

To whom it may concern,

I'm a regular user of Darwin harbour mostly for recreational fishing. I and my family and friends target pelagic species like tuna and mackerel and queenfish, but also demersal species such as trout and bluebone. I've fished Middle arm in particular for around seven years, fishing from a tinny and also landbased, mostly for the likes of barra and salmon. The proposed Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct (MASDP), with the inclusion of petrochemical manufacturing, concerns me greatly on a few fronts. Let me outline them individually here.

Risk of negative impacts on Darwin harbour itself

I am deeply worried about the possible effects of the MASDP on the health of the Darwin harbour's ecology and biodiversity. Whether that is damage to soil through contamination or erosion from land, further environmental pressure on mangroves, effects of freshwater flows into middle arm, large scale disturbance to the seabed from dredging and shipping, increase of sediment and effects on water quality, or disturbance of habitat of marine fauna, the project places great risk on what is the jewel in Darwin's crown: the harbour. Rec fishing is Darwin's lifeblood. Negatively impact the fishing in the harbour through over-industrialisation and the economic and cultural consequences are massive.

Risk of effects on human health

Having a petrochemical plant three kilometres from an urban centre is of great concern to me. I have many friends in Palmerston whose wellbeing would concern me greatly should the MASDP go ahead. The fact that so few petrochemical manufacturing plants worldwide exist in such close proximity to residential areas should be a large, ugly and especially discordant alarm bell. The full effects on human health of such proximity seem not fully known - so why take the risk?

CCS and the effect of project on the NTs emissions

Using Carbon Capture and storage as an emissions offset helps justify further fossil fuel industry expansion right when environmentally we really can't afford to be doing so. It also seems fairly unproven, with the world's largest CCS project in WA falling way short of their CCS target by 70 odd percent. The NT has a target of net zero emissions by 2050. The MASDP, through its role supporting the fossil fuel industry via CCS and its reliance on gas-as-feedstock from either a fracked beetaloo basin or offshore fields will severely risk that target.

I am not anti-industry or anti-jobs - its just that I strongly resent the fact that my taxpayer dollars are being spent by the Commonwealth and NT governments supporting a proposal which presents such huge risks to a place that means so much to me, my family and a large chunk of my social circle in Darwin and Palmerston. We all love the harbour precisely for all the things this project risks: biodiversity, healthy ecosystems, clean air, physical beauty, a relative lack of intensive industrialisation and of course its recreational fishing prospects. It's not worth losing these things.

I request that my submission be published with my identifying information removed