



**19 February 2010**

**Press release: Great news for North Queensland's Environment**

On behalf of a large consortium of research providers and end users working in North Queensland, the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC) welcomed today's announcement by Minister Peter Garrett on the future of the Commonwealth Environment Research Facilities (CERF) Program in North Queensland.

"This is fantastic news for everyone living and working in the region, including major industries such as the tourism industry," said Sheriden Morris, Managing Director of the RRRC.

"We are delighted with the Minister's recognition of the importance of managing this research hub locally, and the importance of coordinating effort and investment across multiple agencies and interested parties. This will ensure the collaborative research environment the RRRC has fostered through the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility (MTRSF) will continue into the future."

The Cairns- and Townsville-based RRRC currently manages and delivers the Australian Government's \$40 million MTRSF on behalf of a large consortium of research providers and end users, including James Cook University, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, the University of Queensland, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO), the Torres Strait Regional Authority, the Wet Tropics Management Authority, and many others.

Sheriden thanked the local community, including the business community and AMPTO, for their support for the MTRSF and RRRC during this process. "In particular, we would like to sincerely thank Jim Turnour, Member for Leichhardt, who has worked tirelessly to ensure that our region continues to receive federal funding and attention," said Sheriden.

"This is also a huge vote of confidence in the ~300 researchers in our consortium, who have really worked hard over the past four years to generate so many scientific solutions for the region's environmental problems," she added. "The additional announcement of bridging funding will be a relief to these people, who were no doubt starting to wonder how they would pay their mortgages after 30 June 2010."

"We look forward to working closely with the entire North Queensland community to put together a research proposal that continues the good work of the MTRSF and continues to deliver for our region."

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**For more information about RRRC or the MTRSF, please visit our website at [www.rrrc.org.au](http://www.rrrc.org.au)**