

## CONTEXT OF THIS REPORT

In August 1996, Senator Hill, Federal Environment Minister, gave his consent to the 'Port Hinchinbrook' marina resort and residential development proposed for Oyster Point in Hinchinbrook Channel. In making this decision, Senator Hill acknowledged concerns about regional impacts associated with developments in the Hinchinbrook area. Consequently, the Federal and Queensland Governments initiated the Hinchinbrook Region Coastal Management Plan to give guidance for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and ecologically sustainable development of the area (Littleproud 1996).

A prominent concern at the time was the impact of boat traffic generated by marina developments, particularly the 'Port Hinchinbrook' marina, on the local dugong population. Accordingly, Senator Hill stated that the Regional Plan '*...will provide specifically for the protection of Dugongs, turtles and other marine animals in Hinchinbrook Channel*' (Hill 1996a). Further, the Plan will provide for '*the regulation of boating activity, including speed limits where appropriate to protect marine animals*' (Hill 1996b). This plan '*will be in place prior to the Port Hinchinbrook Resort coming into operation*' (Hill 1996a).

Senator Hill continued '*This work will be supported by scientific research conducted by James Cook University into dugong movements which will be funded by the Commonwealth. This research will inform the regional planners who will draw on it when making appropriate arrangements for controlling boats*' (Hill 1996a). This report summarises that research.