



**Australian Government**

**Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts**

## **Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility Milestone Report, 31 October 2008**

**Program 9: Sustainable Use, Planning and Management of Tropical Rainforest Landscapes**

### **Project 4.9.1: Indigenous landscapes of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area**

**Project Leader: Associate Professor Steve Turton, James Cook University**

## **Summary**

The project is making steady progress after re-alignment of project objectives and tasks in August 2008. Steve Turton has taken on the role of acting Project Leader and it is expected that a new project leader will take on the leadership role in early 2009. The new project leader will be based at James Cook University's Cairns Campus and will be the director of the Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities.

## **Project Outputs / Milestones**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Targeted Activity</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
a	Establish procedures for further cooperative research and confirmation of community case studies to determine community and regional cultural indicators for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Leanne Cullen).	31 Oct 2008
b	Traditional Owner participation in an Alliance session on Indigenous Cultural Action for Biological and Cultural Conservation and Human Wellbeing workshop being co-hosted by CSIRO and other project partners at the World Conservation Congress (please note, support from WTMA, TCF and CSIRO is covering costs of international travel for project participants, while MTSRF support enables the capacity building in the Wet Tropics region) (Ro Hill).	31 Oct 2008
c	Develop Human Ethics application for submission to JCU Ethics Committee and establish contact with Elders in study sites of Yarrabah and Giringun areas for advice on who would be the most appropriate for participation in the study (Linda Leftwich).	31 Oct 2008

## Project Results

### ***Description of the results achieved for this milestone***

**Milestone (a): Establish procedures for further cooperative research and confirmation of community case studies to determine community and regional cultural indicators for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (Leanne Cullen).**

Cooperative research procedures and frameworks developed within CSIRO and applied with confirmed community case study Kuku Nyungkal. Discussions held on country and at Wujal Wujal with community members regarding the development of community and regional scale cultural indicators. Meetings held with staff at Giringun to develop a case study in the southern Wet Tropics, confirmation of interested group in January. Discussion and approval from Giringun and others regarding the revisiting of Jumbun community indicators (study by Dermot Smyth in 2002); indicators will be reconfirmed with community and indicator data collected and compared with baseline data collected in 2002 to assess cultural security.

**Milestone (b): Traditional Owner participation in an Alliance session on Indigenous Cultural Action for Biological and Cultural Conservation and Human Wellbeing workshop being co-hosted by CSIRO and other project partners at the World Conservation Congress (please note, support from WTMA, The Christensen Fund and CSIRO is covering costs of international travel for project participants, while MTSRF support enables the capacity building in the Wet Tropics region) (Ro Hill).**

Four Traditional Owners from Australia – three from Queensland and one from Western Australia – successfully led a workshop on 7 October 2008 at the 4<sup>th</sup> IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, Spain on the topic of Indigenous efforts to protect bio-cultural diversity. The Traditional Owners were Des Hill of Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation in Kununurra; Warren Cannendo of Terrain NRM in Innisfail; Christine George of Giringun Aboriginal Corporation in Cardwell; and Justin McCaul of the Australian Conservation Foundation in Cairns. Others in the team included Leanne Cullen and Rosemary Hill of CSIRO and Terrain NRM; and Nigel Hedgcock of the Wet Tropics Management Authority, all based in Cairns.

The workshop, which was convened by CSIRO on behalf of the partnership team, aimed to share experiences and knowledge on what Indigenous people are doing to help shape a sustainable future. It attracted over thirty participants from countries as diverse as Nepal, Germany, New Zealand, Guatemala, Italy, South Africa and Australia. MTSRF support through project partnership underpinning the “Indigenous Landscapes of the Wet Tropics” enabled the capacity building of the Wet Tropics Traditional Owners to undertake this exciting and important role. A report of the workshop is attached.

**Milestone (c): Develop Human Ethics application for submission to Ethics Committee and establish contact with elders in study sites of Yarrabah and Giringun areas for advice on who would be the most appropriate for participation in the study (Linda Leftwich).**

Linda's Human Ethics Application was completed and forwarded to JCU's Ethics Committee for approval on Wednesday, 5 November 2008. Since a MTSRF Project Team meeting on 12 August, where the research proposal was discussed, Linda has liaised and sought advice and comments from Mike Wood, Leanne Cullen, Ro Hill, Tina Langford and Valda Wallace. A draft *Part 1 - Application Cover Sheet*; *Part 2* of the Ethics Application; the Informed Consent Form; and Information Sheet were forwarded initially to Tina Langford (Ethics Administrator, Research Services, JCU) and then to Val Wallace (Deputy Head of School and Lecturer – Graduate Research School, School of Indigenous Australian Studies), for their comments and advice. Both Tina's and Val's comments and advice were very useful and suggested amendments were made to the above documents.

A change has been made to the study sites because of the short timeframe involved in the study and to reduce travel distances. Linda will begin the study with Gunggai women in Yarrabah, but, rather than undertake research in the Giringun area, has decided to do the other study with Kuku Nyungkal

women of Black Mountain-Shipton's Flat-Lion's Den and Rossville areas and with Kuku-Yalanji women from Mossman-Wujal Wujal-China Camp.

***Communications, major activities or events during milestone reporting period***

Indigenous Cultural Action for Biological and Cultural Conservation and Human Well-Being  
*Report of the Alliance Workshop held at the Fourth IUCN World Conservation Congress, Barcelona, October 5-9 2008*

Rosemary Hill, Leanne Cullen, Nigel Hedgcock, Christine George, Warren Canendo.

***During next milestone reporting period***

**27 February 2009:** Conduct a workshop with participants who have expressed an interest in participating in the research. A JCU Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form will be given to participants for signature and issues such as ownership of Intellectual Property, protocols for principal researcher and payment rates will be discussed at this workshop. An Agreement between participants and principal researcher will also be discussed and developed for signature by participants and principal researcher (Linda Leftwich).