strong conditions on any operation of the port should it proceed.

Yours sincerely

Tristan Sloan  
Executive Officer  
Amateur Fishermen's Association NT

14 July 2015

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