



Media release

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School Adopts a Wetland

Armed with a GPS and camera, school students gave the Ramsar Wetlands in Bowling Green Bay its health check.

The Ramsar Bowling Green Bay wetlands south of Townsville cover more than 35,000 hectares of tidal mudflats, mangrove forest, salt and freshwater marshes and river channels.

With the wetlands at the school's back door, Maidavale School joined the NQ Dry Tropics' Adopt a Wetland initiative.

Lisa Baynes from NQ Dry Tropics said it is exciting to offer the Adopt a Wetland initiative to give young people their chance to make a difference.

"Participating schools have remarked how fantastic it is to have our organisation come to them with resources and support.

"Next term there'll be six new Adopt a Wetland schools within the catchment of Bowling Green Bay."

The initiative entitles schools to hands-on tours with NQ Dry Tropics experts and funding to continue good works on the school's adopted site.

Speaking with a farmer about the impact of heavy rain on the wetlands prompted John Eade, Maidavale's School Principal, to Adopt a Wetland.

"Scott Fry [NQ Dry Tropics] suggested a time lapse camera and GPS would help students to see changes to wetland environment over months like the rising and lowering water table. We observe the animals and insects that rely on this waterway."

The grade six and seven students used their new found skills to tell a flood planning committee about the internationally significant wetlands.

They tested for water impurities over 12 months and shared their results with the Burdekin Bowen Integrated Floodplain Advisory Committee - the information was affirmation for farmers to their efforts in lowering run-off.

Note: NQ Dry Tropics secured \$2m for its project Protecting the Ramsar Wetland of Bowling Green Bay; Adopt a Wetland is an initiative of this project. These wetlands are of such global significance that it is listed under the international Ramsar Convention.

The 1971 Ramsar Convention was signed in the town of Ramsar in Iran. It is an intergovernmental treaty that member countries including Australia have committed to, to maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and to plan for their sustainable use.

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