

**IN ATTENDENCE****Board directors**

Ms Leslie Shirreffs	Chair
Ms Ann Clarke	Director
Mr John Courtenay	Director
Prof Iain Gordon	Director (arriving at 10.35am)
Mr Phil Rist	Director
Ms Leah Talbot	Director
Mr Scott Buchanan	Executive Director

**Invited official observers**

Mr James Newman	A/Executive Director, Northern Parks and Forests, Department of National Parks Sport and Racing (NPSR)
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**WTMA officers**

Ms Lorraine Briggs	Planner, Planning and Conservation
Dr Paul Chantrill	Principal Project Officer, Tourism and Presentation
Mr Max Chappell	Manager, Planning and Conservation
Mr Campbell Clarke	Principal Planning Officer, Planning and Conservation
Ms Lucy Karger	A/Project Manager, Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication
Mrs Rebecca Lagerroth	Manager, World Heritage Connections
Ms Patricia O'Loughlen	Team Leader, World Heritage Connections
Ms Ellen Weber	Executive Officer

**1 INTRODUCTION****1.1. Chair's welcome and introduction**

The chair Leslie Shirreffs opened the formal meeting at 9.02am and acknowledged the Gimuy Walaburra Yidinji and the Yirrganydji Traditional Owners on whose land discussions are being held and payed respect to elders past, present and emerging, and also acknowledge the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples across the Wet Tropics, about whose land we will hold discussions.

The Chair welcomed other directors Ms Anne Clarke, Mr John Courtenay Mr Phil Rist and Ms Leah Talbot to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Mr James Newman, A/Executive Director, and QPWS from the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing to the meeting.

**1.2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from representatives from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, the Department of Environment and Energy.

The chair advised that Neal Muller, representative from the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (DTEBS) was on long service leave an unable to

participate at this meeting. The department would ensure a suitable nominee would attend future meetings.

The Chair advised that Professor Iain Gordon's plane from Townsville was delayed and that it was expected he would arrive mid-morning.

### **1.3. Conflict of Interest**

No conflicted of interest were declared at the meeting.

### **1.4. Board minutes no 98**

Approval of minutes of the meeting No 98 will be formally endorsed at the next meeting.

### **1.5. Actions arising**

Scott Buchanan updated directors on the Actions arising from the previous meeting, including item 96/2.1 – agreed that Chair meeting with Wuchopperen Health Services (Ltd), is not a priority for the moment, and will be kept open as an option for future Chair briefing.

97/2.2 – The Australian Institute for Geographers conference will be held in Brisbane in 2017. There could be opportunities for the Authority to be involved. Day prior to conference (11 July 2017, Musgrave Park, Brisbane) is dedicated to providing a space for the (Traditional and Historic) Owners of the area to engage with geographers. The organising committee for the conference has received some funding to support travel and registration for Indigenous participation at a national level.

97/2.2 – suitable dates for governance training dates are being investigated. The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) has provided a number of options on three-day training, and the Authority is liaising with the Training and Development unit in Brisbane to coordinate training schedules to reduce costs (\$11K/day for between 8 and 24 participants).

97/3.6 - letters have been sent to State agencies with responsibilities relevant to the Plan process, inviting them to participate in interagency meetings as part of the risk management strategy. The function of this group is to provide feedback to the Authority on plan review proposals; brief their Brisbane counterparts on the plan; and to be able to assist with responses to Rainforest Aboriginal People.

## **Recommendation**

*The Board noted the Actions Arising from the previous meeting, as updated.*

## **Actions**

- *E Weber to send doodle poll survey to directors seeking best time to attend three day training. Coordinate with Training and Development Unit in Brisbane, as other departments (EHP and NPSR) have indicated interest in attending.*

## **2 REPORTS**

### **2.1 Chair's report**

The Chair provided a verbal report and advised that since the last Board meeting a number of significant events has occurred, including the very successful Cassowary Awards and the inaugural meetings and second meetings of the recently established CCC and SAC. The chair:

- noted that the two committees are already making valuable contributions. For example the suggestions from CCC regarding ideas for the 30-year anniversary and the SAC's

recommendation for a photo competition demonstrating the upcoming State of Wet Tropics Report 2016-2017: Natural Beauty and Aesthetic value of the WTWHA.

- thanked director John Courtenay for his work engaging with industry to build the profile of the Authority, including his work on the *Science in the Pub*
- acknowledged the work of the Authority in producing the 2017 People, Country, Culture calendar

The Chair provided a verbal report and advised that she had attended a series of meetings with key regional clients and stakeholders to discuss board priorities and issues of mutual interest, including meeting with:

- the Director-General (DG) and Deputy-Director General (DDG) of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection about a number of matters, including matters on how the Authority's FTEs are counted, who is responsible for the Executive Director's performance plan, and processes for Ministerial correspondence. A follow up letter was sent to the DG and DDG that acknowledges the role of EHP in terms of the accountability issues that EHP has as the administrator of our funds, as well as the independence of statutory WTMA Board.
- the Chief of Staff for the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef about a range of matters including Yellow Crazy Ants, future budgets and to promote a world heritage gateway as a 30th birthday initiative
- Luke Jackson and Alberto Vale from the Australian Quoll Conservancy about how the Authority can support their work, and threatened species in the WTWHA
- the CEO of Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation and discussed the review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan, progress on land tenure resolution and continued collaboration in economic opportunities for communities
- Sheriden Morris who is both CEO of Reef and Rainforest Research Centre and new chair of the Northern Australia CRC to consider opportunities for collaboration, to encourage rainforest research, identify tourism opportunities and explore funding models for Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger programs
- Allan Dale, Chair of Regional Development Australia, who also supported collaboration across the RDA, RRRRC and WTMA
- CEO and executives of the Cairns Regional Council discussed the Management Plan review, Yellow Crazy Ants and the 30th anniversary, including potential locations for a Wet Tropics gateway, which they indicated they would now include in their CBD planning
- Brian Arnold of the Aboriginal Development Trust Board, the new operator of the Daintree Discovery Centre, about their plans for growing that and other businesses, employment and tourism enterprise development
- Manager of the Cairns Historical Society and Museum about a potential historical display during the 30th anniversary celebration. The space also includes space for community groups to meet (public meetings and lectures).

The Chair reminded directors that the Authority's current funding agreement expires in 2018, and that it was important to develop a new draft agreement for the State and Commonwealth to sign off on. This would be progressed through meetings with Minister Frydenberg as well as Minister Miles prior to Ministerial Forum.

The Executive Director's performance and development plan is now due. The Chair advised that a director's only session would be convened at the end of the board meeting so that directors have an opportunity to raise any issues that the Chair may wish to discuss with Scott Buchanan as part of this review.

The Chair reminded directors to consider the role of the SAC and CCC throughout the agenda item discussions, and where relevant, refer those matters to them for advice.

### **Recommendation**

*The Board **noted** the Chair's report.*

### **Actions**

- *S Buchanan to continue discussions with the new operators of the Daintree Discovery Centre to seek economic opportunities with Indigenous groups*
- *S Buchanan to develop draft funding agreement to submit to State and Commonwealth government for consideration*
- *consider sponsoring a table at the National NAIDOC*

## **2.2 Directors issues**

**John Courtenay** participated in a site visit to KurWorld (adjacent) with WTMA staff. This was an opportunity to meet with their management team and discuss general planning and landscape matters. The owners were working with community engagement officers to work with the local community.

He was working with WTMA staff and the Riversleigh Scientific and Advisory Committee Secretariat to organize a 'Science in the Pub', on Professor Mike Archer would be a key guest speaker, and talk about fossils and the connection between the Wet Tropics and Riversleigh World Heritage Areas. 70 people have registered so far.

He was working with Wendy Cooper and the Tableland Regional Council on a Bill Cooper Retrospective art exhibition. David Attenborough was a personal friend of Bill Cooper and negotiations are underway to have David Attenborough (professionally) filmed talking about Bill Cooper and the Wet Tropics rainforest. Still in early stages and will report back at the next meeting, and costs not known as yet.

Tabled a letter from Savannah Guides seeking advice regarding the Authority's commitment to the continuing the tour guide field schools. Scott Buchanan confirmed that the 2016-17 annual operating plan included a tour guide school tailored to suit the needs of Rainforest Aboriginal people and also specialised training for Wet Tropics Visitor Centre staff. The Authority is also reviewing the tour guides schools to ensure the long term sustainability of the program and also to ensure it continues to meet World Heritage objectives.

**Leah Talbot** confirmed that she had accepted an appointment to the (Commonwealth) Indigenous Advisory Council. The first meeting is happening at the end of March. She advised directors that her doctoral studies were nearing completion in June 2017 and this would enable her to become more involved in the Commonwealth funded NESP program including the *City and Urban Landscapes* hub and the *Earth Systems and Climate Change* hub, as well as other matters.

She reminded WTMA and directors that tickets to the NAIDOC ball would come on sale early May, and that it might be worthwhile for the Authority to consider sponsoring a table.

**Phil Rist** reminded directors that the National Native Title conference was being held in Townsville early June. It is being held in Townsville in recognition of 20 years since the Mabo decision. Over the years, participation in this event has evolved from representative bodies, and now includes PBCs and many indigenous ranger programs, and land and sea programs, and the Authority may wish to have a presence at that meeting.

Phil Rist advised the board that he was meeting with PEW and ACF. Both of these organisations were initiating a national program seeking greater Traditional Owner decision making on their lands, and he would brief the board on the outcomes of that meeting.

### **Recommendation**

*The Board **noted** the directors' reports.*

### **Actions**

- *S Buchanan to contact Sandra Levers and confirm that KurWorld have not removed any indigenous artefacts from the KurWorld site.*
- *E Weber to follow up with Tim Flannery to see if he is available to speak at a 'Science in the Pub', noting he was coming to Cairns in September 2017.*
- *M Chappell to locate old (WTMA and NPSR) report that provides details of Wet Tropics assets/inventory register.*
- *S Buchanan and P Chantrill to talk with Russell Boswell about the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program and update Russell Boswell about the tour guide and links with the broader Wet Tropics World Heritage Presentation Strategy.*

### **2.3 Executive Director's report**

The Executive provided an update on the board on activities (refer to **Attachment 2.3 (1)**). Items to note include:

- the *Developing Northern Australia Conference* will be held in Cairns in 2017. There is an opportunity for WTMA to present or sponsor a group to talk at the conference
- the National NAIDOC awards will be held 1 July 2017, and CAIF commences the following week. WTMA will be present at CAIF through the Gimuy food festival
- the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Rainforest Aboriginal News published, as well as the 2017 Rainforest Aboriginal Calendar
- an update on cassowary rehabilitation and recovery. The Authority is working with DTMR about an 'overpass' at Smith's gap to assist cassowary/wildlife movement
- there is a new infestation of yellow crazy ant at Hussey's Road, close to the existing areas. The YCA team are working with the relevant landholders and stakeholder to manage the outbreak.

### **Recommendation**

*The Board **noted** the Executive Director's report on the Authority issues since Board meeting 97.*

### **2.4 Queensland and Commonwealth department reports**

James Newman provided an update to directors, and noted that the NPSR Partnership Agreement milestone progress report to 31 December 2016 had been submitted to the Authority. Additional points included:

- congratulated the staff and board of the Authority on the very successful 2016 Cassowary Awards
- the department is working with DATSIP, other State government departments, Eastern Kuku Yalanji and Western Kuku Yalanji to resolve land tenure resolution matters
- they are working with the Commonwealth Government and Australian Wildlife Conservancy in Mount Windsor, Mount Lewis and Mt Spurgeon regarding threatened species management
- the Daintree Management Plan remains a work in progress, Jabalbina and the Wet Tropics Management Authority and other relevant agencies are involved in the discussions.

## Recommendation

The Board **noted** the NPSR report and thanked James Newman for his valuable contribution.

### 2.5 Significant correspondence

20 December 2016 Letter from Department of Environment and Energy advising that the use of Antoff Fibrinol adjacent and within the WHA was not a controlled action

13 February 2017 letter from Minister Miles finalising the record of decisions from the 26<sup>th</sup> Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum

23 February 2017 Letter from Leslie Shirreffs to DDG EHP Maria Mohr regarding Wet Tropics Reporting arrangements

23 February 2017 from Leslie Shirreffs to Minister Furner regarding land tenure resolution in the Wet Tropics

27 February 2017 Letter from Savannah Guides to John Courtenay regarding the Wet Tropics tour guide program

The Queensland Government's Draft Protected Area strategy is out for comments and due 24 February 2017. The Authority has been granted an extension for their submission to enable WTMA board comment.

Community Heritage and Icon Grant program for 2017 have been released. Closing date is 23 March 2017.

Round 1 of the Building Better Regions Funds – community investment stream and infrastructure projects stream grant scheme have been released.

## Recommendation

The Board **noted** the correspondence report.

## Actions

- E Weber to send Authority's submission to the draft protected area strategy for comment.

### 2.6 Scientific Advisory Committee – meeting report 10 February 2017

Iain Gordon briefed the board on the agenda items discussed at the SAC meeting. It was constructive meeting and the members are aware that they are there to support the board. He also reported that the SAC:

- provided comments on the draft Terms of Reference for the 2016-17 State of Wet Tropics Report 2016-2017: *Natural Beauty and Aesthetic value of the WTWHA*, and supported running a photo exhibition in conjunction with this project. Members suggested that images submitted are accompanied by a narrative that describes how they are connected personally to World Heritage natural, cultural and community values
- congratulated staff and the consultants on the production of the 2015-16 State of Wet Tropics report and intend to have additional discussions to consider the report findings and recommendations
- progressed the development of a refreshed Wet Tropics Priority Science Action Plan that builds on the board's strategic priorities and the current Research strategy. This remains a work in progress, and the secretariat is currently identifying priority science questions aligned with Board Priorities for consideration at their next meeting
- discussed protocols for engagement between Rainforest Aboriginal people and researchers and that would be considered at the May SAC meeting

Directors were provided with an update on 2017 student grant scheme. Over 15 postgraduate students were successful in securing around \$30,000 in grant funds. As part of the application process, students had to identify how their research would help progress key strategic priorities regarding Wet Tropics climate change and engaging with Rainforest Aboriginal People

### **Recommendation**

The Board **noted** agenda items discussed and points of interest raised at the Scientific Advisory Committee's first official meeting on 10 February 2017.

### **Actions**

- EW to send directors the list of successful 2017 student research grant recipients.
- SAC to update board on the status of the draft protocols for engagement between Rainforest Aboriginal people and researchers, noting these would be endorsed by the board.

## **2.7 Community Consultative Committee**

Anne Clarke briefed the board on the first official CCC meeting that was held on 16 February 2017. After the meeting she rang members seeking feedback on how they felt the meeting went, in terms of agenda or logistics, and was pleased to report the group considered it productive, and that they were keen to demonstrate support and regional engagement for the board. Member Dennis Ah Kee asked about Indigenous representation at meetings, as he was the only indigenous person attending that day, and that there were four Indigenous representatives at the combined SAC/CCC induction meeting in December 2017.

Anne highlighted a number of issues included in their February meeting communique and noted that the CCC minutes:

- suggested improvements to the *Strategic Rainforest Aboriginal Engagement Framework* to increase the usefulness of the document, including benchmarking progress against the 1998 *Which Way our Cultural Survival* report, and that the best way to engage Aboriginal people is to employ Aboriginal staff; and the benefits of the Authority developing an indigenous employment guideline
- acknowledged that the Board endorsed the community engagement framework in February 2016 and suggested the Community Engagement Strategy may wish to include how it can be used to present the Authority's actions more concisely to ensure engagement practice is assisting and supporting landholders, for example, putting World Heritage information (leaflets) in local council rates notices
- suggested the Authority utilise the Wet Tropics permitting process by making it a condition of permit (e.g. event) that the proponent ensure the World Heritage brand is properly acknowledged
- considered the 30 year anniversary celebrations of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, and made a number of suggestions regarding this (refer to agenda item 3.6)
- discussed the draft Presentation Strategy and acknowledged that this would be considered at Board meeting no 99.

Scott Buchanan advised NPSR were the responsible agency for managing commercial events within the Wet Tropics WHA, and that WTHA permits tended to be around road maintenance and other (community services) infrastructure.

Directors discussed the concept of Wet Tropics hubs and gateways, as destinations and experiences. Authority staff were already working with key visitor centres and assisting them to present World Heritage values. Directors discussed hubs, their function and purpose, and how they could become entry points to the Area that explain the theme of country and introduce people into the landscape.

The Chair reminded directors that Authority has a Strategic Workforce Plan (2016 to 2021) and that the actions are currently being rolled out, but the Authority does not have a specific guideline *per se*. Rebecca Lagerroth noted that the Authority currently employs two Aboriginal staff and is about to appoint a third Aboriginal person. Other opportunities are also being explored e.g. trainees and strategies to fill vacant positions within the organisation.

Directors discussed the timing of CCC and SAC meetings and how they aligned with Board meetings, specifically about how comments, suggestions and feedback from the advisory committees were presented to the board, and how these are considered and responded to.

### **Recommendation**

*The Board **noted** significant outcomes from the Community Consultative Committee's (CCC) induction meeting on 15 December 2016 and their first official meeting on the 16 February 2017.*

### **Actions**

- *R Lagerroth to update CCC members of the progress in implementing the 2016-2021 Strategic Workforce Plan, in particular the Indigenous employment strategy.*
- *M Chappell and Plan Review team to keep CCC members updated on progress of the Wet Tropic plan, with a view to alert and advise the Authority on contentious issues.*
- *CCC to consider of the concept of hubs and gateways; what they could look like, and what would need to be done to community and industry engaged, and how this can be picked up in the presentation strategy.*
- *Directors to reflect at the end of each meeting as to what advice and actions they would like the advisory groups to provide.*

## **3 STRATEGIC ISSUES**

### **3.1 Wet Tropics Corporate Branding**

Rebecca Lagerroth and Shona Smith provided directors with a preview of the draft concept being developed for corporate templates that would be used on internal presentations, business cards, fact sheets and brochures.

A refreshed corporate brand intends to contemporise the look and feel of the Wet Tropics brand, make it more engaging and to help raise awareness of the unique purpose of the Wet Tropics World Management Authority. Comments were sought from the board to help guide the current thinking and to work currently which is in the preliminary stage of development. Directors provided comment on

- various colour schemes and queried how these were perceived by colour-blind people
- how the new brand identifies/picks up on the role of the community
- how the infographics were developed and their logic
- the photo library of images and recommended that these not focus on just the Daintree area, and include images from a number of landscapes throughout the Wet Tropics
- the 'hero' photos, and that some of these need to include people in the landscapes (the People. Country. Culture 2017 calendar was a good example

Directors supported the use of the World Heritage logo, and that it should be highly visible on all signage and products, and that Wet Tropics Management Authority, as the administrator of the Area should be part of the by-line.

### **Recommendation**

*The Board **noted** the (draft) corporate branding.*



### 3.2 Draft Wet Tropics Presentation Strategy

S Buchanan advised directors that the presentation strategy is still in draft, and recommended that the board focus discussion and guidance on the key themes, and the proposed consultation process, with a view to review and endorse the strategy at the next board meeting.

P Chantrill addressed the board and provided an overview of the draft *Presentation Strategy: Explore. Learn. Protect* which is based on five key themes around partnerships, branding and signage, quality interpretation, visitor centres and training and professional development.

The development of the strategy has opened up opportunities for meaningful collaborations and investment with key tourism business and agencies at a regional level, and alignment to provide a clear and consistent brand for the Area as a quality destination based on WH values.

The board thanked P Chantrill for his presentation and provided the following feedback:

- the need to present and market the whole WHA region and not just iconic sites such as the Daintree lowlands
- the poor condition of a number of road signs, park and interpretation signs throughout the Area, and the strategy could consider how the strategy could address this
- the role the Authority can play in telling a 'wow' science story, given we are regarded as a reputable and credible voice for the biodiversity of the Area
- the Wet Tropics is recognised on the National Heritage List for its cultural values and no other place in Australia has Aboriginal people that have continued to live in the rainforest environment and continue their traditional practices. These factors should be picked up in our strategy.

#### Recommendation

The Board

- **noted** the draft presentation strategy, and
- **noted** that they would be provided with an updated strategy at the May 2017 meeting.

#### Actions

- directors to provide comment directly to P Chantrill and S Buchanan on the draft strategy by 21 March for collation and then sent out to directors for consideration and endorsement.
- CCC and SAC to be provided with the final strategy for information
- Authority to consider our role in upgrading Wet Tropics signs (road, directional, entry points into parks etc), given we are not the lead agency to manage.

### 3.3 Cassowary Awards

The directors discussed the 2016 Cassowary Awards and provided guidance to the Authority on how this successful event should roll out in 2017 and beyond. They noted that the CCC had already worked with Authority staff on an internal review at their meeting, and some of the issues considered included frequency of event, format, sponsorship, media opportunities, as well as financial and human resources.

Additional issues that should be investigated include:

- cost in staff time and resources to fund the event and how these can be reduced
- cost comparison of a night time dinner versus afternoon cocktail function
- a shorter event (which could be achieved if no sit-down dinner)
- boosting sponsorship to reduce internal costs
- expanding interest in the awards beyond the conservation sector and into the broader community e.g. youth, agriculture, service providers, business and tourism.

- better media coverage to increase nominations received, including putting notices in our publications (Rainforest Aboriginal News, e-bulletin, facebook)
- timing of the event (cooler drier months could be beneficial in the future)
- investigate award categories to ensure all sectors are covered
- obtain sponsorship from high profile regional organisation
- ensure there are 'official' tables
- on the night have a 'gold coin' donation to raise funds for a specific cause
- to drop a category if there are insufficient entries?
- Need to encourage more entries from the tourist industry – see if TTNQ would help in promoting entries to the award from their members

There was discussion about how to generate additional interest from indigenous organisations to sponsor an award and also to nominate individuals. The Authority will need to factor this into its 2017-18 business plan and seek additional resources and/or extra sponsorships to help recover costs, noting that successfully attracting sponsorship does have resource requirements.

### Recommendation

The Board

- **noted** *Community Consultative Committee comments on the 2016 Cassowary Awards, the Authority's internal review*
- **noted** *the next Cassowary Awards is currently proposed for Saturday 25 November 2017, and*
- **agreed** *that the Authority should contribute up to \$10,000 to run the event and the remainder be funded through sponsorships.*

### Actions

- *promote Cassowary Awards in the Rainforest Aboriginal News and other media to increase indigenous nominations*
- *S Buchanan and/or Chair to meet (and write a letter) to the Land Councils, asking for them to sponsor an award (for example, indigenous youth, elders or organisation)*
- *S Buchanan and/or Chair to meet (and write a letter) to TTNQ seeking involvement in promoting entries to the award from their members*
- *Authority to provide some costs and options for the board to consider, noting that it may cost up to \$20K to run the awards*
- *consider moving the timing of the Cassowary Awards in 2018 to maximise exposure for the 30-year celebration*

### 3.4 Wet Tropics World Heritage Area - 30 year celebrations

The Wet Tropics of Queensland celebrates its 30 year anniversary of inscription on the World Heritage List on 9 December 2018, and the Authority is seeking guidance from the board on a number of issues including:

- a theme for the 30 year anniversary that encourages people to think about maintaining and sustaining the viability of this living landscape for the future
- establishing a small working group to support the Board deliberations around this event
- how the event will be resourced through the 2017-18 operational budget
- sourcing additional government or corporate investment
- timing and length of celebrations.

The 30 year celebration is significant for a number of reasons, including the year a new management plan for the World Heritage will be finalised, the beginning of a renewed funding round; and an opportunity to relaunch and position ourselves throughout the whole Wet Tropics regional community.

## Recommendation

The Board

- **noted** *preliminary conversations with the Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum and the Community Consultative Committee on the upcoming 30 year anniversary of World Heritage listing in December 2018.*

## Actions

- *investigate potential partnerships with Cairns Regional Council and other local government Authorities to, for example, piggy back off Cairns Festival or Ecofiesta*
- *investigate partnerships with media and travel outlets to disseminate World Heritage information to the broader community*
- *ask CCC to form a small (ideas) working group to help the 30 year celebrations*

### 3.5 Creative Resourcing

E. Weber provided a presentation on the progress on various creative resourcing options the directors (with support from Authority staff) were exploring. These were workshopped at the February 2017 Community Consultative Committee meeting, and the group provided additional ideas to explore, including geocaching, working with the citizens of the GBR and Opera in the Bush.

Staff have had an initial briefing with NPSR officers from Brisbane NPSR (SPRIG) officers to consider the possibility of setting up the Wet Tropics as a pilot to progress user-pays options. A small internal working group would include a representative from other government agencies including EHP and DTESB to scope issues. Conversations are also progressing through the Alliance for Sustainable Tourism.

J Newman advised the board on the NPSR fee structure for commercial activity permits. NPSR officers have commenced research into the costs and benefits of the user pay system (for example, \$ spent on protected area management/ \$ spent on capital works and monies spent on fees and charges).

## Recommendation

The Board **noted** *the update on the creative resourcing and user pay options.*

### 3.6 Review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan

L Briggs addressed the meeting and provided details on the stakeholder analysis and consultation (a legislative requirement) that has been prepared for the Wet Tropics Plan Review, timelines and schedule. Relevant stakeholders, including Rainforest Aboriginal people, and the broader community will all be extensively engaged during the plan review consultation process. The analysis outlined the level of engagement for various stakeholder groups, based on how much they may be impacted by the plan (i.e. directly, indirectly or minimal).

Terms of reference to establish an Interdepartmental Committee of Government Agencies have been developed and that group is set to meet in the near future.

MoUs have been sent to the Alliance for Sustainable Tourism and Cairns and the Far North Environment Centre to formally enter into arrangements to consult with their stakeholders and prepare a submission (\$5000 each allocated). A request to quote to engage Rainforest Aboriginal people has been sent out, tendering for work to consult with PBCs and Rainforest Aboriginal people on the plan and to prepare a plan submission (\$10,000 allocated).

## **Recommendation**

The Board **noted** the progress of the Plan Review Phase 1 Consultation which is expected to begin in March 2017.

## **Action**

- L Briggs to send interested directors the request to quote for Traditional Owner engagement for their information.

### **3.7 Aboriginal Tradition and the Wet Tropics Management Plan**

Under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Act), the Authority must, as far as practicable, have regard to the Aboriginal tradition when performing its functions.

The Authority has been considering how the plan review process could respond to the board's aspiration for Rainforest Aboriginal tradition to be incorporated into the Wet Tropics Plan. There has been discussion regarding the difference and inter-relationship Aboriginal tradition' which is a term defined in the *Acts Interpretation Act 1954* and 'cultural heritage' which is defined in the *Cultural Heritage Act 2003*.

The Authority is investigating an appropriate process to allow for protection, practice and maintenance of Aboriginal Tradition that is not currently covered (and not inconsistent) with the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*. The board were supportive for the Plan to:

- have regard for Aboriginal Tradition and define it
- formally acknowledge their contribution to past (and current and future) management
- allow the Authority to enter into Cooperative Management Agreements (CMA)
- be amended to allow for formal acknowledgement and recognition of existing and future Indigenous land management plans (e.g. country based plans, Indigenous Protected Area plans, community development plans etc.) as CMAs, without requiring an additional assessment and approval process after the Indigenous Plan is developed

The board agreed that this would be a complex matter to progress during the review process and thanked Authority staff for their work to date on Aboriginal Tradition and managing for World Heritage and National Heritage.

## **Recommendation**

The Board **endorsed** the approach on proposed amendments to the Plan to improve its operation with regard to Aboriginal Tradition.

## **Actions**

- Plan review team to notify directors of successful tender to undertake Rainforest Aboriginal consultation (and significant timelines).

### **3.8 Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program**

L Karger provided directors with an update on the yellow crazy program. To date, the Authority has received \$1.013M from the Queensland Government, which has enabled scaling up of the eradication program. Some of the key activities and achievements during this reporting period include

- recruiting to twelve temporary staff
- working to have Rainforest Aboriginal people employed (e.g. contract with *Abriculture*, and indigenous owned small business)
- moving to a new accommodation, and

- a successful application to the Department of Environment to amend EPBC and permitting conditions allowing treatment with Antoff Fipronil Ant Bait in dry creek beds and various other changes of conditions including an extended area of treatment

L Karger advised that one new infestation site was reported on 24 February 2017. The site appears to be isolated from the main infestation area and may have been as a result of illegal dumping. Based on preliminary surveys, the area is 7.17ha. A full lure survey will be carried out in March. The area will be treated immediately after survey by hand and again by the helicopter in April, July and September 2017. Community awareness is also an important component of the program, this includes quarterly meetings with key stakeholder and industry.

P Rist asked for advice on the amendment to the conditions of the permit to use Fipronil along (dry) creek beds and waterways, as this chemical is detrimental to aquatic wildlife, including frogs. The Authority were very aware of this, and took this into consideration when making the application. Permit conditions are very strict and includes a stringent monitoring program.

The board suggested that there could be targeted research to determine if there are any residual impacts of the chemical on the wildlife.

The board thanked the yellow crazy ant eradication team and the Kuranda community task force for their efforts.

### **Recommendation**

*The board **noted** progress of the yellow crazy ant eradication program.*

### **Action**

- *L Shirreffs to attend next quarterly yellow crazy ant eradication reference committee meeting (May 2017)*

### **3.9 Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum 2017**

The next Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum is tentatively set for July 2017. The board were provided with an update on the (draft) agenda that will need to be approved by Minister Miles, in his role as Chair of Wet Tropics Ministerial forum.

Draft papers will be sent to all directors for comment, and submitted to the relevant state and federal agencies with enough time for their consideration and to brief their respective Ministers. Key items for discussion include:

- Secretariat report
- approval 2017-18 operating budget
- tenure resolution in the Wet Tropics
- progress of the management of yellow crazy ants in and around the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
- update on tenure resolution program in the Wet Tropics, and
- future World Heritage funding.

The Chair indicated that the Secretariat report will include an update on the establishment of the statutory committees, and the value they bring. Directors also suggested that it would be useful to advise the Ministers that the Authority have endorsed a Rainforest Aboriginal Engagement strategy, as a meaningful way forward to build partnerships with the regional Aboriginal community.

## Recommendation

*The Board:*

- **noted** that the next Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum (Meeting No 27) has tentatively been set for 13 July 2017 to meet in Brisbane
- **noted** that the timelines for final papers to be cleared with relevant departments will require the Board to approve briefing papers out of session, and
- **approved** the proposed agenda provided at **Attachment 3.9 (1)**.

### 3.10 2016-17 business plan and budget report

S Buchanan updated the board on the progress of the business plan to 31 December 2016 and financial position of the Authority current as at 25 February 2017. Most work is on date with the following projects having an 'amber' light:

- management decision to defer work the connectivity program, noting that the GIS layers indicating priority corridors are being utilised by other organisations including community groups and Terrain NRM
- slight delays in delivery of the Wet Tropics Plan Review, which should be rectified with the recruitment of a full-time PO3 Planner and 0.5 FTE GIS officer
- delays in staff professional training and development plans being signed off (transferred to new system i-learn), and
- delays in finalising the communications strategy due to limited staff resources.

The budget indicates the Authority is slightly underspent as at 25 February 2017. A number of devolved grant programs are currently being finalised and this should see the budget mostly on track with respect to projects by the March 2017 quarter.

There is no recommendation to vary expenditure between programs, although an additional \$4000 has been reallocated from within the planning and conservation budget to increase the available funds for the 2017 student research grant scheme

## Recommendation

*The board*

- **noted** the 2016-17 mid-year work plan progress report (as at December 2016), and
- **noted** the 2016-17 financial status report current as at 25 February 2017.

### 3.11 Partnership Agreement 2016-19

The board noted the partnership agreement milestone report provided by NPSR for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018 is due 31 July 2018.

WTMA and QPWS officers are meeting on a monthly basis to ensure the key partnership activities specified in the 2016/17 Terms of Reference (Schedule 3 in the Memorandum of Understanding) remain relevant and continue to deliver on partnership principles. The ToR will be reviewed in May 2017 with a view to update, as required for 2017/18.

## Recommendation

*The board*

- **noted** that the interim report (for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 December 2016) from the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR (QPWS)) for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Partnership Agreement was submitted to the Authority by 1 March 2017.

## 4 General Business

### 4.1 Approval of Board No 99 communique for distribution

**Recommendation**

The board **approved** the *Communique for Board No 99* for distribution to stakeholders.

**4.2 Web guide to best practice World Heritage management**

The board were provided web links to the updated World Heritage web-page.

**Meeting closed.**

**5.0 IN-CAMERA ITEMS**

WTMA officers and departmental observers left the meeting room. The Chair convened a Directors only session to discuss input to the Executive Director's performance and development plan.