



Annual Report 2021–22





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Purpose of the report

This annual report details the financial and non-financial performance of the Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. It describes the achievements, performance, outlook and financial position of the Authority, and satisfies the requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009, the detailed requirements set out in the annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies, Queensland's *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and the Commonwealth's *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994*.

Feedback

The annual report is an important document representing communication and accountability. The Authority values comments and welcomes feedback from readers.

Public availability

This publication can be accessed and downloaded from our website at www.wettropics.gov.au. Alternatively, hard copies of this publication can be obtained by emailing wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au.



Interpreter service statement

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Further information



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The Wet Tropics Management Authority acknowledges Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area and recognises their connection to this cultural landscape. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.



12 August 2022

The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Minister for the Environment and Water
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2021–22 for the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

Under the Wet Tropics World Heritage Conservation Act 1994 (Cth), section 10 (1) 'annual report' means a report given to the Australian Government under section 63 of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (Qld).

Section 10 (2) requires you, as the Minister, to cause a copy of the annual report to be laid before each House of Parliament within 15 sitting days after the report is given to the Australian Government.

In submitting this report to you today, the Authority is fulfilling its responsibilities under Australian Government legislation.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine T. Grant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped flourish at the end.

Ms Christine Grant

Wet Tropics Management Authority Board Chair

Message from the Chair

As manager of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area), the Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) has an obligation to protect, conserve, present, rehabilitate and transmit the Area to future generations. This is a significant challenge, as there is no doubt that the Area faces many threats.

This year has been an important year of change for the Authority, the Area, and the Wet Tropics community with our focus shifting towards the importance of not only protecting the Area but taking meaningful steps towards restoring and building resilience in one of the planet's most important environments.

The twelve months from 1 July 2021 saw significant change in the Authority's Board. Along with my commencement as the first Indigenous Chair on 24 September 2021, Ms Ailsa Lively—a Gunggandji woman—was appointed as a director. Joining existing director Dr Sally Driml, we also welcomed Ms Robin Clark and Prof. Stephen Williams, and are now awaiting the final appointment of a Rainforest Aboriginal male representative. Our new Board has a wealth of experience ranging from Indigenous bio-cultural management and governance, tourism, community development, rainforest ecology, planning and natural resources management. These skills complement my own experience in national and international World Heritage, Indigenous Peoples, natural and cultural management, and biological diversity.

Under the new Board, the Authority continues to work with our partners, Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, land managers, researchers, the broader community, and all levels of government to implement strategies to address the threats and challenges facing the Area.

The Authority hosted a two-day Wet Tropics Landscape Restoration Symposium and field trip on Tableland Yidinji, Ngadjon-Jii and Mamu Country on the southern Atherton Tableland. The importance of landscape restoration as a valuable and practical action to buffer the Area and its distinctive biodiversity and culture from the worst effects of ecological fragmentation and climate change was highlighted. Recognising that the current pace of restoration will not achieve the outcomes required to support future climate adaptation, participants agreed to form an alliance to scale up landscape repair and restoration to build the ecological, social, cultural and financial resilience of the region. Our staff have been working hard in the background to establish the alliance.

The Authority continues its practical approach to climate action, delivering projects through Queensland Government Reef Assist funding with four

Rainforest Aboriginal-led organisations and one land management organisation. Work included restoration of landscapes, weed removal and continuing the long-term monitoring of mountaintop species susceptible to climate change in partnership with Gimuy Walubara Yidinji rangers, James Cook University and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships.

Together with its community and industry partners, the Authority continues to reduce the impact of yellow crazy ants and eradication of this highly invasive species remains on track. Generously supported by the Australian and Queensland governments, our Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program demonstrates the power of partnerships in collective effort and measurable impact.

The Wet Tropics tourism industry—a foundation of the region’s economy with a crucial role in the protection and presentation of the Area—continues to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, our Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031 was launched in September. This plan re-imagines a shared vision and creates a roadmap for a more sustainable and resilient tourism future in the Wet Tropics. One of the first outcomes is a collaboratively developed and funded tour guide training program for the Wet Tropics, to begin in 2023.

Work on the refresh of the Wet Tropics of Queensland Regional Agreement is ongoing, with the Authority supporting Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples in Indigenous-led processes and back-to-Country planning. The 2021 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ Regional Forum, held in Cairns, brought together 84 Rainforest Aboriginal representatives, government, and non-government agency attendees to advance key Rainforest Aboriginal land management and governance issues.

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The Authority’s Board of Directors acknowledges and thanks our departing Board Chair and Directors, recognising their great work and commitment. As always, we extend our thanks to the Authority’s Executive Director Scott Buchanan and the hardworking and passionate staff for their commitment to the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.



Ms Christine Grant

Wet Tropics Management Authority Board Chair

About the Wet Tropics

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area

World Heritage listing of a site is recognition by the international community that the place is such an outstanding example of the world's natural and/or cultural heritage that its conservation is of value to all people. The World Heritage List is comprised of 1,154 properties that the World Heritage Committee considers have Outstanding Universal Value—including 20 Australian properties.

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1988 for its natural values, meeting all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing and fulfilling the necessary conditions of integrity¹. The Area was listed on Australia's National Heritage List in 2007 for its natural values, and in 2012 for its Indigenous cultural values².

The Area is a rich, living cultural landscape for Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, who have lived continuously in the rainforest environment for many thousands of years. Indeed, it is the only Australian site where Aboriginal Peoples have permanently inhabited a tropical rainforest environment.

Relevant legislation

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) is managed under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Queensland Act) and the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994* (the Commonwealth Act). These Acts implement Australia's international duty for the protection, conservation, presentation, rehabilitation and transmission of the Area to future generations.

The Queensland Act established the Wet Tropics Management Authority and is the legal basis for the statutory Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998, which regulates land use activities in the Area through a zoning and permit system. The Management Scheme Intergovernmental Agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is an intergovernmental agreement, originally signed by the Prime Minister of Australia and the Premier of Queensland in 1990. The latest version (agreed in 2012) continues to set out broad structural and funding arrangements for the management of the Area.

1 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/486>

2 <http://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/places/world/wet-tropics>

Our organisation

Who we are

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) was established to ensure Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention is met, in relation to the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area).

The Authority is a body corporate, with statutory powers defined under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Queensland Act). The Authority's functions are fully defined under section 10 of the Queensland Act, but include to:

- develop and implement policies, plans and programs for management of the Area
- formulate performance indicators for the implementation of approved policies and programs
- advise, make recommendations and report to the relevant ministers on the state of the Area
- 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
- monitor the state of the Area.

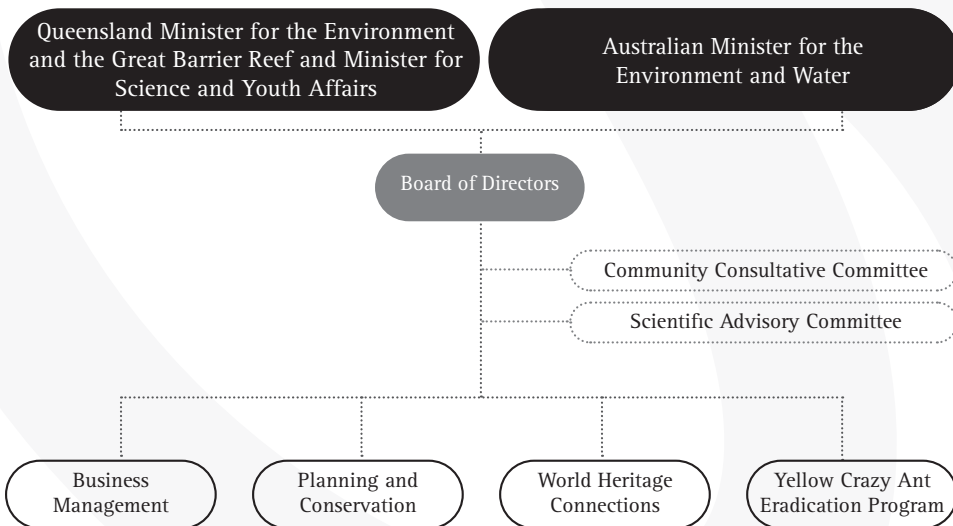
The Authority performs its functions in a way that protects the Area's natural heritage values and is consistent with the World Heritage Convention and relevant legislation.

Our structure

As a body corporate operating under the requirements of both Australian and Queensland legislation, the Authority's structure enshrines its engagement with the Queensland and Australian governments and a range of industry and community stakeholders throughout the Wet Tropics region.

The Authority operates as an administrative unit within the Queensland Government's Department of Environment and Science (DES) and is subject to Queensland public sector legislation, regulations, standards and guidelines governing administrative functions and arrangements. The Director-General of DES is the accountable officer for the Authority under the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009. The Authority is responsible to the Director-General regarding compliance with Queensland Government administrative and financial standards.

Wet Tropics Management Authority reporting structure



Relevant ministers

The Management Scheme Intergovernmental Agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area and the Queensland Act recognise that both the Australian Government and Queensland Government have joint interests in and responsibilities for the Area. The Authority's Board of Directors reports to two ministers:

- The Hon Meaghan Scanlon MP, Queensland Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs
- The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, Australian Minister for the Environment and Water.

Board of Directors

The Authority's Board of Directors (the Board) is established under the Queensland Act. The Board's key function is to implement programs to meet Australia's international obligation for the Area under the World Heritage Convention.

The Board consists of seven directors, six of whom are voting members and serve in a part-time capacity. The Authority's Executive Director is the seventh member and a non-voting director.

The Australian Government and the Queensland Government nominate two directors each—Commonwealth legislation requires that at least one Australian Government nominee is an Aboriginal person. The relevant ministers also jointly nominate a Chair and an Aboriginal director.

There have been significant changes to the Board this year, with the terms of our previous Chair (Ms Leslie Shirreffs) and two directors (Mr Phil Rist and Prof. Iain Gordon) coming to an end. In September 2021, the ministers appointed the Authority's first Indigenous Chair, Kuku Yalanji woman Ms Christine Grant, as well as a new director, Gunggandji woman Ms Ailsa Lively. In November, Prof. Stephen Williams and Ms Robin Clark were also appointed as directors, joining Dr Sally Driml (Board director since October 2020). The process to appoint a male Aboriginal director recommenced in July 2022 following the Federal election and subsequent appointment of a new Minister. The appointment of this director is upon recommendation of the Australian Minister and the process is underway.

Details on the operations of the Board and their achievements in 2021–22 are at Attachment 1 (see page 30).

Statutory committees

The Authority has two statutory advisory committees appointed by the Board under section 40 (1) of the Queensland Act—the Community Consultative Committee and the Scientific Advisory Committee. These committees meet prior to Board meetings and advise the Authority on programs and research for the management of the Area. Each committee is chaired by one of the Board's directors, providing a direct line of communication between the committees and the Board.

Our contribution to government objectives

The vision of the Authority is: 'to protect the values of the Wet Tropics through collaboration, culture, knowledge and passion'.

Consistent with its legislative roles and functions, the Authority endeavours to ensure that its service delivery initiatives contribute to Australian and Queensland government objectives for the Wet Tropics community.

The Authority's direction and service delivery contribute to objectives for the community as outlined in the Queensland Government's Economic Recovery Plan in the following ways:

- safeguarding our health by providing a world-class greenspace for the Queensland community
- supporting jobs in the tourism, Indigenous and community sectors
- growing our region by attracting investment in science, education, nature-based and Indigenous tourism
- investing in skills by refreshing our tour guide program and partnering with universities
- protecting our environment, safeguarding this world-recognised natural landscape for future generations.

Reporting

As required under section 63 (1) of the Queensland Act and section 10 of the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994* (the Commonwealth Act), each year the Authority prepares an annual report (this report) which includes the financial statements and administration of the Acts. The Authority also prepares a State of Wet Tropics report.

Our performance

This annual report outlines the Wet Tropics Management Authority's (the Authority) progress against the Wet Tropics Strategic Plan 2020–2030 (the Strategic Plan). The Strategic Plan details how the Authority will work with partners and the community to effectively manage and protect the World Heritage values of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area and ensure cooperative management with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples.

Five high-level strategies of the Authority are identified in the Strategic Plan, and the Authority's achievements in 2021–22 are detailed in accordance with these:

- Strategy 1—Climate change and other threats (see page 9)
- Strategy 2—Support Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples (see page 11)
- Strategy 3—Involve the community (see page 13)
- Strategy 4—World-class tourism and recreation (see page 15)
- Strategy 5—Minimise impacts (see page 17)

To ensure financial and business planning appropriately supports and enhances the achievement of strategic goals, the Authority's commitment to excellence in corporate governance and management is also reported against:

- High quality executive, partnership and governance work to ensure the Authority remains an accountable and capable organisation (see page 19).

Strategy 1—Climate change and other threats: respond to the impacts of climate change and priority cross-tenure threats to the Area

Climate change is the most significant threat to the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area). Climate change and biosecurity threats (including tropical weeds, yellow crazy ants, and other pest animals) negatively impact the biodiversity values that underpin the World Heritage listing of the Area, placing further pressure on already threatened species and ecosystems.

Restoring habitat and connecting species and ecosystems through corridors is a critical adaptation action that must occur both inside and outside the Area to ensure persistence of Wet Tropics biodiversity over time.

The Authority progressed a major new initiative that underpins the delivery of the Accept, Act, Adapt: Climate Adaptation Plan for the Wet Tropics 2020–2030, hosting a two-day Landscape Restoration Symposium on the Atherton Tableland. At this symposium, attended by 40 organisations (160 people), the Chair of the Authority’s Board announced the intent to develop a Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance. There has been strong interest across the restoration community to be part of this alliance, and the Authority is developing a framework including a governance and delivery approach.

The Authority collaborated with restoration stakeholders to improve resilience of Wet Tropics ecosystems, securing an additional \$650,000 through the Queensland Government’s Reef Assist Program to continue on-ground works in the Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples Prescribed Body Corporate Aboriginal Corporation Trustee Area, and land restoration initiatives on the southern Atherton Tableland.

The Authority worked with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P) and James Cook University on the second year of a mountaintop monitoring program to better understand how particularly susceptible endemic upland possums and birds are responding to changes in climate. Three surveys were completed at Mount Lewis, Mount Windsor and Danbulla (Mount Edith) national parks, focusing on endemic rainforest possums. Results reflect similar trends indicating long term declines in the abundance and distribution of these species. Data collected will assist in management responses to help species adapt to climate change, including the potential for construction of insulated nest boxes or translocation of animals.

A rapidly changing climate has led to a number of severe fires over the last few years, including unprecedented fire events. In collaboration with the Authority, QPWS&P produced a draft Northern Region Climate Change Adaptation Plan to provide practical guidance for staff to plan and implement fire management in the face of climate variability and long-term climate change.

The Authority supported the recovery of threatened species through its Cassowary Recovery Team, and involvement in northern bettong, mahogany glider, and magnificent broodfrog recovery initiatives. The Authority and Terrain NRM jointly nominated the Wet Tropics as a priority place under the Commonwealth Threatened Species Strategy in a bid for the Area to be recognised as one of 20 priority places of focus by the Commonwealth in the recovery of threatened species.

Eradicating yellow crazy ants from the Wet Tropics

The third year of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program under the Intergovernmental Agreement (2019–22) has been one of continued progress towards eradication. The Authority conducted three treatment rounds and extensive surveys and was able to declare eradication of yellow crazy ants from a fourth site. Progress to date has achieved over 75% reduction in broadscale treatment across the total area that has now transitioned to long term monitoring.

Two additional odour detection dogs passed validation and commenced active surveillance. To support the ongoing training and maintenance of the odour detection dogs, the Authority maintained 22 captive yellow crazy ant colonies for ongoing scent production.

The Authority continued to work with the Traditional Custodians, community and industry to mitigate spread, trace potential sources of spread and look for destinations of other infestation areas, as well as sharing research and program information with other ant eradication and control programs.

Strategy 2—Support Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples: promote and incorporate the rights, interests and aspirations of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples in the management of the Area

As Traditional Custodians of the Wet Tropics for many thousands of years, Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples bring unique connections, knowledge and skills to the contemporary management of the Area. The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) values the critical role of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and recognises that active incorporation and promotion of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ rights, interests and aspirations is essential to successful collaborative management.

The Authority continued to embed a rights-based approach with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, including alignment with the Queensland *Human Rights Act 2019*. Consideration of the potential impact on human rights was incorporated into decision-making processes, including all Board decisions and approval of relevant guidelines and policy. A Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ engagement framework and a roadmap for implementing a rights-based approach for Authority staff commenced development. Staff were provided ongoing support to better understand, recognise and embed Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ connections to and management of the Area through collaboration, consultation and meaningful engagement in the delivery of all programs.

The Authority supported the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ Think Tank (RAPTT) in their work to refresh the Wet Tropics of Queensland Regional Agreement (the Regional Agreement) by facilitating various engagement opportunities to ensure Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and partners were kept abreast of the work of the RAPTT. The Authority assisted the RAPTT with ongoing funding negotiations with government and partners including a meeting with the Queensland Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs, the Hon Meaghan Scanlon MP.

The Authority hosted the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ Regional Forum, which involved 84 participants including 58 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples representing more than 20 tribal groups, and key partners. The RAPTT received in-principle support from Rainforest Aboriginal attendees to continue to progress the refresh the Regional Agreement and seek investment with potential partners.

The Authority commenced discussions with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) and provided support to the RAPTT to develop and present to GBRF a funding proposal: ‘Empowering Country, Culture, Community’—this project would advance the refresh of the Regional Agreement whilst also delivering on outcomes of the Reef 2050 Plan across land and sea Country within the Great Barrier Reef catchment. Negotiations between the RAPTT and GBRF continue.

The Authority played a key role in finalising the handback of the Daintree, Ngalba Bulal, Black Mountain and Hope Islands national parks to Eastern Kuku-Yalanji Traditional Owners as a signatory to the landmark Indigenous Land Use Agreement and Indigenous Management Agreement with QPWS&P and Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owners. The handback ceremony on 29 October 2021, attended by the Authority’s Chair and Acting Executive Director, resulted in multiple news outlets from across Australia and around the globe contacting the Authority to interview the Chair, Ms Christine Grant, who is also an Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owner. The Authority attended and participated in the first joint management meeting for the handback area.

Through the Reef Assist Program, the Authority delivered bespoke media training to Dulabed and Malanbarra Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation, to build capacity for rangers to share their stories by producing their own creative and engaging digital content. As part of the Authority’s Landscape Restoration Symposium, a ‘Caring for Country and collaboration for sustainable economies’ yarning circle was facilitated by Djabugay Traditional Owner Barry Hunter, providing an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to share knowledge, experiences and research about restoring tropical vegetation for biodiversity, culture and climate action.

The Authority produced three editions of the Rainforest Aboriginal News, promoting the work of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples on Country, and the 2021–2022 People Country Culture calendar, featuring artwork by Eastern Kuku Yalanji artist Emma Burchill that represents the seasons of Kuku Yalanji Country.

The Authority’s Rainforest Aboriginal Grants program invested \$29,560 across five projects to deliver monitoring of endangered species, build capacity of Indigenous rangers, monitor changes in fire regime and protect significant cultural, natural, and traditional sites within the Area.

The Authority continued to work with the Department of Environment and Science to review and improve the Application for Research Endorsement (ARE) process for ongoing implementation—this process embeds a free, prior and informed consent approach to ensure researchers are engaging with relevant Rainforest Aboriginal organisations prior to applying for research permits in the Area.

Strategy 3—Involve the community: optimise community participation and connection with the Area through innovative interpretation, with a focus on education, volunteering and social inclusion

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) collaborates with a diverse range of partners and stakeholders—including Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, landholders, land management agencies, the private sector, conservation groups, volunteers and the wider community—and recognises the valuable role of these groups in managing the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area).

The Authority hosted a range of events involving key Wet Tropics communities—promoted with targeted social media campaigns—that created opportunities for sharing information and network building across the region including:

- the annual Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Forum
- a two-day Wet Tropics Landscape Restoration Symposium
- the launch of the Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031 at the Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation's East Trinity tourism facility
- a Youth Round Table in partnership with Youth Empowerment Towards Independence (YETI)
- the premiere of six short Working with Nature films showcasing work facilitated under the Reef Assist Program.

Encouraging and supporting youth participation across all program areas was a particular focus. Presentations were delivered to James Cook University students on the impacts of yellow crazy ants and to the Youth Climate Change Summit to inform youth of the Authority's functions in managing the Area's natural and cultural values. The collaboration with YETI facilitating the Youth Round Table has created a pathway for future youth targeted programs. Working with White Rock State School on the creation of a rap song to help raise public awareness about yellow crazy ants and their impacts culminated with an ABC radio interview and broadcasting of the recorded song. Facilitating students from Bentley Park High School to attend a Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands (TREAT) tree planting on the Atherton Tableland introduced a number of local youths to the concept of nature-based economies.

Increasing awareness about the role of the Authority and threats to the values of the Area were elevated by participation at several community events, the largest being Cairns Regional Council's Ecofiesta on 29 May 2022 which attracted over 10,000 people. Other events included Cairns NAIDOC Friday in the Park (where Authority staff were joined by rangers from Dulabed and Malanbarra Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation and Abiculture), Carnival on Collins and Aquafest.

In partnership with Savannah Guides, six Wet Tropics Ambassador workshops were delivered to more than 100 people (online and in person). Attendees were primarily from the tourism industry (including visitor information centres and regional tourism organisations) and local government. The tourism industry was engaged in conversation around sustainable tourism through five roadshow events across the Wet Tropics.

In the delivery of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program, the Authority actively engaged the community using letterbox drops and roadside signs, plus a series of community engagement events including stalls at shopping centres and ‘toolbox talks’ for local businesses.

The Authority’s statutory committees—the Science Advisory Committee (SAC) and Community Consultative Committee (CCC)—provide invaluable contributions and advice. The SAC participated in the Authority’s climate action grants panel, informed the development of the State of Wet Tropics Report and reviewed the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships’ draft Northern Region Climate Change Adaptation Plan. The SAC also considered board priorities, climate change, habitat restoration, and fire management as key areas of focus.

The CCC provided significant feedback to inform and advise the Board on the community’s views and concerns on numerous issues relevant to management of the Area—in particular flying fox management, windfarm development, review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, ethical funding, and land clearing and urbanisation of rural properties which provide valuable corridors for vulnerable and endangered species. Communication with the Board was improved through a joint meeting held to inform the CCC of the Authority’s strategic priorities, and discuss how the CCC can best inform, advise and influence delivery of the Board and Authority’s actions.

A joint CCC and SAC workshop was held to obtain coordinated consideration in reviewing and refining the Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance concept, with members of both committees participating in the Authority’s Landscape Restoration Symposium.

Strategy 4—World-class tourism and recreation: enhance World Heritage presentation and support opportunities for natural and cultural tourism and recreation

While the Wet Tropics has a well-established tourism industry, it continues to evolve and adapt in response to social, economic and environmental influences. There is appetite for sustainable natural and cultural tourism experiences, which will continue to grow. The Wet Tropics is well positioned to ensure that—with careful and collaborative management and planning—its communities and landscapes will benefit from sustainable tourism. The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) is working with key partners to stimulate sustainable tourism solutions in our communities.

In September 2021, the Authority officially launched the Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031 (the Tourism Plan). Developed through consultation with more 180 participants representing more than 80 groups and entities, the Tourism Plan brings together Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, the tourism industry, the conservation sector and partner agencies to develop a sustainable and resilient future for tourism in the Area. The Tourism Plan outlines 6 goals, 16 strategies and 28 actions to be collaboratively delivered.

The Authority has made strong advancements in the implementation of the Tourism Plan, building relationships with the Wet Tropics community and partners, including government agencies and tourism organisations. Priority projects and initiatives to progress actions have been identified, with delivery commitments agreed to by key partners.

A three-and-a-half-year, \$195,000 (plus in-kind contributions) partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and Department of Environment and Science to evolve the Wet Tropics tour guide program has been established and commenced. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is also involved, agreeing to collaborate and share intellectual property between their Master Reef Guides program and the Wet Tropics program. The program design is well underway with the new program to be launched in 2023.

An interagency working group has been established for ecotourism projects with TEQ, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P), Department of Tourism Innovation and Sport, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Authority. The group meets monthly and is responsible for guiding a collaborative approach to progressing shared tourism actions, ensuring consistency with each agency's portfolio obligations, statutory requirements, budget and strategic priorities.

The Authority and QPWS&P formed a working group to foster a collaborative and consistent approach to the presentation and management of Queensland's World Heritage Areas. Draft guidelines for World Heritage presentation and a concept for state-wide World Heritage entrance signage have been developed. This will inform the development of a Wet Tropics presentation framework and support the establishment of world-class visitor sites in preparation for the 2032 Olympic Games.

Targeted engagement with QPWS&P ensured appropriate World Heritage representation at Lake Barrine, Crater Lakes National Park, where the Authority provided \$10,000 toward the design and installation of World Heritage signage. The reinstatement of formal referral processes is being progressed under the Authority's partnership agreement with QPWS&P to facilitate collaborative planning and development of visitor infrastructure projects on protected areas within the Area.

Significant engagement occurred between the Authority, QPWS&P and Jabalbina Aboriginal Corporation regarding the development of a style guide for Daintree National Park, the draft Jabalbina Tourism Strategic Directions Strategy and associated projects including a cultural tourism protocol, Indigenous tour guide training program, and the Eastern Kuku Yalanjiwarra Culture and Tourism Hub development project.

The Authority supported Rainforest Aboriginal tourism initiatives in many ways including participating in a forum led by Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) to establish an independent peak body providing strategic coordination and support to First Nations tourism in Queensland. The Authority is represented in Tourism Tropical North Queensland's (TTNQ) First Nations Tourism Steering Committee, which was established to oversee the development and implementation of a First Nations tourism action plan for Tropical North Queensland, including a regional consultation process, and will build upon the foundations set out in QTIC's Queensland First Nations Tourism Plan 2020–2025.

The Authority was involved in other tourism industry activities including TTNQ's Indigenous Tourism Experiences Cluster Group, and workshops with TEQ focused on the development of the unique selling points for marketing tourism in the Wet Tropics—an opportunity to tell the Wet Tropics story from a World Heritage and National Heritage perspective, increasing awareness and ensuring tourism messaging is consistent, appropriate and accurate.

Strategy 5—Minimise impacts: appropriately manage activities that may have an impact on the World Heritage Area’s values through a regulated permit and zoning system

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) works closely with partners and stakeholders to achieve a balance between protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) and allowing appropriate usage and development for essential community and visitor infrastructure (including for tourism and recreation). Within that careful balance the Authority also actively supports Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples to achieve aspirations to live and work on Country, and other commercial and non-commercial land uses by private landholders within the Area.

During 2021–22, the Authority continued its core business, considering permit applications for new infrastructure and providing advice to the community. A significant permit approval involved the installation of an intelligent traffic system on the Kuranda Range Road, one of the most heavily used road corridors in the Wet Tropics which links Cairns with the Atherton Tableland. This involved installation of electronic systems including large displays, speed cameras and variable speed signs, to monitor and guide safety on the road. Given the importance of the road as a transport corridor and the very high biodiversity and scenic values of the surrounding forest, the assessment and permitting process involved careful consideration of the scale of infrastructure and footprint of disturbance. Negotiations with the proponent, Department of Transport and Main Roads, resulted in a much smaller disturbance footprint than initially proposed and modifications to infrastructure that will help blend more sympathetically with the surrounding forest.

The Authority commenced renewal of the 23 infrastructure maintenance permits across the Area. These permits include major stakeholders such as Ergon, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Rail and local councils. Maintenance permits guide the work of these organisations in ensuring that the operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure within the Area do not impact on the values. Matters conditioned under permit include defined disturbance footprint, guidance on storage of materials, erosion and sediment controls and limitations on noise or use of harmful chemicals.

To support the focus on compliance investigation capacity, four Authority officers have been authorised under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*. A number of compliance matters were investigated including reports of illegal clearing. The Authority has stepped-up proactive compliance patrols, including joint patrols with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships.

The Authority continues to improve and contemporise its legislation with the ongoing review of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and an amendment to the definition of ‘rainforest area’ in the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 (the Management Plan). The Board also approved new guidelines under the Management Plan regarding the translocation of crustacean and fish and revised two existing guidelines on consulting with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and the consideration of minor and inconsequential impacts under the Management Plan.

High quality executive, partnership and governance work to ensure the Authority remains an accountable and capable organisation

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) is committed to excellence in corporate governance and management to ensure financial and business planning appropriately supports and enhances the achievement of strategic goals. All the Authority's work is underpinned by its commitment to delivering high standards of corporate governance, prioritising workplace health and safety, and ensuring that financial management demonstrates transparency and accountability.

Financial summary 2021–22

a) Revenue

Total revenue recorded for 2021–22 was \$12.1 million.

The Authority's main source of revenue continued to be our annual Commonwealth appropriation funding totalling \$5.7 million which is distributed to the Authority via Queensland Treasury. This funding ensures the continuity of vital daily operations for the Authority including the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program.

The Queensland Government contribution included a total of \$1.8 million to the Authority to support its contribution to the management, protection, and rehabilitation of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) and \$3 million as a co-contribution to the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program. The Department of Environment and Science (DES) contributed \$42,500 for the commencement of our accelerating landscape restoration program that will attract and diversify investment options for ecosystem resilience in the face of climate change across the Wet Tropics.

The Authority also derived additional revenue of \$738,545 Reef Assist grant allocation (\$259,545 revenue plus carry over of \$479,000 from 2020–21) from the Queensland Government with a further \$650,000 to extend parts of the program into 2022. The Commonwealth Government provided \$170,000 to fund the Wet Tropics Cultural Landscape Hub—a program that aims to educate and enhance awareness and recognition of the cultural landscape and Indigenous heritage values of the Area.

b) Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year ending 30 June 2022 was \$11.9 million.

The Authority distributed a total of \$1.2 million in Reef Assist, Citizen Science and Rainforest Aboriginal grants to various Aboriginal corporations and other Wet Tropics natural resource management service providers. Operationally, the Authority dispensed a total of \$669,000 to regional suppliers for specialised services, \$1.8 million to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships as per our Partnership Agreement to deliver specific services and \$1.743 million allocated for outsourced delivery of local seasonal contract labour hire for the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program.

c) Financial management

As a statutory body, the Authority's overall fiscal transactions are incorporated into the DES financial statement for 2021–2022. The full-time equivalent (FTE) data—including Authority staff—are included in the financial statements for DES employee expenses.

Wet Tropics Management Authority operating statement

Controlled revenue and expenses	Notes	2021–2022	2020–2021
Revenue		\$'000	\$'000
Revenue from government			
Payments for outputs		6,461	6,204
Asset assumed/liabilities transferred			
Sub-total government revenue		6,461	6,204
Own source revenue			
User charges			
Grants and other contributions	1	5,669	6,845
Taxes fees and fines			
Gain on disposal of fixed assets			
Other revenue		3	56
Interest			
Sub-total own source revenue		5,672	6,901
Total revenue		12,133	13,105
Expenses		\$'000	\$'000
Operating expenses			
Business Management		11,970	11,561
Sub-total operating expenses		11,970	11,561
Non-operating expenses			
Depreciation		9	7
Asset write-downs/loss on disposal			
Sub-total non-operating expenses		9	7
Total expenses		11,979	11,568
Operating result		154	1,537

Notes:

- 1 Commonwealth funding is received as Commonwealth Appropriation paid via Queensland Treasury. For transparency purposes these payments are reflected as 'own source' revenue.

Internal and external audit

Internal audit is a key component of the Authority's corporate governance. The Authority adopts a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, internal controls and governance. This approach safeguards the Director-General of DES in discharging his responsibilities as set out in section 78 (1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

The Authority must be compliant and meet its obligations by ensuring the operations of its business group are carried out efficiently, effectively, and economically. The Authority is subject to DES's quarterly controlled self-assessments and internal audits, in conjunction with external requests from the Queensland Audit Office.

Information systems and record keeping

Information is a critical asset enabling the Authority to deliver its services effectively, efficiently, and consistently. The Authority complies with the *Public Records Act 2002* and keeps complete and accurate records of its activities.

The Authority has a record-keeping policy which defines the expectations of staff in the day-to-day management of its records by:

- documenting decision-making and actions
- mitigating exposure to risk
- safeguarding the Authority's history and knowledge.

The Authority maintains additional critical information systems to support its services, including:

- paper-based and electronic document and records management system (eDocs) to manage and secure administrative and core business records. Administrative records are disposed of appropriately and in accordance with the Queensland Government's General Records and Disposal Schedule, and the State Archives Retention and Disposal Schedule.
- Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) GIS mapping software—a new mobile data collection system to collect, collate and store yellow crazy ant data. When fully implemented, the current Konnect system will be decommissioned, and all geospatial data will be held within a single database fully supported by DES's Information Technology Procurement (ITP). This innovative technology supports the capture, online interactive mapping, and centralised cloud-based record-keeping of the large amounts of data vital to the yellow crazy ant eradication work.
- maintenance of an online zoning map under the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 and record of permit applications assessed and granted under that plan—the permits aim to minimise impacts on World Heritage values of the Area during development and maintenance of community services infrastructure and other activities.
- whole-of-government SAP system for financial performance management and Aurion for human resource management.

As a statutory body, the Authority complies with DES Information Security. DES will incorporate the Authority into the preparation and lodgement of the 2021–2022 Information Security Annual Return.

Integrated services through robust governance practices

a) Public sector ethics

The Authority's staff are public sector employees, and are bound by the *Public Service Act 2008*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service (the Code of Conduct).

The Code of Conduct requires Authority staff to:

- act with integrity and impartiality by being honest, fair and respectful, and ensuring decisions are unprejudiced, unbiased and just
- promote the public good when delivering the programs and services that benefit the people of Queensland
- commit to the system of government with respect for government and its institutions and by upholding the law
- be accountable and transparent when taking responsible action and making decisions that can be explained and easily understood.

The DES Workforce Relations and Integrity (WRI) team provides general advice to the Authority and co-ordinates training on ethical issues including the Code of Conduct, ethical dilemmas, conflict of interest and other employment. Its objective is to support and promote a culture of integrity and accountability.

The WRI team also investigate and report misconduct and corruption, liaise with the Crime and Corruption Commission Queensland and lead public interest disclosure protection.

b) Education and training

The Authority continues to build a strong and accountable workforce by ensuring high ethical standards and values, and adherence to the Code of Conduct.

22 All new staff complete the DES Corporate Induction Program, and ongoing staff undertake mandatory annual refreshers in Code of Conduct as well as emergency safety, fraud and corruption awareness, and information security and privacy awareness.

In 2021–22, staff completed other training regarding workplace health and safety, cultural awareness, public sector management, human rights, procurement, disability awareness, and domestic and family violence.

The Authority invested \$10,127 in training and development which included first aid and CPR, Authorised Officer, and contract management training, along with specialist training specific to the project work undertaken by the Authority.

c) Procedures and practices

Under subdivision 4 of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* and DES administrative procedures and management practices, the Authority must have proper regard to the values and principles of this Act. These are reflected in the Authority's:

- human resource management policies, practices, and procedures
- organisational culture which includes a growth mindset, diversity and inclusion, domestic and family violence, the *Human Rights Act 2019* and respectful workplaces
- performance and capability including performance and development planning, reward and recognition, leadership capability and competencies framework.

d) Human rights

The Authority continues to build a human rights-based culture that clearly demonstrates its ongoing commitment to protect, respect and promote human rights. In 2021–22 internal policies, operational procedures, and decision-making frameworks were updated by the Authority. The staff induction manual was amended to ensure compatibility with the Queensland *Human Rights Act 2019*, and a permanent agenda item was added to the Management Forum to ensure that all executive decisions are regularly reviewed for alignment with the principles and intent of this Act.

The Authority acts on these human rights considerations and obligations through continuously improving practices and raising awareness within the organisation and through its community engagement and partnerships. Proposed changes to the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* have been assessed to ensure any potential impacts on human rights are compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

Since commencement of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the Authority has not received any human rights complaints and therefore has not needed to engage in complaints reporting under section 97(2)(b) of this Act.

Governance—human resources

a) Workforce profile

The Authority establishment, as at 17 June 2022, included 43 full-time positions.

Staffing full-time equivalent (FTE) by occupation type and gender as at 17 June 2022			
Occupational stream	Female	Male	Total
Administration	11.2	10	21.2
Operational	1.8	8.8	10.6
Professional	3.7	2.8	6.5
Technical		1	1
Senior executive service		1	1
Total	16.7	23.6	40.3

Staffing full-time equivalent (FTE) by employment type and gender as at 17 June 2022						
Employment type	FTE		FTE		Total FTE	Total FTE%
	Female	Male	Female	Male		
Contract		1	0.00%	100%	1	2.5%
Permanent	11	4.2	72.37%	27.63%	15.2	37.71%
Temporary	5.7	18.4	23.65%	76.35%	24.1	59.80%
Total	16.7	23.6	39.9%	60.1%	40.3	100.00%

Target group data*		
Gender	Number (Headcount)	Total workforce % (Calculated on headcount)
Women	18	41.86%
Men	25	58.14%
Non-binary	<5	0%
Diversity groups	Number (Headcount)	Total workforce % (Calculated on headcount)
Women	18	41.86%
Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<5	9.3%
People with disability	<5	0%
Culturally and linguistically diverse—born overseas	8	18.6%
Culturally and linguistically diverse—speak a language at home other than English (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages or Australian South Sea Islander languages)	5	11.6%
Leadership team	Number (Headcount)	Total leadership team % (Calculated on headcount)
Women in leadership roles**	<5	0%

* To ensure privacy, in tables where there are less than 5 respondents in a category, specific numbers should be replaced by <5.

** Women in leadership roles are positions of Senior Officer or equivalent and above, noting that there are no Senior Officer roles in the Authority's structure.

b) Strategic workforce planning and performance

The Authority continues to empower, support, and equip staff to successfully deliver its services into the future. The Authority reviews and updates its strategic workforce planning framework annually to maintain alignment with the needs of a diverse workforce. The annual workforce plan integrates common workforce themes, challenges, and solutions to articulate the Authority's future workforce vision.

The plan covers:

- inclusion and diversity
- leadership and management development
- talent retention
- flexible work arrangements
- health and wellbeing.

The Authority strives to continuously improve workforce inclusion and diversity, including fostering a workplace culture that supports and promotes the interests of First Nations Indigenous Peoples.

The tenets of diversity and inclusion are woven through the Authority's programs and initiatives. The Authority acknowledges and promotes the benefits of gender equity including women in leadership. In 2021–22, of the nine positions at A06 or higher, 66% were held by women.

Additionally, the Authority recognises and promotes cultural and generational diversity, LGBTQIA+ inclusion and working with people with a disability as set out in strategies such as the Gurra Gurra framework, the Cultural Capability Action Plan, the Reconciliation Action Plan, the Disability Service Plan and Queensland public sector LGBTIQ+ inclusion strategy.

The Authority maintains its talent pool by ensuring staff are supported to access a range of opportunities, including further education, conferences, and seminars. Staff utilise on-the-job development opportunities through higher duties, secondments, and hot tasking. As at June 2022, 28% of staff are undertaking higher duties.

A range of tools are also available to assist managers and employees to have meaningful career and personal development conversations and staff are encouraged to consider the full range of development opportunities open to them. This could include on-the-job training, relieving, short term projects, coaching and mentoring and participation in formal training activities.

c) Leadership and management development

The Authority's managers and leaders have a vital role in delivering business outcomes and building the capabilities of staff. The development needs of managers have evolved as the protracted pandemic continued to impact working arrangements. Throughout this period managers acquired skills in managing remote teams and delivered outcomes in a challenging environment.

The challenge of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and requirements for social distancing also impacted opportunities to engage in traditional face-to-face leadership training. Online and technology-based learning increased, and several managers and team leaders completed leadership development training through iLearn.

d) Working for Queensland Survey

In 2021–22, the Authority’s workforce participated in the annual Working for Queensland Survey, which is designed to explore employee perceptions of the workplace climate in areas such as employee engagement, job satisfaction and leadership within the public service.

The Authority had a very strong survey response rate of 95%, up 24% from 2020, and 82% of respondents indicated a high level of job satisfaction. These are two elements are indicators of an engaged workforce that feel valued and respected within their organisation.

Key results for the Authority included:

- 87% of respondents felt supported to achieve a good work/life balance
- positive responses from 100% of respondents regarding ‘understanding of what is expected to do their job well’ and ‘how their work contributes to the organisation’s objectives’
- 86% of respondents were satisfied with their flexible work arrangements, up 5% on 2020.

The Authority identified areas for improvement from the survey results, focusing on reducing excessive workloads and strengthening employee resilience in responding to workplace change. Strategies being employed involve strengthened communication between teams and through staff meetings, to reduce silos and identifying ways to redistribute work across and within teams.

Almost half of the workforce are temporary due to the funding base of the Authority and the project nature of some programs. A significant improvement indicated in the survey results related to staff feeling better informed about the likelihood of extension to temporary roles. The conversion of temporary to permanent status for staff with more than two years tenure and informing staff early when roles will not be extended have contributed to retaining good staff and a sense of improved security generally in the Authority.

e) Reward and recognition

The Authority values its employees and recognises that their success and achievements contribute to the Authority’s continued high performance. Reward and recognition help to maintain a healthy and positive workplace culture. During 2021–22 at weekly staff briefings, email and online, Authority staff—including the Executive Director and managers—regularly and openly acknowledged positive behaviours and the outstanding, challenging and important work of their colleagues.

f) Employee health and wellbeing

The Authority is committed to cultivating a supportive workplace that demonstrates a strong commitment to staff health, safety and wellbeing. It utilises risk management techniques and processes, follows and adapts DES procedures, and engages in processes to identify, manage and reduce risk, hazards and work-related incidents.

Management and staff take a proactive approach to welfare to support colleagues who may be vulnerable. The Authority promotes best practice in early intervention strategies to appropriately manage injury and illness cases and ensure the best possible return-to-work outcomes. Staff accessed the DES wellness program including free skin cancer checks, flu vaccinations and mental health awareness sessions.

Six workstations were modified in line with advice from an occupational therapist. Staff employed ergonomically sound practices to ensure optimal comfort, and to reduce exposure to workstation related injuries.

The Authority's Workplace Health and Safety Team ensured legislative compliance through adherence to relevant policies and procedures. Working with the improved risk register the team updated the Remote Working Procedure to better align with safe practices in remote working and mitigate risks identified in the register.

g) Flexible working arrangements

Providing flexible working arrangements is a key enabler of an inclusive and productive workforce. Flexibility and adaptability characterised the Authority's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the previous reporting period and these arrangements were refined and embedded into common practice in 2021–22.

As at June 2022, 62% of non-frontline staff have flexible work arrangements in place. The Authority has management procedures and practices to ensure clear and effective communication within teams, and across the organisation to support effective working relationships and productivity.

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All staff commit to in-office attendance on set days ensuring team building and communication within workgroups and across the organisation. The Public Service Commission guidelines inform the Authority's well-communicated policy and practices and support staff to negotiate arrangements to work from alternative offices, work from home and to work across the span of hours.

For staff with flexible work agreements in place, ensuring that 50% of their time in a pay fortnight is allocated to their base office has improved innovation, agility and resilience throughout the Authority. Comprehensive occupational health and safety processes are in place to mitigate the risks involved in off-site and remote work.

h) Industrial and employee relations framework

The Authority abides by the tenets of the DES industrial and employee relations frameworks. The *Industrial Relations Act 2016* provides a framework for co-operative industrial relations setting out the minimum employment standards for employees, and the *Public Service Act 2008* prescribes arrangements and responsibilities specific to public service employees.

Employee conditions are detailed in the Queensland Public Service Officers and Other Employees Award—State 2015, and all staff are covered by the State Government Entities Certified Agreement—State 2019.

i) Early retirement, redundancy, and retrenchment

No redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid during the reporting period.

Attachment 1—Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors

Act or instrument

Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993

Functions

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) was established to ensure Australia’s obligation to the World Heritage Convention is met in relation to the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area). The specific functions of the Authority are detailed in section 10 (1) of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Queensland Act). The Authority has a Board of Directors (the Board) that is responsible for the way in which the Authority performs its functions and exercises its powers. The specifics of the Board are detailed in divisions 2–5 of the Queensland Act.

Achievements

In 2021–22, the Board:

- welcomed the first Indigenous Chair, Ms Christine Grant
- welcomed three new directors—Ms Ailsa Lively, Ms Robin Clark and Prof. Stephen Williams
- progressed proposed changes to the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*
- endorsed changes to the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 to better reflect the definition of ‘rainforest area’, and new guidelines on translocation of fish, consulting with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, and managing minor and inconsequential impacts
- endorsed ecological restoration (climate action) initiatives
- supported an interagency working group to implement the Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031
- supported collaboration with Tourism and Events Queensland and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships to develop a plan to evolve the Wet Tropics tour guide program
- continued to provide advice on the eradication of yellow crazy ants from the Area
- advocated for ongoing funding for the important Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program—the Australian and Queensland governments have committed to a further four years of funding support
- championed a rights-based approach to refresh the Wet Tropics of Queensland Regional Agreement with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples
- welcomed the proposal for better involvement of youth on the Board
- significantly enhanced meaningful and productive relationships with our citizen scientists, scientific and broader community.

Financial reporting

As a statutory body our financial balances are incorporated into the Department of Environment and Science’s audited annual financial statements, which as a department complies with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

Remuneration

Position	Name	Meetings and/or attendance	Approved annual sessional or daily fee*	Actual fees received**
Chair	Christine Grant	6	\$520 daily fee	\$18,022 5.5 sitting days
Former Director	Christine Grant	2	\$400 daily fee	Included in total above 2 sitting days
Director	Sally Driml	8	\$400 daily fee	\$6,595 7.5 sitting days
Director	Ailsa Lively	6	\$400 daily fee	\$3,850 5.5 sitting days
Director	Robin Clark	4	\$400 daily fee	\$2,110 4 sitting days
Director	Stephen Williams	4	\$400 daily fee	\$2,307 4 sitting days
Outgoing Chair	Leslie Shirreffs	2	\$520 daily fee	\$11,301 2 sitting days
Outgoing Director	Iain Gordon	4	\$400 daily fee	\$3,300 3.5 sitting days
Outgoing Director	Phillip Rist	2	\$400 daily fee	\$820 1.5 sitting days
Executive Director	Scott Buchanan	All	N/A	N/A
Number of scheduled meetings/sessions	<p>The Board met on four separate occasions in 2021–22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5–6 August 2021 (meeting #116): 2-day virtual meeting • 15–16 November 2021 (meeting #117): 1.5-day meeting in Cairns • 31 March–1 April 2022 (meeting #118): 2-day meeting in Cairns • 9–10 June 2022 (meeting#119): 2-day meeting in Cairns <p>Other activities: 6 Sept 2021 climate change working group (0.5 day) and consideration of out-of-session paper #442 (virtual deliberation).</p>			
Total out-of-pocket expenses	<p>Board operations cost \$84,816 in 2021–22, with the main expenses attributed to sitting fees, reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, information technology support, travel and accommodation, meeting expenses and costs for director recruitment processes.</p> <p>The Chair and Board were reimbursed a combined total of \$2,221 for out-of-pocket expenses, including taxi fares, motor vehicle reimbursement and travel allowance.</p> <p>The Board is fully funded by the Australian Government—the Queensland Government does not contribute to its operational cost.</p>			

The Authority did not dispense any approved sub-committee fees for the prescribed period.

* Chair and Member fees approved by Cabinet and Governor in Council—see Queensland Government Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies – Regulation, Administration and Advice Level 2 (Daily).

** In addition to daily fees to attend board meetings, the Chair and members of the Board are eligible to be remunerated for additional work time required to carry out their role (i.e. to prepare for meetings, write reports or correspondence, undertake consultation, represent the Authority and/or to provide specific strategic advice). This may include chairing the Authority’s Advisory Committees. Chairs and members may also be compensated for their travel time to attend the Authority’s meetings and/or other strategic events on behalf of the Authority.

Attachment 2—Compliance checklist

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance		
A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s	ARRs—section 7	Page v
Accessibility		
Table of contents	ARRs—section 9.1	Page iii
Glossary		Page 34
Public availability	ARRs—section 9.2	Page ii
Interpreter service statement	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs—section 9.3	Page ii
Copyright notice	Copyright Act 1968 ARRs—section 9.4	Page ii
Information licensing	Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture Information Licensing ARRs—section 9.5	Page ii
General information		
Introductory information	ARRs—section 10	Page 3
Non-financial performance		
Government objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans/specific initiatives	ARRs—section 11.1	Page 7
Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs—section 11.2	Page 8
Agency service areas, service standards	ARRs—section 11.3	Refer DES AR
Financial performance		
Summary of financial performance	ARRs – section 12.1	Page 19
Governance - management and structure		
Organisational structure	ARRs—section 13.1	Page 5
Executive management	ARRs—section 13.2	Page 6
Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities)	ARRs—section 13.3	Page 5-6
<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>	ARRs—section 13.4	Page 22
<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>	ARRs—section 13.5	Page 23
Queensland Public Service values	ARRs—section 13.6	Page 22

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement*	Annual report reference
Governance—risk management and accountability		
Risk management	ARRs—section 14.1	Refer DES AR
Audit committee	ARRs—section 14.2	Refer DES AR
Internal audit	ARRs—section 14.3	Page 21
External scrutiny	ARRs—section 14.4	Page 21
Information systems and record keeping	ARRs—section 14.5	Page 21
Information security attestation	ARRs—section 14.6	Page 22
Governance—human resources		
Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs—section 15.1	Page 26
Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18, <i>Early retirement Redundancy and retrenchments</i> ARRs Section 15.2	N/A
Open data		
Statement advising publication of information	ARRs – section 16.0	Page ii
Consultancies	ARRs—section 31.1	N/A
Overseas travel	ARRs—section 31.2	N/A
Queensland Language Services Policy	ARRs—section 31.3	N/A
Financial statements		
Certification of financial statements	FAA—section 62 FPMS—section 38, 39 and 46 ARRs—section 17.1	Refer DES AR
Independent Auditor’s report	FAA—section 62 FPMS—section 46 ARRs—section 17.2	Refer DES AR

* ARR’s Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies
DES AR Department of Environment and Science Annual Report
FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
FPMS Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Area	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area
Authority	Wet Tropics Management Authority
Board	Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors
CCC	Community Consultative Committee
Commonwealth Act	<i>Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994</i>
DES	Department of Environment and Science
QPWS&P	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships
Queensland Act	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>
RAPTT	Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Think Tank
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee
Strategic Plan	Wet Tropics Strategic Plan 2020–2030
Tourism Plan	Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031
TEQ	Tourism and Events Queensland
TTNQ	Tourism Tropical North Queensland
World Heritage Convention	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage





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The Wet Tropics Management Authority is able to undertake its work in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area with the assistance of the Australian Government and Queensland Government.