

Australian coal basin may be top 10 polluter: Greenpeace

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File photo shows a Greenpeace activist holding a banner at the Sydney Aquarium urging UNESCO to save the Great Barrier Reef in March. A coal basin near the Great Barrier Reef will rank among the world's worst producers of carbon pollution if fully mined, Greenpeace said Wednesday.

A coal basin near Australia's Great Barrier Reef will rank among the world's worst producers of carbon pollution if fully mined, Greenpeace said Wednesday as it warned of devastating consequences.

The environmental organisation said Queensland's Galilee Basin could threaten the global climate, as well as destroy local habitat, if all of its thermal coal was mined and burnt.

"If the Galilee Basin were a country, the carbon dioxide produced from

using this coal would make it the seventh dirtiest fossil fuel burner on the planet," Greenpeace said in a report: 'Cooking the Climate and Wrecking the Reef'.

With nine new thermal coal mines in the pipeline, five of them bigger than any existing [coal mine](#) in Australia, Galilee's carbon dioxide output could hit 700 million tonnes per annum once it hits maximum production, it said.

This would leave only China, the US, India, Russia, Japan and Germany ahead of the basin in terms of annual [carbon dioxide emissions](#) from [fuel combustion](#).

The proposed mines—some of which mining billionaires Gina Rinehart and Clive Palmer have stakes in—are in various stages of development, and Greenpeace said it was possible, given their scale and cost, that not all would be built.

"Due to the size of each individual mine, however, the impact of even one mine would be considerable," it said.

"If all nine mines go ahead, the impact on international, national and local environments would be devastating."

The report analysed projected coal demand under several [International Energy Agency](#) scenarios, assessing the development of the Galilee Basin under various levels of international action on climate change.

Scenarios under which dangerous global warming was prevented required a significant reduction in [greenhouse gas emissions](#), including a drastic drop in coal consumption, it said.

"Development of the Galilee Basin requires precisely the opposite—a

substantial growth in coal-fired power generation and, consequently, of coal demand," it said.

The exploitation of the Galilee's coal resource "would have the dual outcome of reckless industrialisation of the [Great Barrier Reef](#) World Heritage Area and contribution to a degree of coal consumption that could render international climate goals unattainable", it said.

Greenpeace is calling for a halt to the proposed expansion of coal mining and export infrastructure in Queensland.

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