



# WET TROPICS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

**MEDIA RELEASE: THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 2007**

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## **Wet Tropics greenhouse gas audit launched**

An audit of greenhouse gas emissions in the Wet Tropics shows that we emit less greenhouse gases per capita than the national average. However, our emission levels are still well above many other industrialised countries.

The audit was released today (20 December 2007) by the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA). It is the first regional audit of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia.

Member for Cairns and Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, Desley Boyle, said that Australians have the highest greenhouse gas emissions per person in the world.

“We all need to start reducing our emissions urgently. Climate change needs to be addressed locally as well as globally. This audit shows us where we can improve and will be useful when we consider how the Cairns and Wet Tropics region should develop and address the impacts climate change,” Ms Boyle said.

“I congratulate the WTMA on taking the initiative to commission this audit. Through ClimateSmart 2050, the Queensland Government is working to deal with the environmental and economic impacts of climate change. I hope this audit inspires other regions in Queensland and Australia to follow.

WTMA executive director, Andrew Maclean, said the Authority was keen to work with government and the local community to address the impacts of climate change on the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

“Research shows that even a few degrees of warming will have significant impacts on Wet Tropics wildlife, particularly upland species in the mountain and tableland areas. The health of the rainforests will be vital in the future to ensure we have plentiful supplies of fresh water and thriving tourism and recreation,” Mr Maclean said. “There will also be major impacts on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.”

“The Authority is working with our partners in the North Queensland Climate Alliance (NQCA) to educate the local community about how we can best deal with the impacts of climate change and reduce our own emissions in the region,” he added.

Dr Allan Dale, Terrain Natural Resource Management (Terrain NRM) chief executive officer, said he welcomed the Authority’s greenhouse gas audit.

“As a member of the NQCA, Terrain NRM is working with local governments and landholders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote the Wet Tropics as a great place to invest in carbon offsets. There is great potential here for replanting forests and bringing investment into the region to improve our environment and our economy,” Dr Dale said.

Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation Andrew McNamara said the audit release is a timely reminder to all Queenslanders about the reality of climate change impacts in Queensland.

“Climate change is real and its impacts will extend well beyond the Wet Tropics rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef,” Minister McNamara said.

“There will also be significant impacts on the economy, agriculture, infrastructure and health due to changes in rainfall, water supplies and temperature. For instance, sea level rise will begin to affect low lying coastal areas and the intensity of tropical cyclones and associated storm surge will increase. Changes in rainfall and temperature will affect agricultural production, and those pests and diseases that thrive in warmer conditions will increase, affecting human health and agriculture.

“We all have an important and immediate role to play in doing what we can as individuals to reduce our climate change impact.”

The audit was commissioned by the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) as a member of the North Queensland Climate Alliance (NQCA).

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***Media opportunities:***

The following people will be available for interviews at the launch:

- Desley Boyle, Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry.
- Mr Andrew Maclean, executive director, WTMA.
- Dr Allan Dale, CEO, Terrain NRM.

The Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation, Andrew McNamara, is available for phone interviews. Please contact Emma Parnell at the Minister’s Office on 3336 8002.

***Further information:***

Contact Campbell Clarke at WTMA on 4052 0542 or [campbell.clarke@epa.qld.gov.au](mailto:campbell.clarke@epa.qld.gov.au)

***About the Wet Tropics greenhouse gas audit:***

[http://www.wettropics.gov.au/media/med\\_issues.html](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/media/med_issues.html)

***About the impacts of climate change in the Wet Tropics:***

[http://www.wettropics.gov.au/mwha/mwha\\_climate.html](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/mwha/mwha_climate.html)

***About the North Queensland Climate Alliance***

<http://www.nqclimatealliance.org.au/>

***About climate change in Queensland***

[www.climatechange.qld.gov.au](http://www.climatechange.qld.gov.au)

***About how Queenslanders can contribute towards reducing climate change in Queensland***

[www.climatesmart.qld.gov.au](http://www.climatesmart.qld.gov.au)