



MEDIA RELEASE

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McCarthy calls for extensive audit of the reef funding gravy train.

KAP Candidate for Leichhardt, Daniel McCarthy has today called for a forensic audit to be carried out on all Barrier Reef government funding warning that the 'rivers of gold' crisis funding being allocated to save a reef that doesn't need saving have flowed for far too long and it was time to reveal to tax payers just how their money was being spent.

A select few crisis crying people have done exceedingly well from millions of dollars in tax payer funded grants whilst the rest of the marine tourism industry in Cairns and Port Douglas have suffered tremendously.

"We have the third largest territorial sea of any nation yet no politicians currently in Canberra have the slightest grasp on reality with our oceans, and it now seems government doesn't know or has been turning a blind eye to where the reef funding money has been funnelled and a full and thorough forensic audit will determine what's been going on with the \$102 million been spent on Crown of Thorns alone" says Daniel McCarthy KAP Candidate for Leichhardt.

The negative publicity in the world-wide media is a result of outrageous false and misleading claims made by those milking the gravy train. It has destroyed the reputation of the Great Barrier Reef", says Daniel McCarthy KAP Candidate for Leichhardt.

"The knock-on effect caused by the reefs trashed reputation have flowed through the North. Our Cairns Port expansion plans are held to ransom by the Federal governments Reef 2050 plan along with the unnecessary vegetation management laws and increased green-tape where virtually every farmer in North and Far North Qld has also been vilified along the way".

"It's high time to restore integrity into science, policy and research funding for the Great Barrier Reef" says Daniel.

The current media reports of the sacking of Prof Peter Ridd by James Cook University that is currently before the courts is deeply troubling.

"As far as I am aware Prof Ridd was simply offering a scientific view that the science in relation to reef funding should be quality controlled. I support Prof Peter Ridd's proposal that at least one per cent of the funding that goes to the Great Barrier Reef is spent on checking the science, verifying the findings and providing quality assurance" says Daniel.

Recently the Crown of Thorns starfish funding has also been under scrutiny in wide spread revelations in the media.

“We all want to protect the GBR that’s for sure. However, I have been inundated with phone calls from people across the marine sector and the public who are absolutely rotable over the reef funding scandal that has come to light”

Daniel McCarthy has a deep understanding of the threats and the reality of what’s actually happening on the reef, having worked on the reef for most the last 30 years and in every sector of the marine industry.

“I have long been concerned that the relationships and arrangements for reef funding were ‘a little cozy’ between a couple of individuals and their organisations and members of parliament, but what has been revealed in recent wide spread media of late shows that the situation stinks of jobs for the boys to say the least. The revelations raise many questions that the public rightly expect to be answered.”

“Hard working Australian tax payers are having hundreds of millions of their dollars directed into the ‘save the reef’ industry.”

“Now it appears some of this money may be being funnelled into personal retirement funds, penthouses, expensive luxury cars, hobby farms on the tablelands, overseas holidays and election campaign funding for a select few. It certainly does not pass the pub test.”

“If the media reports are proven to be true, the public outrage will be justified.”

Mr McCarthy is furious that many of the matters being raised equates to ‘Donor Democracy’.

“If what is alleged in these media reports is true, I think it’s disgraceful. Australian’s are fed up with seeing their money be swallowed up in deceptive self-interested projects under the guise of saving things”, says McCarthy.

There are many further questions to be asked including why the Federal Government gave \$450 odd million to a private company that never asked for the money, nor has the capacity or idea as what they intend to do with it?

(The Australian, 5 Oct 18: LNP donors win Great Barrier Reef Contracts by Rosie Lewis)

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/lnp-donors-win-great-barrier-reef-contracts/news-story/22a23f1e66550bd9e1796b8b421a4f09>

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/am/government-forced-to-defend-controversial-reef-funding-process/10721702>

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/climate/inquiry-call-over-reef-contracts-for-firms-with-links-to-chairman/news-story/d87ee287e8a0b27310bc0e3c62b2e4c3?login=1>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-16/great-barrier-reef-funding-grant-scrutinised-auditor-general/10720928>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-22/great-barrier-reef-funding-labor-accuse-due-diligence/9785782>

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