



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

Purpose of the report

This annual report details the financial and non-financial performance of the Wet Tropics Management Authority from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. It highlights the work, achievements, activities and strategic initiatives of the Authority, and satisfies the requirements of *Queensland's Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and *Financial Accountability Act 2009*; and the Commonwealth's *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage 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 from our website at www.wettropics.gov.au. Alternatively, hard copies can be obtained by emailing wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au.

Interpreter service statement

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Attribution

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Further information



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ISBN 978 1 921591 76 1

THIS REPORT IS PRINTED ON AUSTRALIAN MADE PAPER THAT HAS BEEN CERTIFIED UNDER THE NATIONAL CARBON OFFSET STANDARD.

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30 October 2017

The Hon Dr Steven Miles MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for
National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef
400 George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2016-2017 and financial
statements for the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

I certify this Annual Report complies with:

- ~ the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*
- ~ the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act*
1993
- ~ the detailed requirements set out in the Annual Report requirements
for Queensland Government agencies.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found
at page 52 of this annual report

V

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie Shirreffs", written in a cursive style.

Leslie Shirreffs PSM

Chair

HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE

Commenced a consultative review of the statutory Wet Tropics Management Plan. The team provided targeted information and consultation sessions to 19 Aboriginal organisations, 1,335 stakeholders and 1,857 Wet Tropics landholders and neighbours.

WEBSITE TRAFFIC VIEWS	VIEWS	UNIQUE VISITORS	USERS	DAYS OF CONSULTATION
	1,641	1,368	718	59

Ramped up the Yellow Crazy Ant (YCA) Eradication Program.

A commitment of more than \$10 million in funding from the Commonwealth and State governments over the next three years enabled three treatment rounds in the YCA infestation area.



Appointed a new Community Consultative Committee and Scientific Advisory Committee. The new committees comprise multidisciplinary expertise that will inform contemporary World Heritage management challenges and decision-making.

Hosted the 2016 Cassowary Awards. More than 30 individuals and organisations were nominated in eight categories. More than 200 people attended to celebrate community, industry and Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' contributions to the protection and presentation of the World Heritage Area.



Developed a Rainforest Aboriginal Strategic Engagement Framework 2016-2018, including a partnership model for a refreshed approach to engagement with Rainforest Aboriginal people and their organisations.

"WHICH WAY OUR CULTURAL SURVIVAL" REVIEW

MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES IN WORLD HERITAGE, RECOGNITIONS OF CULTURAL VALUES

PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT

BROKER SUPPORT FOR ACTIVITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON-COUNTRY PARTNERSHIPS

FACILITATE OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR WORKING ON COUNTRY

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

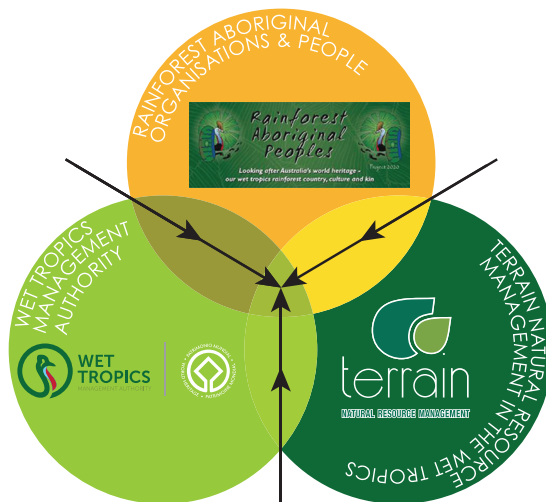
SUPPORT CROSS-LEARNING EVENTS

MENTORING PROGRAM

GROUP-TO-GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIP

TELLING THE STORY

COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTION



Awarded sixteen post-graduate students from five Australian universities almost \$40,000 towards research that contributed to understanding climate change impacts; provided adaptation and mitigation strategies to protect and conserve the natural and cultural integrity of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area; and engaged with Rainforest Aboriginal people so that they are supported in expressing their knowledge, culture and management practices on country.

In partnership with Terrain NRM, published three editions of the Rainforest Aboriginal News. Some 2,000 copies of each of the three editions was distributed to more than 200 Aboriginal organisations and individuals as well as regional organisations with an interest in Traditional Owner involvement in the management of the Wet Tropics.



2,000
COPIES OF EACH

DISTRIBUTED TO OVER

200

ABORIGINAL ORGANISATIONS,
INDIVIDUALS AND REGIONAL
ORGANISATIONS

Message from the Chair

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is the world's oldest living rainforest. Stretching over 900,000 hectares from Cooktown to Townsville, this stunning landscape provides habitat for more than 660 different species of vertebrate animals and safeguards the highest biodiversity of endemic rainforest plants in the world. It is also an extraordinary cultural landscape, the traditional lands of the Rainforest Aboriginal peoples who have shaped the country to its current World Heritage significance.

Tropical biodiversity is one of the wonders of our natural world. A 2013 study published in the international journal *Science*, identified the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as the second-most irreplaceable natural World Heritage site on the planet when it comes to protecting biodiversity and preventing extinctions of the world's mammals, birds and amphibians. As one of the most extensively studied rainforests globally, the Wet Tropics provides insight into how Tropical diversity is generated and sustained and how it will fare into the future. The Wet Tropics also is a highly valued part of tropical North Queensland where communities live, work, and recreate; providing social, environmental and economic benefits conservatively valued at more than \$5.2 billion per annum to the region.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is committed to working collaboratively across jurisdictions to protect this significant heritage area for future generations.

Our role is diverse. As well as performing the functions set out in the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and administering the statutory *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*, the Authority builds meaningful partnerships with the community, Rainforest Aboriginal people, industry, government, and non-government agencies and organisations to help advance the conservation and presentation of the Area. It promotes scientific research and sharing of knowledge; seeks to give the Area a role in the life of the community and works to support sustainable tourism and recreation.

2016-17 represents another year of achievement for the Authority and its partners who worked hard to manage and protect the values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

Review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan

Important work has commenced on the review of the statutory *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* (the Plan), including substantial consultation with regional tourism leaders, the conservation sector, and Rainforest Aboriginal people. The Plan controls activities that have the potential to impact on the Area's World Heritage values and its integrity. The 10-year review creates an opportunity for the Authority to update and improve the Plan operations. This will help to ensure the new Plan provides stronger recognition of Aboriginal tradition and identifies opportunities for future tourism and presentation potential, while continuing to protect the outstanding natural values of the Area.

The first round of public consultation was completed on 30 June 2017, with a series of workshops, meetings and consultations held across the World Heritage Area, with over 74 written submissions received. This highly-valued input will inform the development of the final Plan which will be released in late 2018.

Working with Traditional Custodians

The Authority places a high priority on working closely with Rainforest Aboriginal peoples, and respects their traditional lore and cultural knowledge, rights, interests and aspirations towards best practice management of the World Heritage Area. While Native Title claims have been resolved over a large proportion of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, Rainforest Aboriginal people have yet to derive demonstrable economic value from the World Heritage listing of their traditional lands.

The Board supports the meaningful involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples in the management of their traditional lands, through economic participation and access to country. During 2016-17, the Authority provided financial and on-ground support through a devolved grants program as well as assisting negotiations for tourism investment. I am pleased with these initiatives as a catalyst towards greater economic participation and the Authority will continue to work with relevant State and Commonwealth agencies to enhance Indigenous governance and increase the number of Indigenous Ranger programs and employment opportunities in the region.

The Board also approved a refreshed Rainforest Aboriginal regional engagement framework which the Authority has begun refining in keeping with Aboriginal governance aspirations. The Authority is working with Terrain NRM and other partners to review and refocus the Authority's own engagement with, and services for, Traditional Owners. The Authority is also focusing on partnership projects with Traditional Owner communities developing capacity in land management, cultural tourism and research.

Establishment of Committees

Two statutory committees, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and Community Consultative Committee (CCC), were re-established in November 2016 for three-year terms. These Committees provide valuable independent, multidisciplinary advice to the Board and the Authority across community and scientific interests. Under refreshed terms of reference, the Board sought to ensure that traditional bio-cultural knowledge was considered alongside western sciences in informing the work of the Board and the Authority. The Board also saw the benefits and efficiencies in appointing directors Anne Clark (CCC) and Professor Iain Gordon (SAC) to chair the committees, to provide confidence that the committees' views are considered by the Board and reported back to the committees.

Presenting the Wet Tropics through Tourism

Tourism remains a strong focal point as a principal conduit for presenting the Area's Outstanding Universal Value and as a generator of economic activity and jobs for the region. The Authority continues to work with organisations, industry representative bodies, and local and state governments to develop innovative interpretative resources that ensure tourists, visitors and the local community gain the most from their experiences in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

The Authority continues to make a strong contribution to support World Heritage presentation by encouraging, strengthening and engaging with the nature-based tourism industry.

The role of visitor information centres, tour guides and volunteers is critical to the success of connecting visitors to the World Heritage Area, its value and environmental experience. To identify new ways and means of delivering high standards of presenting World Heritage values and its work with partners, the Authority commenced work on a refreshed *Presentation Strategy*. This work is expected to continue over the foreseeable future to ensure strong partnerships, improved branding, consistent messaging, and the ability to respond to visitor expectations.

The Authority's Tour Guide Program, developed and delivered in partnership with industry association Savannah Guides, ensures World Heritage tour guides are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to deliver world-class World Heritage interpretive experiences. This training and the associated workshops have strong support within the industry and the Authority is particularly enthusiastic at the significant interest shown by Rainforest Aboriginal tour guides.

The Authority has built a strong relationship with Tropical Tourism North Queensland (TTNQ) and increasingly ensures positive collaboration between industry, operators, government agencies and local communities towards developing new tourism products and

opportunities to sustainably showcase the World Heritage Area. A current focus is a shared approach to exploring creative resourcing opportunities to support new infrastructure, enhance interpretive tools, and generate jobs—especially for Rainforest Aboriginal people.

Yellow Crazy Ants

Other vital work includes the continuation of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program in and around the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Authority was able to ramp up the program with a commitment of over \$10.5 million in funding from the State and Commonwealth governments over the next three years. These increased resources have enabled the team to better treat and identify infestations in the region. A more intensive program of treatment is now showing strong results, in conjunction with a strong community education program and a comprehensive research program with James Cook University. I would like to personally acknowledge the significant contribution of the community in advocating for and advancing this vital program to eradicate this significant threat to both World Heritage values and whole of community wellbeing.

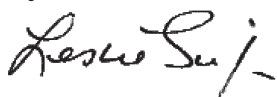
Towards the Future

While I am extremely proud of our achievements to date, I am equally excited by what the Wet Tropics Management Authority will continue to deliver in the coming 12 months.

Achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Convention in the Wet Tropics would be impossible without the support and collaboration of a huge network of partners in community, industry and government.

As always, I am inspired by the fantastic, tireless work our staff do out there amongst the community. On behalf of the Board, I thank the outstanding Executive Director, Scott Buchanan, the highly professional Authority staff, and the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Community Consultative Committee for their efforts, dedication, and passion in advancing the management of this exceptional World Heritage Area.

My sincerest thanks.



Leslie Shirreffs PSM

Chair

Our Organisation

World Heritage and National Heritage Listing

The World Heritage List includes 1,073 properties which the World Heritage Committee considers to have Outstanding Universal Value. These include 832 cultural heritage, 206 natural heritage and 31 mixed heritage properties.

As of 30 June 2017, 167 State Parties ratified the World Heritage Convention. Australia became a signatory in 1974 and at 30 June 2017 there were 19 Australian properties on the World Heritage List. World Heritage listing is recognition by the international community that a place is such an outstanding example of the world's natural or cultural heritage that its conservation is of value to all people.

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) has outstanding natural values, meeting all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing and fulfilling the necessary conditions of integrity¹. In 2007, the Area was listed on Australia's National Heritage List for its natural values and in 2012 the national Indigenous heritage values were included as part of the existing National Heritage listing for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area². The Rainforest Aboriginal people of the Wet Tropics of Queensland have lived continuously in the rainforest environment for at least 5,000 years, and this is the only place in Australia where Aboriginal people have permanently inhabited a tropical rainforest environment.

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

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

Administration of the Act

Enabling legislation

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage 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 to future generations of the World Heritage Area.

The Queensland Act establishes the Wet Tropics Management Authority and provides the legal basis for the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* (the Plan) that regulates land use activities in the Area through a zoning and permit system. The *Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Management Scheme* is an intergovernmental agreement signed by the Prime Minister of Australia and the Premier of Queensland in 1990. It sets out broad structural and funding arrangements for the management of the Area. The agreement is incorporated as Schedule 1 to the Queensland Act and given effect by section 3 of the Commonwealth Act. An amended version of the intergovernmental agreement was adopted in 2011.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority

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 World Heritage Area. The Authority is a body corporate, with statutory powers defined under the Queensland Act. The Authority's functions, as defined under section 10 of the Queensland Act, are to:

- ~ develop and implement policies and programs for management of the Area
- ~ formulate performance indicators for the implementation of approved policies and programs
- ~ advise and make recommendations to the Minister and the Ministerial Council
- ~ prepare and implement management plans for the Area
- ~ administer funding arrangements

- ~ 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
- ~ liaise with the Australian and Queensland governments, agencies and international organisations
- ~ monitor the state of the Area
- ~ advise and report to the Minister and the Ministerial Council on the state of the Area.

Subject to performing its functions in a way which is consistent with the protection of the natural heritage values of the Area, the Authority must, as far as practicable, also perform its functions in a way that is consistent with the objectives and principles of the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment.

Our contribution to government objectives

The Authority's mission is to 'lead, inspire, advise and support the Australian and global community to protect and share the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in perpetuity'.

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

Statutory reporting obligations

Each year the Wet Tropics Management Authority prepares a report on the financial statements and administration of the Act, and a report on the state of the Area, as required under section 63 of the Queensland Act and section 10 of the Commonwealth Act.

Management structure

The intergovernmental agreement includes the establishment of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum consisting of Commonwealth and State Ministers with environment portfolio responsibilities. Its function is to coordinate policy and funding for the Area. The agreement recognises that both the Australian Government and Queensland Government have joint interests in and responsibilities for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.

A Board of Directors is set up under the Queensland Act and consists of seven Directors, six of whom serve in a part-time capacity.

Two Directors are nominated by the Australian Government and two by the Queensland Government. The Chair and a designated Aboriginal Director are nominated by the Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum. The Executive Director of the Authority is a non-voting Board Director. The Board's key function is to implement programs to meet Australia's international obligations for the Area under the World Heritage Convention.

The Authority operates as an administrative unit within the Queensland Government's Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. As part of the Queensland public sector, the Authority is subject to public sector legislation, regulations, standards and guidelines governing administrative functions and arrangements. The Director-General of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection 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 State Government administrative and financial standards.

Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum

As at 30 June 2017 the Ministerial Forum comprised:

- ~ The Hon Dr Steven Miles MP, Queensland Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef (Chair)
- ~ The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Australian Minister for the Environment and Energy.

Statutory Committees

The Authority has two statutory advisory committees appointed by the Board under section 40 (1) of the Queensland Act. These committees advise the Authority on programs and research for the management of the Area. They are the Community Consultative Committee and the Scientific Advisory Committee. These committees generally meet prior to Board meetings and advise the Authority on programs and research for the management of the Area. The Board has appointed a Director to chair each committee, thus providing a direct line of communication between the committees and the Authority.

2013-2018 Strategic Goals

The Wet Tropics Management Authority Strategic Plan sets out the Authority's directions from 2013- 2018. The Strategic Plan outlines how the Authority will achieve its goals. These include protection of heritage values, community appreciation of the World Heritage Area, active participation of Rainforest Aboriginal people and a positive working relationship with the Queensland and Australian governments.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is organised around seven strategic goals as follows:

- 1 The Outstanding Universal Value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is protected and maintained consistent with Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention.
- 2 Communities derive benefit and value from the World Heritage Area, are effectively involved in planning and management, and their stewardship of the World Heritage Area is recognised and supported.
- 3 Rainforest Aboriginal people are supported in expressing their knowledge, culture and management practices on country.
- 4 The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is used, enjoyed and celebrated as the world's finest learning landscape for tropical rainforest and its sustainable management.
- 5 World Heritage Area values are supported and presented through sustainable tourism.
- 6 Enduring partnerships enhance the integrity of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, its presentation and its function in the life of the community.
- 7 The Wet Tropics Management Authority is an accountable and capable organisation.

The Outstanding Universal Value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is protected and maintained consistent with Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is established under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* to ensure Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention is met in relation to the Wet Tropics. Protecting and managing the Outstanding Universal Value of the Area lies at the heart of the Authority's governance and management regime.

Achievement highlights for 2016-17 include:

- ~ ramping up of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program with a commitment of over \$10.5 million in funding from the Commonwealth and State governments over the next three years
- ~ commenced the 10-yearly review of the statutory Wet Tropics Management Plan, including support for meaningful engagement with Rainforest Aboriginal people, and the tourism and regional conservation sectors. The team provided targeted information and consultation sessions to 19 Aboriginal organisations, 1,335 stakeholders and 1,857 Wet Tropics landholders and neighbours. Website traffic recorded 1,641 views with 1,368 unique visitors and 718 users over the 59-day consultation period.

Administration of the Wet Tropics Management Plan

The Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 (the Plan) regulates land use activities in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) which have the potential to impact on the integrity of the Area. It includes criteria for the assessment of permit applications for construction and maintenance of roads, powerlines, water supplies and communication facilities. The Authority also develops policies and guidelines about how best to manage the use of the Area. Codes of practice and environmental management plans are often included as part of permit conditions.

The Authority strengthened its partnerships with community service infrastructure providers and Commonwealth, State and local agencies throughout 2016-17. Officers provided pre-lodgment advice on over 20 matters, and assessed and issued five new permits under the Plan. As a component of administering the Plan, Authority staff regularly liaise with contractors and officers responsible for the planning, building and maintenance of community services infrastructure inside and adjacent to the World Heritage Area. As part of this liaison, the Authority provides advice on actions that could be taken to avoid or mitigate impacts on the Area.

In 2016-17, Authority staff audited and advised a number of agencies or organisations undertaking activities in the World Heritage Area under existing permits. Staff provided pre-lodgment advice to a number of State and local government agencies, community service infrastructure service providers and Aboriginal organisations; provided training to local councils on infrastructure maintenance, and issued five new permits under the Plan (Appendix 3).

Review of the operation of the Wet Tropics Management Plan

Under section 53 of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, the Authority is required to review the operation of the Plan every 10 years. The Queensland Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, the Hon Dr Steven Miles MP, as Chair of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum, approved the Authority commencing its review on 29 April 2016. Under section 42 of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, the Authority must give public notice that it proposes to commence a review of the Plan and invite submissions.

This notice was given on 2 May 2017 with the closing date for receiving submissions being 30 June 2017. The Authority provided information booklets and online information about suggested amendments to the Plan and zoning maps inviting submissions on these suggestions.

As at 30 June 2017, the Authority received 74 submissions and commenced a consultative review of the statutory *Wet Tropics Management Plan*. The team provided targeted information and consultation sessions to 19 Aboriginal organisations, 1,335 stakeholders and 1857 Wet Tropics landholders and neighbours. Website traffic recorded 1,641 views with 1,368 unique visitors and 718 users over the 59-day consultation period.

The Authority established a Plan review inter-departmental committee to assist in guiding the Plan review process and to discuss any potential implications of proposed amendments with key government agencies. The Authority also engaged contractors to assist Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate, the nature-based tourism industry and the conservation sector to prepare consolidated submissions for this first phase of public consultation about the Plan review.

Natural Heritage Conservation

Ecological connectivity is important for the long-term health of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Authority worked with land managers and the community to develop a range of priority corridors to restore ecological connectivity between the numerous sections of the World Heritage Area and other rainforest outliers. The restoration of these corridors will help to address the impacts of climate change, ecological fragmentation, invasive pests, and changes in fire and water regimes.

The Authority also made a submission to the Office of the Coordinator-General regarding the draft terms of reference for an environmental impact assessment regarding the proposed Kur-World Integrated Eco-Resort project, Kuranda. The submission included advice regarding World Heritage connectivity considerations.

Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program

The Authority has been successful in increasing its operational capacity in an effort to eradicate yellow crazy ants (YCA) from within and adjacent to the World Heritage Area. This is as a result of increased funding from the Commonwealth and State and governments.

Progress on surveillance, monitoring, delimitation and treatment activities increased considerably, making this period the most productive for on-ground activities and the most significant for revealing ant activity throughout the infestation area. Significant gains were made in surveying and mapping ant activity. The Authority collected data on patterns of distribution and insight to human-assisted YCA spread, which in turn presented opportunities to focus engagement activities, treatment, monitoring and research as necessary.

Three treatment rounds were conducted during the 2016-17 year. Treatment areas included riparian vegetation and adjoining creek systems, dry creek beds, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, adjoining forested areas, adjoining sugar cane farms and residential development areas.

Ant activity appears to have dropped significantly in residential areas adjoining riparian vegetation which may be a direct result of effective treatment in dry creek systems. Expanded delimitation showed significantly less activity in some residential areas this year compared to previous years.

Results indicate that the Program is having a significant impact on reducing YCA activity levels and distribution across the majority of the infestation area.

Community members contributed to delivering program outcomes in a number of capacities including treatment, surveillance, delimitation, raising community awareness, promoting good will and identifying new areas of infestation.

The Authority has funded the Traditional Owners, the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji, to partner on YCA eradication. Gimuy Rangers have gained skills in surveillance and treatment activities, whilst sharing their culture and knowledge of country with Authority staff. Through Kuranda Envirocare, 12 Bulmba Rangers participated in on-ground works at the Russett Park infestation, expanding the social, cultural, and professional network of participants managing YCA within the region.

Threatened species

The Authority chairs and provides secretariat support for the Cassowary Recovery Team, which oversees the implementation of the Recovery Plan for the endangered southern cassowary under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Membership includes a broad range of government agencies, organisations, and individuals who are working for cassowary conservation throughout the Wet Tropics.

The Authority also works with land managers, researchers and community groups on a range of other threatened species, primarily through the Australian Quoll Conservancy and the recovery teams for the northern bettong and Mabi forest.

The Authority collaborated with Terrain NRM and Cape York NRM in proposing strategic action and plans for cassowary projects under the Australian Government's Threatened Species Prospectus.

Climate resilience planning

Resilience planning to conserve the integrity of the Wet Tropics is a priority for the Board this term, and a key focus of the Scientific Advisory Committee.

Whilst the Authority cannot address the overall issue of climate change, it can take steps to improve the resilience of the World Heritage values through a range of actions and collaborations with other organisations. To this extent, the Authority will work towards a compact with other organisations (such as local governments and the Department of National Parks, Sport and Recreation) to focus collaborative efforts on resilience actions such as improving connectivity; feral plant and animal control; and transition pathways for species.

Communities derive benefit and value from the World Heritage Area, are effectively involved in planning and management and their stewardship of the World Heritage Area is recognised and supported

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is a valued global asset that provides benefits to the local, national and international community. As well as being an iconic natural environmental experience the Area has an economic value of more than \$5.2 billion annually³. The Authority is an active member of the Far North Queensland community, supporting and engaging groups and individuals to actively participate in enhancing and presenting the natural and cultural values of the Area. Landholders, neighbours and Rainforest Aboriginal people of the Area play an important role in monitoring threats and are valuable partners to management agencies.

Achievement highlights for 2016-17 include:

- ~ hosting the 15th Annual Cassowary Awards
- ~ organising and participating in exciting regional events, carnivals and exhibitions across the region including to promote World Heritage values to the broader community

Working with the Wet Tropics community

As part of its commitment to the community, the Authority participates in and organises community events to promote the World Heritage values. At community events, the Authority engages with a variety of audiences to provide valuable information, answer queries and promote activities and projects being undertaken across the Area. Some of the events for 2016-17 include:

- ~ Gimuy Fish and Food Festival 17 July 2016
- ~ Cairns Regional Council's Carnival-on-Collins (4 September 2016
- ~ World Cassowary Day 24 September 2016
- ~ Wallaby Creek Festival 30 September – 2 October 2016
- ~ Cairns Ecofiesta 28 May 2017
- ~ Cairns Home Show and Caravan, Camping and Boating Expo 13–15 May 2017
- ~ 100 Years of Cairns High School 25 May 2017
- ~ 20 Years of Malanda Visitors Centre 17 June 2017

In addition to this, the Authority invites the community to a number of events that highlight the values of the World Heritage Area in informative and engaging ways. In 2016-17 this included a 'Wet Tropics Wild Talks' series, a 'Science in the Pub' event and an Eco -Art competition for school-aged children.

Wild Talks

Wet Tropics Wild Talks is a series of events scheduled in partnership with the Cairns Regional Council to bring the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area into the hearts and minds of the community. The talks are designed to encourage discovery and enjoyment of the outstanding and unique qualities of the region.

The *Wildlife Under the Canopy* Wild Talk featuring cassowaries was held at the Cairns Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre on 13 August. Attended by almost 60 people, the series featured Girringun Aboriginal Corporation's video on cassowaries—*No Wabu No Wuju No Gunduy*—a discussion of cassowaries across the ages and the science of cassowaries.

In October 2016, the Authority hosted the third series of *Wildlife Under the Canopy*. Focusing on some of the threats to the World Heritage Area hidden under the canopy, presentations were made on the impacts of yellow crazy ants; the endangered Kuranda tree frog and the use of detector dogs for conservation. This popular session had over 60 people in attendance.

Science in the Pub

Emanating from its World Heritage family project, the Authority demonstrated the linkages between the Wet Tropics and the Riversleigh World Heritage Areas to a wider public by holding 'Science in the Pub' at the Cape York Hotel, Cairns, on 13 March. Famed paleontologist Professor Mike Archer and Wet Tropics Director, Professor Iain Gordon captivated an audience of over 160 people by weaving the story of the interconnectedness of the fossils of Riversleigh and the wildlife of the Wet Tropics.

Keep it Wild Eco-Art Competition

The Keep it Wild Eco-Art competition is a way to encourage school aged children to engage more fully with the Wet Tropics and learn about reducing our footprint on the environment. More than 140 school students throughout Far North Queensland entered the 2017 *Keep it Wild* competition. Applying and interpreting the theme '*Living Lightly*', students were tasked with creating a three-dimensional sculpture demonstrating how they think we can live lightly with less impact. Winners were announced in a ceremony attended by more than 100 proud students, parents, grandparents and teachers at the Cairns Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre on 23 June 2017. To present the Eco-Art competition, the Authority successfully partnered with

Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, Cairns Regional Council and Cairns Sunset and Harbour Cruises.

Winning entries and a selection of other artworks were displayed at the Cairns Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre between 19 June and 24 July 2017.

2016 Cassowary Awards

As a means of celebrating and supporting the outstanding contributions made towards the conservation and presentation of the World Heritage Area, the Authority founded the Cassowary Awards in 1999. The 2016 Awards ceremony was attended by approximately 200 community members, partners, politicians, scientists and students. The 2016 awardees were:

- ~ Kuranda Envirocare - Conservation and Rehabilitation – Thorsborne Award for Community Conservation
- ~ Malanda Falls Visitors Centre - Tourism and Presentation
- ~ Australian Quoll Conservancy - Innovation
- ~ Dr Miriam Goosem - Education
- ~ Jabalbina Ranger Program - Rainforest Aboriginal People – Our Country
- ~ Peter Rowles - Community Champions
- ~ Douglas Shire Council – planning framework - Local Government
- ~ James Cook University Sustainability Club - Young Cassowary Award

In addition, a special 'Chair's Award' was given to Ron and Pam Birkett, previous owners of the Daintree Discovery Centre, in recognition of their contribution to the World Heritage Area spanning almost 30 years.

Communications

Wet Tropics Management Authority Website

The Authority's website underwent a complete refurbishment to 'freshen' up the look and feel of the business of the Authority and the World Heritage Area. All pages within the website have been updated and provide a platform for the public to access current and accurate information on the Authority's projects, news and events, Board, World Heritage Area information and Rainforest Aboriginal people activities.

News and media

A priority of the Authority is to maintain its media presence to raise awareness of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and its management and protection.

A prioritised events program throughout the year ensures the Authority can reach the broader community effectively and efficiently. Opportunities are taken to collaborate with relevant government departments such as Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, to share event space that allows the Authority to showcase the management of the World Heritage Area. Upcoming events are promoted on the website homepage within the news and media section and are subsequently followed up after the event with a summary and images. Social media is playing a more important part in the broadcasting of information and upcoming events to the public.

The Authority initiated multiple opportunities to discuss topical issues on radio throughout the year, including the Cassowary Awards, cassowaries, and yellow crazy ants.

The Wet Tropics quarterly eNews features the Authority's activities as well as activities of stakeholders who assist in the management and conservation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. This eNews is one way the Wet Tropics community and national and international subscribers are kept abreast of events in the region.

Social media

The Authority currently operates three Facebook pages: The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, Wet Tropics Tour Guides and the Yellow Crazy Ant information group. A pro-active approach is taken to ensure each page is updated regularly to keep the community engaged and aware on current issues, trends and themes that pertain to conservation, environment and World Heritage.

Since its inception in June 2011, the Authority's Facebook engagement has grown steadily. To date, the Wet Tropics World Heritage page has up to 2,415 page likes. The Wet Tropics Yellow Crazy Ant information group (public group) has 215 members and the Wet Tropics Tour Guide page has 141 members.

An analysis of the audience who 'like' the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area on Facebook shows us that most are from Australia (predominately Cairns region) followed by the USA, India, and the UK.

Rainforest Aboriginal people are supported in expressing their knowledge, culture and management practices on country

Rainforest Aboriginal people have lived in the rainforests of the Wet Tropics region for many thousands of years. Before European settlement, the Wet Tropics rainforests were some of the most populated areas of Australia, and the only area where Australian Aboriginal people lived permanently in the rainforest.

The Authority acknowledges the Area is a significant living cultural landscape. Empowering Rainforest Aboriginal people as the traditional land owners is essential to the long term sustainability and integrity of the Area.

Achievement highlights for 2016-17 include:

- ~ the Authority invested \$50,000 in Aboriginal organisations to support traditional and cultural land management
- ~ collaborative partnerships to promote people, country and culture in the Wet Tropics.

Rainforest Aboriginal Strategic Engagement Framework 2016-2018

In 2016 the Authority developed a partnership approach to improve the way the Authority engages, in order to involve Rainforest Aboriginal people in World Heritage management. The framework directly connects to the key themes and recommendations of the "Which Way Our Cultural Survival" report (1998), the "Regional Agreement" (2005) and more recent planning processes. The principles guiding the Authority's engagement with Rainforest Aboriginal people include:

- ~ being a culturally responsible lead agency in collaboration with Rainforest Aboriginal people and the broader network, to ensure accountability to its commitments
- ~ improving methods by moving towards a better understanding of 'good practice' and strengthening enabling conditions for a rights-based approach to World Heritage conservation
- ~ empowering Rainforest Aboriginal people to progress their agendas on their terms.

The Authority's engagement approach respects present organisations and enterprises and their particular concern for the Area.

Collective aspirations in NRM and World Heritage in the Wet Tropics

In August 2016, the Boards of Terrain NRM and the Authority endorsed a partnership model to guide the Authority's refreshed and supported

approach with Rainforest Aboriginal people and their organisations. The model recognises the critical importance of equal participation of Rainforest Aboriginal people and their organisations, the Authority and Terrain NRM to achieve the agreed outcomes.

The foundations of this partnership model were developed in consultation with a number of Rainforest Aboriginal people with a range of knowledge and experience in World Heritage and NRM. They advised on appropriate methods to engage with and support Rainforest Aboriginal people in the pursuit of their interests and aspirations in relation to knowledge, culture and management practice in the Wet Tropics.

"WHICH WAY OUR CULTURAL SURVIVAL" REVIEW

MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES IN WORLD HERITAGE, RECOGNITIONS OF CULTURAL VALUES

PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT

BROKER SUPPORT FOR ACTIVITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON-COUNTRY PARTNERSHIPS

FACILITATE OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR WORKING ON COUNTRY

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

SUPPORT CROSS-LEARNING EVENTS

MENTORING PROGRAM

GROUP-TO-GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIP

TELLING THE STORY

COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTION

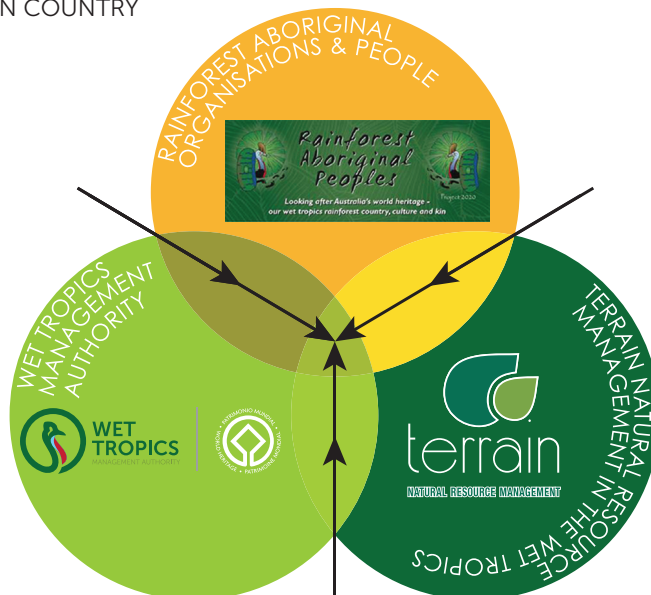


Figure 1. Partnership Model

A clear example of this collaborative approach has been the delivery of the Rainforest Aboriginal News and an annual *People Country Culture* calendar. Both are communication products from the Authority and Terrain NRM celebrating the contemporary role Rainforest Aboriginal people play in the management of the Area.

Respecting Native Title rights and interests

Rainforest Aboriginal people have a long history of advocating for their rights and interests in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Native Title and other Rainforest Aboriginal land interests cover 87.5% of the Area. Seventeen Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (RNTBCs) and approximately 109 registered Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) currently operate in the Area.

The Authority plays an important role in promoting the Native Title rights and interests of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the Area through management partnerships across diverse tenures. This includes continuing to support these rights and interests through:

- ~ ILUA arrangements with RNTBCs
- ~ Memorandums of Understanding for Indigenous Protected Areas
- ~ permit processes under the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*
- ~ a Partnership Agreement with the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing.

The Authority respects and works closely with a broad range of Aboriginal organisations and networks across the Area representing local, sub-regional, and regional interests.

Fulfilling land management responsibilities

The Authority has an ongoing commitment to ensure meaningful involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the management of the Area. During the reporting period, the Authority invested \$50,000 in five Aboriginal organisations to support the following projects:

- ~ Dawul Wuru Aboriginal Corporation – Capacity Building and Planning Project
- ~ Choorechillum (Ngadjon-Jii PBC) Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC – Maintenance of Country Project
- ~ Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji RNTBC – Signage Project
- ~ Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC – Cultural Heritage Mapping and Maintenance of Country Project
- ~ Wadjanbarra Tableland Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC – Cultural Heritage and Protection Project.

The Authority also supported three land and sea management workshops for Rainforest Aboriginal people including the first ever Indigenous Ranger Workshop for the Wet Tropics, initiated by Girringun Aboriginal Corporation.

Subsequent workshops have included the Jalbu Jalbu (women) land

and sea management workshop held on Kuku Yalanji Country and hosted by Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation. This event in itself was significant as another first-time event, with more than 30 Indigenous women from across the Wet Tropics coming together over three days in March to coincide with International Women's Day. Key topics for discussion included issues such as greater participation for women in caring for country, and women's rights and responsibilities in the workplace. This workshop had strong support from women across private and public sector agencies such as Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Biosecurity Queensland and Mossman Gorge Visitor Centre.

Formally recognising cultural heritage values

The World Heritage Convention encourages the integration of cultural and natural heritage protection into regional planning to ensure that World Heritage continues to have a function in the day-to-day life of the community.

The Authority is currently considering best practice approaches to the management of natural and cultural values and has adopted a free, prior and informed consent process of engagement of Rainforest Aboriginal people as part of the review of the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*.

The Authority met with 25 Rainforest Aboriginal PBCs, RNTBCs and registered native title applicant groups, representative organisations, and Traditional Owner Boards to meaningfully engage in the review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan. This standard of engagement will continue throughout the Plan review process with an aim to consider the aspirations of Rainforest Aboriginal people and develop a Plan to enable economic development and sustainable livelihood opportunities, and support on-country management activities.

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is used, enjoyed and celebrated as the world's finest learning landscape for tropical rainforest and its sustainable management

Accumulated knowledge about the values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area represents a major asset for the protection and management of the Area. Further capitalising on this knowledge can contribute to the future management of the Wet Tropics and to other natural landscapes.

The Authority recognises that scientific research plays a critical role in providing the knowledge for evidence-based informed decision-making and for the community to understand and appreciate the importance of the Area. The Authority seeks to support continued research, build on the legacy of past research investment, and ensure knowledge generated in the Wet Tropics is accessible to rainforest and protected area managers elsewhere.

The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Area, together with the favourable research environment found within the region, provides great opportunities for collaborative research across a range of disciplines such as ecology, climatology, tourism, sociology and economics based on tropical ecosystems.

Some of the key highlights for 2016-17 include:

- ~ directing the Authority's research investment to priority issues relevant to the management and policy needs of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
- ~ presenting and communicating research findings that maximise uptake and impact for management and policy
- ~ growing public awareness in the World Heritage Family project

World Heritage Family project

There are obvious evolutionary, geological, biogeographical, zoological and botanical links between the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and several other Australian World Heritage areas. The Authority has developed a collection of stories detailing the common evolutionary lineages across Queensland's World Heritage properties as well as some of Australia's other World Heritage properties. The stories highlight the OUV of the Wet Tropics and how this relates to a wider World Heritage family.

Queensland and Australia's World Heritage properties are like a family. Despite their many differences, they share a common heritage. These ancestral connections can be subtle, but the World Heritage properties share an ancient geological and evolutionary history that underlies their OUV. Taking this strategy gives the Authority a new and interesting

way of telling stories; highlighting and enriching the Wet Tropic's OUV message.

The World Heritage family has piqued the interest of other property managers who have sought opportunities to collaborate on the storytelling. Further, the story has been warmly welcomed by the tourism and education sectors. This has resulted in Skyrail and Daintree Discovery Centre utilising components of the story for their own marketing, and a town hall discussion in Mt Isa to engender greater understanding of world heritage value to tourism operators and local schools.

Student Research Grant Scheme

Through its Student Research Grant Scheme, the Authority seeks to encourage and support post-graduate research that builds on the legacy of past research investment in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and to ensure that knowledge generated in the Wet Tropics is accessible to rainforest and protected area managers elsewhere.

In its sixth year offering competitive small grants to Australian post-graduate students, The Authority funds up to \$4,000 for PhD and Masters research projects and up to \$1,500 for Honours projects. These 12-month grants supported costs associated with field work, purchase of equipment, field data collection, laboratory research and analysis of data.

The Authority received many well-conceived projects, that demonstrated scientific rigour and innovation. Sixteen successful post-graduate students from five Australian universities received grants.

- ~ Michael Bradley, TropWATER, Estuaries and Coastal Wetland Ecology research group - Identifying critical fish habitat in the Wet Tropics: threatened nursery components
- ~ Dylan Case, James Cook University - The impact of yellow crazy ants on key invertebrates, skinks and frogs of the Wet Tropics
- ~ Aik Ting Gladys Chau, James Cook University - Determining the drivers of mangrove forest dynamics in Daintree National Park
- ~ Sieara Claytor, James Cook University - Controlling chytridiomycosis: characterising virulence factors from the frog-killing fungus
- ~ Anita Freudmann, QLD University of Technology - Foraging ecology and behaviour of eastern tube-nosed bats (*Nyctimene robinsoni*)
- ~ Claire Gely, Griffith University - How will increased drought affect herbivory-based insect communities in Australian tropical rainforests?

- ~ Melinda Greenfield, James Cook University - Interactions among fungi, ants, and the ant-plant *Myrmecodia beccarii*
- ~ Kristal Kinnane, James Cook University - Oxygen isotope ($\delta^{18}\text{O}$) composition of leaves and wood in rainforest plants grown under varying environmental conditions
- ~ Rebecca Pearce, Charles Darwin University and Northern Futures Alliance - Enhancing the health of the governance system driving ecosystem service markets in northern Australia
- ~ Hemchandranauth Sambhu, James Cook University - Evaluating butterfly conservation status in the Wet Tropics bioregion of Queensland, Australia.
- ~ Rankin Salina, James Cook University - Effects of the presence of a queen on the foraging behaviour of the invasive yellow crazy ant, *Anoplolepis gracilipes*
- ~ Rismita Sari, James Cook University - Analysis of the variation of Australian *Garcinia* using diversity array technology
- ~ Stephanie Todd, James Cook University - Camera trap occupancy modelling and population estimation of the endangered northern bettong (*Bettongia tropica*) in the Lamb Range
- ~ Adriana Uzqueda, James Cook University - Conservation of the spotted-tailed quoll across the Wet Tropics mountaintops
- ~ Citty Williams, RMIT University - Nganaga Ngamunka, The climate memory
- ~ Nicolas Young-Cardenas, James Cook University - Trend series analysis of mangrove forests in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Cairns to Innisfail) region, Australia, using all available Landsat imagery.

Wet Tropics Learning Landscape eBulletin

The 2016-17 edition of the Learning Landscape eBulletin was produced and released on-line. In producing this research eBulletin, the Authority aims to establish the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as an important centre for research synthesis and to establish the Authority as a recognised knowledge broker with respect to World Heritage management and tropical natural heritage management. The purpose of the research e-bulletins is to promote science for management; help identify management issues and scientific solutions; emphasise application and relevance of research; and translate, interpret, synthesise and convey research findings to better inform decision making.

The Authority distributed the research e-Bulletin to over 1,000 individuals, Commonwealth, State and local government bodies,

managers of other Australian World Heritage properties, research organisations, conservation organisations and Indigenous organisations. Readership of the Learning Landscapes eBulletin extends into 12 countries.

The June edition reported on research findings from work conducted in the Area by six students who successfully applied for and received student grants from the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

Tropical Rainforest Plant identification

In a partnership with the Australian Tropical Herbarium (ATH), the Authority developed and delivered a series of plant identification workshops that provided hands-on training to teach and develop skills in identifying the flora of the Wet Tropics. Two rainforest plant identification courses were run during the year at the Daintree Rainforest Observatory and at Paluma. The workshops introduced participants to the skills and resources needed for rainforest plant identification, taught the use of interactive plant identification keys and improved participants' understanding of identification, distribution, and ecology of Wet Tropics native and invasive plant species.

The workshops were based on the Interactive Key to Australian Tropical Rain Forest Plants which is the largest interactive key in the world and covers 10% of the Australian vascular flora (over 2,530 species). While targeting land managers in the World Heritage Area, the workshops were also open to the public.

World Heritage Area values are supported and presented through sustainable tourism

The tourism industry is a key partner for visitors and the wider community to understand and appreciate the World Heritage Area. The Authority's tourism projects enable the tourism industry to present World Heritage Area values, foster appreciation of the Area's special values, and ensure the economic and community benefits of tourism. Quality tourism experiences ensure that tourism makes a sustainable contribution to the regional economy.

Some of the key highlights for 2016-17 include:

- ~ development of a draft Presentation Strategy that provides a framework and focus for future tourism projects
- ~ a review of the Wet Tropics Tour Guide program to address growing demand and interest in the program
- ~ maintained the Authority's strong relationship with the tourism industry and fostered closer collaboration with media.

Presentation Strategy

In an effort to position the Wet Tropics as a key destination and to communicate its' exceptional values, the Authority is refreshing its approach to presentation through a new, collaborative Presentation Strategy. The strategy aims to encourage visitor dispersal throughout the whole of the Wet Tropics.

The strategy sets out a framework for a partnership approach to achieve best practice World Heritage presentation. The Authority will maintain and strengthen collaborative partnerships to improve the quality and depth of work undertaken to present the Area. This will include collaborative development of branding, shared storytelling and quality interpretation; as well as providing and supporting the training and capacity development of people who work in tourism and presentation.

The action areas from the strategy will be supported by a commitment to working in close partnership and collaboration with our key stakeholders and partners including the tourism industry, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Rainforest Aboriginal people, local government, and the wider community. The Authority is working with the tourism industry to ensure consistent branding of the World Heritage rainforests.

The Wet Tropics Tour Guide program

The Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program aims to raise skills and knowledge on World Heritage in the tourism industry to ensure high standards of interpretation and presentation of World Heritage values. Staff who attend guide school and training workshops under the program become certified Wet Tropics Tour Guides and ambassadors of the World Heritage Area. The program seeks to support Rainforest Aboriginal communities presenting culture and land to visitors at a time of increasing interest in establishing Aboriginal tourism ventures. The Authority conducted a review of the Tour Guide program in 2017.

The review process explored opportunities to broaden the approach and to strengthen pathways to certification. The recommendations will be put into action in 2017-18.

The Wet Tropics Field School, held in Malanda, was well received and helped to attract a new cohort of participants. Approximately 15 Aboriginal people participated in the schools, with a cohort of Land and Sea Rangers based in Hopevale. The schools continue to focus on being broadly accessible and culturally appropriate.

Tourism networks

The Authority maintained its strong relationship with the tourism industry and closer collaboration with media. Journalists, bloggers and travel writers were referred to Authority staff to guide and interpret the landscape. This led to a number of new articles about the Wet Tropics and its special values. The Australian Geographic, Jetstar in-flight magazine, and Queensland.com blog all featured extensive coverage and focus on the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

The Authority's focus of bringing conservation and tourism together remains central. It continues to collaborate with Ecotourism Australia through the Nature Tourism Alliance, with Savannah Guides as key partners in World Heritage presentation, and in delivering the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program. Bringing the Tour Guide Program under the umbrella of Ecotourism Australia has aligned it with Ecotourism Australia's national Eco Guide framework. The Authority continues to cooperate and partner with the Cairns Aquarium, Daintree Discovery Centre, and Douglas Shire's gateway project to promote World Heritage presentation.

Support for Rainforest Aboriginal tourism

The Authority has been working with the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP) to consolidate mentoring and support for emerging Aboriginal Tourism products. This work has focused on supporting presentation and storytelling skills. Another focus has been on developing partnerships and identifying potential investment and mentoring partners including Indigenous Business Australia, Indigenous Land Corporation, the Department of Education and Training and the Aboriginal Development Trust Board (the new owners of the Daintree Discovery Centre).

A key activity was the organisation and conduct of a tourism showcase of emerging Aboriginal products on the Atherton Tablelands. Investors and mentoring partners were introduced to three local Aboriginal tourism products and given the opportunity to workshop and contribute to constructive lines of feedback and support. The collaborative efforts resulted in new opportunities to develop capacity building, training and mentoring linked to the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Program, including scheduling an on-country Wet Tropics field school and provision for more tailored on-country training and workshops and support.

Enduring partnerships enhance the integrity of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, its presentation and its function in the life of the community

The Authority considers partnerships with other environmental agencies central to its success. As Authority is a small organisation with limited operational roles, it relies on the commitment and cooperation of its partners in government, the community and in industry to ensure that the goals of the World Heritage Convention are achieved in the Wet Tropics. Some of the Authority's most important partners are:

Land owners and managers within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Most prominent among these is the Queensland Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR), which is responsible for the national parks, conservation reserves and other lands that comprise over 85% of the World Heritage Area. Private land comprises a large proportion of the remainder of the Area, and the Authority is particularly conscious of the commitment of these owners whose land management practices benefit the entire community.

Local government. The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area intersects with 12 local government areas. Councils make a vital contribution to the Area through sensitive design and management of transport; water and other council and community services and infrastructure; sympathetic planning and regulation of development and leadership in matters such as pest control and community engagement.

State and Commonwealth environmental agencies. Numerous Commonwealth and State agencies contribute to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Prominent among these in the Queensland Government are the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection; Department of Natural Resources and Mines; Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; and Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. In the Commonwealth, the Department of Environment and Energy; Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade also play particularly important roles.

Universities, research institutions and schools. Through research and teaching, universities and schools build and communicate knowledge about the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. They play a central role in achieving the World Heritage Convention goal calling for the transmission of world heritage properties to future generations. CSIRO, James Cook University, Griffith University and others have made a vital contribution through research over many years, ensuring that the Wet Tropics is strongly positioned as one of the world's premier learning landscapes for rainforest ecology and management.

Rainforest Aboriginal people. The Rainforest Aboriginal tribes that recognise the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as their traditional country continue to have a vital interest and role in the protection and management of the landscape which lies at the centre of Rainforest Aboriginal culture.

The tourism industry. The Far North Queensland tourism industry—through this a large proportion of the regional economy—relies heavily on the globally significant natural values of the Wet Tropics rainforests. In turn, the tourism industry is a vital partner in presenting the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to millions of visitors and communicating its values.

Regional community organisations. Many community organisations in the region play an important role in supporting the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. These include Terrain NRM and Cape York NRM, the regional natural resources management bodies; numerous catchment coordination groups; regional and local scale catchment management and landcare groups; and community conservation organisations. Recreation, arts and cultural organisations are also important partners for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

The Authority's partnerships are evident in almost all elements of its work so feature in other parts of this annual report. Partnership activities that are not otherwise reported are summarised below.

Regional Managers Coordination Network

The Authority is an active participant in the Far North Queensland Regional Managers Coordination Network. This network, comprising senior public sector leaders in Commonwealth, State and local governments in the region plays an important role in supporting collaboration between government agencies by sharing information relevant to implementation of government programs.

Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing

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While the Authority is the lead agency responsible for policy, planning and the coordination of management in the Area, it is not directly responsible for on-ground management. Day-to-day management activities such as infrastructure maintenance, fire, pest and weed and pest control are the responsibility of the relevant land managers which include the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR); the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection; the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; community infrastructure service providers; and 11 local governments.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, through NPSR is responsible for the on-ground management of national parks, conservation reserves and others areas of public land that total around 85 percent of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area making it a vitally important partner for the Authority.

A partnership agreement has been developed between the Authority, NPSR and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to prioritise and coordinate management activities in the protected area estate within the World Heritage Area. The partnership agreement outlines products and services to be delivered by the QPWS under funding provided by the Queensland Government for World Heritage management.

In 2016-17, the Authority provided NPSR with \$1.8 million of Queensland State Government funding that had been appropriated for world heritage management purposes. This arrangement helps to ensure NPSR is able to address any particular priorities of the Authority in relation to the world heritage status of the Wet Tropics landscape.

Since June 2016, QPWS and the Authority's officers have liaised to further streamline, clarify and update a new Partnership Agreement (MoU), focusing on key principles and deliverables. The 2016-2019 Partnership Agreement encourages collaboration and active consultation, so as to continue to facilitate meaningful engagement between the Authority, NPSR (QPWS), and Traditional Owners.

Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee

The Authority collaborated with other Australian world heritage properties through the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (AWHAC). AWHAC advises the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment on policies, programs and appropriate cultural protocols which benefit world heritage properties in areas of common interest and on national or crosscutting issues. In addition to the opportunity to contribute to national policy for World Heritage, the Authority's participation in AWHAC helps increase capacity in the Wet Tropics and elsewhere by sharing information.

International links

As a World Heritage Area, the Wet Tropics has an international profile. The Authority was pleased to host a number of international delegations seeking to learn about the values of the World Heritage Area and its system of management. Through this, the Authority contributes to strengthening global capacity for World Heritage management and helps Queensland and Australia's reputation in support of the World Heritage Convention. The Authority also welcomes the opportunity to learn from the experience of visitors.

The Authority's contribution is often in support of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment or the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Creating linkages with other environment and heritage managers in Asia and the Pacific also represents a contribution the Authority can make to Queensland's objective of sharing tropical expertise.

Australian Committee for IUCN

The Authority is a government agency member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Along with other Australian IUCN members, the Authority participates in the Australian National Committee for IUCN (ACIUCN). ACIUCN plays a valuable networking and information sharing role between government and non-government members of IUCN in Australia.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is an accountable and capable organisation

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is committed to excellence in corporate governance and management. This is delivered by improving the Authority's contributions to investors, stakeholders, and the community; continuing to pursue high standards of business planning to ensure resources are allocated to the 2013-2018 priorities established by the Wet Tropics Management Authority Board; and regularly monitoring progress and outcomes.

In February 2016, the Board updated the Strategic Plan's priorities that describe the ultimate outcomes the Authority aspires to. The priorities are to:

- ~ pursue climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies to protect and conserve the integrity of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
- ~ engage and partner with Rainforest Aboriginal people to develop economic opportunities through ranger programs, tourism and scientific research within the Area
- ~ deepen the relationship with the community and increase relevance and recognition of the work done by the Authority
- ~ ensure science is sought and used to inform decision-making, in partnership with research institutions
- ~ recognise and utilise the outcomes of formal scientific research and knowledge held by Rainforest Aboriginal people to shape management of the Area
- ~ develop a formal mechanism for individuals and institutions conducting research within the Area to give back to Indigenous communities they engage with, through both financial and knowledge transfer arrangements
- ~ improve presentation and marketing of the Area in conjunction with tourism and other stakeholders
- ~ secure sufficient funding to continue baiting programs and further research of yellow crazy ants with a goal of eradication
- ~ progress a three year (2016 – 2019) Partnership Agreement with NPSR to support management of the protected area estate within the Area
- ~ investigate options for 'user pays' mechanisms and how revenue might be used by the Authority in management, presentation and

programs as well as to benefit Rainforest Aboriginal people and other communities within the Area.

Financial management

As the Authority is a Statutory Authority, its general-purpose financial statements and details for 2016-2017 are incorporated in the overall Department of Environment and Heritage Protection financial statements. Total funding of \$7.6 million for 2016-2017 was provided to the Authority, principally by the Australian and Queensland governments, and supplemented by other forms of income. The Authority realised an operating surplus of \$1.3 million. A summary of the Authority's operating statement for 2016-2017 is provided in **Table 1**.

The Australian Government's allocation to the Authority for 2016-17 was \$4.7 million. These funds were allocated to the Authority's programs. The Queensland Government through the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection contributed \$2.8 million to the Authority to support management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Authority allocated \$1.8 million of these funds to the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing for on-ground and field management services.

Audits

Two operational audits were conducted by PGL Financial Services Pty Ltd in 2016-2017 for Commonwealth Grants received.

Overseas Travel

Scott Buchanan, Executive Director and Rebecca Lagerroth, Manager World Heritage Connections traveled to Hawaii to represent the Authority and the Queensland Government at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in September 2016. The Cost of travel was \$14,125 in total.

Staffing and contractors

At 30 June 2017, the staff establishment of the Authority totalled 57 positions of which 20 were vacant. Most of the vacancies were in the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program (YCAEP). The YCAEP comprises 17 temporary staff and recruitment continues to fill the 29 positions identified as necessary.

The Authority expended \$322,268 on contractors during 2016-17 to provide specific services. These services included Traditional Owner services (such as Welcome to Country payments and PBCs for cultural advice), information technology support, workforce management, research, invasive species treatment, and protection and conservation activities. **Table 2** shows expenditure on contractors for 2016-2017 compared to the previous financial year.

Table 1. Wet Tropics Management Authority Operating Statement

CONTROLLED REVENUE AND EXPENSES	2016-2017	2015-2016
Revenue	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue from government		
Payments for outputs	2,826	1,862
Asset assumed/liabilities transferred		
SUB-TOTAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE	2,826	1,826
Own source revenue		
User charges	4	54
Grants and other contributions	4,747	3,200
Taxes fees and fines		
Gain on disposal of fixed assets		
Other revenue	34	12
Interest		
SUB-TOTAL OWN SOURCE REVENUE	4,781	3,216
TOTAL REVENUE	7,607	5,042
Expenses	\$'000	\$'000
Operating expenses		
Program		
BBA Business Management	6,269	4,985
Sub-total operating expenses	6,269	4,985
Non-operating expenses		
Depreciation	5	27
Asset write-downs'/loss on disposal		
Sub-total non-operating expenses	5	27
TOTAL EXPENSES	6,275	5,303
OPERATING RESULT	1,332	31

Table 2. Expenditure by contracts

CONTROLLED REVENUE AND EXPENSES	2016-2017	2015-2016
Contractors by Program*		
Payments for outputs	2,826	1,862
Business Management	42,205	4,860
World Heritage Connections	22,206	5,900
Protection and Conservation	13,375	5,742
Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program	222,482	0
TOTAL	322,268	41,724

**Excludes expenses incurred against the NPSR/Wet Tropics Management Authority Partnership Agreement.*

Workplace health and safety

The Authority adheres to the Queensland Government's health and safety management systems and procedures. The Authority recorded no accidents for 2015-16. Regular workplace health and safety inspections are conducted with no significant issues arising. Authority staff attended regular education, awareness and training sessions to ensure current accreditations are maintained.

Employees who suffer from a work-related injury or illness are entitled to apply for workers' compensation. Wet Tropics Management Authority is committed to ensuring that all workers' compensation claims are appropriately managed. The number of accepted workers' compensation claims for 2016-17 was three.

In 2016-17, the Authority's accepted claims increased by two from the previous reporting period. The average amount paid was \$16,988 per claim.

Workforce planning and performance

The Authority is committed to developing the capability of its employees and recognises that training and development is critical for delivering government priorities, objectives, and outcomes; developing high performing teams; and the attraction and retention of employees. In 2016-17 the Authority developed a training and professional plan for all staff, allocating \$30,000 to implement. All training needs were identified through individual Performance and Development Plans.

In 2016-17 the Authority was engaged in workforce capability planning in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Heritage

Protection. The purpose of the workforce capability planning process is to ensure the Authority can continue to meet the challenges of the future, in addition to recognising the Authority is in a competitive market when it comes to retaining, attracting and developing the most effective workforce to achieve agreed objectives. Implementation of the strategic workforce plan enables the Authority to build both an overall workforce strategy, tailor strategies for particular roles of interest and identify and fill staffing skill gaps.

Equal employment opportunity

All recruitment and selection recommendations are monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance with Queensland Government policies and procedures including current human resources directives. All appointments during 2016-2017 complied with directives and no equal employment opportunity complaints were received. At 30 June 2017, the Authority had 18 females and 19 males on staff and 20 positions vacant. **Table 3** gives a profile of the Authority’s staff.

Wet Tropics volunteers and internships

The Authority recognises that volunteers make a valuable contribution to the organisation and as such, is committed to planned, supported and appropriately managed volunteer arrangements. During 2016-17 the Authority hosted five graduate placements via formal arrangements through the Aurora (Native Title Internship) Program.

Table 3. Employment by gender, occupation stream and salary

Employment by gender and occupational stream as at 30 June 2017 based on actual occupants		
Stream	Female (%)	Male (%)
Administraion and Senior Executive Service	12 (32)	8 (22)
Professional	1 (3)	2 (5)
Technical	0	2 (5)
Operational	5 (14)	7 (19)
TOTAL	18 (49)	19 (51)

Table 3. Employment by gender, occupational stream and salary

Employment by gender and salary level as at 30 June 2017 based on actual positions		
Salary Range	Female (%)	Male (%)
\$120,000 +		1 (3)
\$110,000 - \$120,000	1 (3)	1 (3)
\$100,000 - \$110,000	1 (3)	1 (3)
\$89,000 - \$100,000	2 (5)	4 (11)
\$75,000 - \$89,000	4 (11)	4 (11)
\$65,000 - \$75,000	3 (8)	1 (3)
\$54,000 - \$65,000	3 (8)	2 (5)
TOTAL	12 (52)	11 (48)

**Taken to nearest rounding point in male percentages.*

Terms and Abbreviations

ARC	Australian Research Council
AWHAC	Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee
Commonwealth Act	<i>Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994</i>
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific, Industry and Research Organisation
DATSIP	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
DEHP	Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (Queensland)
EPBC	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwealth)
GIS	Geographic Information System
ha	Hectare
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JCU	James Cook University
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPSR	Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
Queensland Act	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>
RFK	Interactive Key to Australian Tropical Rain Forest Plants
RNTBC	Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate
The Area	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area
The Authority	Wet Tropics Management Authority
The Plan	Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
YCA	Yellow Crazy Ant
WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority

APPENDIX 1. Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors

Board of the Wet Tropics Management Authority

Act or instrument

Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993

Functions

Under s10(1) Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993, the functions of the Board are to:

- (a) develop and implement policies and programs in relation to the management of the wet tropics area;
- (b) formulate performance indicators for the implementation of policies and programs approved by the Ministerial Council; and
- (c) advise and make recommendations to the Minister and the Ministerial Council in relation to—
 - (i) the management of the wet tropics area; and
 - (ii) Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention in relation to the wet tropics area;
- (d) prepare, and ensure the implementation of, management plans for the wet tropics area
- (e) administer funding arrangements in relation to the wet tropics area;
- (f) enter into, and facilitate the entering into of, cooperative management agreements (including joint management agreements) with land-holders, Aboriginal people particularly concerned with land in the wet tropics area and other persons
- (g) enter into arrangements for the provision of rehabilitation and restoration works in relation to any land in the wet tropics area;
- (h) gather, research, analyse and disseminate information on the wet tropics area;
- (i) develop public and community education programs in relation to the wet tropics area

- (j) promote the wet tropics area locally, nationally and internationally; liaise with the governments and authorities of the State, the Commonwealth, other States and the Territories, and international and foreign organisations and agencies;
- (k) monitor the state of the wet tropics area; and
- (l) advise and report to the Minister and the Ministerial Council.

Achievements

- ~ approved the framework, steps and estimated timelines for the 10-year review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan. This includes establishing a framework to ensure the free, prior and informed consent with Prescribed Bodies Corporates and Aboriginal groups throughout the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as part of the consultation process
- ~ held the Wet Tropics Ministerial Forum on 25 November 2016
- ~ tabled the Authority's 2016-17 State of Wet Tropics report in the Queensland and Australian parliaments
- ~ hosted the 2016 Cassowary Awards, 3 December 2016. This event celebrated the contributions made by the wider community into the protection and presentation of the World Heritage Area
- ~ appointed a new Community Consultative Committee (CCC) and Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)
- ~ developed an action plan to progress a couple of creative resourcing ideas that would boost support for World Heritage management, visitor amenities, and other initiatives to enhance presentation
- ~ published the Inaugural Rainforest Aboriginal News (October 2016) to showcase good news stories about Traditional Owner involvement in the management of the Wet Tropics
- ~ developed a (draft) Wet Tropics Presentation Strategy, which aims to help focus the Authority's efforts to present the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and canvass options for new private and public contributions to achieve higher standards

Financial reporting

The Authority provides audited financial statements as required as per the Financial Accountability Act (QLD) 2009.

Remuneration

POSITION	NAME	MEETINGS/ SESSION ATTENDANCE	APPROVED ANNUAL SESSIONAL OR DAILY FEE	APPROVED SUB- COMMITTEE FEES IF APPLICABLE	ACTUAL FEES RECIEVED
Chair	Leslie Shirreffs	4	\$520 DAILY FEE		\$23,393
Member	John Courtenay	4	\$400 DAILY FEE		\$5,400
Member	Anne Clarke	4	\$400 DAILY FEE	Chair Wet Tropics Community Consultative Committee (\$400 DAILY FEE)	\$5,400
Member	Iain Gordon	4	\$400 DAILY FEE	Chair Wet Tropics Scientific Advisory Committee (\$400 DAILY FEE)	\$5,400
Member	Leah Talbot	3	\$400 DAILY FEE		nil
Member	Phillip Rist	3	\$400 DAILY FEE		\$4,000

NO. SCHEDULED MEETINGS/ SESSIONS	The Board met four times in 2016-17: 23-24 August 2016, 1-2 December 2016, 7 March 2017 and 25-26 May 2017.
TOTAL OUT-OF- POCKET EXPENSES	<p>The Board costs \$76,918 to operate, mostly for sitting fees, reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, travel expenses, site inspections and catering.</p> <p>The Board of the Wet Tropics Management Authority is funded by the Australian Government. The Queensland Government does not contribute to its operational cost.</p>

APPENDIX 2. Statutory Committees

Wet Tropics Scientific Advisory Committee

Act or instrument

s40 Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993

Functions

The Committee has the function of advising the Authority on:

- (a) scientific research that will contribute to the protection and conservation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area; and
- (b) scientific developments relevant to the protection or conservation of the Area.

Achievements

The Scientific Advisory Committee was appointed by the Wet Tropics Board in November 2016 and met for the first time in December 2016. Some of the major issues discussed included the development of the Science Priority Action Plan that focuses on climate change resilience and monitoring, biosecurity, World Heritage presentation and community engagement. Other achievements included providing advice:

- ~ to the Wet Tropics Management Authority Board on the World Heritage attributes and ecological function of Wet Tropics species including the southern cassowary and spectacled flying fox
- ~ on developing research protocol guidelines for engagement between Rainforest Aboriginal people and researchers
- ~ on QPWS values-based park management framework for national parks
- ~ on the State of Wet Tropics report for 2016-17, which is based on World Heritage Criteria vii: 'Natural Beauty and Aesthetic value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area'.

Financial reporting

The Wet Tropics Management Authority provides audited financial statements as required as per the Financial Accountability Act (QLD) 2009.

Remuneration

POSITION	NAME	MEETINGS/ SESSION ATTENDANCE	APPROVED ANNUAL SESSIONAL OR DAILY FEE	APPROVED SUB- COMMITTEE FEES IF APPLICABLE	ACTUAL FEES RECEIVED
Chair	Professor Iain Gordon	3	\$400 DAILY FEE	N/A	\$1,800
Member	Professor John Herbohn	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Member	Mr John Locke	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Associate Professor Susan Laurance	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Dr Suzanne Long	0	N/A	N/A	
Member	Professor Bruce Richard Prideaux	0	N/A	N/A	
Member	Dr Lea Scherl	1	N/A	N/A	
Member	Mrs Joann Schmider	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Dr David Westcott	2	N/A	N/A	

NO. SCHEDULED MEETINGS/ SESSIONS	The Scientific Advisory Committee met three times in 2016-17: 15 December 2016, 10 February 2017 and 16 May 2017.
TOTAL OUT-OF- POCKET EXPENSES	<p>The Scientific Advisory Committee costs \$5,439 to operate, mostly for sitting fees (Chair), advertising, and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, travel expenses and catering. Members do not receive sitting fees.</p> <p>The Scientific Advisory Committee is funded by the Australian Government. The Queensland Government does not contribute to its operational cost.</p>

Wet Tropics Community Consultative Committee

Act or instrument

s40 Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993

Functions

The community consultative committee has the function of advising the authority on the views of the community on the authority's policies and programs in relation to the wet tropics area.

Achievements

- ~ provided advice and comment on a number of strategic policy documents including the draft Queensland Protected Area Strategy, the Australian Government proposed climate change policy, the Wet Tropics Management Authority's Community Engagement Strategy, Rainforest Aboriginal Engagement Strategy, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Presentation Strategy and review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan
- ~ provided input on potential themes, activities, products and partnerships to help celebrate the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area 30-year anniversary in 2018
- ~ provided advice on the Authority's engagement, strategies and branding program
- ~ provided input into the review of the Wet Tropics Tour Guide School and program

Financial reporting

The Wet Tropics Management Authority provides audited financial statements as required as per the Financial Accountability Act (QLD) 2009.

Remuneration

POSITION	NAME	MEETINGS/ SESSION ATTENDANCE	APPROVED ANNUAL SESSIONAL OR DAILY FEE	APPROVED SUB- COMMITTEE FEES IF APPLICABLE	ACTUAL FEES RECIEVED
Chair	Ms Anne Clarke	3	\$400 daily fee	N/A	\$2,200
Member	Dennis Ah-Kee	2	N/A	N/A	
Member	Allison Anderson	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Ellie Bock	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Allan Gillanders	3	N/A	N/A	
Member N/A	Sigrid Heise-Pavlov		2	N/A	
Member	Bess Murphy	2	N/A	N/A	
Member	Craig Pocock	2	N/A	N/A	
Member	Gerard Puglisi	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Peter Rowles	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Angela Toppin	2	N/A	N/A	
Member	Linda Venn	3	N/A	N/A	
Member	Seraeah Wyles	2	N/A	N/A	

NO. SCHEDULED MEETINGS/ SESSIONS	The Community Consultative Committee met three times in 2016-17: 15 December 2016, 16 February 2017 and 4 May 2017.
TOTAL OUT-OF- POCKET EXPENSES	<p>The Community Consultative Committee costs \$6,650 to operate, mostly for sitting fees (Chair), advertising and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, travel expenses and catering. Members do not receive sitting fees.</p> <p>The Community Consultative Committee is funded by the Australian Government. The Queensland Government does not contribute to its operational cost.</p>

APPENDIX 3. Annual Report on the Administration of the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998

The Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 regulates land use activities inside the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area that have the potential to impact on the integrity of the Area. In 2016-17, Authority staff audited and advised on a number of agencies or organisations undertaking activities in the World Heritage Area under existing permits. Pre-lodgement advice was provided to the following agencies:

Department of Transport and Main Roads regarding:

- ~ road widening on the El Arish – Mission Beach Road
- ~ curve widening and removal of dead trees along road verges on Kuranda Range Road
- ~ design options for cassowary management on Kuranda Range Road
- ~ upgrading Henry Ross Lookout, Kuranda Range Road
- ~ widening of Captain Cook Highway at Rifle Range turnoff, Wangetti

Douglas Shire Council regarding:

- ~ clearing vegetation at Donovan Lookout, Bloomfield Track
- ~ curve widening at Alexandra Range section of Cape Tribulation Road
- ~ upgrades to Kulki car park entrance and Maardja car park

Cook Shire Council regarding:

- ~ proposed drainage and batter upgrades to ameliorate impacts of a land slip

Cassowary Coast Regional Council regarding:

- ~ opening up the H-Road near Tully River as a mountain bike track
- ~ water reservoir, Bulgun Creek

Townsville City Council regarding:

- ~ reconstructing a water supply pipeline at Crystal Creek

Powerlink regarding:

- ~ sand blasting towers and associated study to review any impacts on soil, water, flora and fauna

Ergon regarding:

- ~ tree planting and upgraded infrastructure in and near the Area to improve World Heritage connectivity, especially at Maria Creek

In addition, staff commenced consultation with Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate regarding assessment of Wet Tropics permit applications by community services infrastructure providers for ongoing maintenance of their infrastructure inside the Area.

Authority staff assessed and issued five new permits under the Plan as follows:

- ~ Telstra for a telecommunications tower, Wangetti
- ~ Department of Transport and Main Roads for a road upgrade, Kuranda Range Road
- ~ Queensland Rail for slope stabilisation works, Kuranda Rail Line
- ~ Skyrail Rainforest Cableway for a replacement lookout structure
- ~ Department of Transport and Main Roads for road widening, El Arish – Mission Beach Road

Staff reviewed the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for Southedge Road. Staff ran a workshop for Ergon to assist in improving its EMP documents to manage its infrastructure within the Area.

The Authority provided training to Cairns Regional Council on community services infrastructure maintenance as it relates to permit conditions under the Plan.

Investigation and enforcement

National Park rangers, as authorised officers under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, investigated an alleged offence under section 26(1)(b) of the Plan, namely allowing an undesirable animal (two dogs) to stray or escape onto, or remain at, any place in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The alleged incident

took place at Licuala Fan Palm Walk, Djiru National Park within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. A penalty infringement notice under the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014 was subsequently issued to the owner of the two dogs involved.

Land dealings

The Authority advised on seven enquiries regarding development proposals, including those outside the Area that may affect the World Heritage values. Authority staff provided formal advice on five occasions to the State Land Asset Management group within the Department of Natural Resources and Mines regarding land dealings including proposed lease renewals, freeholding applications and proposed road closures. Staff inspected the state of a lease and reviewed compliance with extant lease conditions of a remote block beside Russell River.

APPENDIX 4. 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	ARRs – section 7	Page v
Accessibility		
Table of contents	ARRs – section 9.1	Page iii
Glossary	ARRs – section 9.2	Page 41
Public availability	ARRs – section 9.2	Page ii
Interpreter service statement	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i>	Page ii
Copyright notice	Copyright Act 1968	
Information licensing	ARRs – section 9.4	Page ii
	QLD Government Enterprise Architecture – Information licensing	Page ii
General information		
Introductory Information	ARRs – section 10.1	Page 3-6
Agency role and main functions	ARRs – section 10.2	Page 8-10
Operating environment	ARRs – section 10.3	Page 8-10
Non-financial performance		
Government objectives for the community	ARRs – section 11.1	Page 9
Other whole-of-government plans / specific initiatives	ARRs – section 11.2	Page 9
Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs – section 11.3	Page 11
Agency service areas, service standards and other measures	ARRs – section 11.4	Page 11
Financial performance		
Summary of financial performance	ARRs – section 12.1	Page 37

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENT	BASIS FOR REQUIREMENT	ANNUAL REPORT REFERENCE
Governance -management and structure		
Organisational structure	ARRs – section 13.1	Page 7
Executive management	ARRs – section 13.2	Page 9
Related entities	ARRs – section 13.3	N/A
Boards and committees	ARRs – section 13.4	Page 10
	ARRs – section 13.4	Appendix 1
		Appendix 2
<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>	ARRs – section 13.5	Refer to DEHP
Queensland Public service values	ARRs – section 14.1	Refer to DEHP
Risk management		Refer to DEHP
Governance - risk management and accountability		
Risk management	ARRs – section 14.1	Refer to DEHP
Audit committee	ARRs – section 14.2	Refer to DEHP
Internal audit	ARRs – section 14.3	Nil
External scrutiny	ARRs – section 14.4	Refer to DEHP
Information systems and record keeping	ARRs – section 14.5	Refer to DEHP
Governance – Human resources		
Workforce planning and performance	ARRs – section 15.1	Page 38,39
Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No 11/12 Early retirement, Redundancy and retrenchments	
	Directive No 16/16 Early retirement, Redundancy and retrenchments (from May 20 2016)	
	ARRs Section 15.2	
Open data		
Statement advising publication of information	ARRs – section 15.7	
Consultancies		N/A
Overseas travel	ARRs – section 15.7	Page 36
Queensland Language services policy	ARRs – section 15.7	Page ii

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENT	BASIS FOR REQUIREMENT	ANNUAL REPORT REFERENCE
Financial statements		
Certification of financial statements	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 42, 43, 50 ARRs – section 18.2	Page 37
Independent Auditor's report	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 50 ARRs – section 17.2	

ARRs Annual report requirement for Queensland Government agencies

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*