



Australian Government
Department of the Environment,
Water, Heritage and the Arts



MEDIA ALERT

28th April 2008

Understanding and managing the threats to our Reef, Rainforest and Torres Strait environment.

Many of Australia's leading environmental and social scientists will be joining industry leaders in Cairns for a four day conference on the environmental risks facing our Reef, Rainforest and the Torres Strait.

The 2008 Marine and Tropical Science Research Facility (MTSRF) Conference is being held from Monday 28th April until Thursday 1st May 2008. The Conference will provide an opportunity to share information and explore solutions to the threats facing the unique natural systems of North Queensland.

Managing Director, Sheriden Morris, said "Over 300 of Australia's best scientists are involved in the MTSRF program and are working on answering questions such as what can we do about climate change impacts on tropical rainforests and the reef? How do we fix up poor water quality? How do we deal with a rapidly increasing population in this region and what will the impact be on our surroundings? Will the Cassowary survive? How will recreational fishers respond to more people and less fish? What do we do about sea level rise for the low lying islands in the Torres Strait?"

"This Conference is an opportunity for scientists, government and industry leaders to hear about the latest research and to discuss solutions to the problems we are facing now and into the future."

The Reef & Rainforest Research Centre represents the Australian Government's Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility (MTSRF) and is part of the Commonwealth Environmental Research Facilities Program. The aim of MTSRF is to provide world class solution based science to ensure the future health of North Queensland's public environmental assets.

The Australian Government has invested \$40 million over four years into North Queensland to fund scientific research to support the conservation and sustainable use of our environment. The fund also aims to build capacity in the north to assist in the understanding and management of our environment.

www.rrrc.org.au

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"Industries such as tourism rely heavily on our environment to generate over \$8 million annually and employ over 50,000 people so it is crucial that the scientific research generated through the MTSRF program delivers meaningful and useful solutions for both our region and Australia as a vital part of our natural heritage," said Ms Morris.

The Conference program is available from the Reef & Rainforest Research Centre's website (www.rrrc.org.au). Interested members of the community are invited to attend and should contact Toni Fulton on 0407 632 945.

For further information:

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