



## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE WET TROPICS RESTORATION ALLIANCE

“Ensuring Wet Tropics landscapes thrive under a changing climate”

### **Our commitment**

The Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance (the Alliance) is a coalition of organisations dedicated to ensuring the survival of the Wet Tropics forests—some of the world’s oldest continuously surviving tropical rainforests—amidst a changing and unstable climate. The Alliance also strives to enhance the ecological, social, cultural and financial resilience of the Wet Tropics region.

We work as partners to reverse the decline of our unique biodiversity and use nature-based and traditional ecological solutions, including revegetation and conservation outside reserves, to address our climate emergency.

The current decade is our window to climate-proof critical areas of the Wet Tropics. Acknowledging the challenge of retaining and restoring the environment, the United Nations has declared 2021–2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, with a focus on preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.

### **Why we need an Alliance**

Many organisations currently work across the Wet Tropics region to protect, restore and repair our unique landscapes, doing fantastic work to connect and restore land outside of existing protected areas.

However, the challenges for their work are many. The scale of restoration required to save Wet Tropics forests is hampered by limited short-term funding, inconsistent access to information on best practice and emerging environmental markets, and a restoration community whose efforts are under-recognised in terms of the immense contribution they make to the region’s economy and environment. Critically, it is imperative that Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples are provided more opportunities to lead and co-develop land restoration initiatives.

Organisations identified a desire for a coordinated and supported network in the region including landholders, Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, industry, government, researchers and investors who have common goals and aspirations to champion restoration efforts across the Wet Tropics.

### **What we want to achieve**

Western and traditional science have identified where we need to urgently restore Wet Tropics forests to limit and reverse the declines of wildlife and ecosystem services. As the climate warms, we believe this critical resilience work must occur over the next decade.

The Alliance will take a strategic and scientific approach to landscape conservation by supporting new and existing forest corridors, creating protective buffers around reserves, and preserving

remnant vegetation across the landscape. Restoring ecological functions in priority natural areas provides refuges for unique biodiversity such as our endemic ferns and orchids, possums and tree-kangaroos.

To achieve this, the Alliance will align conservation efforts more strategically to achieve real impact on the ground and scale up investment through natural capital markets and other means.

The Alliance will utilise world-leading research and capacity building to secure a better future for our communities, economies, landscapes and wildlife.

An investment framework will be developed in partnership with interested Alliance members to attract increased investment to save Wet Tropics forests. The framework will tell the compelling story about why the Wet Tropics is a critical place for urgent investment in restoration and resilience actions and can be used to support members' work and identify priority areas for restoration such as key connectivity areas across the landscape.

### **How we will work together**

The Alliance is about supporting our members' existing work and developing capacity and income streams. We recognise that people's interest and passion for conservation in their local patch is a key component of improving the resilience of the Wet Tropics.

The Alliance is also about identifying key areas where upscaled investment and on-ground action is required. This will include areas of the landscape that science tells us will be relatively more 'stable' under a changing climate.

These key areas will be identified through the investment framework.

Wet Tropics Management Authority, Terrain NRM and James Cook University have agreed to resource the foundational work. The role of these partners is to provide ongoing support to members to maximise their impact by scaling up on-ground action and investment, coordination and knowledge sharing.

The Alliance is open to any organisation or individual with an interest in working together to ensure the survival of Wet Tropics forests under a changing and unstable climate. Alliance members currently include Traditional Custodians, landscape restoration practitioners, research organisations, conservation entities and investors. With the goal of securing the future of some of the world's oldest continuously surviving tropical rainforests, the Alliance invites anyone committed to contributing to this mission to join as a member.

### **Benefits to Alliance members**

Joining the Alliance offers many advantages, including access to the collective partnership, skills, knowledge and potential shared resources of fellow members. You will receive priority invitations to Alliance activities throughout the year, such as the annual forum, field days and workshops tailored to your interests and regional needs.

**Signatories to the Alliance will commit to:**

- pursuing ambition targets for landscape repair and restoration, and creating a strategic network of viable biodiverse, carbon sequestering and productivity enhancing vegetation corridors adjacent to and connecting with the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.
  - collaborating to identify partners and resources for implementing integrated, landscape level repair, restoration and revegetation projects to improve community resilience and halt the loss of biodiversity.
  - rallying the community, landholders, industry and restoration organisations to achieve those targets.
  - exploring community supported, evidence-based interventions to safeguard species pending emissions reductions.
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**Signature:**

X

**Organisation:**

**Name of Signatory:**

**Position:**

**Date:**