

WESTERN CAPE YORK WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2015

*How you can invest in water quality
improvement planning for western Cape York*



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A WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR WESTERN CAPE YORK PENINSULA

1. Introduction

One of the major impediments facing Cape York is the myth that it is a vast undisturbed wilderness sitting in a time-warp that has by-passed the rest of Australia. Change has been occurring for a long time but is now being compounded by rapid changes in land tenure, highly mobile tourists who come and go without control or continuing commitment to the Cape, feral cattle and pigs that remain uncontrolled and problems from old mines not yet rehabilitated while plans for new mines continue.

There are new pressures on both land and water resources by the demand for irrigation and land clearing and the imposition of another vision of more intensive agriculture and new and emerging industries such as sandalwood and carbon capture.

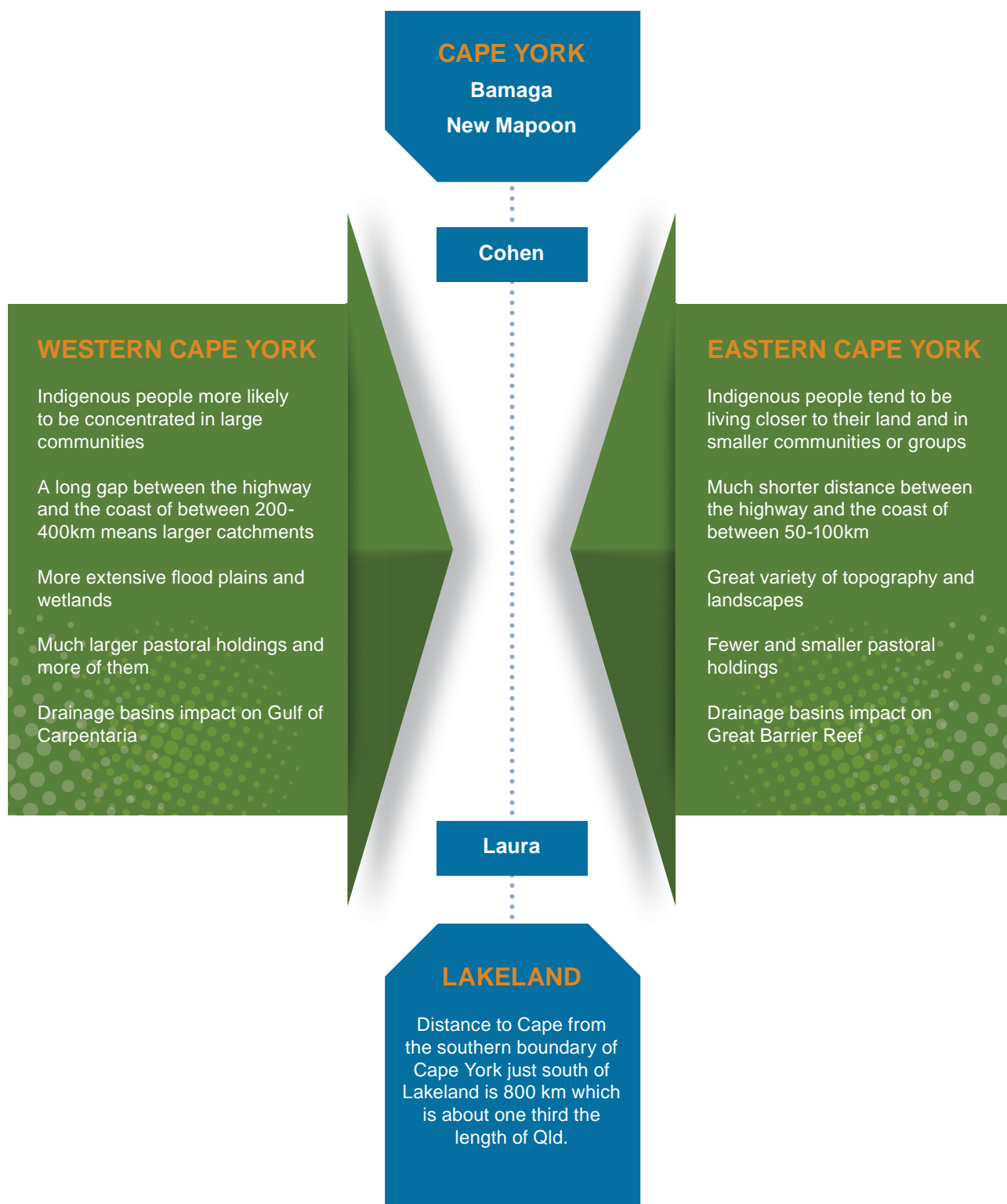
The people of Cape York can see it from another perspective. There are about 17,000 residents in this vast area of 13,720,000 hectares. They comprise a diverse range of people with interests ranging from mining, pastoralism, tourism and fishing. They are the traditional owners and speak for cultures that can, and often do, differ from non-Indigenous people. But they too, search for new opportunities for social and economic benefits based on their culture and will continue to do so as they exercise their rights under Native Title as well as recognise pre-existing rights. All must exist alongside national parks and equivalent reserves. Fire is poorly managed and is now used in ways that diverges markedly from the many thousands of years of Aboriginal burning.

2. A new focus on the western Cape

The Cape Peninsula Development Road is often used as a convenient boundary between the East and West Cape York. The Road is not exclusive in its delineation between the two because some of the very large drainage basins such as the Mitchell start far to its east, while others such as the Coen creep less over the Road. But in the end there are drainage basins that flow to the east into the waters of the Great Barrier Reef and there are those that flow west into the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Road is a good way of looking at how they differ. The key characteristics of east and west are shown in Figure 1.

The eastern side of Cape York has been the subject of the Great Barrier Reef Water Quality Improvement Plan (GBR WQIP) since 2013 and it is now time to do the same work on the western part of the Cape.

Figure 1. Some key characteristics of eastern and western Cape York



Cape York NRM has developed a high degree of skill and capacity in water management issues as a result of its work on the GBRWQIP. It is therefore in an excellent position to extend its work to cover the western part of the Cape. It will bring its expertise and key learnings from the GBRWQIP to the west. This expertise involves its extensive experience in community engagement with the variety of stakeholders across the Cape and beyond to the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments.



3. The benefits of a Western Cape York Water Quality Improvement Program

- 1) Many stakeholders would benefit from the availability of the reports and the new project will be aligned with both State and Commonwealth Government strategic objectives for the region. Private enterprise and other organisations will also be asked to contribute both financially and in kind so that the Western Cape York Water Quality Improvement Plan (WCY WQIP) represents their interests and increases stakeholder engagement and ownership of the Plan. The first step is to present a Prospectus that demonstrates the benefits of supporting Cape York NRM to achieve that Plan
- 2) The present Cape York Great Barrier Reef Catchments (CYGBC) project is reaching its final stage and Cape York NRM wants to capitalise on this work by extending it over the remaining area of Cape York by a Western Cape York Water Quality Plan (WCYWP). There are many advantages of using the expertise and experience gained by Cape York NRM in the completion of the CYGBC project and applying that to the rest of Cape York.
- 3) A central aim is to provide an objective basis for decision making and provide a data-rich background to the management of the Cape. This is an essential step towards resource allocation and management in a region where strong opinions and personal anecdotes so often get in the way of the appropriate decisions. This project will also take a systematic approach as opposed to the ad hoc and individual decisions that so easily result in unintended cumulative impacts.
- 4) There is a short window of opportunity to avoid further tipping points and an objective and accurate WCYWQIP is essential as a baseline for managing current problems while identifying best management practice for land and water management on the Cape for a sustainable future. The project will be carried out within the human and cultural resources and governance and regulatory framework of the Cape and how they interact with its biophysical resources and economy. Water is the connecting link between them all.



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- 5) A 'business as usual' response will result in further irreparable damage. The Cape is not static and is the recipient of the same sort of change imposed on the rest of Australia. Fundamental to it all is the fact that land tenure is changing and will continue to change as Native Title claims are determined and the response institutes a wide range of agreements and land uses. Among the demands will be increased employment and management of resources by Indigenous people. They are well aware of the negative impact of a range of pressures has had on country and will want to become part of the solution. At precisely the same time, other eyes see the water resources of the Cape as a target for Northern Development.
- 6) Cape York NRM can play a key role in finding a path through the maze of development pressure on the Cape by using its expertise to develop and present baseline data to direct change.
- Where change is coming from – sediments from historic landuse are still in the system and have not reached deposition. There is still continuing pressures for development such as water allocations, water plan, and land suitability for intensive agriculture bananas.
 - Land tenure change – pest and weed management may be relaxed as tenure and land use changes
 - The great increase in the number of people travelling- weeds, rubbish, dogs, guns, off road vehicles. Tourism becoming one of the biggest industries. Road building and maintenance is becoming a major employment opportunity on the Cape
 - Many changes are a result of individual decisions but cumulative impact will be significant



4. Bringing the key learnings from the GBR WQIP to this project

The Key Learnings of the Cape York Great Barrier Reef Catchments Water Quality Improvement Plan so far are:

4.1 End of catchment sediment loads are significantly increased by anthropogenic activities within the catchments.

These activities are, in order of significance are:

a) Low dry season ground cover due to grazing and fire.

High grazing pressure and late season burning lead to low or no ground cover at the end of the dry season, which greatly increases sediment loss and movement into waterways.

b) Gravel road building and maintenance.

Gravel deposits increase during annual road maintenance, roadsides are cleared and creek crossings built up with road base. During the wet season, heavy rains scour and wash out roads and creek crossings, and erode cleared roadsides. This eroded sediment moves into waterways.

c) Historic mining.

Strip mining in the 1800's left large areas of bare earth. These areas are continually scoured out and eroded by heavy wet season rains, and sediment moves through water ways and is still moving throughout the system.

d) Current alluvial mining.

Current alluvial mining activities are a source of sediment during the wet season when tailings dams become overwhelmed by heavy rainfall and floodplain overbank flows



4.2 Freshwater ecosystem health is being degraded by anthropogenic activities and introduced species within the catchments.

These activities in order of significance are:

a) Feral animals and weeds.

Feral pigs, cattle and horses damage wetland and streambanks, defecate in and around waterways and create 'pads' around and along water bodies which increase soil erosion and nutrient run-off. Pigs also root in wetlands searching for plants and animals to eat, which decreases ecosystem biodiversity and increases water evaporation, causing increased soil erosion in the wet season.

b) Gravel road building and maintenance.

Annual road maintenance requires water, which is often extracted from wetlands and rivers. As road maintenance is generally undertaken in the dry months, this water extraction leads to decreased water levels in the wetlands and rivers.

c) Low dry season cover due to grazing and fire.

d) Elevated levels of nutrient, pesticide and sediment may impact on freshwater ecosystems.

In the Lakeland district of the Normanby catchment immediately downstream from intensive agricultural land use the impact is most apparent in "First Flush" runoff events, early in the wet season when flow volumes in the freshwater reaches are low. Abstraction of surface and groundwater for irrigation and packing sheds may also impact on downstream freshwater environments by reducing base flow and volume of water in water holes.

These learnings transfer directly to western Cape York, as the same threats and pressures are present.



5. But some big questions remain to be answered in the WCYWQIP

The big questions to be addressed in western Cape York are:

- 1) Does grazing on the larger pastoral holdings of the western Cape impact on water quality more so than the smaller holdings of the eastern Cape?
- 2) Is fire impacting western Cape York more significantly than eastern Cape York?
- 3) What impact will sea level rise and climate variability have on western Cape York environments and communities?
- 4) What water monitoring is required across western Cape York?
- 5) What is the current state of land and water disturbance on western Cape York?
- 6) Are there suitable areas for new horticultural or agricultural developments?
- 7) What implications are there for the Great Artesian Basin if there is further development on western Cape York?
- 8) What is the cultural significance of western Cape York rivers to Indigenous people?

Cape York NRM believes that understanding the water resources of the Cape provides a unifying theme from that will either directly address the above questions and make others more readily addressed.

6. From Plans to action

Cape York has been the subject of numerous plans. Some of those plans apply to local governments or specific parts of Cape York such as the Lakeland horticultural district and community plans for Indigenous communities. It is the large number of overall plans for Cape York that reveal how difficult it is for governments to deal effectively with such a large and diverse area. There have also been countless investigations and research studies into major areas or assets within Cape York.

Some of the best known plans for all of Cape York are:

- 1995** Cape York Land Use Strategy (CYPLUS) a joint initiative of the Queensland and Commonwealth Government. The aim was to establish regional management objectives on knowledge of the resources of the Cape.
- 1997 - 2001** Cape York Peninsula Natural Heritage Trust Plan. Developed by the Commonwealth Government in consultation with the Queensland Government. The Plan involved property planning, enhancing and extending the network of Protected Areas, feral animal and weed control, land rehabilitation and assessment of natural and cultural values.
- 2014** Strategy for Delivering Water Resource Management in Cape York. Queensland Government. Provides opportunities to access water resources on the Cape for the development of agriculture, tourism and industry.
- 2014** Cape York Regional Plan. Queensland Government. The aim of the plan is to manage the competing economic and environmental interests of the State by establishing regional land use categories that can then be assessed for development opportunities.

Despite so many plans with so many good intentions, very few lasting strategic directions have been set for Cape York. One reason is that each of them has originated for different reasons and a holistic and considered approach that can stand scrutiny from the broad range of stakeholder and bring them together on a shared vision has proved difficult. This is not to overlook the central nature of competition for resources.

It is simply the fact that an integrated approach to Cape York resources that would allow decisions to be made among competing interests has not been available.



7. The Water Resources of Western Cape York

The water resources of western Cape York are extensive and valuable. However, there is not a single study that has brought all the knowledge together in a single report supported by a unified data set. Cape York NRM will examine all the existing reports covering the pre-European era, the 1930-1960 major development era and the material held in the Queensland Land Use Mapping Project (QLUMP) and build a water model for the remainder of Cape York as is being completed for GBRWQIP.

Particular drainage basins and river systems will be targeted for more intensive work where it is clear that major pressures will place a more immediate impact on them. The type and scale of this work can be great and Cape York NRM would work very closely with its stakeholders to arrive at a practical and workable plan that can be based on key assets such as:

- **Drainage basin scale - big river catchments all numbered in national identification system** (drainage basin summary)
- **The region or any part of it can be split out or grouped around marine receiving waters** (receiving waters summary)
- **River scale- May be a feature river but it would be selective** (river asset report)
- **Targeted higher order stream sampling** (sampling for both water quality and ecological health – there is a reason for doing it such as point source or land use affecting an ecological asset)
- **Priority water asset reports** (water asset report will be case studies of typical areas under threat and recommended actions and cost)
- **Priority land use reports** (e.g. Stewart Basin would talk about grazing, historic mining, current mining, urban, conservation and nature-based recreation)

8. The water quality improvement plans

The work program to be undertaken by Cape York NRM for the Western part of Cape York is based on achieving the principles of the National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS). This Strategy has been developed jointly by the Ministerial Councils of Australia and New Zealand and is implemented in cooperation with state and territory governments. It is now overseen by the Standing Council on Environment and Water and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Each component of the reporting framework shown in the matrices that follow are designed to meet the objectives set out in the NWQMS.

Those objectives summarized are:

- An integrated approach to water management based on ecologically sustainable development based on all aspects of resource use as it relates to the social, economic and environmental benefits.
- Take a holistic approach to each of the drainage basins on the Western side of Cape York as water quality impinges on all users and the interests of both the State and Commonwealth Governments
- To work in co-ordination of all levels of government, interest groups within the catchment and bring researchers together with community interests through consultation and engagement with the great variety of stakeholders.
- To work with Indigenous people in the larger communities as well as the Traditional Owners who live on country and Native Title holders as well as Claimants. In other words, to engage with Indigenous people.
- To assist governments and private enterprise meet their short term needs within a sustainable long-term future.
- The ultimate aim is to contribute to decision-making in resource management at a time when so many people have an interest in how Cape York is managed.

8.1 Community and stakeholder engagement plan

Cape York NRM is responsible to a representative Board that has members from the main sectors and interests in Cape York. It takes pride on its relationship with the people of Cape York and works with other regional organisations as well as a successful track record in working with the Queensland Government and the Commonwealth Government. There are nine Board members of which five are Indigenous people representing four different zones across Cape York. CYNRM brings its approach and experience in working with the people and interest groups involved in resource management on the Cape.

It is within this context of community engagement and participation that Cape York NRM proposes an overarching framework for this WCYWQIP. It involves the participation of the people and industries of Cape York, regional organisations and the Queensland State Government and the Commonwealth Government.

Cape York NRM envisages working with the following people and organisations to ensure full stakeholder involvement:

- 1) Funding partners who contribute directly to the WCYWQIP. There will be an opportunity provided to this group to establish a steering committee so that they have a continuing opportunity to engage with the project and its management.
- 2) In kind partners comprising those who contribute a wide range of in kind support such as transport and accommodation or science and research and other organisations that provide volunteer assistance.
- 3) Supporters in principle comprising major organisations that give their support to the project such as the peak Indigenous organisations based in Cairns.
- 4) Cape York regional organisations that need to be consulted.
- 5) State and national NGO that have a record of involvement in Cape York

The entire work program set out below is based on continuing community engagement and this is reflected in the selection of staff, their role and the products of the WCYWQIP.

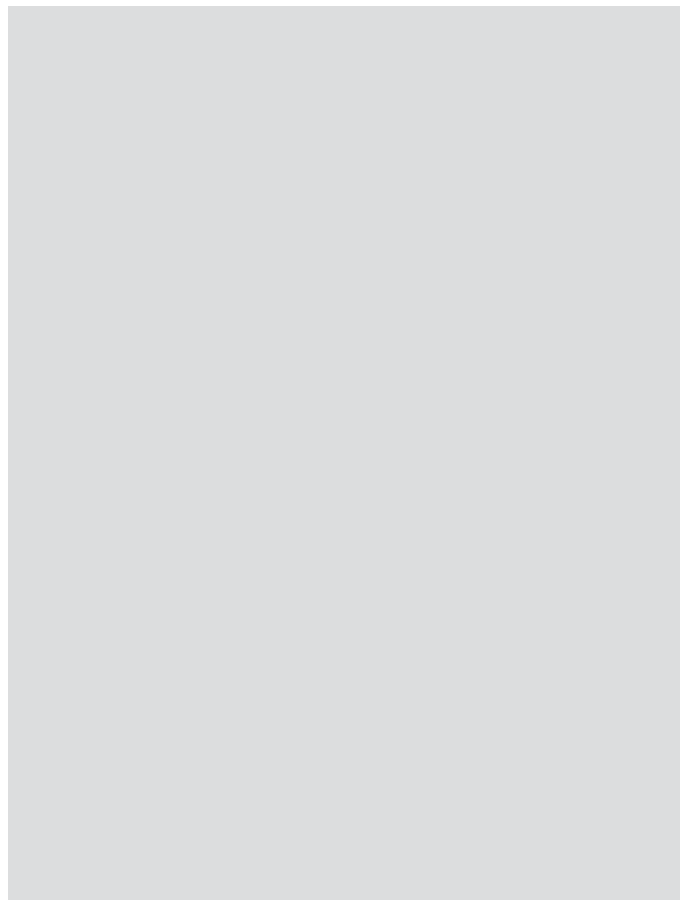
The team comprises:

- A team leader who is will develop the freshwater and marine water plans by workshops and community meetings as well as inspections with land and water managers that are inclusive and respectful of the different perspectives that will arise.
- An Indigenous engagement officer who will ensure that the cultural, social beliefs and values and economic aspirations of Aboriginal people are included at all levels.
- A land use officer, also skilled in mapping, will liaise with all land and water managers and stakeholders to determine current land use, what is causing change and its implications for integrated resource management. A key role of this position is to establish a relationship with major stakeholder groups such as pastoralists, tourism operators, mining and the fishing industry in particular but also new and emerging industries such as forestry and carbon sequestration.
- A science communicator who ensures technical accuracy in user-friendly reports, regular media reporting and also maintains an interactive website for those who want to communications in that form.

8.2 The water quality improvement plan reporting framework.

The following templates for each of the reports will be stand-alone reports but as can be seen in 8.2.4 below, they will be used to produce the nine overall basin reports. The templates are presented as matrices and their role is to provide a systematic approach to the completion of each report. The headings in each template, both in the horizontal and perpendicular axis, are the chapter headings for the reports. The vacant boxes are where the team leader ticks the box when that chapter is completed to a high standard. This approach also allows readily accessible reporting to funding bodies so that progress can be reported against milestones.

Map 1. Shows each of the nine drainage basins.



8.2.1 The contents for each of the 52 freshwater asset reports

Key elements of each freshwater asset report for each of the nine drainage basins

8.2.2 The contents of the 52 Marine water asset reports

Key elements of each marine water asset report for each of the nine drainage basins

8.2.3 The contents of the nine land use reports

Key elements of each land use report for each of the eight drainage basins

8.2.4 How all the asset reports will be presented in each of the nine drainage basin reports

The contents of each of the eight drainage basin reports

9. Logistics and budget

The entire project will be managed by Cape York NRM which will employ and house key staff and resources such as vehicles and IT. However, a significant component of the budget needs to be directed toward contracting essential services from the State Government as well as other research institutions. There may also be opportunities to include Indigenous employment opportunities for data collection, monitoring and evaluation. These may also become a focus for as specific Waterwatch or similar water management Indigenous ranger program. Again, the specifications for such involvement need to be refined in the Prospectus.

A preliminary budget for a three-year WCYWP is shown in the table below. It demonstrates that the project is achievable with modest support from funding providers. It would, of course, be desirable to obtain secure funds for the three years but various options can be developed to ensure seed funding with further funds being made available on achieving specified targets at particular milestones.

Year 1 WCYWQIP staff requirements and budget

Staff Title / Role and Gross salary	Objective of Role	Measurable Outcomes	FTE	COSTS				
				SALARY	VEHICLE	TRAVEL	OFFICE	OPERATIONAL
Team Leader \$140,000	Technical leadership for delivery of WQP for Western Cape York and establish implementation partnerships	New WQIP for WCY Establish implementation partners 8 Basin reports 48 WAR and land use reports	1	\$140,000	\$14,000	\$25,000	\$12,000	
TO Engagement \$110,00	Establish partnerships for development and implementation of WQIP	Basin reports that reflect Indigenous cultural and economic values and involvement in the 48 Water Asset Reports	1	\$110,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$18,000	\$160,000 for Indigenous capacity building \$240,000 (\$5,000 per WAR to support engagement)
Industry Engagement \$110,000	Extension and advisory role to facilitate and promote regional working groups representing agriculture, mining, forestry, fisheries, tourism	Develop frameworks for benchmarking management practice adoption for measuring change. Works with existing groups and emerging industries	.6	\$66,000	\$12,000	\$16,000	\$12,000	
Science Communication \$110,000	Technical support for writing, editing and presenting WQ Reports	Ensure scientific and technical rigor and manage all products	.5	\$55,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$18,000	\$10,000 for printing of products \$40,000 for 8 Basin reports
Total Costs Year 1 WCYWIP			3.3	\$371,000	\$66,000	\$121,000	\$60,000	\$450,000
Total Yearly Cost								\$1,068,000

Years 2 and 3 WCYWQIP staff requirements and budget

Staff Title / Role and Gross salary	Objective of Role	Measurable Outcomes	FTE	COSTS				
				SALARY	VEHICLE	TRAVEL	OFFICE	OPERATIONAL
Team Leader \$140,000	Technical leadership for delivery of WQP for Western Cape York and establish implementation partnerships	Annual WCY WQIP implemented and given annual update. Continue to build partnerships	1	\$140,000	\$14,000	\$25,000	\$12,000	
TO Engagement \$110,000	Continue to build partnerships for development and implementation of WQIP	Empowered groups that involve Indigenous cultural and economic values and involvement in the 48 Water Asset Reports	1	\$110,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$18,000	\$160,000 for continuing Indigenous capacity building
Industry Engagement \$110,000	Identify and promote Best Management Practice while facilitating implementation partnerships through the industry working groups include any emerging industries	Implement measuring practice change. Update at least 4 land use reports each year - urban/ports, pastoral, horticulture, fishing, mining	.4	\$44,000	\$12,000	\$16,000	\$12,000	
Science Communication \$110,000	Technical support for writing, editing and presenting WQ Reports	Ensure scientific and technical rigor and manage all products	1	\$110,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$18,000	\$10,000 for printing of products \$8,000 for updating Basin reports
Total costs per fro Years 2 and 3 WCYWIP			3.3	\$364,000	\$66,000	\$167,000	\$60,000	\$178,000
Total Yearly Cost								\$854,980



10. Data management and ownership

Cape York NRM will ensure funding partners that the data will be maintained and be made available to facilitate decision making and planning. It may eventuate that there are different levels of data storage and access with different agreements regarding its access. Seemingly simple issues can take on a degree of complexity that need to be considered such as whether there will be hard copy materials released to the public, how traditional knowledge will be accessed and stored and how any associated issues of intellectual property will be dealt with. Cape York NRM will make certain to funding partners and other stakeholders the data base will be maintained and that all issues of cultural sensitivity, intellectual property and access to data will be appropriately managed.

11. Conclusion

There is a compelling case for extending the project in eastern Cape York to cover the extensive drainage basins that flow into the Gulf of Carpentaria. The WCYWQIP will align with State and Commonwealth governance and strategic objectives for the Cape as well as the private sector such as mining, agriculture, fisheries and tourism. It will mesh with Indigenous land and water owners and the progressive changes being implemented through Native Title determinations. The preliminary budget shown above demonstrates that the objectives of Cape York NRM are practical, achievable and in the public and private interest of the wide community aspirations for a sustainable Cape York.

An aerial photograph of a coastal wetland. A wide, winding river or estuary flows through the center of the image, surrounded by lush green marshland. The water is a mix of light and dark blue, indicating varying depths and sediment. The marshes are a vibrant green, with some areas appearing darker, possibly due to dense vegetation or water. The sky is a pale blue with some light clouds. An orange diagonal banner is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the word 'APPENDICES' in white capital letters.

APPENDICES

About Cape York NRM

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Cape York Natural Resource Management Ltd.

Trading Name: Cape York NRM

ACN :146 770 167

Directors

David Claudie (Chair)	Indigenous Sector Zone 2
Penny Johnson (Vice Chair)	Local Government Sector
Sandra Woosup	Indigenous Sector Zone 1
John Charlton	Tourism, Small Business, Mining and Other Industries Sector
Shelly Lyon	Conservation Sector
Emma Jackson	Primary Industries Sector
Marilyn Kepple	Indigenous Sector Zone 3
Shane Gibson	Indigenous Sector Zone 4
John Giese	Community Sector

Senior Management

Bob Frazer	CEO and Company Secretary
Peta-Marie Standley	Operations Manager
Roxanne Voyce	Corporate Services Manager
Lyndal Scobell	Communications Manager

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Principal Office

CSIRO Tropical Forest Research Centre
47 Maunds Road, Atherton Q 4883
Ph. 07 40957133

Cooktown Office

Healthy Country Hub
2/122 Charlotte Street, Cooktown 4895
Ph. 07 40695368

Cairns Office

Suite 3, 143 Buchan Street, Cairns Q4870

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Cape York Natural Resource Management Ltd. (Cape York NRM) ACN 146 770 167, ABN 89 146 770 167 is the entity making the invitation to invest set out in this document.

This is a fundraising document and not a prospectus for the purposes of the Corporations Act 2001. Cape York NRM is a limited liability company with not for profit objectives. The company is on the Register of Environmental Organisations and holds Gift Deductible Recipient Status for its Cape York Natural Resource Management Public Fund.

You are invited to read this document and make an independent decision about investing in the Water Quality Improvement Plan for Western Cape York, and the water quality improvement plan work of the organisation. You should consider seeking professional advice in relation to the investment before making any decision. This document has been prepared in good faith, but has not been tailored for the circumstances of any individual investor.

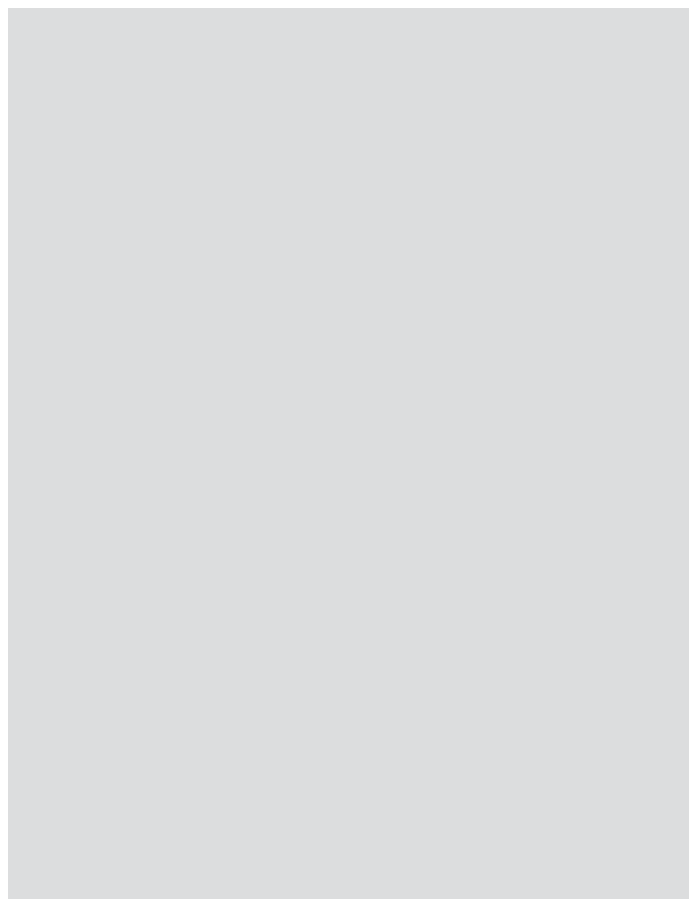
No person is authorised to provide information or make any representation in connection with this offer document which is not contained in this document and any information or representation made may not be relied upon for the purposes of making a decision to invest in the work of Cape York NRM. Neither Cape York NRM or nor any other person guarantees any specific return or outcome as a result of the work of Cape York NRM.

Information contained in this document may change over time. Financial accounts are current as at the date stated in those accounts and are stated in Australian dollars unless otherwise specified. Defined terms and abbreviations used in this document are explained in the Glossary.

OUR ORGANISATION

Cape York NRM is a member owned limited liability company with not for profit status. It was established by the people of Cape York in mid-2010 after an extensive community consultation and engagement process, and was incorporated in October of that year.

Cape York NRM is the Commonwealth and State Government designated NRM body for the Cape York NRM Region. The organisation also works in partnership with Northern Gulf Resource Management Group, the Regional NRM body for the Northern Gulf, to jointly support land managers in the northern catchment area of the Mitchell River basin (Mitchell JMA).





OUR OBJECTIVES

The objects for which the Company is established are to carry out the role of a regional Natural Resource Management body for the Cape York Region by:

- a) working with the people of the Cape York Region to develop and deliver natural resource management activities for the purpose of protecting, enhancing or improving the natural environment or a significant aspect of the natural environment of the Cape York Region; and
- b) building the capacity of people and organisations within the Cape York Region to care for the natural environment and to practice sustainable use of natural resources.
- c) promoting the recognition and protection of the unique cultural heritage of Cape York including its sites, structures and objects of cultural significance as well as the intellectual property inherent in the traditional knowledge and practices of its Indigenous people.
- d) to support and facilitate the ecological sustainability and viability of industry to improve quality of life for the community.

OUR VISION

Cape York NRM is recognised as a having contributed strongly to the creation of a community that cares for its natural environment and practices sustainable use of its natural resources.

OUR MISSION

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



OUR CHARTER

To fulfil the role of a Regional Natural Resource Management Body for Cape York NRM Region including:

- The protection and enhancement of the natural environment;
- To support and facilitate the ecological sustainability and viability of industry to improve quality of life for the community;
- The provision of information and education, building community capacity, the carrying on of research about the natural environment and its management;
- Development of a natural resource management plan and investment strategy for the Cape York region;
- Development of funding applications for the regional and competitive components of State and Australian Government funding programs, and;

Being accountable for Australian and State Government funding to implement the natural resource management plan and investment strategy for the Cape York region.

OUR VALUES

Respect for the people before us, the people here today and especially the people of the future.
Healthy well managed natural resources, as a valuable existing capital, as they underpin the people of Cape York's cultures, economies, environment and lifestyles.

Democracy and full active participation in decisions that affect our lives and the lives of our children.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Governance for Cape York reflects its unique geography, natural assets, people, communities and opportunities.

Cape York is remote from current mainstream governance arrangements, with difficult communications and significant climatic and distance barriers, however its people and communities hold a huge wealth of knowledge. Governance practice, public investment, policy (including all planning) and innovation that empowers local communities to 'drive' planning in a healthy and equitable partnership with government are essential for the maintenance of Cape York's environmental, social and cultural values as well as equitable and sustainable development. In particular, a lack of capacity and resources to participate in the social and political (mostly Brisbane and Canberra centric) networks which influence the discourse on the governance of Cape York's resources is a real barrier to informing and effectively engaging many of Cape York's people and communities of interest.

Traditional Owners have rights and responsibilities for management of land and resources across Cape York.

They have knowledge and capacity essential for effective management of these resources. With this in mind Cape York NRM has adopted the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People as its framework for engagement of the Traditional Custodians of Cape York's land and fresh and salt water resources.

Comprehensive knowledge of Cape York's natural and cultural resources informs decision making.

This will ensure that development decisions are well informed by the best available scientific and Traditional knowledge; do not impact adversely on the health of those natural and cultural resources; consider their impact on spatial or temporal connectivity, and; enable ecosystems to maintain their resilience to climate variability and climate change. Any approach must also acknowledge and demonstrate respect for, and fully exploit the knowledge and passion, of the people of Cape York.

New wealth opportunities are purposely designed and supported so that they are sustainable and provide a long lasting and true legacy for the region and its diverse peoples.

Decisions are made within the context of systems rather than isolated single point developments so that cumulative impacts are well understood and managed. Long term implications, costs and benefits of projected changes and significant risks such as climate change must be fully considered in decision-making.

The economic valuation of ecosystem services must be a strong underpinning decision making tool.

This allows a quantitative comparison of the benefits and costs of development, especially as the natural resource capital of Cape York are expected to play a key role in new economic developments.

OUR GOVERNANCE

The company is governed by a ten member board of directors. Directors must be residents of Cape York and the directorships are sector based, representing Cape York's Indigenous Community, Conservation, Primary Industry, Local Government and Tourism Small Business Mining and Other enterprise sectors. The company currently has more than 250 members and the directors are elected by the membership for three year terms. The Chair and Vice Chair are appointed by the directors from their number.

OUR BUSINESS MODEL AND OPERATIONS TEAM

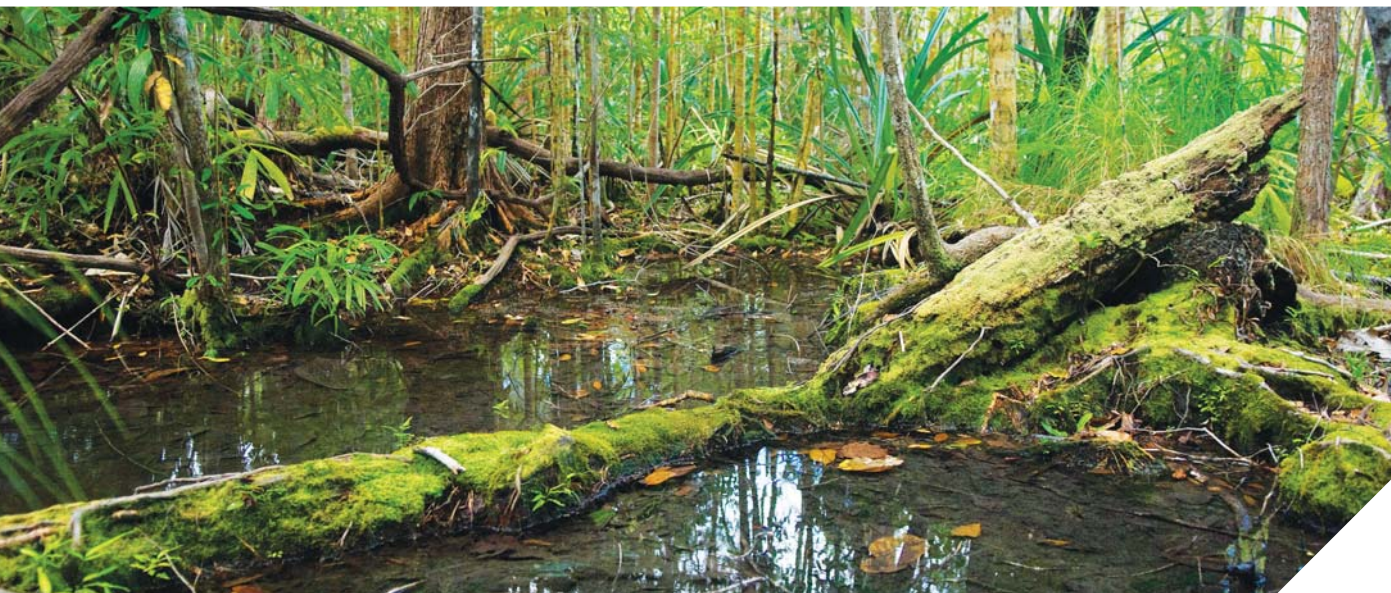
Cape York NRM has adopted a business model which involves delivery of the majority of its on-ground activities through partnerships with the region's landholders, landcare groups, Indigenous Rangers, and organisations such as Aboriginal Land Trusts. This model results in almost all of our capacity to get work done on the ground residing in our partner organisations. This approach required a transition from previous arrangements (prior to the establishment of the company). Previously the majority of the State and Commonwealth Government Regional allocation went to several large organisations based in Cairns or Cooktown that delivered on behalf of the landholders and people of Cape York. Our approach focuses on building the capacity of landholders and organisations based on Cape York and supporting them to do work on their country.

The fire scar mapping and its uploading to the North Australian Fire Information web site for access by landholders by Cape York Sustainable Futures is an example of our partnerships model.

This model utilises a smaller staffing contingent relative to many of Australia's Regional NRM bodies, and skill sets and experience that give the company the capacity to engage and communicate with our community, provide project development and technical support to our partners, and manage our relationships with our partners, the three levels of government and other organisations involved in natural resource and cultural heritage management on the Cape. Other key skills and experience for which staff have been recruited include NRM planning, cultural awareness, working with a diverse community, to prioritise investment, data management, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, mapping and managing of service agreements with government.

The company employs a CEO and 8 other staff across 7.5 FTE positions. Several of those positions are fixed term and project related. The company also hosts a coordinator on behalf of an alliance of Western Cape York Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger groups that are working collaboratively on marine turtle conservation.

The staffing structure includes a Senior Management Team (CEO, Operations, Corporate Services and Communications Managers) and Operations, Corporate Services and Communications teams.



OUR KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- Cape York NRM is a member of the Queensland Regional NRM Groups Collective, the peak representative body for regional NRM arrangements in Queensland - www.rgc.org.au/
- The company also has a formal alliance with other North Queensland Regional NRM bodies:
Terrain - www.terrain.org.au/
- Northern Gulf Resource Management Group - www.northerngulf.com.au/
- NQ Dry Tropics - www.nqdrytropics.com.au/
- Southern Gulf Catchments - www.southerngulf.com.au/

Cape York NRM has also entered into Memoranda of Understanding which formalise our relationships with a range of our delivery partners, conservation groups and other groups with common goals or interests.



OUR FUNDING

The company receives funding from a range of the Commonwealth and Queensland Government Programs and participates in opportunities to contribute to NRM and cultural heritage related policy and program development. At this time the company's level of dependence on government funding is a risk. Our income from government programs has reduced significantly in recent years, and income from these sources in 2015-16 is forecast to reduce by a further 30%.

The impact of this reduction in income on our ability to fund the Fire Scar Mapping/NAFI program is a key factor in seeking your investment in that work. It is also driving a review of our existing core operational cost commitments beyond the first half of the coming financial year to ensure that these costs are secure in the medium term.

Cape York NRM has in place a robust financial management system which includes a Finance Risk and Audit Committee and annual budgets and the company's operational and financial performance is monitored by the Board of Directors on a regular basis. It also has in place a Corporate Strategic Plan with practical actions relating to reducing dependence on government funding through diversification of income.

Cape York NRM has a formal 'virtual agency' relationship with Community Sector Bank (CSB) www.communitysectorbanking.com.au/ and is a shareholder in that institution. Cape York NRM is one of more than 9,000 not for profit organisations which benefit from their services and CSB also makes regular small donations to the Public Fund which we manage on behalf of our community.