



Media Release

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Reward offered for information on snubfin dolphin killers

A \$5,000 reward is being offered for information leading to the charging of those responsible for killing two rare snubfin dolphins within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Zone.

ING DIRECT – a long-time supporter of WWF’s work to protect the snubfin dolphin – is providing the reward after two dead dolphins were found tied to a mangrove and weighted down with concrete blocks near Townsville late last month.

"We've been working with WWF to better understand this rare and special species so when we heard about the recent killings, we were happy to put forward the reward to ensure this heartless activity is never repeated," said ING DIRECT CEO Don Koch.

WWF-Australia CEO Dermot O’Gorman said: "This is an appalling incident and the people responsible have still not been caught."

"Members of the community may have valuable information about the death of these rare dolphins, and we hope this reward will encourage them to speak out," Mr O’Gorman said.

Crime Stoppers Queensland is assisting Queensland Police and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) with the investigation and providing their specialist intelligence-gathering service in order to help identify those responsible. Crime Stoppers is available 24 hours a day to receive information.

Authorities indicate that the animals died after being entangled in fishing nets, and that those responsible attempted to hide the carcasses by weighing them down.

The snubfin is Australia’s very own dolphin species and was only recognised as a unique species in 2005. There is still a lot to discover about this rare dolphin but latest research indicates the loss of just one individual per year in addition to the natural mortality rate may be enough to trigger irreversible declines in local populations.

WWF has asked the Queensland and Australian governments to recognise the snubfin dolphin as an endangered species and provide the dolphin with the legal protection it needs.

"Even if you don’t have information about this particular incident, you can still help by signing WWF’s petition to achieve legal protection for the snubfin dolphin," Mr O’Gorman said.

"Snubfin dolphins are getting tangled in fishing nets and hit by boats, and coastal development is polluting their habitat. This may mean we lose the dolphin unless it gets the legal protection it deserves."

Information about this crime can be provided anonymously to Crime Stoppers 24hrs a day: Free Call: 1 800 333 000; SMS Report: Send ‘QLD’ + ‘(Your Information)’ to 1800 333 000; or online at www.qld.crimestoppers.com.au

For more information & photographs: Charlie Stevens, WWF Media Office, +61 (0)424 649 689

To sign the petition for legal protection of snubfin dolphins go to www.wwf.org.au