

*Annual  
Report*  
**2001-2002**



*The Wet Tropics Area enjoyed,  
protected and treasured now and forever.*



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## **Note**

### *Abbreviations used in this report*

WHA:	World Heritage Area
EPA:	Environmental Protection Agency
QPWS:	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
DNRM:	Department of Natural Resources and Mines
CRC:	Cooperative Research Centre
NHT:	Natural Heritage Trust
JCU:	James Cook University

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# *Triple Bottom Line*

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#### **A note from the Executive Director...**

*This year, the Authority has moved to structure the Annual Report along the lines of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) reporting. To this end, the report is structured in three sections:*

- *Environment Report, including the State of the Wet Tropics Report*
- *Community and Social Report*
- *Management, Economic and Financial Report.*

*In making this change, we hope to demonstrate that the World Heritage Area plays an important role in the life of the community; through conservation of this spectacular region and provision of ecological goods and services; through economic returns and employment arising from the substantial nature-based tourism industry that depends upon the Area; and through the contribution that the Authority makes as part of the government structure of far north Queensland.*

*Your comments and thoughts on the role of the Authority and the structure of this annual report will be valued and greatly appreciated.*



*Russell Watkinson  
Executive Director*



# Highlights from the Chairperson

There is a well-worn environmental adage: 'Think globally, act locally'. This rather neatly fits my responsibilities as Chair of the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

The area known as the Wet Tropics of Queensland (alternatively known as Australia's Tropical Rainforests) is inscribed as a World Heritage Property. When that designation occurred we incurred responsibilities to the global community. In formal terms this means responsibility to the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO.

There is a wider, less formal responsibility and that is to future generations of humans, and the other life-forms with which we share the planet and depend upon for our survival. This is encapsulated in the principle of intergenerational equity, one of the key underpinnings of sustainable development. Regrettably, despite volumes of supportive rhetoric since the publication in 1987 of the report by the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Report), there is still a long way to go to reach this goal.

However, one world-wide environmental success story is World Heritage protection. The concept has been embraced by virtually every nation in the world. Countries including Australia are taking their responsibilities very seriously.

What has made World Heritage popular is not simply that *natural sites* preserve biodiversity and *cultural sites* preserve the early history of humans, but that World Heritage protection is a natural partner with ecotourism and cultural tourism.

When the world's largest industry, tourism, has an incentive to protect and manage environments on the

principles of sustainable development, we have at work that other fundamental principle in the Brundtland Report, the marriage of ecology and economics. Recognition of this interdependency is the fundamental difference between environmental management in the twenty-first century and that of the previous one. What are called 'win-win' solutions are far more common when the links between the environment and business are obvious.

The very slow progress in putting into practice the principles of sustainable development – as witnessed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg at the time of going press – is a consequence of our inability, or unwillingness, to make this link throughout the global economy.

With this background, I'll turn my attention to the management of World Heritage Properties in Australia and the Wet Tropics in particular.

Australian citizens, and Commonwealth and State governments, are justifiably proud of the fact that we have more World Heritage Properties listed for their natural values than any other country in the world. At the World Heritage Committee and World Heritage Bureau meetings in Cairns in November 2000, we (the nation, the two levels of government and, in particular, the then Environmental Ministers, Robert Hill and Rod Welford) showcased and celebrated our achievements in World Heritage management. That Cairns was chosen for this event was very appropriate. The Reef meets the Rainforest here; and of all our nation's natural attributes, this area ranks as the number one tourist attraction.

I have mentioned the fact that tourism is the world's leading industry. It is also this country's leading employer. With regard to tourism and World Heritage Properties, the following facts should be noted. First, in the order of half this country's international visitors come because of an interest in our natural attractions; that is, nature-based tourism is a cornerstone of this country's prosperity. Second, Australia is leading the way globally with accreditation/certification of ecotourism tours, accommodation and attractions. We have had an accreditation scheme since 1996. I have chaired the accreditation body from its commencement.

The Australian expertise in ecotourism certification has led to my team being made responsible for the development of a global certification scheme. This will be officially launched at the International Ecotourism Conference in Cairns in October 2002. This event will be the finale of the United Nations Year of Ecotourism.

Why go into this detail on ecotourism? Principally, because it is via ecotourism – and in particular, accredited ecotourism – that we meet our obligations to *present* our World Heritage sites.

To make clear the importance of ecotourism, it is necessary to note that the fundamental difference between it and conventional tourism is that the former requires the operator to provide top quality interpretation and education services to the tourist. As a consequence, environmental awareness grows in the community, and managers of protected areas have their compliance and enforcement burden reduced – and therefore we pay less for these tasks.

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The battle to have areas listed as World Heritage Properties is, more often than not, couched in terms of ecotourism values and employment versus some exploitive use (such as timber getting). Hence it is extremely important to be able to deliver ecotourism benefits to justify to doubters that protection does not come at the expense of jobs.

To that end, the Authority has, through a thorough public consultation process, developed over the last three years a Nature-based Tourism Strategy and a Walking Strategy. I have kept the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council informed of these developments – in fact, these strategies were developed at the request of the Ministerial Council.

Notwithstanding this progress, we are limited in our capacity to implement these strategies. While ecotourism products (such as tours and lodges) are the responsibility of the private sector, only the public sector can maintain the basic infrastructure of vehicle access tracks, walking tracks, etc. We don't have the luxury of a free 'highway' as our sister organisation, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), has with the Coral Sea.

For some years now the Authority has been arguing for funding to properly maintain and develop the access network, and other aspects of our strategies, with limited success. Yet we are encouraged to develop such strategies that involve the public and thereby build up expectations. Those with long memories will recall that when the compensation and structural adjustment package was formulated and costed prior to World Heritage listing of the Wet Tropics, a world-class walking track was a major item. Fifteen years later we still don't have one. However, I must point out that the Misty Mountains Trails is a wonderful initiative and will go some way to addressing community demands.

The proposed visitor information centre and canopy walk at Crawford's

Lookout is another ecotourism initiative which the Authority has worked on with local interests. Here is a good case for the promotion of a private-public partnership. However, it will not happen unless there is a government commitment to commence the process of partnership-building.

There are many other matters (such as weed and pest control) calling out for money. As an economist (one-time Taxation Officer, one-time Commissioner of the Industry Commission) I fully appreciate the difficulty governments have of meeting conflicting community concerns.

I must emphasise that I do not blame any of the Environment Ministers (either Commonwealth or State) which I have served for the seriously inadequate funding of the World Heritage Area.

In part I blame myself. I have failed to convince those who control the purse strings. I have failed to convince these people of the environment-economic interdependency I have discussed above. I have failed to convince these people that there is a community willingness to pay more taxes/charges *if* the benefits flow on to the local community and can be attributed (hypothecated) to the new imposts.

I came to the Authority just after it had had its budget reduced by 40 per cent. Putting myself in a Minister's position, I can understand that decision. World Heritage listing occurred in 1988, by 1996 there was still no Management Plan and the community was divided on World Heritage matters.

The negative situation which existed in 1996 is no longer. A Management Plan and much, much more exist. The far north Queensland community is not divided. The time is surely right to reward the Authority for its achievements.

Any new money will be spent on addressing threats such as weeds and

pests, saving cassowaries, opening up tracks closed because they are too dangerous, assisting the indigenous community become more fully involved in management and ecotourism, etc.

There are two very simple impediments to obtaining the resources necessary for the Authority to meet its statutory requirements and legitimate programs in the future. The first is that neither the Authority Board nor its staff get to 'sit at the table' when the Commonwealth and State Governments work their way through their annual budget allocations. This is something that still amazes me and a matter I have raised with Ministerial Council on a number of occasions. We have a statutory duty but no effective means of communicating our resource needs in the early budget bids.

If the rainforest values were threatened, it would be my reputation (about the only thing of value a scholar has) and that of my Board which would be at stake. Yet we have no capacity, except via putting requests to the Ministerial Council after the fact, or making out-of-session requests to the relevant Ministers, to seek the funding we need to achieve best outcomes for the World Heritage Area.

The *realpolitik* of budgetary allocations in the six years I have been Chair is that allocations are made by Environment Australia at Commonwealth level, and by the Environmental Protection Agency in Queensland – without real input by the Authority – and these decisions conveyed to us as a *fait accompli*. At least if I had an opportunity to argue our case on par with all other agencies of government, I would not feel as despondent as I do now when we are under-funded.

The second point goes to the root of working towards sustainable development and making proper economic decisions. The rainforests of the Wet Tropics are an extremely valuable economic asset (or *natural capital* to use the new language). It



is due to the existence of the World Heritage rainforests and their integrity that tourism's direct and flow-on turnover is three-quarters of a billion dollars annually.

If one was to capitalise the annual flow of tourism profits (or rents), a very large monetary value would attach to the Wet Tropics. To that could be added the dollar value of the contribution the rainforests make to agricultural production, and the water supplies they provide for city and towns. In addition, there is the *expected* value of the biodiversity contribution to pharmaceuticals.

At present we don't have these estimates. They need to be calculated and used to show Treasury officials what we need to manage the Area properly to obtain a sustainable flow of profits and consumer benefits year in year out.

This takes me to a partial solution to the Authority's financial situation. The benefits of a World Heritage-listed rainforest flow in part to the tourism industry as profits, in part to the tourists, in part to local recreationists, in part to local farmers and city dwellers. All should be willing to make a contribution to the management of the rainforests commensurate with the benefits they receive.

At present, by far the major beneficiaries are the tourism industry and the tourists. A special charge, what we might call a *conservation management charge* (after the Great Barrier Reef fee) should be imposed on all tourism operators who make use of the rainforests. I recognise that tour operators presently pay a per capita fee. This is a comparatively small amount. It could be multiplied several times before it approaches the Great Barrier Reef environmental management charge.

Throughout my period as Chair, the Board has periodically supported serious investigation of such a charge. If confined to the commercial tour operators – who have the ability to pass on the charge in full or part to

tourists – and if the money gathered was spent locally, with industry input on priorities, I believe any short-term angst would be overtaken by the long-term benefits. The Reef charge, while it stays at its present level, is no longer a political issue. The visitor and camping fees on that other notable World Heritage Property, Fraser Island, are not an issue. I have visited numerous World Heritage Properties around the world. It is unusual to discover one which you can enter free of charge.

Please do not believe that I am arguing that a user/beneficiary-pays system should cover all the costs of protecting and presenting the rainforests. There is a significant *public good* characteristic to the Wet Tropics and, hence, a taxpayer responsibility exists.

There is one final aspect of our financial position to which I draw your attention. The starting point is that World Heritage status is the highest level achievable for a protected area. While it is often the case that a World Heritage Property was a National Park (and, hence, managed by a State Government, except in the Territories), once listing occurs the status of the area is elevated. This means that the responsibilities for management are now shared between the Commonwealth and a State government. Putting in place an equitable funding arrangement is necessary.

To coordinate management at the highest possible level, a Ministerial Council drawing its members from both levels of government exists. This is documented in an Inter-Governmental Agreement, essential for a property of this multi-tenured nature. Associated with the Inter-Government Agreement is a *financial agreement*. Our funding agreement has now lapsed and funding for the Authority continues on a year to year basis. A new financial agreement is urgently needed for the Wet Tropics.

The expert advice (in 1987) to the Commonwealth Government on the

institutional arrangements for the Authority was to form a statutory body much like the one that the Authority is today. It was envisaged that the existing Queensland National Parks rangers and Queensland Forestry rangers would join the new organisation. That is, there would be no division – as there is now – between policy staff and on-the-ground management staff. The people providing this advice had experience of the difficulties GBRMPA had in being required to work with Queensland National Parks and Wildlife staff and the Fishing and Boating Patrol officers. Not that there were personal problems or differences; rather the arrangement made for a cumbersome bureaucracy and clearly confused the public when it came to the issue of permits. In the end, management of the Wet Tropics was put in place without addressing these issues. However, through *service agreements* slow progress has been made in getting a seamless management regime.

I raise the issue of management regimes for World Heritage Properties because the Queensland Government is searching for a new model. In doing so, it has recognised that the Wet Tropics is the benchmark.

I am a very strong advocate of change in World Heritage Property management in Queensland and throughout Australia, if it aims to bring all Properties up to Wet Tropics standards. We should have by now good evidence of the success or otherwise of the various models.

I have voiced my opinion that other Properties could greatly benefit from a Wet Tropics model. However, caution is needed to ensure that the success of the Wet Tropics is not compromised in any changes. I am honoured to be involved in advising the Queensland Government on World Heritage matters. What I write here is consistent with the advice I am giving.

There is considerable advantage, particularly in dealing with local

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community interests (which can be in conflict), in having an independent (non-public servant) Board with real powers to do such things as develop management plans, issue permits, and ensure that there is compliance with plans. The Authority Board has proven that these things can be achieved and at very little cost (one reason being that the public gets the benefit of the expertise and work of a Board without paying salaries).

It would be remiss of me to present this, my final Chair's report, without thanking all those who have helped achieve the outcomes of the past six years.

In the very first instance I must thank Robert Hill and Brian Littleproud for asking me to take the position. It was not a position I sought, but I convinced myself to take it because the future of the Wet Tropics was 'unfinished business' for me, having had an involvement since 1981.

Brian Littleproud deserves special thanks for continuing to believe in my capabilities when in the first instance the Queensland Cabinet rejected his proposal that I become Chair. I hope I have, in a small way, proven Brian's judgment to be correct.

With the change of government in Queensland, Rod Welford became Environment Minister and Chair of the Ministerial Council. Most of my period as Chair was spent with Rod Welford and Robert Hill being the key ministers. A great deal was achieved.

The breakthrough the Authority needed to survive, let alone meet its statutory requirements, was the development and acceptance by governments of its Management Plan. Robert Hill, with assistance from Ian Macdonald, was crucial to this process. I thank both of them for giving up considerable time to work with me on this matter.

The Management Plan would not have been accepted had the local authority Mayors not agreed. Obviously, other stakeholders, in

particular the conservation movement, the tourism industry, the business community, local farmers and landholders, the indigenous community and the general community had to be convinced that the Management Plan was appropriate. All these people have my sincere thanks. At staff level, special thanks go to Vicki Pattermore for her detailed work on the Plan.

From the time Rod Welford became Queensland Environment Minister he took a very strong interest in the Authority, its strategic directions, and the projects it promoted. Some of my most rewarding times, both professionally and personally, occurred during Rod's tenure.

Robert Hill and Rob Welford represented different levels of government and different political parties, yet – because both were extremely hard working and committed to sound environmental outcomes – we were a team. I thank both of them for their friendship and assistance.

The covering letter to the 2001-2002 Annual Report is addressed to my two new Ministers, Dean Wells and David Kemp.

I am sorry that the three of us have not had the opportunity to work together for any length of time. Two ex-academics and one practising one could have made a formidable team.

I thank both Dean and David for their encouragement, assistance and commitment that I have experienced since they took over as my Ministers. I wish both of them every success in the future.

A number of other parliamentarians have played crucial roles in helping the Authority achieve what it has so far. These include the other members of the Ministerial Council and local MPs. A special thanks is due to Lesley Clark – one-time Authority Board member – now Parliamentary Secretary to Premier Peter Beattie.

I must thank all the Board Members who have served with me. I hope the rest will excuse me for selecting George Mansford for a special thanks. George provided the 'no nonsense', pragmatic but principled leadership that was fundamental to many of our achievements, particularly when combined with elder Eric Deeral's wisdom.

Without a dedicated staff, professionally led by Russell Watkinson, nothing would have been achieved. To each and everyone of the Authority's staff I say thank you, not only on my behalf but on behalf of the other Board Members.

Finally, family and some very close old friends have stood with me throughout. There have been many trips to north Queensland, some at very short notice, weekend work, telephone calls at all hours, having to squeeze the Wet Tropics in with my full-time university job. Professional and personal advice has been sought and so willingly given by friends and family. For your understanding and assistance I thank you.

During the six years I have made some good friends. I hope I have lost none.



Tor Hundloe  
Chairperson



# Environmental Report

*The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is an area of outstanding natural values, meeting all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing.*

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is an area of outstanding natural values, meeting all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing. To ensure it is conserved and protected for future generations, the Authority operates under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*. This is the Queensland legislation which sets out the role of the Wet Tropics Management Authority in managing the World Heritage Area. The Act also provides the legal basis for the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*. The Plan regulates land use activities in the World Heritage Area through a zoning and permit system.

The Authority is not responsible for day-to-day management issues such as maintenance, routine permits, and enforcement activities which are the responsibilities of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). However, it is responsible for the coordination of on-the-ground management to ensure the World Heritage Area is properly protected.

A Principal Agencies Forum meets every six weeks to ensure that management activities are co-ordinated between the Authority and QPWS.

## **Wet Tropics Management Plan administration**

The forest management section of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) has amalgamated with QPWS. This has enabled on ground management of 78 percent of the World Heritage area to be undertaken by QPWS.

In November 2001 a further 259,382 hectares of State Forest within the World Heritage Area was converted to forest reserve, a holding tenure

(under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*) before eventual conversion to a protected area tenure.

## **Service Agreement**

To prioritise and co-ordinate management activities, a service agreement was developed between the Authority and QPWS outlining products and services to be provided by each agency in relation to the management of the World Heritage Area. Service agreement performance is reviewed on a quarterly basis.

## **Permits**

Land use activities within the World Heritage Area are regulated under the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*. The Plan is subordinate legislation to the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and is, therefore, a regulation under Queensland law. It over-rides local government planning schemes to the extent of any inconsistency.

Some 1,300 permits have been issued under the Wet Tropics Management Plan by QPWS as an approved permit entity during the 2001-2002 year. Most permits issued related to the use of motor vehicles on presentation restricted and management roads.

The introduction of a new guideline for the use of motor vehicles on presentation restricted and management roads in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has reduced the number of roads requiring permits under the Wet Tropics Management Plan to five. This will result in a significant reduction in the number of permits issued by QPWS on the Authority's behalf.

A new electronic permit database has been developed to enable staff to better track applications and Authority issued permits. The new

system will assist the Authority to better monitor timelines, environmental performance and reporting requirements.

The Authority dealt directly with 40 permit applications during the year. The majority of applications were for the maintenance of infrastructure and included:

- maintenance of telecommunication facilities;
- road and railway maintenance and upgrade works;
- construction of private dwellings;
- construction of water extraction facilities;
- maintenance and construction of recreational facilities;
- construction of a pontoon and jetty in the Daintree River;
- seed collecting; and
- commercial flights over the area.

#### **Significant development proposals**

The Authority continues to work with various agencies on the assessment of significant development proposals, including the Kareeya-Innisfail powerline, the Kuranda Range Road upgrade and Russett Park emergency access proposals.

Staff assessed and provided advice on proposals from DNRM for the renewal of leases in and adjoining the World Heritage Area. These included grazing leases, permits to occupy, agricultural and residential leases.

#### **Compliance**

The first person to be prosecuted under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection Act 1993* was sentenced to 12 months in prison in December 2001 for the deliberate illegal felling of 23 rainforest trees. This is the first known pre-meditated illegal logging in the World Heritage Area since its listing. An appeal against the severity of the sentence was rejected.

A memorandum of understanding is being developed between the Authority, QPWS and DNRM to ensure a coordinated approach to the enforcement of legislation across all tenures within the World Heritage Area.

A collaborative approach with the Department of Main Roads (DMR) has been undertaken in the upgrading of the El Arish to Mission Beach Road. This project has set best practice benchmarks for road upgrades in areas of important habitat for the endangered cassowary, a keystone species in the Wet Tropics bioregion.

#### **Rainforest dieback**

The recent discovery of many scattered patches of dead rainforest is a potentially serious issue. Rainforest dieback, attributable to *Phytophthora cinnamomi* now appears to be much more widespread than previously expected. Preliminary findings from a Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre (Rainforest CRC) project suggest that up to 14 per cent of the World Heritage Area may be at risk. The Authority has commissioned the Rainforest CRC to further investigate these recently identified outbreaks so that informed management decisions can be made.

#### **Compensation**

Following the introduction of the Wet Tropics Management Plan in 1998, the Board received 10 claims for compensation for injurious affection. The Board has rejected nine of the claims due to insufficient information supplied as to the nature of the claims. One of these claimants has taken the matter to the Land Court for determination. There remains one outstanding claim under consideration.

#### **Zone corrections**

Guidelines were established for the identification and correction of errors on the Wet Tropics Management Plan zoning maps. The Board resolved to correct an error identified at Paluma relating to the depiction of Zone D visitor infrastructure.

#### **Land and cultural heritage management**

Development of appropriate management strategies for land and cultural heritage management continued to be a focus of the Authority and the following activities were undertaken:

- assisted the Djabugay Ranger

Agency and the KMKM Corporation with funding for two Djabugay rangers to work with the Authority to develop a fire management plan for the Mona Mona reserve, as per the Mona Mona Management Agreement;

- facilitated the Mona Mona *Healing Country* project to develop a practical rehabilitation management plan with the Djabugay Ranger Agency, the Mona Mona Planning Committee, and the QPWS Centre for Tropical Restoration;
- assisted with funds to train the Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Rangers in an accredited Level 1 firefighters course to meet work place health and safety standards and enable them to carry out fire management in the Daintree National Park;
- participated in Yarrabah (Gungandji and Mandingalbay Yidinji) native title claim mediation meetings and Ngadjon-jii native title claim mediation meetings to ensure inclusion of Authority interests with regard to land use issues; and
- participated in the Kuranda Communities Negotiation process, which is co-ordinating government service delivery to Kuranda Aboriginal communities including infrastructure development and land management for the Mona Mona community.

#### **Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA)**

The Authority played a major role in the Eastern Kuku Yalanji ILUA negotiations aimed at resolving native title and land use within and adjacent to the northern region of the World Heritage Area, including an assessment of the impact of the ILUA proposals on the Wet Tropics Management Plan.

#### **Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy**

An audit of conservation activities in and around the World Heritage Area was completed. This audit is now being used as the basis for development of a conservation





strategy to set directions and priorities for the conservation and rehabilitation of the World Heritage Area and surrounds. A steering committee has been formed consisting of representatives from the conservation sector, Rainforest Aboriginal groups, local government, primary producers and tourism interests.

#### **Research and monitoring activities**

The Authority's partnership with the Rainforest CRC is in its third year of a seven year program. CRC program support groups have been established and the Authority's *Research and Information Needs Report (2000)* has been used to influence the CRC's research program.

The Authority contributed funds to the following research projects during the financial year:

- weed incursions and remote sensing along roads and powerlines in the World Heritage Area;
- forest dieback mapping and impact assessment;
- vegetation mapping of the Wet Tropics - an ongoing project involving detailed vegetation and geological mapping of the Wet Tropics biogeographic region;
- remote sensing technology and applications for monitoring World Heritage Area 'condition'; and
- report on fish stocking and translocations within the World Heritage Area.

The Aboriginal Resource Management program provided strong support to the Rainforest CRC Program 7's (Aboriginal collaboration and capacity building) implementation of key projects through leadership and participation in the Program 7 Support Group. A significant project is the development of a statement of Aboriginal cultural values of the Wet Tropics region and the development of a cultural tourism database. The Authority participated in the Rainforest CRC *Indigenous Voices Conference* on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's rights and needs concerning research ethics, theories and practices for research with and by Indigenous peoples.

The Authority funded a variety of research projects during the financial year including the design of a visitor monitoring system for the World Heritage Area, a visitor and community attitude survey and intellectual property rights and indigenous research agreements.

#### **Geographic information systems and information technology activities**

The Authority continued to capture and apply geographic based information, critical to management of the World Heritage Area. In particular data capture for the Authority's Wet Tropics vegetation mapping project is proving very valuable. Such information has recently been supplied to the Queensland Herbarium for mapping of Wet Tropics regional ecosystems and consequential statutory application under the State's *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.

#### **Pest management**

Staff attended forums concerning pest management including the Far North Queensland Pest Advisory Forum and Far North Queensland Feral Pig Committee.

The Authority continued its funding to DNRM for feral pig trapping in and around the World Heritage Area. The trapping program began as a pilot in 1993 to develop and manage a system of controlling feral pigs in the region. Many landholders neighbouring the World Heritage Area are actively involved in controlling pigs on their properties. Some have purchased and operate their own traps designed to avoid catching cassowaries.

#### **Fire management**

A fire management strategy is being developed in consultation with QPWS, Traditional Owners, and other landholders and neighbours as part of the conservation strategy. QPWS is implementing a new fire management system for *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and *Forestry Act 1959* tenures. The Authority is providing information to QPWS on vegetation mapping and GIS support to assist in the development of their fire plans. The involvement of Traditional Owners will be facilitated through the Authority's community liaison officers.

#### **Wet Tropics Walking Strategy**

The Walking Strategy was released in October 2001. It proposes the development of a world class walking track network in the Wet Tropics region including more long distance walks, heritage walks and Aboriginal guided walks. It identifies the need for increased resources for walk construction and maintenance and enhanced ranger presence on walks. The strategy stresses the need for readily available information about the diversity of walks available in the Wet Tropics region.

#### **Regional planning input**

The Authority has been actively involved in a range of other strategic planning exercises which have implications for World Heritage management. They include:

- planning for a potential canopy walk and long distance walks in the southern Wet Tropics as part of the heritage trails program;
- planning for development of mountain bike tracks in the Cairns region;
- the Koombuloomba ecotourism project;
- the Danbulla-Lake Tinaroo management strategy;
- local government planning scheme preparations (Atherton, Cardwell, Douglas, Herberton, Hinchinbrook, Johnstone shires) under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*;
- development of the draft Barron Water Resource Plan.

#### **State of Wet Tropics reporting**

The 2001/2002 State of the Wet Tropics report has been prepared as required under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and is attached to this report as Appendix 4.

#### **Periodic Report**

At the request of Environment Australia, a draft Wet Tropics Periodic Report based on the World Heritage Convention guidelines was presented to a UNESCO regional workshop on periodic reporting of World Heritage properties in the Asia-Pacific region.

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# Community and Social Report

*It is important that the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has a function in the life of the community.*

It is important that the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is seen to have a function in the life of the community. The Authority has responded to this by developing a successful model for conservation which includes community and traditional owner involvement in the management of the Area.

#### **A model for community involvement**

Community involvement in the management of the Area is based on a series of consultative groups which provide feedback and recommendations to the Authority Board.

The Authority works to maintain productive relationships with stakeholders critical to the implementation of the primary goal which is to implement Australia's international duty to protect, conserve, present, rehabilitate and transmit to future generations the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, within the meaning of the World Heritage Convention. Community issues management and capacity building, resource coordination (particularly value adding through partnerships), visitor centres and displays, interpretation and education, media liaison and publications are part of this approach.

The Authority is responsible for building partnerships with Rainforest Aboriginal people to facilitate their involvement in the management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. This is primarily achieved through the Aboriginal Resource Management program. Engagement is achieved by establishing relationships based on knowledge and respect of Aboriginal peoples' responsibilities, traditional laws and customs and their legislative rights and interests. The Authority has obligations to involve Aboriginal people in management of the World Heritage Area.

#### **Community Consultative Committee (CCC)**

The CCC is a statutory committee under section 40(3) of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*. It consists of 23 representatives from the Area, chosen to represent a broad cross-section of the Wet Tropics community. Typically, members are from local government, farming and commerce groups, the tourism industry, the conservation sector and neighbours of the World Heritage Area.

A new CCC was appointed in 2001. It met four times during the year, with all meetings being held in Cairns. Significant issues discussed by the CCC during the year were:

- the proposed Kareeya-Innisfail transmission line replacement;
- the effect of fish stocking in and adjacent the World Heritage Area;
- feral animals and weed control.

#### **Stakeholder liaison groups and community support**

The Authority supports three stakeholder liaison groups, the Landholders and Neighbours Liaison Group (LNLG), Tourism Industry Liaison Group (TILG) and the Conservation Sector Liaison Group (CSLG). These groups provide valuable, two-way communication with the Authority and items raised at these meetings are presented to the Board. Other groups and organisations supported by the Authority as part of its commitment to capacity building in the Area include the Cassowary Advisory Group (CAG), the Australian Rainforest Foundation (ARF) and the Tourism Partnership Program (TPP).

#### **Landholders and Neighbours Liaison Group (LNLG)**

The LNLG has ten members who represent a broad geographic spread across the Wet Tropics region and reflect the diversity of regional land





use. The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has more than 300 freehold and leasehold landholders within its boundaries and more than 2,500 immediate neighbours. The LNLG provides advice to the Board on issues affecting private landowners and functions as a conduit for the two-way flow of information between the Authority and landholders and neighbours.

Meetings are held in regional communities and incorporate open forums for local neighbours and landholders followed by group consideration of various issues. The most significant issues raised during forums in the 2001-2002 year were managing weeds in the World Heritage Area and feral pig management.

Following a recommendation by the LNLG, Natural Heritage Trust funds were applied to the purchase of two mobile weed sprayers, to be used by Wet Tropics landholders and neighbours. Douglas Shire Council and Johnstone Shire Council have agreed to provide storage, maintenance and a booking service.

Other initiatives of the LNLG *Good Neighbours Program* include:

- updating of the neighbours database and more than 50 free 'World Heritage Neighbours' signs distributed to people owning land adjoining the World Heritage Area;
- production and distribution of issue six of the *Neighbours Newsletter*;
- 1400 copies of a weed identification pocket field guide for agricultural and environmental weeds in far north Queensland were printed and sent to landholders in and around the World Heritage Area, local governments and other key agency staff.

The LNLG met in Ingham during August 2001. A new committee was approved by the Board in 2002. It met twice during the year in the Daintree and at Tolga.

**Tourism Industry Liason Group (TILG)**

The TILG consists of tourism

operators in the Area and senior tourism industry representatives. It met twice this year and both meetings were held in Cairns. Key issues for the group included a new brand for the World Heritage Area and tour guide accreditation.

A new brand for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area was launched in November 2001. The words, 'Australia's Tropical Rainforests-World Heritage' together with a frog and leaf logo were developed in consultation with tourism operators, QPWS, the conservation sector and



Millions of years in the making. Protected forever.

Rainforest Aboriginal people. The Authority has retained the cassowary and bowenia cycad frond as its corporate logo. The new frog logo has replaced the cassowary and bowenia cycad frond on road signs in the World Heritage Area. A CD of high resolution images approved by Rainforest Aboriginal people, sample text, maps and logo style manual - designed to ensure accurate information, reflecting desired World Heritage values - was distributed free of charge to tour operators within the World Heritage Area.

**Conservation Sector Liaison Group (CSLG)**

The CSLG members represent the major conservation groups in the Area and provide valuable feedback on conservation concerns regarding World Heritage management. It met four times this year. All meetings were held in Cairns. The group has continued to provide feedback on policy and permitting issues, raise concerns over various activities in the Area and has provided input and advice to the Authority's Conservation Strategy terms of reference.

**Cassowary Advisory Group (CAG)**

CAG advises the Authority and QPWS on a range of cassowary conservation issues. Membership includes key cassowary conservation groups, the wildlife industry, local authorities, government departments and concerned members of the public.

A cassowary education kit produced in 2001 has been reprinted in 2002. The student and teacher resource kit is now available to schools throughout Australia upon request and 200 copies have been distributed to date. Other projects CAG has undertaken include cassowary rehabilitation centres built at Garners Beach and Hartley's Creek (Cairns) and petitioning DMR for the erection of cautionary road signs at Mission Beach, alerting drivers to the presence of cassowaries.

Promotional stickers with a cassowary silhouette and words 'Take Care' were distributed to all permitted tour operators in the World Heritage Area. The stickers have proved very popular and more than 400 additional stickers were sold through the three cassowary care groups at Mission Beach, Daintree and Kuranda.



Funds from an NHT grant were allocated to Cardwell Shire Council to support a cassowary corridor project officer.

**Tourism Partnership Program (TPP)**

The TPP group was formed to oversee implementation of the Marketing Action Plan completed in 2000-01. This plan resulted in the development of the new frog logo and brand for the World Heritage Area.

The group consists of senior representatives of WTMA, QPWS, Tourism Queensland, Tourism

Tropical North Queensland and Townsville Enterprise Limited. Representatives for Rainforest Aboriginal people have been invited to join the group.

#### **Australian Rainforest Foundation (ARF)**

The ARF is a not for profit company established with the support of the Authority in 1996. Its primary goal is to raise private sector funds to support the conservation of the Area. The Authority continued to provide a variety of administrative and other in-kind support to the Foundation during the year.

The Authority also played a major role in finalising an agreement for the ARF to undertake a land acquisition and conservation program in the Daintree supported by \$1 million seed funding from the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council. This is a major component of implementing the Daintree Futures Study and should commence in 2002.

#### **Australian Tropical Forest Institute**

An independent feasibility study commissioned by the Authority and undertaken in 2001 concluded that creating a new Australian Tropical Forest Institute would establish Cairns as a world leader in tropical forest research and management - and help diversify the regional economy. The initiating partners of the Authority, James Cook University (JCU), Rainforest CRC and BioProspect received notification of a Queensland Smart State loan of \$7.8 million towards the project. The proposed site for the institute is beside JCU at Smithfield, Cairns. Building is expected to be completed in 2003/04.

#### **Communication and presentation**

The Authority continued with a range of media communications to visitors and residents in the Area, including:

- significant review and update of the Wet Tropics website;
- provision of the website information on computers at seven Wet Tropics Visitor Centres throughout the Area to provide free public access to information;
- the Wet Tropics newspaper was changed to a magazine format this year featuring the

new World Heritage Area brand and frog logo. It was renamed *Australia's Tropical Rainforests World Heritage Magazine*. Distribution was expanded to cover more of the region and 130,000 copies printed. Good community feedback was received.

#### **Cassowary Awards**

Eight recipients were presented with Cassowary Awards at a ceremony in August 2001, which was attended by the Queensland Minister for Environment and Chair of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council, Dean Wells and Federal Parliamentary Secretary, Dr Sharman Stone, who represented the Commonwealth Environment Minister, Senator Robert Hill. The Cassowary Awards recognise individuals and groups who have made an outstanding contribution towards the conservation of the World Heritage Area and is a major event in recognising the role of the community in World Heritage Area management.

#### **Media relations**

The Authority continued to attach a high priority to timely responses to relevant media issues. There was considerable coverage of issues such as cassowary deaths at Mission Beach, an illegal logging of mature rainforest trees and the subsequent gaoling of the offender and the release of the Authority's Walking Strategy. Media launches were held for the new brand for the World Heritage Area, the Australian Tropical Forest Institute announcement and the distribution of the cassowary education kit to local schools.

#### **Information papers**

A public information paper on the board's policy regarding the salvage and removal of fallen timber from within the World Heritage Area was prepared.

#### **Field guides**

Production of a *Water Infrastructure Management Code of Practice Field Guide* is being finalised. This statutory guideline provides a concise description of the maintenance and operation of water extraction

infrastructure in the World Heritage Area. It will be distributed to water infrastructure operations and maintenance personnel.

The Authority has been working closely with DMR to update the field guide for best practice in road maintenance in the Wet Tropics.

#### **Community engagement**

Area Conservation program staff attend Regional Vegetation Management Planning and Regional Natural Resource Management Board meetings, Integrated Catchment and Natural Heritage Trust committee meetings and participate on the Rainforest CRC's program support groups.

More than 100 inquiries were received from other agencies, community organisations and prospective landowners on the Authority's requirements on land in and adjoining the World Heritage Area.

The Authority also commented on numerous development proposals on properties adjoining the World Heritage Area.

#### **Visitor centres**

The Authority has continued with its support of community visitor and interpretive centres throughout the World Heritage Area, including:

- new projector and sign provided to the Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation group at Mission Beach;
- new World Heritage Area interpretive display erected at the Mission Beach visitor centre;
- new evolutionary timeline display provided to Rainforest Habitat visitor centre at Port Douglas and to the Ravenshoe visitor centre;
- an NHT grant of \$50,000 towards interpretive materials and displays for a new Centre for Tropical Restoration visitor centre being built at Lake Eacham.

#### **Volunteer program and public contact rangers**

The Authority funded three QPWS



public contact ranger positions in Cardwell, Lake Eacham and Cairns. At June 30 there was an estimated 100 Wet Tropics volunteers managed by these public contact rangers. During the year volunteer activities across the region included water quality testing, tree planting and other rehabilitation works, school and vacation activities and production of display material. The program is currently under review in conjunction with QPWS.

### **Cairns Gateway**

The Authority was also a key participant with tourism, education and business interests in the proposal to construct a major gateway information and interpretive centre in central Cairns. The Cairns Gateway Project was allocated Queensland Heritage Trails funding of \$1 million towards the project and an investigation of appropriate sites was commenced in 2002.

### **Partnerships with Rainforest Aboriginal people**

The Authority has a direct role in community liaison, policy and protocol development, inter-agency networking, and the implementation of the *Review of Aboriginal Involvement in the Management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area*, including the development of a regional agreement through the Interim Negotiation Forum (INF) process. Increasing attention is being given to including Aboriginal perspectives into other Authority programs.

The Authority works closely with and assists Aboriginal representative organisations such as:

- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC);
- North Queensland, Cape York and Central Queensland Land Councils;
- Giringun Elders and Reference Group;
- key tribal organisations such as Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation, Mamu Aboriginal Corporation, Yalanji Elders Justice Network, and the Burungu Aboriginal Corporation;

- the Authority also seeks to ensure that Aboriginal negotiating teams are properly resourced and informed to enter into meaningful negotiations with the Authority on various matters.

### **Management agreements**

Staff assisted Aboriginal landholders develop management agreements that reconcile native title rights with the Authority's statutory obligations to protect World Heritage values.

Implementation of the Mona Mona management agreement Stages 1 and 2 between the Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation, the Authority and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy continued with the assistance of the Mona Mona Planning Committee. The following activities were undertaken:

- financially assisted the Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation to resource the Djabugay Ranger Agency to manage World Heritage values at Mona Mona;
- supported the Mona Mona Planning Committee and the Djabugay Ranger Agency with in-kind support, such as GIS assistance, and the provision of mapping resources and research data; and
- participated in discussions with DNRM, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, the North Queensland Land Council and Aboriginal groups regarding the transfer of the Mona Mona under the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*.

A draft memorandum of understanding with the Budjubulla Aboriginal Corporation and QPWS was prepared to protect World Heritage values adjacent to Budjubulla Station (formerly known as Kirrama Station). Negotiations continued on the Buru (China Camp) Management Agreement with the Burungu Aboriginal Corporation, the Cape York Land Council, Balkanu, the Department of Premier and Cabinet and DNRM regarding the Buru community's settlement planning to reconcile Wet Tropics World Heritage Area management objectives with Native Title rights and interests.

### **Community liaison**

The Authority works to ensure that effective and appropriate communication, negotiation and consultation occur between the Authority, land management agencies and the Rainforest Aboriginal community.

A key objective is to raise community awareness of Rainforest Aboriginal people's aspirations regarding management of the World Heritage Area. Over the year the Authority has:

- provided assistance to the Aboriginal member of the Wet Tropics Board, Mr Eric Deeral, by keeping him informed of Rainforest Aboriginal issues and facilitating his attendance at community meetings and key forums;
- contracted the Giringun Elders and Reference Group and North Queensland Land Council to provide three Aboriginal community liaison officers to work with the Authority to facilitate the involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the protection, conservation and management of the World Heritage Area;
- published the sixth and seventh editions of the *Rainforest Aboriginal News* newsletter and distributed 3,000 copies of each issue to Rainforest Aboriginal communities and representative organisations, local councils, Queensland and Commonwealth politicians, government agencies and interested individuals;
- published a fact sheet outlining the INF process for Rainforest Aboriginal clients;
- continued the maintenance of the Authority's *Keepin' In Touch* Rainforest Aboriginal database to ensure Aboriginal people were regularly informed of Authority projects;
- updated the Rainforest Aboriginal Heritage section of the Authority's website;
- supported the involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal members on the Community Consultative

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Committee, the Wet Tropics Landholders and Neighbours Group, Cassowary Advisory Group, and the Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy steering committee;

- consulted Rainforest Aboriginal groups regarding the design of a new frog and leaf logo and brand for the World Heritage Area and the development of a photographic image library including the use of appropriate photographic images and captions;
- consulted Rainforest Aboriginal groups regarding the development of the Wet Tropics Walking Strategy;
- consulted Rainforest Aboriginal groups regarding permitting and management of roads under the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*.

#### **Inter-agency coordination**

Liaison with other agencies is an important element of the Authority's operation. Successful negotiation and information exchange with other organisations in the field helps the Authority build positive relationships and achieve its goals.

Part of the Authority's inter-agency co-ordination role has included the development of the Mamu Heads of Agreement, between Mamu people, North Queensland Land Council, QPWS, the Johnstone Shire Council and the Authority to progress the Mamu Canopy Walk proposal and protect native title rights and address tourism management within the Mamu estate. Protocol awareness and consultation with Rainforest Aboriginal groups was held regarding the proposed Misty Mountains Trails project and Aboriginal participation in the Wet Tropics Regional Environment Resources Management Forum. This forum was hosted by the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) Bushcare program and addressed how to improve the engagement and resourcing of Rainforest Aboriginal groups through the NHT process.

#### **Interim Negotiating Forum (INF)**

The establishment of the INF was a

key recommendation from the Ministerial Council commissioned *Which Way Our Cultural Survival? The Review of Aboriginal Involvement in Management of the World Heritage Area*. The INF process is proposed to lead to the development of a Wet Tropics regional agreement. The Authority has played a significant role in establishing the INF between Rainforest Aboriginal peoples and Queensland and Commonwealth Government agencies with an involvement in World Heritage Area management and its activities have included:

- supporting the independent facilitator for the INF, Mr Jim Petrich, in negotiations with ATSIC and the Central Queensland, North Queensland and Cape York Land Councils to identify Rainforest Aboriginal INF negotiation structures;
- provided financial and in-kind assistance to the North Queensland Land Council to stage a representative Rainforest Aboriginal community workshop that endorsed the Aboriginal Negotiating Team (ANT) and the NQLC as the principal support organisation;
- organised the inaugural meeting of the INF in Cairns in December 2001 and the second meeting of the INF in Cairns in May 2002;
- drafted the INF overarching memorandum of understanding between ATSIC, the North Queensland Land Council, the Central Queensland Land Council, the ANT and the Authority;
- financially assisted the ANT's secretariat and the involvement of the Rainforest Aboriginal community in the INF process pending finalisation of a contract with the North Queensland Land Council to prioritise these services; and
- continued progress with the Review recommendations endorsed by Ministerial Council (referred to as *Schedule 1 recommendations*).

#### **Lorentz National Park World Heritage project**

Lorentz National Park, West Papua, is the largest protected area in South-East Asia (2.5 million hectares) and was listed as a World Heritage Area in 1999.

A project to strengthen the capacity of Papuan local government, local communities and World Heritage property managers in effective planning and management of Lorentz National Park is being funded by AusAid. The project will be implemented by Indonesia's Directorate-General of Nature Conservation and AusAid has contracted Environment Australia through the Asia Pacific World Heritage focal point to oversee the project. The Authority will lead a project team and in association with the Rainforest CRC, will provide technical assistance including training in World Heritage and community planning. Negotiations are currently underway to arrange for an initial consultative workshop at Jayapura, Papua to be followed by training in Cairns early in 2003. There is also a proposal to 'twin' Lorentz National Park with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.



# Management, Economic and Financial Report

*The Authority's primary goal is to ensure that Australia meets its obligations under the World Heritage Convention in relation to the World Heritage Area. The Authority is a body corporate, with statutory powers defined under the Act.*

## **Enabling legislation**

The Queensland legislation, the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, was proclaimed on 1 November 1993, apart from sections 56 and 57. The Commonwealth legislation, the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994*, (Commonwealth Act) was proclaimed on 15 March 1994.

The *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* was gazetted 22 May 1998 and commenced operation on 1 September 1998. Section 56 of the Queensland Act which prohibits the destruction of forest products, and section 57 which sets out compensation provisions, also commenced on 1 September 1998.

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Management Scheme is an intergovernmental agreement signed by the Prime Minister and Premier of Queensland in 1990. The agreement is scheduled in the Queensland Act and given effect by section three of the Commonwealth Act. It was last revised by Commonwealth and State Ministers in December 1995.

The Authority's primary goal is to ensure that Australia meets its obligations under the World Heritage Convention in relation to the World Heritage Area. The Authority is a body corporate, with statutory powers defined under the Act.

The Authority's functions are to:

- develop and implement policies and programs for management of the Wet Tropics Area;
- formulate implementation performance indicators for approved policies and programs;
- advise and make recommendations to the Minister and the Ministerial Council;

- prepare and implement management plans for the Area;
- administer funding arrangements;
- facilitate and enter into cooperative management agreements;
- rehabilitate and restore the Area;
- gather, research, analyse and disseminate information on the Area;
- develop public and community education programs;
- promote the Area locally, nationally and internationally;
- liaise with State and Commonwealth governments, agencies and international organisations;
- monitor the state of the Area; and
- advise and report to the Minister and the Ministerial Council on the state of the Area.

In performing its functions, the Authority must consider Aboriginal tradition and liaise and co-operate with Aboriginal people particularly concerned with the Area. It must function in a way that is consistent with the objectives and principles of the *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development*.

## **Management structure**

The Wet Tropics Ministerial Council comprises two Commonwealth and two State Ministers. The Queensland Minister for Environment chairs the Council.

Its board of directors comprises five private citizens who serve in a part-time capacity. Two directors are nominated by the Commonwealth and two by the State. The chairperson is jointly nominated. The executive director of the Authority is a non-voting board director.

At the state government level, the Authority lies within the environment portfolio. As part of the Queensland public sector, the Authority is subject to established public sector legislation, regulations, standards and guidelines governing administrative functions and arrangements.

The director-general of the Environmental Protection Agency is the accountable officer for the Authority under the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1997*. The Authority is responsible to the director-general regarding compliance with state government administrative and financial standards.

#### **Wet Tropics Ministerial Council**

At 30 June 2002, the council comprised:

##### **Chairperson**

The Hon. Dean Wells MP (*Minister for Environment, Queensland*);

##### **Members**

The Hon. Dr David Kemp MP (*Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Commonwealth*);  
The Hon. Merri Rose MLA (*Minister for Tourism and Racing, Queensland*); and  
The Hon. Joe Hockey MP (*Minister for Small Business and Tourism, Commonwealth*).

##### **Meetings and dates**

The Wet Tropics Ministerial Council met on 8 June 2001.

#### **WTMA board of directors**

At 30 June the board comprised:

##### **Chairperson**

Professor Tor Hundloe (appointed on 14 November 1996, and re-appointed on 22 September 1997 and 24 December 2000);

##### **Directors**

Mr Tony Charters (*Commonwealth nominee*, appointed on 11 December 1997 and reappointed on 24 December 2000);

Mr Eric Deeral (*Commonwealth nominee*, appointed 19 March 1998 and reappointed on 24 December 2000);

Ms Anne Portess (*Queensland nominee*, appointed 24 December 2000);

Mr Peter Valentine (*Queensland nominee*, appointed on 24 December 2000); and

Mr Russell Watkinson (appointed *executive director WTMA*, 16 March 1998).

##### **Meetings and dates**

The WTMA board of directors met on 16-17 August 2001, 15-16 November 2001, 25 March 2002 and 5,6 and 7 June 2002 (all meetings held in Cairns).

##### **Board remuneration**

Board costs including meeting fees, special assignment fees, air fares and travel allowances for 2001-2002 was \$34,067.

#### **Wet Tropics Community Consultative Committee**

A new Community Consultative Committee was appointed in April 2001 for a three year term.

##### **Chairperson**

Mr Nigel Stork (*CEO, Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre*);

##### **Members**

Mr Claude Beeron (*Girringun Elders and Reference Group Aboriginal Corporation*), Ms Jax Bergersen (*conservation*), Mrs Truus Biddlecombe (*recreation*), Mr Kevin Burton (*rural interests*), Mr Geoffrey Bush (*rural interests*), Mr John Courtenay (*tourism*), Mr Roy Dickson (*neighbour*), Cr Tom Gilmore (*local government*), Ms Jane Lynch (*conservation*), Ms Robin Maxwell (*community*), Mr Charles Morganson (*Girringun Elders and Reference Group Aboriginal Corporation*), Cr Marjorie Norris (*local government*), Cr Jeff Pezzutti (*local government*), Cr Keith Phillips (*local government*), Mr Ross Rogers (*rural interests/commerce*), Mr Stephen Russell (*environment/tourism*), Mr Allen Sheather (*conservation*), Mr Max Shepherd (*tourism*), Cr Les Tyrell (*local government*), Ms Linda Venn (*community*), Mr Bruce Williams (*education*), Mr Norman Whitney (*rural interests/neighbour*).

##### **Meetings and dates**

9 November 2001, 21 March 2002 and 31 May 2002 (all meetings held in Cairns).

##### **Remuneration**

Members do not receive sitting fees. The committee cost \$6,303 in 2001-2002 mostly for reimbursed travel expenses.

#### **Wet Tropics Scientific Advisory Committee**

A new Scientific Advisory Committee was appointed in 2001.

##### **Chairperson**

Dr Chris Margules;

##### **Members**

Assoc. Prof Steve Turton, Prof. Judy Atkinson, Dr Jackie Robinson, Mr Peter Stanton, Dr Mark Fenton, Prof. Geoff McDonald, Dr Bill Carter.

##### **Meetings and Dates**

19 July 2001, 5 February 2002 (all meetings held in Cairns).

##### **Remuneration**

Members do not receive sitting fees. The committee cost \$6,702 mostly for reimbursed travel expenses.

#### **Wet Tropics liaison groups**

The Authority has three stakeholder liaison groups, each of which is chaired by a board member.

#### **Landholders and Neighbours Liaison Group**

A new Landholders and Neighbours Liaison Group was approved by the board in 2002.

##### **Chairperson**

Cr Anne Portess (*Mayor, Herberton Shire*);

##### **Members**

Ms Dawn Brown (*Ingham*), Mr Marcus Bulstrode (*Mena Creek*), Mr Maurice Franklin (*Mission Beach*), Ms Alison Gotts (*Cape Tribulation*), Mr John Nicholas (*Cow Bay*), Mr Ross Rogers (*Malanda*), Ms Eileen Schoorl (*Atherton*), Mr Norman Whitney (*East Trinity*), Mr Trevor Wood (*Townsville/Paluma*).

##### **Meetings and dates**

The outgoing committee met on 12 August 2001 (Ingham). The new committee met for the first time on 9 March 2002 (Daintree) and again on 18 May 2002 (Tolga).

#### **Tourism Industry Liaison Group**

##### **Chairperson**

Mr Tony Charters (*Tourism Queensland*);

##### **Members**

Mr Bill Bayne (*Atherton Tableland Promotion Bureau*), Mr Bill Calderwood (*Tourism Tropical North Queensland*), Mr Terry Carmichael (*Qld Wildlife Parks Association/Rainforest Habitat*), Mr John Courtenay (*Pacific Asia Travel Association*), Mr Ron Cusick (*Raft and Rainforest Pty Ltd*), Mr Mark Evans (*Paronella Park*), Mr Daniel



Gschwind (*Queensland Tourism Industry Corporation*), Ms Sue Korecki (*Skyrail*), Ms Terry Rogers (*Port Douglas Daintree Tourism Association*), Mr Richard Power (*Townsville Enterprise Ltd*), Mr Andrew Steel (*Australian Tourism Export Council*), Mr John White (*Wait-a-While Tours*).

#### Meetings and dates

8 October 2001 and 27 March 2002 (all meetings held in Cairns).

#### Conservation Sector Liaison Group Chairperson

Mr Peter Valentine (*James Cook University*);

#### Members

Mr John Beasley (*Kuranda Envirocare*), Mr Chris Bennett (*Daintree Task Force*), Mr Henry Boer (*Cairns and Far North Environment Centre*) replaced by Mr John Rainbird in March 2002, Ms Kylie Freebody (*Greening Australia*), Ms Brenda Harvey (*Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation*), Mr David Hudson (*Conservation Volunteers Australia*), Mr Tony Irvine (*Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands*), Ms Sue Mathams (*Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group*), Ms Margaret Moorhouse (*North Queensland Conservation Council*), Mr Rob Palmer (*The Wilderness Society*), Mr Allen Sheather (*Daintree Cassowary Care Group*), Mr Peter Smith (*Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland*).

#### Meetings and dates

6 August 2001, 29 October 2001, 11 February 2002, 13 May 2002 (all meetings held in Cairns).

#### Remuneration

Members of the liaison groups do not receive sitting fees. The liaison groups cost in total \$11,291 mostly for reimbursed travel expenses.

#### Corporate Services Program

The Corporate Services program is responsible for financial management, human resource management, general administration and program coordination functions within the Authority.

The primary objective of Corporate Services is to develop and maintain appropriate management information

systems to assist other programs to achieve the Authority's overall objectives and to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

#### Financial management

The Authority's general purpose financial statements for 2001-2002 will be incorporated in the overall Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) general purpose financial statements. Total funding of \$8.487 million for 2001-2002 was provided to the Authority principally by the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments and supplemented by other forms of income. Included as part of total funds, \$212,000 was carried forward from the previous financial year.

Details of receipts and expenditure for 2001-2002 are provided in Appendix 1.

The lack of a financial agreement between the State and Commonwealth has continued to hinder the Authority in planning for the future management needs of the Area.

Funds were distributed among Corporate Services, Aboriginal

Resource Management, Planning and Research, Area Conservation, Community Relations and Daintree Rescue programs within the Authority, with a significant proportion of the budget being distributed to QPWS.

During the year an audit of the Authority's financial management systems was undertaken by the EPA's internal auditor. No significant discrepancies/irregularities were identified. Action has since been taken on several of the audit's recommendations to improve local systems.

#### Staffing

The approved staff establishment of the Authority as at 30 June 2001 totalled 30 permanent positions.

During the year it was necessary to supplement staff resources through the letting of consultancies and engagement of temporary contract staff. Details of consultancies and contract staff, along with a comparison to the previous financial year, are shown in Table A.

**TABLE A Details of consultancies and contract staff**

Expenditure \$	2001/2002	2000/2001
<b>Consultancies by category *</b>		
Communications	27,326	112,889
Scientific/Technical	5,428	12,861
Management	72	353
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32,826</b>	<b>126,103</b>
<b>Contract staff by program*</b>		
Area Conservation	8,556	6,022
Planning & Research	310,864	253,661
Community Relations	102,406	61,939
Corporate Services	30,026	11,981
Aboriginal Resource Management	137,343	151,783
Daintree Rescue		72,288
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>589,198</b>	<b>557,674</b>

\* Excludes EPA and QPWS expenditure on direct funded projects.

At 30 June 2002, the Authority employed one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) staff, equivalent to about 3.3 per cent of the total positions. In addition the Authority engaged the services of three Aboriginal community liaison officers under contracts with Aboriginal communities and land councils.

### Training and development

The Authority participates as a member of the regional training and human resource network. Expenditure for staff training, development and attendance at conference and seminars was \$44,736 in 2001-2002. There were 37 attendances of staff to 12 various GIS or science-based conferences, seminars and workshops. Two staff undertook the Public Sector Management course and one staff member completed Certificate IV Assessment & Training. Various public courses were attended by staff to fulfil their training requirements. In-house training was provided to Authority staff on ethics, code of conduct and administrative procedures as well as the orientation of new staff.

### Overseas travel

The Project Officer, Community Relations travelled to Germany as part of the Rotary group study exchange team. Vocational visits were undertaken in reference to environmental project management.

### Workplace health and safety

The Authority participates on a regional committee for workplace health and safety issues. No significant issues have been revealed by workplace health and safety audits of the workplace. Two workplace incidents were recorded during the year. Three staff completed a 4WD recovery course.

### Equal employment opportunity

The Authority and the EPA - Northern participate in a joint Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) network committee. All selection recommendations are monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance with the recruitment and selection standard. All appointments complied with the standard and no EEO complaints were received by the Authority.

Where appropriate, advice and support is provided to managers and supervisors on EEO and anti-discrimination matters.

On 30 June 2002 the Authority had 14 females and 14 males on staff with two positions vacant. Some basic profiles on gender are shown in Table B.

### Economic Benefits of visitor activity and expenditure

Tourism plays a major role in the life of the community in the World Heritage Area and is a key economic driver. According to the latest

research from the Office of Economic and Statistical Research, tourism in Tropical North Queensland represented 14.4 percent of the gross regional product (GRP) and 19,500 full time jobs. The region also had the third highest number of room nights sold in Queensland.

Visitor expenditure in Tropical North Queensland is estimated at approximately \$1.8 billion (W.S. Cummings and Associates 1998/99). A study by Driml (1997) estimated a total of 3.4 million visitor days per annum within the Area. The report estimates tourism use of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area at \$443 million per annum. This translates to an estimated total gross expenditure for the region (which includes indirect flow-on effects to the local economy) of \$753 million.

**TABLE B Employment by gender and salary level**

<b>Employment by gender and occupational stream, June 2002</b>		
<b>Stream</b>	<b>Female(%)</b>	<b>Male(%)</b>
Administration and Senior Executive Service	12 (42.85)	9 (32.14)
Professional	2 (7.16)	4 (14.28)
Technical		1 (3.57)
Operational		
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 (50.00)</b>	<b>14 (50.00)</b>
<b>Employment by gender and salary level, June 2002</b>		
<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Female(%)</b>	<b>Male(%)</b>
\$73,376 +		1 (3.57)
\$69,381 - \$73,376	1 (3.57)	1 (3.57)
\$62,622 - \$69,381		4 (14.28)
\$55,961 - \$62,622	1 (3.57)	3 (10.71)
\$48,773 - \$55,961	2 (6.89)	4 (14.28)
\$42,089 - \$48,773	4 (14.28)	
\$33,279 - \$42,089	5 (17.85)	1 (3.57)
\$26,407 - \$33,279		1 (3.57)
\$18,572 - \$26,407		
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 (50.00)</b>	<b>14 (50.00)</b>