



2013-2018

Cape York NRM Regional Investment Strategy





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Disclaimer

Cape York Natural Resource Management Ltd takes no responsibility for any actions taken based on the information contained in this report. Further advice should be sought before acting upon information contained in this report.

Cover Photo

Serpentine River, Mitchell River Delta (Kerry Trapnell)

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Introduction

This Regional Investment Strategy contains the priorities for investment for the five years 2013-2018 as identified through consultation with the peoples and communities of Cape York.

The purpose of the strategy is to detail the investment required to undertake activities that will contribute to achieving community identified outcomes.

The principal intent of the strategy is to act as a prospectus for obtaining the Cape York NRM regional base funds from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program and the Queensland Government's NRM program. It will also be used as the basis for attracting funding from other sources, including Commonwealth and State Government grant programs, the corporate sector and philanthropic organisations.

Our Region

The Cape York NRM region (137,000 km²) extends north from the Mitchell River catchment to 'The Tip' of Cape York Peninsula. It encompasses diverse landscapes including 16 complete river basins with their systems virtually unmodified (the Annan River being the exception). The region contains 30 broad vegetation groups including 72 different types of rainforest comprising 20% of Australia's remaining rainforest.

An area of the Mitchell River catchment north of the "CYPLUS" line (Figure 1) is known as the Joint Management Area (JMA). Both Cape York NRM and Northern Gulf Resource Management Group (NGRMG) have community, industry and government engagement responsibilities within the JMA. Both organizations apply for funding and manage projects within the JMA

in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (dated 7th June 2011).

Although the biodiversity has yet to be systematically surveyed, Cape York is known to have 3338 terrestrial plant species (379 of which are listed as rare and threatened and 264 of which are only found in Cape York).

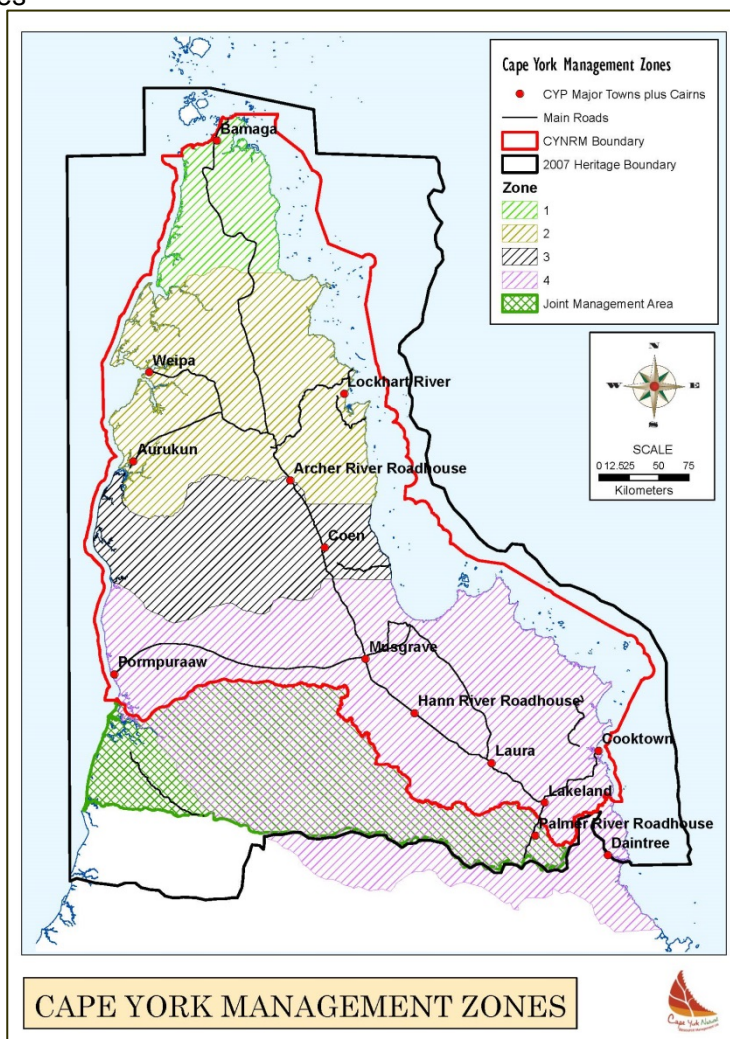


Figure 1 Cape York region showing the four Indigenous sector zones and the Joint Management Area

Cape York's diverse fauna includes 60% of Australia's butterflies, 25% of the frog species, 25% of the reptile species, 50% of the bird species and 33% of the mammals and the richest freshwater fauna in Australia (88 species, 41 of which are only found in Cape York).



Cape York has a rich historical and living cultural landscape. There are about 45 distinct Aboriginal languages with several hundred dialects. The diversity of its ecological zones – drier central highland, wetter northern region and wetter and more continuous rainfall in the east – has allowed for the development of contrasting kinds of cultural landscapes. The way water moves across the landscape is the basis underpinning Cape York's clan estates, language groups and regional alliance groups.

The population of Cape York in 2011 was 15,400 56% of whom are Indigenous (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). Most people live in towns and there is a high level of unemployment (16%) (Chester & Driml 2012). There are 10 local governments (8 of which are Indigenous).

The major primary industry based on both land use and income is cattle grazing. The other main industries include mining, horticulture, tourism and commercial fishing.

Land use includes 14.3% national park, 23.3% Aboriginal Shire Lease, DOGIT or Land Trust, 52.9% is leasehold (with 33.9% pastoral lease). Less than 1% of Cape York is freehold land (Chester & Driml 2012).

Cape York NRM – who we are

Cape York Natural Resource Management (Cape York NRM) is a member-owned, community orientated not-for-profit company which was established in 2010 to support sustainable natural resource management solutions to protect Cape

York's natural assets and community wellbeing for future generations.

It was the last of 56 regional natural resource management bodies to be set up across Australia.

The company has a board of directors (10) comprising sector representatives with the Chair and Vice Chair elected by the Directors from their number. The sectors are:

- Indigenous
- Local government
- Tourism, Other Industries and Small Business
- Primary Industry
- Conservation
- Community

To ensure appropriate Indigenous representation, the region is divided into 4 Indigenous sector zones (Figure 1). Zone 1 members appoint two directors and members in each of the other three zones each appoint a director to the Board.



Figure 2 Cape York NRM Board Top (L-R) John Giese, Reginald Williams, Desmond Tayley, Barry Lyon, Bottom (L-R) Richard Tamwoy, Peter Inderbitzen, Gavin Bassini, David Claudie (absent: Dick Foster)

Cape York NRM has a staff of seven with the main office located in Atherton.



Vision

Cape York NRM's vision is:

Cape York Regional Body is recognized as having contributed strongly to the creation of a community that cares for its natural environment and practises sustainable use of its natural resources.

Mission

Its mission is:

To help people work together to care for the natural environment and to promote the sustainable use of Cape York's natural resources.

Values

- Being transparent, and having open and accountable processes
- Being consultative, approachable, engaging and supportive
- Being trustworthy and always acting with integrity
- Acting inclusively, and taking a collaborative approach in all that we do
- Being proactive, solutions oriented and innovative
- Respecting and valuing diversity.

Business Model

Cape York NRM has adopted a business model that is:

- Minimalist in terms of staffing and infrastructure
- Committed to delivering maximum funding on ground
- Committed to delivering through partnerships with organizations and people on Cape York
- Committed to supporting and building their capacity to deliver

Because of the large number of plans and planning exercises undertaken by various government agencies on Cape York over the past 15 years and community dissatisfaction with resulting implementation, Cape York NRM has adopted a "learning through

doing" approach, including developing a system of planning rather than focusing on a single plan.

We have also adopted a resilience thinking approach to natural resource management on the Cape, based on social-ecological systems.

A Transformability Framework has been developed as part of a research partnership between Cape York NRM and RIRDC through the *Transformation for Resilient Landscapes and Communities* study. We have adopted this framework to assist Cape York NRM and its partner organisations to explore how resilience thinking, adaptive governance and collective learning, separately and together, can build the capacity to take intentional transformative action for sustainability (Mitchell et al. 2013) (Griffith et al. 2013).

Operating Principles

Cape York NRM operates on the basis that natural resource management is really all about people. We see people and their values as an integral part of the landscape. Success in managing natural resources is dependent on people and people are complex.

The organisation has adopted a Governance Policy based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a guide to the way in which it relates to, engages and works in partnership with the Indigenous people of Cape York.



Figure 3 Moreton meeting with the Conservation Group



RIS Development Methodology

The development of the RIS has provided Cape York NRM with an opportunity to revisit its plans and priorities for managing natural resources and put the aspirations of the people of Cape York into action.

In developing the RIS, reviews were undertaken of the key consultation processes that Cape York NRM and other organisations have carried out over the past several years (Sandy Robinson & Associates 2013) and of past planning on Cape York (Dale 2012).

The review of consultation processes was undertaken in accordance with the Transformability Framework. The review took into account the concerns and priorities of hundreds of stakeholders of Cape York and resulted in a list of 23 big concerns/issues.

Based on the information from that review a set of principles were applied to guide the thinking about future investment. These principles include:

- Proactive action
- Do No Harm to the resilience of Cape

York

- Enduring, whole system benefit
- Adaptive management
- Working together
- Building trust and capacity as we deliver
- Coordinated devolution of responsibility and authority for land and sea stewardship
- The right people speak for country
- Feasibility and value for money
- New ways of doing things - Innovation

A workshop was held on 8th March 2013 with representatives of the six sectors and with technical experts. The selected participants were key people who broadly represent Cape York and who have enough knowledge to critique the issues identified in the review and to identify priorities, targets and actions for delivery.

The workshop participants considered the issues/concerns obtained from the desktop review of previous consultation process as well as those raised separately by community and technical representatives. The issues were considered in terms of outcomes sought, cross-cutting themes, existing resources, the way forward and how to get there. The issues were ranked by number of respondents that raised them as a key issue (Figure 4).

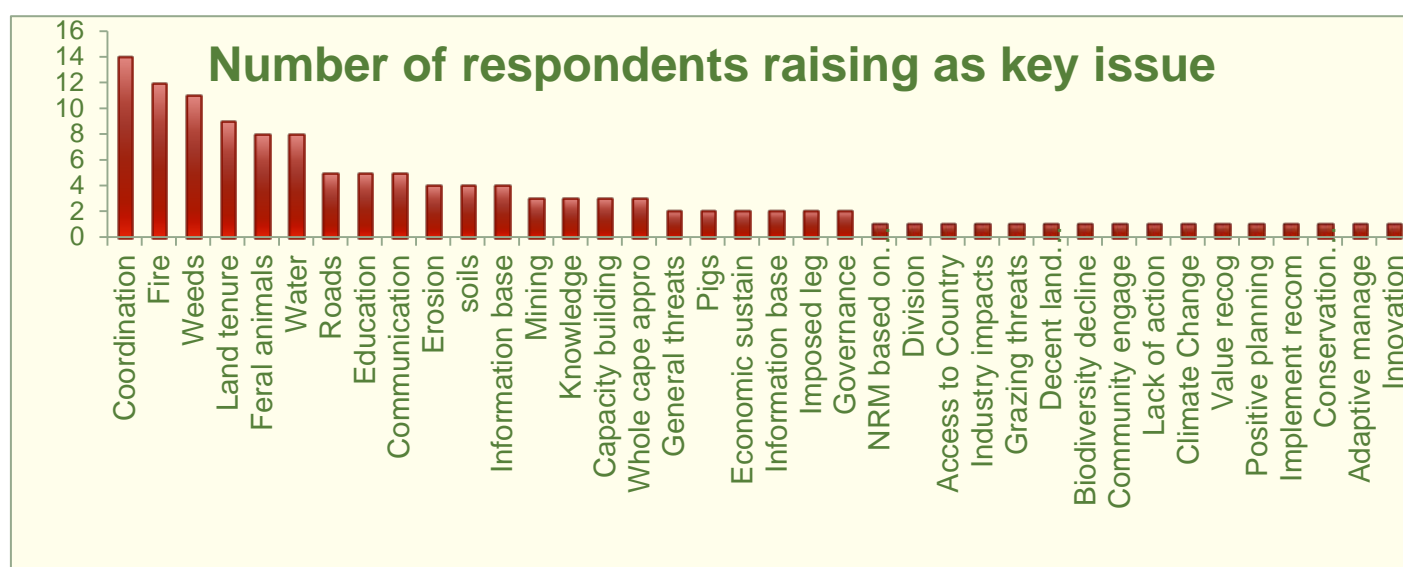


Figure 4 Issues ranked by number of respondents ranking them as a key issue



Following the workshop, Cape York NRM staff analysed the results. They then developed the RIS program logic using the results of this analysis, the review of the consultation documents, the 2012-2013 program logic, the current projects of Cape York NRM and its partners. This resulted in an overall program logic and logics for five themes, (fire, water, soils, livelihoods and integrated pest management).

Program Logic

Overall Program

The overall program logic is provided below.

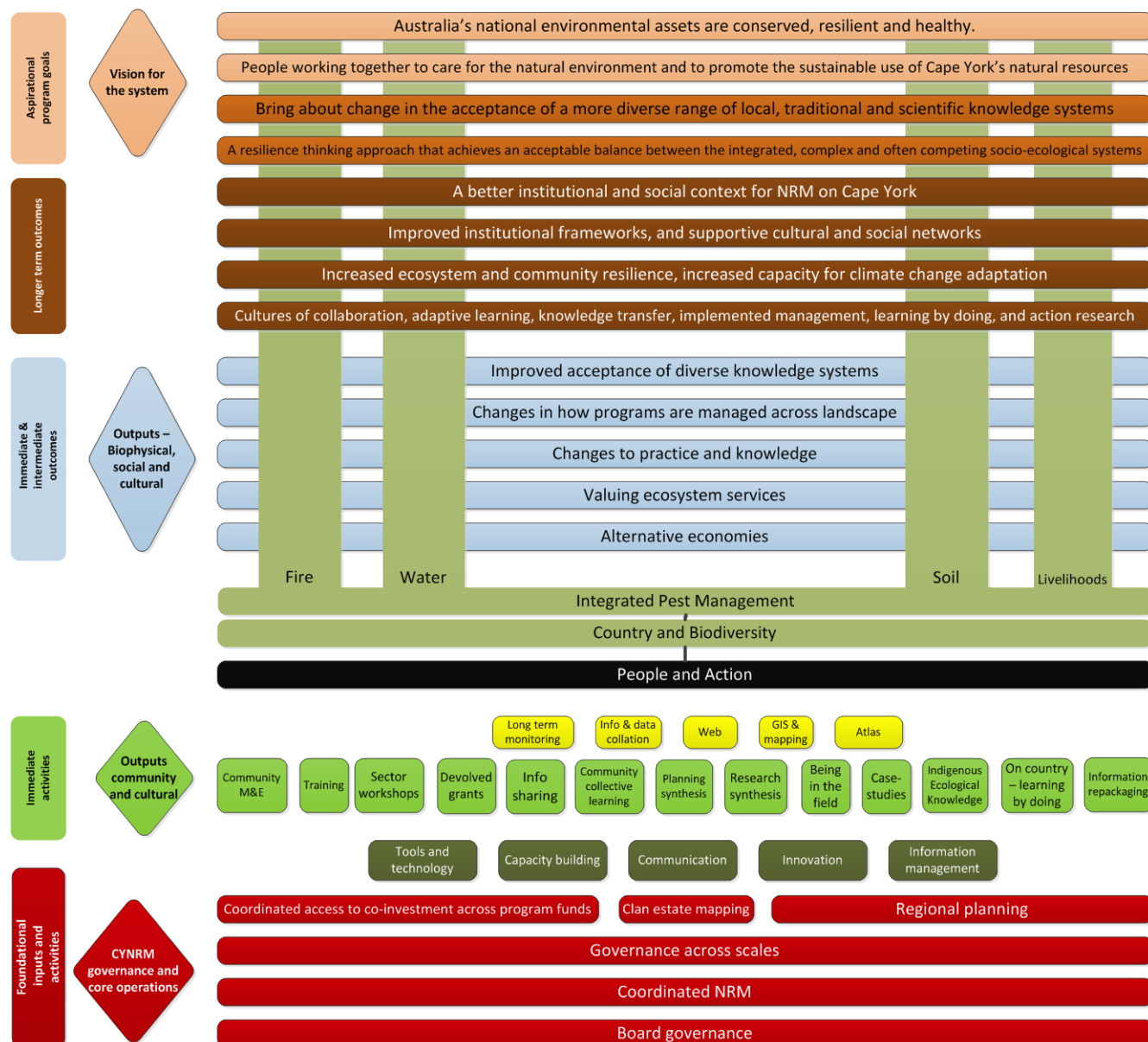


Figure 5 Explains the overall program logic from bottom to top, i.e. from the foundational inputs and activities to the aspirational goals



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