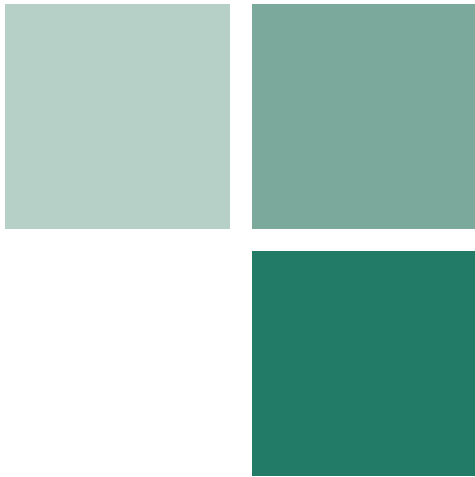




**WET
TROPICS**
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

**ANNUAL REPORT AND
STATE OF THE WET TROPICS REPORT**

2011–2012



WET TROPICS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Annual Report 2011–2012



Purpose of the report

This annual report details the financial and non-financial performance of the Wet Tropics Management Authority from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012. 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*. It also includes a report on the state of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, as required under section 63(1) of the Queensland Act and section 10 of the Commonwealth Act.

Your feedback

The annual report is an important document representing communication and accountability. The Authority values comments and welcomes feedback from readers.

This publication can be accessed and downloaded from our website at www.wettropics.gov.au

Copyright

© Wet Tropics Management Authority 2012

All images are copyright Wet Tropics Management Authority unless otherwise indicated.

Wet Tropics Management Authority
PO Box 2050
Cairns QLD 4870
Phone: (07) 4052 0555
Email: wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au

ISBN 978-1-921591-64-8

Licence



This report is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY Attribution) 3.0 Australia licence.

CC BY Licence Summary Statement: In essence, you are free to copy, communicate and adapt this annual report, as long as you attribute the work to the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

To view a copy of this licence, visit www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/deed.en.

Attribution

Content from this report should be attributed as: Wet Tropics Management Authority Annual Report and State of Wet Tropics Report 2011-12.

Disclaimer



This document has been prepared with all due diligence and care, based on the best available information at the time of publication. The Authority holds no responsibility for any errors or omissions within this document. Any decisions made by other parties based on this document are solely the responsibility of those parties.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is committed to providing accessible services to people from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding the annual report and need to access this document in a language other than English, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask them to telephone the Queensland Government Library Services on +61 7 3224 8412.

This publication can be made available in an alternative format (e.g. large print or audiotape) on request for people with vision impairment; phone +61 7 3224 8412 or email library@eph.qld.gov.au

This report is printed on Monza Recycled paper stock, Certified Carbon Neutral by The Carbon Reduction Institute (CRI) in accordance with the global Greenhouse Gas Protocol and ISO 14040 framework. The Lifecycle Analysis (LCA) for Monza Recycled is cradle to grave, including Scopes 1, 2 and 3. It has FSC Mix Certification with its 55% recycled content.



27 September 2012

The Honourable Andrew Powell MP
Chair, Wet Tropics Ministerial Council
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection
Level 13
400 George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the Annual Report and State of the Wet Tropics Report 2011-2012 for the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

I certify this Annual Report and State of the Wet Tropics 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*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the Annual Report requirements for Queensland Government agencies.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be accessed at <http://www.wettropics.gov.au/corporate-home>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P Valentine".

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority

Contents

Wet Tropics Management Authority Annual Report 2011–2012

Highlights from the Chair	4
Introduction	8
Administration of the Act	10
Planning and Conservation Program	20
Communities and Partnerships Program	30
Business Management Program	38
Terms and Abbreviations	46

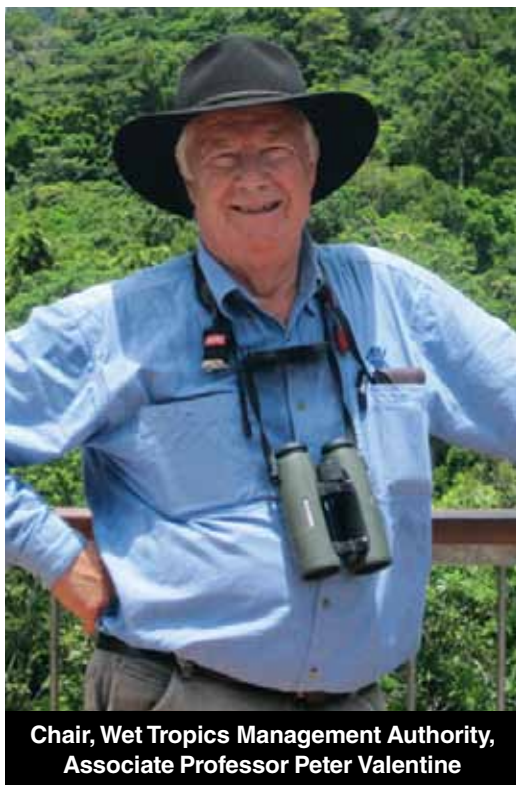
State of the Wet Tropics Report 2011–2012

Executive Summary	50
Introduction	53
Involvement, collaboration and participation	56
Governance (legislation, policies, strategies and coordination)	66
Human and community well-being, and environmental values and services	68
Research, education and knowledge application	71
Tourism and interpretation	76
Shaping the future	78
Footnotes	81



Highlights from The Chair





The Wet Tropics of Queensland is one of the World's outstanding natural landscapes. Its extraordinary diversity, beauty and scientific significance was recognised in 1988 through inscription of the Area on the World Heritage Register.

As a consequence of the listing of the Wet Tropics of Queensland as a World Heritage Area, Australia accepted an international duty for the protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the Area. The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) has the great privilege of assisting the Queensland and Australian Governments in meeting that obligation.

The Authority's role is diverse. As well as protecting the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) through administration of the Wet Tropics Management Plan, the Authority promotes scientific research and sharing of knowledge; works to improve the well-being of Rainforest Aboriginal people; seeks to give the Area a role

in the life of the community and works to support sustainable tourism in the World Heritage Area.

2011-12 represents another successful year for the Authority and its partners in World Heritage management. Some of the highlights of the year are summarised below.

Supporting the State and Commonwealth Governments

The Authority welcomed the appointment of Queensland Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, the Honourable Andrew Powell MP, following the Queensland State election in March 2012. Minister Powell took an early interest in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the work of the Authority.

The Wet Tropics Ministerial Council met in August 2011 in Brisbane. Two key items of business were the approval of amendments to the Wet Tropics Management Plan and agreement to a revision to the Management Scheme Intergovernmental Agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.

Building strong partnerships

The Authority depends absolutely on a variety of partnerships and collaborations in the delivery of its programs. All of our partners are important to us, but I take this opportunity to particularly acknowledge and thank Terrain NRM, James Cook University, CSIRO, the Australian Tropical Herbarium, the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance (and its constituent community organisations), Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Biosecurity Queensland, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre and the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities. We look forward to continuing strong

collaborations with these organisations and continuing to grow our connections in the future.

New Directors

I welcomed the appointment during the year of Dr Rosemary Hill and Ms Leah Talbot as Directors of the Authority. Both women bring very considerable knowledge of the Wet Tropics region and of heritage management and are already making a very positive contribution to the governance of the Authority.

Supporting Rainforest Aboriginal people

2011-12 was a year of transition for the Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics as communities developed new forms of engagement and governance.

The emergence of the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance provides a potentially valuable partner and pathway for the Authority's engagement with the 18 Rainforest Aboriginal tribal groups. The Authority was pleased to provide support and advice to the Alliance in its establishment phase and looks forward to a steadily strengthening relationship.

The Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement provides for the preparation of community development plans that will enable re-settlement of traditional lands within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. After an extensive process of consultation with the clan and family groups involved, the Authority was very pleased to complete several of these plans. Authority Director Leah Talbot, herself a member of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji community, represented the Authority at ceremonies celebrating completion of these plans.

Strengthening Wet Tropics tourism

The Authority recognises and values the critical importance of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to the wet tropics tourism industry and in turn, the far north Queensland economy.

The Authority collaborated with industry and community partners to have the Wet Tropics included as one of Australia's 'National Landscapes'. I have been pleased to observe the leadership shown by the Authority in ensuring our partners are involved in this valuable program, which has resulted in a prominent place for the Wet Tropics in international tourism promotions.

The Authority, with funding support from the Queensland Government, has completed a pre-feasibility study for a World Heritage gateway for Cairns. If established, this gateway would play an important role in Wet Tropics tourism by interpreting the values of the World Heritage Area and orienting visitors to the diverse opportunities provided in the region. The results of the study will provide a basis for further work in support of this important concept.

In partnership with the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, the Authority has completed and commenced implementation of a package of training for tour guides working in the Wet Tropics. Already more than 65 guides have completed the training. The Authority plans to continue to support their professional development through workshops and other activities conducted in partnership with the industry. The outcomes of this work will contribute to the reputation of the Wet Tropics as a high quality tourism destination.

Protecting World Heritage values

Two significant new risks to the outstanding universal value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area came into prominence during the year. A large infestation of yellow crazy ant was detected at Edmonton, south of Cairns, which extended into the adjacent World Heritage Area. In response, the Authority formed a partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia and Biosecurity Queensland to secure grant funds for a project that will systematically search

World Heritage Area boundaries for the presence of the ants.

The Authority watched with alarm the northward spread of myrtle rust towards the Wet Tropics and was disappointed to receive reports of numerous outbreaks of the disease from about April 2012. I have written to State and Commonwealth Ministers urging that our national performance in the management of this disease be reviewed and that a higher priority be afforded to disease risks affecting natural environments.

Building and sharing rainforest knowledge

The Authority took an active role in the establishment of the Tropical Ecosystems Hub for the National Environment Research Program. Using the Wet Tropics Research Strategy as a primary guide, the Authority provided advice on priorities for investment and mechanisms for knowledge transfer. The Authority continues to support implementation by chairing the Rainforest Implementation Group and serving on the Hub steering committee.

Engaging the community in World Heritage conservation

The Authority continues to support the Tablelands community in the *Making Connections* project, which is strengthening connections between remnant vegetation in and around the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Authority was delighted that the value of the project received national recognition as a 'climate change champion' by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility. The award recognised the strength of the community collaboration in the project as well as its strong scientific underpinnings.

During the year, the Authority refreshed its Cassowary logo and made substantial progress towards

renewing the Wet Tropics website. The website is a vital communication tool, sharing knowledge about the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, the Authority and other partners in management. The new website enhances the Authority's capacity to communicate and engage with the Wet Tropics community.

The Authority took the opportunity to meet with local government leaders when it met in Malanda and Ingham during the year. Local government is a vital partner in the protection and management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. New leaders were elected to several councils during the course of the year and the Authority looks forward to building mutually supportive relationships.

I take this opportunity to thank my fellow Directors and Authority staff for their efforts in support of another successful year.



Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority



Introduction



The World Heritage List includes 962 properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value. These include 745 cultural, 188 natural and 29 mixed properties. As of June 2012, 189 State Parties have ratified the World Heritage Convention.

Australia became a signatory in 1974 and at 30 June 2012 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 World Heritage Area' or 'the Area') has outstanding natural values, meeting all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing and fulfilling the necessary conditions of integrity. The Wet Tropics of Queensland is considered to:

- contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance - *Criteria (vii)*
- be an outstanding examples representing the major stages of Earth's history, including the record of life, and significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features - *Criteria (viii)*
- be an outstanding example representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals - *Criteria (ix)*
- contain the most important significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing

threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation
- *Criteria (x)*.

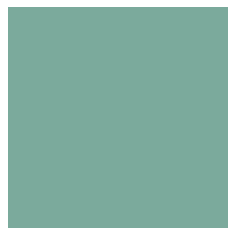
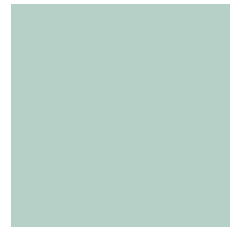
In May 2007 the Area was also listed on Australia's National Heritage List. The Area was listed for the five National Heritage criteria which correspond to its World Heritage criteria. It is intended that, over time and subject to resources available, the Wet Tropics of Queensland will be reassessed for its full range of National Heritage values. The criteria are:

- the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history - *Criteria (a)*
- the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history - *Criteria (b)*
- the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history - *Criteria (c)*
- the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of (i)
- a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or (ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments - *Criteria (d)*
- the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group - *Criteria (e)*.



Administration of the Act

- Enabling legislation
- The Wet Tropics Management Authority
- Statutory reporting obligations
- Management structure
- Committees and liaison groups



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 Agreement was adopted in 2011.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority

The Wet Tropics Management Authority ('the Authority') was set up to ensure Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention is met in relation to the Area. It is funded by the Australian Government and the Queensland Government, reporting to both on its performance against agreed outcomes. 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 Queensland and Australian 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.

The Authority must perform its functions in a way that is consistent with the protection of the natural heritage values of the Area. Subject to this requirement, in performing its functions, the Authority must, as far as practicable, have regard to the Aboriginal tradition of, and liaise and cooperate with, Aboriginal people particularly concerned with land in 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 with the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment.

Statutory reporting obligations

Each year the Wet Tropics Management Authority prepares a report on the administration of the Act during the year, financial statements for the year, and a report on the state of the Area, as required under section 63(1) of the Queensland Act and section 10 of the Commonwealth Act.

Management structure

The intergovernmental agreement provides for, *inter alia*, the establishment of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council, consisting of Commonwealth and State Ministers. Its function is to coordinate policy and funding for the Area.

In August 2011 the intergovernmental agreement was updated to reflect the decision of the Council of Australian Governments to abolish property specific Ministerial Councils, including the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council, and to make other minor amendments required to ensure the Agreement remains current and relevant. The amended agreement continues to recognise that both the Queensland and the Commonwealth have joint interests in and responsibilities for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.

Subject to amendment of the Queensland Act, several of the functions of Ministerial Council will be re-allocated to a Ministerial Committee, comprising the Commonwealth and Queensland Environment Ministers acting in cooperation. Other functions will be discharged by either the Queensland or Commonwealth Minister.

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

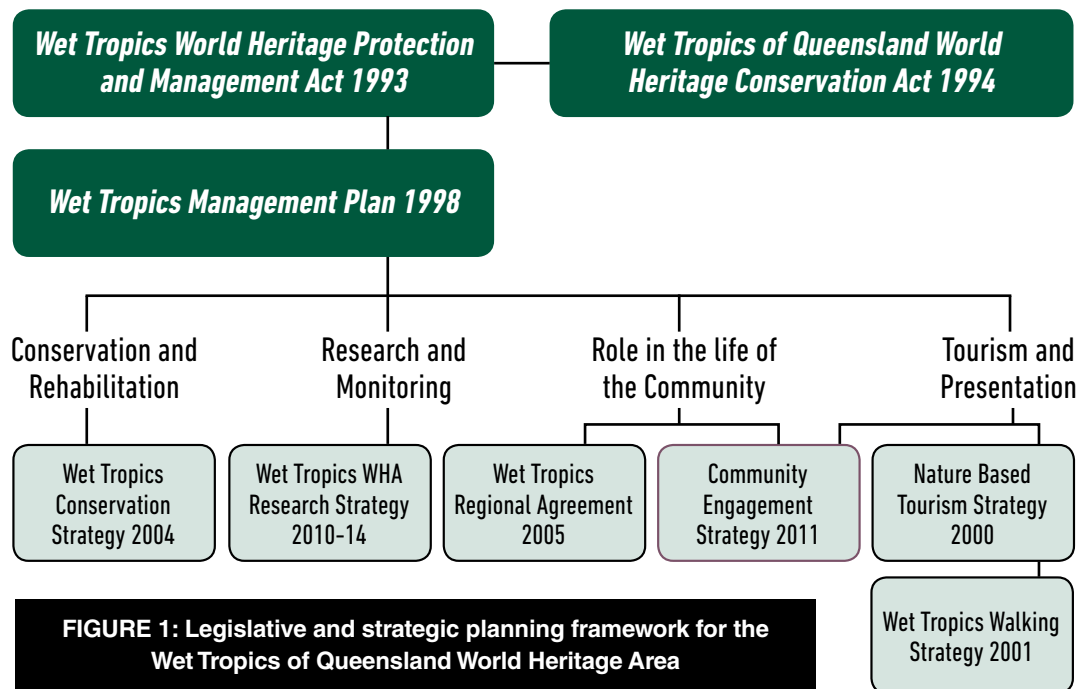
Ministerial Council. The Executive Director of the Authority is a non-voting Board Director. The Board's key function is to implement programs to meet Australia's international obligations for the Area under the World Heritage Convention.

The Authority operates as an administrative unit within the Queensland Government 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.

The Authority has two statutory advisory committees appointed by the Board under the Queensland Act. They are the Community Consultative Committee and the Scientific Advisory Committee. These committees meet quarterly prior to Board meetings and advise the Authority on programs and research for the management of the Area.

The Authority is a small organisation and works in partnership with other agencies, stakeholders and the wider community. The Authority has produced a range of strategic policy and planning documents which guide management of the World Heritage Area, consistent with its legislative responsibilities. Figure 1 provides an overview of the Authority's legislative and strategic planning framework.

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 and pest control are the responsibility of the relevant land managers which include the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, infrastructure service providers for power, water and roads and nine local governments. The local government areas which include parts of the Wet Tropics World Heritage include (Map 1):

- Cairns Regional Council
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Charters Towers Regional Council
- Cook Shire Council
- Hinchinbrook Shire Council
- Tablelands Regional Council
- Townsville City Council
- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Community Council
- Yarrabah Aboriginal Community Council.

An annual partnership agreement is developed each year between the Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing) 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 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service under funding provided by the Queensland Government for World Heritage management.

The Authority also works in partnership with the regional community as a means of building a sense of ownership and sharing both the benefits and burdens of sound management. In particular, the Authority consults with the community, both through its committees and directly and extensively on matters with significant community impact, such as management plans.

Wet Tropics Ministerial Council
Appointment to the Ministerial Council is for the duration of term of office.

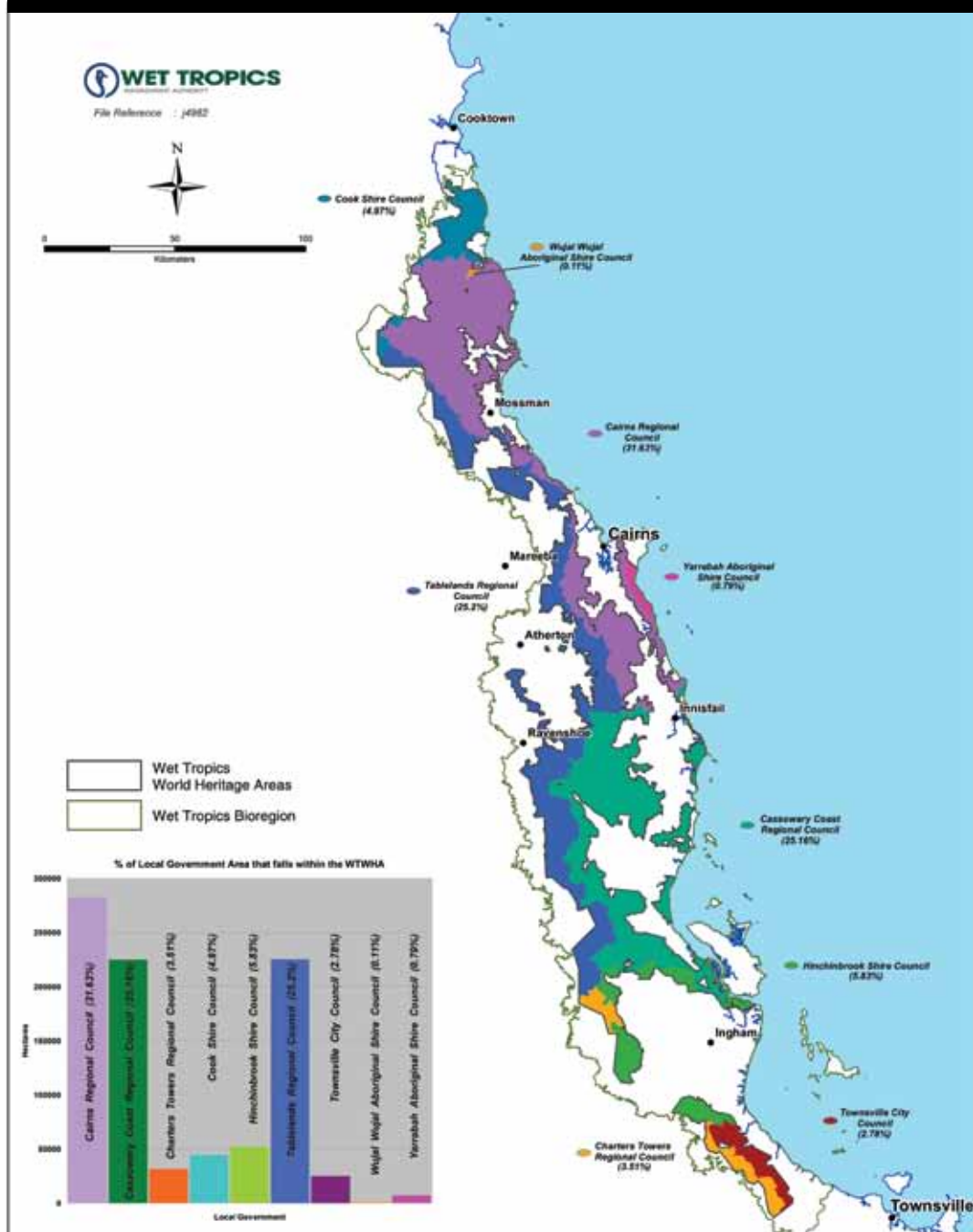
The 22nd Wet Tropics Ministerial Council was held in Brisbane, 12 August 2011. Ministerial Council members at the time of the meeting comprised:

- The Hon Vicky Darling MP, Queensland Minister for Environment (Chair)
- The Hon Tony Burke MP, Australian Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

- The Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP, Australian Minister for Tourism
- The Hon Jan Jarratt MP, Queensland Minister for Tourism, Manufacturing and Small Business.

Following the Queensland State election in March 2012, the Queensland Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, the Honourable Andrew Powell MP became Chair of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council.

MAP 1: Local Government Areas which include the Wet Tropics Heritage Area



Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors

As at June 2012 the Board of Directors comprised:

- Associate Peter Valentine (*Chair*)
- Mr Andrew Maclean (*Executive Director*)
- Dr Alastair Birtles
- Cr Julia Leu
- Dr Rosemary Hill
- Ms Leah Talbot.

The Authority welcomed the appointment in February 2012 of two new Directors, Ms Leah Talbot and Dr Rosemary Hill. One (indigenous) directorship was vacant as at 30 June 2012.

The Authority's Board met quarterly or as required. Four Board meetings were held during the year on: 8-9 August 2012 in Malanda, including a field trip to the Atherton Tablelands; 31 October 2011; 12-13 March 2012; and 21-22 May 2012 in Ingham.

The overall cost of the Board in 2011-2012 was \$37,602. This included meeting fees, special assignment fees, all necessary and reasonable travel expenses, venue hire, catering and other general operating costs.

Wet Tropics Management Authority organisation and management structure

The Authority comprises three programs which work cooperatively to manage the World Heritage Area (Figure 2).

Committees and liaison groups Community Consultative Committee

The members of the Community Consultative Committee are selected to represent a broad range of community views and expertise from throughout the Wet Tropics region. A significant number of the committee members are landholders within the area or live on neighbouring properties. Their interests and skills include conservation, education, tourism, recreation, local government, Aboriginal culture, science and primary industries. Due to other work commitments and responsibilities, three members, including the Chair, Ms Moni Carlisle, resigned from the Community Consultative Committee during the first half of 2012. At 30 June 2012 membership comprised:

- Ms Bryony Barnett (*Deputy Chair*), Tolga
- Mrs Pam Birkett, Cairns
- Mr Greg Bruce, Townsville
- Mr Pino Giandomenico, Ingham
- Mr Eden Gray-Spence, Cairns
- Mr John Hardacker, Innisfail
- Ms Darlene Irvine, Cairns
- Mr Dean Nulty, Cairns
- Ms Joann Schmider, Cairns



Associate Professor
Peter Valentine



Mr Andrew Maclean



Dr Alastair Birtles



Cr Julia Leu



Dr Ro Hill



Ms Leah Talbot

- Ms Doon McCool (representing the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority) (*Observer*)
- Mr Bruce Rampton (representing Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing) (*Observer*).

The Community Consultative Committee met on: 15 July 2011; 7 October 2011; 3 February 2012; and 20 April 2012. The Community Consultative Committee cost \$1,908.00 to operate, mostly for catering, venue hire and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses and travel expenses. Members do not receive sitting fees.

Scientific Advisory Committee

Members of the Scientific Advisory Committee come from a broad range of disciplines including the natural, ecological, socio-cultural and economic sciences. Most are actively involved in tropical research programs in the Wet Tropics region and northern Australia. At 30 June 2012 the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee were:

- Professor Steve Williams, Director, Centre for Tropical Biology and Climate Change, James Cook University (*Chair*)
- Dr Susan Laurance, Tropical Leader in Rainforest Ecology, James Cook University (*Deputy Chair*)
- Dr Damien Burrows, Centre for Tropical Water and Aquatic Ecosystem Research, TropWater
- Professor Carla Catterall, Environmental Futures Centre, Griffith University
- Professor Darren Crayn, Director Australian Tropical Herbarium
- Dr Miriam Goosem, Principal Research Fellow, James Cook University
- Dr Alex Kutt, Adjunct Associate Professor, James Cook University
- Ms Henrietta Marrie, Adjunct Senior Fellow, United Nations University and Adjunct Professor, James Cook University

- Dr Dan Metcalfe, CSIRO Ecosystem Services
- Mr Andrew Millerd (representing Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing)
- Dr Lea Scherl, Vice-Chair, Oceania, IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy
- Professor Jeff Sayer, Professor of Conservation and Development Practice, James Cook University
- Mr Gerry Turpin, Queensland Herbarium, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection
- Dr Christine Williams, Assistant Director General, Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts
- Dr David Westcott, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems

Members of the Scientific Advisory Committee met on: 7 October 2012; 23 February 2012; and 10 May 2012. The SAC cost \$7,850 to operate, mostly for catering, venue hire and reimbursements for out of pocket and travel expenses. Members do not receive sitting fees.

Conservation Sector Liaison Group

The function of the Conservation Sector Liaison Group (CSLG) is to provide conservation sector input to the Authority in relation to key conservation challenges associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area; to channel information and opinion between the conservation sector and the Authority; and to facilitate and support implementation of the Authority's conservation agenda. In turn, the conservation sector, through the CSLG, has the opportunity to be effectively engaged in providing timely input into the development of policies and strategies to address these key challenges.

The CSLG met four times during the year on: 17 October 2011; 7 December 2011; 26 March 2012; and 18 June 2012. The Authority provides secretariat

support for the CSLG, including provision of meeting facilities, catering, and out-of-pocket travel expenses for members whose organisations or community conservation groups cannot cover those costs.

Members of the CSLG are appointed on a three-year term. The current CSLG was appointed in August 2011 for a three-year term. At 10 June 2012 members included:

- Ms Sarah Hoyal, Cairns and Far North Environment Centre (*Chair*)
- Mr Peter Smith, Wildlife Preservation Society Qld (*Deputy Chair*)
- Dr Alice Crabtree, Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Dr Sigrid Heise-Pavlov, Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group
- Mr Tony Jurgensen, Johnstone Ecological Society
- Mr Glenn Kvassay, Quoll Seekers Network
- Mr Jeremy Little, The Wilderness Society
- Ms Margaret Moorhouse, North Queensland Conservation Council and the Alliance to Save Hinchinbrook
- Mr Patrick Pearlman, Environmental Defender's Office
- Ms. Deborah Pergolotti, Frog Decline Reversal Project
- Mr Peter Rowles, Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation
- Ms Rowena Grace, Terrain NRM (*Observer*)
- Mr Andrew Millerd, Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (*Observer*)
- Mr Travis Sydes, FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (*Observer*)
- Mr Michael Graham, Biosecurity Queensland (*Observer*)

In 2011-12, the cost for convening CSLG meetings was \$2,210. Costs incurred were primarily for catering purposes and out-of-pocket travel expenses of members. Members do not receive sitting fees.

Wet Tropics Tourism Network

The Wet Tropics Tourism Network provides a key point of contact between the Wet Tropics Management Authority and tourism operators who utilize the World Heritage Area. Meetings provide a formal channel of communication where participants advise and provide comment to Wet Tropics on policy directions, projects and strategies, specifically regarding tourism.

The focus of the Network is to facilitate partnerships and cooperation in presenting World Heritage Values and as a result, further strengthening and developing the Wet Tropics tourism industry. The Tourism Network comprises representatives from the tourism industry, local operators, local and state government agencies, local conservation groups and Rainforest Aboriginal people. Over 100 individuals and organisations are on the mail list to participate at meetings, and participants choose to attend meetings that are of interest to them.

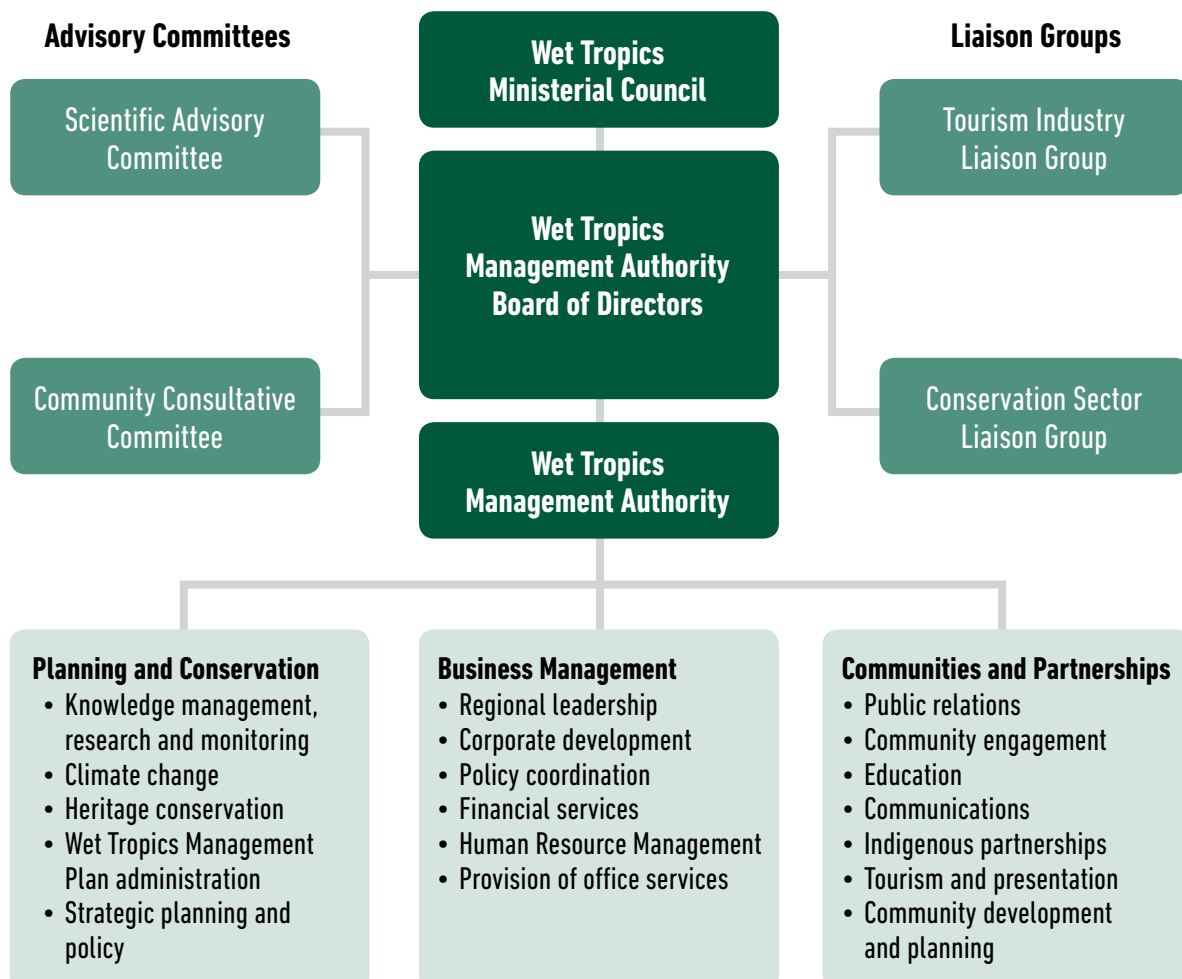
Members of the Wet Tropics Tourism Network met on: 6 September 2011; 14 February 2012; and 1 May 2012. The cost of running the group was \$1,910 and included catering and reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses and travel expenses. Members of the Wet Tropics Tourism Network do not receive sitting fees.

At 30 June 2012 the Wet Tropics Tourism Network organisational membership included the following representative organisations (excluding local and state government organisations, individuals and private tour operator businesses):

- The Alliance for Sustainable Tourism
- Australian Tourism Export Council
- Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Inc.
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Far North Queensland Tourism Operators Association

- Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation
- NQ Indigenous Tourism Alliance
- Gulf Savannah Tourism Network
- Mission Beach Community Association
- Mission Beach Tourism
- Queensland Tourism Industry Corporation
- Tableland Promotion Bureau
- Tourism Daintree Coast, Port Douglas and Daintree
- Tourism Operators and Business Magnetic Island
- Tourism Port Douglas Daintree
- Tourism Kuranda
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland
- Townsville Enterprise Limited
- Tropical Coast Tourism
- Yalanjiwarra Jalunji Marrjanga Aboriginal Corporation

FIGURE 2: Wet Tropics organisation and management structure





Long tailed pygmy possum



Planning and Conservation Program

- World Heritage protection
- World Heritage conservation and rehabilitation
- World Heritage knowledge management, research and reporting
- Knowledge management and delivery



The Planning and Conservation Program comprises staff with skills in environmental planning and assessment, permits and regulations, environmental monitoring and reporting and knowledge brokering and communication. The Planning and Conservation Program is responsible for the delivery of the following projects:

- World Heritage protection
- World Heritage conservation and rehabilitation
- World Heritage knowledge management, research and reporting

World Heritage protection Wet Tropics Management Plan and permit administration

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

The Planning and Conservation Program also provides advice on development proposals, including those outside the Area that may affect the Area's natural and cultural values. Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) staff work closely with landholders, local governments and other service providers to manage infrastructure and development issues and to improve weed and feral animal control. Key project objectives include:

- implementation of strategies that protect the Area from adverse impacts of development and use
- developing strategies that support

the conservation and rehabilitation of the Area

- engaging key partners in management roles that support the protection of World Heritage values consistent with the World Heritage Convention and associated Australian and Queensland Wet Tropics legislation.

Assessment of Wet Tropics permit applications

Authority staff assessed and issued permits under the Plan to the following agencies:

- Townsville Water for vegetation clearing at Paluma Saddle Dam
- Townsville City Council for the replacement of the Birthday Creek bridge
- Cairns Regional Council for the installation of rock fall barriers at Barron Gorge Road and the construction of a viewing platform at Crystal Cascades
- Powerlink Queensland for the construction of the Ingham to Tully 275kVA electricity transmission line and power poles adjacent the switchyard at Kareeya hydro electricity power station
- Department of Transport and Main Roads for the construction of road works at Tin Creek on the Captian Cook Highway and batter stabilisation on the Kuranda Range section of the Kennedy Highway and also on the Gillies Highway
- Ergon Energy for the construction of a telecommunication tower at Mt Mackay
- Djabugay Guided Tours Aboriginal Corporation for the construction of a walking track near Skyrail's Barron Falls Station.

A number of agencies were issued with new permits to allow them to continue to maintain their infrastructure in the World Heritage Area including Department of Transport and Main Roads, Cairns Regional Council,

Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Charters Towers Regional Council, Cook Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Tablelands Regional Council, Townsville City Council, Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, Ergon Energy, Stanwell Corporation, Powerlink Queensland, Broadcast Australia Pty Ltd, Queensland Police Service, Black and White (Quick Service) Taxis Ltd.

Authority staff continue to assess other development proposals including proposals by Department of Transport and Main Roads for batter stabilisation works on the Captain Cook and Gillies Highways.

Minor and inconsequential activities

Activities deemed to be of minor and inconsequential impact under the Plan do not require a Wet Tropics permit to be issued. One permit application was assessed by staff during 2011-2012 and deemed to be minor and inconsequential in terms of the impact the proposed activity would have on the Area's integrity. That proposal was from Powerlink Queensland for the construction of new optic fibre cables on the Chalumbin to Kareeya powerline.

Staff also reviewed and provided advice regarding proposals that were also deemed to have only minor and inconsequential impacts on the Area. These included:

- Ergon Energy for access to transmission lines at Yule Point and the replacement of an underground electricity transmission line near Copperlode Dam
- Commonwealth Department of Defence for the upgrade of training facilities at Tully Training Area
- Hinchinbrook Shire Council for minor batter stabilisation on the Wallaman Falls Road
- Department of Transport and Main Roads for track access at Yule Point
- Cairns Regional Council for stabilisation works on the Lake

Morris water reserve track

- Queensland Rail for the installation of radio repeater facilities adjacent to the Kuranda railway.

Wet Tropics permits issued by the Department of Environment and Resource Management

The former Department of Environment and Resource Management issued 206 permits under Part 6 of the Plan for the use of motor vehicles on presentation restricted roads and management roads.

Training of conservation officers

All conservation officers under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* have, by virtue of their office, the power to undertake investigation and enforcement activities in relation to the Plan. Staff from the Authority conducted training for Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) officers on their responsibilities as authorised officers under the provisions of the Plan.

Compliance

On 1 October 2011 a contractor to Queensland Rural Fire Service constructed a fire break within the Girramay National Park, within the World Heritage Area, and also across adjacent freehold land due to the threat the fire posed to three residential properties. The construction of the fire break resulted in impacts to soil and to watercourses and disproportionate clearing of vegetation.

At the request of the Authority, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) reviewed this incident with Queensland Rural Fire Service and reported that lessons have been learnt by all parties which should help improve future fire control activities within the World Heritage Area. Some on-ground rehabilitation was later carried out by QPWS which included the planting of 700 seedlings.

Cooperative Management Agreements

The Authority developed a Cooperative Management Agreement under section 43 of the Plan with James Cook University regarding the construction of a 40 metre steel lattice tower at Robson Creek in Danbulla National Park. The tower with its associated scientific instrumentation will allow the collection of data to monitor energy, water and carbon balance. In conjunction with measurements of soil and weather, and the long term monitoring of vegetation in an associated rainforest site, it is expected that the study will improve the understanding of the relationship between biophysical parameters and vegetation growth. The data being collected at Robson Creek will also contribute to a global network of similar instrumented monitoring sites.

Bloomfield to Cape Tribulation Road planning study

The Cairns Regional Council agreed to undertake a whole-of-road planning study for the future management and use of the Bloomfield to Cape Tribulation Road. This study, fulfilling a condition of a previously issued permit, is required by the Authority as a basis for consideration of any further permit applications to upgrade the road.

Wet Tropics Management Plan review

A Wet Tropics Amendment Management Plan was prepared following completion of the first 10-yearly review of the Plan. However, the approval process for the Amendment Plan was not completed prior to Queensland State Government elections being called in early 2012. The Authority expects to complete the Amendment Plan during 2012-13.

World Heritage conservation and rehabilitation

'Making Connections' project

In 2010 the Authority was successful in securing \$600,000 from the Australian Government's *Caring for Our Country* initiative for a project referred to as

'Making Connections: Building Landscape Resilience to Climate Change in the Wet Tropics Landscape'. Scientific modelling has shown that improving connectivity in the cool, high areas of the Southern Atherton Tablelands could help build the resilience of the region to climate change and provide a refuge for the unique plants and animals of the Wet Tropics that are sensitive to rising temperatures.

This 3-year project is a collaborative exercise involving multiple partners. The project was officially launched at the Authority's Board meeting in Malanda in August 2011 followed by a tree-planting at East Evelyn involving participating private land holders and project partners including Tablelands Regional Council (TRC), Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA), Trees for Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands (TREAT), the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group (TKMG), Malanda Landcare, QPWS, Griffith University and University of Queensland.

With the assistance of the QPWS in facilitating relationships with landholders and contractors, nearly 19,000 trees of over 100 species have been planted along Rock Road and East Evelyn Road by TRC, CVA's *Better Earth* programme and more than 120 volunteers from the School for Field Studies and community groups like TREAT and TKMG. To date, 6.5 hectares have been replanted, and over 2.5 kilometres of fencing has been erected to protect plantings from cattle. Two pasture conversion plots have been established by Dr Carla Catterall (Griffith University) to trial low-cost methods of encouraging natural regeneration. Five microhabitat plots have been established by Dr Luke Shoo (University of Queensland) with assistance from CVA to encourage faster re-colonisation of small ground-dwelling animals like frogs and skinks.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and CSIRO recognised this 'Making Connections' project as their Community Champion award for 2012, one of four national Climate Change Champion awards. Dr Luke Shoo and nature refuge owner Mr Dave Hudson attended the National Adaptation Conference in Melbourne and accepted the award on behalf of all project partners.

Biosecurity threats to World Heritage values

Tramp ants

Electric ants (*Wasmannia auropunctata*) and yellow crazy ants (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) are among the world's 100 most invasive species and pose a significant risk to the Area should they become established. Both have been present in restricted locations in the Cairns region for several years and Biosecurity Queensland has been continuing surveillance and control measures to seek to eradicate these areas of infestation.

In early 2012, yellow crazy ants were detected just inside the World Heritage Area for the first time, in Little Mulgrave National Park near Edmonton. It is believed this Edmonton infestation was most likely the result of ant-infested vegetation being dumped, potentially after Tropical Cyclone Yasi, and spreading over a year across 230 hectares of farmland and forest.

The Authority recognises the support and timely action of Biosecurity Queensland in commencing biosecurity measures to seek to eradicate this incursion as a matter of priority, before it can become established in the World Heritage rainforests. Methoprene, an ant growth inhibitor is being used and was spread via helicopter in June 2012. Further treatments will be carried out during 2012-13.

In order to support Biosecurity Queensland in their efforts to raise

awareness of, and to control tramp ants, the Authority arranged for media exposure about the threat and produced a short video on yellow crazy ants to help people to identify them and encourage reporting of any sightings.

The Authority also submitted a funding application to the Australian Government's *Caring for our Country* program on behalf of Biosecurity Queensland and Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) to intensively survey the boundary of the World Heritage Area for tramp ant infestations between Palm Cove and Edmonton, and around Bingil Bay near Mission Beach. This will enable CVA (trained by Biosecurity Queensland) to lead teams of volunteers to survey for electric and yellow crazy ant infestations, and to raise community awareness of the impact they can have on the unique flora and fauna of the Wet Tropics, humans, pets, and rural livelihoods.

Myrtle rust

Myrtle rust (*Puccinia psidii*) is a fungal disease which poses a very serious threat to the outstanding universal value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. It affects plants of the *Myrtaceae* family, including gum trees (*Eucalyptus spp.*), paperbarks (*Melaleuca spp.*), tea trees (*Leptospermum spp.*), bottle brushes (*Callistemon spp.*), lilly pillies (*Syzygium spp.*) and turpentine (*Rhodamnia spp.*). More than 200 species of myrtle are found in the Wet Tropics, with the warm, humid climate providing ideal conditions for its requirements.

Native to South America, myrtle rust was first detected in Australia in April 2010 on the central coast of New South Wales. It was then detected in south eastern Queensland and more recently in the Cairns region. In April 2012, myrtle rust was detected in the Area at Mossman Gorge National Park and by June 2012 had been detected in a number of national parks across the Wet Tropics from Cape Tribulation in the north to



south of Ingham and west to Ravenshoe. While it may be many years before the full impact of the disease is realised, the Authority is concerned about the major threat it poses on the Area's World Heritage values, as well as the apparent shortcomings of Australia's biosecurity system which has failed to prevent the rapid spread of the rust through eastern Australia's native forests.

The Authority will continue to work with the Queensland and Australian Governments to seek research funding to help better understand the relative susceptibility of Wet Tropics species to the disease; what parts of the landscape may be more or less susceptible to infection, and what quarantine and control measures might be effective at a local scale.

National parks planning and management

The Authority provided comments and submissions to the State's masterplan for protected areas, forests and wildlife '*Naturally Queensland 2020*'. The Authority also liaised and provided advice to DERM in relation to the preparation of a number of management plans for national parks in the Area.

The Authority also prepared and produced a '*Fire knows no boundaries*' brochure for distribution by the Cairns Hillslopes Committee, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and Cairns Regional Council. The brochure is designed to help inform the public, especially those with properties adjacent protected areas, about the need for controlled burns and where to get further information.

Local Government planning

The Authority provided advice and recommendations in relation to preparation of local government planning schemes for the Cassowary Coast, Tablelands and Cairns Regional Councils and the Cook Shire Council.

Working with the community Cassowary Recovery Team

The Authority continues to chair and provide secretariat support for the Cassowary Recovery Team which oversees implementation of the Recovery Plan for the Southern Cassowary under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).



In early 2012, Authority staff assisted the Cassowary Recovery Team to develop a dedicated website cassowaryrecoveryteam.org as a central resource for anyone interested in cassowary conservation in Australia. The site incorporates information about southern cassowaries, where to see them, how to report sightings, educational resources, cassowary news, meeting agendas, and how to be 'cass-o-wary' and support conservation efforts.

World Heritage knowledge management, research and reporting

World Heritage Reporting United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation Periodic Report

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) requires the preparation of World Heritage Periodic Reports every six years on a regional basis. Australia is part of the Asia-Pacific reporting region. The Periodic Report is the primary reporting and evaluation mechanism for all World Heritage properties. The Authority submitted its Periodic Report on the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (via the Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities) to the

World Heritage Centre in 2011.

The compiled Periodic Report for the Asia-Pacific region was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its thirty-sixth session (24 June - 6 July 2012).

World Heritage Retrospective Inventory

In 2010-2011 the World Heritage nomination files of Asian and Pacific World Heritage properties which were inscribed on the World Heritage List pre-1999 were reviewed by the World Heritage Centre. The reason for this review was because prior to 1999, inventories and baseline data on these earlier properties was not gathered in a systematic or consistent way. This review resulted in the Authority being requested to provide a retrospective 'Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as well as an accurate map depicting the boundaries of the property.

The Authority subsequently prepared these retrospective products which are based on the information provided in the original nomination document and the original International Union for Conservation of Nature, (IUCN) assessment reports for the Wet Tropics. At its 36th session, the World Heritage Committee (Saint Petersburg 24 June -

6 July 2012) formally adopted the Wet Tropics of Queensland retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. At the same time the Committee adopted the improved Wet Tropics of Queensland boundary mapping as prepared by the Authority.

Research Partnerships

Scientific Advisory Committee

The Planning and Conservation program continued to support the Authority's Scientific Advisory Committee. During the year major issues where SAC advice was sought included: the development of the Wet Tropics Learning Landscape Roadmap; biosecurity issues; amendments to guidelines and policies associated with the review of the Wet Tropics Management Plan; Caring for Our Country funding submissions; connectivity conservation priorities; fire management and State of the Wet Tropics reporting.

National Environmental Research Program

The Australian Government's National Environmental Research Program (NERP) funds a portfolio of public good environmental research throughout Australia. The NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub, administered by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), is addressing issues of concern for the management, conservation and sustainable use of the Wet Tropics, Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait regions through the generation and transfer of research findings and knowledge.

The Authority is represented on the NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub Steering Committee and also chairs and is represented on the NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub Rainforest Implementation Group.

Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network

The Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) is supported by the Australian Government through the

National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy and the Super Science Initiative. TERN provides infrastructure and procedures through which a wide array of ecosystem research data and knowledge can be stored, accessed and analysed. It provides a set of dedicated observation sites, standardised measurement methodologies, equipment and data.

TERN is establishing two Rainforest Super Sites in the Wet Tropics Area; one on the Atherton Tableland centred on a 25 hectare instrumented monitoring plot at Robson Creek; and one in the Daintree lowlands centred on JCU's Daintree Rainforest Observatory and canopy crane site. The Rainforest Super Sites will provide information on changes in biodiversity focusing on the influence of climate change and climate drivers such as carbon dioxide.

The Authority and the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing are entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the TERN Rainforest Super Site research consortium to jointly support their various projects and to facilitate, enable and encourage collaboration of effort between the parties for mutual benefit.

ARC Linkage Grant

In December 2011 the Authority entered into a partnership agreement with James Cook University, the Queensland Herbarium, the University of Queensland and Biome5 Pty Ltd in an Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage project: *Accelerating species richness gains and carbon sequestration in secondary regrowth in north Queensland*.

The aim of the project is to devise strategies to accelerate rainforest recovery and regrowth on degraded land. Although tropical abandoned lands offer important opportunities to increase carbon storage and conserve biodiversity, natural forest regeneration is slow and frequently inhibited by

arrested and deflected successions and invasion by woody weeds.

The Authority's contribution to the project involves the allocation the staff time and access to digital spatial coverages and data sets.

Student research grant scheme

In 2011-12 the Authority established a competitive funding scheme for small grants to Australian post graduate students to support environmental, social and cultural research which would benefit Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Management, policy development and operational decision making. Over 25 projects were submitted for consideration by the panel. Well conceived projects, meeting the priorities of the Wet Tropics Management Authority Research Strategy 2010-2014 and demonstrating scientific rigour and innovative research were favourably reviewed. Ten post-graduate students from five Australian universities were successful in receiving funds.

Wet Tropics learning landscape

During 2010, the Authority completed a substantial review of its research and information needs to produce the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Research Strategy 2010-2014*. A key outcome and initiative developed under the Research Strategy was the promotion of the Area as a World Heritage 'learning landscape'. Through this, the Authority seeks to support continued research, to build on the legacy of past research investment and to ensure knowledge generated in the Wet Tropics is accessible to rainforest and protected area managers elsewhere. The Learning Landscape concept recognises that there are comparative advantages of undertaking research which focuses on and benefits the management of World Heritage properties, since actions taken at these iconic properties attract considerable attention and can influence the adoption of good management practices elsewhere. The 'Learning

Landscape' concept is also aligned with UNESCO policy which encourages World Heritage properties to serve as 'living laboratories' where monitoring, mitigation and adaptation processes can be applied, tested and improved.

They also encourage partnerships between relevant organisations in field activities on mitigation and adaptation strategies, methodologies, tools and/or pilot projects.

Over the past year, several workshops were held to refine and develop the concept further, resulting in an initial draft Wet Tropics Learning Landscape Roadmap being produced for Board consideration and discussion.

Tropical rainforest plant identification courses

The Wet Tropics Management Authority, in partnership with the Australian Tropical Herbarium delivered a series of workshop-style courses covering the skills needed to identify both native and weedy plant species in the rainforests of the Wet Tropics. The courses were designed for a broad range of users, including environmental professionals, rangers, students and interested public. The courses were hands-on, with participants visiting local rainforests to put into practice their classroom learning. In 2011-12, six workshops were delivered across north east Queensland to various Indigenous ranger groups and the general public.

Geographic Information Services

The Authority provided geographic information services and products to a varied client base during the year. Clients included local, State and Commonwealth government departments, universities, research organisations, community groups and individuals.

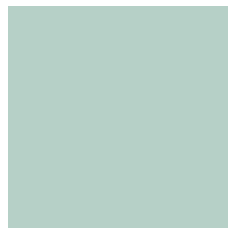


Rainforest fruits



Communities and Partnerships Program

- **Community Engagement**
- **Indigenous Partnerships project**
- **Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement Implementation**
- **Tourism and Presentation**



The Communities and Partnerships program comprises staff with professional skills in community engagement, indigenous partnerships, communications, tourism and visitor services. Through the Communities and Partnerships program, the Wet Tropics Management Authority (The Authority) works to ensure that the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) is relevant in the life of the community and that, in turn, the community has a say in the management of the Area and has opportunities to contribute towards its protection and management. The program includes four main projects:

- Community engagement
- Indigenous partnerships
- Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement implementation
- Tourism and visitor services.

Community engagement

The Community Engagement Project aims to inspire the community to actively engage and participate in conservation and presentation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) and to educate the community to appreciate the diverse environmental and socioeconomic benefits of the Area. The project also aims to promote the role of the Authority and its partners in managing the Area.

The project generates and supports a broad range of products and activities to engage and educate the community, including advisory and liaison groups, educational materials, the Wet Tropics Management Authority website, brochures, books and DVDs, local media stories, regional displays, art exhibitions, and the annual Cassowary Awards.

Working with the Wet Tropics community

Community Consultative Committee

The Community Consultative Committee held meetings every quarter, discussing topical issues around the Wet Tropics

region. The Committee gained a Rainforest Aboriginal representative, however saw the resignation of the Chair and a Committee member during the year. Topics covered during the year included access to the Area, education opportunities, community forums, branding of the Authority and presentation of the Area.

Cassowary Awards and Young Cassowary Awards

The thirteenth annual Cassowary Awards were held at the Cairns Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre on 5 November 2011. The Awards were presented by Board Chair Peter Valentine and Mr Steve Wettenhall MP, Member for Barron River, representing the Queensland Government. Also held on the evening were the Young Cassowary Awards, now in their sixth year. Ten Cassowary Award winners were honoured, including one Young Cassowary Award.

Keep it Wild poster competition

The Authority launched its Keep it Wild poster competition in September 2011. The competition was held at the Cairns Regional Art Gallery. Over 300 entries were received, with young artists from primary schools around the region finding expression to messages about protecting our reef and rainforests. Winning posters were exhibited at the Cairns Regional Gallery. The winners' artwork was also made into a calendar for 2012.

Promotion of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

National Heritage Week

The Authority celebrated Australian Heritage Week from 14 - 22 April 2012. With support and advice from the Authority the Cairns Post included a feature on 18 April, highlighting the values of the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas and Cape York Peninsula region. A number of public figures also supported the feature by providing quotes.

Branding

The Authority refreshed its Cassowary logo in 2012, keeping the logo to a simple stylised cassowary head, however with an added splash of colour. Roll out of the refreshed logo was to coincide with the preparation of the renewed Wet Tropics website. Three statements defining the Authority's role in 'Conserving', 'Sharing', and 'Enriching' were also articulated and provided the basis for organisation of information relating to the Authority on the renewed website.

Communications

Wet Tropics website

The Authority commenced work in 2012 on renewing its website with a new design and a review of its content. The site focuses on showcasing the World Heritage Area and the work of the Authority. The website's landing page focuses on enabling visitors to understand, explore and care for the World Heritage Area. The site has retained the popular walks database and the Rainforest Explorer educational resource. Visitors to the website can also learn how the Authority works by visiting pages grouped into conserving, sharing and enriching.

Social media and networking

A Wet Tropics facebook page was set up in 2011-12 to establish a social media presence that would promote World Heritage Area experiences. Visitors to the page are able to share their experience and perspectives of the World Heritage Area and learn more about activities going on in and around the Area. The Wet Tropics facebook page allows the Authority to share events, and to communicate with connected community members.

E-newsletter

Publication of the Authority's quarterly e-newsletter continued during the year, with the objective of ensuring the Wet Tropics community is well informed about the World Heritage Area and the

work of the Authority and its partners. Editions were published in August and November 2011 and March and May 2012.

Education

Newspapers in Education

The Authority sponsored the Newspapers in Education (NiE) section of The Cairns Post newspaper for the eighth year. As part of its sponsorship the Authority provided four pages of stories and small activities. This year's NiE articles promoted the Young Cassowary Awards, Keep It Wild art competition, and Australian Heritage Week.

Indigenous Partnerships project

Liaising and co-operating with Rainforest Aboriginal people of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) and respecting their traditions are key elements to how the Authority operates in managing the Area. As the original managers and custodians who shaped the landscape to its current natural significance, the Authority acknowledges the significant contribution Rainforest Aboriginal people make to management.

The capacity of Traditional Owners to express their knowledge, cultures and 'looking after country' practices is critical to their well-being, yields social and economic dividends for the broader community as well as environmental and cultural benefits. Appropriate recognition and support provides a platform for improved leadership, governance and operational competencies through capacity growth, education, and equitable participation in decision-making, enterprise development and employment.

The Authority undertakes community and corporate liaison, policy and protocol development, negotiation and implementation of native title determinations and Indigenous Land Use Agreements, collaborative projects, engagement in permit assessments,

and supports the preparation of grants for Rainforest Aboriginal organisations for their involvement in on-ground management. This partnership approach includes working closely with Rainforest Aboriginal people and their local and regional organisations, native title representative bodies, Federal and State government agencies, local government councils, research institutions, non-government organisations and reference groups.

Partnerships with Rainforest Aboriginal people

National Heritage Assessment for Indigenous Heritage Values

The Authority provided advice and assistance to the Australian Government in support of the assessment of the National Heritage Values of the Wet Tropics and for public consultation to ensure Rainforest Aboriginal people are aware and involved in the listing decision and its implications for the Area.

Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance

Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance (RAPA) is the emerging regional leadership group across Rainforest Aboriginal people within the Wet Tropics region, actively supporting the on-ground Traditional Owner networks and providing a strategic regional voice. The Authority provided financial and in-kind support to RAPA, in partnership with Terrain NRM and Girringun and Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporations, to establish their governance and operational capacities. The Authority recognises that RAPA's pro-active regional voice can greatly contribute to service delivery outcomes for Rainforest Aboriginal people, including engaging with the Authority, other government agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs) and sector groups with interests in the World Heritage Area.

Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network

The Authority supported Rainforest Aboriginal representatives to participate in the Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network (AWHIN) enabling Wet Tropics Traditional Owners to discuss strategies and ideas with Traditional Owners from other World Heritage Areas. Former Authority Board Director, Ms Allison Halliday (AWHIN co-chair) represented the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area on the AWHIN.

Native Title, Indigenous Land Use Agreements and other agreements in the World Heritage Area

The Authority participated in the negotiation and implementation of a variety of Native Title Determinations and associated Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs). In this task the Authority seeks to reconcile its responsibility to appropriately balance World Heritage values with the well being of Rainforest Aboriginal people, their cultural obligations to protect and manage lands and waters, and their aspirations for land use, community development and socio-economic recovery. In 2011-12 the Authority was a signatory to a number of Native Title determinations in the World Heritage Area including:

- Wanyurr Majay peoples over lands in the vicinity of Mt Bellenden Ker and parts of the Wooroonooran National Park and surrounding areas
- Djiru peoples over lands and waters in Mission Beach and surrounding areas including parts of Tully Gorge, Clump Mountain and Hull River National Parks, Walter Hill Range Conservation Park, Unallocated State Land and Reserve Land
- Gugu Badhun peoples over lands in the upper Burdekin, including the George and Seaview ranges, across to Lava Plains and to Emu Creek
- Combined Gunngandji determination over land and waters, including the

northern part of the Yarrabah Deed of Grant in Trust, including Yarrabah township, the foreshores of Mission Bay, Cape Grafton, Turtle Bay, Wide Bay and Oombunghi beach, part of Malbon Thompson Forest Reserve and two parcels of land on Fitzroy island.

The Authority has also been engaged in the negotiations of the Mamu and Tablelands Yidinji Native Title ILUA negotiations.

Indigenous Protected Areas

The Authority worked with the Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation (MYAC) /Djunbunji Land and Sea Program and Girringun Aboriginal Corporation to develop pathways for the implementation of their respective Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA).

In December 2011 the Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding with MYAC outlining agreed commitments under the ILUA together with a commitment to assist MYAC and the Djunbunji Land and Sea Program to implement their IPA. The Authority is also collaborating with Mandingalbay Yidinji people (through the Djunbunji Land and Sea Program) to assist them with cultural heritage mapping as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding the Authority recently signed with them.

Indigenous Community engagement Community liaison

The Authority worked closely with Rainforest Aboriginal people, native title representative bodies, regional Aboriginal organisations, government agencies, non-government organisations and reference groups to engage Rainforest Aboriginal people in the management of the Area. The Authority continued to implement its obligations under the Wet Tropics Regional Agreement, including applying consultation protocols with local Traditional Owners on all aspects of the Authority's business.

Community consultations effective in maintaining strong relationships with the Rainforest Aboriginal community were focused around structured discrete projects and activities. Routine consultation activities provided timely and informed advice and information exchange that benefited both Rainforest Aboriginal people and the Authority. Some examples include:

- participating in the Girringun IPA Steering Committee and progressing an Memorandum of Understanding with Girringun Aboriginal Corporation
- supporting Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation to establish a tourism enterprise
- facilitating training in plant identification, map reading and GPS use for Bana Yarralji and Djunbunji rangers so assist them in managing their traditional lands more effectively
- working with Ngadjon-jii elders (and the Tableland Regional Council) to record oral histories and stories relating to pioneer settlement, human relationships and interactions with the rainforest.

Indigenous climate change mitigation

The Authority collaborated with the United Nations University (UNU), the Christensen Fund and the Cairns Institute to convene a symposium on the 25 March 2012 on *Climate Change Mitigation with Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples: Practices, Lessons Learned and Prospects*.

Over 80 participants participated in the workshop to compile and analyse relevant issues related to climate change mitigation action by local communities and indigenous people using case studies from Northern Australia, including the Wet Tropics, Torres Strait and Cape York Peninsula.

The outcomes were presented at an international UNU Traditional Knowledge Initiative Workshop on

26-28 March 2012. This larger three-day workshop was organised in partnership with the UNU, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement implementation

The core objective of this project is the protection of World Heritage values and Eastern Yalanji peoples' improved well being and sustainable livelihoods through the establishment of environmentally, culturally, socially and economically sustainable Community Development Plans and Activity Guidelines. These will assist Eastern Yalanji people to move back on to and care for country in a sustainable fashion in accordance with their Native Title rights and interests.

The Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreements (EKY ILUA) signed in 2007 provided for the creation or continuation of a number of tenures over 230,000 hectares of the traditional lands of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji, mostly within the northern sector of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. These include Reserves for Cultural, Environmental, and Recreational purposes, Freehold, Term Lease, National Park and Aboriginal Land as Nature Refuge or Community Development areas. The latter, approximately 16,500 hectares, was transferred in 2011 under the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991* for Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owners to live on their country, manage it to conserve the lands' values and to develop sustainable economic opportunities from it to improve their well-being. They have agreed to exercise their Native Title rights and interests only in accordance with a Cooperative Management Agreement under the *Wet Tropics*

Management Plan 1998.

This Cooperative Management Agreement also provides for the agreement of Community Development Plans and Activity Guidelines that facilitate such development and ensure the protection of World Heritage values. All activities must be compliant with the valid laws of the State and Commonwealth. The Authority and prescribed body corporate and land trust Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation (Jabalbina) worked with Traditional Owners to prepare Community Development Plans for these Community Development areas.

Community Development Plans

Community Development Plans were completed for four pilot areas at Cow Bay, Georges Yard, Mungumby and Trevethan. Community Development Plans were signed off by clan elders at ceremonies organised by Jabalbina at Wujal Wujal, Trevethan and Mungumby.

Community Development Plans for other areas in the Community Development areas will be developed using the same format in response to settlement pressures which may arise in future through the actions of particular clan groups. Further tasks also include the accurate depiction of the boundaries of the proposed 'good living areas' within the Community Development areas for the incorporation of Community Development Plans into local government planning schemes.

Master Planning project

Activities also have to comply with Local Government planning requirements under the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* (SPA). The Authority commissioned Cook Shire Council's local government planning scheme experts to develop a mechanism to incorporate Eastern Kuku Yalanji Community Development Plans into the new *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* compliant local government planning schemes. This project report provided an overview describing how the

various elements of the package interact with the planning scheme, and explained how Eastern Kuku Yalanji people wishing to live on country could progress their plans. This master plan also informed the development of a Bush Living Code or other mechanism to incorporate the Community Development Plans into the Local Government planning schemes. It is envisaged that these outcomes may also assist in framing a broader 'Bush Living Code' for Aboriginal Land to be put forward as a State Planning Policy or other planning instrument to allow uses such as building homes to be self-assessable in these circumstances.

The Authority and Jabalbina facilitated the formation of a cross-government working forum, led by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and including the Cook and Cairns Regional Councils, that considered practical ways of integrating the rights and interests of Indigenous landowners with development and environmental conservation regulation. This joint working group will now be convened to consider further steps in the adoption of the model by State and local government.

Ten Mile Station Natural Resource Management Agreement

The Authority worked with the lessee of Ten Mile Station, a former pastoral lease, to develop a natural resource management agreement (a lease condition under the ILUA) to ensure that cattle are managed within the World Heritage Area in an ecologically sustainable manner. Negotiations are expected to be concluded shortly.

Community Development areas Activity Guidelines

Community Development Plans as described above, prescribe where Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owners may live on and develop their country. Community Development Areas Activity Guidelines set out how various activities must be undertaken to ensure that

World Heritage values are appropriately conserved. Jabalbina and the Authority worked together to agree a draft set of Activity Guidelines to complement the Community Development Plans.

Tourism and Presentation

Tourism and the presentation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area) and associated values are critical areas of activity for the Authority. They contribute to the Queensland Government's back on track statement of objectives for the community, to grow a four pillar economy and deliver better infrastructure and planning.

The Authority is contributing to regional efforts to put tropical Queensland back on the map as Australia's main nature-based tourism destination. It has done this by: championing the establishment of a World Heritage Gateway Centre for Cairns; instigating, leading and implementing a comprehensive tour guide certification and training program; and leading the regional effort to have the Wet Tropics as one of Australia's 15 National Landscapes, the Commonwealth's program to market the best of Australia's nature to the international traveller.

The Authority is very conscious of the economic importance of the Area and is actively interested in ensuring it is sustainably managed in ways that maintain its relevance and value in the tourism marketplace. The Authority also regards a strong partnership with the tourism industry as a vital means of achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Convention for presenting the World Heritage Area and for ensuring it has a role in the life of the community.

National Landscapes

The Authority has worked closely with Tourism Australia and Parks Australia in the last year to establish the Wet Tropics region as one of Australia's National Landscapes. The Authority is currently chair of the Wet Tropics

National Landscapes Committee and has led regional efforts to get the best value from the region's participation in the program. The Authority collaborated with regional tourism bodies, regional councils and local operators to help develop, diversify, market and present a range of quality nature based tourism experiences in the Wet Tropics region.

National World Heritage Gateway

In 2011-12 the Authority engaged a consultant to support the process of undertaking a prefeasibility report for an Australian World Heritage Gateway. The final report and prospectus provides solid arguments for the continuing support for the project. If established, it has the potential to provide a central point that celebrates the significant World Heritage values of the region, inspiring, engaging and educating visitors about the significant natural and cultural wonders that surround them. It has the potential to be a globally significant attraction for the region and Australia.

Wet Tropics tour guide training

The Authority has made a strong contribution to the tourism industry through developing an on-line training scheme for Wet Tropics tour guides. The Queensland Industry Tourism Council, with funding support from the Queensland Government, partnered the Authority to train tour guides based in the Wet Tropics. Over 65 tour guides have completed the training using the on-line training package. The course helps raise the bar of professional standards in guiding in the Wet Tropics

region. The Authority is continuing to support guides by offering professional guide schools to strengthen guide standards and networking.

Digital communication and presentation

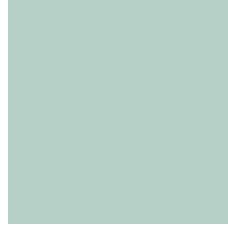
The Authority is collaborating with regional councils and the network of visitor information centres around the Wet Tropics to develop and provide visitor resources about the outstanding experiences available in the Wet Tropics region. This includes guides to waterfalls and swimming holes, day walks, camping, climbing, mountain bike and horse riding opportunities, and cultural experiences. During the last year the Authority successfully piloted a Wet Tropics touch screen that showcases values and experiences of the Area. Further development of the touch screen technology is expected to occur in the coming year and rolled out to a number of Visitor Information Centres around the Area.

Wet Tropics Tourism Network and stakeholder liaison

The Authority has broadened its tourism network to include those from the industry the Authority can work in partnership with on a wider range of projects. The Wet Tropics Tourism Network membership provides the Authority with intelligence and insight into current issues around access to protected areas for tourism purposes and the need to strengthen the quality and range of tourism products in the region.

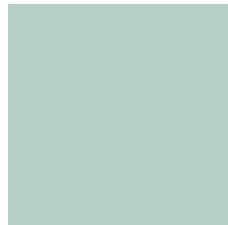


Surprise Creek



Business Management Program

- Corporate development
- Business administration



This Program principally supports the Wet Tropics Management Authority's (the Authority) strategic plan goal, which is that the Authority demonstrates excellence in corporate governance and management. This is delivered by improvement of the Authority's contribution to investors, stakeholders and the community by continued development of the Authority's capability, effectiveness and accountability. There are two projects within this program, Corporate Development and Business Administration.

Corporate Development

The Corporate Development project aims to ensure the Authority maintains and develops its own capacity and continues to adapt to the changing needs of the Australian and Queensland Governments and the Wet Tropics community.

Wet Tropics Ministerial Council

The 22nd Wet Tropics Ministerial Council met in Brisbane on 12 August 2012. At the meeting, the Council approved the draft Wet Tropics Amendment Plan and approved amendments to the Wet Tropics Intergovernmental Agreement to provide for abolition of the Ministerial Council.

Partnerships

The Authority regards partnerships with other agencies with roles in environmental management as central to its success in managing the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Of particular importance is the Authority's relationship with the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing primarily through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). The Authority manages its formal relationship with QPWS through an annual agreement. The format for the agreement emphasises the mutually supportive partnership of the two organisations. Other important partnerships for the Authority include those with:

- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Parks Forum to enable engagement in national and international conservation management networks
- The Australian Committee for IUCN, which supports the implementation of the IUCN global program through information sharing between Australian members and where appropriate, representing the collective view of Australian members to the IUCN council and executive
- Terrain NRM which has worked with the Authority in Indigenous partnerships projects, joint development of funding applications and in community engagement
- The National Environment Research Program (NERP) and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), which administers rainforest research in the region
- The Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC), in addition to its heritage policy roles in support of the Authority, coordinates the assessment and issue of permits under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* with the work of the Authority
- Tourism Queensland which, along with Tropical Tourism North Queensland, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, the Commonwealth Department of Resources Energy and Tourism and many regional tourism businesses, assists the Authority in ensuring the World Heritage Area is appropriately presented to visitors.

The Authority understands the importance of coordinating its work with other State and Commonwealth agencies to facilitate efficient and effective service delivery to the Wet Tropics community. The Authority's active participation in the Far North

Queensland Regional Manager's Coordination Network is an important means of achieving this.

New investments and funding proposals

The Authority continued to seek new funding into projects that contribute to its strategic goals. It was successful in obtaining a \$30,000 grant from the former Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation to undertake a World Heritage Gateway prefeasibility study. Other significant proposals included:

- \$10M from the Commonwealth Government Clean Energy Future (Biodiversity Fund) for rehabilitating parts of ten major corridors connecting separate sections of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. While the bid was unsuccessful in this instance, several components of the project proposal were funded via a number of local Landcare organisations.
- \$170,000 from the Commonwealth Government's Caring for Our Country program for 'Sustainable Grazing Practices for Eastern Kuku Yalanji people' to introduce practical, sustainable low-cost grazing practices, including watering points and fencing of riparian vegetation, primarily on Harlow's 10 mile property

Development of each of the proposals strengthened partnerships, but unfortunately, neither was supported.

Submissions

National Wildlife Corridors Plan

The Authority made an extensive submission to the draft National Corridors Plan www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-corridors/index.html to recommend the inclusion of the Wet Tropics as a national priority. This draft plan promotes the importance of large-scale connectivity projects as a means of ensuring biodiversity

outcomes. It identifies a series of projects either underway or regarded as a good idea. The Authority's submission expressed the view that while connectivity is very important, it is also important not to lose sight of the need to maintain investment in the conservation of high value landscapes like the Wet Tropics.

Australian Heritage Strategy

The Authority made a submission to the Australian Heritage Strategy discussion paper. <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/strategy/index.html>.

The Authority expressed the view that once a place is listed, an adequate system of management must be implemented and the listing entity must accept responsibility for ensuring that this is in place and well supported.

Australia's Biodiversity in a changing climate

The Authority made a submission to the House of Representatives Inquiry into Australia's Biodiversity in a Changing Climate. The submission references the 2007-08 State of the Wet Tropics Report on climate change and draws attention to the particular vulnerability of wet tropics biodiversity to climate change and, consistent with the State of Wet Tropics report, advocates four main areas for action. The submission also encourages the Inquiry to capitalise on the foundations of research into climate change in the Wet Tropics to use it as one of the case studies they propose to undertake.

International Links

The Authority remains interested in developing its role in support of heritage managers in the Asia Pacific region and internationally. This objective is consistent with intentions of the World Heritage Convention and aligns well with the Authority's knowledge brokering and communication agenda.

Representatives from the Solomon Islands (East Rennell World Heritage

Area), Papua New Guinea (Kuk Early Agricultural Site World Heritage Area), Vanuatu (Chief Roi Mata's Domain World Heritage Area) and Kiribati (Pheonix Island Protected Area World Heritage Area) took part in an intensive capacity building workshop in Cairns hosted by the Authority in collaboration with the Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

This intensive training was designed to assist Pacific Island countries with the completion of their Periodic Reports to the World Heritage Centre while also providing an opportunity and a venue to bring our neighbouring World Heritage Area managers together, strengthening regional relationships. The training was delivered as part of the "Strengthening World Heritage Governance in PNG and the Solomon Islands" project under the AusAID Pacific Public Sector Linkages Program.

A delegation of 20 Chinese officials from the Guangdong Nature Reserve Management met with Authority staff in November 2011 to discuss tourism and community partnerships and to learn about the Authority's roles and responsibilities in management arrangements governing the Area.

The Authority hosted a group of South American visitors in February 2012 visiting under the AusAID Australian Leadership Awards Fellowship programme through QUT International Projects in Brisbane. Their interests were largely in the field of social policy, and they were particularly interested in engagement with Traditional Owners.

The Authority has continued to engage in national and international conservation management networks, in particular through membership of the IUCN and Parks Forum.

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Business planning systems

The Authority gives a high priority to developing a business plan in to ensure it creates the highest possible value for the Wet Tropics community and stakeholders. The Authority is committed to developing and adapting its own capabilities to ensure it maintains capacity to meet the needs of the Australian and Queensland Governments and the Wet Tropics community. The Authority's project management approach encourages clear identification of outcomes, objectives and milestones. It requires purposeful allocation of staff and other resources to organisational priorities and establishes a clear basis for organisational performance management.

Funding

As the Authority is a Statutory Authority, its general-purpose financial statements details for 2011-2012 are incorporated in the overall Department of Environment and Resource Management financial statements. Total funding of \$4.9 million for 2011-2012 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 \$221,000. A summary of the Authority's operating statement for 2011-2012 is provided in Table 1.

The Australian Government's base allocation to the Authority for 2011-2012 was \$3 million. These funds were allocated among the Authority's programs. The Queensland Government contributed \$1.7 million to the Authority. Under the annual Partnership Agreement with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services, these funds were then transferred to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for on-ground World Heritage management services.

Audits

One operational audit was conducted by PGL Financial Services Pty Ltd in 2011-2012 for Commonwealth Funds received.

Staffing and contractors

At 30 June 2012 the approved staff establishment of the Authority totalled 28 permanent positions, seven of which were vacant.

Contract staff supplemented staff resources during the year to provide a range of services. These services included marketing and communications, graphic designers, financial and workforce management; conservation and tourism activities and administrative support. Table 2 shows expenditure on consultancies and contracts for 2011-2012 compared to the previous financial year.

Workplace health and safety

We adhere to the Queensland Government's health and safety management systems and procedures. The Authority recorded no accidents for 2011-2012. Regular workplace health and safety inspections are conducted with no significant issues arising. Authority staff attend regular education, awareness and training sessions to ensure current accreditations are maintained.

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 2011-2012 complied with directives and no equal employment opportunity complaints were received. At 30 June 2012 the Authority had 12 females and nine males on staff and six positions vacant. Table 3 gives a profile of the Authority's staff.



Clohesy River, Atherton

TABLE 1: Wet Tropics Management Authority Operating Statement

Controlled Revenue and Expenses	Notes	2011-2012	2010-2011
REVENUE		\$'000	\$'000
Revenue from Government			
Payment for Outputs		1,946	2,141
Assets Assumed/Liabilities transferred		0	0
Sub-total Government Revenue		1,946	2,141
Own Source Revenue			
User Charges		2	16
Grants and Other Contributions		3,001	2,831
Taxes, Fees and Fines			
Gain on disposal of fixed assets			
Other Revenue		5	7
Interest			
Sub-total Government Revenue		3,008	2,854
TOTAL REVENUE		4,954	4,995
EXPENSES		\$'000	\$'000
Operating Expenses			
Program			
WBA Business Management		831	1,049
WBB Communities & Partnerships		960	1,195
WBC Planning & Conservation		1,162	877
WBD QPWS - WTMA Partnership Agreement		1,774	1,666
Sub-total Operating Expenses		4,727	4,787
Non-Operating Expenses			
Depreciation		6	6
Asset Writedowns/Loss on disposal			
Sub-total Non-Operating Expenses		6	6
TOTAL EXPENSES		4,733	4,793
OPERATING RESULT		221	202

TABLE 2: Expenditure on Contracts

	2011-2012	2010-2011
EXPENDITURE	\$	\$
Consultancies by Category*		
Management	0	0
TOTAL	0	0
Contract Staff by Program*		
Business Management	12,608	2,745
Communities & Partnerships	33,528	26,745
Planning & Conservation	62,968	23,484
TOTAL	109,104	52,974

* Excludes QPWS expenses incurred against the Service Agreement.

TABLE 3: Employment by gender, occupational stream and salary

**Employment by gender and occupational stream as at 30 June 2012
(based on actual occupants)**

Stream	Female (%)	Male (%)
Administration and Senior Executive Service	11 (55)	5 (25)
Professional	2 (10)	3 (15)
Technical	0	1 (5)
Operational	0	0
Total	13 (65)	9 (45)

**Employment by gender and salary level as at 30 June 2012
(based on substantive positions)**

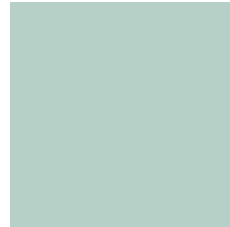
Salary Range	Female (%)	Male (%)
\$107,869 +		1 (5)
\$101,610 - \$107,467		2 (10)
\$91,712 - \$98,341		2 (10)
\$81,962 - \$87,691	1 (5)	3 (15)
\$71,435 - \$77,644	6 (30)	1 (5)
\$61,641 - \$68,991	4 (20)	
\$52,132 - \$59,293	2 (10)	
Total	13 (65)	9 (45)



Roaring Meg Creek



Terms and Abbreviations



AWHIN	Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network
CAFNEC	Cairns and Far North Environment Centre
CCC	Community Consultative Committee
CCRC	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
CFOC	Caring for our Country
CVA	Conservation Volunteers Australia
CDP	Community Development Plan
Commonwealth Act	<i>Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994</i>
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific, Industry and Research Organisation
CSLG	Conservation Sector Liaison Group
CTBCC	Centre for Tropical Biology and Climate Change
DERM	Department of Environment and Resource Management
DOGIT	Deed of Grant in Trust
DRET	Department of Resources Energy and Tourism
EKY	Eastern Kuku Yalanji
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
FNQ	Far North Queensland
FNQROC	Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
GPS	Global positioning system
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
Jabalbina	Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation
JCU	James Cook University
JYAC	Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation
MTSRF	Marine and Tropical Science Research Facility
MYAC	Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation
NERP	National Environment Research Program
NGO	Non-government organisation
NiE	News in Education
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OUV	outstanding universal value
PNG	Papua New Guinea
QLD	Queensland
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
Queensland Act	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
RAPA	Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance
RRRC	Reef and Rainforest Research Centre

SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee
SEWPaC	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
SPA	<i>Sustainable Planning Act 1999</i>
Terrain NRM	Terrain Natural Resource Management
T.C. Yasi	Tropical Cyclone Yasi
The Area	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area
The Authority	Wet Tropics Management Authority
The Plan	<i>Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998</i>
TERN	Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network
TKMG	Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group
TRC	Tablelands Regional Council
TREAT	Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNU	United Nations University
WHA	World Heritage Area



Baby crocodile

Each year the Wet Tropics Management Authority is required to prepare a report on the state of the Area, as required under section 63(1) of the Queensland Act and section 10 of the Commonwealth Act. This report fulfills that requirement. The Authority acknowledges the contribution of Dr Lea Scherl to the preparation of this report.



STATE OF THE WET TROPICS 2011–2012

The Function of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area in the Life of the Community



Executive Summary

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is a region of spectacular scenery containing the richest variety of animals and plants in the country. The World Heritage Area's magnificent environment is a source of pride to the local and regional community. It is also valued by the wider regional North Queensland community and recognised and supported broadly in Australia and elsewhere.

Article 5 of the *Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (the World Heritage Convention) calls upon each State Party to the Convention to '*adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programs*'.

The World Heritage Area's function in the life of the community manifests itself in many interconnected dimensions. This report examines how the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area has a function in the life of the community.

Involvement, collaboration and participation

Communities and stakeholders

With more than 2500 individual blocks of land neighbouring the World Heritage Area's 3000 kilometre boundary, the active involvement of neighbours and landholders is crucial to the management of the Area. Wider representation for community engagement comes through a number of committees attached to management agencies and natural resource management organisations. Locally-based community groups are also active participants in the Area's conservation and land care. Vital programs of

communication with stakeholders use a variety of means, including electronic and social media to support their efforts.

Indigenous peoples

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is culturally rich, comprising the traditional lands of 18 Rainforest Aboriginal groups. Since the World Heritage listing, regional Rainforest Aboriginal representative arrangements have evolved through Indigenous organisations and committees attached to management agencies and natural resource management organisations into an independent regional alliance. During this evolution the *Wet Tropics Regional Agreement* represented a considerable effort and a landmark in fostering collaboration for Indigenous peoples' effective participation and self-determination in the Wet Tropics region. There is also widespread support for other forms of engagement with Indigenous peoples through negotiated Indigenous Land Use Agreements and the creation of Indigenous Protected Areas.

Governance

Concerted efforts towards collaborative management are a feature of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. As a multi-tenured protected area which includes private landholders and different government-held tenures, its governance necessitates complex and vibrant community partnerships which build on and provide social capital for the Wet Tropics region. Community based planning and management processes in the region complement the protection and management regime established under State and Commonwealth legislation.

Human and community well-being and environmental values and services

There is strong recognition of the quality of life benefits derived by the community from the World Heritage Area. However, the nature and strength of the links between environmental values and services from the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and human and community well-being are incompletely understood. Clean air, good water quality, water supply from the forest in the dry season, the aesthetic beauty of the surrounding green mountains to cities and towns throughout the region are all part of these services. Opportunities for walking, camping and other recreational activities also provide an important connection between the World Heritage Area and the community. Each of these examples contribute to human and community well-being benefits related to health, greater social cooperation, spiritual customary practices and income generation.

Research, education and knowledge application

Research

The Wet Tropics region has benefited from a succession of Commonwealth investments in support of regionally-based integrated research programs. The inter-disciplinary nature of research has been greatly influenced by the existence of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and active management agencies needing information for management. The value of the World Heritage Area as a living laboratory has been outstanding, demonstrated by the output of publications and transfer of knowledge to management in the region and elsewhere.

Education

Schools and academic institutions benefit greatly from being in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Many school field trips take place in the Area. Educational materials have been developed to assist in the delivery

of Wet Tropics themed teaching in schools. Academic institutions such as the James Cook University have a strong focus on teaching tropical ecology, natural resource management, sustainable development, ecotourism and conservation sciences. Staff from agencies and organisations in the region also plays a significant role in transferring knowledge about the Area and World Heritage management to many different learning contexts in the region.

Tourism

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is one of the premier tourism attractions in Australia. The tourism industry plays an important role in connecting communities and economies. It is a key regional partner in delivering better understanding of World Heritage values through interpretation and presentation. Aiding in such delivery is the region's first online training program for tour guides, raising the bar for World Heritage tourism in North Queensland. The Wet Tropics is one of Australia's National Landscapes, providing the opportunity to reach a global audience and strengthening regional collaborations within the tourism industry.

Shaping the future

Opportunities for further enhancing the function of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in the life of the community include:

- *Supporting collaborative governance for conservation and management of the World Heritage Area* through strong leadership and dialogue across levels
- *Promoting and fine-tuning involvement and participation* of a wide range of stakeholders through multi-stakeholder forums, ongoing identification of interest groups, and innovative ideas to celebrate involvement and communicate amongst and with stakeholders

- *Supporting Indigenous people's aspirations and contributions to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area through strengthening of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' representative bodies, bolstering capacity to participate in management and the development of co-management arrangements within the World Heritage Area*
- *Fostering applied research and promoting knowledge transfer through innovative approaches within a learning landscape approach that transfers knowledge into application, more research in the social, economic and cultural areas, and diversity in training approaches*
- *Improving standards for tourism and interpretation through tour guide training, partnerships with the tourism industry, support for visitor centres and innovative tourist information services and upgrading infrastructure, access and facilities supporting tourism in the World Heritage Area*
- *Promoting understanding of the links between environmental services and values and human and community well-being with clear communication about such links to the wider community, further research, and exploring options for payment for environmental services.*



Frill-necked lizard

Introduction

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the World Heritage Area or the Area) is a region of spectacular scenery and rugged topography with fast-flowing rivers, deep gorges and numerous waterfalls. Mountain summits provide expansive vistas of the oldest surviving rainforest in the world. The exceptional coastal scenery combines tropical rainforest, white sandy beaches and fringing reefs just offshore; a unique feature on a global scale¹. The Area contains the richest variety of animals and plants in the country, including two-thirds of the butterfly species, half of the birds and a third of the mammals².

The World Heritage Area covers nearly 900,000 hectares from Townsville to Cooktown in North Queensland. A visitor survey in 2002 estimated about 4.4 million visits per year to recognised Wet Tropics World Heritage Area sites³. It is predicted that some 270,000 people will live within the Wet Tropics region by 2016. In the broader region, the estimated resident population is forecast to exceed 700,000 by 2031⁴.

The Area provides opportunities to be close to nature. Many people use it for recreational activities, enjoying the fresh air and clean water, as well as the ambience of surrounding green hills and proximity to waterfalls and rivers. For others, it is their livelihood, providing opportunities to conduct research, and to promote, manage and implement tourism activities.

There is strong community awareness of the World Heritage Area and support for its protection - 62% of surveyed respondents 'strongly' support the World Heritage listing while almost all of the respondents (92%) support the general level of protection afforded by

the listing⁵. Residents view the Area as an integral part of their landscape, lifestyle and community, and feel a strong sense of collective ownership and responsibility^{6,7}. The Area is also valued by the broader regional North Queensland community and its outstanding universal value is widely recognised and supported in the Australian community and elsewhere.

Prior to World Heritage listing in 1988, the rainforests of the Wet Tropics region were extensively harvested for timber. Listing led to an outright ban on commercial logging in the Area. The conversion of Wet Tropics lands to national parks also led to some restrictions in usage. These actions polarised the community. A substantial structural adjustment package was provided to compensate businesses and individuals and to develop alternative industries, in particular, tourism.

“

The controversial listing of the Wet Tropics in 1988 was a tumultuous period in north Queensland's history... the conflicts of the time frayed the edges of the local social fabric.

⁸ Nigel Tucker, *From the Heart*, 2009.

”

Despite the challenging start, it is well recognised now that many other values have come to the community from its protection and management. More than 20 years later, the World Heritage Area

is totally entrenched in the communities of this region. Community support for its listing has grown from 50% in 1996 to over 80% in 2007^{9, 10}. Being a resident of the Wet Tropics region brings pride to communities and individuals and promotes an overarching sense of place, social identity and cohesion.

There are numerous reasons to celebrate the outstanding universal value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and what has been achieved for its conservation and for its role in the community. Lessons learned here have informed the management of other World Heritage Areas in Australia and elsewhere. Management of the Area is a dynamic process where emerging threats, such as increased pressure for access to the Area for multiple and sometimes conflicting uses also provides opportunities for the development of strong partnerships.

The World Heritage Convention obliges State Parties to the Convention to identify, protect, conserve, rehabilitate, present and transmit to future generations, the natural and cultural heritage of the World Heritage properties within its territory (Article 4). The Convention also obliges State Parties to, *'adopt general policies which [aim] to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programs'* (Article 5 (a))¹¹.

The Operational Guidelines developed by the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the Convention do not provide specific guidance on the function of a World Heritage Area in the life of the community¹². There are a number of paragraphs that do refer, in general terms, to aspects of such a function, and why addressing this is important. In their entirety, these paragraphs include reference to participation of a wide variety of stakeholders including local and Indigenous people (paragraph

12,123); potential partnerships (paragraph 40); human activities, including those of traditional societies and local communities, often in natural areas (paragraph 90); and development of educational materials, activities and programmes (paragraph 219).

The existing guidelines for preparing World Heritage nominations is silent in addressing the function in the life of the communities¹³. A review by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on World Heritage and Evaluation Processes related to Communities and Rights recognises that World Heritage nomination guidance is yet to fully address the importance attached to community concerns and rights in a comprehensive manner¹⁴.

Further, there is also no global guidance or framework to measure the obligation related to providing a function in the life of the community and how it is being implemented through the management of any particular Area. This is left largely to the discretion of each property.

The need for more generally accepted frameworks for social assessment of conservation management has more recently been discussed through international initiatives and can provide some insights¹⁵.

In addition to its primary purpose of reporting to the Queensland and Australian Parliaments, this report is a contribution to the need for more systematic social assessment of activities related to conservation and management of World Heritage Areas.

The broad dimensions related to the function of the World Heritage Area in the life of the community incorporates a number of themes and dimension which are inter-connected and can influence each other. Together they represent a range of social, economic and cultural aspects related to the Area.

They include:

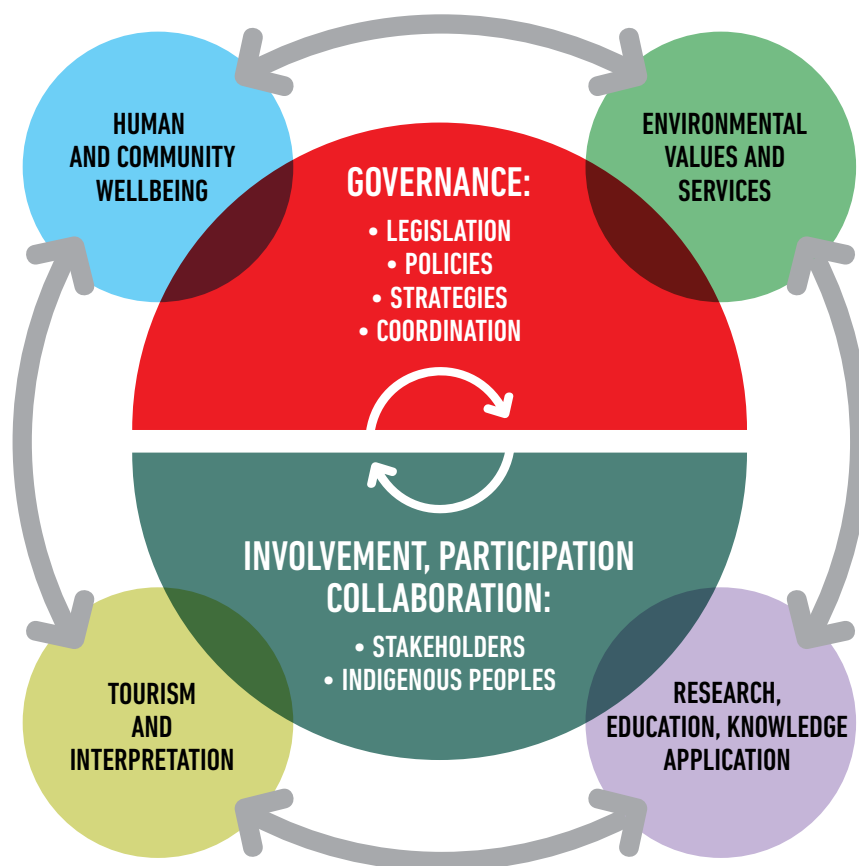


FIGURE 1: The Function of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in the Life of the Community

- involvement, participation and collaboration of, and with, stakeholders. This is an overarching term to represent all sectors related to government, non-government, industry, community groups, research and academic institutions, and from all levels (local, sub-regional, regional, national and international) that have a direct interest in the World Heritage Area
- the governance context expressed in terms of legislative frameworks, policies, strategies and coordination mechanisms for planning and management across agencies, organisations and groups
- involvement, participation and collaboration of, and with, Rainforest Aboriginal people as custodians
- contributions to human well-being
- research, education and knowledge application

- tourism and interpretation
- environmental values and services.

A description and analysis of each of these dimensions leads to understanding current needs for improvement in management, collaboration, communication, research, education, and industry practices. This will contribute towards ensuring that the overall function of the Area in the life of the community can accommodate new social, cultural and economic trends and policy requirements. Community is interpreted in its broader sense, meaning not only the people that live in and around the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, but also people and communities of interest living throughout Australia and the world who have an interest in the protection and management of the Area ¹⁶.

Involvement, Collaboration and Participation

- Engagement processes
- Key stakeholders and organisations
- Indigenous peoples

Engagement processes

A wide range of community groups, non-government organisations and scientists in this region provided the inspiration and drive for the World Heritage listing. Since then, management approaches adopted for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area have been very successful in recruiting people from different sectors of the community, through formal and informal processes ¹⁷.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority now plays an important regional leadership role, managing the World Heritage Area on behalf of the world community as well as on behalf of the Australian community and local people who are very much part of the Area. In this sense the Wet Tropics community must be regarded as including the local and regional community, Rainforest Aboriginal people, the wider community (domestic and international visitors) as well as management agencies, local government, landholders, industry and the research community.

Engagement of Wet Tropics communities is a central goal of the management regime for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area reflected in The Wet Tropics Management Authority 2008-13 Strategic Plan ¹⁸. The current review of the statutory *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* has involved three rounds of formal consultation and extensive liaison with stakeholder groups to ensure the amended plan will reflect community interests and aspirations. A similar community engagement philosophy was used during the

development of a nature-based tourism strategy and a walking track strategy. Another model for engagement on the part of the Authority is reflected in sector-specific liaison groups such as the Conservation Sector Liaison Group and the Wet Tropics Tourism Network.

Key stakeholders and organisations

Many other stakeholders and organisations from different sectors play a fundamental role in support of the management of the World Heritage Area. Some of these are discussed below.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

As much of the World Heritage Area comprises National Parks and other protected area tenures managed under Queensland's *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) play an important role in the Area's management. Its staff conduct practical on-the-ground management in partnership with many groups in the region, contributing in areas such as pest management; environmental recovery after natural disasters; facilitating and implementing NRM plans (fire, pest and cyclones) facilitating workshops; developing working groups to address specific management issues for threatened species and communities, as well as issues of interest for local community and recreational park uses such as mountain biking and horse riding.

QPWS also support local community groups such as the Tablelands National



Photo courtesy QPWS

Cassowary feeding stations

More than 12 months have passed since Cyclone Yasi damaged large areas of cassowary habitat between Cardwell and Innisfail and at Mission Beach on 2 and 3 February 2011.

The forest is showing significant signs of recovery. Trees now contain significant re-growth, and flowering and fruit development continue to increase, highlighting the resilience of these forests. However, due to damage to the forest caused by the cyclone, the supply of rainforest fruits is still at a low level. To supplement the cassowaries' diet during this low food period without making them dependent on handouts, feeding stations were deployed in the area but are now progressively being reduced where natural fruit levels are adequate.

Feed stations are supplied with fruit approximately every three days, and amounts are varied to ensure the birds keep up their natural foraging. As of July 2012, QPWS had 28 active feed stations from the Cardwell Range north to Flying Fish Point. At the peak of the program 105 were operating.

More than 170,950 kg of fruit has been distributed, averaging almost 3000kg per week. In the early phase of the program, retailers Coles, Woolworths and Bi-Lo donated fruit. Volunteers have now given more than 5,455 hours to cut up the fruit. In addition to the volunteers' efforts, 55 private landholders have feeding stations on their properties, with permission from QPWS. Residents are reporting cassowary sightings so birds can be better managed in the wild and so QPWS can alert motorists.

Parks Volunteers to work with park staff on pest management initiatives, flora and fauna surveys and weed control.

Neighbours and landholders

Many of the threats to World Heritage values can occur along the extensive boundary of the Area. There are more than 2500 individual blocks of land neighbouring the Area's 3000 kilometre boundary and many more in the catchment areas. Neighbouring land is managed for a numerous purposes including conservation, timber production, grazing, sugar cane and other agriculture, beekeeping, tourism and private residences. Inside the World Heritage Area there are also about 200 freehold blocks or parts thereof (two percent of the Area) and over 100 leases (10 percent of the Area). Most of these are grazing leases.

The assistance of landholders and neighbours is vital for the retention and rehabilitation of habitat and wildlife corridors, fire management, weed and feral animal control, and care of water quality and flows. Neighbours and landholders are special stakeholders in the management of the Area and have cooperated with the Authority and other organisations to develop toolkits for best practice on private properties^{19, 20, 21}. Landholder engagement also provides insights into the key social and economic issues which affect their decision-making in regard to adoption of natural resource management practices^{22, 23}.

Land Care and community revegetation groups

Community support for World Heritage values is a stimulus for community action in the wider landscape. For example, Terrain NRM works in collaboration with a number of Wet Tropics Land Care and community revegetation groups. In doing so, it plays a role in transmitting the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Area. Land Care and revegetation

groups, which have traditionally involved many neighbours and landholders, are a strong part of the community landscape. They support conservation in the region through their voluntary efforts and initiatives, in partnership with government agencies and NRM organisations.

Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands (TREAT) was established in 1982 as a partnership between private landholders and QPWS²⁴. Initially TREAT also had an aim of training ex-timber workers for revegetation work so they could then be employed by local councils to revegetate degraded lands. Over the past thirty years it has grown from a small group of volunteers to a regionally important community group comprising over 460 families and 900 individual members.

The Lower Peterson Creek Revegetation Project group, formed in 1998, is another example of community initiative in the region. The revegetation of this creek contributes immensely to recreational opportunities for locals, and to enhancing the quality of visitor experiences, with a number of commercial tour operator incorporating a visit to the site as part of their presentation package for visitors. Many other broadly similar community catchment management groups play an important role in connecting communities with the World Heritage Area and through this developing community capacity.

Local council and infrastructure agencies

In collaboration with local government and (water, roads and power line) infrastructure agencies, the Wet Tropics Management Authority and QPWS have worked on innovative approaches for the design and construction of essential community infrastructure for access and enjoyment of the World Heritage Area while minimising impacts on the environment. This work has led to the

establishment of codes of practice for the water industry, road and vegetation maintenance and electricity supply ^{25, 26, 27}.

Communication with and across stakeholders

The Wet Tropics Management Authority and other partner organisations involved in the World Heritage Area use a variety of media to communicate with stakeholders. Most agencies and organisations in the region maintain websites or distribute newsletters aimed at informing stakeholders of current topical issues and developments. Some examples include the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Cyclone Yasi recovery newsletter and Terrain's member e-newsletter. The Wet Tropics Management Authority also distributes a quarterly e-newsletter relating specifically to the World Heritage Area. Several agencies involved in World Heritage management are beginning to use social networking sites such as Facebook® as a way of connecting with the community.

Special recognition of community commitment

Active community stewardship of the World Heritage Area deserves to be recognised and celebrated. The Wet Tropics Management Authority Cassowary Awards, for example, recognise the vital importance of community support for management of the Area. On the 20th anniversary of inscription on the World Heritage List, the Authority also recognised the central role of the community in the conservation and management of the Area through publication of *From the Heart*, a collection of personal stories about the Area from all parts of the regional community ²⁸.

Summary observations

The involvement of a wide range of stakeholder groups is enriching and complex. It creates a tremendous social capital in the Wet Tropics World Heritage

Area that supports its management and educates the public about the outstanding value of this region. It is evident that the UNESCO World Heritage Area Operational Guidelines paragraph 12 which specifically encourages State Parties to '*Ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties and partners in the identification, nomination and protection of World Heritage properties*' is already well implemented ²⁹.

There is a very high level of support for the World Heritage status of the Wet Tropics ³⁰. As new threats emerge and financial pressures limit management resources, such community support is increasingly needed.



Over the past 20 years I have seen the World Heritage listing raising the wider community's appreciation of our country to that which it deserves. The listing seemed to formalise what we, as Traditional Owners, already felt toward the land and we are now working hard to have our land formally recognised for its cultural values.

³¹ Phil Rist, *From the Heart*, 2009.





Best-practice manual for road construction and maintenance

A range of agencies are responsible for operating and maintaining community infrastructure in the Area including QRail, QPWS, Telstra, Ergon Energy and Powerlink. These agencies have become world leaders in the conservation

initiatives they have developed as routine components of their operations inside the World Heritage Area. Several of these initiatives, such as the *Wet Tropics Road Maintenance Codes of Practice* are now being adopted in other parts of Queensland and Interstate.

Indigenous peoples

Broader context

In addition to its natural values, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is culturally rich, comprising the traditional lands of 18 Rainforest Aboriginal groups.

Although the World Heritage Area is not formally listed for its cultural values, there is widespread recognition that Rainforest Aboriginal people have played a very significant role in shaping the landscape to its current natural significance, and maintaining the outstanding value of the Wet Tropics region for many generations.

Both the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* refer to Traditional Owners of the Area. For example, section 10(5) of the Act requires that the management authority must 'have regard to the Aboriginal tradition of the Aboriginal people particularly concerned with the land', and that it must 'liaise, and cooperate with Aboriginal people'. The *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* supports native title negotiation processes and provides for management agreements

with Aboriginal interests under Part 3 Division 5 'Negotiations and variation of controls under agreements'. The particular rights of native title holders in the World Heritage Area are also recognised in several sections of the Management Plan, and specific guidelines have been developed for consulting Aboriginal people particularly concerned with land in the Wet Tropics Area.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority engages Traditional Owners in the presentation, protection and management of the World Heritage Area. Two positions on the Authority's Board are reserved for Aboriginal persons. Their inclusion on the Authority's advisory committees and in the

development of strategic plans ensures that Rainforest Aboriginal people have a direct voice in managing their traditional lands.

Other agencies and organisations like QPWS and Terrain NRM also recognise the importance of positive and effective engagement with Rainforest Aboriginal people. Terrain's People and Country programs assist the regions Traditional Owners to realise their aspirations for land and sea management. QPWS has a number of activities to provide support for management of country in the region. Such involvement and participation at a regional level has been achieved particularly through representative arrangements whose evolution is summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Summary timeline of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' Representative Arrangements in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

Pre European Settlement	Aboriginal people occupied, managed and enjoyed land in the Area prior to the arrival of Europeans.
Early 1870s to mid-1980s	Colonisation and dispossession of Aboriginal traditional lands. Traditional lands reduced to a few small Aboriginal reserves.
June 1988	Two Rainforest Aboriginal representatives directly voice concerns to the World Heritage Bureau regarding inclusion of their lands in a World Heritage Area without their consent. To allay international concern, the Australian Government advises the World Heritage Committee that there is absolutely no intent to restrict traditional activities on lands within the Area and that proposed management arrangements designed to ensure that Aboriginal communities play an important role in the management of the whole Area.
1988	The World Heritage Committee formally accepts the Commonwealth nomination for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area to be officially inscribed on the World Heritage list (9 December 1988).
1992	The <i>Rainforest Aboriginal Network</i> is established as the first Rainforest Aboriginal representative entity.
1994/5	<i>Bama Wabu</i> replaces the <i>Rainforest Aboriginal Network</i> as representative organisation for Rainforest Aboriginal interests.
1996	<i>Girringun Aboriginal Corporation</i> , a regionally affiliated Traditional Owner driven community-based enabling organisation is incorporated under the <i>Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976</i> .
1998	Wet Tropics Ministerial Council sponsor report <i>Which Way Our Cultural Survival? Review Of Aboriginal Involvement in the Management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area</i> is published by the Review Steering Committee in 1998.

TABLE 1 continued: Summary timeline of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' Representative Arrangements in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

2001-2004	An <i>Interim Negotiating Forum</i> conducts nine forums and several regional workshops to develop the <i>Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement</i>
2004	The Aboriginal Rainforest Council is established and has representation from all 18 tribal groups.
2004	Terrain NRM establish its <i>Traditional Owner Advisory Committee</i> .
2005	In February 2005 the Wet Tropics Management Authority establishes the Rainforest Aboriginal Advisory Committee.
April 2005	On 29 April the <i>Wet Tropics Regional Agreement</i> is signed by 18 Rainforest Aboriginal tribal groups, the Australian Government, the Queensland Government and the Wet Tropics Management Authority.
2005	The <i>Wet Tropics Aboriginal Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan</i> (the Bama Plan) is launched by 19 Tribal Groups and Terrain NRM.
2006	The <i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i> is amended to allow for a second Aboriginal Board member.
2007	Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreements are signed in April for much of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area from Mossman north to the Bloomfield area followed by a Native Title consent determination in December.
2008	The <i>Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation</i> is established as a Registered Native Title Body Corporate to look after the Native Title interests of Eastern Kuku Yalanji people following on from the Native Title determination over their traditional estates in 2007.
2010	<i>Central Wet Tropics Institute for Country and Culture Aboriginal Corporation</i> established under the <i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006</i> to work as a sub-regional strategic brokering organisation to support the capacity of voluntary Traditional Owner groups on the ground in implementing their aspirations for cultural and natural resource management.
2011	Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors dissolves the <i>Rainforest Aboriginal Advisory Committee</i> based on a recommendation of the Rainforest Aboriginal Advisory Committee to enable a focus on establishing a functional Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance.
2011	Terrain NRM <i>Traditional Owner Advisory Committee</i> advised Terrain Board that it would disband as part of the transition process toward the establishment and recognition of the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance as a key engagement group for Traditional Owners in the Wet Tropics.
2012	<i>Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance</i> develops a business plan and is now a non-incorporated alliance between the Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation and Central Wet Tropics Institute and other Aboriginal community organisations. This Alliance has memberships of individuals, groups and organisations covering the Wet Tropics Area.

A number of regional representative arrangements have evolved since the listing of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in response to shifts in Aboriginal community needs, cultural priorities, and capacity. In general, this has seen a move away from agencies and organisation-driven models to models of self-determination.

The Wet Tropics Regional Agreement represents a landmark in fostering collaboration for Indigenous people's effective participation in the Wet Tropics region³². It provides an overall framework for the involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area with the Wet Tropics Management Authority, the state and commonwealth governments and the 18 Rainforest Aboriginal groups. It recommends the objectives, principles, protocols and improved administrative arrangements for engaging Rainforest Aboriginal people in decision making and on-ground management. Its significance was recognised by the Queensland Premier in the 2005 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management.

Terrain NRM also sought to better involve Rainforest Aboriginal people in on-ground management of the region and the result was the Wet Tropics Aboriginal Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan (the Bama Plan). It allowed Indigenous peoples to express their aspirations, needs and priorities with respect to natural resource management in the region. It was the first of its kind in Australia, and now regarded as a useful framework for many NRM organisations to follow³³.

Each of these planning processes represented a substantial achievement in building collaborations and achieving alignment between Rainforest Aboriginal people and other organisations operating in the Wet

Tropics. While it is evident that some elements of the Regional Agreement and the Bama Plan have not been implemented in the manner intended, the significance of these documents as landmarks in better engaging Rainforest Aboriginal people in the management of their traditional country should not be underestimated. Their direction and intent remain relevant and important to Rainforest Aboriginal people.

The style of collaboration between management agencies and Rainforest Aboriginal peoples requires constant fine-tuning. Rainforest Aboriginal peoples have also been taking the steps to again become autonomous in managing their interests in the World Heritage Area through the creation of their own Indigenous institutions and initiatives for management of country.

Currently, a Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance (RAPA) is establishing as a regional leadership group across Rainforest Aboriginal peoples of the broader Wet Tropics region, actively supporting Traditional Owner networks. It is supported by many of the smaller community organisations within the Wet Tropics. The Wet Tropics Management Authority and Terrain NRM support RAPA in the development of its role, governance and operational arrangements. Defining the nature of the relationship between RAPA and any non-Indigenous management agencies or organisations that may in future collaborate with RAPA is a work-in-progress.

Other types of engagement with and support for Rainforest Aboriginal people

The settlement of Native Title claims made under the *Native Title Act 1993* and associated Indigenous Land Use Agreements are an important basis for the engagement of Traditional Owners in management of the World Heritage Area.

Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) aim to appropriately balance World Heritage values with the well-being of Rainforest Aboriginal people, their cultural obligations to protect and manage lands, and their aspirations for land use, community development and socio-economic recovery. The Djiru, Eastern Kuku Yalanji, Mandingalbay

Yidinji, Wanyurr Majay (Yidinji), Dulabed and Malanbarra Yidinji and Gunggandji people have signed ILUAs with the Wet Tropics Management Authority and the State of Queensland in the recent past. Other agreements are currently being negotiated under the auspices of the Native Title Tribunal.



Moving back on Country ***Eastern Kuku Yalanji Indigenous Land Use Agreement - A cooperative approach to land ownership, use, management and community development***

The 2007 Indigenous Land Use Agreement settled a range of land use issues and ensured the protection of environmentally and culturally sensitive areas over 230,000 hectares in the northern sector of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

The suite of 15 agreements establishes a cooperative approach to land ownership, use and management and community development.

Approximately 16,500 hectares was transferred in 2011 under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 for Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owners to live on their country, manage it to conserve the land values and to develop sustainable economic opportunities from it to improve their well-being. Most of this land is within the World Heritage Area and a Cooperative Management Agreement under the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 provides for the agreement of Community Development Plans and associated Activity Guidelines. Native Title Holders have agreed to exercise their native title rights and interests only in accordance with the Cooperative Management Agreement.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority in partnership with other management agencies and local government have been supporting community development plans to better empower Eastern Kuku Yalanji community to manage their country within the Area. Lessons learned from this project have

relevance for engaging with Traditional Owner groups across the Area. One important lesson is that equitable, effective and timely participation of Traditional Owners in these arrangements still depends on their capabilities and capacities at any point in time.



Girringun Traditional Owners' role in management of country and natural disaster recovery

Traditional Owners from Girringun in the Hinchinbrook Shire played an important role after Tropical Cyclone Yasi.

Getting to sites of cultural significance after the cyclone was very important to see what damage had occurred. Girringun Traditional Owners were among the first to enter many affected areas, taking stock of the damage and suggesting measures towards the clean-up and recovery. This included cleaning up the country, fencing of properties adjacent to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, and revegetation,

with a number of agencies and groups working together. The recovery efforts also brought Indigenous and non-indigenous communities closer in their understanding and respect for each other - a net social benefit at a community level that can be quite enduring. In some instances, Indigenous peoples have been allowed to access their sacred sites within or bordering private properties, which was not encouraged or permitted before. There were also increased opportunities for Indigenous people to be trained in conservation and land management in the cyclone-affected region, with around 220 people receiving training.

Governance (Legislation, Policies, Strategies and Communication)

- Legislation and institutional framework
- Collaborative management

The listing of the Wet Tropics of Queensland as a World Heritage Area was a stimulus for establishing new governance arrangements to manage the region and ensure that Australia's obligations under the World Heritage Convention are met. In this context, governance includes the legislative and policy frameworks that establish the context and obligations for management; approaches and structures for participation of different stakeholders and perspectives; power relations and decision-making processes, relationships amongst stakeholders, responsibility and accountability.

Legislation and institutional framework

The *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* underpins the integrated conservation and management of the World Heritage Area and provides the legal framework for the roles and responsibilities of the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is a regionally based statutory authority which was established with the objective of ensuring Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention in relation to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area are met. Its Board of Directors and advisory groups are drawn largely from the regional community. The World Heritage Area provides benefits and essential services to the community and it is also intended, in a reciprocal way, that the community has an active role in caring for the Area.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* extends consideration of the potential impact of development beyond the boundaries of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to take into account any impact on World Heritage values. A significant proportion of the World Heritage Area comprises national parks and other protected area tenures managed under Queensland's *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. This Act is the framework for protected area and wildlife management in Queensland and provides further complementary legislative protection for the Area.

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is a multi-tenured protected area within which there are private landholders and different government-held tenures. Other critical planning processes in the region need to ensure that they complement the protection and management regimes established under State and Commonwealth legislation. For example, regional statutory planning instruments, such as the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031³⁴, explicitly recognises the values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and includes provisions that contribute to its protection and conservation.

Collaborative management

Landscape and corridor management in the Wet Tropics region requires ongoing effective cross-institutional coordination in dealing with multi-tenure and multiple uses. The Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy³⁵ developed

by the Authority in collaboration with numerous partners, promotes actions to achieve the conservation, rehabilitation and transmission to future generations of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the broader Wet Tropics bioregion. The Strategy seeks to align the efforts of numerous government and community organisations and is influential in priority setting and resource allocation. A broad range of corridor priorities identified in the Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy are now reflected in the Terrain NRM Regional Plan³⁶ and the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031³⁷ and are also reflected in local government planning schemes at a finer scale (*under the Queensland Sustainable Planning*

Act 2009). All these agencies and organisations work closely with a wide range of community groups with the values of the World Heritage Area as an important driver of their collaboration.

Collaborative management is a reality in the Wet Tropics region. The complex governance system that is in place for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is constantly evolving but it is already fulfilling one important function in the life of the community in terms of coordinating resources and building social capital. It is facilitating, promoting and sustaining partnerships and collaborations across different types of stakeholders at different levels.



Making Connections

Scientific modelling has shown that improving connectivity in the cool, high areas of the Southern Atherton Tablelands could help build the resilience of the region to climate change and provide a refuge for the unique plants and animals of the Wet Tropics that are sensitive to rising temperatures.

The Making Connections project is a collaborative exercise involving multiple partners including Tablelands Regional Council, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Trees for Evelyn and AthertonTablelands (TREAT), the Tree



Kangaroo and Mammal Group (TKMG) Malanda Landcare, Griffith University, the University of Queensland and the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

With the assistance of the QPWS in facilitating relationships with landholders and contractors, nearly 19,000 trees of over 100 species have been planted and more than 120 volunteers from the School for Field Studies and community groups like TREAT and TKMG. To date, 6.5 hectares have been replanted, and over 2.5 kilometres of fencing has been erected.

Human and Community Well-Being, and Environmental Values and Services

- Human and community well-being
- Threats to environmental services and values

Human and community well-being

There are many opportunities within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area for walking, bike riding, swimming in the pristine waters of lakes and creeks, for adventure trips, wildlife observation and resting within serene surroundings. The Area is a place to enjoy, to heal, to recharge from the stresses of life; to more intimately commune with its diverse fauna and flora; to experience emotions and sensations that are buried within us in the bustle of our daily lives; and to feel inspired.

The philosophy of 'Healthy Parks, Healthy People'³⁹ is highly relevant to the Wet Tropics community. There is strong recognition of such quality of life benefits from the World Heritage Area. The proximity of many visitor sites to communities is also highly valued, as evidenced by the high levels of visitation and use of the Area by local residents. Respondents to a survey also state that 'it is good to know it exists' and believe that very important benefits are derived from the provision of places for relaxation and contemplation, as well as recreational and social opportunities^{40, 41}. The visual amenity of the area is so much valued that the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 has as one of its goals to protect and enhance the unique visual amenity and landscape of the region⁴².

Human well-being and economic, social and cultural benefits also come from a range of ecosystem goods and services provided by the Wet Tropics

World Heritage Area^{43, 44}. However, the nature and strength of the links between environmental values and services from the Area and human and community well-being are still incompletely understood. These links are described in Figure 2⁴⁵. It recognises that the direct and indirect relationships between many of these specific environmental values and services and dimensions of human and community well-being are an inextricable part of

“

Protected areas provide open spaces and recreation opportunities, large areas for carbon sequestration, they generate energy and provide research and education facilities. Above all these, they play a role in the maintenance of cultural values which contribute to community health, well-being and a strong sense of place.

³⁸ R. Bushell, *The role of nature-based tourism in the contribution of protected areas to the quality of life in rural and regional communities in Australia*, 2002

”

the function of the Area in the life of the community, but mostly taken for granted.

There has been some empirical research undertaken that attempt to illustrate these ecosystem values and linkages and how they directly manifest themselves within this region, as illustrated in the following examples. Cloud stripping in the high altitude rainforests of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area contributes greatly to the annual precipitation which feeds stream flow and water supply ⁴⁶. A number of creeks in the Wet Tropics continue to flow in the dry season because of this contribution.

Rivers within the Area provide power for two hydro-electricity stations, Koombooloomba Dam on the Tully River and Barron Falls Hydro on the Barron River. Drinking water quality in general is also a very important environmental service in the region that on a daily basis is valued by residents and others. Production of macadamias on the Atherton Tableland benefits greatly from insect pollination – as insects that use the rainforest interact with nearby agricultural crops ⁴⁷. Coffee plantations in the region derive similar benefits from the Area's birdlife.

The potential for carbon sequestration is an environmental service that could be further explored. Carbon sequestration could be a significant incentive for landholders to participate in initiatives for sustainable management and a fitting contribution to reward the time and effort of those who over the years have worked hard towards conservation of ecosystems on their properties ⁴⁹. The potential also exists for scientific bio-prospecting for pharmaceutical products.

Threats to environmental services and values

Threatening these environmental services is a range of biosecurity issues

(discussed in the State of the Wet Tropics Report 2010-2011 and climate change (highlighted in an earlier State of the Wet Tropics Report 2008-2009 and by others) ^{50, 51}.

The natural disasters which are a common occurrence in this region also pose a significant threat. Thus another important function of the Area in the life of the community is the development of resilient communities capable of implementing adaptive management and self-sustaining momentum at times of recovery from disasters or when dealing with any other threats. The role of natural resource and conservation management organisations at times of natural disasters is perceived by the community to be invaluable. They contributed greatly to recovery efforts after cyclone Yasi, working closely with local councils and community organisations. This was also the case in efforts like the Daintree Rescue Package, cassowary recovery plans and Mission Beach recovery work.

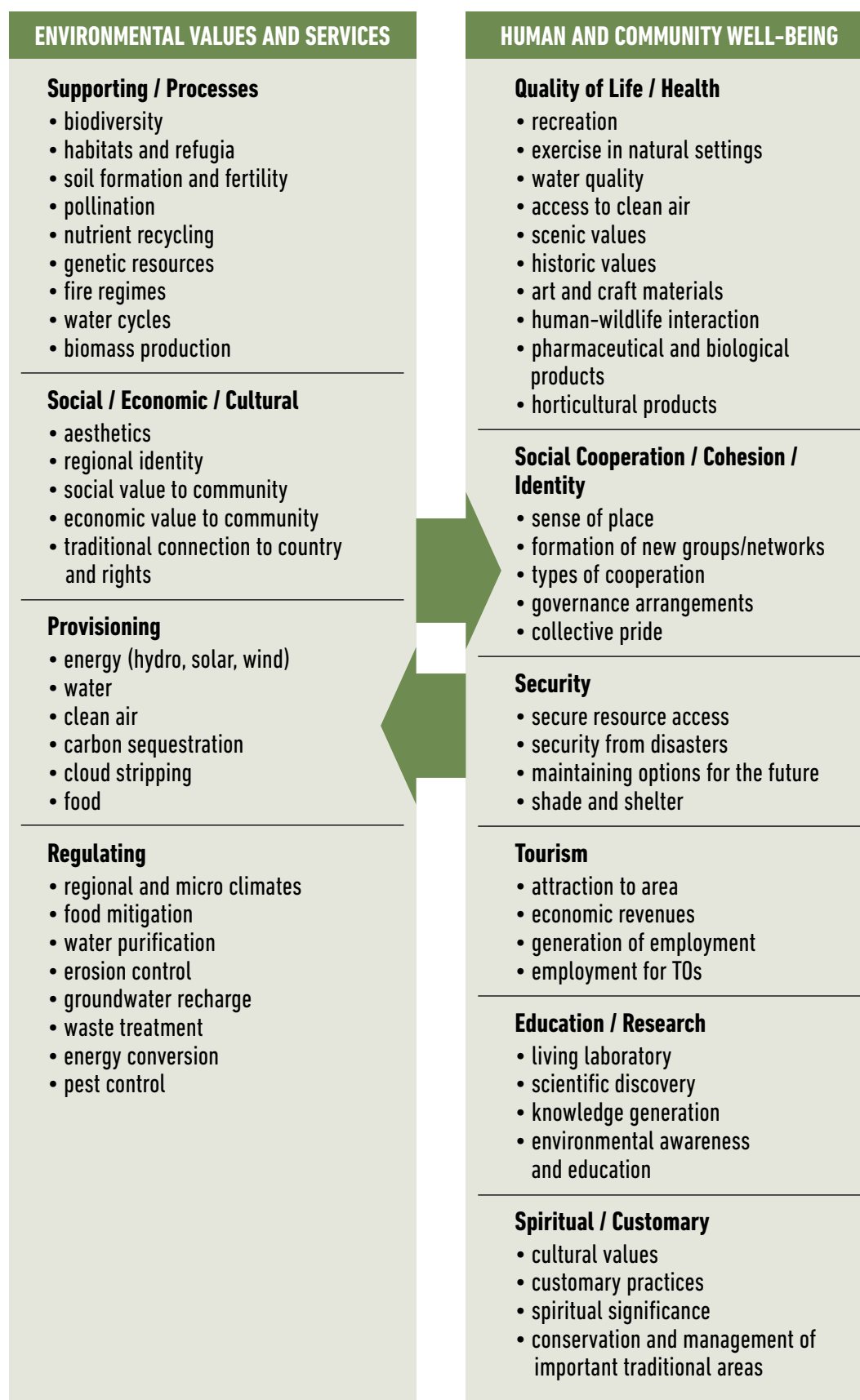


The community sees the World Heritage Area as an integral part of the quality of life, as an important component of place meaning and identity, and as an amenity and resource which provides for community recreation, restoration, and inspiration as well as a livelihood for many.

⁴⁸ *J. Bentrupperbäumer et al, Visitor Monitoring System for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, 2004.*



FIGURE 2: The Link between Environmental Values and Services and Human and Community Wellbeing in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area



Research, Education and Knowledge Application

- History and institutional context for research
- Research and management nexus – knowledge application
- Research on social, cultural and economic dimensions
- International knowledge transfer
- Learning and teaching

History and institutional context for research

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is an extraordinarily rich and dynamic living laboratory for the acquisition of knowledge and understanding - of its fauna, flora, biodiversity, ecosystem functioning and services, as well as its social, economic and cultural values.

Research capacity and knowledge has developed rapidly in this region over the last 20 years through two rounds of Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre funding (1993-2006); the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility investments (2006-2010) and the National Environmental Research Program (2010-2014). A supersite⁵² has been established under Australia's Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) to capitalise on and extend this research legacy.

An important foundation for the amount and calibre of research in the Wet Tropics region was the establishment of the CSIRO laboratory on the Atherton Tableland and the James Cook University campus in Cairns.

Several partners in the management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area participated in the Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), which was a consortium of research and management agencies charged with facilitating well-targeted research and

effective knowledge transfer.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority was part of the Rainforest CRC's governing structures and provided financial, in-kind and staff support to ensure research was also directed to address management needs and seek management solutions.

The World Heritage Area was not only a centrepiece of research but also played a critical role in ensuring multi-disciplinary research across all the programs. Support groups within the Rainforest CRC, made up of stakeholders within the Wet Tropics region, played an important role as end users in shaping research, with the Authority and QPWS staff represented in all of those groups.

The legacy from this research undertaken within the CRCs still influences management of the Area. Impressive research facilities like the Australian Canopy Crane Research Station at Cape Tribulation will continue to foster even more interest in the conduct of research in the future.

Research and management nexus – knowledge application

Research institutions have played a vital role in the provision of information and advice with direct relevance to the management of the Wet Tropics region. Table 2 provides an overview of current priority research areas which have been identified as relevant to

TABLE 2: Examples of current high priority research areas relevant to understanding the function of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in the life of the community

BROADER RESEARCH AREA	SPECIFIC RESEARCH TOPICS
Rainforest Aboriginal cultural studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspirations and interests of Rainforest Aboriginal people and systems of management to facilitate co-management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area • Documentation of Rainforest Aboriginal culture • Aboriginal capacity building and engagement in natural resource management • Culturally important attributes of the World Heritage Area
Community attitudes, benefits, engagement, use and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How business (particularly tourism) and other community and Traditional Owner partners can be engaged, benefit from, and contribute to the knowledge and management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area • Community attitudes, knowledge levels, perceptions, expectations, concerns, needs and levels of support with respect to the use and management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area • Best ways to promote the value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to the community
Presentation, recreation and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key determinants of visitor experience at Wet Tropics World Heritage Area recreation sites • Key indicators of visitor behaviours, motivation and understanding and how these might be applied to improve management • Perceptions of scenic and aesthetic importance and how they can be used for impact assessments
Socio-economic and environmental benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the ecological goods and services provided by the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area are • The role of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in maintaining prosperity together with social health and well-being
Integration of knowledge for management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best ways for the integration of social and ecological science for World Heritage conservation and management

understanding the function of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in the life of the community.

An important source of engagement between research institutions and management agencies is the Wet Tropics Management Authority's statutory Scientific Advisory Committee which meets four times a year to provide advice to the Authority on any emerging issues, proposals, and planning relevant to the Area.

With the support of the Scientific Advisory Committee, the Wet Tropics Management Authority completed a research strategy⁵³ that aims to guide research efforts and facilitate knowledge transfer. This is one means of inviting collaboration with research providers to address specific information needs for management. The committee helps to ensure that World Heritage Area management staff in all agencies are exposed to up-to-date research relevant to the Area. It also helps to co-opt the skills and knowledge of the research community.

Research on social, cultural and economic dimensions

Inter-disciplinary research that addresses the relationships between the Wet Tropics environment, the environmental services it provides and the social, cultural and economic dimensions of communities in this region plays a valuable role in better understanding the function of the World Heritage Area in the life of the community. Examples of such research include some related to Indigenous peoples^{54, 55}; visitor and community experiences, perceptions and values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area^{56, 57, 58}; landholders' characteristics^{59, 60}; community involvement in management^{61, 62} and social resilience⁶³.

The adoption of appropriate cultural protocols for involving Indigenous

people in research will ensure their continued involvement in the generation of knowledge⁶⁴. Further enhancing their skills will facilitate continued production of valuable resources such as videos produced by Girringun Aboriginal Corporation *No Wabu, No Wuju, No Gunduy* (No Rainforest, No Food, No Cassowary) which tells the story of the cassowary and its importance to Aboriginal Rainforest people⁶⁵.

International knowledge transfer

A benefit of undertaking research which benefits the management of World Heritage properties is that actions taken at these iconic properties attract considerable international attention and can influence the adoption of good management practices elsewhere. Recognising this, UNESCO encourages World Heritage properties to serve as living laboratories where monitoring, mitigation and adaptation processes can be applied, tested and improved.

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is regarded as one of the best-studied patches of protected rainforest on a global Scale⁶⁶. For this reason, and also for the calibre of work undertaken, research in the Area has raised global interest in similar rainforest World Heritage Areas or rainforest tropical environments facing problems like climate change impacts.

Sharing the experience gained by Australia in managing the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (and other Australian properties) is a useful means of strengthening World Heritage management elsewhere, particularly in Oceania.

In 2009, the Authority supported the Australian Department of Sustainability Environment Water Population and Communities (SEWPaC) to run a two-week training workshop for East Rennell World Heritage Area (Solomon Islands) land managers. Australia has also deployed experienced Wet Tropics



A Learning Landscape

The outstanding universal value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has been a focus for researchers for many years.

Located within the region is the James Cook University and important laboratories of CSIRO - Australia's national science agency. Researchers from these and other Australian institutions have made a major contribution to knowledge about the Wet Tropics rainforests. This knowledge contributes to understanding about tropical rainforests throughout the world.

The Wet Tropics region offers many benefits for researchers. There is already a substantial foundation of ecological data in place. The region supports outstanding research facilities, for example, James Cook University

and the Australian canopy crane research station, and easy access to forests for fieldwork. The forests are carefully managed to maintain their conservation values and management authorities are strongly supportive of research programs.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority, the statutory authority responsible for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, has established a research strategy for the Area. The research strategy creates a foundation for establishing the Wet Tropics as a learning landscape. Through this, the Authority aims to encourage continuing research, addressing key management issues for the Wet Tropics of Queensland and other tropical forests and to ensure the results of research have influence in management and policy for the Area.

management resources to assist the Lorentz World Heritage Area (Republic of Indonesia) in the development of a management plan for the property. During 2011, the Wet Tropics Management Authority hosted officials from the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati and Vanuatu in support of the completion of their six-yearly periodic reports.

Learning and teaching

Schools and academic institutions benefit greatly from being in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area where many field-trips take place. Many of the agencies and organisations in the region contribute tremendously to learning about the natural environment and the specific outstanding value of the World Heritage Area.

Staff of agencies and organisations in the region regularly attend teacher in-service training and host school visits to the World Heritage Area. Agencies and organisations also support specific projects for community awareness like the Cattana Wetlands Project and numerous field-based school activities in the region ⁶⁷.

Another schools-focused initiative is an annual poster competition, conducted in partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Winning entries are compiled into a calendar that is widely distributed to school communities.

Alongside TAFE, Education Queensland and others, the Authority also supports the monthly News in Education (NiE) Post-Ed supplement in the Cairns Post. As part of its sponsorship the Authority provides stories, feature articles and activities for school students across the region.

Terrain NRM includes an education link on their website where teaching resources are listed and available to the public. It has partnered with

Earthwatch to produce a series of climate information fact sheets and deliver educational events across the region on this climate change adaptation.

James Cook University (JCU) have a strong focus on teaching rainforest sciences, natural resources management, sustainable development, ecotourism and conservation. Together with their strong focus on World Heritage, they are well positioned to use the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as an exemplar case-study and as an outdoor teaching laboratory.

The Area is critical to the teaching at JCU which even evokes the scenic beauty of the World Heritage Area in its marketing to domestic and overseas students, citing the close vicinity of the Cairns and Townsville campuses to two World Heritage natural environments – the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Wet Tropics ancient rainforests ⁶⁸.

Other tertiary academic institutions like the School for Field Studies on the Atherton Tablelands market exclusively to international students to learn about rainforest ecology and restoration, providing an opportunity to transfer knowledge overseas ⁶⁹.

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area will continue to be a reference for knowledge about tropical forest ecosystems and associated environmental services and social, cultural and economic dimensions not only in Australia but also overseas. It is quite clear that, in the 20 years since the listing, the Area has played a significant role in promoting knowledge generation and its application.

Tourism and Interpretation

- Economic value of tourism
- Framework for tourism management
- Sustainable tourism industry
- Tourism and Traditional Owners
- Regional Leadership
- Visitor experiences and facilities

Economic value of tourism

There is wide recognition by state and commonwealth governments and a whole range of stakeholders that World Heritage Areas are tourism assets. World Heritage is a very powerful brand for the tourism industry in this region. The combination of reef and rainforest experiences are promoted widely. The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is regarded as one of the premier tourism destinations in the Australia.

In terms of national economic impact, the Wet Tropics of Queensland is one of the most significant World Heritage Areas in Australia. The annual visitation for 2006-07 was estimated at 5 million and contributed just over two million dollars in direct or indirect output or business turnover and 13,351 direct or indirect jobs⁷⁰. During the year ending 2010, the region had an estimated 5.7 million visitors and is the third most significant destination in Australia for international visitors. Total visitation to the Cairns Townsville region over the past year has included an estimated 18 million visitor nights spent within the region⁷¹.

Framework for tourism management

The framework for tourism in the World Heritage Area was established in the Wet Tropics Nature Based Tourism Strategy⁷². Developed in close consultation with the tourism industry and relevant government agencies, the

strategy divides the World Heritage Area into twelve tourism precincts according to their distinctive features and tourism focus. The overall aim is to encourage a dynamic, sustainable and professional nature-based tourism industry in the Wet Tropics. The strategy encourages cooperative partnerships between the tourism industry, land managers, Indigenous people, conservation groups and the community. A primary strategy for managing the impacts of tourism in the Wet Tropics is to provide for focused access areas and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service provides such opportunities in many of the National Parks in the region.

Sustainable tourism industry

Tourism is a major industry linked to World Heritage Areas⁷³. Provision for and management of sustainable tourism in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area can contribute greatly to understanding the critical role that World Heritage plays in fostering sustainable development.

The tourism industry is a key regional partner in delivering better understanding of World Heritage values through interpretation and presentation. It also plays a very important role in connecting communities and economies. The industry hires many interpreters to portray the World Heritage Area to a wide range of visitors and local community members. Recognising this, the Wet Tropics Management Authority is working together with

the tourism industry to ensure high standards in the commercial tour guide industry. Such close partnerships assist in giving visitors to the region a high quality experience, enhancing their understanding of the outstanding universal value of the Wet Tropics and helping to minimise any environmental risks associated with tourism operations in the World Heritage Area.

A Wet Tropics World Heritage specific curriculum for tour guide training has been developed and launched recently through a partnership with the Queensland Tourism Industry Council. This program also aims to reduce the onerous task faced by tour guides of sourcing accurate, up-to-date information to enhance visitor experiences. The program has been well received. In the first six months since its launch in early 2012 more than 65 training places have been filled.

The regional tourism industry recognises the importance of maintaining a good reputation for the quality of its products and services and sustainable practice. A high proportion of operators have secured certification for their operations through Ecotourism Australia. Recent Queensland Government policy reforms related to the Tourism in Protected Areas framework will make accreditation of this type compulsory for commercial operators using high visitation sites within the World Heritage Area.

Tourism and Traditional Owners

Tourism has the potential to create much needed employment opportunities for Rainforest Aboriginal people.

A welcome new development that will assist Traditional Owners gain further economic benefit from the World Heritage Area has recently commenced operations at Mossman Gorge.

This is the most heavily visited site in the Wet Tropics with more than half a million visitors each year. The recently

established interpretive centre enables the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people to collect a transfer (bus) fee and provide exclusive cultural and environmental interpretation at the site. The new arrangements have also remedied previous parking problems, reducing impacts on World Heritage values and improving visitor experience.

Regional leadership

The Wet Tropics Management Authority has provided regional leadership in establishing the Area as one of Australia's National Landscapes under a program jointly administered by Tourism Australia and Parks Australia. Under the program, a regional committee will forge partnerships between regional tourism and conservation interests in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

The program aims to foster internationally competitive tourism experiences that value, enhance and protect the natural and cultural environments on which they depend.

The positioning statement for the Wet Tropics region acknowledges the Wet Tropics as a triumph of natural wonder, hidden beauty, accessible nature and diversity. From the Daintree, to the Tablelands or spying a wandering Cassowary, this World Heritage landscape delivers an entrancing, intriguing and engaging experience.

Visitor experience and facilities

All these initiatives contribute towards what have been identified as the most important aspects of visitors' experience in this region: to see natural features, and to be close to and experience nature through observing the scenery, short walks, photography/painting/drawing and relaxing⁷⁴. Maintaining the quality of visitor experience remains a challenge, as facilities require upgrading and constant maintenance. The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has around 180 visitor sites, at least 94 of which have some level of infrastructure⁷⁵.

Shaping the Future

- **Promote and fine-tune involvement and participation of a wide range of stakeholders**
- **Support Indigenous peoples' aspirations and contributions to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area**
- **Support collaborative governance for conservation and management of the World Heritage Area**
- **Foster applied research and promote knowledge transfer**
- **Improve standards for tourism and interpretation through collaboration**
- **Promote understanding of the links between environmental services and values and human and community well-being**

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is a fundamental part of the community in North Queensland, contributing to many aspects of people's lives, industries, organisations and groups. This outstanding Queensland state, national and international icon must be managed with care to ensure its longevity. Priority areas for planning and policy attention are listed below.

Promote and fine-tune involvement and participation of a wide range of stakeholders

A strong foundation already exists for participation by a wide range of stakeholders but there is a need to continually refine and adapt systems of communication and engagement to deal with changing issues and changes in communities.

Effective multi-stakeholder involvement requires professional skills in community engagement across the region. Ongoing identification and mapping of community groups with an interest in the World Heritage Area is vital for more integrated regional planning and communication.

Such knowledge also allows for tailor-made production of informational materials on the outstanding value of

the Area, current threats, and the work of management agencies.

Collaboration with stakeholders is critical in areas such as monitoring biodiversity, endangered species, and environmental impacts. This is particularly the case given emerging biosecurity threats and also the catastrophic events, such as cyclones that are common in the region.

Innovative approaches should continue to be implemented to celebrate the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and support community efforts through events, awards, or ambassador programs. With the rapid growth of new technologies and social media it is also important to investigate online opportunities for communication amongst Wet Tropics communities and management agencies.

Support Indigenous peoples' aspirations and contributions to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

Continued support is vital for institutional strengthening of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' representative bodies in ways that are culturally sensitive and considered appropriate by them. Promoting inter-cultural dialogue around specific management challenges,

particularly related to bio-cultural activities within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, is an ongoing process in the region.

Support collaborative governance for conservation and management of the World Heritage Area

Effective management of this Area cannot be accomplished without strong collaboration between all levels of government, community groups, landholders, Rainforest Aboriginal people and industries. Such collaboration benefits from clear definition of roles and responsibilities, and synchronised efforts and use of resources.

It is vital to gain an understanding of the expectations of different stakeholders as well as culturally appropriate ways of engaging them in the collaborative process. Continuing strong regional leadership is necessary to foster collaboration and create the right space for dialogue. A major contributor to that dialogue will be maintenance of strong working relations between Canberra and Brisbane-based institutions with those in the Wet Tropics region. Planning resources must be sufficient to ensure all groups and institutions feel their interests are properly taken into account.

The capacity for Rainforest Aboriginal people to participate in the management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area needs to be bolstered with funding and other capacity development interventions as part of supporting Indigenous peoples' social development and self-determination goals.

Management arrangements like Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous Land Use Agreements should be recognised as a significant contribution to the presentation, preservation and management of the World Heritage Area in addition to their contribution to livelihoods.

“

The most obvious change in the management of the World Heritage Area has been a lifting of standards. Standards of presentation in the Area; maintenance of its internal infrastructure such as roads and powerlines; knowledge and understanding of its plants, animals and vegetation communities; and awareness and management of threatening processes. These have all increased significantly through the focus and direction provided by the listing.

⁷⁶ Nigel Tucker, *From the Heart*, 2009.

”

Models for co-management with Indigenous peoples need to be tailored to the specific context, interests and capabilities of Traditional Owner organisations. Management agencies and other collaborators need to be prepared to adapt and flex to changing community needs.

Foster applied research and promote knowledge transfer

Priority should be given to implementing the Wet Tropics Management Authority Research Strategy 2010-2014 and to promoting the World Heritage Area as a learning landscape, paying particular

attention to the transfer of knowledge between researchers, managers and the wider community, including our Asia-Pacific neighbours.

More research effort needs to be directed towards areas such as the links between the World Heritage Area and human well-being; recreation and tourism experiences; economic valuation of environmental services; and the economic contribution of the World Heritage Area to the regional economy. More is also needed on the cultural aspects of the World Heritage Area, which includes understanding of working cross-culturally and appropriate co-management models for this Area. Collaboration of Traditional Owners in research needs to adhere to clear standards and guidelines and these should be promoted in the region.

Improve standards for tourism and interpretation through collaboration

World Heritage Areas are tourism assets and nature-based tourism is the major industry within the Wet Tropics region. A number of current initiatives that foster collaboration between management agencies and the tourism industry need to be further encouraged and promoted. Tour guide training launched recently through a partnership between management agencies and the Queensland Tourism Industry Council will improve the quality of presentation of the Area. Monitoring mechanisms for quality control of accreditation standards is part of the collaborative work of Ecotourism Australia, the industry and management agencies in the region.

The Wet Tropics National Landscape Program is a clear example of a broad partnership at a regional and strategic level. Supporting the Wet Tropics hub of this national initiative will create a platform for planning and product development, particularly as the tourism market is evolving and changing.

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has many facilities, some easier and others more difficult to access. The demand for road and facility upgrades in this region is increasing to meet growing population needs, and to provide more access to the Area and essential services. All facilities need to be designed, built and maintained to a standard consistent with the World Heritage status of the Area.

Promote understanding of the links between environmental services and values and human and community well-being

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area was established because of its natural outstanding natural value. Those World Heritage values need to be preserved in their own right. However, the Area exists within a cultural, social and economic context and cannot be managed without institutions, groups and individuals. It is vital to communicate to the public the link between their quality of life and the value of conservation and management of the World Heritage Area for the environmental values and services it provides. Environmental services and values from the World Heritage Area are of critical importance in supporting the resilience of the broader Wet Tropics landscape and need to be better understood.

Footnotes

- [1] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Research Strategy 2010-2014, Improving management by building and communicating knowledge through collaboration*, Wet Tropics Management Authority, 2010, p.2.
- [2] N. Stork, S Goosem and S. Turton, Australian Rainforests in a Global Context, in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Forest Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S. Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp 4-20.
- [3] J. M. Bentrupperbäumer and J. P. Reser, *Measuring and Monitoring Impacts of Visitation and Use in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area 2001/2002: A Site Based Bioregional Perspective*, Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre, Cairns, 2002, pp. 11-51.
- [4] AEC Group, *Cairns - Townsville Experiences Audit Report*, September 2011, <http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/Documents/nltts/working-grps/dmp/Cairns-Townsville-EDS-2.pdf> (accessed 2 July 2012).
- [5] J. M. Bentrupperbäumer, S. E. O'Farrell and J. P. Reser, *Visitor Monitoring System for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area: Volume 2 Visitor Monitoring Process - From Pre-Destination to Post-Destination*. Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Cairns, 2004, pp 10-43.
- [6] J. Carmody, J. and B. Prideaux, *Community Attitudes, Knowledge, Perceptions and Use of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area in 2007*, Report to the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, Cairns, 2008, <http://www.rrrc.org.au/publications/downloads/Entire-Document.pdf> (accessed 10 July 2012).
- [7] J. M. Bentrupperbäumer and J. P. Reser, *The Role of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in the Life of the Community*, A Survey of the North Queensland Community, Revised Edition, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management. Rainforest CRC, Cairns, 2006, pp. 3-40.
- [8] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *From the Heart: Celebrating 20 Years of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area*, Cairns, 2009, p. 19.
- [9] Bentrupperbäumer and Reser, p. 34.
- [10] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *From the Heart*, pp. 20-40.
- [11] World Heritage Centre, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, World Heritage Centre November 11/01, 2012, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide11-en.pdf> (accessed 1 September 2012).

- [12] World Heritage Centre, pp. 2-87.
- [13] World Heritage Centre, p. 90.
- [14] P. Larson, IUCN, *World Heritage and Evaluation processes related to Community and Rights*, Prepared for the IUCN World Heritage Programme, June 2012, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/496/> (accessed 1 September 2012).
- [15] K. Schreckenber, I. Camargo, K. I. Withnal, C. Corrigan, P. Franks, D. Roe, L. M. Scherl and V. Richardson, *Social Assessment of Conservation Initiatives: A review of rapid methodologies*, IIED - Natural Resource Management Series, 2012. pp. 1-38.
- [16] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *The Wet Tropics Management Authority Community Engagement Strategy 2011-2015*, Cairns, 2011, p. 15.
- [17] Valentine, P.S. and Hill, R, The establishment of a World Heritage Area, in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S. Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp 81-93.
- [18] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Strategic Plan 2008-2013*, http://www.wettropics.gov.au/mwha/mwha_pdf/Strategies/WTMAStrategicPlan.pdf, p. 12.
- [19] J. Kanowski, C. P. Catterall, K. Freebody and D. A. Harrison, D. A. (2008). *Monitoring Revegetation Projects in Rainforest Landscapes. Toolkit Version 2*, Report to the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns, 2008, pp. 1 -45.
- [20] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *The Landholder's Handbook: Living with World Heritage*, http://www.wettropics.gov.au/site/user-assets/docs/jsc_living_with_wh.pdf (accessed 12 September 2012).
- [21] S. Scragg, *World Heritage Wet Tropics: Restoring Communities* (video) Funded by TREAT, Terrain, RADF grant, School for Field Studies and Barron Catchment Care, <http://www.sarahscragg.com/> 2011, (accessed 12 September 2012).
- [22] N. Emtage and J. Reghenzani, *Wet Tropics Sustainable Agriculture Survey Interim Report. A Survey of Landholders from the Wet Tropics Natural Resource Management Region*, Report to the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns, 2008. p. 30.
- [23] N. Emtage and J. Herbohn, J. (2008), *Profiles of rural landholders in relation to Natural Resource Management in the Wet Tropics region of North Queensland*, Report to the Marine and Tropical Sciences, Cairns, 2008, pp. 30-40.
- [24] *Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands* (TREAT), <http://www.treat.net.au/> (accessed 6 June 2012)
- [25] Queensland Department of Main Roads, *Road maintenance code of practice for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area*, Department of Main Roads and Wet Tropics Management Authority, Cairns, 1998, p 2-10.

- [26] Wet Tropics Management Authority (2007) *Keep the trees please!* (brochure) Cleaning up roads after a cyclone in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Cairns, 2007.
- [27] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Water Infrastructure Code of Practice: Wet Field Guide for the Maintenance and Operation of Water Extraction Infrastructure in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area*, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Cairns, 2000. pp. 1 - 40.
- [28] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *From the Heart*, Cairns, 2009.
- [29] World Heritage Centre, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide11-en.pdf> (accessed 1 September 2012).
- [30] Bentrupperbäumer and Reser, *The Role of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in the Life of the Community*, p. 60.
- [31] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *From the Heart*, p. 51.
- [32] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement*, Cairns, 2005, http://www.wettropics.gov.au/site/user-assets/docs/regional_agreement.pdf (accessed 1 September 2012).
- [33] The Wet Tropics Aboriginal Plan Project Team (2005). *Caring for Country and Culture – The Wet Tropics Aboriginal Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan*, Rainforest CRC and FNQ NRM Ltd, <http://www.terrain.org.au/images/stories/publications/nrm-plans/V3-Aboriginal-Cultural-and-NRM-Plan.pdf>, Cairns, 2005, (accessed 1 September 2012).
- [34] *Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031*, http://www.dsdp.qld.gov.au/resources/far_north_qld/fnq-regional-plan-2009-31.pdf (accessed 11 September 2012).
- [35] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy: the conservation, rehabilitation and transmission to future generations of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area*, Wet Tropics Management Authority, 2004, Cairns, p. 4-15.
- [35] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy: the conservation, rehabilitation and transmission to future generations of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area*, p. 60.
- [36] *Sustaining the Wet Tropics: A Regional Plan for Natural Resource Management 2004–2008*. FNQ NRM Ltd, Innisfail. <http://terrain.org.au/publications/by-terrain/nrm-plans.html> (accessed 11 September 2012).
- [37] *Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031*, p. 40.
- [38] R. Bushell, R. Staiff and N. Conner, The role of nature-based tourism in the contribution of protected areas to the quality of life in rural and regional communities in Australia, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 2004, 9: 24-36.

- [39] Healthy Parks, Healthy People. *International Congress, Melbourne 11-16 April, 2010*. <http://www.healthyparkshealthypeoplecongress.org/> (accessed 11 September 2012).
- [40] J. Carmody and B. Prideaux, Bruce, Living with world heritage rainforests: measuring community perceptions. *International Journal of Innovation and Regional Development*, 2010, vol. 2 (1/2). pp. 96-111.
- [41] Bentrupperbäumer and Reser, p. 70.
- [42] *Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031*, p. 42.
- [43] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *State of Wet Tropics Report 2004- 2005*, http://www.wettropics.gov.au/media/media_pdf/annual_reports/ (accessed 2 September 2012).
- [44] I. Curtis, Economic Approaches to the Value of Tropical Rainforests in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S. Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp. 252-260.
- [45] Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis*. Island Press, Washington DC, 2005, p. 150.
- [46] D. McJanet, J. Wallace, P. Fitch, M. Disher and P. Reddell, Hydrological processes in the Tropical Rainforests of Australia, in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S., Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp 198-209.
- [47] S. A. Cunningham and K. R. Blanche, K.R. (2008). Services and Disservices from Insects in Agricultural Landscapes of the Atherton Tableland in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S., Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp. 240-250.
- [48] J. M. Bentrupperbäumer, S. E. O'Farrell, J. Reser, p.25.
- [49] *The Degree Celsius Wet Tropics Biocarbon Sequestration and Abatement Project*, <http://www.marketbasedinstruments.gov.au/MBIsinaction/Currentcasestudies/DegreeCelsiusproject/tabid/372/Default.aspx/372/Default.a> (accessed 2 September 2012).
- [50] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Annual Report and State of Wet Tropics Report 2010-11*, <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/wet-tropics-ar.html>, (accessed 2 September 2012).
- [51] S. E. Williams, J. L. Isaac and L. P. Shoo, The Impact of Climate Change on the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functions of the Wet Tropics, in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S., Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp. 282-294.
- [52] Australia's Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) <http://tern.org.au/Australian-Supersite-Network-pg17873.html> (accessed 2 September 2012).

- [53] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Research Strategy 2010-2014*, p. 8.
- [54] R. Hill, L.C. Cullen-Unsworth, L. D. Talbot and S. McIntyre-Tamwoy, Empowering Indigenous peoples' biocultural diversity through World Heritage cultural landscapes: a case study from the Australian humid tropical forests. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 2011, 17(6), pp. 71-91.
- [55] R. Hill, Collaborative environmental research with Kuku-Yalanji people, in *Working on Country: Contemporary Indigenous Management of Australia's Land and Coastal Regions*. eds. Baker R, Davies J and Young E., Oxford University Press. 2001, p. 143.
- [56] Bentrupperbäumer, O'Farrell and Reser, p. 36.
- [57] Carmody, and Prideaux, p. 40.
- [58] Bentrupperbäumer, and Reser, p. 80.
- [59] Emtage and Reghenzani, p. 40-49
- [60] Emtage and Herbohn, p. 90.
- [61] J. Carmody and B. Prideaux, B, Enhancing the Role of Host Communities in the Management of Protected Areas through Effective Two-way Communications: A Case Study. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 2011, 16(1), pp. 89-104.
- [62] R. Hill, K. J. Williams, P. L. Pert, C. J. Robinson, A. P. Dale, D. A. Westcott, R. A. Grace, and T. O'Malley, Adaptive community-based biodiversity conservation in Australia's tropical rainforest, *Environmental Conservation*, 2010, 37(1) pp. 73-82.
- [63] H. Ross, M. Cuthill, K. Maclean, D. Jansen and B.Witt, *Understanding, Enhancing and Managing for Social Resilience at the Regional Scale: Opportunities in North Queensland*. Report to the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns, 2010, p. 59.
- [64] M. Fuery, *An evaluation of previous and current methods and models for researching Indigenous resource use and purposes, with recommendations for 'best practice' research solutions*. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre on behalf of the Australian Government's Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility, Cairns, Australia, 2009, p. 18.
- [65] Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, *No Wabu, No Wuju, No Gunduy* (No Rainforest, No Food, No Cassowary) (video), produced by the Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, Cardwell, 2008.
- [66] N.E. Stork, and S. Turton, Introduction, in *Living in a Dynamic Tropical Landscape*, eds. Stork, N.E. and Turton, S., Blackwell Publishing, Victoria, 2008, pp. 2.

- [67] *Cattana Wetlands Project*, <http://www.nqit.net/cattana/> (accessed 2 September 2012).
- [68] *James Cook University of North Queensland*, <http://www.jcu.edu.au/> (accessed 2 September 2012).
- [69] The School of Field Studies, <http://www.fieldstudies.org/programs> (accessed 2 September 2012).
- [70] Gillespie Economics and BDA Economics and Environment, *Economic Activity of Australia's World Heritage Areas*, Report to the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and Arts, Canberra, 2008, pp. 22-24.
- [71] AEC Group, pp. 80-92.
- [72] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *Wet Tropics Nature Based Tourism Strategy: A strategy for the development and management of nature based tourism*, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Cairns, 2000, pp. 4-11.
- [73] A. Pedersen, *Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites: a Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers*. UNESCO, World Heritage Centre, 2002, p. 34.
- [74] J. Carmody and B. Prideaux, *Sustainable Nature Based Tourism: Planning and Management. Report on Visitation and Use, 2009/2010: Executive Summary*. Report to the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility, Published by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns, 2011, pp. i-iii.
- [75] Bentrupperbäumer, O'Farrell, and Reser, p. 78.
- [76] Wet Tropics Management Authority, *From the Heart*, pp. 19.



PO Box 2050
Cairns, QLD 4870

Tel: 07 4052 0555
Fax: 07 4031 1364
Email: wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au
Website: www.wettropics.gov.au