

My Sea, My Timor



by Kim Kane

ILLUSTRATED BY GIBRAEL CAROCHO



FOR THE CHILDREN OF TIMOR-LESTE,
FOR WHOM MARITIME BOUNDARIES ARE FOUGHT
– THE KEEPERS OF OUR SEA.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS :

The Land and Maritime Boundary Office (LMBO) acknowledges the wonderful collaboration that went into bringing this book “My Sea, My Timor” to life. This is a children’s book that much like Timor-Leste’s creation story, explores the wonderful relationship that exists between Timorese children and their sea, with all its creatures, large and small, and ecosystems, that the Timorese must protect for future generations to enjoy. The author, Kim Kane, pays a triumphant tribute to the poetry of Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão. The illustrator, Gibrael Carochó, brings to life all the different characters of the book with vibrant illustrations that will enchant and captivate generations of Timorese children. Together, we have created a book that celebrates the beauty of the Timor-Leste’s seas and fosters a love and respect for marine life and biodiversity in the hearts of our young readers. ©LMBO 2024



Land and
Maritime
Boundary
Office



Nestled between the Banda Sea
and the Arafura Sea is my sea.
I put on my snorkel and jump in.

What do I see?



My sea has an underwater garden that Pygmy Blue Whales travel all the way from Australia to visit.



My sea has Flying Fish that zip across the top of the water
so fast I can hardly catch their fluted wings.

My sea has sleek dolphins sewing the waves, arching
in and out with machine precision.



My sea has Plate Coral as large as hammocks and
puffy Coral Cushions as plump as cakes.

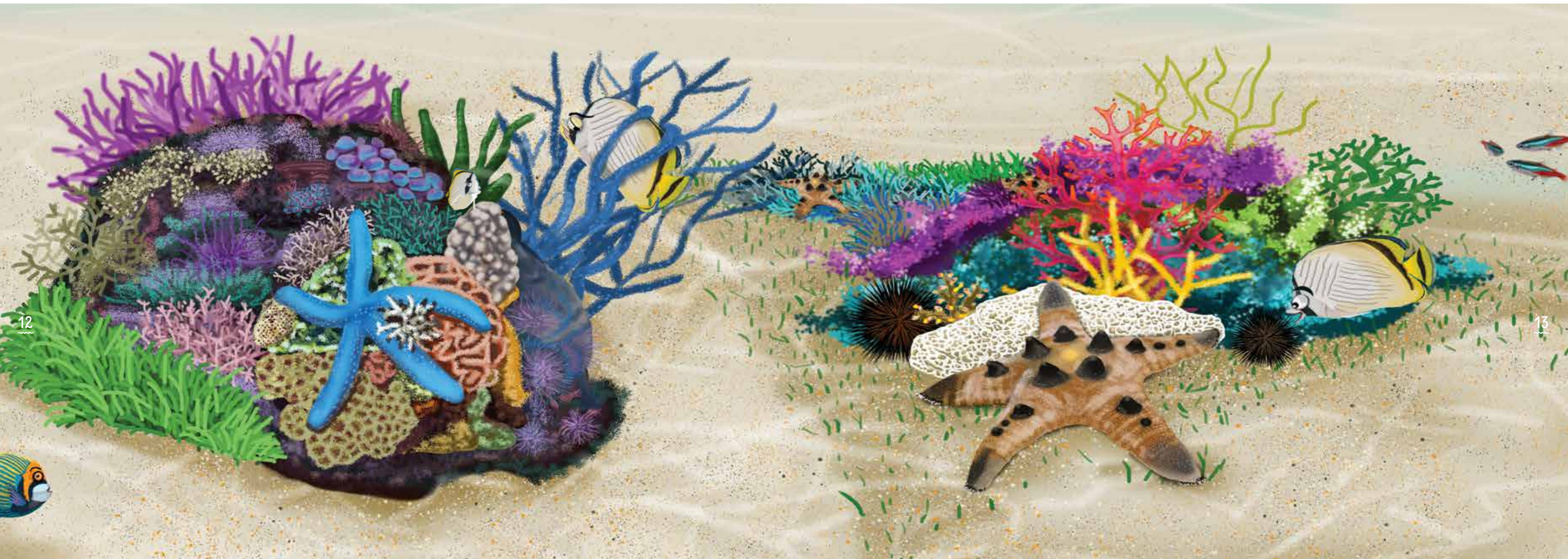
My sea has coral that blushes
as pink as a baby's teething cheeks.



My sea is a jewellery box of colours kept bright by the upwellings that keep the coral cool...

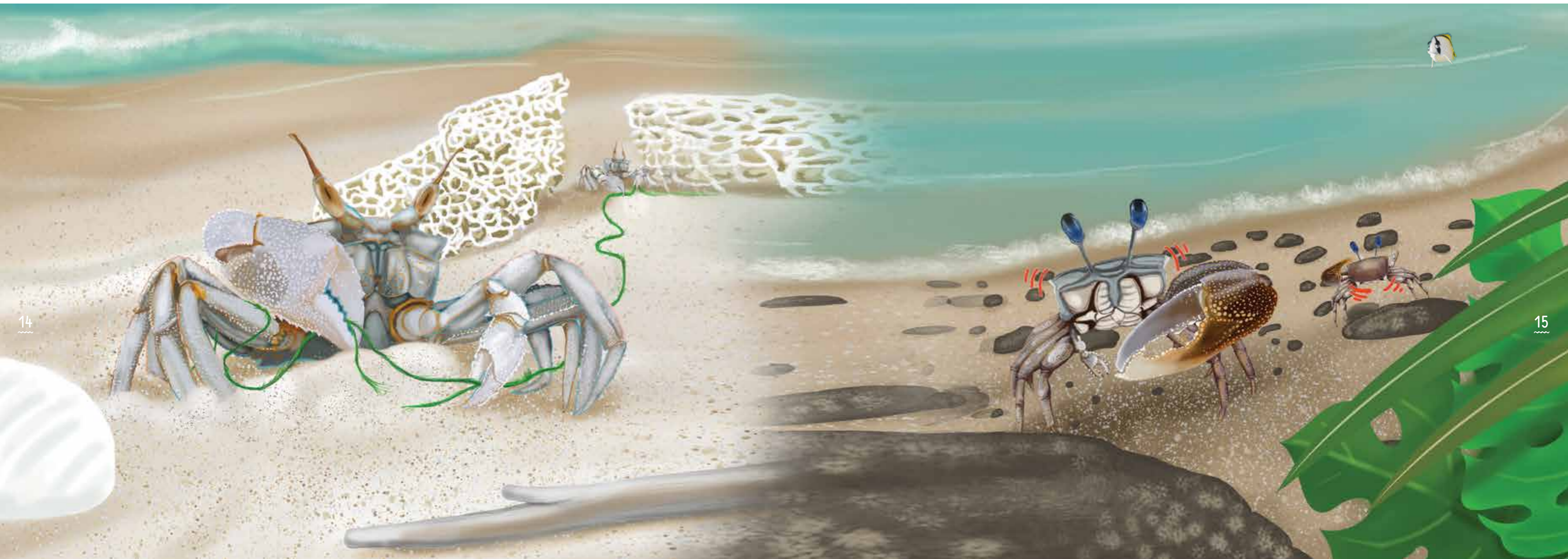


just as the sea cools me.



My sea has starfish as blue as a fisherman's bucket.

My sea has Choc Chip Starfish that look
as sweet as cookies on TV.



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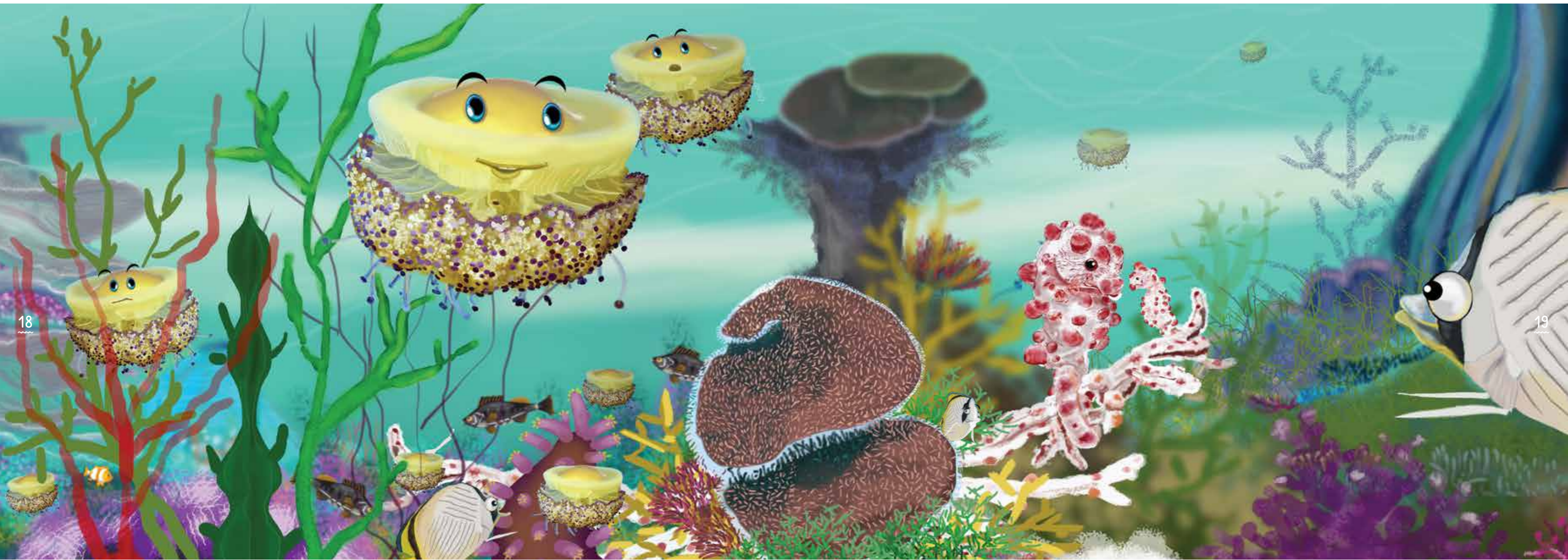
My sea has tiny, sandy crabs and crabs as clear as glass.

My sea has Fiddler Crabs dancing gleefully to hidden ocean beats.
They flick their bottoms from side ...to side ...to side...
Can you do it too?!



My sea has Boxer Crabs which carry two anemones like pom poms.
The anemones sting predators and catch food for the Boxer Crab to eat.

The Boxer Crab and his anemones work together
in a perfect team.



My sea has jellyfish as pale and cloudy as banana juice.

A Pygmy Seahorse, pink and knobby, curls its tail to hold on tight.



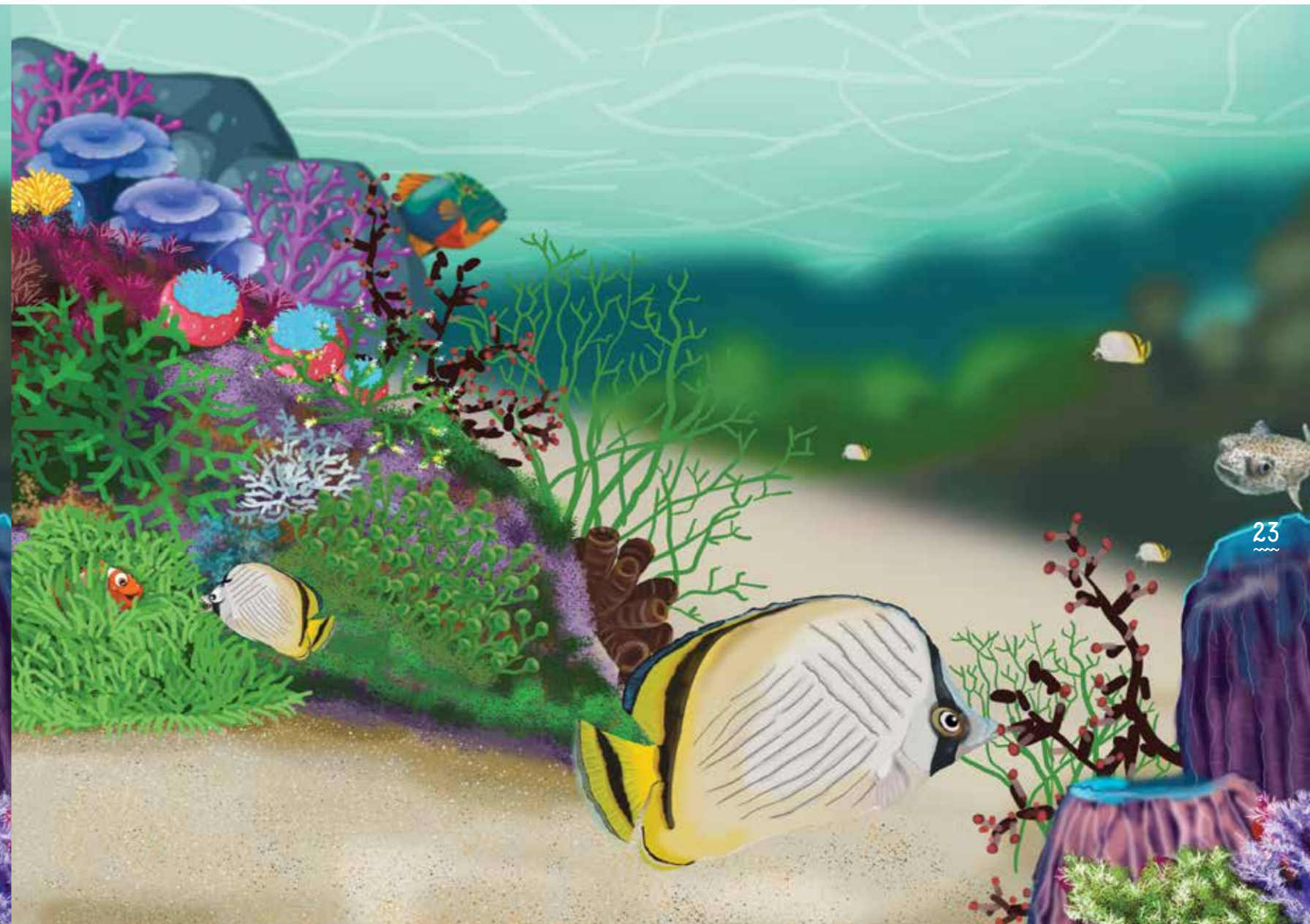
My sea has fish that look like horses and fish that look like rocks and stones.
My sea has Box Fish with sides as straight as *Uma Lulik*.*



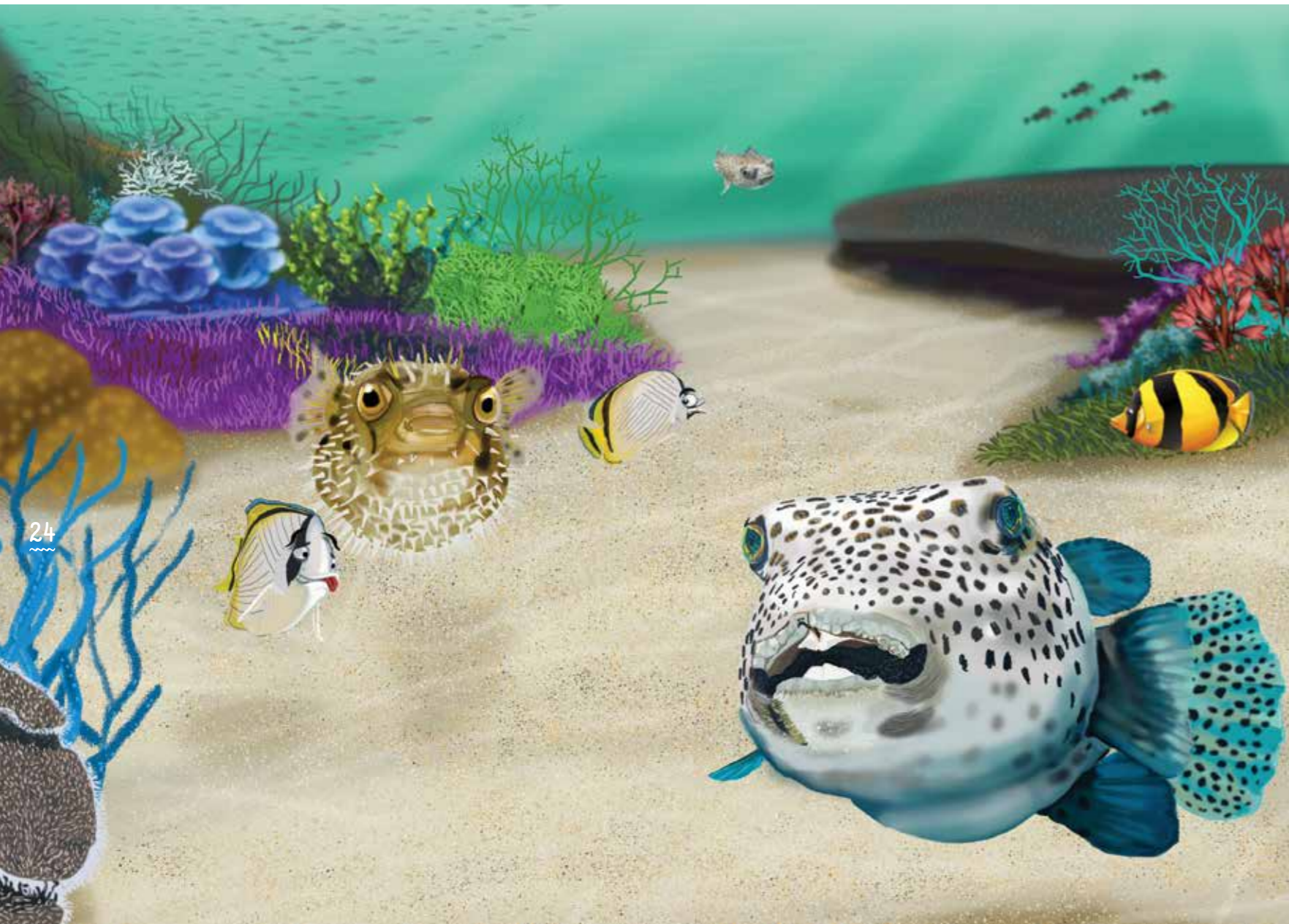
My sea has Damselfish in a permanent panic and Flounders
staring sideways along the reef floor.



My sea has Giant Sweet Lips
who look like they ate too much ai-manas*...



and Vagabond Butterfly Fish. Their fine stripes are like spoon lines
drawn in the sugar at the bottom of a coffee cup.



My sea has Puffer Fish that suck in water to make themselves as taut as spiky water balloons. This is scary for predators... and scary for me!



My sea has Trigger Fish that shoot as fast and straight as spearguns. The Trigger Fish mark out their underwater territory as we protect ours.



My sea is full of cleaners. My sea has Sea Cucumbers that purify the water and Parrot Fish who clean the coral like the busiest of *inan-aman*.*
The Sea Cucumbers poop keeps my sea-garden growing.

My sea has Cleaner Shrimp who clean the teeth of fish queuing in line.
You can open your mouth too if you are brave... I am not!



Along the shore, the Mangroves filter the water and the salty air.
The Cleaner Shrimp, the Sea Cucumbers, the Parrot Fish and the Mangroves all clean...

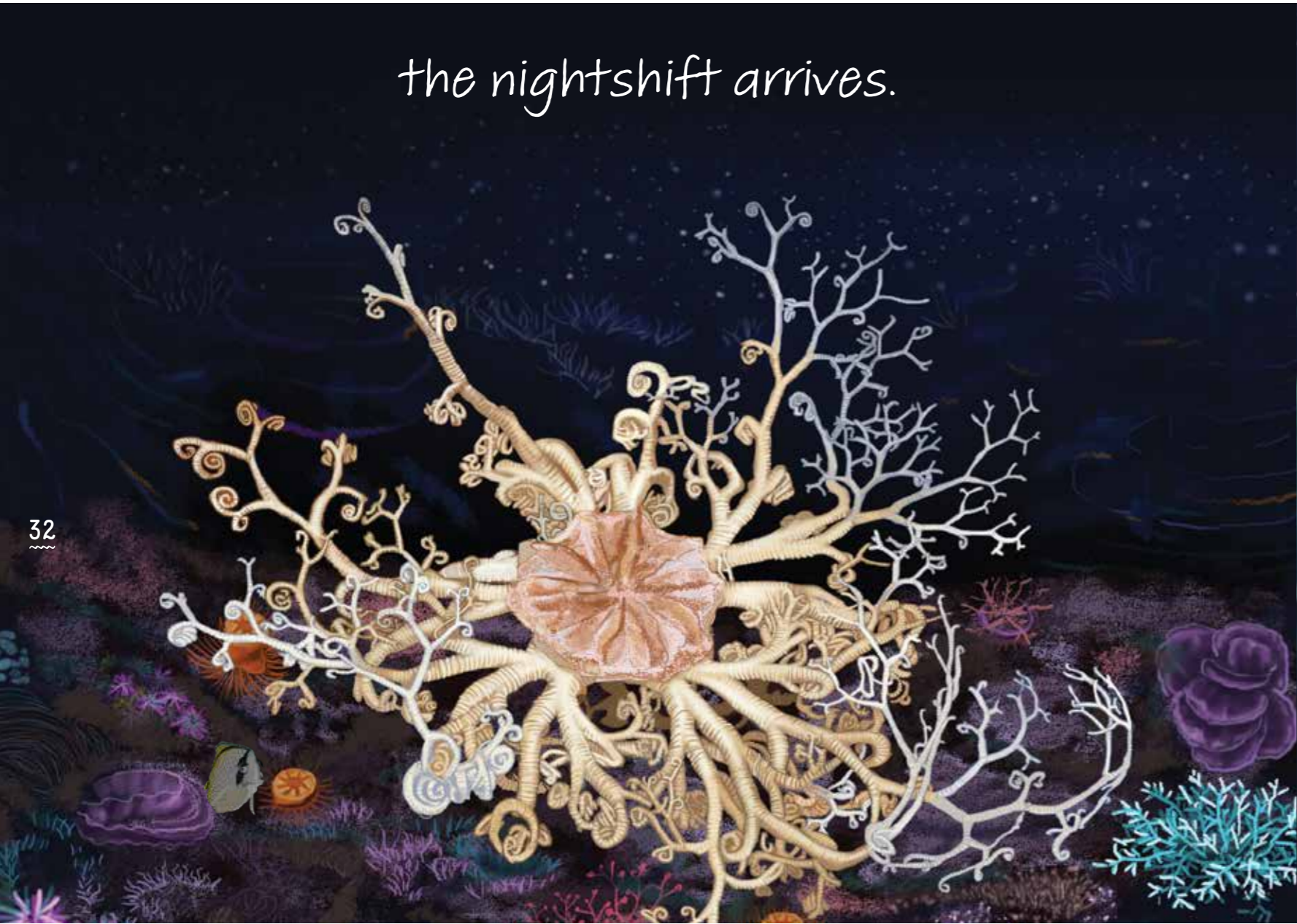


and we must do our bit too!



In my sea, as the sun sets, the fish park themselves
in crevices to sleep and...

the nightshift arrives.



My sea has Basket Star that unfurl like ghostly lace
and worms that glow like stars.
There are stars above and stars below.



My sea has a turtle that breaks the surface of the water for air.
I just catch the pattern of his ancient shell marked with stories
and secrets in the moonlight.

My sea is a treasure chest with
so many things I can hardly hold
them all in my head.
But on a clear, still day,
I gaze up at the silver ceiling...
and I see me in

My Sea, My Timor

WHAT CAN YOU SEE
IN OUR SEA?



TEACHERS' NOTES

The Timor-Leste reef is a critical part of the world's Coral Triangle. Because the reef has been protected, our reef is the most biodiverse in the whole world. We have the potential to engage in carefully managed tourism on the reef and show the rest of the world what a beautiful and precious place it is. Managed carefully, tourism will provide jobs for the families of Timor-Leste now and in the future.

MEET APEU

CAN YOU FIND APEU, THE ANGEL FISH?!
Cheeky Apeu, our Angel Fish is everywhere. Sometimes he is with friends and sometimes he is alone. Sometimes he is quite visible and sometimes he is hiding. Can you find Apeu?!

SEA CUCUMBERS

Did you know that Sea Cucumbers are the secret heroes of our reef? It is important to leave them in the water as they purify the water and their poo fertilises the seabed. Before we had regulations, the Sea Cucumber were removed from the reef in Timor-Leste and the reef became filled with Crown of Thorns starfish. Luckily, regulations were introduced and the Sea Cucumbers were no longer harvested which helped maintain water purity levels. This helped prevent Crown of Thorns starfish larvae from blooming, and their numbers dwindled. It is our responsibility to keep the reef healthy and alive by not over-fishing this precious resource.

MANGROVES

Sea cucumbers are not the only cleaners in the sea. Mangroves play a critical role to protect the sea and the shore. The Mangroves filter the water and the salty air. Their huge roots prevent erosion and provide protection for fish to breed. We must do our best to protect Mangroves so they can protect us!

PLASTIC POLLUTION

Plastics are terrible for the marine environment. Plastic rings can choke birds and fishing line has been found around all sorts of animals including sharks and turtles. Fish can also swallow micro plastics or tiny plastic beads found in our waterways. Here are some handy tips for keeping our marine park clean:

- Try to avoid using or buying products wrapped in unnecessary plastic, and find alternatives to single use plastics. It is always better to take a reusable bag shopping!
- Don't put plastics down the drain including soaps with microplastics in them. Remember anything in a gutter or a drain eventually makes its way to the sea!
- Always cut plastic rings before you put them in the bin as they can end up around seabirds' necks.
- Always pick up any rubbish you see in the water or along the shore and place it in the bin.

FUN FACTS

- All of the corals and all of the fish in this book are found in the waters of Timor-Leste along with thousands more.
- There are more than 400 types of coral in the Timor-Leste reef.
- There are over 1,200 species of fish.
- Timor-Leste is the best place in the world to catch a glimpse of elusive Pygmy Blue Whales. The whales migrate between the Banda Sea and Australia every year between October and November. In addition to Pygmy Blue Whales, you can also find Sperm Whales, Melon Heads, Pilot Whales, False Killer Whales and several species of dolphins. This group of mammals are called cetaceans and Timor has lots of them. In fact, one third of all known species of whales and dolphins in the world can be found in Timor-Leste's waters!

MY SEA, MY TIMOR

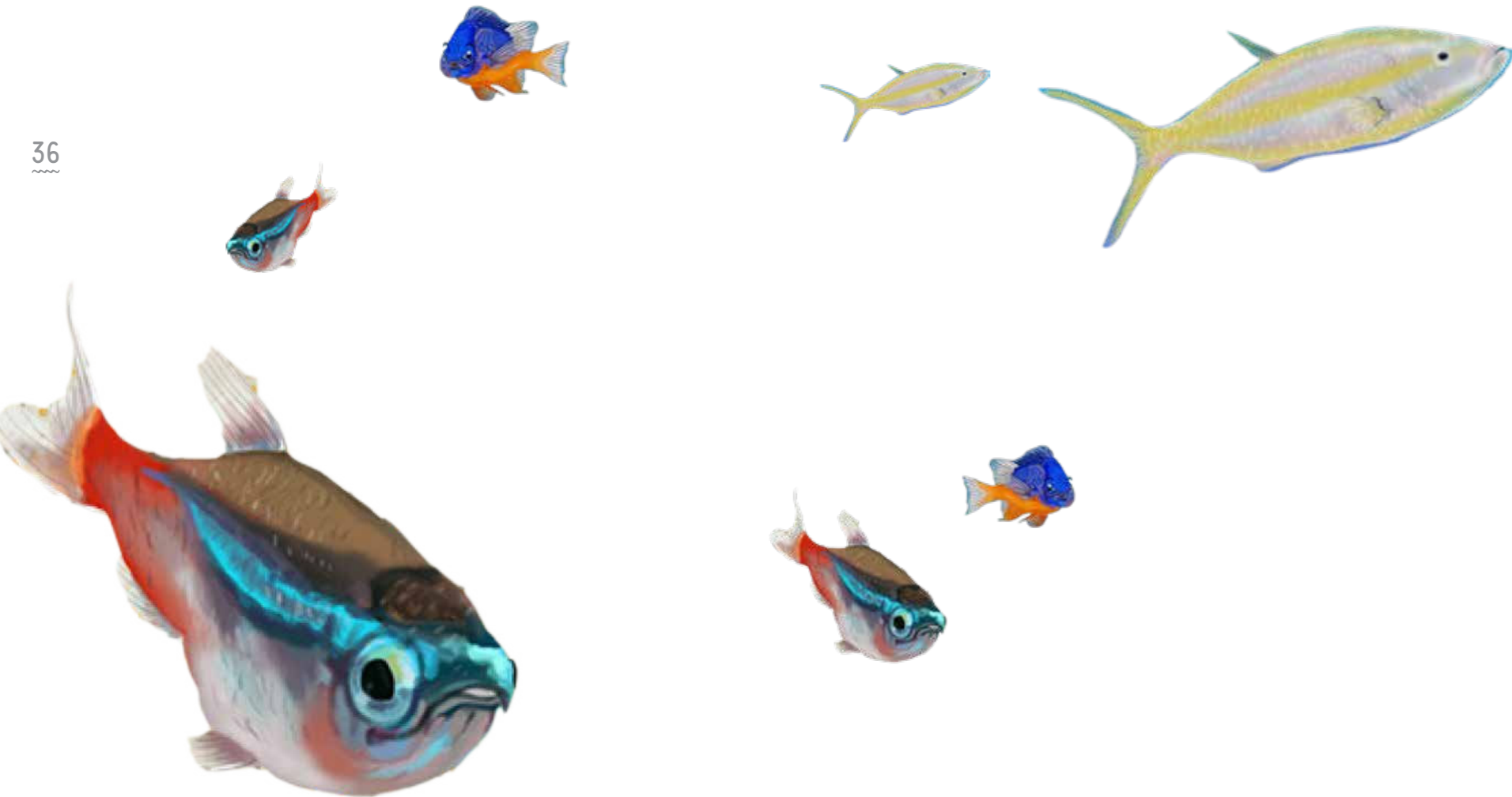
The title of this picture book, 'My Sea, My Timor,' comes from the LMBO campaign "Ha'u-nia Tasi, Ha'u-nia Timor". This campaign for the ocean and the blue economy was in turn inspired by a wonderful poem, "My Sea" written by Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão. The poem is beautiful but it is also important as it shows that the sea, our sea, belongs to Timor-Leste. We have worked hard to protect it for you and for your children and we believe the sea is Timor's greatest asset. Let's look after it!

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- * Uma Lulik = Timorese sacred house
 - * Ai Manas = Timorese chilli
 - * Inan - Aman = Parents


MORE INFORMATION :

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Design: vanzella.com.au







"NESTLED BETWEEN THE BANDA SEA AND THE ARAFURA SEA IS MY SEA.
I PUT ON MY SNORKEL AND JUMP IN.
WHAT DO I SEE?"

My Sea, My Timor celebrates the relationship between
Timorese children and their cherished sea.



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