

Minutes
WTMA Board Meeting
No. 88: 12-13 March 2012

Directors:	Assoc. Professor Peter Valentine	Chair
	Dr Alastair Birtles	Director
	Cr Julia Leu	Director
	Dr Ro Hill	Director
	Ms Leah Talbot	Director
	Mr Andrew Maclean	Executive Director
Departmental	Ms Jane Ambrose	SEWPAC (Monday only)
Observers	Mr Ian Mason	SEWPAC
	Mr Ross MacLeod	QPWS/DERM
	Mr Wolf Sievers	QPWS/DERM
	Mr Paul Martyn	DEEDI (Tuesday only)
Committee	Professor Steve Williams	Chair SAC
Chairs		
Guests	Ms Ann Clarke	DEEDI (Tuesday only)
	Mr Shaun Sims	WTMA contractor (item 6.2)
WTMA staff	Ms Ellen Weber	Executive Officer
	Mr Max Chappell	Manager, Planning and Conservation
	Dr Paul Chantrill	Manager, Communities and Partnerships
	Mr Campbell Clarke	Principal Conservation Officer
	Mr Bruce Jennison	Principal Conservation Officer
	Ms Patricia O’Loughlen	Team Leader, Communities and Partnerships

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chairperson’s Welcome and Introduction (Monday 9.07am to 9.12am)

The Chair Peter Valentine opened the meeting at 9.07am and warmly welcomed the new appointees Dr Ro Hill and Ms Leah Talbot to their first meeting as WTMA Board Directors.

The Chair welcomed QPWS representatives Ross MacLeod and Wolf Sievers to the meeting.

The Chair was pleased to advise directors that Mr Paul Martyn (DEEDI) would be attending future WTMA Board meetings to represent tourism interests.

1.2 Apologies (Monday 9.12am to 9.15am)

Apologies were received from Helen Cox (DRET). An alternate departmental representative was unable to participate. DRET requested that papers be forwarded to the DRET office for comment and advice.

The Chair advised that Moni Carlisle had reluctantly resigned as CCC Chair as she had taken up a new role as an International coordinator with the School for Field Studies in America (refer to agenda item 2.5).

Dr Ernie Grant was invited to participate at the meeting as an observer but was unable to attend.

1.3 Previous Minutes (Monday 9.15am to 9.17am)

Resolution

The Board:

- *confirmed the Ordinary minutes from Meeting No. 85*
- *confirmed the Ordinary minutes from Meeting No. 86, and*
- *confirmed the Ordinary minutes from Meeting No. 87.*

1.4 Actions Arising (Monday 9.17am to 9.20am)

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

- 87/3.3 Planning context and directions.** Board members advised that this meeting will be held on 30 May 2012.
- 87/5.1 Myrtle Rust.** Board members were advised that QLD Herbarium had received CFoC funds to monitor and survey Myrtle Rust. Board members reiterated their concern about the potential threat that Myrtle Rust poses to Wet Tropics World Heritage values.
- 87/2.1 DEEDI representation at WTMA Board meetings.** Action now completed.

Resolution

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

1.5 Wet Tropics Amendment Management Plan 2011 – Advice of Cabinet Decision (IN CAMERA – CONFIDENTIAL) (Monday 4.00pm to 4.50pm)

Refer to Confidential Attachment 1.5 (1).

2.0 REPORTS

2.1 Chair's Report (Monday 9.20am to 9.25am)

The Chair gave a verbal report to the Board on a number of issues including that:

- he attended the Mandingalbay Yidinji Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) hand over ceremony. This is the first Indigenous Protected Area to be established over existing government protected areas (Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and National Park) and provides a framework for collaboration in managing these areas, and
- he had an opportunity to meet with the UNESCO GBR Monitoring Mission delegation and that it highlighted the importance of managing World Heritage Areas for Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and all it implies.

Resolution

The Board noted the Chair's report.

2.2 Directors' issues – verbal reports (Monday 9.25am to 9.40am)

The Chair invited Board Directors to provide comments or advice.

Alastair Birtles

- had met with Richard Mackay (Chair AWHAC) and discussed the rejuvenation of the committee. AWHAC are also keen to ensure that they are able to assist AWHIN in discharging their responsibilities,
- he was very pleased to be able to participate in the inaugural meeting of the WTMA Tourism network, National Landscapes committee and World Heritage Gateway steering committee, and
- advised that he had an opportunity to discuss World Heritage issues with DERM and Traditional Owners on Cape York Peninsula and they are keen to connect with AWHIN.

Ro Hill

- as a member of the Australian Landcare Council attended New Zealand's inaugural Landcare conference to gather information relevant to a number of issues, including finding ways to facilitate increased Indigenous engagement in NRM. NZ is strongly engaged in collaborative governance initiatives.
- through her NERP project is trying to align her work on indigenous co-management with a FaHCSIA funded AIATSIS project on joint management and protected areas,
- will be attending a meeting hosted by AIATSIS in Alice Springs, with a number of Australian Parks service chiefs (state and commonwealth) to consider joint management, and
- advised members that a workshop on joint management will be held at the AIATSIS Native title Conference in Townsville in June, which is celebrating 20 years since the Mabo High Court decision.

Leah Talbot

- is liaising with RAPA leadership group and understands they intend to invite the WTMA Chair and the Executive Director to a meeting with the RAPA.

The Chair invited Board Observers to provide comments or advice.

Ross MacLeod

- DERM is progressing national heritage nomination for Cooloola, and have advice from SEWPAC that they hope to provide comments on the WH nomination prepared by the end of March 2012, and
- progress for nomination of suitable areas of CYP continues, the consultation has been ramped up with release of discussion brochure and consultation with various stakeholders on the CYP. Focus has been progressing the country based planning directly through Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) and Clan groups or estates.

Jane Ambrose

- a joint international expert mission to the World Heritage property of Great Barrier Reef by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (WHC), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is taking place from 5 to 14 March 2012
- Controlled Action decisions (as defined under EPBC) for all Australian WH properties, will be sent in a quarterly report to the WHC

- a Comprehensive Strategic assessment for the GBRWHA will be undertaken as part of Australia's response to the WHC decision on the GBR. Agreements have been signed with Queensland and with GBRMPA, and the assessments are scheduled to run for the next two years.
- Riversleigh – there has been an issue with funding and the Executive Officer position is currently vacant. SEWPAC is working with Qld to resolve this, and
- processing 2012-13 CFoC applications. Hopefully in future Heritage & Wildlife Division will play a lead role in determining successful applications.

Paul Martyn

- is very pleased to have the opportunity to represent tourism interests at Board meetings
- provided an overview of priorities, pressures and opportunities within the tourism sector, industry and stakeholders, including the goal of doubling expenditure in tourism by 2020, and
- confirmed that FNQ tourism has a significant role to help meet targets, particularly with respect to new markets, indigenous tourism and nature-based activities.

Resolution

The Board noted the Directors' and Observers' reports.

2.3 Executive Director's report (Monday 9.40am to 10.15am)

The Authority's Executive Director, Andrew Maclean addressed the Board and provided the following updates:

- the Wet Tropics Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) has now been executed, and
- he will be meeting with members of the monitoring mission later in the week to discuss WTMA's role in relation to World Heritage management.

Resolution

The Board noted the Executive Director's report.

2.4 QPWS Wet Tropics Quarterly Activity Update (Monday 10.15am to 10.30am)

Wolf Sievers presented the Wet Tropics QPWS Activity Report (Oct-Dec 2011) to the Board and advised that

- QPWS are reviewing an exit strategy for the cassowary feeding program,
- QPWS and CVA had undertaken rehabilitation plantings at Appleyard Creek firebreak, Bilyana (Girramay NP),
- the State government handed the deeds to the 63,000ha of land in far north Queensland to its traditional owners the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people. The handover included about 15,000ha Aboriginal freehold land for community development and about 48,000ha of Aboriginal freehold land which will be dedicated as a Nature Refuge, and
- he was leaving the Wet Tropics and was transferring to Brisbane to up a new position as Director of Threatened Species.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the QPWS Wet Tropics Regional Manager's report,*

- *congratulated Andrew Millerd for being recognised for commitment and dedication to the cassowary response project following Cyclone Yasi 2012 and receiving an Australia Day Achievement Medallion,*
- *requested the Authority invite Buzz Symonds to attend the May 2012 Board meeting to present on Joint Management arrangements, and*
- *thanked Wolf Sievers for his for facilitating a very constructive and cooperative relationship between WTMA and QPWS over the time he has been in the Wet Tropics, and wished him all the best for the future.*

2.5 Community Consultative Committee (Monday 11.05am to 11.30am)

Paul Chantrill presented the CCC report on behalf of the CCC Chair and advised that the Authority proposes to seek Expressions of Interest from outside the CCC to fill the position of Chair.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the CCC minutes for 3 February 2012,*
- *noted comments received on the ‘Maximising the value of the CCC’ Board paper presented at the last Board meeting,*
- *approved arrangements for appointing a new CCC Chair and filling vacancies,*
- *thanked Moni Carlisle for her significant contributions to the World Heritage management,*
- *thanked Kirsten Lesina for her contributions to the CCC, and*
- *requested the Deputy Chair act as Chair for the April meeting pending Board appointment of a new Chair.*

2.6 Scientific Advisory Committee (Monday 11.30 to 12noon)

Prof Steve Williams thanked Dr Sue Laurance for chairing the February SAC meeting, Prof Williams tabled the draft minutes of the meeting.

The Board was very pleased to receive a peer reviewed paper on securing landscape resilience to tropical cyclones in the Wet Tropics noting that while it provided excellent overview of key NRM issues (landscape connectivity, pest and weeds), it did not consider other biodiversity issues such as fire management and non-iconic species.

Resolution

The Board

- *noted that the SAC met on 23 February 2012, and*
- *requested the SAC provide advice to the Board regarding biodiversity prioritisation effort of non-iconic species post cyclones.*

3.0 WORLD HERITAGE PROTECTION

3.1 Situation and Issues Report – Protection (Monday 12 noon to 12.20pm and Tuesday 2.25pm to 2.35pm)

Max Chappell addressed the meeting and provided an updated on the status of issues relating to the Bloomfield Road.

Resolution

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

3.2 Definition of a rainforest (Monday 12.20pm to 12.30pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the meeting and advised the revised guideline offers more detail about rainforest vegetation types than the definition in Schedule 3 of the revised Plan and these will be useful to help assess permit applications.

Resolution

That the Board approves the revised section 62 guideline 2: Definition of a rainforest at Attachment 3.2(1).

3.3 Collecting seeds and other propagules (Monday 12.30pm to 12.45pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the meeting.

Resolution

The Board:

- *approved the revised section 62 guideline for collecting seeds and other propagules (Attachment 3.3(1)), and*
- *noted that the new guideline will apply when the revised Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 becomes law.*

3.4 Translocation of fish and crustaceans (Monday 1.30pm to 1.40pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the meeting and advised that the amended Wet Tropics Management Plan will prohibit translocating a crustacean or fish under section 26(1)(c). However, section 33(o) allows the Authority to issue a permit for translocation.

The Authority has an agreement with Queensland Fisheries to take into account its expert opinion when deciding on permits for translocation and stocking.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted that the Wet Tropics bioregion has the highest freshwater fish diversity in Australia and contains many endemic species and species of high conservation value,*
- *noted that the Authority has previously agreed with Queensland Fisheries to recognise only one fish stocking activity as being established; the stocking of barramundi in Koombaloo Dam,*

- *stressed the need for continued and diligent monitoring of any stocking efforts and their impacts,*
- *approved the section 62 guidelines at Attachment 3.4(1) for assessing Wet Tropics permits for translocation of fish and crustaceans, to come into effect when the proposed amendments to the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 comes into operation, and*
- *noted the agreement to work with Fisheries Queensland on deciding permits for fish and crustacean translocation in and around the World Heritage Area.*

3.5 Cattle Grazing Policy (Monday 1.40pm to 2.10pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the meeting and advised the current policy needed to be updated to reflect changes in the Plan and management of grazing on leasehold lands.

Resolution

The Board

- *noted the SAC has previously advised that cattle grazing is generally incompatible with WHA values, and*
- *approved the revised cattle grazing policy at Attachment 3.5 (1), to become active when the revised Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 becomes law.*

3.6 Presentation (Restricted) and Management Roads (Monday 2.10pm to 2.30pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the meeting on the amendments to road classification under the Wet Tropics Management Plan, including management implications regarding permits, special values, preventing impacts, road management plans and community education and appropriate use.

Resolution

The Board:

- *pending amendment to the Wet Tropics Management Plan, endorsed the proposal to remove the requirement for a permit to use the three presentation (restricted) roads below and instead manage them under a road management agreement with QPWS*
Tinaroo Range network (Mt Edith and Kauri creek Roads)
 - *Shoteel Creek and Bridle Creek Roads (from Copperlode Dam wall to the Clohesy River fig tree)*
 - *Mount Lewis Road (from blue finch site to the forestry hut),*
- *pending amendment to the Wet Tropics Management Plan, endorsed the proposal to delegate administration of Wet Tropics to Townsville City Council for Benham's Track (a permit system may still operate),*
- *approved the amendment to section 62 guideline 8 (Attachment 3.6(1)) for use of motor vehicles on presentation (restricted) and management roads in the WTWHA (to be introduced when the Plan amendments comes into effect),*

- *noted that section 62 guideline 8 pertains to road classifications under the proposed amendments to the Wet Tropics Management Plan and that Benhams Track will remain a management road until the amendments become law, and*
- *approved the deletion of Policy 2 – Roads in the Wet Tropics WHA (Attachment 3.6 (2)).*

3.7 Offsets policy and guideline (Monday 2.30 to 3.10pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the meeting

The Board discussed issues regarding managing the WHA for cultural and scenic values. It was supportive of the approach taken and requested additional agency (state and commonwealth) consultation.

Resolution

The Board:

- *approved in principle the attached policy (Attachment 3.7 (1)) for environmental and scenic offsets in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as a basis for further agency consultation,*
- *approved the attached section 62 guidelines (Attachment 3.7 (2)) for assessing permits under the Plan, and*
- *noted that the policy and guideline are written to be implemented under the amended Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998, but can also be put into effect under the current Plan.*

3.8 EPBC Act reforms (Tuesday 9.10am to 9.25am)

Campbell Clarke briefed the Board on major reforms to the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and advised that the Authority plans to discuss a range of issues related to the administration with SEWPAC including:

- development and use of regional environment plans in the assessment of controlled actions and promotion of ecological connectivity
- liaison between the Authority and SEWPAC on assessment of impacts in and around the World Heritage Area
- development of the Australian offsets policy and its impacts on assessments and offsets in the Wet Tropics, and
- potential for accreditation of the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* under the EPBC Act. There is an agreement for the Australian government to develop guidelines.

Resolution

The Board noted the major reforms to the EPBC Act and how they may affect World Heritage management in the Wet Tropics.

4.0 WORLD HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND REHABILITATION

4.1 Situation and Issues Report – Conservation and Rehabilitation (Monday 3.10pm to 3.25pm and Tuesday 9.25am to 9.45am)

Max Chappell addressed the meeting.

Resolution

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

4.2 Conservation Strategy review and implementation (Monday 3.25pm to 4.00pm)

Campbell Clarke addressed the Board and provided a briefing on the Authority’s \$10.3M biodiversity fund proposal and the rationale for the bid (connecting WHA, climate change and community capacity).

Resolution

The Board:

- *endorsed the development of a more detailed strategy to implement connectivity priorities within and around the World Heritage Area,*
- *congratulated the wet tropics community in Wet Tropics conservation over the past eight years (Attachment 4.2 (1)),*
- *noted the draft project brief for connectivity conservation (Attachment 4.2(2)),*
- *requested the SAC be involved with the development of the connectivity conservation strategy, and*
- *noted that the review of the Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy also identified biosecurity as a major issue requiring further investigation by the Authority as to how the Authority might best prioritise its Biosecurity efforts.*

5.0 WORLD HERITAGE PRESENTATION

5.1 Situation and Issues Report – World Heritage Presentation

Paul Chantrill addressed the meeting and provided updates on relevant issues (Tuesday 9.45am to 10.10am)

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the situation report relating to ‘presentation’ issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, and*
- *requested the draft road map for progressing the Wet Tropics tourism accreditation scheme be forwarded to Board members for their information out of session.*

5.2 Branding and Communication (Tuesday 10.10 to 11.05am)

Shaun Sims addressed the Board and provided an overview of the work he has been contracted to do. Presentation provided at **Attachment 5.2 (2)**.

The Board were generally pleased by the progress to date and requested opportunities to provide additional comment out of session.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted WTMA has engaged a consultant from Capture Advertising and Marketing to undertake branding and communication work, and*
- *noted the consultant is presenting to the Board three of his deliverables including: Marketing Strategy; WTMA Brand Statements; and refreshed cassowary logo.*

6.0 ROLE IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

6.1 Situation and Issues Report – Role in the Life of the Community (Tuesday 11.15am to 11.55am)

Paul Chantrill addressed the meeting and tabled the RAPA Business Plan, Terms of Reference and Review Recommendations for the Aboriginal Plan and the Regional Agreement.

The Executive Director advised that the Authority had invited RAPA to submit proposals to WTMA for further support that could accelerate RAPA's establishment, and would also continue to work with sub-regional groups and representatives on Indigenous matters and projects.

As a member of the RAPA leadership group, Leah Talbot thanked the Board for their patience

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,; and*
- *thanked the RAPA for substantive progress made in developing their business plan.*

7.0 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

7.1 QPWS/WTMA Partnership Agreement 2011-12 – Mid year review (Tuesday 2.05pm to 2.25pm)

Andrew Maclean and Wolf Sievers addressed the meeting and advised that future the QPWS Park Plans would be reviewed by the Authority on behalf of the Board, and issues would be brought to their attention as necessary (including out of session if required).

Resolution

The Board noted the achievements to date in the 2011-12 WTMA/QPWS Partnership Agreement.

7.2 Budget and workplan – mid year review (Tuesday 11. 55am to 12.05pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting and provides updates on the work plan and budget including:

- difficulty in recruiting officers to assist with Indigenous Partnership projects,
- slow progress in the learning landscapes initiatives,
- need to recruit external skills to meet work plan commitments (*vis.* media, website, branding and communications), and
- diversion of existing staff time and resources to develop and write projects for the Commonwealth CFOC Open Grants scheme and Biodiversity Fund.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the financial status report current as at 31 January 2012 at Attachment 7.2 (1), and*
- *noted the work plan progress report at Attachment 7.2 (2).*

7.3 2012-2018 Strategic Plan Review (Tuesday 12.05pm to 12.35pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting and advised the Authority needed to be well positioned in advanced of the completion of the current round of Commonwealth funding under the CfoC program to ensure WTMA continues to attract the support from the State and Commonwealth Governments.

Planning is underway and will include discussions with key stakeholders. There will be a role for the Board in this process.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the process to be followed for the review of WTMA's strategic plan, and*
- *requested the Authority include this issue this issue at the May Board meeting, with a view to bring in an expert consultant to facilitate the conversation.*

7.4 Board Meeting dates 2012 (Tuesday 1.20pm to 1.35pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting.

Resolution

The Board decided on the 8-9 November 2012 as a suitable date for Board meeting No.91.

7.5 Special Assignment Allocations (Tuesday 1.35pm to 1.45pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting.

Resolution

The Board approved the schedule of special assignment work for Directors at Attachment 7.5 (1).

7.6 WTMA Annual Workplan 2012-13 (Tuesday 1.45pm to 2.05pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted the progress in development of the 2012-13 annual workplan and provides further comment and directions to facilitate its completion, and*
- *endorsed the draft workplan for submission to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) as part of our milestone reporting requirements to receive the final instalment of our baseline funds for the 2011-12 financial year.*

Meeting closed at 2.30pm Tuesday 13 March 2012

**1.5 Wet Tropics Amendment Management Plan 2011 – Advice of Cabinet Decision
(IN CAMERA – CONFIDENTIAL) (Monday 4.00pm to 4.50pm)**

Max Chappell addressed the Board.

Resolution

The Board:

- *noted that the Wet Tropics Amendment Management Plan 2011 (2011 Amendment Plan) was endorsed by the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council on 12 August 2011,*
- *noted that at its meeting of 31 October 2011, Cabinet considered a submission prepared by the Authority and decided to endorse that the 2011 Amendment Plan be recommended to the Governor in Council for approval subject to amendment to remove the proposed amendment to s.65 of the Amendment Plan,*
- *directed that a new amendment plan be prepared, the Wet Tropics Amendment Management Plan 2012 (2012 Amendment Plan) which retains all the amendments contained in the 2011 Amendment Plan with the exception of the proposed amendment to s.65,*
- *directed that the amendments to s.65 as proposed in the 2011 Amendment Plan also be retained with the following exception: omit 'and', insert 'or';*
- *pending the making of the above amendment and preparation of the final 2012 Amendment Plan to Ministerial Council seeking Council's recommendation to the Governor in Council for approval of the plan,*
- *noted that pending Ministerial Council's deliberations on the final 2012 Amendment Plan, the Authority will prepare a Cabinet submission seeking its endorsement that the 2012 Amendment Plan be recommended to the Governor in Council, and*
- *noted that the material in this paper must be treated as Cabinet-in-Confidence and held confidentially within the Authority.*