

WET TROPICS NATURE BASED TOURISM STRATEGY



**A Strategy for the Development
and Management of
Nature Based Tourism**



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Development and Management
of Nature Based Tourism**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND MAJOR ACTIONS

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (WHA) is a priceless natural area of global significance and the Australian community has obligations to ensure its protection, conservation, presentation, rehabilitation and transmission to future generations.

The Wet Tropics represents an outstanding visitor destination and tourism plays a key role in presenting the Area's values to millions of visitors each year. Tourism is of central importance to local and regional economies and represents a strong social element in tropical North Queensland. Nature based tourism is diverse in style and scale and is broadly distributed throughout the Wet Tropics WHA. Some 200 visitor sites are addressed in this Strategy.

Tourism in the Wet Tropics WHA is currently estimated to generate over \$750 million each year (Driml, 1997). The economic benefits of tourism can enhance the quality of life of local communities and potentially support Aboriginal aspirations for greater participation in management of the World Heritage Area. However, close interaction between the tourism industry, management agencies and the community at large is essential to ensure effective protection of the World Heritage property values.

Ecologically sustainable tourism also requires ongoing investment to ensure conservation of the Area and appropriate management of visitor sites so that services, facilities and recreational experiences are compatible with presentation opportunities within the World Heritage Area, meet expectations and continue to attract tourists.

This Strategy provides a blueprint for tourism development and management in the World Heritage Area and surrounds. It is based upon a partnership approach amongst management agencies, tourism industry, conservation groups, Aboriginal people and the broader community. The Strategy provides:

- a vision
- objectives
- guiding principles
- a policy and planning framework, and
- an implementation process.

The Strategy recognises that tourism must be considered in the context of overall management of the Wet Tropics WHA, including conservation, research, traditional cultural heritage practices, community services and recreation by local users. It provides some certainty for the future development and management of nature based tourism across the World Heritage Area and surrounds.

The approach adopted by this Strategy is value-based and emphasises management of potential and actual impacts of visitor use on World Heritage values, rather than management of uses *per se*. The key elements of the strategy are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Key elements of the Nature Based Tourism Strategy

STRATEGIC POLICY

1. Partnership Arrangements	Mechanisms to form a partnership approach to tourism management between the tourism industry, land managers, Aboriginal groups, conservation sector, local residents and other stakeholders.
2. Research and Information Needs	Protocols and procedures for collection, management and easy use of scientific, cultural heritage, social and economic information.
3. Marketing Wet Tropics Opportunities	Guidelines for appropriate marketing of the Wet Tropics agreed between the tourism industry and land managers.
4. Monitoring and Response Procedures	Guidelines and procedures for performance criteria, monitoring of changes and pre-determined responses.
5. Permitted Access Rights and Administration	Efficient, effective and equitable administration of access rights with clear duration, security and conditions.
6. Accreditation and Training	An accreditation system and complementary training programs outlining industry standards.
7. Cost Recovery	A system for users to equitably contribute to management and monitoring costs, financially or in-kind.
8. Infrastructure	Guidelines and requirements for infrastructure development to mitigate adverse impacts on values and enhance visitor experience.

LAND USE PLANNING

9. Planning Frameworks	Three levels of land use planning will apply to nature based tourism.
10. Precinct Planning	Regional planning which defines desired visitor use and management objectives for management of presentation at a regional and site level.
11. Site Planning	Site specific planning which reflects preferred management intent for use of sites.

IMPLEMENTATION

12. Implementation Schedule	A work program developed with land management agencies to implement the Strategy's actions.
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The Strategy will be implemented through an integrated package of mutually supporting mechanisms, primarily:

- partnership arrangements to promote the active involvement of all key stakeholders in tourism planning, management and review,
- research to provide the basis of continuous improvement in appropriate environmental practices,
- better information management to enable stakeholders to make informed decisions and promote understanding based on quality information,
- precinct and site planning to determine appropriate types, levels and conditions of visitation consistent with World Heritage zoning,
- marketing guidelines to ensure accurate and appropriate marketing of Wet Tropics sites,
- precautionary management, monitoring and reporting arrangements to ensure regular review and adjustment of management regimes, including use of contingency plans,
- accreditation systems linked to commercial tourism activity permits to establish best practice for the nature based tourism industry that encourages continuous improvement,
- efficient, equitable cost recovery and administrative systems,
- an infrastructure development program designed to enhance Wet Tropics presentation and minimise impacts associated with tourism, and
- a process for ongoing implementation and review of the Strategy according to new information or changing conditions.

The Strategy is based on the realistic forecasts of: increasing tourist numbers in the future; increasing demand for a range of nature based tourism experiences; a larger proportion of free and independent travellers; and significant involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the management of nature based tourism.

The major actions arising from the Strategy are to:

- build stronger partnerships between the management agencies, tourism industry, Aboriginal people, conservation sector and other stakeholders,
- facilitate Aboriginal involvement in tourism and tourism management,
- guide research into priority topics relating to tourism and visitor management,
- develop an integrated information management system across land management agencies,
- prepare guidelines for appropriate marketing of World Heritage values and visitor sites,
- develop a Visitors Guide to the Wet Tropics,
- establish accreditation requirements for tourism operators and guides,
- develop an integrated commercial activity permit system across land tenures,
- develop strategies for recovering costs associated with managing and providing for visitor use of the World Heritage Area,
- develop monitoring procedures and contingency plans to avoid unacceptable impacts of tourism in the Wet Tropics,
- identify infrastructure hubs for visitor facilities throughout the Wet Tropics, and
- undertake visitor site planning and management.

PART A: MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Wet Tropics WHA was listed in 1988 for its outstanding natural values as an important part of the world's heritage. Thus it has a range of values significant to local, national and international communities. The Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) was established to manage the area to meet Government commitments under the World Heritage Convention which are specifically to protect, conserve, present, transmit to future generations, and rehabilitate the Wet Tropics WHA.

Conservation is the underlying principle of management of the Wet Tropics WHA. To the extent that it is consistent with conservation objectives, the Wet Tropics Management Authority and the land management agencies provide for ecologically sustainable use of the World Heritage Area.

Presentation of the values of the Wet Tropics WHA to locals and visitors alike depends substantially on educative, well-presented and professional tourism programs. The Wet Tropics WHA is an outstanding visitor destination and the tourism industry is the prime medium which brings most visitors into contact with World Heritage values of the area. Nature based tourism in the Wet Tropics region also generates substantial employment within local communities. It contributes significantly to local, state and national economies directly and, together with the Great Barrier Reef, is an internationally recognised tourism attraction. Appendix D - Wet Tropics Tourism Overview provides a summary of current trends in nature based tourism and predicted future patterns of use.

WTMA works in partnership with Queensland government land management agencies to meet its obligations, primarily the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Queensland Department of Natural Resources (the land management agencies). These agencies manage the majority of State owned lands in the Wet Tropics WHA in accordance with Queensland legislation, primarily the *Wet Tropics Protection and Management Act 1993*, the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and the *Forestry Act 1959*. Rainforest Aboriginal people, private landholders and local governments also play significant roles in the management and presentation of the values of the Wet Tropics.

This Strategy provides a land use planning framework for an integrated approach to management of nature based tourism in and around the Wet Tropics WHA. The Strategy is underpinned by the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 which establishes management zones and regulates activities which may impact on World Heritage values. To be consistent with the definition in the *Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1992*, nature based tourism is consid-

ered in this Strategy as tourism activities of a “scientific, educational, spiritual, intellectual, cultural and recreational nature where the natural environment is an integral component of these activities”. The Strategy focuses on sites and areas which can be accessed by motorised vehicle, and encompasses both free and independent travellers and commercial tourism operations.

The Strategy will provide the strategic framework for more activity-specific strategies that are related to recreational use of the World Heritage Area such as the Walking Strategy.

1.2 Strategy Format

The Strategy comprises three parts:

Part A - MANAGEMENT CONTEXT focuses on the vision, guiding principles and objectives for the future development and management of nature based tourism.

Part B - STRATEGIC POLICY details the World Heritage policy framework and key strategies for the management of tourism in the Wet Tropics.

Part C - LAND USE PLANNING outlines precinct plans and site functions for nature based tourism activities in the Wet Tropics. A scenario for nature based tourism has been established around a shared vision, objectives and guiding principles, and the use of precinct plans for managing sustainable tourism.

1.3 Scope and Purpose

The Strategy will form the basis for a coordinated approach between stakeholders to nature based tourism in the Wet Tropics region. A coordinated approach is essential to ensure the region is able to benefit from appropriate tourism development while minimising conflicts arising between tourism, management agencies and other community interests.

The Strategy provides interest groups and individuals with an appreciation of the management intent and how the nature based tourism industry is likely to develop, enabling them to make informed decisions on the nature, degree and extent of their involvement in nature based tourism.

The Strategy includes two matters that are not strictly related to tourism in the Wet Tropics WHA:

1. Some visitor sites have been identified and incorporated within the Strategy even though they are not within the Wet Tropics WHA since:
 - tourism in the Wet Tropics WHA cannot be realistically managed in isolation, and
 - WTMA encourages relevant land managers and neighbours to adopt a complementary approach.

2. Recreational needs, both local and regional, have been considered as far as possible within the Strategy since:

- tourism and recreation inevitably share many of the same sites and resources, and a balance providing for both is necessary, and
- tourism and recreation use often result in similar impacts.

Free and independent travellers make up a significant component of tourism in the Wet Tropics and will be managed according to site requirements along with commercial tourism operations. A 'Visitor's Guide to the Wet Tropics' will be produced.

While the Strategy principally addresses nature based tourism on public lands, the contribution that private landholders can make by presenting World Heritage values is recognised and encouraged. Successful implementation of the Strategy will involve a cooperative approach between government management agencies and private landowners in and around the World Heritage Area. This will ensure complementary public and private investment in providing facilities and services to visitors and local communities.

2 TOURISM MANAGEMENT IN THE WET TROPICS WHA

2.1 Legislative and Policy Framework for the Strategy

The Wet Tropics WHA is subject to the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and *Native Title Act 1993*, and Queensland's *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, *Forestry Act 1959* and the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998.

Nothing in the Strategy removes the statutory consultation and impact assessment obligations of land management agencies (particularly in relation to Queensland Government Native Title Future Act notification procedures) or serves to pre-empt any final management decisions at the site level.

The Strategy is consistent with the legislative framework for the World Heritage Area and takes into account the values and principles embodied in the World Heritage Convention and relevant international treaties and conventions. Of particular relevance to this Strategy is the World Heritage Convention management objective "to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community".

The Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 commenced operation in September 1998. The Plan divides the Wet Tropics WHA into four management zones according to integrity, remoteness from disturbance, intended physical and social setting and management purpose. These zones are depicted on zoning maps and provide the framework for management of the Wet Tropics WHA, including tourism management.

Policies that guide implementation of the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 are detailed in the document *Protection Through Partnerships* (1997). An outline of the legislative and policy framework for management of the Wet Tropics Region is provided in Appendix F – Legislative and Policy Framework for the Strategy.

Commercial tourism of the Wet Tropics WHA is managed through a permits system. Permits for commercial tourism are administered by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (under the *Nature Conservation Act (Qld) 1992*) or the Department and Natural Resources (under the *Forestry Act (Qld) 1959*), depending on the tenure of the land. Other permits and approvals may be required from local governments and State agencies.

Tourism management is also guided by a number of national, state, regional and district strategies. Strategies which apply to the Wet Tropics region and relate to nature based tourism have been reviewed as part of the development of this Strategy (refer Appendix E - Related Strategies).

2.2 Need for a Strategic Approach to Tourism Management in the Wet Tropics

Tourism in the Wet Tropics encompasses both free and independent travellers and commercial tours. Commercial tour operators require permission to operate on State lands, including National Parks and State Forests. All visitors require permission to access certain nature based tourism sites, particularly those on presentation (restricted) roads.

The current case by case permit assessment system that has evolved for tourism management generally works well when visitor levels are low and provides a reasonably effective system to manage the impacts of each proposed operation. It also provides a degree of flexibility for managers and tourist operations. However, this approach is complex in its administration and leads to increasing, reactive restriction as use and impacts increase. This approach has also suffered from a lack of established policy for tourism management within the Wet Tropics region. As a result, there has been limited ability to identify or manage the cumulative impacts of many tourism activities on World Heritage values and on other users. This has tended to result in access to some sites being granted to too many users. When tourism levels are high, as is currently the case in the World Heritage Area, a more strategic approach is needed.

Similar concerns in relation to tourism management in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park are leading to substantial changes from case by case permit assessment and management to integrated, forward planning of use and standardisation of most tourism permits (Review of the Marine Tourism Industry in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, 1997).

This Strategy outlines a range of integrated mechanisms to better manage issues associated with the potential individual and cumulative impacts of tourism on Wet Tropics WHA values over time. The Strategy is based on:

- a vision
- objectives
- guiding principles
- a policy and planning framework
- accompanying management strategies, and
- implementation process.

3 VISION FOR WET TROPICS NATURE BASED TOURISM

3.1 Vision

The vision for tourism in the Wet Tropics WHA is:

Regional, national and international recognition, understanding and appreciation of the unique values of the Wet Tropics WHA through:

- the development and maintenance of dynamic, culturally appropriate and ecologically sustainable, professional and innovative presentation opportunities to world best standards, and
- cooperative partnerships between the tourism industry, managing agencies, indigenous people, conservation groups and the community,

to ensure ongoing protection of World Heritage values.

3.2 Objectives

Objectives for nature based tourism of the Wet Tropics WHA and surrounds are:

World Heritage Values: Tourism which supports implementation of Australia's duty to "protect, conserve, present, rehabilitate and transmit to future generations" the Area's World Heritage values.

Natural Values: Tourism which is consistent with:

- the conservation requirements of all endemic plant and animal species and regional ecosystems
- protection of soil, landforms and waterways from non-natural degradation, and
- rehabilitation processes on degraded lands.

Cultural Heritage Values: Tourism which contributes to an appreciation, understanding and protection of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage values; and empowers Aboriginal people as tourism industry participants.

- Tourism Values:* The provision of opportunities for both commercial visitors and free and independent travellers to access, enjoy and develop an increased awareness of the natural and cultural values of the Area in an ecologically sustainable, culturally appropriate and economically viable manner.
- Community Values:* Tourism which complements community desires and aspirations and positively contributes to the regional community quality of life and economy.
- Recreational Values:* Tourism which is consistent with the provision of a diversity of quality recreational opportunities and based on the interests, and legitimate expectations of residents and visitors.

4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles have guided the development of this Strategy:

- The primary goal of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Area Management Scheme* and the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 provides the framework for developing and implementing this Strategy.
- Tourism must be ecologically sustainable and compatible with conservation of Wet Tropics WHA values.
- The precautionary principle will apply when making decisions about tourism with potential serious and irreversible impacts on World Heritage values.
- Tourism in Wet Tropics WHA will be managed in the context of the Queensland Ecotourism Plan (1997), ie. to:
 - be ecologically sustainable
 - be appropriate to its environmental and cultural setting
 - provide visitor satisfaction and enhance understanding
 - benefit local communities, and
 - be marketed responsibly.
- The economic benefits generated by tourism in the area should be reinvested back into the area to support conservation of the Area and management of tourism and to benefit local communities in the Wet Tropics as far as practicable.
- Tourism will be managed in the context of managing overall use. Managing impacts of use will ensure conservation of World Heritage integrity and values.
- In managing potential impacts of tourism, emphasis will be on defining acceptable outcomes through establishing performance criteria, rather than prescriptive directives detailing how to achieve these outcomes. Contingency planning and pre-determined responses to early warnings of unacceptable impacts will be agreed between management agencies, the tourism industry and stakeholder groups. This reflects a precautionary approach as required in the World Heritage Area legislation.
- A range of opportunities for presentation of Wet Tropics WHA values will be provided, but not necessarily within each tourism precinct.
- Tourism activities which provide opportunities to present unique values of a particular area will take precedence over activities which may be conducted in alternative locations.
- Tourism access will be limited to activities and operations which will have least impact on Wet Tropics WHA values and which will benefit World Heritage conservation through promotion of an understanding and appreciation of those values.
- Tourism management systems must recognise the need for a reasonable level of commercial certainty along with the need for operational flexibility to allow appropriate responsiveness to changing tourism circumstances.
- Equitable cost recovery systems are valid where commercial benefits from use of public resources arise.
- Price control is not a preferred mechanism to manage demand and should only be considered where alternative mechanisms are impractical or ineffective.

- Permit systems will be used as a mechanism to achieve management objectives.
- Appropriate levels of access should be managed by a combination of:
 - regional, precinct and site based planning
 - marketing consistent with available opportunities (ie. supply driven in preference to demand driven)
 - active management to mitigate potential or existing impacts, and
 - infrastructure provision and maintenance of facilities designed to encourage appropriate use at particular sites.
- Site specific planning and infrastructure development (outside of freehold land) will provide for ongoing involvement of Aboriginal traditional owners.
- Rainforest Aboriginal people have native title rights and are partners in management of and participation in nature based tourism in the Wet Tropics WHA.

5 IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

An Implementation Schedule for management strategies identified in this Strategy will be prepared within 3 months of finalisation of the Strategy. Key actions and time frames will be negotiated and costs determined. It must be recognised however that implementation programs will be dependent upon annual budget allocations of governments.

Strategic policies will be developed and implemented under the guidance of the Executive of the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Queensland Department of Natural Resources and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services. Members of the nature based tourism Steering Committee and Working Group will be invited to provide input throughout the processes of policy development.

The outcomes of site reviews and planning exercises described in Part C will be reviewed annually by Precinct Advisory Groups (PAGs) comprising local government and community members, before being presented to the Wet Tropics Board for endorsement.

PART B - STRATEGIC POLICY

1 POLICY FRAMEWORK

A range of policies have been developed to support the achievement of the Vision and Objectives for nature based tourism in the Wet Tropics, dealing with:

- rainforest Aboriginal peoples' rights and interests,
- partnership arrangements and communication,
- research needs and information management,
- presenting Wet Tropics and marketing tourism,
- monitoring and response procedures,
- permit systems and commercial tour operations,
- accreditation and training,
- management costs and contributions to tourism management, and
- infrastructure.

For each of these a policy statement has been formulated. Each statement outlines a set of management strategies to achieve the intent of the policy. Boxes are used to highlight key features of the policies, the lead agency, key partners and the time frame. In each case:

1. The **Lead Agency** (shown in bold): is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of each management strategy.
2. The **Key Partners** are responsible for input, feedback, evaluation and review of strategies. They may need to implement components of the strategies.
3. The **Estimated Project Duration** is indicative and subject to development of a detailed timetable and implementation program.

2 POLICY STATEMENTS

2.1 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Rights and Interests

Management agencies recognise that Rainforest Aboriginal people have unique rights, interests and cultural responsibilities within the Wet Tropics region which distinguish them from other stakeholders. Rainforest Aboriginal people have a significant role to play in the planning and management of nature based tourism sites on public land.

Management Strategies

2.1.1 Recognition of Aboriginal Rights and Interests

Although many of the native title rights of Rainforest Aboriginal people remain undetermined, a pro-active approach to Aboriginal concerns will be taken which recognises:

- that approximately 80% of the World Heritage Area is potentially claimable under native title legislation,
- that nature based tourism settings exist within a complex array of Aboriginal cultural landscapes with their own inherent value systems and land management regimes, and
- the considerable potential for indigenous cultural tourism.

A range of statutory obligations, policies, and protocols currently exist which require land management agencies to consult and negotiate with Rainforest Aboriginal people and to have regard to their culture and tradition. These include the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*. To this effect nature based tourism planning and management activities within the WTWHA will be undertaken in accordance with the protocols and guidelines established under Section 62 of the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*.

Consistent with current Native Title notification procedures, Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Recommendation 314, and the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (Objective 22.1), Rainforest Aboriginal people will be formally provided an opportunity to comment with respect to any specific area management planning or infrastructure development proposal.

2.1.2 Visitor Site Management

The Strategy recognises the need for ongoing involvement of local Rainforest Aboriginal groups, particularly with respect to:

- sites involving outstanding issues identified during the preparation of the strategy, that are now listed for review (Table 6),
- the review of sites not considered in the Strategy's Aboriginal consultation exercise, and
- the negotiation of management strategies to mitigate potential or existing impacts on native title rights and interests or cultural heritage values.

It is acknowledged that any assessment and comments on sites from traditional owners (or other Aboriginal people concerned with the area) does not pre-empt or impact upon any future negotiations either within the context of native title claim processes or Indigenous Land Use Agreements. Nor do they remove the requirement to:

- notify traditional owners as per State Government future act notification procedures, and
- assess the cultural heritage and socio-economic impacts of specific development or planning proposals in accordance with existing legislation or established policy and procedures (such as the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998).

In cooperation with Rainforest Aboriginal people further attention needs to be given to the development and implementation of social, cultural, and economic impact assessment procedures. Such procedures would cater specifically for the impacts of nature based tourism on the unique set of values and aspirations which characterise the array of Rainforest Aboriginal cultural landscapes underlying the various precincts.

The Strategy will be reviewed in response to specific outcomes of any Indigenous Land Use Agreements, or in relation to specific nature based tourism guidelines, developed as part of the proposed Wet Tropics Regional Agreement with Rainforest Aboriginal people.

2.1.3 Aboriginal Involvement In Nature Based Tourism

It is beyond the scope of this Strategy to specifically address many of the concerns and interests of Rainforest Aboriginal people regarding their participation, employment and training in the tourism industry. However, it is acknowledged that traditional owners can and do play a significant role in the presentation and management of the natural and cultural values of the Wet Tropics WHA and surrounding regions. It is anticipated that the implementation of this Strategy will facilitate the development of an Aboriginal Tourism Strategy.

Potential partnership arrangements, for example, the tourism industry and Rainforest Aboriginal people working collaboratively on projects at Bloomfield, Mossman Gorge, Kirrama and/or Wooroonooran areas will be pursued in the early stages of implementing the Strategy.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Site planning and review	WTMA	QPWS, DNR, Native Title representative bodies, specific traditional owner groups, Bama Wabu, tourism industry	12 months
Tourism partnerships	Rainforest Aboriginal people, Tourism industry	WTMA, QPWS, DNR, TTNQ	Ongoing

2.2 Partnership Arrangements and Communication

There will be a partnership approach to tourism management between WTMA, the tourism industry, conservation interests, land management agencies, Aboriginal interests, local government and other stakeholder groups. Partnerships will be founded on mutual interests and obligations.

Management Strategies

2.2.1 Cooperation

Proactive stakeholder participation will be encouraged to ensure ongoing involvement with implementation of the Strategy.

2.2.2 Communication

Established communication channels will be used to foster effective two way flow of information between the Wet Tropics Management Authority, land management agencies and key stakeholder groups to promote:

- understanding and appreciation of Wet Tropics WHA values,
- ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate tourism practices,
- support for appropriate nature based tourism activities, and
- active participation of all stakeholders in tourism management.

Precinct Advisory Groups will be formalised to provide for effective input into management of visitor sites and planning for proposed infrastructure such as walking tracks.

2.2.3 Evaluation and Review

In cooperation with stakeholders, procedures will be established to review and evaluate the effectiveness of management regimes on:

- protecting sites of high natural and cultural conservation significance,
- achieving management objectives at precinct and site specific scales, and
- maintaining recreational use settings.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Effective Communication	WTMA	All stakeholders	3 months to formalise, then ongoing
Procedures for review	WTMA	All stakeholders	6 months

2.3 Research Needs and Information Management

Research and effective information management will be undertaken to support and refine management strategies to effectively manage visitation and protect values. The acquisition of better information is a continuing process involving research, monitoring and consultation.

The Wet Tropics Information Needs for Management (2000) recognises tourism and visitor management as one of seven 'key forces for change', that is, 'forces considered to have the highest order of potential pervasive impacts (either positive and negative) on the future character of the Area...'

Management Strategies

2.3.1 Information and Research Needs

Tourism research will be facilitated, based upon the following priorities:

- biophysical and social carrying capacities,
- methodology for site monitoring and response procedures,
- tourism demand assessment,
- site risk assessment,
- visitor expectations and satisfaction, and
- best practice visitor information and presentation mechanisms.

New research needs will be identified through established advisory groups and research will be commissioned through the Rainforest CRC and other research providers.

Partnership agreements with industry and local community networks will be utilised to assist with data gathering and monitoring.

2.3.2 Information Management and Access

An integrated information management system will be established across land management agencies that:

- provides readily accessible public information about natural and cultural heritage values for specific sites, or where to access such information,
- respects sensitive and confidential information and cultural and intellectual property rights,
- mitigates against the use of false, misleading or inaccurate information in interpretation or promotion of the Area, and
- facilitates industry decision-making.

2.3.3 Cultural Heritage Protocols

Protocols will be established for the presentation of cultural heritage information incorporating procedures for the endorsement of interpretive material by traditional owners for use at specific sites; and appropriate training for operators approved for accessing culturally sensitive sites.

A system to monitor the presentation of culturally sensitive material to visitors will be developed and implemented in accordance with agreed protocols for Aboriginal consultation in relation to the Wet Tropics WHA.

Information provided to visitors will also reflect the values and views of others, especially the local community.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Information and research needs	WTMA	Rainforest CRC, Tourism Council of Australia, Tourism Queensland, DNR, QPWS, Bama Wabu, PAGs, Conservation groups.	Annually
Information management	WTMA	QPWS, DNR, Bama Wabu, Rainforest CRC	12 months to establish system. Maintenance on-going
Cultural heritage protocols	WTMA	Bama Wabu, QPWS, DNR, Rainforest CRC, PAGS	12 months

2.4 Presenting Wet Tropics and Marketing Tourism

Marketing will be used as a tool to influence visitor demand, encouraging visitation across the region in a manner consistent with management objectives and intent, ensuring accuracy of presentation, and setting visitor expectations in relation to the range of nature based tourism opportunities available within the Wet Tropics WHA.

Management Strategies

2.4.1 Presentation and Promotion

A presentation package for Wet Tropics nature based tourism will be developed which:

- increases understanding and appreciation of World Heritage and cultural values, and
- promotes appropriate cultural and environmental interaction with the Wet Tropics.

A visitor ‘Guide to the Wet Tropics’ will be developed as a tool to:

- promote the diverse range of opportunities to experience Wet Tropics values across the WHA,
- enable visitors to accurately match desired experience with available opportunities, and
- assist in managing access and demand.

Tourism industry requirements for developing itineraries will be recognised.

2.4.2 Product Marketing Assessment

The relationship between the destination marketing strategies of the tourism industry and the Strategy will be examined to:

- assess the potential of marketing programs to support World Heritage Area management objectives,
- ensure the accuracy of marketing images, and
- support a sustainable tourism industry.

2.4.3 Marketing Guidelines

In cooperation with the tourism industry, a marketing action plan will be prepared for the accurate and appropriate marketing of Wet Tropics to:

- manage demand through appropriate promotion and marketing of visitor sites and tourism precincts consistent with Strategy management objectives,
- ensure a balanced and coordinated approach to the marketing of Wet Tropics values between the tourism industry and land managers for the Wet Tropics WHA and surrounds,
- promote the development of a diversity of nature based products,
- ensure marketing does not create unrealistic visitor expectations, and
- increase awareness and appreciation of Wet Tropics World Heritage values, and
- provide a style manual and library of images which assists the media, Wet Tropics Management Authority and the industry to develop a common approach to marketing.

Private landowners involved in nature based tourism will be actively encouraged to develop and manage sites in a manner consistent with this Strategy and develop partnership arrangements to market in a complementary manner to public facilities.

2.4.4 Monitoring of Industry Performance

Tourism industry and community based monitoring and reporting of compliance with agreed marketing guidelines will be established.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Presentation package	WTMA/QPWS/DNR	All stakeholders	12 months
Product marketing assessment	TTNQ	TQ, Tourism industry, DTAs, WTMA	6 months
Marketing guidelines	TTNQ	TQ, Tourism industry, DTAs, WTMA, Bama Wabu	6 months
Monitoring	WTMA/TTNQ	All stakeholders	Ongoing

2.5 Monitoring and Response Procedures

Monitoring and response procedures will be established for tourism and visitor activities to ensure effective management of sites. The proposed approach will be based upon the carrying capacity and limits of acceptable change models.

Management Strategies

2.5.1 Monitoring Program and Response Procedures

An efficient and cost-effective visitor site monitoring program will be developed to identify both positive and negative trends in relation to stated management objectives, with respect to environmental condition, visitor experience and condition of tourism infrastructure and services.

Criteria for monitoring and associated performance indicators will be based on the management objectives and stated management intent for precincts and sites. Typical monitoring criteria are shown in Table 1.

Appropriate response mechanisms will be developed with the involvement of tourism operators and detailed in contingency plans to ensure that a pre-determined response can be swiftly put in place should an adverse impact become evident. This will minimise potential conflict between the industry and site managers.

Management responses may vary, depending on the circumstance, and include:

- minor changes to on-site management,
- increased or more focused monitoring and research,
- adjusting use to sustainable levels,
- temporary cessation of site use and provisions of alternative sites if feasible,
- remedial action, and
- reviewing the entire management of the site, including if necessary redesignating the site.

Tourism operators will need to factor the responses detailed in contingency plans into their business and marketing plans, to ensure that tourism operations and marketing reflect that itineraries may need to change.

Table 1: Typical monitoring criteria relating to unacceptable impacts

	On-site	Off-site
Biophysical	<input type="checkbox"/> erosion <input type="checkbox"/> vegetation damage <input type="checkbox"/> introduction weeds <input type="checkbox"/> water quality <input type="checkbox"/> graffiti/vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> domestic animals <input type="checkbox"/> fire risk/damage <input type="checkbox"/> response of wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> spatial spread <input type="checkbox"/> vegetation damage <input type="checkbox"/> introduction weeds <input type="checkbox"/> water quality <input type="checkbox"/> introduced species <input type="checkbox"/> site-source erosion <input type="checkbox"/> pollutants <input type="checkbox"/> response of wildlife
Social	<input type="checkbox"/> conflicts of use <input type="checkbox"/> visitor behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> visitor flows <input type="checkbox"/> visitor satisfaction <input type="checkbox"/> facility standards	<input type="checkbox"/> site social amenity <input type="checkbox"/> visitor satisfaction <input type="checkbox"/> impacts on adjoining/adjacent lands/ communities

2.5.2 Site Monitoring

The following approach to site monitoring (outlined in Table 2) will be adopted:

- visitor sites will be managed as ‘pockets of special use’ within the general protected area landscape
- on-site management will protect the natural, cultural heritage, scenic and social values of the site in the context of the specific management objectives and management intent as defined for that site,
- off-site management will prevent or minimise any impacts of on-site use from spreading to affect natural, cultural heritage, scenic and social values beyond the immediate site,
- on-site and off-site monitoring criteria will be based on management objectives under this Strategy and, in particular, the management intent for each site described in the Sites Register (Table 5).

Table 2: Approach for Site Management

<p>1. Recognise that the decision to designate a visitor site automatically distinguishes the site from the surrounds so that the site and its environs are managed and monitored differently for different purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> designation of a visitor site automatically gives the site social values (community, recreation and tourism) which do not necessarily apply, or apply to a lesser extent, to surrounding areas <input type="checkbox"/> the environs surrounding a site will be managed to maintain and preserve its natural and cultural heritage values.
<p>2. Identify the specific on-site values and define management objectives.</p>
<p>3. Define the off-site objective as on-site use having minimal or no adverse impact.</p>
<p>4. Explicitly adopt the principle that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> significant off-site biophysical change requires management intervention to minimise or eliminate impacts <input type="checkbox"/> significant on-site biophysical change may be accepted if consistent with the site objectives <input type="checkbox"/> the acceptability of social change on-site or off-site is subservient to biophysical integrity.
<p>5. A significant change in any value whether on-site or off-site should trigger a review of management (operationally or strategically, depending on the significance of the change). A review may result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> changing the classification of the site, and therefore the values, to be managed, and the style and objective of management <input type="checkbox"/> mitigation of impacts within the existing style of management, or closure of the site.
<p>6. Note that this process provides a benchmark for measuring change (from the time when the site is designated) and defines the nature of indicators to be considered: biophysical in terms of what exists on-site and off-site at the time of designation; social from users/community and from day-to-day management.</p>
<p>7. Recognise that this process enables focus on tangible indicators that are practically monitored - it also takes account of cumulative and ‘downstream’ impacts without the need for detailed surveys/studies as any changes to off-site biophysical indicators alert to a change in on-site use. Detailed surveys or studies may then be focused on the factors associated with the signalled change.</p>

In order to properly apply the above approach, the spatial extent of visitor sites will be accurately defined in site descriptions to enable the effective monitoring of on-site versus off-site impacts.

2.5.3 Industry and Community Involvement

Tourism operators and local users will be engaged in the monitoring and reporting of conditions of sites. Their involvement may be a direct financial contribution or in-kind contribution such as participating in monitoring programs and site restoration works. Permit conditions of tourism operators may involve a requirement to undertake monitoring.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Develop monitoring criteria and performance indicators	WTMA	QPWS, DNR, TQ, Tourism industry, SAC, Rainforest CRC, PAGs	6 months
Monitoring program and contingency plans	WTMA	Rainforest CRC, QPWS, DNR, Tourism industry, Bama Wabu, SAC, PAGs	12 months
Industry and community involvement	QPWS, DNR	WTMA, Tourism industry, PAGs	Ongoing

2.6 Permit Systems and Commercial Tour Operations

Clearly defined access rights and obligations for tourism will be developed to provide all stakeholders with a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the requirements necessary to support a sustainable industry. Commercial interests recognise the need for precautionary management and appropriate response systems should adverse impact trends develop. Similarly, management systems will be cognisant of commercial needs for stability, predictability and economic viability.

Management Strategies

2.6.1 Permit Allocation System

A review of permitting and allocation processes for tourism on Queensland's State lands is currently being conducted. This Strategy will need to take into account this State wide review.

Subject to the Queensland review, equitable, clear and consistent permit allocation and re-allocation processes will be developed that:

- recognise past performance as a criterion for permit assessment,
- provide a consistent approach to determining permit duration and security recognising ecological, cultural, management, social and business investment needs, and
- provide and implement efficient administration of the commercial activity permit system across tenures which minimises delay, duplication, uncertainty and subjective decision making.

2.6.2 Permit Assessment Criteria

Permit assessment criteria will include application of the principles, policies and stated management intent contained within this Strategy including that related to:

- presentation objectives,
- the precautionary principle,
- impact monitoring,
- impact response mechanisms in contingency plans,
- adherence to agreed marketing guidelines,
- accreditation and training requirements,
- contribution to tourism management and conservation, and
- consistency with management intent of Wet Tropics Management Plan zones, precincts and sites.

The permit assessment process will consider consistency with the management intent of site classes in Part C of this Strategy.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Establish allocation system	QPWS, DNR	WTMA, Local Government, Tourism industry	12 months
Develop permit assessment criteria	QPWS, DNR	WTMA, Local Government, Tourism industry	12 months

2.7 Accreditation and Training

Accreditation of tourism operators will be pursued to ensure best practice standards. The adoption of practices and professional development of operators through training will be encouraged through the formal adoption of approved accreditation systems linked to the commercial activity permitting system.

Management Strategies

2.7.1 Accreditation for Commercial Operations

- Appropriate accreditation will be required as one of the criteria when considering access rights and commercial activity permits.
- The accreditation standards developed in the National Ecotourism Accreditation Program will be adopted and refined to meet the specific requirements of the Wet Tropics WHA.
- Specific codes of practice will be established in conjunction with the National Ecotourism Accreditation Program for activities in the Wet Tropics not already covered for accreditation.

2.7.2 Accreditation and Training for Guides

- Accreditation standards developed in the National Nature and Ecotour Guide Certification Program of the Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA) will be adopted and refined, along with other appropriate programs, to meet the specific requirements of the Wet Tropics WHA.

- A Code of Practice for Guides for the Wet Tropics WHA will be developed and integrated with accredited heritage interpretation and tourism courses to enhance:
- ecological and cultural responsibility in tourism activities and
- community understanding and appreciation of the Area.

2.7.3 Accreditation Levels

Various levels of accreditation will be required for different activities and access to particular areas:

- based on the sensitivity of areas being accessed and presented, and
- reflecting the values and management intent as described under the Wet Tropics Management Plan zones, precincts and site classifications.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Accreditation for commercial operations	QPWS	NEAP, Tourism industry, WTMA, DNR	9 months
Accreditation for Guides	WTMA	QPWS/DNR, Tourism industry, TAFE, EAA, NEAP	9 months
Adopt 3 accreditation levels	QPWS/DNR	Bama Wabu, WTMA, Tourism industry	12 months

2.8 Management Costs and Contributions to Tourism

Management

Wet Tropics Management Authority and the land management agencies will pursue equitable contributions from the commercial tourism sector and where feasible, from free and independent travellers to assist maintenance of visitor infrastructure and site management to conserve World Heritage values and support access by the tourism industry and visitors.

The World Heritage Area historically has had a sporadic pattern of capital funding with limited maintenance funding, increasingly high demands on resources and a poor history of ‘user pays’ to obtain contributions towards management costs. If land management agency obligations and community aspirations are to be met, there is clearly a need to establish more stability in funding arrangements.

A review of management and cost recovery systems for tourism is currently being conducted across Queensland. The strategies implemented under this policy will need to be consistent with the outcomes of the State wide review unless specific World Heritage considerations apply.

Strategies

2.8.1 Management Cost Analysis

Management financial reporting will be progressively reviewed to determine direct and indirect tourism management and monitoring costs. Costs of management and monitoring will be apportioned between beneficial users (private/commercial benefit - ie. costs recoverable in principle) and 'public interest' (borne by government) in an equitable manner.

2.8.2 Cost Recovery Accounting

Efficient accounting procedures will be established to support the implementation of cost recovery systems and to provide transparency in the application of revenue.

2.8.3 Cost Recovery Implementation

Subject to adequate opportunity for industry consultation and notification, financial or in-kind contributions to management and monitoring costs will be implemented, based on the 'user pays' principle (commercial benefits from use of a public resource). Key considerations will be:

- reimbursement of costs for land management where a high degree of on-site investment/management and/or monitoring is required to support tourism activities,
- contributor involvement in the development of collection procedures and the distribution of funds, and
- a phase-in period that allows industry to adjust their pricing schedules in accordance with the release of marketing literature.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Management cost analysis	QPWS, DNR	WTMA, Tourism industry, TQ	6 months
Establish accounting procedures	QPWS, DNR	WTMA, TQ	1 year
Implement a system for cost recovery	QPWS, DNR	WTMA, Tourism industry, Treasury	2 years

2.9 Infrastructure

The provision of infrastructure at visitor sites will address the need to:

- be consistent with the management objectives of visitor sites,
- direct limited resources for infrastructure to priority areas,
- provide effective integration between public and private visitor infrastructure and services, and
- ensure services and facilities, whether public or private, are of a standard that reflects the significance of the Wet Tropics WHA.

Priorities for infrastructure development will be focused on ‘essential’ infrastructure development. Highest priority will be given to sites requiring action to resolve current issues of environmental or cultural degradation, health and safety, or community values.

Management Strategies

2.9.1 Infrastructure Hubs

The concept of service and infrastructure ‘hubs’ will be adopted as an alternative to direct provision of on-site infrastructure wherever possible. While dependent on location, site visitation numbers and patterns, basic services and facilities such as toilets and garbage disposal should be concentrated wherever possible at points, usually off-site, where a number of visitor sites may be efficiently serviced. This approach:

- maintains ‘naturalness’ of sites as far as practicable,
- promotes cost effectiveness for both infrastructure, visitor information and servicing/maintenance, and
- supports economies of local townships.

2.9.2 Five Year Infrastructure Program

A 5 year indicative works program will be prepared and implemented for visitor infrastructure development and maintenance in the Wet Tropics WHA according to identified priorities. The necessary funds will be sought to implement the 5 year program.

Appropriate site assessment and planning will occur in advance of funding to facilitate efficient implementation when funds become available.

2.9.3 Infrastructure Guidelines

‘Service and facility standards’ guidelines will be developed, suitable for application in the Wet Tropics WHA.

2.9.4 Coordination with Marketing

Marketing activities will be coordinated with availability and capacity of existing visitor infrastructure.

Implementation

Strategy	Lead Agency/Group	Key Partners	Estimated Project Duration
Develop a 5 year works program	WTMA, QPWS, DNR	All stakeholders	6 months
Guidelines for infrastructure	Wet Tropics Management Authority	QPWS/DNR, Private operators	12 months and review annually
Coordinate visitor capacities of sites with marketing	Wet Tropics Management Authority, TTNQ,	QPWS/ DNR	Ongoing

PART C - LAND USE PLANNING

1 PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

Three levels of land use planning have been developed and applied under the Strategy (Table 3). The intent of this 3 tiered approach is to provide a diversity of visitor experiences and opportunities for nature based tourism consistent with conservation of natural and cultural heritage values of the region. All three planning levels should be taken into account when considering nature based tourism initiatives.

Table 3. Levels of Land Use Planning

Planning Level	Planning framework	Purpose and function
1. Regional	Wet Tropics Management Plan zones	The Wet Tropics Management Plan establishes the primary setting within each management zone. Any tourism infrastructure within the World Heritage Area must be consistent with zoning. Nature based tourism opportunities are focused on visitor sites and routes in the Wet Tropics region which are accessible by motorised vehicles. For areas within the World Heritage Area this equates to sites and routes zoned in C and D and roads designated as accessible for presentation purposes.
2. Precinct (sub-regional)	Precinct planning	The Strategy recognises that different ‘precincts’ within the Wet Tropics region possess distinct tourism or recreational attributes. The precinct planning framework facilitates development of themes for each precinct and promotes precinct based tourism initiatives which support the theme and capitalise on precinct attributes ¹
3. Site	Site classification system	Site classifications and descriptions establish the management intent and the proposed setting of individual sites with respect to visitor use. The site classifications in Table 5 include strategies to achieve the management intent and actions required.

The above 3 tiered approach provides a sound basis for:

- integrated planning and management across a regional/precinct/local level to ensure an appropriate range of visitor opportunities throughout the region,
- development of ‘visitor information packages’ within and across precincts that offer particular tourism themes, and
- involvement of local communities in tourism planning that enables new proposals to be assessed within a consistent regional framework.

¹ It is envisaged that distinguishing precinct attributes will be further enhanced through appropriate ‘branding’ in the development of the Wet Tropics Marketing Action Plan.

2 PRECINCT PLANNING

2.1 Concept and Purpose

The purpose of the precinct planning framework is to recognise the special and sometimes unique nature based tourism opportunities of a particular precinct and to build on these distinctive characteristics to enhance the diversity of nature based experiences available to visitors within the Wet Tropics region.

The Strategy establishes 12 nature based tourism precincts within the Wet Tropics region (refer Nature Based Tourism Precincts and Visitor Sites Map):

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Bloomfield/Windsor | E. Kuranda/Cairns | I. Koombooloomba/Kirrama |
| B. Daintree/Cape Tribulation | F. Russell/Mulgrave | J. Cassowary Coast |
| C. Douglas/Wangetti | G. Tablelands | K. Wallaman |
| D. Julatten/Mareeba | H. Wooroonooran | L. Paluma |

2.2 Natural Attributes, Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

Each precinct is defined according to its distinctive nature based tourism attributes and values. Special tourism opportunities are also identified based on these distinctive attributes.

2.3 Management Intent

Management intent and a preferred focus of tourism is provided with respect to nature based tourism initiatives. These statements generally set the ‘vision’ and preferred ‘tone’ for nature based tourism within the precinct.

2.4 Application

Precinct descriptions and statements of management intent will be applied as guidelines when land managers are considering the appropriateness of visitor activities or new tourism initiatives within a particular precinct.

3 PRECINCTS

3.1 Bloomfield / Windsor Precinct

3.1.1 Natural Attributes

- Spectacular rugged expanses of largely undisturbed upland rainforest areas not available on a similar scale elsewhere in the northern parts of the Wet Tropics region,
- extensive ranges of tall sclerophyll forests,
- coastal plains, mangroves and beaches enclosed by steep mountains,
- outstanding biodiversity and ecological integrity,
- waterfalls and mountain streams such as Bloomfield Falls, Roaring Meg Falls and Home Rule Falls, and
- geologically unique formations such as the Black Mountain area.

3.1.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Wilderness and remoteness from large urban development,
- unrivalled opportunity for self reliant travellers and specialised small group tours to experience relatively undisturbed natural values,
- historic explorer, mining, pastoral and ‘frontier’ tourism opportunities and visitor experiences at Cooktown and along the Development Road,
- limited infrastructure, including roads and tracks, with most access limited to 4WD vehicles when weather allows,
- limited land clearing apparent,
- townships of Cooktown, Helenvale, Ayton, Bloomfield and Wujal Wujal strategically located to act as service hubs and ‘jump off’ points for nature based tourism activities in the precinct,
- specialised natural and scientific tours with high quality interpretation, and
- Aboriginal cultural tours by traditional owners.

3.1.3 Management Intent

Maintain the nature based tourism values of the precinct by:

- providing for wilderness experiences and appreciation,
- enhancing opportunities for self reliant travellers and small group tours,
- maintaining existing visitor sites, tracks and roads,
- developing some bushwalking facilities,
- providing infrastructure for tourism which primarily uses lodge style accommodation in existing towns,
- managing vehicle access along the coast road (Bloomfield Track) to ensure remote and undisturbed natural values are not compromised, and
- providing ‘off-site’ presentation material on Wet Tropics World Heritage values.

3.2 Daintree/Cape Tribulation Precinct

3.2.1 Natural Values

- Spectacular expanses of rugged rainforest clad mountains and mountain streams,
- rainforest lined beaches and fringing reef,
- the visible coincidence of the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas,
- rich lowland rainforests and wetlands,
- spectacular sea and range views and drives along coastline,
- largely intact rainforests and mangrove systems of the Daintree River valley bordered by spectacular mountain rainforest,
- high biodiversity and ecological integrity, and
- the richest assemblage of primitive flowering plants in the world.

3.2.2 Special Tourism Attributes and Opportunities

- World renowned 'reef meets rainforest' icon provides unique presentation opportunities and visitor experiences,
- scenic drives for free and independent travellers,
- the Daintree River access for crocodile spotting and mangrove tours,
- high capacity visitor infrastructure with sealed access at a few nodes along the Cape Tribulation road caters for large numbers of coach and 4WD guided nature based tours,
- the sympathetic conservation design and meandering nature of the Cape Tribulation road enhances the ecotourism experience,
- opportunities for highly specialised and personalised ecotours,
- local 'host' community of residents, and
- cottage, hostel and resort accommodation within a precinct where the natural setting predominates throughout.

3.2.3 Management Intent

Maintain and promote the values of the Precinct by:

- enhancing the 'reef meets rainforest' presentation and tourism experience,
- primarily providing for small group day tours and overnight stays,
- providing visitor infrastructure and interpretation to cater for high volume day use at specific sites,
- maintaining high quality visitor infrastructure and interpretive facilities,
- reducing the net visitor impacts on World Heritage values,
- encouraging and supporting the host community to provide specialist services to visitors that present the special attributes of the Daintree area, and
- redirecting future tourism growth to alternative opportunities for nature based tourism in Wet Tropics areas south of the Daintree River.²

² refer *Protection through Partnerships, WTMA, 1997*

3.3 Douglas/Wangetti Precinct

3.3.1 Natural Attributes

- Highly varied landscape from dry to wet forested areas,
- rural landscapes of Mossman and Mowbray Valley,
- the coincidence of the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas,
- scenic coastal vistas,
- numerous spectacular beaches and seascapes along the coastal highway, and
- waterfalls, gorges, mountain streams, in particular Mossman Gorge.

3.3.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Proximity to major tourism accommodation and service areas,
- cultural heritage presentation opportunities, and
- potential of Mowbray Valley to provide alternative nature based and recreation opportunities to other highly used sites and areas.

3.3.3 Management Intent

Maintain and promote the values of the precinct by:

- providing nature based presentation opportunities for large groups of people,
- enhancing the small number of high capacity sites with well developed infrastructure to cater for high use and promote appreciation and enjoyment of the Wet Tropics,
- investigating the potential for additional visitor use of the Mowbray Valley,
- managing the Wangetti coastal corridor to provide dispersed coastal/beach recreation opportunities,
- enhancing the ‘reef meets rainforest’ presentation and tourism experience, and
- maintaining the scenic qualities of the coastal drive as one of the premier scenic drives in Australia.

3.4 Julatten/Mareeba Precinct

3.4.1 Natural Attributes

- Rich diversity of habitats including upland rainforests and wet sclerophyll forests,
- dry sclerophyll forest and open woodlands,
- rural landscapes, and
- scenic views and mountain ranges.

3.4.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Circuit drive opportunities for all types of tourists and transport,
- special ecotourism opportunities (for example bird watching including cassowary, highland wildlife),
- excellent small group touring loop opportunities via Black Mountain Road, and
- nature based tourism combined with exposure to local farm and cottage produce.

3.4.3 Management Intent

Maintain and promote the values of the precinct by:

- providing for self directed or guided vehicle based ecotours,
- promoting small group and free and independent traveller ecotourism,
- providing opportunities for Aboriginal cultural tourism, and
- providing limited visitor infrastructure.

3.5 Kuranda/Cairns Precinct

3.5.1 Natural Attributes

- Barron Gorge views and waterfall,
- spectacular views of Cairns coastal lowlands and seascape,
- coastal lowland habitats including mangrove communities,
- rainforest mountain ranges,
- wet and dry sclerophyll habitats of the Lamb Range, and
- extensive cane paddocks.

3.5.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Existing world class nature based and cultural tourist presentation infrastructure such as Skyrail, Kuranda train, Barron Gorge lookout and boardwalks, Kuranda Range road, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park,
- complementary tourism infrastructure and opportunities such as the Kuranda ‘rainforest village’,
- Lake Morris and airport mangrove boardwalk offer low volume tourism opportunities,
- well developed walking track network linking Cairns, Kuranda and Lake Morris,
- Cairns port is a major access point to Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and
- links to Tablelands precinct for organised tours and free and independent travellers.

3.5.3 Management Intent

Maintain and promote the values of the Precinct by:

- promoting the precinct as the introduction to the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef,
- providing presentation opportunities for large numbers of people
- maintaining high levels of infrastructure and site hardening to cater for large numbers of tourists, and
- promoting appreciation and enjoyment of Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area values.

3.6 Tablelands Precinct

3.6.1 Natural Attributes

- Volcanic geological formations such as cinder cones, volcanic plugs and rolling lava plains,
- numerous crater lakes and wetlands,
- diverse fauna including rare tree kangaroos, possums, gliders and platypus,
- small pockets of remnant rainforest,
- combination of natural and rural landscapes,
- gently rolling upland vistas with waterfalls (eg Millaa Millaa Falls, Zillie Falls) interspersed among large tracts of rural land, and
- forested ranges to the west.

3.6.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Lakes based tourism (crater lakes, Lake Tinaroo) a major component of Tablelands nature based experience,
- a comparatively cool and low humidity climate compared with coastal precincts,
- extensive all weather rural road network allowing easy access to experience a diverse range of Wet Tropics values,
- provision for day trips from Cairns or overnight stays at lodges, hotels and camping grounds,
- numerous walks, picnic grounds and camp sites throughout the precinct, and
- picturesque traditional northern Queensland rural villages nestled within the rural landscape (for example Yungaburra, Herberton).

3.6.3 Management Intent

Promote and enhance the values of the precinct by:

- providing a mix of tour opportunities which integrate nature based tourism with rural Queensland cultural experiences,
- providing for a diversity of tourism opportunities through development of some feature sites to cater for larger sized groups, and
- managing other sites predominantly for smaller tour groups, and free and independent travellers.

3.7 Russell/Mulgrave Precinct

3.7.1 Natural Attributes

- Large river and valley landscapes of the Goldsborough, Russell and Mulgrave Rivers,
- low coastal rainforest ranges,
- extensive riparian habitats and estuaries,
- mountain streams and waterfalls,
- geological formations such as the Pyramid, and
- the coincidence of the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas.

3.7.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Provides a distinct suite of opportunities and experiences from the adjacent Cairns/Kuranda precinct,
- opportunities for water based recreation activities, including canoeing, boating, swimming and fishing,
- well developed walks and picnic areas,
- access to estuarine areas of the Russell and Mulgrave Rivers and adjacent Great Barrier Reef,
- links to Tablelands precinct for organised tours and free and independent travellers, and
- walk linking to Wooroonooran precinct.

3.7.3 Management Intent

Maintain and enhance the values of the precinct by

- providing a range of sites and opportunities for smaller groups and free and independent visitor use,
- providing opportunities for bush walkers,
- maintaining recreation opportunities for the greater Cairns community, and
- providing 'on-site' presentation material on Wet Tropics World Heritage values.

3.8 Wooroonooran Precinct

3.8.1 Natural Attributes

- Highest mountains in Queensland, and rugged ranges,
- relatively undisturbed rainforest habitats,
- mountain streams with waterfalls, and
- high wilderness qualities.

3.8.2 Tourism Values and Opportunities

- All season access to high quality rainforest areas and waterfalls along the Palmerston Highway,
- provides an essential link for one-day or two-day tour circuits from Cairns along the Palmerston Highway to Koombooloomba, the Tablelands and return to Cairns,
- opportunities for small groups and free and independent travellers to access more remote and wilderness experiences,
- existing network of high quality walks,
- rugged, central wilderness suitable for self reliant bushwalking and tourism situated close to Cairns,
- opportunities for walking links to the Tully River and Mena Creek, and
- strategically located as an alternative set of tourist destinations to the Daintree/Cape Tribulation precinct.

3.8.3 Management Intent

Enhance and promote the values of the precinct by:

- providing recreation and presentation opportunities for small, self reliant groups in wilderness and remote areas,
- developing the potential for further bushwalking opportunities and experiences,
- managing visitor features along the Palmerston Highway to provide high quality presentation and interpretive facilities,
- promoting the precinct as an alternative tourist destination to the Daintree/Cape Tribulation precinct, with Innisfail as a service hub,
- investigating the potential for canopy walk infrastructure as a major development to attract visitors to the precinct, and
- promoting the Cairns - Palmerston - Tablelands loop as a world class nature based touring circuit.

3.9 Koombuloomba/Kirrama Precinct

3.9.1 Natural Attributes

- An area of high natural integrity with a diversity of rainforest, wet and dry sclerophyll forest habitats,
- steep mountain ranges of rainforest,
- dramatic waterfalls and river gorges, and
- mostly remote from urban and rural disturbance.

3.9.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Opportunities for 4WD ecotouring, camping and scenic driving on the Kirrama Range road, linking with Cassowary Coast and Koombuloomba - Tully Falls area,
- opportunities for ecotouring links to the north via Palmerston Highway,
- opportunities for water based activities at Koombuloomba, and
- potential for Koombuloomba area to support ecotourism opportunities by providing a nature based ecotourism accommodation base.

3.9.3 Management Intent

Maintain and enhance the values of the precinct by:

- providing for touring, viewing, educational and interpretive ecotourism, and
- supporting Koombuloomba as an infrastructure hub to cater for a range of group sizes and providing services as a 'jump off' point for smaller groups engaged in touring or other activities in the southern portion of the precinct³.

³ a concept plan for recreation opportunities in the Koombuloomba area has been prepared.

3.10 Cassowary Coast Precinct

3.10.1 Natural Attributes

- Remnant coastal rainforests supporting numbers of cassowaries,
- wetlands with diverse Wet Tropics coastal habitats,
- mangrove communities,
- the coincidence of the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas, and
- expansive stretches of beach and coastal scenery.

3.10.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Recognition of coastal lowlands and Mission Beach as a ‘sanctuary’ area for the cassowary,
- Mission Beach and Cardwell Interpretation Centres,
- Tully Gorge provides popular adventure and small group river based recreation opportunities,
- Mission Beach area as a focus for a Wet Tropics coastal tourism destination south of Cairns, and
- potential opportunities for Tully Gorge to be a major regional walking track ‘head’ and bushwalking opportunities in spectacular settings.

3.10.3 Management Intent

Promote and present the values of the precinct by:

- providing interpretive opportunities for large numbers visitors,
- providing highly developed levels of infrastructure to promote appreciation and enjoyment of Wet Tropics values, especially the values associated with the coastal lowland ecosystems,
- promoting the development of a major walking track and associated facilities linking the precinct with the Koombooloomba - Kirrama precinct, and
- managing presentation opportunities based upon the active presence of cassowaries.

3.11 Wallaman Precinct

3.11.1 Natural Attributes

- Extensive river valley and coastal delta,
- spectacular coastal views at Cardwell Gap overlooking the Hinchinbrook Channel and Island,
- diversity of rainforest, mangrove, wet and dry sclerophyll habitats,
- rural coastal plains with remnant lowland forests, lagoons and old stream traces of the Herbert River,
- scenic rim of ranges with mountain streams and waterfalls, including the spectacular Wallaman Falls, and
- volcanic geological formations such as Mount Fox.

3.11.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Well developed walks including Wallaman Falls, Broadwater and Dalrymple Gap walks,
- opportunities for water based activities at Broadwater and Herbert River, including canoeing and fishing, and
- scenic tour links to Paluma and Koombaloo/Kirrama precinct via the Mount Fox road.

3.11.3 Management Intent

Promote and present the values of the precinct by:

- encouraging new visitor opportunities to complement Hinchinbrook Island nature based tourism,
- managing a small number of high capacity sites with well developed infrastructure,
- providing for a larger number of smaller capacity sites,
- providing improved access to and presentation opportunities at key scenic icons such as Wallaman Falls, and
- maintaining the opportunities and experiences in more remote parts of the precinct for smaller visitor groups.

3.12 Paluma Precinct

3.12.1 Natural Attributes

- Dramatic rainfall and vegetation gradient,
- diverse rainforest habitats and well developed ecotones,
- waterfalls and mountain streams such as Crystal Creek, Jourama Falls, Birthday Creek, Running River, Bluewater and Keelbottom Creeks,
- coastal plains and wetlands, and
- Paluma Dam.

3.12.2 Special Tourism Values and Opportunities

- Readily accessible for day trips in all weather,
- opportunities for experiencing dramatic changes in natural settings and habitats along rainfall gradient between Paluma and Hidden Valley,
- well developed network of walks and associated scenic lookouts,
- opportunities for water based activities including swimming and boating,
- overnight stays at lodges and camp grounds,
- opportunities for self drive scenic tours incorporating Paluma, Paluma Dam, Hidden Valley and Mount Fox,
- visitor information shelter and picnic facilities,
- historic roads and townships, and
- research and education facilities.

3.12.3 Management Intent

Maintain and enhance the values of the precinct by:

- maintaining recreation opportunities for the greater Townsville community,
- provision and maintenance of moderate levels of visitor infrastructure at Crystal Creek sites to promote appreciation and enjoyment of Wet Tropics values,
- enhancing nature based educational opportunities at Paluma township and dam. and
- opportunities for long distance walking to be available.

4 VISITOR SITES – PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The following approach has been adopted to guide the refinement of the precinct planning approach at site level.

4.1 Site Classification System

Different sites within the Wet Tropics possess distinguishing attributes which allow management to optimise their presentation potential and provide a diversity of visitor opportunities.

The site classification system will ensure consistency in the management of visitor sites across the Wet Tropics WHA and surrounding areas. The site classification system establishes seven classes of site as described in Table 4.

Table 4. Nature Based Tourism Site Classifications

Site Class	Function	Strategies
Core Natural 1	Opportunities to experience the WHA and environs in its natural state in a self reliant manner.	Max. vehicle size c. 12 persons; Minimum infrastructure; Off-site interpretation
Core Natural 2	Opportunities to present WHA wilderness with limited interaction with the environment	Basic infrastructure On-site, basic interpretation Max. vehicle size c. 12 persons
Recreation 1	Opportunities for small groups to experience the WHA and environs and recreate in a natural setting	Max. vehicle size c. 12 persons Limited infrastructure On-site basic interpretation
Recreation 2	Opportunities for large numbers of people and groups to experience and recreate in the WHA and environs	Max. vehicle size c. 35 persons Well developed infrastructure High on-site interpretation
Icon 1	Opportunities to experience outstanding WHA features and values in small to medium groups	Max. vehicle size c. 35 persons Well developed infrastructure High on-site static and active interpretation
Icon 2	Opportunity for large numbers of people and groups to experience outstanding WHA features and values	Highly developed infrastructure High on-site and off-site static and active interpretation
Private	Opportunity for a wider range of experiences and initiatives	Formal listing as a Wet Tropics visitor site

4.2 Sites Register

Sites designated for tourism under this Strategy are listed in the Sites Register (refer Table 5). The Sites Register includes:

- site classifications and descriptions which establish the stated management intent of land managers and proposed function of individual sites with respect to visitor use, and
- actions required to achieve management intent.

A three level prioritisation system for each site has been established as a basis to apply available resources:

Priority 1: Actions are required now to resolve current issues of environmental degradation, health and safety or social values, or which if undertaken would be likely to significantly alleviate demands on nearby sites with such issues.

Priority 2: Actions are highly desirable to significantly enhance visitor opportunities and experiences within a precinct or a significant part of a precinct.

Priority 3: Actions that would expand the range of visitor opportunities but are not required in the short term.⁴

Any proposed development activities associated with sites on State lands will be subject to Native Title notification processes, and those sites within the World Heritage Area will also be subject to development assessment processes under the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 and WTMA Aboriginal protocols and procedures.

4.3 Sites under Review

A number of sites identified in the Strategy have outstanding issues to be addressed before a final decision can be made with respect to their inclusion within the Sites Register.

Current 'review' sites include those having identified indigenous concerns about tourism, additional sites identified through public submissions and sites on private land where a request for inclusion within the Strategy has been received by the land holder. 'Review' sites are listed in Table 6.

The Precinct Advisory Groups will be involved in the review of these sites. The review of sites listed in Table 6 will be undertaken within 12 months of adoption of this Strategy.

Sites requiring review will be managed to maintain their current use, except where emergency works or management action is necessary to prevent environmental degradation. No new commercial tour permits will be issued for such sites until they have been reviewed and their classification determined.

⁴ Priority 3 sites have not been subject to a preliminary overview by Rainforest Aboriginal people as has occurred for priority 1 and 2 sites. Similarly, some priority 3 sites have been added as a consequence of public review but have not yet been subject to wider community consultation. Sites of Priority 3 status may therefore be identified as 'sites for review' subject to further advice.

Sites identified as priority 3 have not yet been considered by Rainforest Aboriginal peoples, and require consideration by the appropriate traditional owners. Sites that have been considered by Aboriginal interests are marked with an asterisk in the Sites Register (Table 5).

4.4 Pioneering Sites

Should new ‘pioneering’ sites become evident (that is, the process of visitors using ‘new’ locations for tourism not currently in use or identified under the Strategy) they should be considered as ‘review’ sites unless unacceptable impacts are identified.

In instances where unacceptable impacts are evident or likely:

- access to the site should be immediately restricted or prohibited,
- land management agencies should ensure public notices and advice are issued to ensure public awareness of the reasons for the action, including specific reference to the bio-physical impacts arising from use, and
- the site should be reviewed as a potential visitor site, at which time nature conservation, social, cultural heritage and strategic use issues may be considered in detail.

For any site listed as ‘under review’ because use of that site is inconsistent with the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998, future use and management will be resolved following review of the Management Plan. Until then, such sites will be managed in a manner consistent with the Management Plan.

4.5 Tenure Issues

Some sites have complex land tenures which may result in difficulties for site management. Such sites have been identified in the Sites Register regardless of those tenure issues, and have been given preferred site classifications. It is intended that management of these sites will be negotiated to resolve tenure or access issues. If agreement cannot be reached regarding management of these sites, efforts will be made to ensure the natural and cultural values of these sites are protected.

4.6 Sites outside the Wet Tropics WHA

Although the majority of sites listed in the Sites Register and Sites for Review are within the Wet Tropics WHA, some sites are listed which are outside the Area on ‘public’ lands. The Authority has no responsibilities over these areas, but the sites have been shown to have strategic regional significance with respect to nature based tourism opportunities. The relevant land manager in these instances will be advised of such strategic significance and encouraged to manage the site in a manner that is consistent with this Strategy.

4.7 Sites on Private Land

Unless formal agreement exists with private landholders, visitor sites on privately owned land within the Wet Tropics WHA have generally not been included in the Sites Register. Private landholders who wish to have sites incorporated within the Strategy are encouraged to approach WTMA, and to agree to site and visitor management consistent with the principles and guidelines in the Strategy. This recognises that there are numerous sites on privately owned land that may be used as visitor sites depending on the wishes of the landholder, and subject to the requirements of the Wet Tropics Management Plan.

4.8 Site Action Definitions

The following describes the types of ‘Action Required’ shown in Table 5:

Site assessment	Assess and determine feasible options for management, prescribe appropriate site uses, infrastructure and management regimes
Investigate access and management options	Investigate and resolve issues associated with access or management which involves tenure issues or private interests
Masterplanning	A comprehensive planning exercise involving an area or number of sites, for integrated visitor management or presentation
Site planning	Planning for visitor use of sites, including the provision of infrastructure and interpretation.
Site management review	Active management to maintain facilities and infrastructure.

Table 5. Sites Register**Precinct A – Bloomfield/Windsor**

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
A1	Keatings Lagoon	R2	Birdwatching opportunity.	Site management review.	3
A2	Black Mountain National Park	CN2	Unique geological formation; endemic wildlife. Easy vehicle access for presentation. No entry past lookout to maintain integrity and safety. Investigate potential to upgrade facilities and interpretation.	Site planning.	1
A3	Home Rule Falls	PR	Site provides access to a number of ‘core natural’ sites. Potential for low key walks, visitor facilities and improved access to falls. Opportunities for agreement with Home Rule landholder and State land management agencies regarding access issues, visitor facilities and hardening of tracks leading from this site.	Site assessment and planning.	3
A4	Unnamed Creek (Lorna Doone)	CN1	Small site with limited capacity. Local use site which should not be promoted for tourism.		Nil
A7	Little Forks Picnic Area	CN1	Access point to rugged rainforest and savanna woodland. Small local use site with limited capacity - should not be promoted as tourist destination.		Nil
A12	Donovan Beach	CN1	Beachwalking opportunities.		Nil
A15	Mount Windsor (Tracks Carpark)	CN1	May require low key car parking facilities if potential walking tracks are developed. Will require agreement between leaseholders and management agencies for access.	Site assessment.	3
A16	Mount Lewis (Forestry Shelter)	CN1	Presentation (restricted) vehicle access only. Good presentation opportunities but upland rainforest prone to ecological disturbance.	Site monitoring.	1

Precinct B – Daintree/Cape Tribulation

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
B1	Emmagen Beach	CN1	Beachwalking opportunities. Potential walking to Cape Tribulation. May require hardening of carpark and provision of interpretation.	Site assessment.	2
B2	Emmagen Creek	CN1	Rainforest stream reportedly under severe stress from a range of uses. Requires restricting visitor use to hardened areas, while maintaining low key opportunity for local use.	Site assessment and planning.	1
B3	Cape Tribulation	I1	Recently developed infrastructure and facilities.		Nil
B4	Dubuji (Myall Beach)	I1	Recently developed infrastructure and facilities.		Nil
B5	Noah Beach (North)	R1	Currently the only QPWS campground in precinct. Small site with physical limits to use. Investigate additional or alternative camping opportunities elsewhere in the precinct. Investigate requirement for toilets.	Site assessment.	2
B6	Marrdja Botanical Walk	I1	Recently developed infrastructure and facilities.		Nil
B7	Noah Beach (South)	R1	Small site with limited local use which should not be promoted for tourism. Area of importance to traditional Aboriginal people. Any change of use requires involvement of Aboriginal people.		Nil
B8	Blue Hole	R1	Site degradation is currently evident. Requires resolution of tenure issues associated with public access. Limited capacity site. Should not be promoted for tourism use.	Site assessment and planning.	1
B9	Cooper Creek	I1	Strategic location for free and independent visitor orientation. Also excellent opportunities for presentation of natural heritage attributes of the precinct's coastal area.	Site planning.	2
B10	Thornton Beach	I1	A central point in the precinct. Visitor orientation opportunities similar to those at Cooper Creek. May require upgrade of visitor information facility.	Site planning.	2

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
B11	Cooper Creek (Fan Palm Boardwalk)	I1	A proposal to develop this site for visitor access is currently under review. Good presentation opportunities.	Site planning.	2
B12	Cow Bay (Loopwalk)	R1	Review potential as campground should Noah Beach (North) option be found unsuitable.	Site assessment.	3
B13	Cow Bay (Buchanan Road)	R1	Majority of use by local residents and free and independent travellers. Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Any change of use will require the involvement of traditional owners.		Nil
B14	Jindalba	I1	Recently developed infrastructure and facilities.		Nil
B15	Alexandra Range Lookout	I2	Exceptional views over coastal rainforest areas. Requires review of road design at entry, parking along lookout fence, adequacy of parking and seats.	Site management review.	2
B16	Daintree River Tour Sites	I2	Opportunities for river cruises		Nil
B17	Cape Kimberley	R1	Small site with limited capacity. Should be retained for local use only and not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil

Precinct C – Douglas/Wangetti

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
C2	Saltwater Creek	R1	Small site with limited local use which should not be promoted. Access needs agreement between local landholders, community and management agencies.	Site assessment.	3
C3	Mossman Gorge	I2	Major visitor site with very high use. Of significant interest to Aboriginal people. Physical constraints exist with limited potential for on-site services. High natural and cultural heritage and scenic values. Numerous long term issues including safety, amenity to adjacent community and environmental integrity. Requires resolution involving Aboriginal people and local community to address visitor use, vehicle access, carpark, toilets, picnic area, interpretation, swimming and walking trails.	Masterplanning.	1

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
C4	Mowbray River (Falls Area)	R1	Access to Mowbray Falls and Black Mountain Road via the Bump Track is currently receiving low levels of use with specialist guided tours. Opportunities to provide facilities for river based recreation along the lower Mowbray Valley require investigation, along with assessment of options for walking tracks for visitors and locals. Tenure and access issues to be addressed.	Site assessment.	2
C5	Pebbly Beach	R1	Limited carparking. Concerns regarding removal of pebbles as souvenirs.	Site management review.	3
C6	Pretty Beach	R1	Limited carparking is required to provide access for dispersed beachwalking opportunities along Wangetti coastal corridor. Local and free and independent traveller use. Issues associated with potential upgrade of Captain Cook Highway.	Site assessment.	3
C7	Rex Lookout	I2	Spectacular coastal viewpoint used as a launch site by hang gliders. Requires a review of traffic management.	Site planning.	1
C8	Wangetti Beach (North)	R1	Limited carparking provides access for dispersed beachwalking opportunities along Wangetti coastal corridor. Local and free and independent traveller use.	Site management review.	3
C9	Hartley Falls	CN1	Manage as low key visitor site.		Nil
C10	Wangetti Beach (South)	R1	Potential starting point for self-guided beach and forest walk. Requires review of existing access and facilities to address current site impacts.	Site management review.	1
C11	Ellis Beach	R2	Site is used by Cairns community and free and independent travellers. Provides alternative low key setting to Cairns northern beaches.		Nil
C12	Buchan Beach	R1	Cairns regional community use. Easily accessible natural setting. An alternative to northern beaches. It should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil

Precinct D – Julatten/Mareeba

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
D1	Lyons Lookout	II	Exceptional views. Requires traffic management.	Site planning.	2
D2	Mount Lewis (Blue Finch Site)	CN1	Rare upland rainforest. Potential for numerous remote walking trails. Should not be promoted for general tourism. Opportunity for specialised ecotourism only.	Site assessment.	3
D3	Black Mountain Road (East)	R1	Presentation (restricted) road access. Heritage bridges may require conservation actions. Potential for bicycle touring.	Site assessment.	2
D4	Abattoir Swamp	CN1	Relatively remote opportunity for bird watching. Requires maintenance and upgrade of fencing, bird hides and interpretive signs.	Site management review.	2
D5	Mount Molloy Rest Area (Bushy Creek)	R1	Potential starting point for birdwatching trails north along Bushy Creek. Potential for interpretive signage.	Site assessment.	3
D6	Rainforest Creek	CN1	Limited capacity site.		Nil
D7	Kuranda Forestry Station	CN2	Potential ecotourism visitor centre for interpretive walks and guided tours. Requires consultation with community and tourism industry.	Site assessment.	3
D10	Davies Creek	R1	Potential to enhance this nature based camping and picnic opportunity. Limited visitor capacity. Investigate upgrade of roads.	Site management review.	3
D11	Lambs Head Trailhead	CN1	Start of spectacular rainforest walk. Potential walking link to other areas in the Kuranda and Lamb Range areas. Access road requires maintenance.	Site management review.	3
D12	Emerald Creek Day Stop	R1	Local use site with limited capacity, which should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil

Precinct E – Kuranda/Cairns

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
E1	Pease Creek	CN1			Nil
E2	Saddle Mountain Track	CN1	Potential remote walking track relatively accessible to major centres.	Site assessment.	3
E3	Skyrail (Kuranda access)	I2	High profile opportunity for viewing rainforest canopy.		Nil
E4	Jum Rum Conservation Park	R1	Potential for large numbers of groups to appreciate self-guided rainforest interpretive walk. May require hardening of carpark and tracks, and provision of interpretation.	Masterplanning for Barron Gorge area - underway.	2
E5	Giant Pendas	I2	Relatively low cost potential quality site for high visitor use. May require hardening carpark and tracks, and provision of interpretation.	Masterplanning for Barron Gorge area - underway.	1
E6	Barron Falls Lookout	I2	Focus for a range of activities. Major infrastructure being developed.	Masterplan for Barron Falls area - underway.	1
E7	Henry Ross Lookout	I2	Primary viewing site of coastal plain from Kuranda Range road. Wet Tropics presentation opportunity. Possible link to walking trail. Consider options as part of Kuranda Range Transport Study (in progress).	Site assessment and planning.	2
E8	Wrights Lookout	I1	Potential walking link to nearby sites. Visual impact of powerlines to be considered in site planning. Possibility to upgrade access, provide viewing platform and static interpretation.	Masterplanning for Barron Falls area - underway.	2
E9	Skyrail (Kamerunga access)	I2	High profile opportunity for viewing rainforest canopy.		Nil
E10	Barron Gorge (Power Station)	R2	Main recreation area and access to lower Barron Gorge. Requires review of options. Potential as a major site close to Cairns if upgraded. Possible trail link to Wrights Lookout. Consideration of power station operation, local community interests, visitor use, vehicle access, facilities, interpretation, rafting and walking trails.	Masterplanning for Barron Gorge area - underway.	2

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
E11	Lake Placid	R2	Strategic location close to Cairns. Excellent potential for introduction of visitors to rainforest environment. Significant local use. Master plan needs to incorporate high level rafting activities.	Masterplanning for Barron Gorge area – underway	2
E12	Cairns Airport Mangrove Boardwalk	R1	Good presentation of mangrove communities. Potential for expansion of presentation material.		Nil
E13	Stoney Creek (Kamerunga)	R1	Potential as the start of a walking track to Barron Gorge. Also important for local community nature based recreation. Potential to improve pathways and carpark, access to swimming holes, interpretation.	Masterplanning for Barron Gorge area - underway.	1
E14	Stoney Creek Road (Speewah)	R2	Potential access to Barron Gorge track network, camping and day use area.	Masterplanning for Barron Gorge area - underway.	2
E15	Flecker Botanical Gardens	I2	Good interpretation opportunity for a variety of rainforest habitats.		Nil
E16	Clohesy River	R1	Site suited for 4WD touring opportunities.	Site assessment.	3
E17	Crystal Cascades	R2	Quality major site close to Cairns. Investigate possibility of general facilities upgrade and interpretation.	Site management review and planning.	2
E18	Lake Morris Road Lookout	CN1	Spectacular views across Trinity Inlet. Possible walking link to Crystal Cascades. Investigate upgrading carpark and provision of viewing platform.	Site planning.	3
E19	Lake Morris (Copperlode Dam)	R1	Significant site close to Cairns. Investigate improved access to lakeside. Potential starting point for long distance walking. Access to 4WD presentation opportunities.	Masterplanning.	2
E20	Grey Peaks National Park	CN1	Relatively undisturbed, large area close to Cairns.		Nil

Precinct F - Tablelands

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
F1	Mount Edith	CN1	Site on presentation (restricted) road. To be managed as a low-key natural site.		Nil
F2	Creek Crossing (Intersection A and C Roads)	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Carparking for walking access to ACB roads.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F3	Kauri Creek Day Stop	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Danbulla Drive visitor facility. Local and free and independent visitor use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F4	Kauri Creek Camp Ground	R1	Danbulla Drive visitor facility.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F5	School Point Day Use Area	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Danbulla Drive visitor facility. Local and free and independent visitor use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F6	Downfall Creek Camping Area	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Danbulla Drive visitor facility. Local and free and independent visitor use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F7	Fong On Bay Camping Area	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Danbulla Drive visitor facility. Local and free and independent visitor use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	Nil
F8	Old Danbulla Schoolhouse	R1	Birdwatching and walking opportunities.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F9	Platypus Rock	R1	Platypus watching opportunity.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F10	Tinaroo Day Stops	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Danbulla Drive visitor facilities adjacent township.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F11	Lake Euramoo State Forest Park	R1	Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Danbulla Drive visitor facility. Local and free and independent traveller use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
F12	Gillies Lookout	R1	Lookout and launch site for hang gliders.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F13	Mobo Creek Crater	R1	Danbulla Drive visitor facility. Local and free and independent visitor use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F14	Black Gully Day Use Area	R1	Limited local use. Potential for higher levels of use.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F15	Cathedral Fig Tree	I2	Feature of Danbulla tourist drive. Investigate opportunities for involvement of Aboriginal people and cultural heritage interpretation.	Danbulla Tinaroo Master-planning - underway.	2
F16	Tolga Scrub	R2	Of special importance to Aboriginal people. Site planning and management to involve Aboriginal people. Easily accessible site with high conservation values and presentation potential.	Site management review and planning.	1
F17	Lake Barrine National Park	I2	Focus for presentation of World Heritage Area. Aboriginal people are interested in involvement in management and opportunities for cultural tourism. Requires review of efficient use of limited area for infrastructure and quality presentation of WH values.	Site planning.	1
F19	Red Cedar	R1	Quality presentation site.		Nil
F20	Platypus Area	R1	Limited local use. Should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil
F21	Mount Baldy Road Sites	CN1	Area used for spotlighting.		Nil
F22	Curtain Fig Tree	I2	Feature site of Tablelands tour circuits.		Nil
F23	Lake Eacham National Park	R1	Major recreational site as well as high presentation opportunity for World Heritage values. Aboriginal people are interested in involvement in management and opportunities for cultural tourism. Requires review of general facilities for efficient use of limited area for infrastructure and interpretation.	Site planning.	1

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
F24	Hasties Swamp	R2	Birdwatching opportunity. Potential for bird hides and bird watching.	Site planning – underway	3
F25	Carrington Falls	R1	Local use site, no facilities.	Site management review and assessment.	3
F26	Wongabel Botanical Walk	R2	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people, particularly the maintenance of natural and cultural values. Investigate interpretive walk opportunities.	Site assessment.	3
F27	Malanda Falls	R2	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people. High profile location close to Malanda township.		Nil
F28	Bartle Frere (West)	CN1	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people. Exceptional walking opportunity close to Queensland’s highest mountain, with high World Heritage values. Site to be managed in conjunction with walk to summit and link to Josephine Falls. Investigate provision of toilet and campground facilities; upgrade car park and access; limited static interpretation at campsites.	Site assessment and planning involving Aboriginal people.	2
F29	Bromfield Swamp Lookout	R2	Birdwatching and interpretive opportunity.	Site planning - underway.	3
F31	Plath Road to Wondecla (Halls Falls)	CN1	May require upgrade of access track.	Site assessment.	2
F32	The Crater (Mount Hypipamee National Park)	I2	Facilities and track recently upgraded.		Nil
F33	Zillie Falls	R1	Short walk through forest to waterfall and swimming hole.	Site management review.	3
F34	Millaa Millaa Falls	I1	Investigate picnic facilities, toilets, possible interpretation and short walks.	Site management review and assessment.	2
F35	Ellinjaa Falls	R1	Short walk through forest to waterfall and swimming hole. Part of a driving circuit to numerous waterfalls.	Site management review.	3
F36	Millaa Millaa Lookout	R2	Opportunities to view volcanic landscape of the southern tablelands	Site management review.	3

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
F37	Mount Fisher	CN1	Review possible development of specialised interpretive guided trail.	Site assessment.	3
F38	McKenzies Falls	R1	Limited local use site which should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil
F39	Tumoulin Glider Tree Sites	CN1	Currently used by locals and one commercial operator. In state forest with good road access. A spotlighting area rather than a particular site.		Nil
F40	Souita Falls	R1	Short walk through forest to waterfall and swimming hole.	Site management review.	3
F41	Papina Falls	R1	Short walk through forest to waterfall and swimming hole.	Site management review.	3

Precinct G – Russell/Mulgrave

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
G1	Walsh's Pyramid	I1	High profile feature with limited potential for high levels of visitor use. Scenic values, with free and independent traveller demand. Numerous ongoing issues including management of access, safety and environmental impacts, static interpretation, signage and walking trails. Requires agreement with local landholders and land management agencies on access.	Site assessment.	1
G2	Mulgrave River (Little Mulgrave)	R2	Opportunities for river based picnics, recreational activities such as swimming.		Nil
G3	Peats Falls	R1	Limited site capacity. Free and independent traveller and local use only. Requires agreement with local landholders and land management agencies on access. Investigate possible site for carpark, short walks, interpretation and viewing areas.	Site assessment.	1

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
G5	Fishery Falls	R1	Limited site capacity, restricted access. Free and independent traveller and local use only. Should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil
G6	Russell Heads Boat Access	R1	Potential interpretive site.		Nil
G7	Goldsborough Valley State Forest Park Sites	R2	Well developed visitor infrastructure. Opportunities for dispersed small groups to undertake creek based activities. Start of long distance walks .		Nil
G8	Bellenden Ker Boat Landing	R1	Focus for boating public. Potential for upgraded facilities.	Site assessment.	3
G9	North Bramston Beach	R1	Low key coastal site. Evidence of degradation from impacts of use. Requires review of facilities.	Site management review.	1
G10	Babinda Boulders	R1	Major local use site.	Site assessment.	2

Precinct H - Wooroonooran

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
H1	Heales Lookout (Gillies Highway)	I1	Limited capacity viewing site. Good presentation point. Review vehicle access and interpretation.	Site planning.	2
H2	Josephine Falls	I2	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people with potential for cultural interpretive services. Linkage to Bartle Frere summit and Bartle Frere (West).	Site management review.	2
H3	Golden Hole	R1	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people. Major local use site which should not be promoted. Potential walking link from Tablelands to coast. Review possible development of carpark and campground.	Site assessment.	1

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
H4	Henrietta Creek	R2	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people and any further site developments must involve Aboriginal people. Popular site adjacent to highway. Starting point of walk to Nandroya Falls. May require review of car-park, day use and camping areas, shelters and fireplaces.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2
H5	Goolagan Creek	R1	Area of special interest to Aboriginal people and any further site developments must involve Aboriginal people. Popular site adjacent to highway. Review facilities.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	1
H6	K Tree	CN1	Small site adjacent to highway. Site provides walking access to Tchupala and Wallicher Falls.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	1
H7	Crawfords Lookout	I2	Area of importance to Aboriginal people, and any further developments must be undertaken with full involvement of traditional owners. Scenic views immediately adjacent to highway. Currently under consideration as the potential site of a canopy walk.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2
H8	Cowley Falls	CN1	Spectacular falls in area with high World Heritage values. Provision of access and effective management requires visitor infrastructure development. Look at provision of carpark, viewing platform and interpretation.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2
H9	South Johnstone Forestry Camp	R2	Potential as significant group or walking track camp site. Also potential picnic site for visitors touring the South Johnstone loop circuit. Requires review of facilities.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2
H10	Charappa Creek	CN1	Site access by a presentation (restricted) road.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2
H11	Downey Creek	CN1	Access to site is by presentation (restricted) road. Site provides potential access to more remote walking opportunities.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2

Precinct I – Koombuloomba/Kirrama

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
I1	Millstream Falls	R1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people, with potential for cultural tourism and management involving Aboriginal people.	Site planning.	3
I2	Cannabullen Falls	CN1	Site of walking access to falls. Potential link with Koombuloomba/ H Road walking trails.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	2
I3	Charmillan Carved Tree and Waterfall	CN1	Area of importance to Aboriginal people with potential for cultural tourism and management by Aboriginal people. High cultural heritage values. Any management or promotion to be consistent with protection of those values.	Site management review.	3
I4	Mount Koolmoon Trailhead	CN1	Access to walk. Requires track maintenance.	Site management review.	2
I6	Eyrie Lookout	CN1	Structural and safety issues. Investigate alternative lookout options to replace Eyrie Lookout as a site. Area of interest to Aboriginal people, with potential for cultural tourism and management involving Aboriginal people.	Site assessment.	1
I7	Tully Falls	CN1	Significant viewpoint near Koombuloomba.	Site management review.	3
I8	Koombuloomba Dam Sites	R2	Areas of interest to Aboriginal people with potential for cultural tourism and management by Aboriginal people.	Masterplanning for Koombuloomba - underway.	1
I9	Tully River Bridge	R1	Entry point to Culpa Road and commencement of presentation (restricted) road.	Masterplanning for Palmerston area.	3
I10	Old Sawmill Waypoint	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Remote location in an area of high WHA values. Potential to be a linking site between Kennedy and Blencoe Falls for long distance walking.	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	2
I11	JCU Research Centre	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Potential access point for walking opportunities to be investigated.	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	2

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
I12	*Society Flats	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Works already scheduled by DNR.	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	2
I13	Tuckers Lookout	CN2	Area of interest to Aboriginal people.	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	2
I14	Carron Creek Falls	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Key site along Kirrama Range Road route	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	2
I15	Percy Pease Lookout	CN2	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Highest point on Kirrama Range Road. Opportunity for static interpretive signage.	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	2
I17	Blencoe Falls	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people, with potential for cultural tourism and management by Aboriginal people. Major feature of a range of tourism opportunities along the Kirrama Range Road. Remote, self-reliant camping opportunity. Infrastructure limited to that required for safety, environmental protection.	Masterplanning for Kirrama Range area.	1
I18	Dalrymple Gap Track Carpark	R1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people for planning and management. Multi-tenure management issues require resolution. Maintenance and repairs are required to the walking track as a priority. Involve Aboriginal people in management.	Site management review.	1

Precinct J – Cassowary Coast

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
J1	Eubenangee	R1	Significant wetlands presentation opportunities. Multi-tenure issues which require agreements with landholders and local government council regarding access.	Site planning.	2

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
J2	Ella Bay (Heath Point)	R1	Local and free and independent visitor use. Issues associated with access.	Site planning.	3
J3	Etty Bay	R2	Mix of local community and free and independent visitor use. Investigate static interpretive signage and upgrade of camping facilities.	Site management review.	2
J4	Moresby River Boat Ramp	R2	Popular public boating site.	Site planning.	2
J5	Mena Creek Falls & Waterholes	R1	Adjacent to Paronella Park. Safety issues at lookout.	Site management review.	2
J6	Liverpool Creek (Boat Access 2)	R1	Local use, limited capacity site which should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil
J7	Tully Gorge (Stopovers)	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people with potential for cultural tourism and management by Aboriginal people.	Masterplanning for Tully Gorge - underway.	1
J9	Tully Gorge (Zig Zag)	R1	Limited use by other than commercial operations. Potential for wider community use.	Masterplanning for Tully Gorge - underway.	3
J10	Tully Gorge (Kareeya)	R1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people, with potential for cultural tourism and management by Aboriginal people.	Masterplanning for Tully Gorge - underway.	3
J11	Tully Gorge (State Forest Park)	R2	Popular site with potential to develop as significant campground and recreational area with high presentation opportunities.	Masterplanning for Tully Gorge - underway.	3
J12	Liverpool Creek (Boat Access 1)	R1	Local use, limited capacity site which should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil
J13	Nyleta Creek Scout Hut	R1			Nil
J14	Bicton Hill	R1	Scenic site readily accessible. Investigate provision of opportunities through links with other sites. Investigate upgrade of access, picnic facilities and walking trails, and installation of viewing platform.	Site planning	3

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
J15	Lacey Creek State Forest Park	R1	Walking links with Licuala and Bicton Hill. High World Heritage value interpretive potential. Investigate upgrade of picnic facilities and presentation.	Site assessment and planning.	2
J16	Alligators Nest State Forest Park	R1	Free and independent visitor and local use only. Should not be promoted for general tourism.		Nil
J17	Licuala State Forest Park	R1	Links with Lacey Creek and potential link with Bicton Hill. High World Heritage value interpretive potential.	Site assessment and planning.	1
J18	South Mission Beach (Boat Ramp)	R1	Primarily local site for boat launch. Potential to develop as interpretive site and walking link to Kennedy Bay. Investigate general facility upgrade.	Site assessment.	3
J19	Edmund Kennedy Walk	CN1	Exceptional, short coastal trail with high potential for interpretation of Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage values. Requires resolution of management arrangements with local landholders and management agencies.	Site assessment.	1
J20	Hull River Boat Ramp	R1			Nil
J21	Murray Falls State Forest Park	R2	Area of interest to Aboriginal people, with potential for cultural tourism and management by Aboriginal people. Traditional walking tracks to Kirrama Range. Popular camping and day use area. Investigate upgrade of toilet and static interpretive facilities.	Site planning involving Aboriginal people.	2
J22	Edmund Kennedy National Park	R1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. Coastal and wetlands interpretive walks and static interpretation.	Site planning.	3
J23	Five Mile Creek	R1	Popular day use site for swimming and picnicking with provision of toilets. Area of interest to traditional Aboriginal owners.		Nil

Precinct K – Wallaman

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
K1	Herbert River (Yamanie Falls)	CN1	Area of interest to Aboriginal people.	Site assessment.	3
K2	Broadwater State Forest	R2	Area of interest to Aboriginal people. High visitor use area, camping facilities. Terminus of Dalrymple Gap walk.		Nil
K3	Fishers Creek Boat Ramp	R1	Area of significant interest to Aboriginal people. Facility upgrade underway.	Site management review.	3
K4	Cardwell Gap Lookout	I2	Key viewing point of coast where the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas interface. Spectacular views of Hinchinbrook Island. Opportunity for combined presentation of GBR and WT World Heritage Areas.	Site assessment.	2
K5	Wallaman Falls	I2	Primary visitor site in southern Wet Tropics. Area of interest to Aboriginal people, with potential involvement in tourism and management. Access road to site requires maintenance or upgrading. Close cooperation between land managers, Aboriginal people, community and local government will be required. Potential for general facility upgrade.	Site assessment.	1
K6	Mount Fox Crater Lookout	CN1	Unique geological feature adjacent to Wet Tropics. Steep, stoney walk to summit of old volcanic cone. Unformed car park and access road.	Site management review.	2

Precinct L – Paluma

Map Reference	Site Name	Class	Notes and Issues	Actions Required	Priority
L1	Jourama Falls	R2	Popular day and camping visitor site.	Site management review.	2
L3	Paluma Dam	R2	Major visitor site from Townsville. Link for visitor routes to Wallaman Precinct and main highway. May require general facility upgrade. Requires identification of appropriate traditional Aboriginal owners. Paluma Dam planning underway.	Site planning.	3
L4	Birthday Creek Falls	R1	Small visitor site which complements the Paluma Dam site.	Site management review.	2
L5	Big Crystal Creek	R2	Area of interest to traditional Aboriginal owners for management involvement. Popular day use area and camp sites. May require upgrade of access road.	Site planning.	3
L6	Running River (Hidden Valley)	R1			Nil
L7	Big Crystal Creek (Rock Slides)	R1	Area of interest to traditional Aboriginal owners for management involvement. Carpark at start of walking access to popular summer swimming location. Requires upgrade of carpark.	Site assessment.	3
L8	McClellands Lookout	I1	Carpark at start of access to lookout and walks. Picnic facilities. Potential for increased interpretive material.	Site management review.	2
L9	Paluma Township	R2	Centre point of precinct, providing access to surrounding sites. Potential for static interpretive material presenting World Heritage values. Requires identification of appropriate traditional Aboriginal owners.	Site assessment.	3
L10	Little Crystal Creek	R1	Popular day use site with picnic and toilet facilities.	Site management review.	2
L11	Boomerang	R1	Popular camping site with 4WD access. Camping and vehicle use unmanaged at present.	Site management review.	3

Table 6. Sites Under Review

Site Number	Site Name	Notes
A	Roaring Meg Falls	Aboriginal traditional owner concerns. High priority. Requires consultation and involvement of Aboriginal traditional owners.
A5	Shiptons Flat	Value as a potential site.
A6	Cedar Bay	Value as a potential visitor site (boat access only).
A8	Weary Bay Beach	Local residents' concerns. Requires consultation and community involvement.
A9	Bloomfield Falls	Bloomfield Valley community members' concerns - high priority.
A10	Woobadda Creek Crossing	Community concerns - high priority. Environmental protection issues associated with current use.
A11	Cowie Beach	Beachwalking opportunity at accessible rest stop. Local residents concerns. Requires consultation and community involvement.
A13	Mount Windsor (B Road)	Potential terminus for long distance wilderness walking track. Status of the road will be reviewed when the Wet Tropics Management Plan is reviewed, with a view to designating the road as presentation or presentation (restricted).
A14	Mount Windsor (Forestry Camp)	Potential terminus for long distance wilderness walking track. Status of the road will be reviewed when the Wet Tropics Management Plan is reviewed, with a view to designating the road as presentation or presentation (restricted).
C1	Cassowary Creek (Beauty Spot)	Access to this site is complicated by land tenure issues. Requires negotiation with landholders, management agencies and community to resolve access. Site should not be promoted for general tourism.
D8	Bare Hill	Indigenous concerns and access issues. Requires consultation and community involvement.
D9	Mareeba National Botanical Gardens	Potential site once established.

Site Number	Site Name	Notes
F18	Picnic Crossing	Access issues. Values as a site to be assessed.
F30	Lamins Hill Lookout	Potential tourism site. Requires consultation with Aboriginal traditional owners.
G4	Behana Gorge	Gorge is a significant recreation site for regional residents. Requires consultation and community involvement.
H	Djallan Creek	Aboriginal traditional owner concerns. High priority for resolution of use and management.
H	North Johnstone Rafting Sites	Aboriginal traditional owner concerns. Requires consultation with Aboriginal traditional owners and industry.
I5	Walters Waterhole	Management concerns about motorised access. Status of the road will be reviewed when the Wet Tropics Management Plan is reviewed.
I16	Kennedy Falls (Scout Hut)	Access point to falls. Steep gradient and sensitive rainforest habitat. Requires investigation of safety issues.
J8	Cochable Creek	Potential as a part of a long distance walking opportunity. Status of the road will be reviewed when the Wet Tropics Management Plan is reviewed.
L2	Benhams Falls	Potential for 4WD loop between Paluma Dam and Hidden Valley. Management access only at present. Status of the road will be reviewed when the Wet Tropics Management Plan is reviewed, with a view to designating the road as presentation or presentation (restricted).
L12	Keelbottom Creek	Access by road blocked since Cyclone Rona.
L13	Bluewater Road (Old Forestry Camp)	Old forestry buildings in cleared area. Road closed because of damage from Cyclone Justin. Potential picnic site.
L14	Bluewater Road (Quarry Lookout)	Vantage point on edge of quarry. Road closed because of damage from Cyclone Justin.

APPENDIX A - ABBREVIATIONS & TERMINOLOGY

All Stakeholders	All of the groups below
Bama Wabu	Bama Wabu Aboriginal people
CCC	Community Consultative Committee (Wet Tropics)
CRC	Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre
EAA	Ecotourism Association of Australia
NLLG	Neighbourhood and Landholders Liaison Group
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
DNR	Queensland Department of Natural Resources
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee (Wet Tropics)
PAG	Precinct Advisory Group (Wet Tropics)
TILG	Tourism Industry Liaison Group (Wet Tropics)
TQ	Tourism Queensland
TTNQ	Tropical Tourism North Queensland
WHA	World Heritage Area
WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority

APPENDIX B - REFERENCES

- DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, SPORT AND TERRITORIES (1995). *Australia's World Heritage*, Commonwealth of Australia.
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- QUEENSLAND TOURIST AND TRAVEL CORPORATION (1998). *Asian Markets Barometer*, Issue 5 - June 1998. <http://www.tq.com.au>
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- WET TROPICS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (1998). Nature Based Tourism Strategy Stage 1: *Background Paper 1 - Values, Issues, Desired Outcomes and Strategies*.
- WET TROPICS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (1997). *Protection Through Partnerships - Policies for the implementation of the Wet Tropics Plan*.

APPENDIX C - PROCESS OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The initiative to develop a strategy for nature based tourism activities in and around the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area had its origins within the Wet Tropics Tourism Industry Liaison Group during 1994. A Steering Committee was established to progress this initiative. Membership of the Committee consisted of:

- Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia (ITOA) – represented by Max Shepherd
- Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) – represented by John Courtenary
- Far North Queensland Tour Operators Association (FNQTOA) – represented by Andrew Steele
- Queensland Travel and Tourism Corporation (QTTC)
- Far North Queensland Promotion Bureau (FNQPB)

Government representatives included:

- Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Department of Environment (DE)
- Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA)
- Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry (DTSBI)

The Department of Natural Resources subsequently prepared a funding application on behalf of this Steering Committee under the then Commonwealth Department of Tourism Ecotourism Grants Program. The application was successful and the project commenced.

Through the commitments and dedication of this inaugural Steering Committee a draft report was prepared in April 1996. Tourism industry representatives contributed considerable time and industry expertise free of charge to the production of this draft Strategy. The draft report is recognised as a key resource document in developing the final Strategy.

During the initial phase the Alliance for Sustainable Tourism was formed. The Alliance for Sustainable Tourism comprises membership from Pacific Asia Travel Association North Queensland, Far North Queensland Tour Operators Association, Association of Marine Park Tour Operators, Inbound Tour Operators of Australia, Tourism Tropical North Queensland, the Tourism Council of Australia (Qld) and the Ecotourism Association of Australia. It has been the main representative tourism industry body participating in the process.

Finalisation of the Strategy was postponed pending the gazettal of the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*. Upon gazettal of the Management Plan, the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council recognised the priority requirement for a tourism strategy and allocated further funding to facilitate completion of the project.

In 1998 the project was re-established. The project management structure, stakeholder representation, process and terms of reference were modified and expanded to provide opportuni-

ties for a broad base of stakeholder representation and ownership of the process. This process was undertaken in two stages:

Stage 1: focused on developing regional objectives, principles and policies to provide a framework for the overall strategy

Stage 2: focused on applying these principles and policies through land use planning for nature based tourism across the Wet Tropics region.

Stage 1 policies were developed largely through a Technical Working Group representing a wide range of organisations and community interests, reporting to a Steering Committee comprising similar representation, being:

- Alliance for Sustainable Tourism
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
- Bama Wabu
- Cairns and Far North Environment Centre
- Department of Natural Resources
- Office of National Tourism
- Office of Sport and Recreation
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
- Tourism Queensland
- Wet Tropics Management Authority

The same groups were involved in developing Stage 2, with the additional contributions of Sub-regional Advisory Committees (SRACs) providing targeted advice at the local and precinct level. SRAC membership was established by inviting representation from local indigenous, conservation, community, scientific and tourism groups as well as from local land management agencies. The sites reviewed in Stage 2 were substantially based on those identified in the Wet Tropics Management Authority's Visitor Management Guidelines, detailed in the document *Protection through Partnerships*.

The two stages were combined into the Draft Wet Tropics Nature Based Tourism Strategy and released for public comment from September to December 1999. Following public review, submissions were considered by the Technical Working Group, Steering Committee and Wet Tropics Board. Amendments were made following the advice of these committees and a final Strategy prepared.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority acknowledges the support and commitment of a range of stakeholder interests and individuals who have provided considerable time, effort and expertise in development of the Strategy. Many people provided their input free of charge. It is hoped that the production of the final Strategy represents an outcome that reflects the cooperative spirit and energies put into this important exercise for managing nature based tourism in the Wet Tropics region.

APPENDIX D - WET TROPICS TOURISM OVERVIEW

1 TOURISM IN THE WET TROPICS WORLD HERITAGE AREA

The Wet Tropics is an internationally acclaimed visitor destination. A survey of visitors to North Queensland revealed 45.6% (N = 1 099) of respondents nominated rainforest experiences as one of their three main reasons for visiting the region (Driml, 1997). The Wet Tropics WHA offers a diversity of experiences to visitors ranging from remote, self reliant experiences to those easily accessible with highly developed and often specialised infrastructure.

In 1998, there were over 210 commercial operators with permits to operate within the Wet Tropics region (QPWS, 1998). Over 48% of Queensland's nature based tourism operators were based in Far North Queensland with the majority of these operating to sites within the Wet Tropics WHA (TQ, 1998).

Studies of nature based tourism opportunities in the Wet Tropics WHA identify over 180 sites which are regularly used by visitors to the region, 94 of which have associated infrastructure (WTESSC, 1996). Accommodation and transport hubs used to access these sites are primarily concentrated around Cairns, Port Douglas, Kuranda and, to a lesser extent, the Mission Beach / Cassowary Coast area.

The only detailed source of information on visitor numbers to the Wet Tropics WHA was a survey undertaken in 1993 by Manidis Roberts *et al* which estimated the total number of visits as 4.77 million, or 3.4 million visitor days (Driml 1997).

1.1 Economic Contribution of Tourism

The tourism industry contributes significantly to the economy at both a local and regional scale. Direct tourism use of the Wet Tropics WHA is currently estimated to generate over \$179 million (Driml, 1997). This is based on expenditure associated with commercial tours, hire cars and running costs for private vehicles. Total gross expenditure for the region (which includes flow-on effects to the local economy) is estimated to be \$753 million (Driml, 1997).

1.2 Tourism Growth Forecasts

The 1997/1998 Queensland visitor survey found that domestic travellers accounted for more than 80% of visitors to Queensland (TQ, 1998). The Tourism Forecasting Council anticipates a 4.8% growth rate in 1999 for Tropical North Queensland which represents the major gateway for visitors to the Wet Tropics region (TQ, 1998).

2 PREDICTED FUTURE PATTERNS OF USE

2.1 Trends and Forecasts for Australian Tourism

Forecasts for international visitor arrivals to Australia between 1996 and 2005 are that arrivals are expected to increase each year, averaging 7.8% annually in the period. In total numbers, forecasts predict the number of international visitors arriving in Australia will increase from 4,165,000 in 1996 to 8,834,000 in 2005. Growth is projected in all major areas of international tourism (Office of National Tourism, 1998).

Australians travelling on holidays within Australia are also expected to increase. Forecasts predict the number of nights Australians spend on holidays to increase from 103,700,000 in 1995 to 121,800,000 in 2005 (Office of National Tourism, 1998).

2.3 Far North Queensland Tourism

Forecasts: It is difficult to predict medium to long term growth in international visitors given the current economies of many Asian nations. The downturn in Asian economic growth is expected to reduce the number of international tourists visiting Queensland for a long period (Coopers and Lybrand, 1998). However, growth in arrivals from the United States, China and Germany continues to be strong. The Tourism Forecasting Council expects international visitation to Queensland to recover to 4.5% growth in 1999 with a return to 1997 visitor levels likely to occur in 2000 (TQ, 1998).

Characteristics: A comparison of 1996 international visitor arrivals in Australia with a survey conducted of international visitors to Far North Queensland in 1995 suggests that there was a concentration of Japanese, European and North American visitors in Far North Queensland. Although the figures are not directly comparable, they indicate that while Japanese represented 19.52% of international visitors to Australia in 1996, they represented 38.29% of those surveyed in Far North Queensland. Comparable figures for European and North American visitors are 19.18% v 32.21% and 9.08% v 15.79% respectively (refer **Table D-1**).

Table D-1: Far North Queensland Focus - Specific International Tourists

Origin	Proportion of International Visitors to Australia	Proportion of International Visitors to Far North Queensland
Japan	19.5%	38.3%
Europe	19.2%	32.2%
North America	9.1%	15.8%

(from International Visitors Survey, 1996, Office of National Tourism)

International visitors from New Zealand, Other Asian (Asia, excluding Japan) nations and the rest of the world were under-represented in Far North Queensland. This may reflect a focus on tourism visitation by Japanese, North American and European visitors to Australia, while New Zealand, other Asian and Other World visitors either prefer different Australian destinations or are visiting for non-tourism purposes.

This pattern conforms generally with experience within the Far North Queensland Tourism industry, and is significant in projecting the types of experiences that tourists of different nationalities may seek. Generally, most Japanese tourists arrive on pre-booked, package programs catering for large numbers of people. Many European and North American visitors arrive with intentions of flexibly choosing their own programs on arrival, and often seek smaller scale services that may provide unusual experiences.

The patterns of length of stay of the three main groups of international visitors to Far North Queensland are shown in **Table D-2**.

Table D-2: Length of Stay - Main Far North Queensland International Visitors

Length of stay	Japan	European	North America
1 week or less	77.4%	2.47%	11.55%
1 to 2 weeks	18.9%	13.16%	41.07%
2 to 3 weeks	1.15%	20.13%	20.98%
3 to 4 weeks	1.12%	20.75%	5.9%
4 weeks or more	1.42%	43.48%	20.52%
	100%	100%	100%

(from International Visitors Survey, 1996, Office of National Tourism)

Few Japanese tourists spent more than 2 weeks in Far North Queensland, but 84.36% of European visitors and 47.4% of North American visitors spent over 2 weeks. Nearly half of European, and over a fifth of North American, visitors were here for more than 4 weeks. Tourists who may be attracted to independent travel in the Region would have to be planning to spend some time in Far North Queensland if they want to do more than 'standard' 'Reef and Rainforest' tours.

Estimates of the total number of domestic tourists visiting Far North Queensland is complicated by difficulties in separating persons travelling on holidays as tourists from those travelling on business, for family reasons etc.

APPENDIX E - RELATED STRATEGIES

This Strategy is consistent with the in-principle approaches adopted by the following strategies.

National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> National Strategy for Ecological Sustainable Development - Commonwealth of Australia, 1992 <input type="checkbox"/> National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Industry Strategy - Commonwealth of Australia, 1997 <input type="checkbox"/> National Ecotourism Strategy - Commonwealth Department of Tourism, 1994
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Queensland Ecotourism Plan – Queensland Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry, 1997
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> FNQ 2010 Regional Planning Process – Queensland Department of Communication and Information, Local Government and Planning <input type="checkbox"/> FNQ 2010 Regional Plan <input type="checkbox"/> FNQ 2010 Regional Plan Supporting Technical Document - Environment <input type="checkbox"/> FNQ 2010 Regional Plan Supporting Technical Document - Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> Cairns Region Tourism Strategy - Office of the Coordinator General <input type="checkbox"/> Wet Tropics Walking Strategy - Wet Tropics Management Authority (in preparation)
Local District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Atherton Tablelands Tourism Study, Parts A and B - Atherton Tablelands Promotion Bureau Ltd., 1996 <input type="checkbox"/> Cassowary Coast Tourism Strategy - Cassowary Coast Development Bureau, 1995 <input type="checkbox"/> Douglas Shire Tourism Strategy - Douglas Shire Council, 1998

APPENDIX F - LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK



