

Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998

Information Sheet No. 14



Development and Maintenance of Infrastructure

What is the Wet Tropics Management Plan about?

The Plan commenced on 1 September 1998 and was designed to help protect the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Plan regulates only those activities within the that have the potential to adversely affect the natural or cultural values of the World Heritage Area¹. The activities of most concern are the destruction of native vegetation, and the disturbance of earth or watercourses.

Is the maintenance of infrastructure allowed within the Wet Tropic World Heritage Area (WHA)?

In most situations maintenance of infrastructure can be undertaken with a permit and in some cases the works being carried out may be considered minor and inconsequential and may therefore not require a permit. However, destructive maintenance practices are generally prohibited in the WHA under the Wet Tropics Management Plan. Types of infrastructure under consideration include roadworks, telecommunications, power and water supply and Defence activities. If a permit is required, in most cases, applicants would be required to adhere to codes of practice.

Codes of Practice have been developed in co-operation with local government, the Department of Main Roads, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and other agencies for maintenance or infrastructure including; roadworks, water infrastructure, electricity supply and telecommunications with service providers which address:

- protection of the integrity of the Area;
- control of weeds, feral animals and erosion;
- use of chemical products;
- disposal of earth, forest products and waste;
- access;
- rehabilitation of disturbed areas; and
- management of run-off.

The Authority acknowledges the stewardship role that some infrastructure service providers perform with respect to their leases, and their local knowledge of the land plays an invaluable part in the development of sustainable and environmentally responsible management practices.

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¹The natural values for which the Wet Tropics Area was listed as of World Heritage significance include evidence of major stages of the earth's evolutionary history, ongoing geological and biological processes, superlative natural phenomena or areas of natural beauty, and important habitats for conserving biodiversity. The Area's cultural values are also considered in determining appropriate management.