

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

The Honourable David Eby  
Premier of British Columbia  
Office of the Premier  
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*Delivered via email*

**Subject: Protect Baynes Sound — Concerns Regarding the Proposed Coastal Gateway Port in Union Bay**

Dear Prime Minister Carney and Premier Eby,

On behalf of the signatories below, we are writing to express our strong concerns regarding the proposed Coastal Gateway Port project in Baynes Sound, and to urge your governments to ensure that any review processes related to this proposal are rigorous and science-based, respect indigenous rights and are fully protective of the ecological and economic values of Baynes Sound.

Baynes Sound, a federally recognized Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area, is one of British Columbia's most important marine ecosystems. It supports nearly half of the province's shellfish production, functions as a nursery for the last commercially harvested herring stock on the coast and provides a key traditional food-harvesting area for the K'ómoks First Nation. Any shipbuilding, repair, or dismantling operation must be carefully evaluated to ensure it is compatible with these ecological, cultural, and economic values.

Ship construction, repair, and recycling can only be conducted safely in fully contained industrial facilities with impermeable surfaces and appropriate environmental controls. The shallow nature of Baynes Sound means that constructing such a facility would likely require dredging or the beaching of vessels — both of which carry significant risks, including the potential introduction or mobilization of heavy metals and other contaminants.

No such containment systems currently exist in Baynes Sound. The proponents of Coastal Gateway Port Ltd. are the same individuals associated with Deep Water Recovery (DWR), whose prior ship-breaking activities in Union Bay resulted in documented environmental non-compliance. The B.C. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy issued multiple warnings to DWR and ultimately a Pollution Abatement Order in 2024, resulting in the cancellation of their lease and water access rights. A change in company name or spokesperson does not resolve the underlying concerns regarding suitability of the location or past performance.

There are, however, promising models for responsible ship recycling in Canada and British Columbia. MP Gord Johns, together with MLA Josie Osborne, has championed the development of a clean, regulated ship-recycling industry, including a proposed facility in Port Alberni. Such work, undertaken within proper industrial containment, under clear environmental standards, and in partnership with Indigenous and local communities, represents the type of responsible approach that should be encouraged.

Accordingly, we urge your governments to:

1. Ensure that any shipbuilding, repair, or recycling operations — especially those proposed for sensitive marine environments such as Baynes Sound — are subject to rigorous, transparent environmental assessment, science-based standards such as the EU Ship Recycling Regulation, strong regulatory oversight, and respect Indigenous rights.
2. Support the development of properly regulated, sustainable ship-recycling facilities in appropriate, deep-water industrial locations.
3. Develop a ship-recycling policy and regulatory framework that aligns with international best practices (EU SRR or equivalent) and ensures Indigenous rights are respected.

Canada’s marine economy should grow in ways that are sustainable, safe, and environmentally responsible. Protecting Baynes Sound — one of the most productive shellfish-growing regions in the country — from industrial contamination is essential to maintaining existing jobs, supporting coastal food systems, and ensuring long-term ecological resilience. At the same time, investing in world-class ship-recycling capacity in appropriate locations can generate high-quality employment and align with national economic and environmental goals.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

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CC: Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Honourable Joanne Thompson; Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Nature, the Honourable Julie Dabrusin; Minister of Transport, the Honourable Steven Mackinnon; BC Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, the Honourable Randene Neill; BC Minister of Environment and Parks, the Honourable Tamara Davidson; Member of Parliament for the riding of Courtenay—Alberni, Gord Johns; Member of Legislative Assembly for the Mid-Island Pacific Rim, the Honourable Josie Osborne