



MEDIA RELEASE

Issued Monday, 28 April 2008

Raindrops keep falling on our heads

Townsville Enterprise is urging water intensive industries to consider setting up in North Queensland following the Queensland Government decision to rule out the proposed Burdekin Pipeline.

A 2007 report commissioned by Townsville Enterprise, Thuringowa City Council and NQ Water identified that industries representing around 20% of the national economy would be attracted to North Queensland's water supply advantages.

The "Bradfield Scheme" to pipe water from North Queensland to the South East Corner was today ruled out by Minister for Natural Resources and Water Craig Wallace MP. The announcement came as Townsville Enterprise released a new publication aimed at luring investment into the region on the basis of abundant water supplies.

North Queensland is blessed with a reliable and abundant water supply and excellent water supply infrastructure. Further good news for North Queensland is that the latest predictions for the impact of climate change in Australia show North Queensland's total rainfall is unlikely to be seriously changed. This is in contrast to the predictions for southern Australia.

The latest technical report from CSIRO and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology on Climate Change in Australia predicts rainfall is likely to decrease in southern

areas during winter, in southern and eastern areas during spring, and along the west coast during autumn.

Townsville Enterprise Economic Development General Manager Dr Lisa McDonald said the predictions all bode well for North Queensland's ability to service new industries.

"For 2030, there will be little annual rainfall change in the rainfall totals for North Queensland. This should be foremost in the minds of forward looking business's with a heavy reliance on dependable water supplies"

"We are mindful of the need to be sustainably using water resources at a time when much of the country is suffering from the drought. We believe bringing water intensive industries to the region is a solution – in that it will lighten the load being placed on other regions. "

Townsville's favourable water supply situation gives it a competitive advantage over much of Australia. The major industrial hub, Townsville, is effectively serviced by 3 water storages that can hold a total supply of over 2 million megalitres.

To the south of Townsville, the rich sugarcane and horticultural area of the Burdekin offers year round water supplies for agriculture at very competitive prices.

"Our water supplies are extremely reliable, backed up by the jewel in the crown; the Burdekin Dam" Dr McDonald said.

"While the Burdekin dam supports major agricultural industries in the Burdekin irrigation area; it provides a solid and reliable backup supply to Townsville's urban and industrial areas."

The Burdekin is incredibly reliable for a number of reasons. One is the size of the storage area – over 1.8 million megalitres. The other is its huge catchment of over 133,000 km², a significant part of which is in the wet tropics. This ensures good runoff into the system in most years.

“The infrastructure that connects our major water storages also offers flexibility when our urban water supplies do become low.” Dr McDonald said.

Reliable water supplies into the future are one of the many features that North Queensland can offer businesses whose need for water is critical competitive edge.

Dr McDonald said “the region also offers well located industrial land, skilled workers, great transport infrastructure and a magnificent lifestyle that provides the foundation to attract and maintain skilled workers”

It is very likely that water prices will surge in large urban centres in southern Australia as economists predict a 25% decrease in water availability coupled with a 15% increase in population.

“We encourage those industries traditionally located around major urban centres in Southern Australia that rely on cheap and reliable water supplies to think about moving north”

“There is already a hub of industrial activity in the region to provide the support services and value chain services large businesses need.”

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