



## *Turtle Talk - August 2022*

### **Journey to Recovery**

Welcome to Sea Turtle Foundation's August 2022 edition of Turtle Talk. We're excited to be getting back on track with our purpose to ensure sea turtle populations do not go extinct and there are Turtles for Tomorrow.

The COVID-19 crisis severely affected the operations of the Sea Turtle Foundation. Border closures left the Foundation's staff and volunteers unable to travel to carry out their activities, and the fundraising that supports this important work dwindled.

We've been on a journey of recovery to get the organisation swimming along again. A Strategic Plan has been put in place to make sure we're always working towards our objectives for sea turtles of:

- increasing global populations
- protecting and expanding nesting and foraging habitats
- increasing knowledge of and protecting migration pathways
- identifying, highlighting and minimising processes that threaten populations
- promoting community awareness of threats and solutions
- facilitating research
- raising funds for conservation
- encouraging the proactive implementation of solutions by government and non-government communities
- stopping the non-cultural taking of eggs and turtles
- enabling sustainable indigenous hunting and egg collection.

Look out for our newsletters every quarter to keep you up to date on our progress.



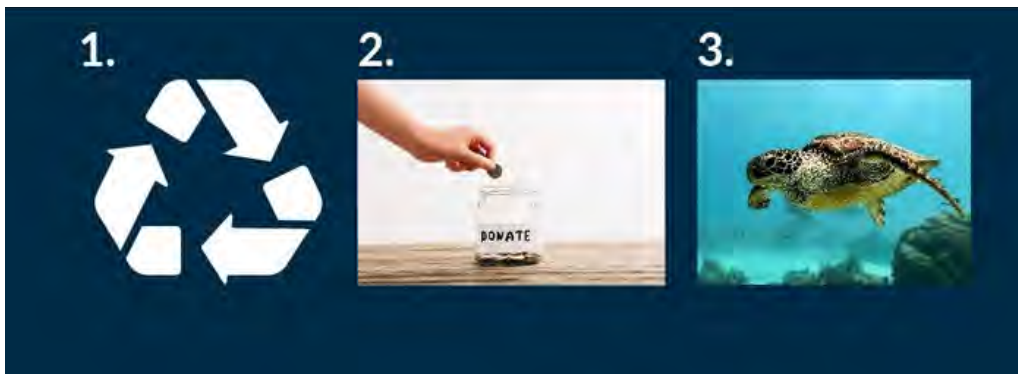
# Contract Awarded

The Queensland Department of Environment and Science has awarded Sea Turtle Foundation a contract to administer and manage the Turtle Stranding Volunteer Network. Under this contract STF will:

- coordinate and deliver training for volunteer turtle rescue groups
- manage data collected by volunteers
- ensure timely input into StrandNet database of marine life strandings
- report on volunteer responses
- assist volunteer groups to have the resources they need for their activities.

STF is thrilled to have this opportunity and looks forward to updating you on activities conducted under this contract in future newsletters.

## You can help with Containers for Change

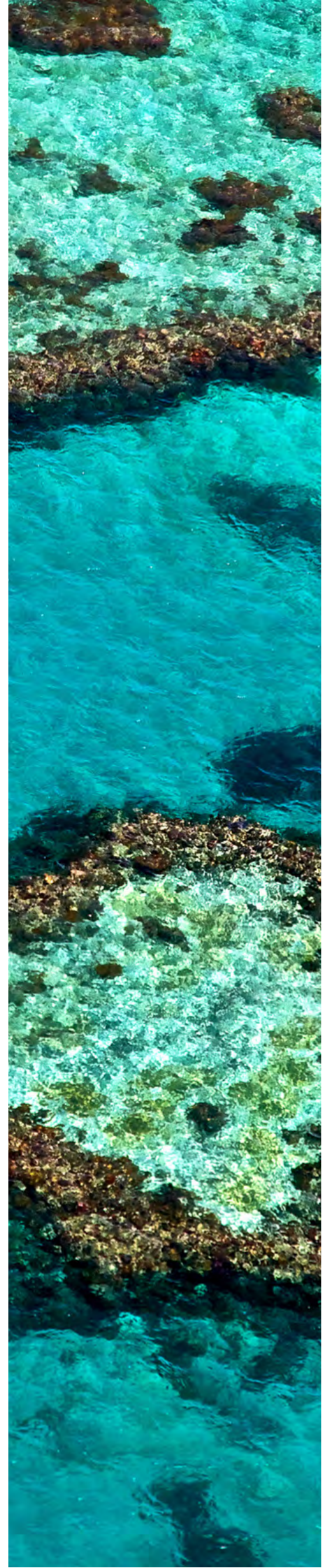


In Queensland, Australia you can help STF make sure there are Turtles for Tomorrow just by recycling your containers.

Take your containers to a refund point and use code C10012195 to make sure your refund is donated to Sea Turtle Foundation.

Get your workplace or social group on board to maximise your impact.

You'll be helping the planet twice by funding work to protect sea turtles and reducing the amount of waste that ends up in waterways.



# The Importance of Turtles

A common question is why are sea turtles so important to the survival of the planet?  
Sea turtles help:



- keep marine habitats healthy and productive including seagrasses, coral reefs and coastal dunes)
- critical nutrients move from the ocean to the beaches
- balance marine food chains
- provide habitat for other marine life.

***A healthy ocean keeps the planet healthy.***



## Strandings Season 2022, Townsville, Qld

We are preparing for nesting season 2022. Whilst government provides some support, such as online training and some equipment, it does not give us funds to fully run this service. Can you help us by making a donation, no matter how small so our volunteers can deliver on this service? This includes:

- recruiting volunteers and training them to get stranding training accreditation.
- simulated training on the beach.
- supply of several basic stranding kits
- uniforms for accredited volunteers
- building relationships with other rescue organisations, vets, government and academia.
- costs of travel to stranding, such as fuel.
- phone plan costs for stranding co-ordinator.

No matter how small the donation, it will really help us to save as many stranded turtles as possible in the Townsville region. Thank you.

[Donate - Sea Turtle Foundation](#)





## Volunteers Needed

### Strandings Team - Townsville Based

We are gearing up our volunteer strandings team for the 2022 nesting and hatching season (around September to March each year).

Strandings can occur at any time, so we have a roster of who's available over the season. The Foundation will also provide a work shirt, cover fuel costs and provide the central strandings phone to receive calls from the strandings hotline.

Volunteers will need to:

- complete the Department of Environment and Science online training modules, which the Foundation will organise.
- complete the infield hands on training run by the Foundation
- become proficient at ensuring stranding protocols are strictly followed
- commit to the roster they advise they can do
- be prepared for physical work that may occur in poor weather
- pay attention to detail for paperwork required by the Department of Environment & Science
- have a professional approach to interactions with the general public and other organisations such as vets, academic organisations, local government and other rescue and rehabilitation organisations in the Townsville region.



# Spotlight on Species - Hawksbill Turtle

Hawksbill turtles are named for their beak-like mouth. They forage over coral reefs and rock outcroppings, which provide a smorgasbord of their favourite food - sea sponges - using their specialised beaks to pick them out of cracks and crevices.

Sea sponges are toxic and most animals can't consume them, but the Hawksbill can eat over 450kg in one year! This provides an important service to the marine environment by preventing sea sponges from overgrowing corals and suffocating reefs - just one of the ways sea turtles help to keep our oceans healthy.



The tiny Hawksbill turtle hatchlings swim for several days out into the wide blue sea after emerging from their sandy nests. Like all sea turtles, the males never return to land again. The females return only to lay their eggs, which happens every two to four years from around the age of 25 to 30.

Solitary creatures, they are active throughout the day, snacking on sponges and adding a salad of algae and seagrass here and there for a bit of variety. They wedge themselves into cozy rock ledges or inviting coral fields when they want to rest and sleep.



Already vulnerable, research indicates that the number of hawksbill turtles in Australia is declining. It is threatened by human impacts on its nesting beaches, climate change and through commercial fishing practices.

Click [here](#) to become a Sea Turtle Foundation member and help protect the beautiful hawksbill turtle.



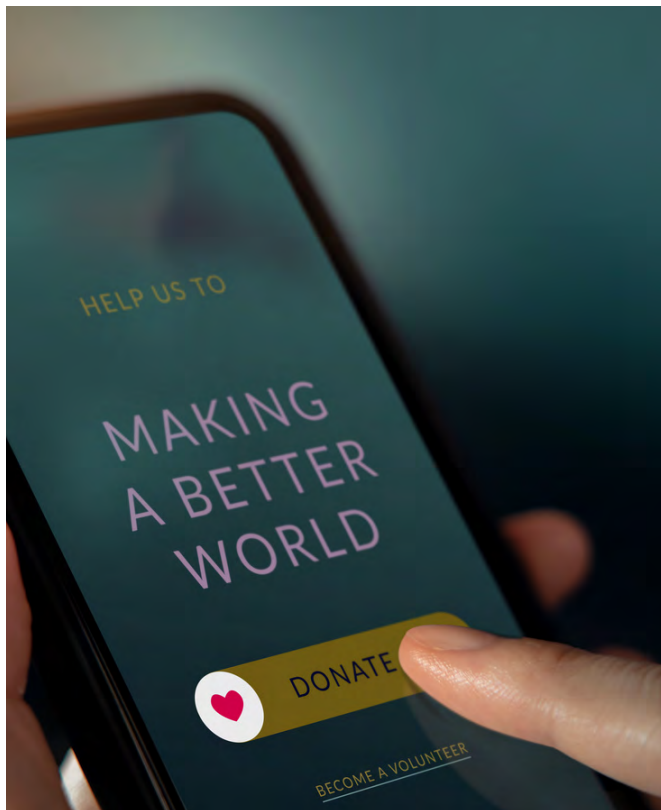
# State of the Environment Report

The 2021 State of the Environment Report states that three of Australia's six sea turtle species are endangered, while three are vulnerable.

Climate change is the biggest danger to sea turtles as it results in habitat loss from coral bleaching, seagrass loss, rising sea levels and extreme weather events. Increasing beach temperatures are also a threat to sea turtles as turtle eggs incubated at higher temperatures produces more females

Pollution, marine debris and the bycatch of turtles by commercial fisheries enterprises also put pressure on sea turtle populations.

While the State of the Environment report doesn't deliver much good news, it gives us all the impetus to do more to protect our marine environment. You can help by supporting Sea Turtle Foundation.



## Help us on our Journey to Recovery

Sea Turtle Foundation lost over 40% of its revenue in the first year of COVID-19 alone! Help us get back on track today by making a donation.

Sea Turtle Foundation is a registered charity so all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

All contributions are greatly appreciated and will help us ensure there are Turtles for Tomorrow.

[Click here to make your donation now!](#)



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