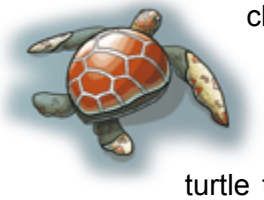
Media Release
19 May 2010

Myrtle's Battle against Climate Change

When a scientist presents their PhD, most people expect a boring report that is hundreds of pages long, with numerous complicated graphs and lots of footnotes.



Instead James Cook University PhD Student Mariana Fuentes has produced a children's book with illustrations, and only 10 pages long.

The book is based on Mariana's findings on her study of the impacts of climate change on the northern Great Barrier Reef green sea turtle population. The main character of the book "Myrtle" is based on a real turtle that was satellite-tagged in 2008 at Mer Island, Torres Strait. Myrtle was named by students from the local Tagai State College.

This book is dedicated to the children of the Torres Strait islands with the hope that they learn about the effects of climate change on sea turtles and find a way to make a difference and to this end, Mariana is hoping that it will be incorporated into the school curriculum for Grade 7 students.

A limited number of the books are available from the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre.

About the Author

Originally from Brazil, Mariana moved to Australia almost a decade ago to become a marine biologist. She has been working on sea turtle conservation and management programs for rhe last eight years and has conducted research on many aspects of sea turtle biology and ecology. Sea turtles have an important role to play both ecologically and, for the people of Torres Strait, culturally. It was Mariana's commitment to building the capacity of local communities to address the impacts of climate change that led to the development of this book, which aims to educated Torres Strait children about the perils faced by sea turtles in the face of climate change, and what these challenges mean to the Torres Strait communities.

Mariana's research has been funded by MTSRF and funding for the book design and print production were provided by Reef and Rainforest Research Centre. The book was launched at the fourth Annual MTRSF conference being held in Cairns 18 – 20 May 2010.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>ENDS>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

The 2010 MTSRF Annual Conference is in Cairns from May 18 - 20 at Pullman Reef Hotel & Casino, Wharf St, Cairns. Media is welcome. For more information please contact the Conference Media Co-ordinator, Gaye Scott, phone 0418 793 009, gaye.scott@the2020group.com.au or Sheriden Morris, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Managing Director, Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility, phone 07 4050 7400, email sheriden.morris@rrrc.org.au