

April 13, 2017

Residents to have a whale of a time at marine-themed Ecofest event

Ecofest 2017 will boast well-known Australian personalities who will share some 'turtley' cool facts in line with this year's theme - "Be Great to Our Barrier Reef".

Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett said gourmet seafood farmer, Matthew Evans, Sea Turtle Foundation Director, Tim Harvey and passionate soil biologist Sandra Tuszynska would be centre stage on Sunday, June 4 at the Gladstone Tondoon Botanic Gardens.

"Evans is best known as the host of popular SBS television programs Gourmet Farmers, What's the Catch and For the Love of Meat and, is also the owner of Tasmania's Fat Pig Farm," Councillor Burnett said.

"As the director of not-for-profit, non-government group Sea Turtle Foundation, Harvey is passionate about protecting sea turtles through research and action.

"Tuszynska, specialising in micro-ecology (fungal ecosystem biology), is known for her work in decreasing the amount of pesticides from Australian soils and preventing agricultural and industrial runoff into waterways."

Councillor Desley O'Grady, a member of the Gladstone Region Environmental Advisory Network, said the guest speakers would communicate important messages about human impacts on the marine environment.

"Humans can have an indirect impact on the marine environment such as the use of pesticides in the agriculture sector and it's important to acknowledge and learn from this," Councillor O'Grady said.

Cr O'Grady said the speakers would be located at the GREANhouse Tent on the day of the event.

"Harvey will present at 10am and discuss whether or not sea turtles are thriving or threatened; Evans will feature at 11am and outline what sustainable seafood is; and Tuszynska will speak at 1pm about fungi, the superheroes of our future," she said.

"Two environmental short films will also be presented on the day as well as talks from a Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority spokesperson."

For more information, visit Council's website at www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/ecofest

**MEDIA INFORMATION: For further information contact Council's Communications & Marketing Unit
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