
Minutes Board Meeting 127

In Attendance

Board Directors

Ms Chrissy Grant	Chair
Ms Robin Clark	Director
Dr Sally Driml	Director
Ms Ailsa Lively	Director
Professor Stephen Williams	Director
Mr Scott Buchanan	Executive Director

Observers

Julia Playford (Online)	Executive Director, Office of the Great Barrier Reef and World Heritage, DESI
Paul Beri (Online)	Principal Ranger, Northern Region, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships
Blythe Neville (Online)	Heritage Policy Officer, First Nations Heritage Section, World and National Heritage Branch, DCCEEW
Steven Silvester (Online)	General Manager - Tourism Industry Development, Department of Tourism and Sport (DTS)
Angela Siggery (Online)	Director, World Heritage Unit, Office of the Great Barrier Reef and World Heritage, DESI
Ed Hopper (Online)	State Projects, Department of Tourism and Sport (DTS)

WTMA Staff

Saskia Salmeron-Rodriguez	Manager, World Heritage Connections
Alicia Haines	Principal Project Officer, World Heritage Connections
Bruce Jennison	Principal Conservation Officer
Angus McLeod	Senior Conservation Officer
Phoebe Kinley	Principal Project Officer, Presentation and Engagement
Sean McNamara	Principal Advisor
Wendy Brooksby	Administration Officer

1. Introduction

1.1. Chair's welcome and introduction

The Chair acknowledged the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji and the Yirrganydji Traditional Owners of the Cairns area and paid respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and all Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples from the Wet Tropics region as the traditional custodians of this landscape. Ms Grant paid her respects to Elders and her own Elders of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people and welcomed Directors, observers, and staff to the meeting both in person and online.

1.2. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Matt Brien

Regional Director, Northern Region, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
and Partnerships

Willy Enoch-Tranby

Board Director

1.3. Conflicts of interest

None reported

2. Reports

2.1 Chair's Report

Since the last Board meeting the Chair:

March:

- attended ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Presentation and Restoration of Cultural Properties) Conference in Seoul, South Korea on participatory approaches in World Heritage, presenting on Indigenous peoples' rights and responsibilities in World Heritage, and
- worked with DCCEEW to wrap up the Grant from the Australian Government for the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage to conduct an International Expert Workshop to Recognise Indigenous Peoples' Values which was held in Geneva in January 2024.

April:

- out-of-Session Board Meeting considering the Milestone Report and the Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) Annual Business Plan and Strategy, and the Cassowary Awards categories.

May:

- worked with the steering committee to finalise the initial membership of the newly formed joint WTMA/Terrain joint Indigenous Advisory Committee. The first meeting has been held, which was primarily an induction, and the next meeting will be held in August
- held further discussions with DCCEEW and UNESCO World Heritage staff to run a FPIC side event at New Delhi 46COM UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting in July 2024. The event is to be funded by the Australian and Canadian Governments in conjunction and assistance of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, will focus on case studies on Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) where it is administered properly, and the consequences of proceeding without it, and
- continued to undertake a wide range of additional work for CBD, Oceans Decade, and interviewing for 8 positions for the Reef TO Taskforce, late night international zoom meetings, and delivering a training presentation for students for the University of Arizona IPLP (Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy group) on Indigenous peoples' engagement in environmental conservation. Also involved in webinars for UNESCO Ambassadors for training awareness on Indigenous Peoples and World Heritage, to prepare for upcoming meetings.

Resolution

The Board *noted* the Chair's report.

2.2 Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director updated the Board on:

HR

1. Healthy Organisation

- based on the work from several all-staff workshops, facilitator Josh Gibson drafted and presented the Authority's values statement with respect at its core. Staff discussed and endorsed the work in an in house and online workshop session

2. Staff Movements

- Carita Waite has joined us and is driving the rebranding of the Cassowary Awards, Aaron Smith will return to the team in July, and Saskia Salmeron-Rodriguez is taking up an acting Director Ecotourism and Permitting role with QPWS&P for month returning 22 July. The Board acknowledged Andrew McKenna for the good work and many of the Authority’s stories he produced and had published in local national and international journals in his time with the Authority, and
 - Zack Severino is acting as Operations team leader whilst Jochem is on two months long service leave. Zack is seconded from QPWS&P and was previously working on the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program (YCAEP) as a supervisor and coordinator.
3. Board reappointments
- Directors Chrissy Grant and Ms Ailsa Lively are due for re-appointment. Their second term re-appointment requests have gone to Federal and State Ministers. Finalisation of the appointments are expected before the November Board meeting.

FINANCE

4. Budget update
- the budget position for the end of financial year is on track and the preliminary work to build the 2024-25 budget is now in progress. The formalisation of the Authority’s budget build through the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation will be confirmed by mid-August 2024. The Executive Director provided the board with the specifics of the expected over and under spends and final position for each funding source and for each program.

PROGRAM UPDATES

5. YCA Eradications
- largest area eradicated of yellow crazy ants recorded globally, with a total of 455 hectares; Since the last Board meeting, an additional 25.3 hectares have been declared ‘eradicated’ from creeks in Sawmill Pocket; on track to declare eradication in an additional 1000 hectares in another 4 years.
6. New YCA detections
- Yellow crazy ants have been found near the Vico Street Treatment Area, and the Dibella Treatment Area at the Gun Range.
7. YCAEP Funding Strategy
- now 2 years (and halfway through) the 4-year Funding Agreement for the YCAEP
 - funding Ask preparations are underway seeking continued funding for ten years from 1 July 2026 at \$6 million a year shared 50/50 from the State and Federal governments, and
 - with a state election this year (2024) and a federal election next year (2025), WTMA is starting to seek election commitments for continued funding, and conducted briefings with local councilors, Senator Nita Green, local members, and the opposition spokesperson for environment.
8. WTMA Events and Marketing
- Protect Your Patch - WTMA and Kuranda Envirocare are partnering with local community groups and other pest programs to coordinate a community event in Kuranda on July 6th, 2024, to raise awareness of the impacts of yellow crazy ants and other invasive pests
 - AntZone – YCAEP has launched a user-friendly online map showing where yellow crazy ant and electric ant infestations are found across Far North Queensland using a scannable QR code, and
 - Ecofiesta - WTMA presented at a booth at this public festival held on 2 June 2024 with more than 600 people stopping by the stall on the day.
9. Restoration Program
- funding available to December 2024
 - successful workshop held in the Daintree led by Jabalbina presenting on their Green Economy Strategy which aims to empower Eastern Kuku Yalanji Bama to protect their land, sea and culture while pursuing economic and social prosperity
 - we still have to deliver commitments to the Southern Atherton Tablelands sub-catchment plan and produce an investment framework

- proposed Bega collaborative agreement – demonstration model of how to get industry involved – provides an opportunity for Terrain to provide in-kind support of value, and
 - the restoration program will continue – it is making progress, but we are still a long way from the alliance being completely functional – ongoing work with Terrain and James Cook University is required.
10. Bama Country and Culture Project
- ‘Rainforest People Country Culture’ interactive story maps featuring individual films produced for 10 different groups across the World Heritage Area
 - formal launch is scheduled for September 2024, and
 - A draft video example of the films was shown to the Board in their lunch break.
11. Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides (WTWHG)
- Work is progressing with the online build. Additional contractors (including Savannah Guides, Allison Halliday and Willie Brim) have been engaged to assist with development, oversight and review
 - The program includes three training packages (Guardian, Protector and Champion) and 11 learning modules and has received significant support across the tourism industry – particularly from TTNQ, and
 - A launch of the World Heritage Guides program is scheduled for November 2024.
12. Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Visual Identity Style Guide
- Work is underway to Identify key visitor sites to install new ‘identify columns ‘across the Wet Tropics. This is happening in conjunction with QPWS&P, who have secured (\$800K) for World Heritage presentation.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the Executive Director’s report.

2.3 Previous Minutes —Board Meeting 126

Resolution

The Board **endorsed** the minutes for Board Meeting 126.

3.0 Strategic Issues

3.1 Board Policy review program - Papers for decision

Mr Bruce Jennison provided a brief overview of the three draft guidelines and took the paper as read. He noted that the policy statements have been reviewed and identified as redundant and/or superseded by more contemporary guidance. The three policies reviewed were:

- No. 2 Roads in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Attachment 3.1.1)
- No.7 Compliance and Enforcement (Attachment 3.1.2)
- No.10 Grazing in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Attachment 3.1.3).

Discussion

Ms Clark: enquired about the status of grazing opportunities remaining in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) and a possible policy gap if the policy is rescinded. Mr Jennison advised that it is a minor issue now as 75-80% of the Area sits within National Parks and no grazing is allowed within Queensland National Parks. He noted a few exceptions that are being monitored such as isolated freehold areas and landholdings, with leases that outline their land care obligations, that border the Area.

Mr Wong clarified that Queensland legislation prohibits grazing of cattle or prohibited animals in the Area and noted wild cattle that are living within the Area as the biggest issue in relation to the policy discussion. Mr Beri

stated that Parks & Wildlife staff are aware of the issue and clarified that the nature of cattle is to graze in cleared areas.

Action: Mr Wong to pass through any relevant information on grazing in the National Parks area to QPWS&P.

Resolution

The Board **approved** the rescinding of the following Wet Tropics Management Authority Board Policy Statements:

- No.2 Roads in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Attachment 3.1.1)
- No.7 Compliance and Enforcement (Attachment 3.1.2)
- No.10 Grazing in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Attachment 3.1.3).

3.2 Draft Section 62 guideline – Limited and Developed Visitor Infrastructure – paper for decision

Mr Wong spoke to the item and noted the Board had discussed it at the morning ‘in camera’ session. He outlined the following historical points:

- in 2020 the Wet Tropics Management Plan (the Plan) was amended to, among other things, remove zone D (on visitor Infrastructure)
- this left zones A, B& C; and included provisions noting where different types of visitor infrastructure (limited and developed) can be built, providing examples
- the relevant provisions resulted in an outcome whereby limited visitor infrastructure can be built in any zone and developed infrastructure can only be built in zone C, and
- the Draft Section 62 Guideline – Limited and Developed Visitor Infrastructure is drafted to provide more definition and guidance to assessors and to proponents.

Feedback from the Board included:

- make more prominent the advice, to consider locating the proposed infrastructure in a zone outside the World Heritage Area and that the first step is to look for feasible and alternative locations
- amend and expand the statements relating to ‘World Heritage values including wildlife prescribed under the threatened species’ to include plants, habitats and threatened species and the Outstanding Universal Values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
- point to the DCCEEW website which includes the Indigenous values on the National Heritage List
- the draft does not mention Free Prior and Informed Consent - consultation uncovers the national environment significance that may not be obvious to the community or commercial enterprise seeking to install limited or developed visitor infrastructure
- consider the Queensland ecotourism policy and the proposed White Paper on Ecotourism
- consider adding ‘allowing visitors to enjoy and stay temporarily in the area’ to the low impact statement
- consider adding or referencing Section 10
- consider the opportunity to include in the draft statements that cover the assessment of the requirement of the applicant to, not only construct the visitor infrastructure, but the obligation and reasonable assurance of their ability and intention to maintain and continue to minimise the impact of the infrastructure and its use
- the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area effective use of the permit system e.g. 15 year permits for high value status operators that guarantee ongoing 3rd party monitoring and meeting agreed standards of operation, and
- including signage in LVI and DVI permits that enhance learning and understanding about the Outstanding Universal Values (cultural and ecological) of the Area.

Resolutions

The board **noted** the draft Section 62 guideline *Limited and Developed Visitor Infrastructure* (Attachment 3.2.1) and provided feedback.

The Board **approved** the Authority to undertake external consultation on the draft guideline.

3.3 Update on the 20th Cassowary Awards preparations

Ms Kinley introduced Ms Carita Waite to the Board. Ms Waite joined the Media and Community Engagement team 2.5 months ago bringing considerable experience in graphic design. Ms Waite's skills and creativity have been applied to great effect in the redevelopment of the Cassowary Awards design, the suite of publicity materials, online presence and sponsorship prospectus.

- nominations for the Cassowary Awards are open until 31 July 2024
- promotions started with Ecofiesta in June, NAIDOC in the Park, Protect your Patch in Kuranda and continued with mailouts to schools. Mailouts to the Rainforest Aboriginal People's group and the Restoration Alliance to name a few
- some early nominations have come in already and a sponsor for the Young Cassowary Award has been secured
- there will be 10 awards in total
- it is expected that the nominations for the Board to review and choose the Award winners will be sent to the Board members in the week commencing 19 August 2024
- an out-of-session meeting will be arranged with Board members
- Ms Kinley provided the Board with the new look trophy mock up brief provided to the artist. The design by Ms Waite is in line with the marketing materials rebranding for the Awards, and
- an Aboriginal artist is producing the trophy in steel and wood.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the timings for selecting award recipients for the 20th Cassowary Awards.

The Board **noted** the new event branding developed as per the previous Board decision to refresh the artwork for the Awards.

3.4 Update on the draft State of Wet Tropics 2023-24 Report

Mr McNamara provided an update for the Board on the progress of the two draft reports that are produced annually to meet legislative requirements:

- Wet Tropics Management Authority Annual Report 2023-24, and
- The State of the Wet Tropics Report 2023-24.

Mr McNamara advised that:

- the Board can expect to receive drafts of the reports for review and comment in the first two weeks of August
- both reports are in development and resources from across the Authority have been identified to draft and edit the documents, and
- the theme is a broad profile of attributes of management of OUVs, management actions and priorities and pressures. The use of the Wet Tropics Healthy Water/Report is a repository online.

Resolutions

The Board **noted** the update on the development of the State of Wet Tropics Report 2023-24.

3.5 A Rights-based Approach

Ms Salmeron-Rodriguez and Ms Haines provided an overview of the work being done to develop a Rights-based Approach that informs all aspects of the Wet Tropics Management Authority's interactions with clients, communities, stakeholders and staff.

Ms Haines outlined the embedding of the Rights-based Approach (the Approach) as underpinning strategic action 2.1 in the 5-Year business plan to implement the Approach across all aspects of heritage management. Through her presentation she made the following key points:

- the 19 March 2024 all staff workshop provided an opportunity to explore what staff understood about a Rights-based Approach, share examples of the Approach and identify ways to communicate and support all staff to work with a common understanding of the principles and the practices in their daily work
- embedding a Rights-based Approach which is primarily a cross-cutting theme, and building cultural capability is the responsibility of managers and staff
- the development and delivery of the Approach should include a ‘truth telling’ element to provide an important context and support understanding of the depth of experiences that informs our current context of engagement with First Nations Peoples
- there are powerful examples available now within the experience of the Authority’s staff that will help other staff to understand the importance, recognise the practices and the benefits of the Approach
- there is representation across SAC, the CCC and the annual Rainforest Aboriginal People’s regional forums delivering on the Wet Tropics Regional Agreement and entering into agreements and partnerships ensuring that they are based on free, prior and informed consent
- there is a need to build cultural awareness and capability across all teams in the Authority
- attending the all-staff workshop a young intern working with Alicia was inspired to draft a user-friendly guide with reference to International legislative standards and Human Rights charters
- this has proved a valuable draft to work from and in terms of the implementation approach will be supported by the Authority’s values of respect, knowledge sharing, communication and collaboration, and
- the first cultural awareness session is planned for the YCA operations team in a few weeks’ time and will serve as a test case for building a deliverable induction module for the Authority.

Ms Haines updated the Board on the progress of the Bama Country and Culture Project. The Board were impressed with the draft video demonstrating the quality of the products that each of the participating Rainforest Aboriginal peoples are working to produce.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the update on the Authority’s all-staff workshop and the work done on a Rights-based Approach.

3.6 Artificial Intelligence in the work of the Authority – Uses and risks – Presentation for noting

Mr Buchanan provided the Board with the August 2023 PWC publication ‘*Artificial Intelligence what Directors need to Know*’ and the Institute of Community Directors Australia’s Help Sheet: *Artificial Intelligence and Governance Frameworks*. He spoke to his presentation on AI and the context for the Authority covering:

- the current use of AI
- controls in place
- risks and issues to be aware of, and
- Board’s duty and responsibilities

Throughout the presentation some of the issues the Board discussed included:

- the issue of validity of the information in reports and the need for raised awareness, noting that AI is already being used within the Authority to rearrange and reduce responses to key points for a wide variety of reporting demands that form part of the daily commitments in the work of the Authority
- GIS staff are starting to experiment with AI in coding, other users are preparing standard briefing notes

- even in these uses there are risks and as a government organisation there are controls and ethics that we need to be aware of in the use of AI. The acknowledgement of its use in the production of materials and its risks and limitations in the workplace are at this point, not regulated
- the Executive Director warned against even uploading information that is private, contains personal details of any kind or is confidential or not publicly available. AI tools are commercial, and information provided to them is unprotected and may be used to generate reports in other areas or be released publicly
- public servants are subject to legislation and a Code of Practice, and Information security access and use policies
- the issue of IP and the use of information that the Authority makes public through its website and publications that can be accessed and used in a way that may publish inaccurate or misinformation inadvertently
- a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) member in a recent meeting had a bot attached to her calendar that provided summaries of meeting that she attended
- a contractor that the Authority engages may be using data that they are preparing for the Authority either using AI or using AI to produce the Authority's information that they have had access to through the contract period and without the knowledge or permission of the Authority
- the Queensland Government has its own QChat system which is restricted to Queensland government users and the information is retained and disposed of every 6 months. While Chat GBT is an open source and unregulated large language model
- for the Authority the Government drives governance best practice through its risk frameworks, policies, processes and procedures, and
- the Authority operates in line with the Queensland Government procurement guidelines which do not currently provide guidance on use of AI by contractors.

Actions

- [The Executive Director to share the schematic 'Use of Artificial Intelligence: Boards duty and responsibilities', and the PWC publication 'Artificial Intelligence what Directors need to Know' and the Institute of Community Directors Australia's Help Sheet: 'Artificial Intelligence and Governance Frameworks'](#).
- [Ms Clark to share The American Planners Association - Trend Report for Planners on AI](#)
- [The Board to review the documents provided and revisit the discussion at a future meeting.](#)

Resolution

The Board **noted** the presentation on the uses and risks of Artificial Intelligence in the work of the Authority.

4.0 Reports

4.1 Advisory Committee Reports

Community Consultative Committee (CCC) - Dr Sally Driml

Dr Driml advised that the CCC met in an online meeting on 24 April 2024 and reported that sadly the two Rainforest Aboriginal members of the committee, Margaret Freeman and Gavin Singleton have resigned to take up other opportunities.

The Board explored strategies to attract and engage new First Nations representatives.

The meeting covered topics including:

- briefing on the reconstruction work post Tropical Cyclone Jasper
- improving the visibility of the post cyclone reconstruction work of the Authority through local community newsletters like the Douglas Shire newsletter

- members expressed interest in having input into the Authority’s communication strategy possibly through their individual stakeholder groups
- seeking more information on the status of threatened species and the priority place work
- preparation for a possible joint CCC and SAC meeting in November
- provided feedback on the 2023-24 State of Wet Tropics Report and the Annual Report drafts
- two CCC members met with Mr Silvester and passed on the committee’s suggestion that a broader community consultation supporting the Wangetti Trail be implemented by DTS. They also commended the DTS consultation processes engaged in for First Nations’ groups, and
- explored ideas to expand the opportunities for World Heritage Areas (WHA) to collaborate on climate change issues – recognising that the Authority has already made efforts in this area without success.

Discussion

- strategies to support attracting a male and female Rainforest Aboriginal People representatives on the CCC
- the CCC suggested that the funding timeframe for disaster relief from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) be extended from 2 years to 5 years. The ED advised that the issue has been discussed at that level and the Commonwealth funding commitment for \$51.3m has been agreed. The governance arrangements are yet to be confirmed
- advising the CCC of the Board’s documented position on wind farms that has informed several briefings.
- the views of DCCEEW regarding already allocated funding and limited capacity for any additional forums for World Heritage Areas and climate change initiatives, and
- climate adaptation as a workshop for the CCC and may be an agenda item in the proposed November joint meeting and the outcome may inform the Authority’s upcoming mid-point review in 2025.

Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) – Professor Stephen Williams

Professor Williams advised that the SAC expert workshop was well supported with 27 noted specialists in various fields attending.

- Mr Wong provided a comprehensive post cyclone briefing
- Mr McNamara sought feedback from the group on the 2023-24 State of the Wet Tropics draft report and Annual Report
- NESP funding – linked to the Priority Place workshop outcome were discussed along with preparations for the Priority Place workshop.
- the June SAC specialist workshop – tied in with NRMs
- the meeting identified that the Federal department through their representative was open to discussion about the ‘priority place’ concept, but funding will still be linked eco-systems with listed threatened species
- State Government recently announce funding for threatened species that will not be limited to currently listed species and may include an eco-system approach, and
- threatened species program funding generally has a timeframe of 10 years – currently 2-year horizons are in operation.

Discussion

Where to from here?– values and risks have been delineated but are yet to be completed for multiple eco-systems to the necessary level of specification. Input from the experts who contributed to the workshop outcomes is now required to complete the studies – uplands, freshwater, vertebrates, frogs. Timeframes for completion of the management proposals from the workshop are unpredictable. Participants return their feedback when they have time.

Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) - Ms Chrissy Grant

Ms Grant as co-Chair with Barry Hunter from Terrain NRM provided the following update:

The inaugural meeting of the Indigenous Advisory Committee was held on 6 May 2024 and attended by the following members:

- Mr Gavin Singleton
- Mr Dewayne Mundraby
- Mr Peter Green
- Ms Jenny Joyce, snd
- Co-Chairs: Ms Chrissy Grant (WTMA) & Mr Barry Hunter (Terrain)

Key points from a WTMA perspective:

- there is an open application process to recruit additional female members
- the focus of the first meeting was:
 - the induction of the new committee members
 - a briefing on the WTMA strategic plan, how the Authority works, and its priorities
 - an outline of the Indigenous organisations and groups operating in the cultural and ecological conservation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the ways in which the Authority works with them, and
 - an overview of the drought hub concept – funded by the Commonwealth.
- next Meeting 5 August 2024.

Action

- Develop a paper providing guidance on payment of First Nations people recruited to specified positions on committees supporting in the Board.
- Ms Haines to update Michelle Friday regarding her IAC application and the process from [here](#)

Resolution

The Board **noted** the CCC, SAC and IAC reports.

4.2 Directors' issues

Dr Sally Driml

Dr Driml provided the following update:

- attended the Global Sustainable Tourism Summit 3- 6 June 2024 with Saskia Salmeron-Rodriguez and Tamara Siemionow from the Authority
- Eco Tourism Australia – a member-based organisation – usually certified individual operators but has now expanded their certification category to include councils – Destination Certification as part of their push towards sustainability tourism
- the Douglas Shire the first council to achieve this certification, and
- to qualify the destination needs to demonstrate - good waste management, transport, a climate adaptation plan, evidence of community engagement in setting priorities.

There are two accredited certification providers for sustainable tourism

- Eco Tourism Australia, and
- Earth Check - alternative eco system

Queensland government has provided funding to support 12 new tourism destinations to achieve certification.

The Federal Government is developing a set of sustainable tourism indicators to focus businesses on the critical elements of sustainable environments that will support ongoing business outcomes.

Ms Ailsa Lively

Ms Lively provided the following update:

- attended several RAPTT meetings since the last Board meeting, including a weekend workshop to review the Regional Agreement

- Advised that those RAPTT members who did not attend the Regional Forum are still unclear on the role of the Indigenous Advisory Committee
- Has completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors foundation governance course, and
- next meeting of RAPTT will be 14 June 2024.

Ms Lively is a director on the Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples PBC– which is progressing the master plan project and researching a site for an eco-visitor centre, ranger base, administration tourism hub and camping area that may be in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. There is a community meeting scheduled for 20th June where there will be a presentation on the master plan.

Ms Lively will be attending the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) climate governance forum in Sydney in August. The forum will support members in preparing for mandatory climate reporting.

Professor Stephen Williams

Professor Williams noted the considerable amount of time spent working with Authority staff in the planning and preparation for the 3-day expert workshop - ‘Landscape resilience and recovery for the tropical northeastern forests of Queensland’. The workshop included key scientists from James Cook University, QPWS&P, the Australian Tropical Herbarium, and NRM organisations (Terrain, Cape York, Gulf Savanna and Coastal Dry Tropics) and other invited specialists.

Ms Robin Clark

Ms Clark provided the following update:

- appointed for another 3 years to the Cassowary Coast River Improvement Trust
- member of a Climate Change Working Group that has delivered a 10-point action plan – which includes preparation of guidelines for Councils in their future Planning Schemes to incorporate climate change, and
- currently preparing a presentation on mitigation and adaptation measures to include in plans for the peer conference in September. The next step will be a practice note for planners.

Resolution

The Board *noted* the Directors’ reports.

4.3 Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW)

Ms Neville took the report as read and would take questions on notice from the Board.

Discussion

- Dr Driml: expressed interest in accessing the Deloitte Report on economic and social values to inform a report for presenting to the DCCEEW and to the Queensland Ministers in September
- The Chair: regarding 2nd Round of the Heritage Grant for updating World and National lists regarding Indigenous cultural values
- The Chair: described the presence of an Indigenous delegation at UNESCO World Heritage Meetings when World Heritage areas are being discussed. Her question: is there or could there be funding available to support an Indigenous Delegation to attend?
- Ms Siggery noted that a DESI representative, Peter Green, from Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers, will be attending the UNESCO conference with an Australian delegation.

Action:

- Ms Neville will follow-up on the availability of the Deloitte Report and status of the Heritage Grant and provide advice to Sean McNamara.

- Check with International Heritage branch and advise the Chair on funding opportunities available for Traditional Owners delegations to attend the World Heritage Committee meeting when their area is being discussed.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the Commonwealth Government report.

4.4 Queensland Department reports

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services and Partnerships – verbal report

Mr Beri spoke to Matt Brien’s report beginning with a recent key personnel change, notably Rianha Rolland who has taken up the Executive Director role for 12 months replacing James Newman.

Values Based Management Framework (VBMF) Roadmap 2023-24 update

- while there is a lot of work going on across the regions on key values and levels of service assessments, health checks are a little behind these and the thematic strategies assessments and are expected to be completed next year, and
- the fire program is conducting planned aerial and ground-based burns across the tropics subject to varying conditions such as too wet burn through to rapidly drying out. So far this season 10 burns have been undertaken in the last fortnight in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

First Nations Engagement and Collaboration

- notifications are out and cultural burns planned for the Gillies Range and Goldsborough area, Buluwai/Djabugay and Bare Hill Conservation Park
- expired ILUAs and MOUs are being transitioned to contemporary agreements – the MYAC IPA Memorandum of Understanding
- discussions are ongoing with Choorechilum PBC and Tablelands Yidinji PBC
- current employment statistics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified staff in QPWS Northern Region is 11% of which 4% are engaged at OO3/OO4 level. The department has a strong focus on increasing the number of indigenous staff in higher levels, supervisory and/or technical roles
- Cultural Heritage inductions being rolled out in Southern Cape York, Diwan, and Mossman management offices, and
- a Jabalbina blended team framework is in development and two OO3 Jabalbina staff are now working with the team.

World Heritage Area Capital Works

- repair works post cyclone, and
- while post cyclone works are largely on track, a state-wide shortage of contractors is a constraint that may impact the ‘completed within 12 months’ target.

Pre-existing Works

- Alexandra Range, Daintree and Daintree Eastern Yalanji Hub signage projects are subject to contractor availability.

Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

Dr Playford took the Board paper provided as read and spoke to the following key issues.

- the K’gari climate adaptation work is a current focus
- Riversleigh, the Queensland museum and University of NSW are collaborating on repatriating fossils to the World Heritage Area

- with the international focus on the Great Barrier Reef there may be some merit in a National World Heritage Area climate change adaptation approach as discussed earlier in the meeting
- a draft decision from UNESCO is expected on or around 21 June 2024 for consideration at the next meeting in July
- review of the Intergovernmental Agreement is underway – the process has been both timely and appreciated particularly for the Wet Tropics
- water quality on GBR is making progress but not the level of progress that was hoped for
- while the particulate nutrient target is quite close, there is work to do on the dissolved organic nitrogen and sediment targets. Delays between funding rounds have been a contributing factor in the results
- the water quality review is in its first phase – identifying issues and aspirations - conducting a series of community seminars. Seeking aspirations and feedback from the Authority given its boundaries with the Reef
- Cape York consultation is continuing the Tentative World Heritage Listing with most points being in National Parks – seeking consent based on consultation is proceeding very cautiously – withdrawal contingency is also available, and
- The Great Sandy Desert is moving forward in the consideration for future Tentative Listing using the same approach.

Department of Tourism and Sport (DTS)

Mr Steven Silvester spoke to the Department’s presentation on the Wangetti Trail

- the Wangetti Trail is a multi-day trail with a focus on the benefits of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, eco-tourism and commercial eco-tourism involving Djabugay Nation Traditional Owners
- following Cyclone Jasper a review of the first section of the Trail revealed that the trail has stood up to the inundations quite well. Where there have been land slips the heavy rock materials can be incorporated into the trail’s maintenance and build
- 90% of the trail from Palm Cove to Ellis Beach is rough cut trail treatment construction and about 1100 metres is completed. Completion of the section is expected later this year
- work is underway with Djabugay nation on the Ellis Beach to Wangetti section design, and
- Cultural Heritage officers are on site, along with a Shadow Ranger who works alongside the construction crew to ensure all compliance issues are met.

Discussion

Dr Driml – thanked Steven for meeting with two members of the CCC and invited him to consider them as a valuable conduit to further community consultation through their local networks.

Resolution

The Board *noted* the State Government reports.

5.0 Actions arising and significant correspondence

5.1 Actions arising

Resolution

The Board *noted* the completion and status of actions arising from previous meetings.

5.2 Significant correspondence

The Executive Director outlined the key correspondence and made the Correspondence Folder available to the Directors.

- letter advising the launch of the 2022-23 Yellow Crazy Ants Eradication Program Report Card

- letters of support to a range of organisations applying for funding
- letters inviting the Federal and State ministers to the Cassowary awards were signed by the chair, and
- Minister Plibersek wrote to advise the Chair that the owners of the Wooroora (previously Chalumbin) Wind Farm Project have withdrawn their application.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the significant correspondence report.

6.0 Other business

No other business

6.1 Board self-assessment

The Board, as part of its best practice governance approach has implemented a standing agenda item to conduct a reflection and evaluation on the effectiveness of the Board meetings. Their objective is to continuously improve the performance of the Board and maintain their focus on strategic matters that drive performance and support the Authority in meeting its legislative obligations. Feedback on this matter was noted by the Principal Advisor to inform the preparation and conduct of the next meeting.

Action:

Mr McNamara to send the Board a package of prepared materials used to support the verbal presentations in the meeting.

6.2 Board Communique

Resolution

The Board **approved** the Communique for Board meeting # 127.

Meeting Close

Board Meeting #127 opened at 11.06am and closed at 4:32pm.



Ms Christine T Grant
Chair
5 September 2024