

# RAINFOREST ABORIGINAL news

ISSUE TWO : January 2017

## World Heritage Update

Welcome to the new year and the second edition of the Rainforest Aboriginal News (RAN). We are really happy to hear the first edition was so well received.

We congratulate Jabalbina Rangers for the recognition of their achievements at the Cassowary Awards in December 2016. We also acknowledge other well deserving finalists of the Rainforest Aboriginal people – Our Country Award, Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Elder Ken Reys and Ngadjon-Jii Traditional Owner Drew Morta.

Another highlight of last year was that the Authority Board formally recognised Rainforest Aboriginal responsibilities in management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and endorsed aligning the way in which the Authority works with rights-based approach. This is not about re-inventing the wheel, but doing things better to consider Native Title rights appropriately.

This is particularly important as the Authority gets ready to review the *Wet Tropics Management Plan* 1998. The Plan regulates land use

activities in the World Heritage Area through a zoning and permit system. A 'have your say' booklet will be distributed soon.

On the Authority's website you will also find a copy of the 2015-16 Annual Report and State of Wet Tropics Report on Ancient, Endemic, Rare and Threatened Vertebrates.

New members were appointed to the Authority's Community Consultative Committee (CCC) and the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) in 2016. Dennis Ah-Kee and Seraeah Wyles join the CCC. John Locke and Joann Schmitter join the SAC. These committees advise the Board.

Late last year the Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum approved the Authority's budget for 2016-17. Ministers committed \$11.8 million over three years to the yellow crazy ant eradication program. Directors are also investigating resourcing ideas to boost support for World Heritage management, visitor amenities and other presentation initiatives, including Aboriginal tourism.

*Looking forward to an exciting year ahead!*

Leah Talbot and Phil Rist  
Directors ~ Wet Tropics  
Management Authority Board



## NRM Update

Terrain's 2016 Annual General Meeting was held in Innisfail in November followed by a Members' Forum.

We acknowledge members and community who participated in the discussions around major new projects, partnerships and funding.

Catchment and community groups remain at the heart of Terrain and our team remain passionate about all projects, not just those reef related.

Our 2015-16 Annual Report and the *Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country* is now available on our website.

A memorandum of understanding was signed by Terrain and GreenCollarGroup on community approaches to carbon projects.

Terrain CEO Carole Sweatman was presented with a leadership excellence award by the Australian Institute of Management.

Steve Turton has been appointed to the Board. Peter Rowles was re-appointed and thanks was given to outgoing director Julia Leu. Alan Colgrave (industry representative) was appointed to the Standing Independent Selection Panel.

Terrain acknowledged and thanked the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Reef Trust, and Queensland Government Regional NRM funding.

Allison Halliday ~ Director, Terrain Board



## 2017 Calendar celebrates Rainforest Aboriginal people country and culture

An exciting new product hot off the press is the 2017 'People Country Culture' calendar, which celebrates and raises awareness of the important and ongoing role of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the Wet Tropics cultural landscape. The calendar has been a collaborative initiative of Rainforest Aboriginal people and their organisations, the Authority and Terrain. Please contact the Authority or Terrain if you would like a copy and don't forget to *submit your feedback*.



*Do you have a project idea  
in the Wet Tropics?*

Contact Alicia Haines on 4241 0510  
or Bart Dryden on 0400 705 830 to  
find out what opportunities might be  
available to assist you.



We acknowledge Rainforest Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and recognise their connection to this cultural landscape. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.



# Motivation to restore Babinda Creek

*“I have fond childhood memories of fishing along a deeper, rainforest lined Babinda Creek using ripe figs as bait. The motivation behind our work on Babinda Creek was an obligation to country and a response to my parent’s great sadness at the degraded and deforested creek banks.”*

Dennis Ah-Kee ~ Wanyurr Majay  
Traditional Owner and Jaragun Pty Ltd.

Jaragun Pty Ltd hosted a ‘Reinstating the Rainforest’ field day at Babinda Creek on 12 October 2016 to share the skills and knowledge they have developed from doing environmental work in the Babinda area over the past three years.

Jaragun’s Dennis Ah-Kee and Liz Owens took over thirty Traditional Owners from across the Wet Tropics region to two sites on Babinda Creek where they have been working with landholders, scientists, Cairns Regional Council and Terrain to restore rainforest.

Dennis and Liz explained that good working relationships with local landholders are essential and that their restoration efforts attempt to connect local remnant vegetation, maximise food sources for the southern cassowary and improve waterway conditions.

This field day was supported by Terrain and the Authority. Positive feedback from participants confirms that Traditional Owners are seeking more opportunities to share knowledge and skills in the future.

*“Getting to meet new people and learn the different ideas each one has was one of the best things about the day. I believe it will increase my knowledge, and I enjoyed the inspiration it brings.”*

FIELD DAY PARTICIPANT

*“The most exciting news we have to share is that we recently spotted a cassowary footprint in one of revegetation sites which features an isolated patch of remnant rainforest.”*

Liz Owens ~ Jaragun Pty Ltd.

## FIELD DAY PARTICIPANTS EXPLORE BABINDA CREEK REVEGETATION SITE



©WET TROPICS IMAGES

### Did you know?

The Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants identification key is available for free online.  
[www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/rfk/](http://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/rfk/)

# Fiji delegates learn from the Wet Tropics

A delegation of nine staff from the Fijian Department of Forestry and Fisheries visited several areas in the Wet Tropics in November 2016 to gain insights and ideas for the development of a refreshed Forestry Training Centre Curriculum.

During their ten day study tour of Queensland, delegates visited the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing, Cape York NRM, Terrain, James Cook University, the Authority, Mossman Gorge Indigenous eco-tourism development, Skyrail, Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Indigenous Business Australia.

The focus of their study tour was to experience how different organisations are implementing legislation to safeguard and promote the protection of natural and cultural resources.

The delegation identified that good governance, community engagement, partnerships, management plans, training and capacity building are essential for sustainably managing Fiji’s terrestrial and marine resources.

*“The knowledge gained from the tour will not only broaden the teams’ technical know-how but also assist the team in the final formulation of the content of the course that they are developing.”*

Mr. Manasa Luvunakoro ~ Principal Forestry Officer Training and Education

## FIJI DELEGATION VISITS GIRRINGUN



©FIJI MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND FOREST



## Wet Tropics Indigenous ranger network

The first regional Indigenous ranger workshop was held on Djiru country at Clump Mountain in November 2016. The event was hosted by Girringun Aboriginal Corporation with support from the Authority and Terrain.

The workshop was a unique knowledge sharing and networking opportunity for rangers across the region. Forty-five people participated, including Gunggandji, Dawul Wuru, Djunbunji, Girringun and Jabalbina ranger groups and guest speakers.

A highlight for many participants was small group sessions that were tailored for ranger coordinators/senior rangers, female rangers and male rangers.

There was a great energy amongst the group and a call for the Authority and Terrain to continue to support a Wet Tropics Indigenous ranger network and workshops in the future. The workshop outcomes will be circulated to all participants in the near future.

“These opportunities allow all rangers to have a yarn about common issues – the small group sessions were really useful. There is a strong feeling this event should be annual.” Sean Walsh ~ Girringun

“The last couple of days have been very important to build relations with all partners. We need a strong vision, to move into the future together.” Hilton Noble ~ Gunggandji



INDIGENOUS  
RANGERS  
NETWORKING  
AND SHARING  
KNOWLEDGE

## Strengthening rainforest plant knowledge

The Australian Tropical Herbarium held a rainforest plant identification course in Paluma in November 2016. Following an expression of interest process, the Authority sponsored two people from Girringun Aboriginal Corporation and two people from Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation to attend.

Girringun Communication Officer, Seraeah Wyles caught up with Jean Thaiday and Delvene Reese to ask about their knowledge of rainforest plants and what they learnt.

Jean said, “I have a good level of rainforest plant knowledge, as I grew up in rainforest country and my elders taught me my knowledge when we were out camping and fishing. I want to expand my knowledge on rainforest plants as it will come in handy when we go to market days and schools. I will also gain a skills that can be transferred into other working areas.”

Delvene added “I am learning from elders like Auntie Jean Thaiday at work. I wasn't really taught this growing up. I now get to learn about the medicinal side of plant use. This has been a real privilege for me. Makes me feel good and excited as a Nywaigi Traditional Owner to be going back to country to learn about rainforest plants and identification as well as showcasing the rainforest plants in Nywaigi country. I hope to learn about all the rainforest species of plants and make sure I can identify them properly when we are out on country”.



DELVENE REESE & JEAN THAIDAY

© GIRRINGUN

## Showcasing innovative and emerging cultural tourism

Aboriginal tourism provides visitors and locals with an opportunity to have more in-depth experiences in the Wet Tropics cultural landscape.

In October 2016, the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP), the Authority and Culture Connect helped to showcase some of the Atherton Tableland's most innovative and emerging cultural tourism products to industry, government and private sector representatives. This showcase highlighted the quality and potential of emerging Aboriginal tourism products and initiated an important support network to ensure these products are realised and continue to grow.

Ngadjon-Jii Traditional Owner and tour guide Drew Morta led representatives through the Malanda rainforest, sharing cultural knowledge about the traditional ways of his people.

DREW MORTA GUIDES TOURISM REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH MALANDA RAINFOREST



Jitta Arts demonstrated traditional weaving practice and talked about how their gallery promotes the art and culture of Rainforest Aboriginal people in a culturally appropriate way.

Tableland Yidinji Traditional Owner Jai Joseph met representatives at the cathedral fig tree and discussed his vision for a tourism enterprise that visits culturally important healing waters in the local area.

The day was a great success and the representatives are now talking about how they can support the growth of Aboriginal tourism in the future.

© WET TROPICS IMAGES



# Terrain's Community Partnerships Team



**Bart Dryden** is currently the Acting Manager of Community Partnerships and provides leadership to the team in the delivery of Terrain's annual work plan. Bart has extensive experience in working with communities in the Wet Tropics to develop partnerships to improve the sustainability of our natural resources.

P: 0400 705 830 or E: [bart.dryden@terrain.org.au](mailto:bart.dryden@terrain.org.au)

**Vanessa Drysdale** [COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ~ MOSSMAN, DAINTREE, BLOOMFIELD] has recently joined the Terrain team and brings her experience in managing NRM projects in remote northern Australia. She has most recently overseen the Sea Country program for Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation located in Nhulunbuy and is very passionate about the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) program, Indigenous engagement in NRM and "both ways" partnerships.

P: 0437 187 036 or E: [vanessa.drysdale@terrain.org.au](mailto:vanessa.drysdale@terrain.org.au)



**Rowan Shee** [COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ~ RUSSELL, MULGRAVE, LOWER BARRON] is also new to Terrain. He has spent the last six years establishing and supporting the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Protected Area and Jabalbina Rangers. He has studied and worked in NRM, urban and regional planning, youth work, tour guiding and language teaching in Australia and overseas.

P: 0458 875 745 or E: [rowan.shee@terrain.org.au](mailto:rowan.shee@terrain.org.au)



**Evizel Seymour** [COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ~ TABLELANDS] develop partnerships with community groups on the Tablelands, particularly in the Upper Johnstone and Upper Barron catchment areas. Evizel has a very fishy background - she has a marine biology degree and aquaculture.

P: 0429 901 440 or E: [evizel.seymour@terrain.org.au](mailto:evizel.seymour@terrain.org.au)

**Jacqui Richards** [COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ~ CARDWELL/MURRAY & HINCHINBROOK] works with a broad range of the community including Traditional Owners, landholders, industry organisations, community groups, research institutions, government and individuals to achieve positive natural resource management outcomes.

P: 0457 577 955 or E: [jacqui.richards@terrain.org.au](mailto:jacqui.richards@terrain.org.au)

**Tony O'Malley** [COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ~ LOWER JOHNSTONE, TULLY] is responsible for supporting community within that area. Tony works with MaMu, Djiru and Gulnay Traditional Owners. He is also NRM policy leader for the Terrain region.

P: 0437 728 190 or E: [tony.omalley@terrain.org.au](mailto:tony.omalley@terrain.org.au)



## What's Coming up in the Wet Tropics

The Authority's Scientific Advisory Committee meet... 10 February 2017

The Authority's Community Consultative Committee meet... 16 February 2017

Terrain NRM Board meeting... 24 February 2017

Community meetings for Terrain's Major Integrated Project... Johnstone Catchment 2 Mar 2017 and Tully Catchment 3 March 2017

Wet Tropics Management Authority Board meeting... 7-8 March 2017

# Updates

## What's been happening in the Wet Tropics...

Rainforest showcase on Aboriginal tourism  
Atherton Tablelands  
13 October 2016

Mamu Djunga Bora Grounds opened at  
East Palmerston ~ 14 October 2016

Fiji Department of Forestry and Fisheries on a study tour in the Wet Tropics ~ 4 November 2016

Girringun Aboriginal Corporation hosted first Indigenous Ranger Workshop for Wet Tropics Region  
8-10 November 2016

Graduation ceremony in Cairns for twenty-two Indigenous rangers and four Indigenous Compliance Officers completing a Certificate IV in Statutory Compliance ~ 11 November 2016

Australian Tropical Herbarium Plant Identification Course held at Paluma  
24-27 November 2016

Terrain NRM Board Meeting and AGM held at Innisfail ~ 25 November 2016

Wet Tropics Management Authority Board meeting held in Cairns  
1-2 December 2016

Cassowary Awards at Hartley's Crocodile Adventures ~ 3 December 2016

New members of the Authority's Community Consultative Committee and Scientific Advisory Committee attend induction meeting in Cairns  
15 December 2016

Subscribe to Rainforest Aboriginal News!  
[wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au)

## Other Relevant Upcoming Events

NAISMA knowledge brokering workshop for Indigenous land managers in Darwin...  
7-8 February 2017

AIATSIS National Indigenous Research Conference in Canberra... 21-23 March 2017

Want to know more about ranger compliance training? (check out this video [www.youtube.com/watch?v=od-1qGx1lf8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=od-1qGx1lf8))