



AUSMEPA MEDIA RELEASE

ISSUED BY THE AUSTRALIAN MARINE ENVIRONMENT
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (AUSMEPA)

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Torres Strait school students to learn about boating safety and their marine environment.

AUSMEPA has just completed a ground breaking project, creating two readers with the help of students in Torres Strait. The books will be used in school literacy programs in Australia's most northern region, Torres Strait. There are 16 schools on various islands dotted throughout Torres Strait, which consists of 18 island and 2 Northern Peninsula Area communities. The islands are scattered over a geographic area of 48,000 square kilometres, from the tip of Cape York, north towards the borders of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

The readers, titled *Boating Safety in Torres Strait* and *Our Environment Our Future*, were written by Bob Winters, an AUSMEPA consultant with the help of 18 students from Tagai College on Thursday and Horn Islands. The children spent several days in a workshop learning about key boating safety issues and preventing pollution which can have a physical and harmful impact on their community and the marine environment. Tagai College Teachers and their boating equipment were essential in the development and photography for these books.

The students appear throughout both readers undertaking basic boating safety education as well as investigating marine environmental threats to their community and learning how to prevent harmful impacts of things like litter, ghost nets, climate change, pollution from boats as well as the threats to Turtles and local fisheries.

The booklets contain 17 pages and almost 50 highly colourful photographs of the students and their environment. Each subject area is discussed in terms of What are the facts? What are the issues? What can we do?

Major funding for the project was made available by Maritime Safety Queensland with funding assistance from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

Under the project funding, a total of 400 copies of each reader will be provided to the schools in Torres Strait, with each of the children who appear in the readers being given their own personal copies.

For more information please contact Bob Winters on 0410 552 574.

Some sample photos from the readers:





Editors Note – About AUSMEPA

Australia has an abundance of precious marine resources, with an almost endless array of fine beaches; we need to look after them.

The Australian Marine Environment Protection Association (AUSMEPA) is dedicated to protecting Australia's marine environment and creates free innovative education programs for schools and seafarers.

AUSMEPA is supported by many maritime companies, individuals and organizations. Funds raised are used to create free action focused education resources for schools, seafarers and other users of the marine environment. AUSMEPA is a founding member of the International Association of Marine Environment Protection Associations (INTERMEPA). www.intermepa.org

AUSMEPA has developed a range of interactive web based educational programs for schools and the community, available from the AUSMEPA website at:

<http://www.ausmepa.org.au/marine-conservation-education-for-schools.htm>

Free posters are mailed to schools on request.

AUSMEPA seeks members from those with an interest in protecting the marine environment, to support its sustainable future and at the same time contribute to:

- Behaviour change education of all Australians in the protection of the Australian marine environment;
- Providing marine environmental programs for young Australians so they can take action now;
- Empowering responsible practices among ships, ports and communities that use the sea; and
- Increasing community recognition of the role of the maritime industry in marine environment management, pollution reduction and sustainable practices.

AUSMEPA invites the community to be involved in protecting the Australian marine environment and saving the world's oceans. Membership and sponsorship details are described on the AUSMEPA website at <http://www.ausmepa.org.au/australian-marine-environment-protection-association-how-to-support.htm>

AUSMEPA acknowledges quality shipping calling at Australian ports through its Ship Membership Scheme see <http://www.ausmepa.org.au/marine-environment-protection-association-ship-membership-scheme.htm>

An educational DVD titled 'Welcome to Australia – Protecting the Marine Environment' provides information to seafarers travelling through Australian waters about our unique marine environment reminding them of the need for continued protection of the ocean from ship sourced pollution. The DVD is placed on every ship arriving in Australia for the first time. To view the DVD see <http://www.ausmepa.org.au/australian-marine-environment-protection-association-dvd.htm>

