

# Reducing Light Pollution in Coastal Communities



Funded by Department of Environment and Science



The Reducing Light Pollution in Coastal Communities project aimed to tackle light pollution and its impact on marine turtles across the Sunshine Coast, Bundaberg, and Gladstone regions. 11 co-design workshops across 3 council regions involved 109 residents from diverse sectors. The sessions revealed a strong community awareness of light pollution, its effects on turtles, and emphasised a need for policy changes. Attendees identified three pillars for impactful initiatives: research, education, and technology, advocating for evidence-based programs.

However, concerns arose regarding the lack of community ownership in conservation efforts, with participants feeling industry, businesses, and tourism operators should play a more active role. Attendees also highlighted the exclusionary nature of the term 'turtle-friendly' and expressed a desire for broader conservation efforts beyond turtles. There was a perception that government support was more passive, expecting community groups to take the lead.

The project's recommendations offer a strategic roadmap for future initiatives, emphasizing innovative engagement strategies like educational packs for children and beach signage, clear messaging on reducing light pollution, emphasis on volunteer participation, and optimized social media communication. Fostering collaboration among community, government, and industry was deemed essential.

The project's future involves disseminating information through academic journals and progressing to the next phase, which includes pre-testing, implementing, and evaluating initiatives for community success. Overall, the co-design workshops provided valuable insights for crafting region-specific campaigns to reduce light pollution and promote conservation efforts.

*"We look forward to continuing to support this research which will assist in preserving our iconic marine turtle population which is of great importance to our tourism industry, business community and local economy." - Bundaberg Regional Council*



Project partners: Sunshine Coast Council, Bundaberg Regional Council, Gladstone Regional Council