

MEDIA RELEASE

25 March 2009

Young Artists Helping Sea Turtles

School children will be helping Sea Turtle Foundation raise awareness of the threats to sea turtles through an artwork project called *'Turtles for Tomorrow'*.

This project, partly funded by the Townsville City Council, will allow the production of a colourful 2010 calendar celebrating our iconic sea turtles. Twelve artworks will be selected from schools in Townsville to make up the *'Turtles for Tomorrow'* calendar.

Gitte Kragh, Project Manager for the Sea Turtle Foundation, said she is thrilled to have the younger generation involved. Ms Kragh said, "We will be running this competition during the first four months of 2009 and invite schools in the Townsville region to submit artworks depicting sea turtles that are a part of our Great Barrier Reef."

"The winners will be announced when the calendar is launched at a community fun day for Threatened Species Day in September. Artwork is a powerful way to convey the message that these beautiful creatures are under threat from human pressures and we need to take action now to ensure we have turtles for tomorrow," she continued.

Primary schools across Townsville are currently creating their masterpieces which will be judged by representatives from Townsville City Council, Perc Tucker Gallery, Aitkenvale Library, Sea Turtle Foundation and indigenous artists.

Cr Vern Veitch from Townsville City Council said the money was well spent on this project. He also stated that the Council was happy to support the project by exhibiting the artwork at Perc Tucker Gallery and Aitkenvale Library.

"We encourage our community to take an active role in educating the public and especially our children about threats to our iconic marine life.

"We have six of the seven species of sea turtles in the world that spend some part of their lives in the Great Barrier Reef right off Townsville.

"We must take responsibility to do everything we can to protect them."

The competition is still open for entry with pieces to be submitted before May 20. Contact Sea Turtle Foundation on 4721 2699 or at their website: www.seaturtlefoundation.org for more information.

The artwork will be on public display for three weeks at the Aitkenvale Library and for four weeks at Perc Tucker Gallery in August and September.

Media enquiries:

Gitte Kragh, Sea Turtle Foundation, (07) 4721 2699 / 0431 259 129, gitte.kragh@seaturtlefoundation.org