
Minutes
WTMA Board Meeting No. 84: 7 & 8 March 2011

Directors:	Assoc. Professor Peter Valentine	Chair
	Dr Alastair Birtles	Director
	Cr Julia Leu	Director
	Dr Elaine Harding	Director (Tuesday only)
	Mr Andrew Maclean	Executive Director
Departmental	Ms Veronica Blazeley	DSEWPac (Tuesday only)
Observers	Mr Peter Ogilvie	QPWS/DERM
	Mr Wolf Sievers	QPWS/DERM
Guests	Pastor John Andy	Indigenous representative
	Ms Leah Talbot	Indigenous representative
Committee	Ms Bryony Barnett	Chair CCC
Chairs	Professor Paul Gadek	Chair SAC
WTMA staff	Ms Ellen Weber	Secretariat
	Mr Max Chappell	
	Mr Nigel Hedgcock	
	Ms Joann Schmider	
	Dr Paul Chantrill	

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chairperson's Welcome and Introduction

The Chair Peter Valentine opened the meeting at 9.25 am and welcomed Director Alastair Birtles; Peter Ogilvie and Wolf Sievers (QPWS/DERM); and Bryony Barnett (Chair CCC).

The Chair welcomed Pastor John Andy and Leah Talbot who were invited to participate at the meeting as Observers representing Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples interests.

The Chair advised that localised flooding in the Cairns Area was causing (traffic) delays for some Directors, Departmental Observers and Committee Chairs.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Jeff Gillies, Tourism Queensland; Karen Jacobsen, Department of Resource Energy and Tourism and Troy Wyles Whelan (RAAC Chair). Veronica Blazeley apologised for Monday but attended on Tuesday.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

1.3 Previous Minutes Meeting No. 83: 8 & 9 November 2011

The Chair referred to the minutes of the previous meeting and Alastair Birtles requested that the following amendments be made:

- Agenda item 2.2 (p 3a) insert at beginning of second dot point at Alastair Birtles report ‘was invited to attend the AWHIN meeting in Broken Hill between 30 Oct-1 Nov 2010 and subsequently’
- Agenda item 2.4 (p 5a) insert the word ‘been’ at second dot point, and
- Agenda item 6.1 (p 9a), use capital ‘C’ for Cassowary Awards.

Resolution

The Board confirmed the Ordinary minutes from Meeting No. 83, as amended.

1.4 Actions Arising

The Chair referred to the Actions Arising from the previous meeting, as updated.

Resolution

The Board noted the status of Actions Arising from previous Board Resolutions, as updated.

2.1 Community Consultative Committee (CCC) appointments 2011-2014 IN CAMERA – Directors and Departmental Observers only (Tuesday 8.00am-8.35am)

The Board thanked all members of the former CCC for their contribution to the Authority over the past several years.

Resolution

The Board:

- *appointed the people listed at Attachment 2.1(a) as Community Consultative Committee for a new three year term to 8 March 2014;*
- *invited Moni Carlisle to Chair the CCC for the three year term;*
- *invited Bryony Barnett to be Deputy Chair of the CCC for the three year term; and*
- *requested an additional person be sought to represent Indigenous Interests of the CCC for later appointment.*

2.2 Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) appointments 2011-2014 IN CAMERA – Directors and Departmental Observers only (Tuesday 8.35m- 9.10am)

The Board thanked all members of the former SAC for their contribution to the Authority over the past several years.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine

Dated:

Chair

Resolution

The Board:

- *invited the people listed at Attachment 2.1(a) to be appointed to the Scientific Advisory Committee for a new three year term to 8 March 2014;*
- *invited Professor Steve Williams to Chair the SAC for the three year term;*
- *invited Dr Sue Lawrence to be Deputy Chair of the SAC for the three year term;*
- *requested an application be made to the Minister to seek appointment of two additional Indigenous representatives expanding committee membership to 14.*

REPORTS

3.1 Chair's Report

The Chair made the following comments

- The Authority's response to Cyclone Yasi has been very good, including the partnership with QPWS. He observed that the Cyclone Yasi response has been markedly better than the response to Cyclone Larry
- Cyclone damage has been extensive in the forests extending south of El Arish
- Wildlife mortality arising from cyclones must be extensive but is not well understood. It may be a useful topic for research
- Good progress is being made towards having the Wet Tropics recognised as one of Australia's National Landscapes. The regional submission was warmly received by the National Landscapes steering committee
- The Chair met with Richard Ireland and Sheriden Morris of RRRC to discuss rainforest research funding, and
- WTMA's relationship with Terrain NRM is very important and the Chair proposed a joint field trip with the WTMA and Terrain Boards.

Resolution

The Board noted the Chair's report.

3.2 Directors' issues – verbal reports

The Chair invited Board Directors to provide comments or advice.

Alastair Birtles reported that:

- he had attended a meeting of the regional National Landscapes steering committee in December 2010 and noted the substantial enthusiasm of participants for the concept. He attended a follow up field trip that emphasised Indigenous tourism development and noted very positive comment from Commonwealth officials following the meeting, and

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Dated:

- Ms Joan Domicelj has resigned as Chair of the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (AWHAC) and that he is acting as Chair until an ongoing appointment is made. A teleconference is scheduled within the next month or two.

The Chair invited observers to provide reports and advice.

Peter Ogilvie advised that

- A recent teleconference of AWHAC officials was advised that the new Chair of AWHAC will be the Blue Mountains WHA representative
- Two States have yet to sign the Australian World Heritage Intergovernmental Agreement, and
- A review of the Caring for Our Country Program is underway and it would be useful if World Heritage managers made submissions

Resolution

The Board noted the Directors' and Observers' reports.

3.3 Executive Director's report

The Authority's Executive Director, Andrew Maclean presented his report to the Board.

Resolution:

The Board noted the Executive Director's report

3.4 Community Consultative Committee

The Chair of the CCC, Bryony Barnett, presented the CCC minutes. She advised of the following points of interest:

- The meeting on the 18 February 2011 was the last meeting for the current term of the CCC and members provided feedback about their experiences as a member of the CCC, and
- Some long-standing members were uncomfortable with aspects of suggested changes to membership, but acknowledged that times had changed and new members were needed to reinvigorate the CCC.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the CCC minutes for 18 February 2011;*
- *noted that this was the last meeting of this term of the CCC;*
- *thanked the CCC for their commitment over the past three years;*
- *requested a briefing on the results of the CCC exit survey at the May 2011 meeting; and*
- *noted that CCC members have been provided the opportunity to participate in Community Engagement planning.*

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

The Chair thanked Bryony Barnett for her valuable contributions to the WTMA Board for the last four years, and valued the dedication and leadership she has offered in this role.

3.5 Rainforest Aboriginal Advisory Committee (Monday 2.20pm – 3.15pm)

The Chair invited Leah Talbot to address the Board on the recommendations tabled at the 1 March 2011 RAAC meeting. Leah Talbot advised the Board that she is not a member of the RAAC, but was invited to attend the meeting and that she was pleased to provide a report on behalf of the RAAC.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted that the RAAC met on 1 March 2011 (Attachment 3.5(1))*
- *noted that the RAPA/RAAC issue is the subject of Board Agenda Item 7.3 (Recommendation 1);*
- *approved the allocation of a position on the SAC that may be filled following further engagement with the Rainforest Aboriginal community, noting that Wet Tropics Research Associates may be appointed by the Executive Director (Recommendation 2);*
- *noted Recommendation 3 regarding the WTMA work plan for consideration in Board Agenda Item 8.2;*
- *thanked the RAAC for its support in Recommendation 4 and endorses the Executive Director to encourage cassowary recovery efforts to be as wide as possible ;and*
- *endorsed the Executive Director to facilitate engagement between Traditional Owners of Wooroonooran National Park and QPWS to address matters raised in Recommendation 5.*

Wolf Sievers advised that DERM's Draft Wooroonooran NP Management Plan has been released for public discussion and comment until 4 April 2011. He advised that the plan does not affect, diminish or extinguish Native Title and associated rights.

3.6 Scientific Advisory Committee (Monday 1.40- 2.20pm)

The Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee Prof Paul Gadek addressed the Board and made the following comments:

- The SAC met on 7 February 2011 (a few days after TC Yasi made landfall on the FNQ coastline). The timing of the meeting provided an excellent opportunity for members to assist the Authority to scope out the issues and create an action plan for a comprehensive recovery program for TC Yasi, and
- SAC members were very concerned to learn that Myrtle Rust has been detected in the Wet Tropics. The potential impacts to WH forests are unknown at present.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

The Board thanked SAC members for alerting them to the Myrtle Rust issue (also refer to agenda item 5.1) and commended SAC in assisting the Authority in the TC Yasi media release and responses.

Resolution:

The Board:

- *noted the SAC minutes from 7 February 2011;*
- *requested the Chair write to the Minister for SEWPAC prepare a letter to Minister Bourke asserting the need for inclusion of Indigenous involvement in the NERP rainforest research investment;*
- *noted the recommendation from the SAC for the WTMA Chair to write a letter to Birds Australia alerting Birds Australia to concerns of perceived deficiencies in the data and the assumptions underpinning their re-assessment of the conservation status of the southern cassowary; and*
- *thanked the SAC for their commitment over the past three years.*

The Chair (on behalf of the Board) thanked the SAC Chair for his valuable contributions to the Authority and personally thanked Prof Gadek for his leadership over the past 3 years, particularly in the development of the Wet Tropics Research Strategy and Learning Landscapes Initiative.

WORLD HERITAGE PROTECTION

4.1 Situation and Issues Report – Protection (Monday 3.15pm - 3.50pm)

Max Chappell addressed the meeting and gave updates on the following

- FNQROC have advised the Authority that it preparing a statement of strategic intent for the Bloomfield Road to be signed by Mayors, and
- DTMR have withdrawn their application for a permit to upgrade the Captain Cook Highway near Tin Creek (Wangetti).

Resolution

The Board noted the situation report relating to ‘protection’ issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

WORLD HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND REHABILITATION

5.1 Situation and Issues Report – Conservation and Rehabilitation (Tuesday 1.20pm to 1.40pm)

Steve Goosem addressed the meeting and gave the following updates:

- Biosecurity Queensland (DEEDI) are currently managing a number of pest eradication programs adjacent to and within the WTWHA including Tramp Ants (Electric Ant), Yellow Crazy Ant, Asian honey bee, Siam weed and *Miconia* spp. Many of these programs run on a cost-sharing basis with the Commonwealth, and
- Myrtle Rust has been detected in Queensland. National Myrtle Rust Management and Coordination Groups have been established to oversee and coordinate response actions.

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Dated:

Board members were very concerned about the threat these environmental pests and weeds posed to World Heritage values and reiterated the need to maintain resilient wet tropical rainforests and landscapes.

The Board requested the Authority consider these biosecurity risks in a strategic context and investigate opportunities for WTMA to 'value add' and promote improved Biosecurity procedures for the WHA

Resolution

The Board noted the situation report relating to 'conservation and rehabilitation' issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

5.2 Tropical Cyclone Yasi: Environmental Impact and Recovery (Monday 3.50pm – 4.20pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board and made the following comments:

- The Queensland Government has established a Reconstruction Authority to deal with reconstruction and recovery following TC Yasi (and flooding in south east Queensland,
- The experience gained from TC Larry has been a valuable guide to the response for TC Yasi, and
- QPWS was quick to respond to the damage to cassowary habitat around Mission Beach by implementing a feeding program. WTMA is supporting this program, capitalising on our communication and engagement networks.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the impacts of Cyclone Yasi and the issues this creates for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area;*
- *congratulated QPWS in their response programs;*
- *requested the Chair write a letter to Minister Jones and Minister Bourke regarding the need for continued longer term support and resourcing for environmental recovery post TC Yasi (including cassowary feeding program); and*
- *supported the intended scope of a draft cyclone response plan at Attachment 5.2(1).*

5.3 Caring for Our Country Project: Mobilising landholders to improve landscape connectivity in the Wet Tropics (Tuesday 1.40pm to 1.50pm)

Deb Pople briefed the Board on the status of the project.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

Resolution

The Board

- *noted that WTMA has been granted \$600,000 from the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country initiative to improve connectivity in and around the Wet Tropics WHA on private land adjacent to Herberton Range NP;*
- *warmly congratulated the WTMA staff involved with the preparation of the successful CfoC proposal;*
- *noted the current arrangements in relation to the project.*

5.4 UNESCO Periodic Report (Tuesday 11.30am to 12 noon)

Dr. Steve Goosem briefed the Board on the status of the UNESCO Periodic Reporting. He advised that the six 'Factors affecting the Property' (generated by the on-line program) are ground transport infrastructure, effects arising from the use of transportation infrastructure, temperature change, invasive terrestrial species and invasive freshwater species.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the preparation of the second draft of the Section II Periodic Report on the state of conservation of the Wet Tropics WHA;*
- *noted the 5 key 'Factors Affecting the Property' as determined by the UNESCO Periodic Reporting process;*
- *noted the final steps for submission of Australia's World Heritage Periodic Reports to the World Heritage Centre.; and*
- *thanked Steve Goosem for his efforts in updating the document.*

5.5 Cassowary Red List re-evaluation (Tuesday 1.50pm to 2.05pm)

Steve Goosem briefed the Board on the issues and process used to re-assess the southern cassowary using the IUCN Red List framework and gave a summary of the 'expert panel's assumptions and their rationale applied. He advised that the Cassowary Recovery Team made a submission to the review.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted that a reassessment of the conservation status of all Australian bird species against IUCN Red List criteria has recently been undertaken on behalf of Birds Australia.*
- *noted that the reassessment process identified the Australian subspecies of the cassowary (*Casuarius casuarius johnsonii*) as a 'contentious' species, and as such was assessed through an 'expert panel' process.*

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

- *noted the cassowary expert panel's recommendation that the conservation status of the southern cassowary in Australia be changed from 'Endangered' to of 'Least Concern'.*
- *endorsed the drafting of a letter to Birds Australia outlining the Authority's concerns regarding the expert panel's assumptions, conclusions and recommendation.*

6.1 Situation and Issues Report – World Heritage Presentation (Tuesday 10am to 10.10am)

Paul Chantrill addressed the Board and provided the following additional comments

- John Courteney has been employed by the Authority to progress accreditation with QTIC, and
- tourism Industry leaders, operators and community groups from Mission Beach and across the region recently met to discuss post cyclone recovery issues.

Resolution

The Board noted the situation report relating to 'presentation' issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

6.2 Tourism Industry Liaison Group (Tuesday 10.10am to 10.25am)

Paul Chantrill advised the Board that the TILG met on 8 December 2010 to progress the concept of a Wet Tropics Tourism Working Group (TWG) and Tourism network (TN).

Resolution

The Board noted the progress of the Operating Guidelines and endorsed them as a basis for further development.

ROLE IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

7.1 Situation and Issues Report – Role in the Life of the Community

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board and provided updates on relevant issues.

Resolution

The Board noted the situation and issues report relating to 'role in the life of the community' issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

7.2 Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement: Community Development Planning and Activity Guidelines (Monday 4.20pm to 5pm, Tuesday 9.15am to 10.00am)

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Dated:

Nigel Hedgcock and Joann Schmider provided the Board up with an update on the project and tabled a draft Community Development Plan for Kaba Kada (Cow Bay) (**Attachment 7.2 (2)**)

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted progress on the development of draft Community Development Plans prepared for the five pilot blocks within the Pink Zone of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji ILUA;*
- *noted progress on the development of draft Activity Guidelines that have been formulated with Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owners to complement the draft Community Development Plans;*
- *noted progress on the development draft Activity Guidelines for the Yellow(Nature Refuge) and Green Zones (National Park) within the WHA formulated by QPWS with Jabalbina and WTMA;*
- *congratulated the WTMA and Jabalbina Team on their work in engaging with Traditional Owners; and*
- *noted that the current project will finish on or around 30 June 2011 at which point all funds will have been expended.*

7.3 Future directions for meaningful engagement of Rainforest Aboriginal people through the RAAC and RAPA (Tuesday 10.55am to 11.50am).

Andrew Maclean reminded the Board that the Aboriginal Rainforest Council (ARC) closed in February 2008. Since then WTMA has been supporting a self-determined leadership group of Rainforest Aboriginal people (RAP) to assess their aspirations for a new model of regional governance. Various roles, functions, principles and models have been considered.

Leah Talbot and Pastor John Andy reassured the Board that engagement with Rainforest Aboriginal People (RAP) would continue in the absence of a RAAC, and that RAPA were committed to positive working partnerships with government and NRM agencies. Dissolving the RAAC would provide a strong message of authorisation, support and confidence to RAPA as an independent voice to represent RAP rights and interests in the strategic management of their country in the Wet Tropics region.

The Board reiterated their support for independent regional voices and were keen to see a clear business plan developed.

Resolution

The Board:

- *approved continued WTMA support for Rainforest Aboriginal people in their endeavours to establish the RAPA proposal;*

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

- *directed that support from WTMA be subject to a demonstrated commitment from Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' organisations to actions and timelines that will achieve the key functional aspects of the RAPA proposal, and that continued support be subject to evidence of substantive progress by the end of June 2011;*
- *requested the Executive Director to provide a paper to RAPA leadership that outlines the services required from, and support provided to, an established regional entity; and*
- *approved the dissolution of the current RAAC.*

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

8.1 Mid-year review of budget and work plan 2010/11 (Tuesday 2.05pm to 2.30pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the financial status report current as at 31 January 2011 (Attachment 8.1 (1)); and*
- *noted the mid year work plan progress report (Attachment 8.1(2)).*

8.2 Draft 2011/12 Work Plan (Tuesday 2.05pm to 2.35pm)

Ellen Weber addressed the Board and advised that the 2011/12 plan was still in development phase and financial analysis (including operating funds) and workforce planning (staff allocations) would be completed in the second phase of planning.

Resolution

- *The Board noted the progress in development of the 2011/12 WTMA workplan and provided further comment and advice to facilitate its completion.*

Meeting closed at 3.00pm

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

Endorsed CCC members (March 2011 Board meeting)		
1	Ms Moni Carlisle (Chair)	Yungaburra, Tablelands
2	Ms Bryony Barnett (Deputy Chair)	Kairi, Tablelands
3	Mrs Pam Birkett	Daintree, Northern Wet Tropics
4	Mr Greg Bruce	Townsville, Southern Wet Tropics
5	Mr Dean Nulty	Cairns, Central Wet Tropics
6	Mr John Hardacker	Innisfail, Central Wet Tropics
7	Ms Kirsten Lesina	Cairns, Central Wet Tropics
8	Ms Penny Scott	Atherton, Tablelands
9	Cr Pino Giandomenico	Ingham, Southern WT
10	Mr Eden Gray-Spence	Cairns, Central Wet Tropics
11	Ms Darlene Irvine	Cairns, Central Wet Tropics

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated:

Endorsed SAC members (March 2011 Board meeting)	
1	Dr. Damien Burrows Director, Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research (ACTFR) James Cook University Townsville 4810
2	Professor Carla Catterall Professor of Ecology, Griffith University Nathan 4111
3	Professor Darren M. Crayn, Director, Australian Tropical Herbarium James Cook University Cairns, 4870
4	Dr. Miriam Goosem Principal Research Fellow, School of Earth and Environmental Science James Cook University Cairns 4870
5	Dr Alex. Kutt CSIRO - Ecosystem Services Tropical and Arid Systems Program Townsville 4810
6	Dr. Susan Lawrence Tropical Leader in Rainforest Ecology James Cook University, Cairns 4870
7	Dr. Daniel Metcalfe Principal Research Scientist CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences Atherton 4883
8	Dr. Christine Williams Assistant Director General Environment and Resource Science, DERM Brisbane 4001
9	Prof. Steve Williams_Director, Centre for Tropical Biology and Climate Change Director, NCCARF National Adaptation Research Network - Terrestrial Biodiversity James Cook University Townsville 4810
10	Dr. David Westcott Principal Research Scientist CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Atherton 4883

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated: