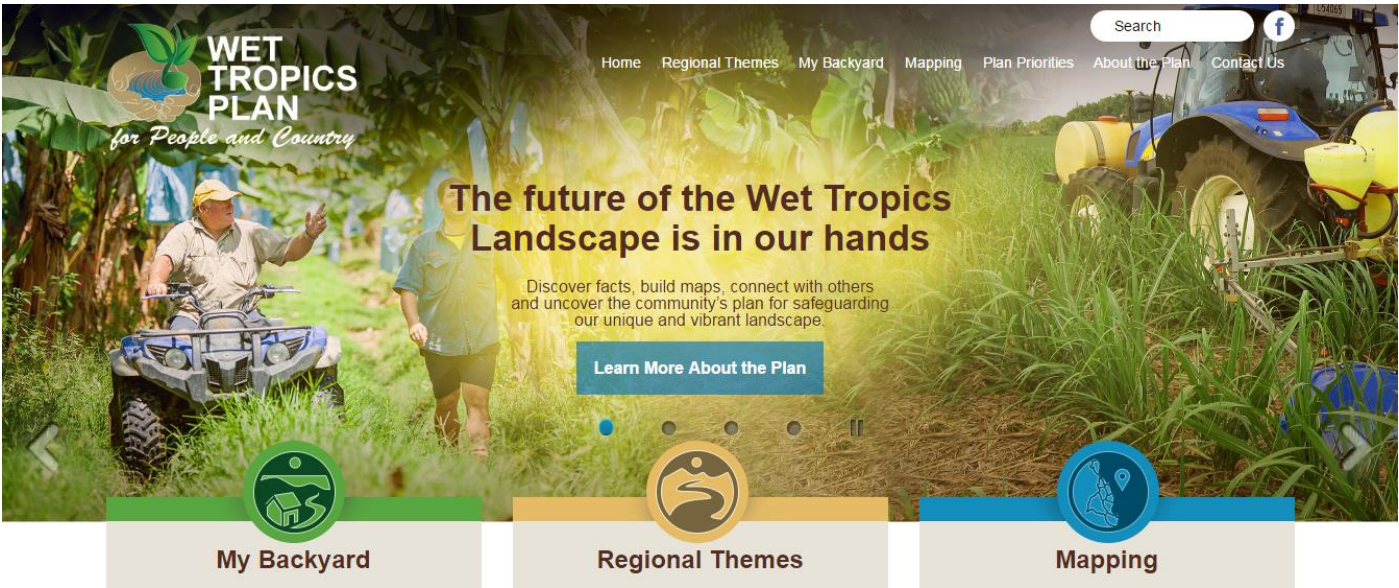




Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country



Summary of Priorities



Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country Summary of Priorities

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Printed November 2016

This document is current as at the date of printing. For the most up to date content, including priorities, please see www.wettropicsplan.org.au

Introduction

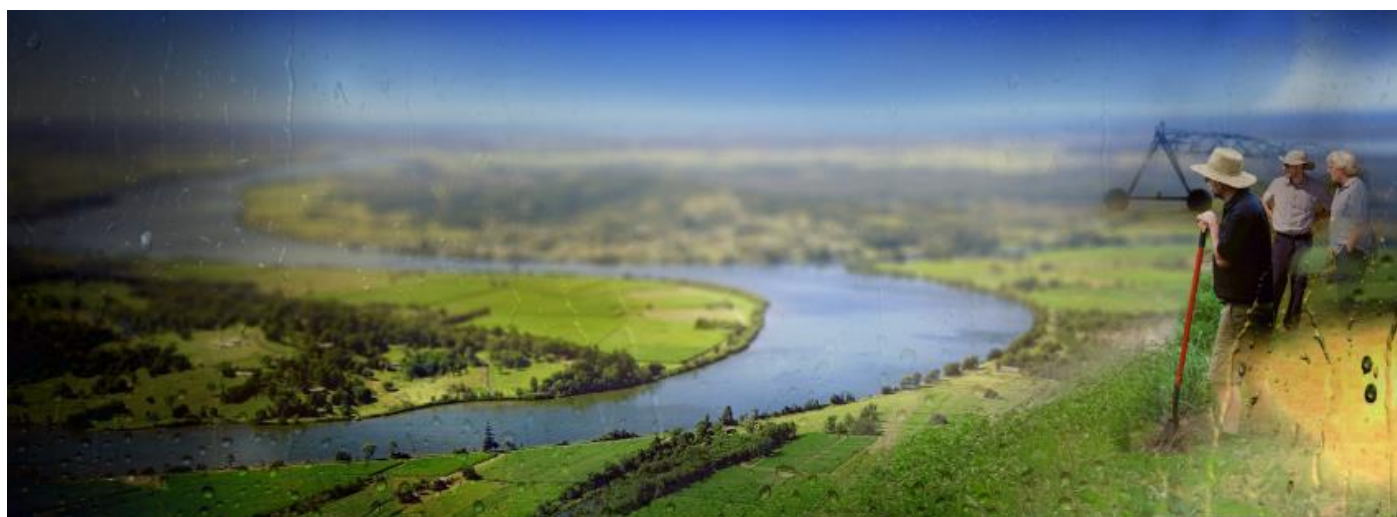
Welcome to the summary document for the Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country, the regional NRM Plan for the Wet Tropics region. To access the full plan, please go to www.wettropicsplan.org.au.

This plan has been produced for the communities of the Wet Tropics region, with the support of nearly 100 partner organisations and contributions from over 1,500 individuals. This plan is the result of a review of the original Regional NRM Plan “Sustaining the Wet Tropics”, which expired in 2008. The review was made possible through the NRM Planning for Climate Change Program.

The Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country is a community-based plan which prioritises natural resource management activities in the Wet Tropics, addressing social, economic and cultural issues, as well as environmental management. Extensive consultation during its development ensures the plan is a reflection of community priorities and values. The Plan was launched in November 2015 and Terrain is now responsible for supporting the community with the plan's development, implementation and ongoing review across the region.

While the full plan can be accessed on-line, this summary document provides an overview of key components of plan development and the regional and community priorities identified through the planning process. These are explained in the following sections of this summary document:

- Plan Purpose – a snapshot of the purpose and principles underpinning the Plan
- Local Landscapes – what are they and why did we focus effort on them
- Plan Logic – the logical framework of the plan, with the following key components
 - Regional Goals
 - Strategic Outcomes
 - Priority Actions
- “Our Plan for....” pages, which provide a community-focused expression of priorities for each of the Wet Tropics Big 5 Regional Goals
- “Our Plan for....” pages, which include community aspirations and priorities for each of the 10 Local Landscapes



Plan Purpose

The Purpose of the Plan

The primary purpose of the Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country is to influence all levels of decision making, including policy makers, investors, community groups, local government and land managers. It does this through:

- **Prioritisation:** Identifying regional goals, outcomes and priority actions – at both the regional and local scales. These actions are based on community values and the best available knowledge, to address our region's challenges – current and emerging. Importantly, the implications of climate change projections have been a key informer of these actions. These priorities aim to influence and attract investment into the region for these priorities.
- **Connections:** Facilitating partnerships, helping people make connections, learn from one another and stimulating collaborative action.
- **Knowledge:** Providing community members, land managers and strategic partners with information to help them make decisions about how to manage what is valued in the region. A key feature of the knowledge component of the plan is an interactive mapping portal.
- **Monitoring:** Providing the basis for tracking progress towards the goals and outcomes, and keeping tabs on how we are progressing with our priority actions.

In order to fulfil this ambitious purpose, the plan needs to meet the following criteria:

- **Meaningful** – a wide range of people and organisations need to relate to, and care about what the plan is saying.
- **Useful** – it needs to provide people with useful information and assistance, in order to be *used!*
- **Current** – it needs to be up-to-date to retain its credibility.

This set of criteria, although short, is extremely challenging and can rarely be met through the traditional approach of preparing a large printed document. All too often those documents just sit on the shelf.

The new approach to planning is focussed on being more adaptive and nimble, ensuring that we can meet many needs and satisfy many interests, but also make ongoing improvements to meet all of the above criteria. For this reason, the new plan is being delivered online as a website.

Adaptive Planning and Management

A 'planning by doing' approach is being taken to reflect the fact that adaptive planning is a cycle that includes planning, action and a review and evaluation of the results. The learnings are then used in the next phase of planning, and being online, can be easily incorporated into the existing plan. In essence, this plan does not need an 'expiry date'. Adaptive planning is about making sure we monitor what we do so we can keep learning and doing things better.



Community Involvement

As a community-based plan, great effort has been taken to involve the community in the planning process to ensure a broader plan ownership and community stewardship. This has happened at both regional and local scales. More information on the planning process can be found on the website.

How the Plan Works

The plan is web-based and interactive, enabling anyone to have access, but also enabling ongoing updates. A key feature is the ability to view the plan through a range of lenses, allowing searches for a particular topic (e.g. biodiversity or climate futures) or by location. The interactive mapping tools enable people to view a wide range of mapping layers, as well as create their own maps and capture their project information. The mapping tool is a key to monitoring progress.

Local Landscapes

The Wet Tropics Region is large and diverse, extending from the Daintree all the way to the Lower Herbert from north to south and out beyond Mount Garnet to the west. A key principle of this plan is to represent the local community perspective alongside regional priorities and find the sweet spots where these meet.

During the planning process 10 'sub-regions' have emerged and throughout our website they are referred to as Local Landscapes. These were key planning units and the basis for a large component of our community engagement, enabling people to put forward priorities for their own backyard. Ongoing discussions with communities from the 10 Local Landscapes will guide the adaptation of the priorities of the Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country and form the basis for ongoing engagement.

Focusing the spotlight on what people care about in their own backyard will ensure better integration between local, regional, state and national priorities and action, as well as build a legacy of landscape stewardship.

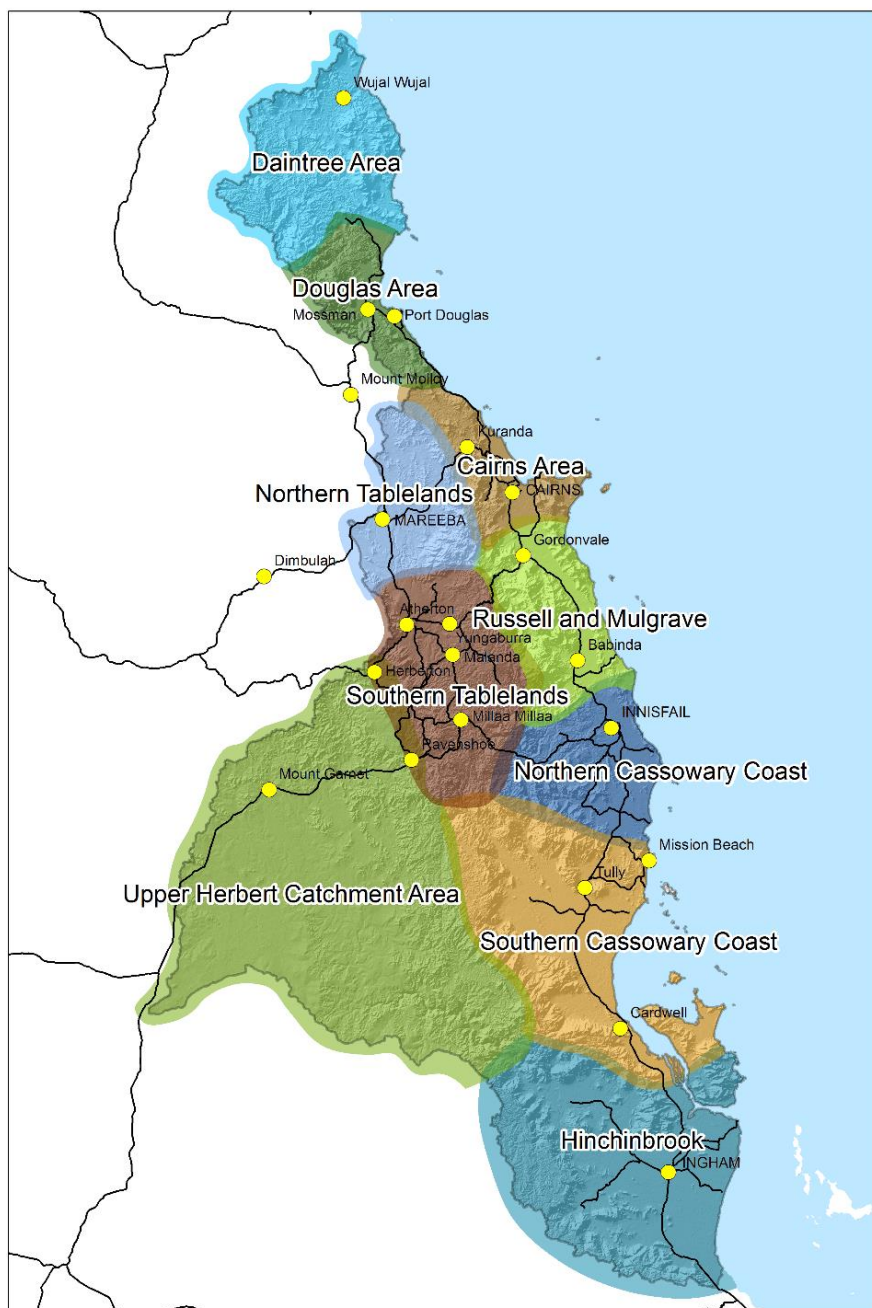


Figure 1: Local Landscapes in the Wet Tropics region.

Plan Logic

The foundation of our planning has been the development of our **Plan Logic**. Put simply, the Plan Logic explains the logic behind our plan. It shows the link between our priority actions and what we hope to achieve in the short, medium and long term.

Most importantly, the Plan Logic specifies the **assumptions** that we have made. This is our rationale - the justification for why we think that our actions will lead to our short term outcomes, and why we think those outcomes are important steps towards our long-term goals and vision.

At the longest time frame, we have **Our Vision** – the lofty state that we are hoping to achieve. **Our Regional Goals** are long-term and still quite aspirational, but more specific. It is important that we do whatever we can to track our progress towards these goals, but this is not an easy task and requires the participation of many agencies and organisations in the collection of landscape condition data. The logic endeavours to articulate why each of our regional goals is important in moving towards our vision.

Our Strategic Outcomes are stepping stones towards the regional goals. Through the many workshops held during the development of the plan, very similar themes emerged about where we would like to be in the next 5 years. Irrespective of which theme we were talking about, there was emphasis on the need for stronger partnerships, better planning, a more engaged community. These formed our cross-cutting Strategic Outcomes. The logic articulates the assumptions we are making in proposing these are the key strategic outcomes.

Our Priority Actions articulate where the community of the Wet Tropics believes we need to put our effort and investment over the next few years. For each priority action, there is also a statement about the assumptions we are making and our rationale behind putting such an action up as a priority.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan) is an extension of the Plan Logic and provides the basis for reviewing and evaluating our progress at all levels. The M&E Plan specifies the Evaluation Questions we need to ask to know whether we are making progress at all levels in the logic, as well as the Key Performance Indicators that we need to collect information about in order to answer those questions.

A more detailed explanation of the different levels of the Plan Logic are provided below.



Regional Goals

Extensive discussions with individuals and groups in the early stages of the plan review highlighted a number of key resounding themes which were common at both the local and regional scales. These have become the Regional Goals – the **Wet Tropics Big 5** – for the Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country. In combination with the Local Landscapes, they provide frameworks from which the information and content of the plan can be considered.

1. **Biodiversity** relates to the incredible spectrum of plants and animal in the region, both on the land and in the water.
2. **Biosecurity** relates to the significant impact that current and potential future invasive species have on our region's ecosystems and productivity.
3. **Water** relates to the rivers and streams flowing through the region and beyond to the Great Barrier Reef.
4. **Sustainable Industries** relates to the sectors that drive the economy of the region and underpin our livelihoods and lifestyles.
5. **Coastal Systems** relates to the unique values and interconnectedness of our coastal zone and the wide range of interactions including natural and human, that influence how well it functions.

The Regional Goals are integral to the Plan Logic, with a regional landscape goal defined for each one. Throughout this plan, there is a pattern of reference to these regional themes, including the provision of information, references, useful links, priority actions and mapping resources.

In addition, there are 2 overarching themes of the plan that are used across all elements, both local and regional:

1. **Cultural Connections** recognises the past, present and ongoing relationship that the Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics have with the landscape and the rights of Traditional Owners to be fully involved in, and benefit from, natural resource management in this region.
2. **Climate Futures** recognises that there is scientific consensus about climate change and it is critical to understand the implications of this when planning how we manage our landscape.

Strategic Outcomes

Across all of the Wet Tropics Big 5 goals, a suite of enabling outcomes were repeatedly identified as critical to the long-term protection of our Wet Tropics landscape.

The remarkable commonality in the messages from the Wet Tropics Big 5 workshops led to the identification of 5 cross-cutting strategic outcomes for this plan. They relate to:

1. **Supportive policies, plans and regulations**
2. **Collaborative, adaptive planning and action**
3. **Traditional Owner benefits**
4. **Sustained and diverse resourcing and**
5. **Community stewardship, values and action**

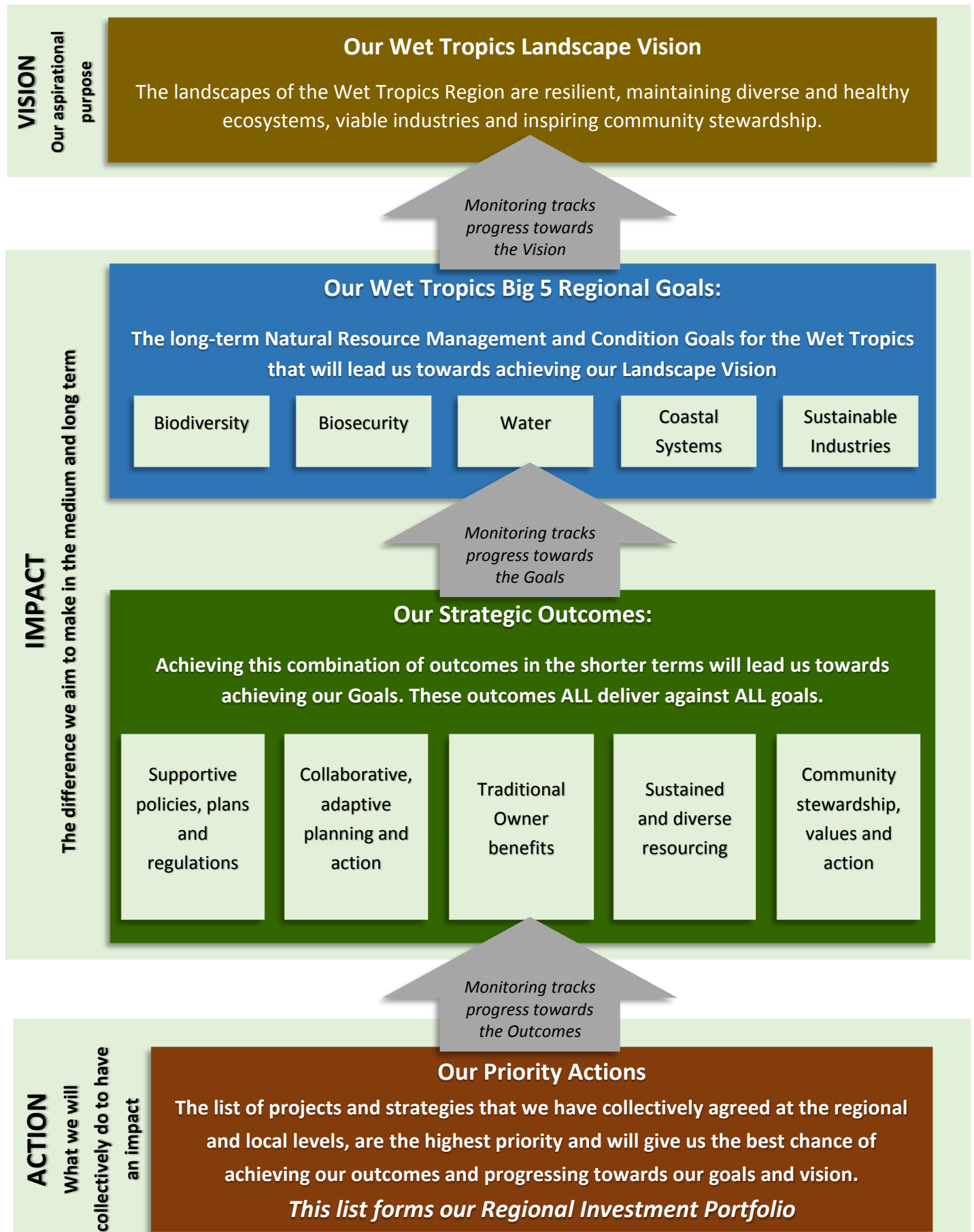
Priority Actions

The communities of the Wet Tropics region have identified a diverse range of priority actions, which collectively, will help achieve our strategic outcomes and keep us moving towards our longer term goals. The identification of priority actions was done both regionally and locally. These were then integrated to arrive at the greatest possible alignment between what people care about in their backyard and regional priorities. There are many specific local priorities that cascade under these that are fully listed on the website with an innovative filtering system that enables the user to locate the projects that are of interest to them.



Wet Tropics Plan for People and Country

Overview of the core components of the Plan Logic





Our Wet Tropics Landscape Vision

The landscapes of the Wet Tropics Region are resilient, maintaining diverse and healthy ecosystems, viable industries and inspiring community stewardship.

Our Wet Tropics Big 5 Regional Goals

	Goal The difference we aim to make	Assumption Why we think this is important	Performance Indicators Signs that will help us track our progress
Biodiversity	The biodiversity values of our region are maintained through improving the condition and connectivity of our ecosystems.	The value of the biodiversity of the Wet Tropics is globally recognised through the WTWHA, and the maintenance and enhancement of these values is fundamental to building a resilient and diverse landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total area of land with native vegetation (categorised by condition) - Area of new plantings - % of priority biodiversity corridors functional - progress against recovery plans (where applicable)
Biosecurity	Invasive species are managed to ensure the maintenance of the region's ecosystem health and the critical ecosystem services and functions provided to our community and industries.	Invasive species are one of the greatest threats facing the Wet Tropics biodiversity and industry assets. Without strategically tackling the issue of current and emerging biosecurity threats, there will be an ongoing decline in the health of the Wet Tropics natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area affected by key priority weeds/pests - No. invasive species of concern (e.g. transformers) - No. priority weeds/pests under control/eradicated - No. new invasive species of concern. - Progress against pest management plans
Water	The condition and resilience of catchments are enhanced, to ensure the maintenance of the critical services and functions they provide to our community and industries.	The health of the waterways and wetlands of our catchments is fundamental to our livelihoods and our lifestyle, as well as key assets such as the Great Barrier Reef.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change in pollutant loads - % of riparian zone vegetated/protected - No. aquatic weed species of concern - Extent/trend of human modification of drainage
Coastal Systems	The Wet Tropics coastal systems are well managed and resilient, and valued for their contribution to the region's economic, cultural, ecological and social wellbeing.	The iconic but contested landscape of the Wet Tropics coastal area is particularly vulnerable to inappropriate development and a changing climate. Special attention needs to be paid to appropriate management of these areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area of wetland disturbed VS rehabilitated/protected - Number and nature of interruptions to coastal processes - Total area of coastal land with native vegetation (categorised by condition)
Sustainable Industries	A culture of environmental stewardship and continuous improvement is the foundation of the industries of the Wet Tropics, delivering enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.	Key Wet Tropics industries such as agriculture and tourism are heavily dependent on a healthy natural resource base, and a culture of environmental stewardship is critical to ensure this base is protected and enhanced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice change trend - No. farmers with diversified production - No. farmers applying adaptive management - Profitability of farms - Demographics of farmers - No. tourism operators with environmental stewardship as core value

Our Strategic Outcomes

Our Priority Actions



Our Wet Tropics Landscape Vision

The landscapes of the Wet Tropics Region are resilient, maintaining diverse and healthy ecosystems, viable industries and inspiring community stewardship.

Our Wet Tropics Big 5 Regional Goals

Our Strategic Outcomes

	Outcome The difference we aim to make	Assumption Why we think this is important	Performance Indicators Signs that will help us track our progress
Supportive policies, plans and regulations	Our local, regional, state and national policies, plans, legislation and decision making frameworks are evidence-based and enable and favour land-use and land-use changes with positive natural resources outcomes.	Without supportive plans and policies, any investment in on-ground works can be either undone or undermined by perverse policy and planning decisions. Protecting assets through strong policies will be more effective than repairing what has been lost.	- Level of policy/plan alignment with the goals of the Wet Tropics Plan
Collaborative, adaptive, planning and action	We work collaboratively to undertake adaptive and evidence-based planning (including in relation to climate change) and proactive on-ground management of our natural resources.	With limited resources available, it is essential that whatever we do in regional/local planning and action is as collaborative and well informed as possible, and that we are all building in collective learning.	- Level and nature of collaborative partnerships (regional and local) - No. and nature of priority projects implemented
Traditional Owner benefits	Traditional Owners' rights to involvement in NRM are appropriately actioned by all parties, delivering cultural, social and economic benefits to Wet Tropics Rainforest Aboriginal People.	Rainforest Aboriginal People have the right to benefit economically, socially and culturally from looking after their Traditional country, and their knowledge and perspective will bring benefits to the Wet Tropics landscape.	- Extent to which TO engagement is integrated into mainstream policy and planning processes. - TO satisfaction with their opportunities for involvement and action
Community values and action	Our community places high value on the health and resilience of our natural resources, and the services they provide to our social, economic and cultural wellbeing.	Without a legacy of widespread community awareness of the importance of the natural resource base on our livelihoods and lifestyles, those who care will always be fighting against a tide of community opinion and/or apathy.	- Level and nature of community action that contributes to the Wet Tropics Plan Goals and Vision.
Sustained and diverse resourcing	We have secure, long term and diverse resources and investment to support natural resource management and sustainable industries in the Wet Tropics.	As Government funding is unlikely to increase, other sources of funding need to be found, in combination with making the most of the resources we already have.	- Level and nature of investment in implementing priorities of the Wet Tropics Plan

Our Priority Actions



Our Wet Tropics Landscape Vision: The landscapes of the Wet Tropics Region are resilient, maintaining diverse and healthy ecosystems, viable industries and inspiring community stewardship.

Our Wet Tropics Big 5 Regional Goals

Our Strategic Outcomes

Our Priority Actions - delivering on our Strategic Outcomes, moving us towards Regional Goals

Strategic Outcome	Priority Action Description	Justification
Supportive policies, plans and regulations	PP 1: Policy influence strategy Preparation of a cross-sector, multi-partner Regional Influence Strategy for high level influence over policy and decision making within and beyond the region.	Providing relevant and credible information to policy and decision makers in a cohesive and collaborative way will have more influence on the future support for NRM than many voices saying a similar thing in different ways. An Influence Strategy that provides feasible and appealing solutions and options will empower policy makers to take measures for improved NRM outcomes.
	PP 2: My Place, My Plan, My Future. Develop knowledge packages and tools that support local-level planning that effectively takes climate change into account.	A lot of information and science is available that could assist future-focused local-level planning (e.g. local councils) – in particular with regard to the likely impacts of climate change, and potential adaptation pathways to mitigate these impacts. The local approach seeks to get maximum buy-in from the diverse stakeholders in the contested coastal systems arena, presenting compelling information in a way that people can relate to. Local planning facilitates local ownership and local action and is where the greatest inroads will be made in a constrained funding model.
	PP 3: Urban Waterways Showcase solutions to improving urban waterways to build community understanding, leading to changes in approaches and policy on a broader scale.	Applying 'green engineering' solutions to urban drainage plans can showcase alternative options to achieve healthier, more aesthetic urban waterways. This approach will bring multiple social and environmental benefits, but importantly, can also help drive changes to policy, culture and attitude of developers and government to urban waterways.
	PP 4: Local Planning for Local Action Conduct appropriate planning and consultation at a local level to enable effective prioritisation, investment and implementation of a range of NRM projects.	Good planning is the cornerstone of developing and implementing good projects. It provides a transparent process to identify and prioritise problems and investigate possible solutions, making the most of limited resources. Good planning generates stakeholder confidence in delivering successful projects and sourcing investment, and, with good communication and consultation, can build on support within the community. Well-supported local level planning can also provide the community with a cohesive, coordinated way forward in dealing with a range of complex issues.

Supportive policies, plans and regulations (cont.)	<p>PP 5: Supporting Implementation of Threatened Species Recovery Plans</p> <p>Incorporate priorities and actions identified through Threatened Species Recovery Plans into local projects to facilitate community stewardship of, and action towards, recovery of threatened species.</p>	Threatened species management and recovery is a difficult and complex undertaking, requiring a whole suite of planning and management considerations, as well as collaboration across all levels of government, industry and community. Policy and regulatory mechanisms are in place to support this process. Recovery Plans, which are prepared using the latest science and with a high level of community consultation, provide an important foundation for planning and implementation of actions to support the recovery of threatened species. Ensuring priorities from these plans are considered in local level planning and projects provides the most effective way to gain wide-spread adoption and implementation of priorities identified through the Recovery Planning process, as well as ensuring strong community stewardship of the process.
	<p>PP 6: Influencing the Research Agenda</p> <p>Develop a region-wide, collaborative Research and Development Strategy – focusing on the research needs to deal with future challenges – including cohesive, long-term landscape condition monitoring.</p>	By providing cohesive and united direction to the research sector, clarifying the knowledge gaps for effective adaptation and increased resilience, investment in R&D will be more targeted and effective, delivered through active researcher/practitioner partnerships. This includes a strategic and collaborative approach to the collection of long-term landscape health data. Clear communication of the success stories will highlight to community/policy makers the value proposition of research that delivers against practical needs, and supports more effective management.
Collaborative, adaptive planning and action	<p>CM 2: Partnerships for Progress</p> <p>Strengthen partnerships – through a range of scale and context appropriate mechanisms to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of existing resources.</p>	Resources are already available in the region, but are best delivered through collaboration. We need to learn to do more with what we already have! Building partnerships aimed at improving adaptive management, although involving effort, delivers rewards in terms of the effectiveness of the limited resources that are available. Sharing information and collectively prioritising ensures that all those working on NRM are singing from the same song sheet, even if they are each singing different parts. Policy influence will be more effective if tackled collectively.
	<p>CM 3: A regional biodiversity “Charter”</p> <p>Collaboratively develop a transparent region-wide agreement on new ‘goals’ and priorities for biodiversity, building in emerging information (science) and climate change.</p>	While there have been many discussions across the region over the past decades about biodiversity, a revision of the goals and priorities for investment are required, and should be developed collaboratively across different sectors and stakeholders. In the light of a changing climate and the need to work towards a different climate future rather than looking back towards a pre-European past, key questions to ask are: “What are the key concepts of biodiversity in a changing climate and how will this influence priorities?”
	<p>CM 4: Biodiversity Connectivity Strategy</p> <p>Collaboratively prepare a Biodiversity Connectivity Strategy focusing on landscape resilience, and incorporating latest climate change science.</p>	Research focused on biodiversity connectivity (some of which builds in climate impacts and better understanding of the future “climate space”) needs to be brought together in a region-wide, agreed, connectivity strategy to maximise the outcomes from connectivity investment and to inform plans and policies that can have either a positive or perverse impact on biodiversity resilience. Critical to this process is a robust future-focused discussion about connectivity – what is it and how do we achieve it.

Collaborative, adaptive planning and action (cont.)	<p>CM 5: Future Focused Invasive Species Prioritisation</p> <p>Review and refine collaborative, cross-tenure, cross-sector prioritisation and decision making frameworks to factor in projected future climate change impacts.</p>	<p>Existing prioritisation and decision making frameworks are exceptionally good, but could be built on to take into account climate change, to build ecosystem resilience in the face of future threats. This may require redefining 'purpose' to focus on preparing as best we can for a different future and intervening in the most strategic way possible to ensure that the ecosystems of our future are as functional as possible. The prioritisation process needs to be realistic about what can be achieved within resource constraints - it is essential to avoid trying to do a little bit about everything, and then not achieving real progress with anything.</p>
	<p>CM 6: Future Expertise in Invasive Species</p> <p>Develop region-wide succession plan for ensuring the retention of technical skills and knowledge in the region (initially related to invasive species, but could be expanded to NRM in general).</p>	<p>The Wet Tropics has attracted professionals in this area for decades and there is an enormous amount of expertise, skills and knowledge already within the region. It is critical to make sure that we don't lose this expertise, and that we are building the next generation of experts and professionals in this area. With people retiring, leaving the area or passing away, knowledge is lost, and the wheel can be constantly reinvented as a consequence. Systematic but innovative ways of capturing, storing and sharing that expertise is essential.</p>
	<p>CM 7: Landholder Support Program</p> <p>Enhance existing, and develop new, practical and useful extension and knowledge brokering services and products for land managers, covering the wide range of integrated NRM issues affecting, and affected by land management.</p>	<p>There are already some excellent examples of innovative and engaging extension and knowledge brokerage initiatives in this region. Using the latest knowledge about how to inspire and enable change in land managers, a cross-sector program targeting a range of outcomes including water quality, biodiversity and invasive species, could enhance farmer capacity and resilience and build a stronger culture of natural resource stewardship. In particular, synthesising and translating the science for land managers, focusing on the opportunities and economic advantages relating to enhanced natural resource outcomes in farming (e.g. soil, pest control, pollination), will lead to an increase in the number of farmers building this into their mainstream land management practices. The development of an extension package provides an effective way to utilise limited resources and time, leading to an investment in knowledge rather than assets and fostering lasting ownership and change. The largest area of land in the Wet Tropics is under agricultural production and it is there that we can have the most impact and achieve the greatest results for the environment and agricultural resilience.</p>
	<p>CM 8: Corridors and Connectivity</p> <p>Strategically and collaboratively conduct restoration projects in priority locations across the Wet Tropics, to improve landscape connectivity and increase ecosystem resilience in the face of traditional and emerging threats, like climate change.</p>	<p>There have been many excellent projects across the Wet Tropics to improve landscape connectivity, resulting in a high level of community capacity, skills and knowledge. Building on this community-driven work and expanding it to involve more partners can engage a broader cross-section of the community. By focussing on areas with high community support, and incorporating recent climate science, there is an opportunity for strong local ownership and stewardship of projects with high biodiversity outcomes. In the face of traditional challenges, like vegetation clearing, and emerging threats, such as climate change, the importance of connectivity to improving landscape resilience and ecosystem function is stronger than ever. There is a good opportunity for close collaboration and information sharing with Traditional Owners on all connectivity projects.</p>

Collaborative, adaptive planning and action (cont.)	<p>CM 9: Restoring Priority Waterways</p> <p>Systematically and strategically conduct riparian restoration projects to improve the health of our region's waterways, including the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.</p>	<p>Community support and involvement in waterway restoration projects is high, based largely on a history of successful projects delivered by well-respected community groups. We can capitalise on this support by building on existing projects and transferring successful methodology to additional areas. A systematic approach to waterway restoration, based on agreed criteria and priorities, will provide extensive benefits to the health of our waterways. The region's waterways have a high significance to Traditional Owners, and waterway restoration projects provide opportunities for Traditional Owner involvement.</p>
	<p>CM 10: Community Engagement Through on Ground Action</p> <p>Engage local communities to conduct small scale restoration activities around local creeks to increase involvement and provide a range of social and environmental benefits.</p>	<p>Many communities see their local waterways as special places. There is a strong connection by the community to these waterways – they are often high profile, visited or seen regularly and may be used for a variety of recreational purposes. All these factors combine to create the impetus to protect and restore local creeks. These areas provide the opportunity to be used as model projects, bringing cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits. Focussing on small scale activities in specific localities can make it easier for people to find a way to be involved which suits them, without requiring a huge commitment.</p>
	<p>CM 11: Wetlands in the Wet Tropics</p> <p>Undertake restoration work in key wetlands across the Wet Tropics to restore their function and protect their value to aquatic and terrestrial species and ecosystems.</p>	<p>Many wetlands throughout the region have been heavily modified, reducing their level of ecosystem function. Wetland projects will help restore their value to aquatic species, as well as to migratory birds and other terrestrial wildlife. Properly functioning wetlands can significantly reduce sediment and pollutant loads in associated waterways, including the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. Many ecological communities associated with wetland habitats will also benefit from wetland restoration projects.</p>
	<p>CM 12: Yellow Crazy Ant Control</p> <p>Involve the community in conducting a comprehensive eradication program for Yellow Crazy Ants and Electric Ants in the Wet Tropics, using a range of innovative and traditional approaches.</p>	<p>These species pose a significant threat to local habitats and wildlife, as well as people's lifestyles in the region. As outbreaks are currently confined to a few discrete locations, total eradication is possible, but it will require rapid, concerted effort. The community is in an excellent position to implement and monitor control programs. With appropriate training and resources, they are able to mobilise quickly and respond to new outbreaks, as well as effectively monitor control success.</p>
	<p>CM 13: Reducing the Impact of Feral Animals</p> <p>Investigate and implement coordinated and innovative biosecurity measures to reduce the impact of feral pests on natural and productive systems.</p>	<p>Feral animals, particularly pigs, have a huge impact on the health of natural systems, as well as imposing huge time and monetary costs on land managers. Building on existing networks and expanding pro-active partnerships, implementing coordinated control programs and using innovative technologies and approaches, can all contribute to the most effective control possible and maximise the efforts of all involved.</p>

Collaborative, adaptive planning and action (cont.)	<p>CM 14: Improving Movement of Fish</p> <p>Removal of barriers and installation of structures to aid fish movement and provide expanded access to fish habitat and breeding grounds.</p>	<p>Many waterways in the Wet Tropics have been modified by urban or agricultural development. These changes have had huge impacts on the movement of fish throughout waterways, in many areas, severely restricting their access to important habitat or breeding areas. The removal of barriers, installation of fish passages and re-engineering roads and crossings can all contribute to improved fish movement and long term aquatic health within the Wet Tropics. Community involvement in these projects is vital to raise awareness and act as a catalyst for further projects.</p>
	<p>CM15: Remnant Protection and Enhancement</p> <p>Conduct management activities within priority areas of remnant vegetation to improve the health, resilience and function of our region's existing forests.</p>	<p>Improving the health of the region's existing forests provides a cost-effective way of maintaining vegetative cover across the landscape. Many remnant patches are at risk of reduced ecosystem function through a death by 1000 cuts approach. Without appropriate management, the cumulative effect of weeds, pests, diseases, natural disturbances, grazing, poor fire management, etc can all gradually erode the health and function of these patches. Existing forests are already contributing to the high biodiversity values of the region – ensuring these areas remain healthy can improve resilience within the landscape and provide immediate biodiversity returns.</p>
	<p>CM 16: Reducing Erosion and Improving Drainage</p> <p>Stabilise areas of significant erosion in the landscape, such as waterways and agricultural drains, using revegetation with native trees, shrubs and groundcovers, maintaining effective farm drains and installing detention basins.</p>	<p>Sediment runoff from terrestrial activities has a significant impact on the health of the region's waterways. Significantly, a range of health problems on the Great Barrier Reef have been linked to land-based sediment and nutrient runoff. Areas of high erosion contribute significant sediment and nutrient loads to the region's waterways. There are a range of effective techniques which could be used to stabilise these areas and reduce the impacts of erosion, as well as contribute to other benefits. Revegetation of unstable areas can bring added benefits to wildlife and connectivity, as well as providing shade and shelter for stock.</p>
	<p>CM 17: Water Conservation Measures</p> <p>Develop and deliver programs and initiatives to conserve water on rural and urban land.</p>	<p>Our water resources are under increasing pressure and competing demands, from urban populations, agricultural use and environmental flows. The uncertainty of a changing climate adds further complexity in water use and management, with potential changes in weather patterns and rainfall events and changes in urban and rural water requirements. Planning and preparing for more efficient water use now will reduce the pressure on existing water storage and infrastructure requirements, as well as bringing about a change in our attitude to water use and a more water efficient culture.</p>
	<p>CM 18: Restoration of Coastal Systems</p> <p>Undertake restoration of priority coastal and foreshore areas in the Wet Tropics region to protect these important habitats and improve their ability to act as buffers for coastal communities.</p>	<p>Coastal environments are highly complex systems existing in a contested area of the landscape. Development pressure, their natural fragility and their vulnerability to impacts of climate change create challenges in their management, but their enormous environmental, social and cultural values justify careful planning and management. Many ecological communities associated with coastal systems are threatened and under increasing pressure. In many areas, healthy coastal and foreshore environments provide the best form of defence against potential impacts of climate change.</p>
	<p>CM 19: Local Action on Local Invasives</p> <p>Develop collaborative, practical protocols and undertake an integrated approach to managing invasive species.</p>	<p>Building on existing partnerships and improving the capacity of local groups and individuals to manage invasive species can provide good outcomes for weed management across the region. Landholders are often time poor, with many conflicting demands – protocols which focus on preventing weeds from arriving and establishing, and providing access to good information and advice can make the most of the time and resources available.</p>

Traditional Owner Benefits	TO 1: Regional TO Institutional Arrangements Establish a region-wide legal entity (PBC) that provides coordination, advocacy, advisory and capacity building support and represents the interests of all members PBCs at the regional, State and National levels.	Long-term and strategic support from a mandated, legal regional organisation will significantly enhance the capacity of Traditional Owner groups to engage in all aspects of NRM through strategic representation and secure access to funding and business opportunities. Having one regional organisation that is active in the policy arena, keeps their finger on the funding pulse, is mandated to negotiate on behalf of PBCs across the region and supports capacity building of all members will be a more efficient and effective means of ensuring Rainforest Aboriginal People gain maximum benefits from NRM.
	TO 2: TO Group Proficiency Program Develop and deliver a long-term, region-wide Proficiency Program which ensures that all PBCs across the region have the skills and knowledge to operate effectively and efficiently, and deliver on the group's aspirations.	Traditional Owner Groups across the region have varied skills, knowledge and capacity to achieve their aspirations including employment and business opportunities working on Country. Investment to ensure that all groups can reach a certain level of proficiency in areas such as governance, administration, service provision, business development and management and engagement will build greater regional capacity for effective and beneficial Indigenous participation. A long-term program would see the 'bar' raised as the capacity of groups increases over time. A region-wide proficiency program would also enable groups to learn from one another's experiences and strengths.
	TO 3: Cultural Values Mapping and Management Establish a Wet Tropics Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Mapping and Management Centre to inform policy, planning and project development and guarantee the protection of cultural values and sites.	The listing of the WTWHA for its Indigenous Heritage gives impetus to the protection, maintenance, interpretation and promotion of the cultural values of Far North Queensland's wet tropical rainforest country and traditional peoples. Supporting cultural knowledge holders to share and record cultural values held in stories, practice and knowledge of country is a priority for both protecting that knowledge, but also having a solid basis from which to inform and influence policies and plans that could either threaten or enhance cultural values. Due to the Listing of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area for its "Cultural Values" it is integral that "Free, Prior and Informed Consent" is authorised by the rightful people or the PBCs that have a Determination of Native Title. This will comply with "International Rights of Indigenous People."
	TO 4: Cultural Values Marketing Develop and implement a region-wide Cultural Values Communication and Marketing campaign, to reinvigorate the recognition and appreciation of cultural values and tackle intergenerational understanding of, and respect for, these values.	Indigenous Culture is too often considered purely historical. It is essential to enhance the understanding that Aboriginal Culture in the Wet Tropics is alive today, and an essential part of our past, present and future. Widespread respect for, and valuing of the exceptional cultural values of the Wet Tropics, will be an important lever for influencing policy, securing investment and ensuring these values are protected into the future. An innovative marketing campaign, drawing on the hooks of modern day technology and appealing to the new generations of both residents and visitors to the region, will ensure that Cultural Values of the region remain alive and well into the foreseeable future.

Community values and action	<p>CV 1: Collective, Regional Communication/Marketing Campaign</p> <p>Develop a region-wide, cross-sector, cross-partner communications program about the natural resource values and threats of the Wet Tropics - building on the strong connection between community and the landscape of the Wet Tropics.</p>	<p>Coming together collaboratively (and combining resources where possible) to develop an integrated 'campaign' about the environmental, social, cultural and economic values and threats to the Wet Tropics landscape, as well as telling the good news stories of what is being achieved by the community and key agencies, will pack a much bigger punch than individual, piecemeal efforts. Telling our story better will help spark people's interest and build community pride, encouraging more people to become involved in NRM. The campaign must sell compelling messages which leverage off the community's attachment to the values of the landscape. Broader marketing of the success stories can encourage involvement in NRM from a broader range of people – telling our story better will help spark people's interest and build community pride.</p>
	<p>CV 2: Farmers Driving their Future Program</p> <p>Develop a "Farmers Driving their Future Program," to support industries to make well informed decisions NOW about changes to practice that will build resilience in the face of future challenges, including climate change.</p>	<p>Providing industries with information about likely future impacts of climate change, population dynamics, market forces etc. on their livelihoods and lifestyles will provide greater insight into the range of possible futures on offer, and support decisions now that will build greater resilience and enable timely transformative adaptation. Having a greater understanding of the challenges/opportunities that the future will bring will enable people to plan their response more proactively, and have a greater influence over their own future. This initiative can form part of the Extension and Knowledge Package.</p>
	<p>CV 3: Building an agricultural innovation movement</p> <p>Develop and implement a multi-partner innovation strategy (including an innovation network), providing the agricultural community with access to knowledge, technical support and opportunities to connect with others trying new ideas.</p>	<p>Agricultural land holds the future – however to build greater resilience (environmental and economic), transformational change is required in the way we go about managing the land for food production, and innovation is key. Providing support for farmer innovation is a priority to fast track change. Support such as easy access to knowledge, case studies, a non-judgemental, open minded space for sharing experiences will not only support those individuals that are trying new things and responding proactively to change, but also build a culture of experimentation and adaptation in the agricultural sector. There are already some excellent examples of innovative and engaging extension and knowledge brokerage initiatives in this region – ones that go far beyond traditional extension, and are independent from organisations promoting particular products.</p>
	<p>CV 4: Supporting Community Groups</p> <p>Provide opportunities to share knowledge and access information and resources, enhancing the capacity of community groups to continue their vital role in managing the natural resources of the Wet Tropics region.</p>	<p>Local people have a strong connection to their local area; with the right support and resources, this can translate into a legacy of positive natural resource management and stewardship. Strong, effective community groups are capable of achieving huge outcomes! Their connection to their local area and the people who live there can ensure local priorities are identified and acted on. The cumulative knowledge developed by community groups over many years puts them in a good position to deliver a whole range of NRM projects and outcomes, while the relationships within their local communities can ensure the message is reaching a broad audience.</p>

Community values and action (cont.)	CV 5: Education and Engagement Develop a comprehensive community environmental education program to improve understanding and awareness and facilitate change.	To bring about real, enduring change and reduce damaging practices, we first need to have broad support and understanding within the community. Providing a clear and consistent message will help us work towards instilling a cultural change. A range of positive educational mechanisms can contribute to increased awareness and understanding of environmental values, which is fundamental to getting the message across, facilitating change and securing the future of the region's ecosystems. Strong community support and understanding can start to influence policy - changing attitudes will lead to on ground change!
	CV 6: NRM Champions Develop a program to identify and acknowledge a network of NRM champions to showcase NRM successes, develop community pride and increase awareness of good NRM practices.	Identifying NRM Champions provides a way of celebrating success through recognising and acknowledging the recipient's positive actions. In addition, marketing the stories really well can attract more interest from the community, helping raise general awareness. The ultimate aim is that there will be an increase in community involvement, ownership and pride in good NRM, resulting in on ground results and community maintenance and monitoring of projects.
	CV 7: Education for the Next Generation Develop and facilitate access to school based environmental and cultural education programs.	Providing education programs aimed at school aged children will result in a long term legacy of increased awareness and better understanding of environmental and cultural issues. Positive educational messages will result in a cultural change and build a stronger sense of stewardship and environmental connection. Influencing the school curriculum is critical for an informed, active and empowered community of the future.
	CV 8: Improving Soil Health Investigate effective techniques for improving the health of soil and develop appropriate extension materials, with the aim of improving land management and reducing sediment and nutrient runoff.	Soil health has a huge impact on the diversity, productivity and condition of agricultural and natural systems. Healthy soils can improve agricultural productivity, reduce reliance on chemical inputs and their associated costs and minimise agricultural runoff to waterways and the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. Robust scientific evidence can be used to develop appropriate extension material to provide landholders with the opportunity to make informed choices regarding the management of their soil. There are also a range of innovative products which require further investigation regarding their effectiveness in improving soil health.
	CV 9: Innovation in Industry Conduct trials on a range of innovative practices relevant to industries in the Wet Tropics, to improve knowledge of the effectiveness of these approaches and increase the uptake of successful techniques.	Improving the science and knowledge underpinning new and more innovative approaches across a range of industries can help increase their uptake, resulting in more sustainable natural resource management, productivity and community outcomes. While there are some excellent innovative approaches already being used in various industries, scientific investigation into their effectiveness, combined with good extension of results, could see their uptake improved. Practical demonstrations, or even model farms showcasing the techniques could be successful ways of spreading the message further. This would enable objective results to be showcased to the broader community, increasing the uptake of successful techniques.
	CV 10: Initiatives for Protecting Habitat Implement education, incentive and stewardship schemes to ensure long term protection of high value habitat – protecting what we already have.	There are significant areas of high value habitat on private land which are not currently protected. Investigating positive ways to protect what is already there provides a cost effective way of achieving strong conservation outcomes, while encouraging support from landholders. 'Least effort' approaches, such as protecting what we already have or encouraging natural regeneration, combined with education / incentives programs provide a range of mechanisms to achieve protection of significant areas of high value habitat.

Community values and action (cont.)	<p>CV 11: Nature Based Tourism to Increase Awareness</p> <p>Develop a tourism marketing strategy to promote the natural assets of the Wet Tropics region, increasing environmental awareness and value through experience with nature.</p>	<p>To really value something, people need a good understanding and awareness of it. The best way to achieve this is to experience it! A clever marketing campaign can increase visitor numbers to the region, but also raise awareness within local communities of the value of the natural environment. Things like wildlife experiences can be really memorable and special for people, helping them become more aware of the need to protect the animals and their habitats. Establishing a strong link between the natural environment and things like employment and regional development bring an added incentive for local communities to support good conservation and environmental management.</p>
	<p>CV 12: Recreation in Nature</p> <p>Develop and implement a plan to improve access to natural areas by a more diverse range of user groups (eg. Disabled, older people).</p>	<p>Increased access to natural areas can build attachment to places, increase appreciation and allow the community to build stewardship over their urban and natural assets. There are opportunities to improve access to natural areas for a whole range of user groups, which would also create opportunities for development of niche tourism markets. Providing appropriate infrastructure to facilitate access to natural areas by disabled or older people would create unique marketing and tourism opportunities for the region, while construction of more walking / cycling tracks would cater for increasing numbers of more active tourists.</p>
	<p>CV 13: Sustainable Design</p> <p>Conduct community education campaigns and workshops to encourage sustainable urban design and planning.</p>	<p>Land management and use in the Wet Tropics landscape is highly contested, particularly in the higher density coastal urban areas. Good education, planning and involvement of a range of stakeholders in sustainable design and planning can help prevent problems, while allowing for reasonable and sustainable growth and making the most of our enviable tropical environment.</p>
	<p>CV 14: Showcasing Model Projects</p> <p>Establish and promote demonstration sites which showcase 'model' projects, to promote good natural resource management and encourage further uptake.</p>	<p>Promoting model projects across a range of areas is an excellent way to showcase success stories and encourage uptake on a larger scale. There is nothing like seeing the successes first hand to demonstrate to the broader community the value of good natural resource management. The demonstration sites can also be a powerful tool in showing <i>how</i> projects can be done, removing the perception that good NRM is too difficult or that certain approaches won't work. Sites with a high level of community involvement and in highly visible locations provide opportunities for the message to spread even further.</p>

Sustained and diverse resourcing	SR 1: Securing Novel Funding Partnerships Develop a collective, regional Strategy for attracting novel (non-traditional) funding/resourcing opportunities for investment in a wide range of NRM initiatives (including philanthropy).	The trend in government “grant” funding to support NRM has been declining for many years. However, there are many resources out there (both cash and other) that could be accessed to support initiatives if they are well articulated, and the case is compelling. The iconic nature of the region is a unique drawcard for novel investment, and a collective strategy around seeking that investment will be critical to future resourcing.
	SR 2: Valuing Ecosystem Services Develop a framework for realistically valuing ecosystem services.	In order to secure long-term, sustained, sufficient investment, including the value of biodiversity and other ecosystem services such as water quality in economic modelling is essential. Tools and methodologies to meaningfully value these services are an essential basis for negotiating ecosystem service payments, as well as communicating to investors the importance of the services healthy ecosystems deliver. It will also be a valuable communication tool for enhancing community valuation of landscape function.
	SR 3: Regional Food Branding Develop a region-wide brand and local trade strategy focusing on sustainable production, low carbon footprint and high quality produce.	Establishing a business brand for the region linked to natural assets, sustainability and proactive tackling of climate change challenges can help in promoting the unique products of the region and building recognition of the quality of the products as well as the farming processes. When done well, the outcome can be a more secure farming future for the region, with reduced environmental impacts. It can also result in enhanced community pride in regional produce and greater loyalty when making purchasing decisions, as well as a better price. However, this will not come without effort in defining the brand and then marketing it within the region and beyond. This is not an area that farmers are naturally talented in, and will require support and investment to arrive at a brand that farmers relate to and that is broadly saleable.

Our Plan for Biodiversity



The extraordinarily unique and varied plants and animals of this region are what makes it special. Therefore it is no surprise that at both local and regional planning consultations, all communities felt strongly about the importance of protecting our biodiversity and educating people about its significant role.

In 8 of the 10 local landscape workshops we held, projects directly focusing on protecting biodiversity were identified as a priority. In 9 out of 10 workshops, there was a strong focus on building community awareness about the environment in general.

A strong message coming through was the importance of improving habitat condition and connectivity within the landscape, to ensure our ecosystems are resilient and can withstand and survive the impacts of climate change.

Our Plan for Biodiversity is based on extensive engagement and consultation about:

- The challenges preventing us from achieving our Biodiversity Goal
- The things that may assist us in achieving our Biodiversity Goal
- The priority actions that we should put in place to address the challenges and make the most of the opportunities

Our priorities for Biodiversity are:

1. We will influence policy and planning frameworks to ensure they favour land-use and land-use changes with positive biodiversity outcomes.
2. We will work collaboratively to undertake adaptive planning and management of biodiversity, focusing on making evidence-based decisions which take into account a changing climate and incorporating monitoring, evaluation and review.
3. We will respect and action the desire of Traditional Owners who wish to be more meaningfully involved in biodiversity projects in their community and country from the planning stage through to implementation.
4. We will secure sustained and diverse resourcing by using the exceptional biodiversity values of the Wet Tropics as the hook for innovative investment partnerships and making the best use of the resources we have.
5. We will work to ensure our community places high value on the health and resilience of our regional biodiversity and is actively involved in its protection.

Our Plan for Biosecurity



Our Goal for Biosecurity:

Invasive species are managed to ensure the maintenance of the region's ecosystem, health and the critical ecosystem services and functions provided to our community and industries

It is no surprise that pests and weeds are a major issue in this region; with our warm and wet climate, it is not only native species that love to live here.

Discussions at both regional and local level workshops resulted in broad agreement that pests and weeds are a major problem, affecting a wide range of stakeholders, including conservationists, Traditional Owners, farmers, graziers and government agencies.

While there is already a very long list of pests and weeds in this region, the real worry from the perspective of the experts is the 'tidal wave' of invasive species at the doorstep, waiting for the right climatic conditions to move in. 'Sleeper weeds' that reside happily in people's gardens could be the next major threat to our ecosystems and industries.

Now, more than ever, we need to be proactive and focus on prevention and early detection, while not losing sight of the important battles that we have been fighting for some years.

Our Plan for Biosecurity is based on extensive engagement about:

- The challenges preventing us from achieving our Biosecurity Goal
- The opportunities that may assist us in achieving our Biosecurity Goal
- The priority actions that we should put in place to address the challenges and also make the most of the opportunities

Our Priorities for Biosecurity are:

1. We will influence policy and planning frameworks to ensure they are evidence-based and focus effort and investment where the best outcome can be achieved.
2. We will work collaboratively across properties, communities, industry and government to undertake proactive, targeted, effective and efficient management of invasive species, with a focus on prevention and early intervention.
3. We will respect and action the desire of Traditional Owners to being meaningfully involved in tackling pest and weeds on their country.
4. We will secure sustained, diverse and consistent resourcing for the strategic and targeted management of pests and weeds.
5. We will work to ensure our community has awareness, capacity, ownership and commitment to fulfil their roles and responsibilities with regard to pest and weed management.

Our Plan for Water



Despite the fact that the journey our water takes within the catchments of the Wet Tropics is highly variable, almost no one questions the importance of good quality water for our economy, environment and lifestyle.

In every discussion/workshop/feedback session held during the planning process, the importance of maintaining and enhancing our waterways and wetlands remained a priority. Emphasis was placed on the quality of the water, as well as the health of the catchment systems through which it flows.

Our Plan for Water is based on extensive engagement about:

- The challenges preventing us from achieving our Water Goal
- The things that may assist us in achieving our Water Goal
- The priority actions that we should put in place to address the challenges and also make the most of the opportunities

Our Priorities for Water are:

1. We will influence the policies and regulations that govern us, ensuring they support Great Barrier Reef water quality and catchment health outcomes at local, catchment system and regional scales.
2. Collectively we manage our water and waterways strategically, making the most of available knowledge and taking into account projected impacts of climate change. It is important to have, share and use this information effectively.
3. We will respect the importance that Traditional Owners place on water and proactively action their rights and desire to be involved in, and benefit from, initiatives aiming to improve water quality and catchment health.
4. We will secure long term and diverse resources and investment to improve the quality of the Wet Tropics water and waterways.
5. We will inspire the Wet Tropics community to place high value on the health of our water and waterways and be actively involved in its management and protection.

Our Plan for Sustainable Industries



The ecosystems of the Wet Tropics support its two key industries, being agriculture and tourism. Without a healthy and functioning natural resource base, neither of these industries will thrive.

This message was loud and clear from both the regional and local level workshops with every single local landscape group identifying sustainable industries as a local priority, in particular agriculture.

Due to limited engagement with the tourism industry, there is a strong focus in this Plan on agriculture. Ongoing interaction with the tourism industry will result in a more comprehensive plan for this industry.

Our Plan for Sustainable Industries is based on extensive engagement about:

- The challenges preventing us from achieving our Sustainable Industries Goal
- The opportunities that may assist us in achieving our Sustainable Industries Goal
- The priority actions that we should put in place to address the challenges and also make the most of the opportunities

Our Priorities for Sustainable Industries are:

1. We will influence the policies and regulations that govern us to ensure they are supportive of diverse, sustainable and resilient industries across all areas.
2. Our Wet Tropics industries will work collaboratively making the most of available knowledge so as to adapt quickly and proactively to change by sharing and using information.
3. We will proactively pursue opportunities for Traditional Owners to play a key role in, and secure long-term employment benefits from, industry development in the region, in particular tourism.
4. We will ensure our Wet Tropics industries are diversified, resilient and future-proof, with a stable, increasing return on investment sustaining profitability.
5. We will inspire the Wet Tropics community to place high value on the vitality of our industries, including our farmers, and actively support local production and service provision.

Our Plan for Coastal Systems



In many ways, the Wet Tropics region is defined by its coastal systems with its waterways within the region all flowing into the coastal flood plain and out to the Great Barrier Reef.

It is interesting to note that although it is not independent from biodiversity, sustainable industries, water or biosecurity, it has unique challenges and these were raised at both local and regional workshops.

Concerns over the impacts of climate change in particular were mentioned including rising sea levels, the likely increase in severe cyclones and the lack of resilience of our highly modified and heavily contested coastal landscapes.

The influence of increasing population and the desire to live where there are sea views was also raised repeatedly.

Our Plan for Coastal Systems is based on extensive engagement about:

- The challenges preventing us from achieving our Coastal Systems Goal
- The opportunities that may assist us in achieving our Coastal Systems Goal
- The priority actions that we should put in place to address the challenges and also make the most of the opportunities

Our Priorities for Coastal Systems are:

1. We will influence our local, state and national policies, plans, legislation and decision making frameworks to ensure they are evidence-based and drive sustainable coastal development and management.
2. We will work collaboratively and adaptively on our coastal management systems, applying up-to-date science and evidence, building in Traditional Owner knowledge and taking into account climate change.
3. We will respect and action the desires of Traditional Owners to be meaningfully involved in the management of the coastal systems, embodied in the concept of land and sea management.
4. We will secure long-term, consistent cross-sector and diverse resourcing for coastal system management.
5. We will ensure our community places high value on the health and resilience of our regional coastal systems and is actively involved in their protection.

Our Plan for the Daintree



The Daintree Local Landscape is renowned for its spectacular natural assets and these astounding attributes warrant world class management.

Although over half of the local landscape is protected in the World Heritage Area, working with our community will be vital to ensure a whole-of-landscape approach to managing our natural assets.

There are also many other factors which make life in the Daintree unique. With community cohesion and collective action, we can make sure all these values are recognised and managed appropriately to protect what is special to our community, for now and generations to follow.

Our three top priorities

1. Community Values: We will work to ensure there is strong community cohesion, and effective collective action to protect and enhance the natural assets of the Daintree.
2. Sustainable Industries: Our region's industries will be sustainable, diverse and resilient, supporting our communities and natural environments.
3. Biosecurity: We will minimise the threat of pests and weeds on our natural and agricultural landscapes through effective planning and action.

"There is an abundance of local knowledge and regard for the natural environment. We need to identify and engage these people."

"As weeds and pests represent the greatest threat to local systems over the next 5 years there is a very real requirement for a co-ordinated and targeted approach to control."



The defining features of our Local Landscape are our diversity of communities and cultures and our spectacular natural landscapes.

It is important to us to protect these values, which contribute to making our Local Landscape unique. Having strong and sustainable industries to maintain our families and way of life is central to achieving our goals.

Underpinning it all is a desire to see our natural systems and waterways maintained and enhanced. Managing all our landscape's values is a complex undertaking, but we have many motivated and passionate people and groups within our communities. With good information, and a cohesive, active community, we can achieve our goals.

Our three top priorities

1. **Sustainable Industries:** Our region's industries will be sustainable, diverse and resilient, supporting our communities and natural environments.
2. **Water:** We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.
3. **Community Values:** We will work to ensure our community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.

"Environmentally sustainable and diverse farming will show how to be economically viable and respect and protect our natural and very special environment."

"Waterway restoration contributes to a balanced, sustainable community, an economy with diverse industry investment."

"Critical to not just focus on the environmental issues and outcomes but also the economic, social and cultural – what does it mean for a wide variety of interests."



We live in a unique part of the world; we have an enviable, tropical lifestyle where our towns, cities and farms remain surrounded by spectacular World Heritage Areas.

We have an opportunity to really embrace our environment to enhance our urban communities and our natural and agricultural landscapes.

With our access to cutting-edge scientific research, as well as effective community groups working at a grass-roots level, we are able to make genuine contributions to planning and managing our environment. From our coastal landscapes, to our upland ranges and our diverse communities, we have a plan to help build a healthy landscape.

Our top three priorities

1. Community Values: We will work to ensure our community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.
2. Biodiversity: We will improve the condition and connectivity of our forests, building a mosaic of corridors to build resilience against threats, including climate change.
3. Water: We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.

"We want to use good planning to prevent future problems, rather than just fixing existing problems."

"If too many urban trees are cut down this city would be hot and boring and not special anymore."

"It's important to show how it can be done better, as an integral part of development."



Our Local Landscape is home – to diverse communities, unique wildlife, awe-inspiring rainforests and cascading tropical creeks and rivers.

We love the natural systems, but we are also proud of our towns and rural areas, which not only make life possible here, but provide us with an enjoyable, satisfying and sustainable lifestyle.

Preserving all these values and making sure our towns, farms and natural landscapes continue to flourish, side-by-side into the future, will take careful planning and management by all of us. We have some good ideas to take this further.

Our top three priorities

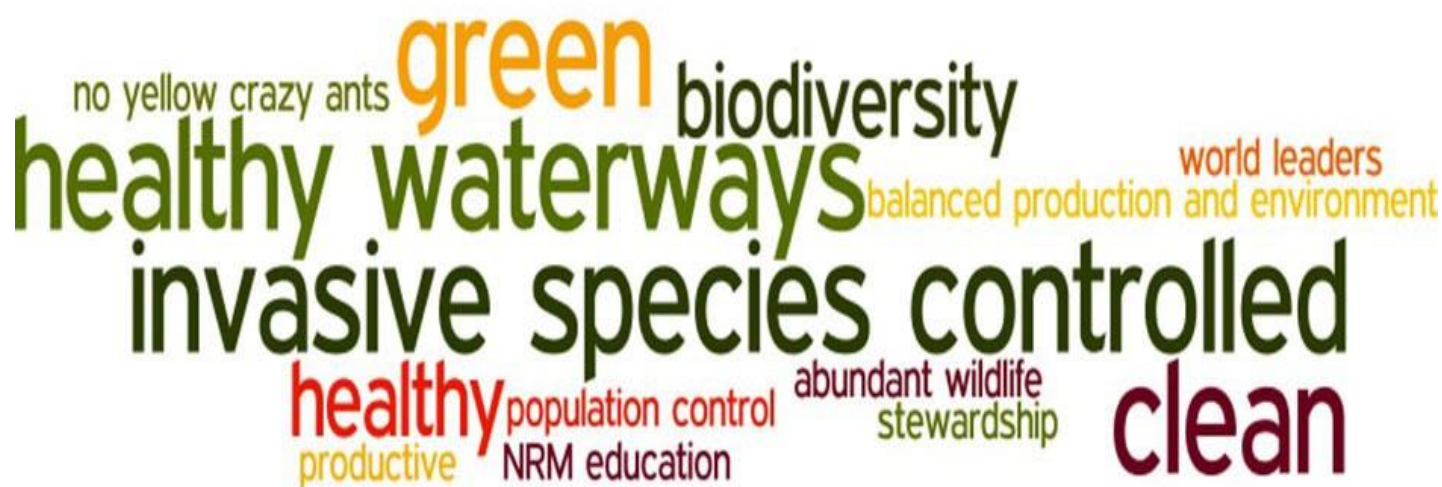
1. **Community Values:** We will work to ensure our community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.
2. **Biodiversity:** We will improve the condition and connectivity of our forests, building a mosaic of corridors to build resilience against threats, including climate change.
3. **Water:** We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.

“We are “they” – “they” should do something means we should do something.”

“I would like to see a landscape that still contains all of the biodiversity of our Wet Tropics and a lot less of weeds/ferals – while still having a sustainable agricultural community.”

“We don’t want to be standing in Singapore daisy under pond apple catching tilapia – we need to preserve what makes this the Wet Tropics!”

Our Plan for the Northern Tablelands



Our strong and diverse communities, special natural landscapes and productive agricultural industries make this Local Landscape an area we are proud to call home.

By working together we can manage and enhance these values; we can maintain healthy waterways and forests and make sure our farmlands and communities remain productive and strong. We can help build a healthy landscape, so our families and children can continue to enjoy all our area has to offer.

Our three top priorities

1. **Biosecurity:** We will minimise the threat of pests and weeds on our natural and agricultural landscapes through effective planning and action.
2. **Biodiversity:** We will improve the condition and connectivity of our native habitat to build resilience against threats, including climate change.
3. **Community Values:** We will work to ensure our community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.

"If these ants (yellow crazy ants and electric ants) get away we can kiss our forests, native animals and farming goodbye. Even gardening and playing in house yards will be lost."

"Native plants are the basic requirement of native animals."



Our Local Landscape is renowned for its diversity, high agricultural production, the magnificent upland rainforests and the diverse cultures.

Much of our community is active and engaged but more awareness of the natural values of the region is needed. By working together with all our local partners, we can identify important corridors between forest fragments and manage them, as well as look after our important waterways and make sure our farmlands remain productive. We can help build a healthy landscape.

Our three top priorities

1. Community Values: We will work to ensure our Southern Tablelands community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.
2. Biodiversity: We will increase the condition and connectivity of our forests to build resilience against threats, including climate change.
3. Water: We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.

“Without interaction / education, we don’t tend to value the importance of the natural environment.”

Our Plan for the Northern Cassowary Coast



Our Local Landscape's natural values and rural lifestyle are unique and special, and definitely worthy of our effort in managing and enhancing them.

Much of our Wet Tropics' rainforests are protected in World Heritage Areas, providing refuge for many species of wildlife, as well as attracting tourists to our area.

Our rural and urban areas are equally valuable, supporting strong communities, diverse agriculture and contributing to our economy and sustainability. Our varied landscapes, from our coastal systems through to the mountain ranges, need our support to make sure they are as healthy as possible, now and into the future.

Our three top priorities

1. Biodiversity: We will improve the condition and connectivity of our forests, building a mosaic of corridors to build resilience against threats, including climate change.
2. Water: We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.
3. Sustainable Industries: Our region's industries will be sustainable, diverse and resilient, supporting our communities and natural environments.

"If we have the information, we can take action to build corridors to enhance movement of threatened species and improve genetic diversity."

"Community partnerships will ensure entire landscapes are transformed, not just small areas. Need to get community members involved by "owning" their revegetation areas."

"When the riparian zone is well-managed, the river becomes stable and self-cleansing."

"If you understand the value of your topsoil you will work to protect it."

Our Plan for the Southern Cassowary Coast



There are not many places where people share their backyards with cassowaries, but in our Local Landscape, that's exactly what happens.

Our strong community pride, combined with our landscape's natural exceptional beauty, provide strong foundations for us to carefully plan, protect and enhance all our region's values.

We know it's a fine balance between conserving our region's natural values, while ensuring our communities and industries remain strong, vibrant and productive.

There is a lot of good work happening and great partnerships already in place in our Local Landscape; we plan to build on this even further to get that balance right.

Our three top priorities

1. Community Values: We will work to ensure our community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.
2. Water: We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.
3. Sustainable Industries: Our region's industries will be sustainable, diverse and resilient, supporting our communities and natural environments.

"We would like to see the majority of landowners committed to and proud of applying best practice to conserving natural values of their land. We can promote these champions as mentors."

"Cyclones Larry and Yasi hit the rivers and riparian vegetation pretty hard and they need some help to recover and be in a more resilient state for next time."

"Happy, healthy, resilient ecosystems will flow on to happy farmers."

"Revegetating will improve the landscape and survival chances of the mahogany glider and other species."



The vast and open spaces of our landscapes provide the foundation for many of our livelihoods, with almost three-quarters of our land area used for cattle grazing.

Within this landscape are spectacular natural wonders, which attract visitors from locally and around the world, supporting an important tourism industry.

Our landscape is also important because of its Cultural Heritage, and the strong connection between our Traditional Owners and this Country. The enormous distances between properties and huge areas managed by individual landholders bring many challenges. Despite the complexity of living and working in this landscape, we have priorities to help us achieve healthy landscapes and strong, sustainable industries. This will help us sustain our special lifestyle.

Our three top priorities

1. Biosecurity: We will control priority weeds in our landscape to improve productivity and natural values.
2. Water: We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.
3. Sustainable industries: We will use appropriate fire management strategies to improve planning and management of fires in our landscape.

"New weeds will come into the area, and we need good protocols for dealing with this in a very timely and effective way – working collaboratively will be most effective."

"This would provide a good demonstration of Traditional Owners working effectively on country."

"Improved fire management strategies can help show respect for the land / environment / other people."



Our tropical, coastal environment, nationally significant wetlands, strong, diverse communities and important agricultural industries make our Local Landscape a special place to be part of.

Our highly diverse natural environments provide important habitat for a huge range of plants and animals, many of them threatened and quite a few found nowhere else.

We have productive agricultural land and appealing towns, all located within this natural landscape. Our community has the skills and the passion to work together to manage and enhance these values.

Our three top priorities

1. **Water:** We will enhance the quality of our water and the condition of our waterways.
2. **Community Values:** We will work to ensure our community understands and appreciates the environmental, cultural, economic and recreational values of our natural areas.
3. **Sustainable Industries:** Our region's industries will be sustainable, diverse and resilient, supporting our communities and natural environments.

"We want to make the waterways a great place to enjoy fishing/boating. We can turn the waterways into a valued community asset that everyone will be proud of."

"We want to see the community and landholders working together, so waterway restoration is everyone's responsibility."

"Plenty of travellers just drive through/past – so why not give them incentive to stop and stay a while. Diversify the local economy and bring a few more \$ to town from travellers who stay."