



MTSRF PROJECT 4.9.2: Sustainable Nature-based Tourism: Planning & Management Issue # 2 DECEMBER 2008

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PHOTOGRAPHS by Karen McNamara & Julie Carmody

**Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!**



We look forward to working with
you in 2009!



WHAT IS PROJECT 4.9.2?

The MTSRF Research Program involves a number of themes, programs and projects. Project 4.9.2 represents:

- Theme 4:** Sustainable Use and Management
Program 9: Sustainable Use, Planning and Management of Tropical Rainforest Landscapes
Project 2: Sustainable Nature-based tourism: Planning and Management

Project 4.9.2 has two main objectives:

Objective A: To report on the sustainable use of rainforest resources by the tourism industry

Objective B: Monitoring of visitors at site level and community perceptions

AIRPORT EXIT SURVEYS

The airport exit surveys have continued at an increasing pace. During 2007, over 1,400 domestic and international visitors were surveyed at Cairns domestic airport. In 2008, we collected over 1,500 surveys. During the year there have been some highlights. We have been granted access by the Cairns Port Authority to run surveys at the international terminal, allowing us to survey visitors exiting the region on flights to Auckland, Guam, Nagoya, Narita, Osaka, Port Moresby and Hong Kong.

Throughout the year, we have also surveyed visitors on a variety of service quality experiences while holidaying in the region – these have related to restaurants, accommodation, tours and activities, and safety of the region. These findings have generated a large amount of attention, and the full results from the year will be released in the 2008 Airport Exit Annual Report due out early 2009. For more information contact Karen McNamara.

COMMUNITY ATTITUDE & PERCEPTIONS REPORT

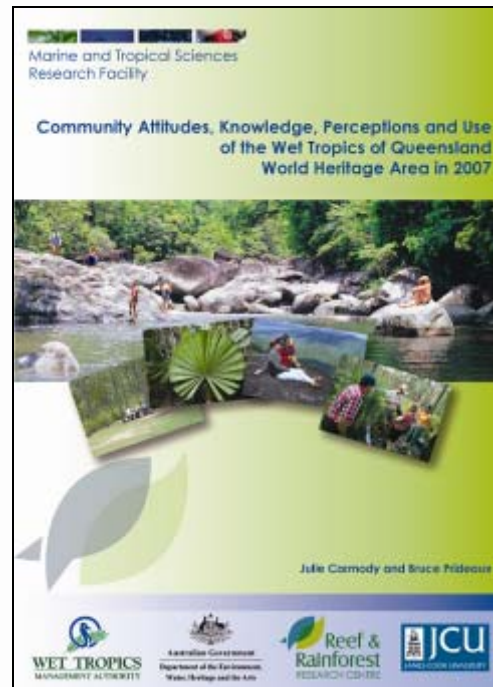
The *Community Attitudes, Knowledge, Perceptions and Use of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area in 2007* report is complete and available.

More than 850 residents of the Wet Tropics bioregion completed and returned the survey which was distributed from May – October 2007. The results show residents have a strong sense of attachment to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area through support for its level of protection, perceptions of its contribution to their quality of life and levels of visitation to the Area primarily for recreational and relaxation purposes. A summary of the results can be obtained by contacting Julie.carmody@jcu.edu.au.

The complete report can be accessed at both the Wet Tropics Management Authority's website and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre's website. The links are:

www.rrrc.org.au/publications
www.wettropics.gov.au/

Hard copies of the report are also available. Contact the Wet Tropics Management Authority or Julie Carmody at James Cook University.



WET TROPICS VISITOR SITE LEVEL SURVEYS

Visitor site level surveys are being conducted from November 2008 to July 2009 at 10 sites across the Wet Tropics. These surveys will assist the Wet Tropics Management Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency in future planning and management of the sites. Surveys will be conducted at Emmagen Creek, Kulki, Dubuji, Barron Falls, Tinaroo day use and camping sites, Wallaman Falls, Paluma, Mossman Gorge, Mamu and Henrietta Creek. Surveys will be distributed to visitors at the sites. If tour operators visiting these sites are willing to help in the distribution of surveys to their customers please contact Julie Carmody.



Image: Site level surveys at Kulki in November 2008.
Photographer: Julie Carmody

AUSTRALIAN TROPICAL HERBARIUM PUBLIC REFERENCE COLLECTION

Located at James Cook University Cairns within the Australian Tropical Forest Institute (ATFI) building, the public reference collection can help you identify native or naturalised plants of North Queensland. The Australian Tropical Herbarium includes nearly 2,000 plant species of the region (expanding to 4,000 in time), botanical literature, interactive CD keys, microscope and computer to access internet-based databases and web resources. The Public Reference Collection is open Monday – Friday 10am-3pm.

RAINFOREST TRENDS & DRIVERS SURVEYS

The rainforest tourism project has also been progressing well throughout the year. We now have nine operators who assist in the collection of surveys throughout the Wet Tropics. These operators include accommodation facilities located in or nearby the rainforest, tours operating in the rainforest, as well as rainforest attractions.

A team of JCU researchers also conduct surveys with visitors each month at Mossman Gorge and the Daintree Discovery Centre to capture drive tourists, and once every six months in Paluma to capture visitors in the southern Wet Tropics. Aiming for around 1,400 surveys for this last year, the survey has explored visitors' perception of rainforest interpretation, activities undertaken in the rainforest, perceived threats to the rainforest and management. The complete results from the year's survey will be available early 2009 as the Rainforest Tourism Annual Report. For more information contact Karen McNamara.



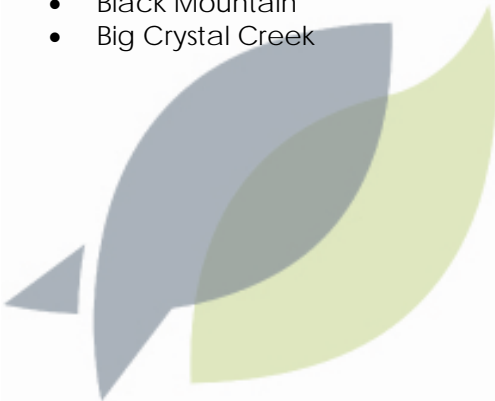
Image: Jonathan Sibtain and Lisa King surveying in Paluma over the Easter long weekend, 2008.
Photographer: Karen McNamara

THE WET TROPICS TOUR GUIDE HANDBOOK

A Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook for the Wet Tropics Management Authority is being compiled for tour guides in the Wet Tropics. The aim is to have tour companies involved in the compilation of the handbook by contributing points of interest normally interpreted at the sites. We would like to include a calendar of floral & faunal events at each site. If you record this type of information could you please contact Julie Carmody. The handbook will be ready in late 2009.

The sites chosen for the handbook are:

- Josephine Falls
- Barron Gorge National Park
- Lake Eacham
- Lake Barrine
- Babinda Boulders
- Curtain Fig
- Mossman Gorge
- Cathedral Fig
- Wallaman Falls
- Goldsborough Valley
- Henrietta Creek/ Nandroya Falls
- Jindalba
- Dubuji
- Maardja
- Kulki
- Alexandra Range Lookout
- Licuala
- Lacey Creek
- Mt Hypipamee & Dinner Falls
- Murray Falls
- Jourama Falls
- Broadwater
- Tully Gorge
- Crawford's Lookout/ Mamu Canopy Walk
- Danbulla Drive
- Black Mountain
- Big Crystal Creek



THANK YOU!

We would like to thank the following organisations and companies for their support and assistance throughout 2008.

- ♣ Wet Tropics Management Authority
- ♣ Environmental Protection Agency
- ♣ Reef and Rainforest Research Centre
- ♣ TTNO
- ♣ Tropic Wings
- ♣ Pioneer
- ♣ Skyrail Rainforest Cableway
- ♣ Daintree Discovery Centre
- ♣ Cairns Airport
- ♣ Downunder Tours
- ♣ Back Country Bliss Adventures
- ♣ Cape Tribulation Resort
- ♣ Wilderness Challenge
- ♣ Paluma Cottages
- ♣ Paronella Park
- ♣ Probe
- ♣ Port Douglas Daintree Tourism Association
- ♣ Daintree Cape Tribulation Tourism Association
- ♣ Mission Beach Tourism
- ♣ Tropical Tablelands Tourism

For further information about Project 4.9.2
contact

James Cook University:

Project Leader

Professor Bruce Prideaux

Bruce.Prideaux@jcu.edu.au

Phone: (07) 4042 1039

Project Manager

Dr Julie Carmody

Julie.carmody@jcu.edu.au

Project Manager

Dr Karen McNamara

Karen.mcnamara@jcu.edu.au

For future updates, visit

www.rrc.org.au/publications