



The Hon. Warren Entsch MP
Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef



**Report to the Minister for the
Environment the Hon. Sussan Ley MP**

June – December 2019

Submitted | 19th December 2019

A note from Warren Entsch MP, Federal Member for Leichhardt

Firstly, Minister thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide input into the direction of government policy and indeed for considering the following report.

While my role as Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef and my plan to develop a national policy on the reduction of single use plastics are connected, they are two distinct matters.

In starting, let me touch briefly on the Great Barrier Reef.

The Great Barrier Reef is a vibrant, beautiful ecosystem of immense value to Australians and the world, but there is no doubt it is under pressure from growing threats.

There are an array of many complex challenges facing the Reef and we must confront these head on.

Global climate change looms as the most serious existential threat to the long-term health and viability of the Reef.

While greater efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses are required globally, the localised threats that are more within our direct control are being managed reasonably well.

While many criticise the work of government, we must remember our investments combined with the work of our agencies and partners are making a substantial difference on the ground.

We are the best Reef managers in the world and globally we are acknowledged as such. As a nation that's something we should all be extremely proud of.

The challenges ahead won't be easy but they are not insurmountable. Through the continued work of our environmental agencies, ongoing research and investments, I believe Australia is up to the task of meeting these challenges head on.

With respect to plastic pollution, Australia must rationalise its consumption and drastically improve our waste management processes.

In doing so we have an opportunity to become world leaders in innovative waste management methodologies, removing plastic pollution from our oceans, and finding more sustainable options for product design and development.

I am determined to implement a ban on single-use plastics nationwide to address this growing environmental concern.

Other than particular niche use cases, I've yet to hear a rational argument that supports prolonging the use of single use plastics.

I appreciate this will not happen overnight but we simply cannot keep putting it off any longer.

My plan to achieve this is three-fold.

Firstly, we must address our consumption of single-use plastics such as bags, PET bottles, Styrofoam packaging and plastic straws.

This can be done through a mix of education and legislation; fundamentally it will also require a significant shift in community attitudes and behaviours.

Secondly, we need to work towards securing a national scheme dealing with the recovery and collection of waste.

In particular, I am acutely aware of the gaps in regional areas. If leveraged correctly these gaps may in fact present sufficient economic opportunity for public/private co-investment—leading to new improvements in regional waste capabilities, or at least, the expansion/optimisation of current initiatives.

At present, recovery and collection work is being undertaken haphazardly and typically organisations, industry and government are operating in silos across the nation.

While organisations such as Tangaroa Blue Foundation and the federally-funded Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers Groups do wonderful work in this space, I believe there is an opportunity to coordinate national efforts and improve efficiencies through leveraging opportunities for collaboration.

Thirdly, we need to work with and support leading scientists and agencies in developing and improving methods that enable recovered and recycled plastics to retain their value as a useful commodity.

Whether it's through improving efficiencies in processing techniques or supporting efforts like “bottle to bottle” recycling over less sustainable end-of-life solutions.

We're starting to make some headway in these areas with an increase in government investment. I applaud these efforts and continue to support them. They include:

- Domestically, the government's \$167 million Australian Recycling Investment Plan is already reducing the amount of plastic waste making its way into our oceans each year.
- Our \$16 million investment towards the Pacific Ocean Litter Project is aimed at assisting our Pacific Island neighbours to tackle key sources of their marine litter by reducing the availability of single-use plastics.
- Furthermore, a new \$100 million investment was announced in this year's Federal Budget to clean-up and protect Australia's coasts, oceans and waterways.

Positive steps are being taken with the National Waste Policy Action Plan and COAG agreements with all States and Territories, and I look forward to providing more input into these plans as we head into 2020.

Overview of Activities

Plastic waste pollution

Soon after accepting my role as Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef, my office set about formulating a discussion paper.

Convenience vs Conservation was released in November 2019 and aims to synthesise a number of complex matters into a digestible format.

It raises issues related to Australia waste management challenges and our role in a global context, as well as the potential for economic opportunity in addressing these and other challenges.

We are seeking feedback and submissions from interested parties through to the closing date of the 21st of February 2020.

The discussion paper can be viewed [here](#).

Recently I met with the Cairns Regional Council and toured their Waste Recovery Centre.

The Cairns Regional Council are very advanced in the technologies and processes they use to collect, reuse and recycle.

Their aim is to minimise landfill and in the pursuit of this goal they have successfully been able to fund a new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) which is expected to be completed by September, 2020.

Though FNQ Plastics, a local company working to produce useful recycled products, I've been able to gain a more thorough understanding of what challenges are faced by manufacturers specialising in utilising recycled materials.

I understand the progress in this area to date has been challenging but the renewed focus of all levels of government on prioritising waste and recycling is promising for industry.

It's also important to note that consumers have a very big part to play. An extensive range of products can be made using recycled material but ultimately the purchasing decisions of consumers will determine the viability of the industry.

Consumer education on the advances in these areas might support greater adoption of products whether it's retaining walls, kitchens, fences, decking and the like.

I have also been working with Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland & Torres Strait (RDA FNQ&TS).

They have submitted a proposal for funding to assess and collate all the current waste, processing and manufacturing facilities in Far North Queensland, the capabilities thereof and how that relates to the viability of markets and circular economic principles.

On the 14th November 2019 I had the pleasure of hosting the Assistant Minister for Waste and Recycling, the Hon. Trevor Evans MP in Cairns, where he was able to meet stakeholders and learn firsthand what is occurring at the grass roots level.

It was great to have a site visit at LSC Recycling and Rehab with Adam Bugeja and his family where they demonstrated the first advanced mobile shredding machine in our local area.

This machine is able to shred large items such as iron sheets, washing machines, large vegetation and even mattresses and turn them into much smaller manageable pieces to enable them to be processed into reusable products.

On the 4th October 2019 I joined my federal colleagues in Townsville for the launch of the month-long ReefClean initiative which aimed to remove 20 tonnes of debris from the Great Barrier Reef. This initiative is part of the Coalition Government's \$5,000,000 commitment to addressing marine debris in the Reef being delivered in conjunction with Tangaroa Blue Foundation and Conservation Volunteers Australia.

On the 15th December 2019, I joined House of Representatives Speaker, the Hon. Tony Smith MP in his electorate of Casey, to visit Garden City Plastics.

This was a fascinating visit. The technology the team from Garden City Plastics has been testing is incredibly promising and presents a real opportunity to leverage end-of-life plastics.

The machine they utilise is able to process an array of plastic material and generate, with great efficiency, different grades of diesel and NAPHTHA oil which can be used to make new plastics.

It is a great concept and we will certainly be looking at ways in which we can incorporate this technology into the pilot program suggested in the discussion paper.

I've had initial discussions with Cairns Regional Council Mayor Bob Manning OAM. He has expressed a keen interest and is willing to send his experts down to see the facility and discuss potential integration opportunities and challenges moving forward.

It is still early days and I look forward to receiving the group's detailed brief on the technology.

Great Barrier Reef issues and stakeholder engagement

I have had many great in-depth discussions with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), the Chairs of the Reef 2050 advisory bodies, and stakeholders such as the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO) and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

These stakeholders are all passionate about ensuring the Reef's long-term sustainability. The people I have spoken to are highly experienced and knowledgeable and as such they understand the Reef's many complexities and they have all been of tremendous value and support.

The recent Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019, downgraded the long-term outlook for the Reef's ecosystem from 'poor' to 'very poor'.

It is important to remember this is an 'outlook' report and there are many recommendations and actions contained within it that offer us a pathway to rectify these issues.

Along with the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan, these play a very important role in guiding our actions in the coming years.

- Climate Change continues to be the biggest threat to the Reef and while people are entitled to a different opinion on the topic, there are fundamental facts what we must acknowledge and grapple with. There is broad consensus that human induced warming presents significant challenges to ecosystems and economies alike. Australia has a significant role to play from a global perspective. Many continue to argue that we represent only roughly 1.5 per cent share of global emissions. While that is indeed the case, if we use this metric as a rationale for reduced action on domestic emissions and other countries who have a similar share of emissions (less than 2 per cent) take the same view—it is equivalent to abdicating responsibility of roughly 40 per cent of global emissions. While everyone loves to point the finger at China and other large emitters, the reality is that we all have a role to play in addressing this issue.

- I am supportive of Australia remaining committed to the Paris Agreement and meeting our emissions reduction targets by 2030. However, it is my view that we ought to be undertaking and supporting more tangible environmental restorative efforts such as Blue Carbon.
- Blue Carbon initiatives provide us with a significant opportunity to sequester CO₂ through improving coastal mangrove areas. This is important not only because of the benefits to reducing our carbon emissions but also the overall health of the Reef and its supporting ecosystems.
- Mangroves are roughly three to four times more effective at sequestering CO₂ as compared to the same amount of terrestrial forests. They are also a critically important habitat and breeding ground for many different species and are of immense value to ecosystems that help support the health of the Reef. This area is of particular interest to me and I was very glad to see that Australia was hosting talks and providing information to our global partners on Blue Carbon during the recent COP25 talks in Madrid.
- Renewables also have an important role to play in decarbonising our electricity generation and I have to say, it brings me great pleasure that Australia's first renewable micro grid is already underway up in the Daintree Rainforest within my electorate. It's been a long time coming, the Daintree community has been without mains equivalent power and as a result each year more than 4 million litres of diesel is burnt to power the community.
- Work has already commenced on getting the project shovel ready. Upon completion, the Daintree will have Australia's first hydrogen-solar powered renewable micro grid. The micro grid will provide power to the Daintree community and remove the need for diesel generation.
- For context, this is a community that is literally sandwiched between two World Heritage areas, the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics. It is acknowledged as the one area in Australia where "the Rainforest meets the Reef" and in this area there is a community of around 800 people. By removing the need for diesel generation we will have a direct impact on the World Heritage rainforest and also the Great Barrier Reef.
- Crown of Thorns Starfish (COTS) remains an ongoing threat and I continue to work closely with stakeholders on ensuring they are best placed and have the resources available to tackle this pest. The Reef and Rainforest Research Centre is working with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation on what can be further achieved and nothing makes me prouder when I visit the COTS boats and seeing local Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth leading the charge.
- I have also raised the prospect of breeding and releasing the Triton shell, Spangled and Red-throated emperor as natural predators to hopefully help manage COTS through a controlled trial in a public/private arrangement with the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and other stakeholders.
- Water quality I am proud to say has grown in strength from the great work the Natural Resource Management groups are doing along the coast.

- In conjunction with farmers and other interest groups, they have been able to advance their knowledge and research and the outcomes are evident along the inshore of the reef.
- The Coalition Government continues to fund these programs and farmers have most certainly changed their practices in accordance with the research.
- The Great Barrier Reef Foundation received a \$443.3 million investment from the Coalition Government to act as the facilitator for funding programs on the Reef.
- While this did not occur without some concerns - of which I have raised my own directly with the Foundation - I am now confident they have a strong strategic plan in place and I look forward to working with them.
- I believe surveying the entire Reef should be a priority. When statistics are released about the Reef, for example fifty percent of the Reef is bleached, I struggle to understand how that can be accurate when the entire Reef has never been surveyed. That is why I have been working with Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef in supporting their concept of the 'Reef Census' and I look forward to seeing their proposal in due course.
- I should also note and congratulate the Reef Restoration Foundation on successfully planting their coral nursery on the outer Great Barrier Reef for the first time. They have been working very hard to reach this stage and I commend them on their foresight and commitment. There are also many other tourism operators who are currently planting coral or applying for permits and I look forward to seeing the results of these initiatives.
 - The link below has a series of photos of the Reef Restoration Foundation nursery <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fm0i8p4fhr3h60p/AAA2IXV-1qaevr24303t1xkMa?dl=0>
- With respect to fishing zones, I am confident we have found a happy medium with the rezoning but I will be keeping abreast of concerns within the industry.

I have also reached out to Queensland Labor Senator Nita Green to offer her a briefing and hopefully allay some of her concerns with respect to my role and the work we are undertaking.

To date, she is yet to take me up on this offer.

As I'm sure you are aware Minister, both in your role and indeed when you visited the Reef with me, it is undoubtedly a complex ecosystem, one that has challenges but also many passionate people who are its caretakers.

The recent coral spawning event we experienced is an illustration of the Reef's resilience and is also a glimmer of the beauty that is yet to come.

I look forward to supporting concepts that will advance the Great Barrier Reef's sustainability and being involved in the Reef 2050 review planned for 2020.

Tourism

Engagement with tourism operators through AMPTO has occurred and a range of matters have been raised.

These included ticket cost, the need for industry liaisons, Crown-of-Thorns Starfish management, Master Reef Guides, permit issues, climate change messaging and ongoing support.

We discussed implementing an Environmental Management Charge (EMC) flyer for all visitors to the Reef.

This would inform visitors what the EMC is for and what their fee is going towards. This will be designed and distributed in the near future for tourism operators to use upon ticketing if they choose.

The issues raised have been provided to GBRMPA for consideration and action where required.

I attended the Tourism Tropical North Queensland Reef Forum in August 2019, which was well attended by Traditional Owners, government and industry.

The forum was initiated to collaborate with all stakeholders on the current state of the Reef and discuss how to better communicate the complexity, ensure everyone is well across the facts, and how to market an appropriate and balanced message to the world.

I would like to pay special thanks to Experience Co. Dreamtime for their wonderful Reef experience and meeting the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander guides on board.

I am aware the funding for Master Reef Guides expires in 2020 and I will be supporting and encouraging all agencies to enable this funding to continue.

Another matter that needs serious investment is shark control measures.

After several attacks at the Whitsundays, the Coalition Government assisted in providing funding to BioPixel to allow them to collect data from the attack site.

The data confirmed clearly that there are sharks moving through Hook Passage on a fairly regular basis at present, which suggests swimming and snorkelling should be avoided.

We have the technology to keep swimmers safe and provide the necessary warnings.

I support funding proposals which have since been submitted to continue and enhance the research programs and data collections.

If this does not occur, it will have serious and devastating impacts on the tourism industry.

Other advocacy and engagement in support of Government policies and programs

Indigenous Rangers - although most of the ranger groups predominately work on land-based activities, it is these land-based programs that assist in the management of the Reef.

For example, the Rangers have been successful in decreasing the number of turtle nests destroyed by feral pigs by 80 per cent.

They continue to monitor illegal traditional and non-traditional hunting and fishing and are best suited to manage the shorelines.

Some groups also have on-water programs and work closely with GBRMPA to build capacity and utilise their knowledge to better manage the Reef.

Recently, the Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon. Ken Wyatt MP announced funding for the Cairns-based Yirrganydji Land and Sea Rangers group to purchase a boat so they can enhance their monitoring and preservation of sea country through marine surveillance and restoration efforts.

I lobbied on behalf of this group as they continuously illustrated strong commitment, diversity, and utilised best practice through their management, knowledge and training.

I would like to see a program established which would allow other Ranger Groups to apply for funding for a vessel based on these proven outcomes.

The Run for the Great Barrier Reef Research Fund was established in 2014 in a partnership between the Tropical Journeys Great Barrier Reef Marathon Festival and James Cook University.

Today it has hundreds of runners competing in the marathon, both local and interstate, with running legend Steve Moneghetti as their ambassador.

The name says what it is to achieve, fundraising and education for and about the Great Barrier Reef. They have in the past donated funds raised to JCU's Whale Shark research program and are now hoping to donate funds towards cleaning up plastics from the oceans.

Their dream is to expand the marathon to every capital city along the eastern seaboard and eventually worldwide.

I will continue working with Sam Cullen and Bruno Bennett to support this event, as I believe it is important we assist third party organisations in being a part of the advocacy of the Reef.

Looking ahead: proposed activities and priorities

- I'll be working to encourage submissions to my discussion paper ahead of the 21st February 2020 deadline.
- Continue to assist RDA in obtaining the necessary funding to complete the required market appraisal with respect to their proposal.
- I intend to visit various electorates along the GBR coastline to meet with stakeholders who assist in managing the Reef.

- The Reef 2050 review is also on the horizon and I will be ensuring stakeholders directly associated with the Great Barrier Reef are included in that process.
- I will continue to work with you Minister on developing further research and safety initiatives in relation to shark control measures.

Communications and Engagement

Media

Media coverage on areas pertaining to this role has been high and continues to receive great interest. Refer to Appendix B for all media releases.

I would like to congratulate all finalists in the Reef Champions Awards and encourage you to read about them in attached item Appendix C.

Significant meetings and public engagement

Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum	<p>Occurred in Townsville on Tuesday 19th November 2019.</p> <p>Included State and Federal Environment Ministers, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Chairs of the Reef 2050 advisory bodies</p>
Assistant Minister for Waste and Recycling Trevor Evans MP visit	<p>Occurred in Cairns on Thursday 14th November stakeholders included Cairns Regional Council, Rural Recycling, LSC, RDA and FNQ Plastics</p>
ReefClean	<p>\$5 Million dollar commitment by the Federal Government to addressing marine debris in the Great Barrier Reef</p>



WARREN ENTSCHE MP
Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

New recycled plastic product a game-changer for the construction industry

Monday, 3 June 2019

New green manufacturing jobs are on their way to Cairns following the development of a new recycled plastic product for use as a low-waste alternative for the construction industry.

Federal Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch said the Coalition Government had invested \$183,300 towards enabling ReGen Plastics Pty Ltd to develop a new recycled plastic product, 'Uniwall', for use in building and construction.

"This new equipment will enable the company to manufacture a developmental batch of Uniwall and put the product to the test via ballistics and weathering tests," Mr Entsch said.

"Once available on the market, Uniwall will provide the construction industry with a sustainable and locally-made alternative for use in flooring, walls, roofing, fencing, sound-proofing and decking."

Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack said the investment in regional Queensland manufacturing will create 16 ongoing jobs.

"Following the successful development of Uniwall, ReGen will now be able to raise the capital required to develop a recycling plant to convert plastic waste into their new product," Mr McCormack said.

"By funding and supporting the ingenuity of our regional entrepreneurs, programs such as the Regional Jobs and Investment Packages are powering dynamic industries and jobs across the country."

This project was funded under the Coalition Government's highly-successful Regional Jobs and Investment Package.

The \$366,600 project was jointly funded by the Coalition Government and ReGen Plastics Pty Ltd.

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Warren Entsch, MP, Liberal National Party, Cairns QLD 4870.



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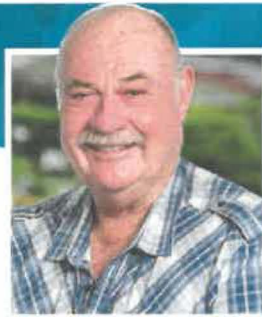
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WARREN ENTSCH MP
Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Far North Queensland indigenous rangers commended on World Ranger Day

Wednesday, 31 July 2019

Federal Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch today commended Far North Queensland's indigenous rangers on World Ranger Day for the work they do protecting the environment and our heritage.

Mr Entsch said Far North Queensland is privileged to have so many dedicated rangers, many of whom are indigenous who combine traditional knowledge with conservation training to protect and manage land, sea and culture.

He said rangers across the region play an important role in natural resource management, including fire management, restoring rivers, preserving threatened species and controlling feral animals.

"The Morrison Government supports more than 2,900 Indigenous Australians to work on Country through a variety of ranger projects, creating employment, training and career pathways," Mr Entsch said.

"Across Far North Queensland, this program has enabled the Morrison government to create 210 jobs in the 2016-17 financial year alone.

"World Ranger Day is a perfect opportunity to recognise and praise the extensive work undertaken by our Indigenous rangers to protect and conserve our natural treasures."

Mr Entsch said the work of indigenous ranger groups is vitally important and that is why the government will continue our supporting their work.

"Indigenous rangers are the eyes and ears in the areas they patrol. They bring local knowledge and insights to their work allowing them to protect and preserve our unique environment," he said.

"Our rangers are passionate about their work and World Ranger Day is our chance to say thank you to all those who dedicate themselves to care for our environment so its splendour can be appreciated now and preserved for our future generations."

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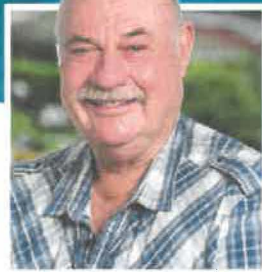
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WARREN ENTSCH MP
Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Funding now available for Far North Queensland environmental projects

Monday, 12 August 2019

The Morrison Government is investing more than \$22 million in a new program to support local environmental projects giving communities across Far North Queensland new opportunities to protect and care for our natural environment.

The Communities Environment Program will see each electorate provided with up to \$150,000 to fund up to 20 local projects.

The grants available will range from \$2,500 to \$20,000 per project.

Federal Leichhardt MP and Special Envoy to the Great Barrier Reef Warren Entsch said the Communities Environment program would empower local community groups to deliver practical improvements to the local environment.

He said a broad range of organisations are eligible for nomination, including community clubs, not-for-profit organisations, landcare groups and schools.

"Community groups in Far North Queensland are already delivering fantastic projects, whether it's planting trees, cleaning up local waterways, reducing litter or protecting native species," Mr Entsch said.

Far North Queenslanders care deeply about their communities and are passionate about protecting our local flora and fauna, our threatened species, and our beautiful natural environment.

The Communities Environment Program will harness that passion by helping grassroots community organisations to deliver practical local project and to ensure a cleaner and greener for future generations."

Application Process:

It is **CRITICAL** to note that there is a two-step process for applicants.

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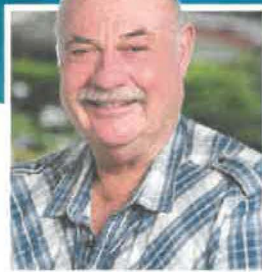
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WARREN **ENTSCH** MP

Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Firstly, an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** form must be completed and returned to Mr Entsch's office before **Friday, 27 September 2019**.

To request a copy of the EOI form and factsheet, applicants should contact Mr Entsch's office on 07 4051 2220 or email warren.entsch.mp@aph.gov.au

The Expressions of Interest will then be independently assessed against the program's criteria

The shortlisted projects, up to 20, totalling up to \$150,000, will then be invited by Mr Entsch to complete a formal online application.

Further information is available at: www.business.gov.au/cep.

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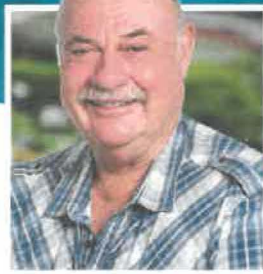
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WARREN ENTSCH MP
Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Funding flows to support smart farming in Far North Queensland

Wednesday, 25 September 2019

A Far North Queensland project has been awarded more than \$86,000 to deliver services under the National Landcare Program - Smart Farming Partnerships.

The '*Smart Drones, Smarter Farming*' project will apply drone technology to precision weed management in Far North Queensland.

Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef and Federal Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch said the federal government funding provided to this project would help local farmers adopt best practice natural resource management.

He said this grant is one of the 110 grants awarded across the country to a value of almost \$9.25 million.

"Smart Farms, Small Grants are about encouraging Aussie farmers to adopt tools and practices that lead to a more sustainable and profitable agricultural sector," Mr Entsch said.

"Tapping into local know-how is vital if we are to maximise our national potential and establish an agricultural sector worth \$100 billion by 2030."

Mr Entsch said this project would engage regional farmers in hands-on trials of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

"Weed-control case studies will be run on three farms in the Tablelands' agricultural region using precision mapping and precision spray drones," Mr Entsch said.

"I am very pleased to see problem weeds like Tobacco weed, Fire Weed and Giant Rats' Tail targeted through this project.

"I am particularly proud that Far North Queensland ingenuity will now have the potential to be applied to helping farmers right across the country."

Further rounds of Smart Farms Small Grants are expected to roll-out progressively over coming months and years.

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THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

THE HON WARREN ENSTCH MP
SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

MEDIA RELEASE

***ReefClean* aims to remove 20 tonnes of debris from the Great Barrier Reef**

Friday, 4 October 2019

Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef Warren Entsch today launched a \$5 million federal-government initiative to remove and reduce marine debris from Australia's greatest natural asset.

The month-long initiative funded through the Australian Government's Reef Trust is targeting the removal of more than 20 tonnes of debris from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park to protect its rich ecosystems and resilience.

It underlines the Morrison Government's commitment to reducing waste along our coastal waters and across the wider Pacific region.

Mr Entsch, who launched '*ReefClean*' at Townsville's Reef HQ, said the initiative would see clean-up events take place in towns and communities all along the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

He said Tangaroa Blue Foundation, working in partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia, was coordinating this year's '*ReefClean*' events.

"Since this initiative commenced last year '*ReefClean*' has engaged more than 1702 volunteers who have removed more than 11 tonnes of debris from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park," Mr Entsch said.

"The 2019 Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report identified marine debris as a high threat to the health and resilience of the Reef and its inhabitants.

"Debris such as plastic bags, bottles and discarded fishing nets pose a significant risk to the Reef's ecosystems.

"In particular, wildlife such as turtles, dugongs, corals and seabirds can suffer injury or death through entanglement and ingestion.

"There is absolutely no doubt the Great Barrier Reef is one of the world's most treasured natural ecosystems and that Australian's are the best Reef managers in the world – something as a nation we should be extremely proud of.

"We now need to start striving to become world leaders in removing plastic pollution from our oceans, especially from the Great Barrier Reef.

"The Reef contributes \$6.4 billion to the Queensland and Australian economies, so it is absolutely vital we keep it healthy and free of litter both for the marine environment itself and for the 64,000 jobs that rely upon it."

Mr Entsch said '*ReefClean*' builds on an earlier Reef Trust investment that saw 5,872 volunteers remove a staggering 32 tonnes of litter from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

"This project will combine with existing efforts currently underway to clean up our beaches and our waterways and work with the broader community to help prevent the flow of litter from its source," he said.

"I would encourage everyone who loves our beautiful Great Barrier Reef to get involved in efforts to protect it from marine debris by participating '*ReefClean*.'

For further information or to volunteer at an existing event or register your own community event visit www.reefclean.org

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**THE HON WARREN ENSTCH MP
SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE GREAT BARRIER REEF**

MEDIA RELEASE

Discussion paper talks of treasure in trash

Thursday, 14 November 2019

Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef Warren Entsch today launched a discussion paper, a first for his new role. Titled: *Convenience vs Conservation*, the paper takes aim at the prominence of single use plastics in Australia.

Launched today as part of National Recycling Week, the paper highlights the importance of improving waste management practices locally and how Australians are tempted with increasingly convenient consumer practices that are fundamentally at odds with principles of environmental sustainability.

It follows on from the Morrison Government's commitment to ban the export of plastic, tyres, paper and glass, agreed to by COAG and announced earlier in August this year.

The discussion paper is calling for submissions from stakeholders, industry and other interested individuals to help provide insight into the unique waste challenges faced by both the Far North region and Australia more broadly.

Mr Entsch said, there has already been a significant interest in the reduction of single use plastics from members of the public and as a result some industry-led improvements and infrastructure development was already underway.

"I've been talking to a range of people and companies operating in this space, and there is a tremendous amount of optimism about the path forward," Mr Entsch said.

"One of the issues I've noticed is that we have many people and organisations operating in silos at present, but the problems they're trying to solve are massive and it seems to me that a more coordinated response is required,

"We're only recycling about 12 per cent of plastics nationally at the moment, we need to start heading towards a more circular economy, the benefit to the environment will be significant; not to mention the potential economic opportunities along the way,

"In the context of the reef, we've got wildlife such as turtles, dugongs and seabirds that suffer injury or death through entanglement and ingestion of marine debris – a lot of which is plastic,

"While we've have got to continue with clean up efforts, we have to make the necessary changes to stop the plastic getting into the environment in the first place – part of that is recognising the value in our waste."

Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management, Trevor Evans joined Mr Entsch in Cairns for the launch of the discussion paper.

“Warren has always been a tireless advocate for North Queensland and the Great Barrier Reef. It’s fantastic to see him continuing that tradition in his role as Special Envoy by engaging with his local community, leading the policy conversation, and bringing the voices of FNQ to Canberra,” said Mr Evans.

“National Recycling Week is an important reminder of the small, practical things we can all do to help the environment. It’s been great to be here in Cairns today, visiting recycling facilities and community leaders, to listen and share information about the Government’s recycling agenda.”

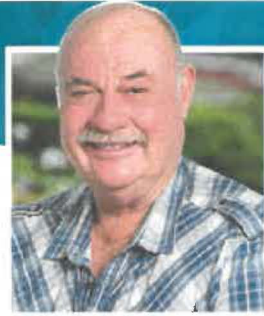
The discussion paper can be viewed on [Warren Entsch’s Website](#).

Submissions are welcome and they will help to inform reports to the Federal Government the Special Envoy has been tasked with undertaking. Submissions close on the 21st of February 2020.

Media Contacts:

Warren Entsch MP: **Adam Davies: 0417 010 702**

Assistant Minister Trevor Evans: **Paul Cormack: 0435 820 478**



WARREN ENTSCHE MP
Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Federal government to fund new marine vessel for Yirrganydji Land and Sea Rangers

Friday, 1 November 2019

The Cairns-based Yirrganydji Land and Sea Rangers will receive funding to purchase a boat so they can continue to monitor, preserve and improve sea country through marine surveillance and restoration.

Funding of \$270,000 for the purchase of a marine vessel will be delivered through the National Indigenous Australians Agency's Capacity Building for Indigenous Rangers Strategy.

Indigenous Australians Minister Ken Wyatt said funding for rangers supports indigenous Australians to work on country, and creates employment, training and career pathways

"This funding provides a great opportunity for the Yirrganydji Land and Sea Rangers to take on more work and upskill existing rangers," Mr Wyatt said.

"Ranger work provides both environmental benefits and real career opportunities that indigenous Australians can aspire to."

Federal Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch said he had been working closely with the Yirrganydji Land and Sea Rangers, particularly Gavin Singleton, to secure funding for this much-needed piece of equipment.

"Our Indigenous rangers are the eyes and ears in the areas they patrol. They bring local knowledge and insights to their work allowing them to protect and preserve our unique environment," Mr Entsch said.

"This investment will also allow the Yirrganydji Land and Sea Rangers to expand existing economic opportunities, as well as to access new ones.

"These opportunities include tourism, and fee-for-service work in biosecurity and environmental monitoring with both government and non-government partners."

Mr Entsch praised Mr Singleton's advocacy in securing the new vessel and praised rangers across the entire region for their fantastic work.

"Far North Queensland is privileged to have so many dedicated rangers, many of whom are

Warren Entsch, MP, Liberal National Party, Cairns QLD 4870.



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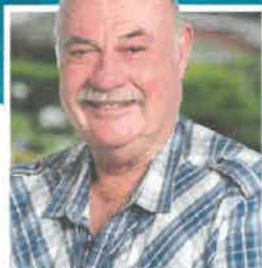
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WARREN **ENTSCH** MP

Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

indigenous who combine traditional knowledge with conservation training to protect and manage land, sea and culture," he said.

"Rangers across the region also play an important role in natural resource management, including fire management, restoring rivers, preserving threatened species and controlling feral animals.

"The work of indigenous ranger groups is vitally important and that is why the Morrison Government will continue to support their amazing work."

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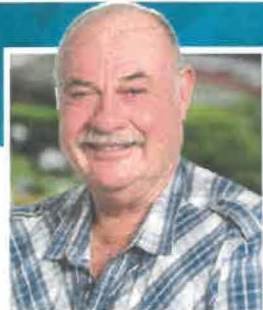
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WARREN ENTSCH MP

Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Grants to support sustainable farming innovation in Cairns and Far North Queensland

Friday, 1 November 2019

Farmers and landcare groups in Cairns and Far North Queensland are encouraged to apply for funding of up to \$50,000 under round three of the Australian Government's Smart Farms Small Grants program.

Federal Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch said the grants would help farmers turn innovative ideas into on-ground projects to improve the quality of their natural resources while increasing on-farm productivity.

"Farmers are the custodians of more than half of Australia's land," Mr Entsch said.

"These small grants can help our farmers, landholders and landcare groups in Cairns and Far North Queensland source funding to help improve natural resource management so the environment, communities and regional economies all benefit.

"Up to \$5 million will be provided under Round three of the Smart Farms Small Grants, with funding of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 available.

"Projects funded under the first two rounds included innovative methods to manage soil acidity; virtual fencing to protect riparian habitat; improving orchard pollination and bee health using drone technology, as well as mentoring activities connecting farmers and students.

"Smart Farms Small Grants supports projects that increase the knowledge, skills and capacity of farming, forestry and fishing communities to adopt best practice sustainable agriculture."

Round three projects must be completed by 30 June 2022.

Round three Smart Farms Small Grants applications are open until Thursday, 19 December 2019.

For more information and to apply visit the Community Grants Hub website www.communitygrants.gov.au.

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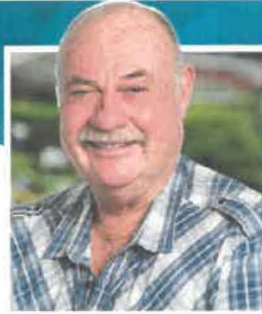
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WARREN ENTSC MP
Federal Member for **Leichhardt**

Environmental disaster recovery funding for FNQ beaches

Tuesday, 10 December 2019

Beaches across Far North Queensland will share in \$371,338 in funding to help revitalise their rich natural habitat following the unprecedented Monsoon Trough earlier this year.

Revitalisation projects at Cow Bay Beach, Pretty Beach, Oak Beach, Ellis Beach, Clifton Beach, Trinity Beach and Holloways Beach have been given the green light as part of the Australian Government's Environmental Recovery Package.

A further three revitalisation projects totalling \$361,343 will be undertaken along the Cassowary Coast at Kurrimine Beach, Kennedy Esplanade and Marine Parade.

Federal Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch said Local Councils and Natural Resource Management groups will assist communities with the delivery of the projects.

"Far North Queensland is known across the world for our pristine beaches and coastline," Mr Entsch said.

"Works at Cow Bay, Oak Beach and Pretty Beach Beach will include the restoration of dunes as well as reinstating natural dune-building processes to reduce damage during future disaster events.

"The works at Ellis Beach, Clifton Beach, Trinity Beach and Holloways Beach will include replacing sand permanently lost from each system to reinstate the beach profile and repair eroded areas.

"This will go a long way in building resilience at the four sites ahead of and possible future disaster events."

Federal Natural Disaster and Emergency Management Minister David Littleproud said the Environmental Recovery Package is part of the \$242 million Recovery Package funded under the joint Commonwealth-Queensland Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

"Queensland's unique natural landscape is one of the most important markets in the tourism industry and supports thousands of jobs in the region," Mr Littleproud said.

"Queensland is no stranger to natural disasters, and this is why funding like this is important to help communities and the environment recover."

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Davies, Adam (W. Entsch, MP)

From: CoalitionFYI <cfyi@coalition.org.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 19 November 2019 3:01 PM
To: Davies, Adam (W. Entsch, MP)
Subject: Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley - MINISTERS ENDORSE REEF STRATEGY

The Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Forum in Townsville has endorsed current reef management strategies and highlighted the importance of a coordinated Federal and State approach in protecting the Reef's future.

Federal Environment Minister Sussan Ley, Queensland Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef LEEANNE ENOCH, Federal Special Envoy for the Reef WARREN ENTSCHE and Reef science and advisory body Chairs, met at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in Townsville today to examine progress under the Federal and State Government Reef 2050 plan.

The meeting highlighted scientific advice that climate change remains the single greatest challenge to the Reef and the importance of work already being undertaken for the reef, including key partnerships with traditional owners, water quality programs, adaptive reef management, increased scientific monitoring and surveillance, and crown of thorns starfish eradication.

"There is clear acceptance of the science and it is also telling us that we are taking important steps to strengthen the Reef's resilience," Minister Ley said.

"Across 346,000 square kilometres, the Reef includes wonderful areas of pristine coral, areas recovering from extreme weather events and those that are still suffering from recent bleaching.

"This year's Reef Outlook Report highlighted the challenges we face but it was also clear about the steps we can and are taking to protect its future and its World Heritage status."

Minister Enoch said the science was clear on what is impacting the Reef, including water quality.

"Here in Queensland, new reef regulations were passed by Parliament in September to help protect the Great Barrier Reef and the thousands of jobs that depend on it," Ms Enoch said.

"These regulations, along with other efforts including tree clearing laws and action on climate change, are all steps that are being taken by the Queensland Government to support the health of the Reef and prevent it from being listed by the World Heritage Committee as in-danger next year.

"Today it was also acknowledged that the role of Traditional Owners in protecting and managing the Reef is vital going forward.

"The partnerships being developed with Traditional Owners are driving key recommendations under the Reef 2050 plan, and the work of Indigenous rangers on the land and sea are also proving vital to protect precious eco-systems."

2019 REEF CHAMPION AWARDS



THE PRINCE OF WALES ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP – REEF SUSTAINABILITY AWARD FINALISTS



JOSEPH MARANO

Joseph Marano is a third-generation sugarcane grower from Mourilyan. He and his family farm 417 hectares and have been implementing best management practices on their cane farms since the late 1970s. As an industry leader in his region, his actions have contributed to a greater awareness of both farmers and the cane industry. He has been accredited under the Smartcane Best Management Practice Program, involved in numerous Reef incentive programs to improve soil health and nitrogen use efficiency, reduce sediment losses and improve chemical application. Joseph makes use of a hooded sprayer to target the application of herbicides and reduce the risk of run-off, zonal tillage to prevent sediment loss and a mill ash spreader to improve soil health among other methods. Beyond that, his work has contributed to better collaboration within the Wet Tropics region, improved productivity, knowledge and learning for both Joseph and the industry. His efforts go well beyond his business with memberships of the Queensland Cane Growers Organisation, CANEGROWERS Innisfail, the Wet Tropics Sugarcane Industry Partnership and the Cane Changer Project. These actions have also led to better water quality outcomes for nutrient, sediment and pesticide pollutants that support the health of the Great Barrier Reef.



LENNY PARISI

Lenny Parisi and his family have farmed sugarcane in the Mulgrave and Russell River catchments for three generations. He has embraced the importance of being a good custodian of the land through holistic management including soil productivity, reducing farm run-off, erosion control, water quality and restoring of creek, river and wetland ecosystems. He leads by example as a Smartcane Best Management Practice accredited farm and through his active involvement in progressive farming initiatives. Lenny has worked with Mulgrave Landcare and Greening Australia to willingly handover seven hectares of marginal cane land to restore the wetland environment. This wetland reconstruction is the first in the Wet Tropics region and is a catalyst for new environmental projects planned for the lower catchment with neighbouring farmers, inspired by Lenny's example, also embarking on revegetating riparian zones. As a member of the Sugar Research Australia Cane to Creek Project, Lenny has made significant changes to his nutrient management program, improved his understanding of soil, water and nutrient interactions and better managed these risks to reduce losses. He also takes any opportunity to share his experiences of retaining and restoring natural areas and adopting better farming practices with the cane industry and community.

REEF NUTRIENT CHAMPION AWARD

FINALISTS



V ROSSI AND SONS

V. Rossi and Sons is a family sugarcane farming partnership made up of father Ricky and his five sons Peter, Mark, Steve, Chris and Tony located at Aloomba on the banks of the Mulgrave River. Together they make and use compost on their farm to reduce their need for inorganic nitrogen fertiliser. After purchasing machinery to set up the system, they have reduced nitrogen application by 30 per cent and used multispecies fallow cropping to improve soil biology. Green harvesting and trash blanketing, subsurface fertiliser application and improved pesticide regimes have also improved operations. In addition, a silt trap and the revegetation of their creek boundary drain with river cherry have maintained biodiversity and improved water quality.



GRAHAM VOLCK

Graham Volck is always searching for better management practices to improve resource use efficiency and the sustainability of his irrigated cotton farming business near Emerald. He offered his farm as a demonstration site for the cotton industry's reef water quality project aiming to improve water use efficiency, water quality, and nutrient use efficiency. After conducting soil tests, collecting water samples, installing moisture probes and analysing the data, he removed one in-crop nitrogen fertiliser application. The crop yielded 12 bales per hectare, and Graham saved between \$68 to \$80/ha in nitrogen fertiliser compared to his previous management practices. Graham believes that more precise nitrogen fertiliser management practices will reduce nitrate lost from the field and improve water quality.

REEF SEDIMENT CHAMPION AWARD

FINALISTS



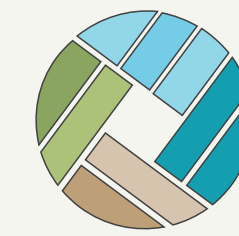
RUSSELL AND CATRIONA MURDOCH

An overarching goal to create an ecologically sustainable grazing operation, that values natural capital as much as it does beef production, has led Russell and Catriona Murdoch to take a holistic approach to the development of their 1900 hectare Boobyjan district property 'Holroyd'. After purchasing the property three years ago, the Murdochs implemented a rotational grazing program to protect riparian areas, decrease erosion and reduce the direct impact of stock on natural waterways. This led to an increase in groundcover of between 50 and 80 per cent across the property and a four-fold increase in Holroyd's carrying capacity.



KATE AND PETER WADDELL

They're 130km from the ocean but Woodleigh Cattle Station owners Kate and Peter Waddell are working hard to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Wanting to stop topsoil loss in heavy rain events, repair extensive gullies and fix eroding tailings dams, they began a major project including earthworks, fencing, revegetation, natural grazing practices and off-stream watering points. They also work their cattle (900 head) in a single herd moved through the paddocks, leading to better grazing of areas, which keeps weeds down, improves soil aeration, increases biodiversity from manure and carbon and water retention, resulting in improved grass growth and less erosion.



REEF CONSERVATION CHAMPION AWARD

FINALIST



NEIL FARMER

Lake Learmonth, owned by Neil Farmer, is a 2,675 hectare cattle property located approximately 45km north of Rockhampton sharing frontage onto the Fitzroy River. Neil has engaged in extensive property planning to manage his grazing lands as ecological systems and preserve soil health to maximise business outcomes. He has installed five new water troughs, 9.8kms of electric fencing and 4kms of poly-pipe to protect riparian areas, promote vegetation regrowth and reduce sediment loss. He now maintains 90-100 per cent ground cover. These changes have also assisted in creating a corridor which not only enhances wildlife movement but provides a preferred nesting habitat for the protected Fitzroy River Turtle and White-throated snapping turtle.

REEF EXTENSION OFFICER CHAMPION AWARD

FINALISTS



ELLIE CARTER

Ellie Carter is highly regarded as a source of impartial and trusted advice on land management extension in the Fitzroy region. During her time at the Fitzroy Basin Association, Ellie has demonstrated a keen interest in agricultural innovations, a proven track record for sound technical advice and, above all, a continued dedication to investing in her skills and future to benefit landholders and industry. Ellie regularly participates in the Fitzroy Regional Extension Network, sharing articles and resources to ensure she remains at the forefront of the agricultural industry while also sharing her knowledge with students from the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges and The Cathedral College in Rockhampton.



JAYSON DOWIE

Jayson Dowie has built and mentored a team of agronomists in Farmacist in the Burdekin who value his expertise and friendly approach. He has partnered with local farmers to develop the RP161 project, an innovative working model that makes changing farming practices as easy as possible for growers. Due in large part to Jayson's dedication, RP161 has achieved a nitrogen reduction of nearly 200 tonnes, over 156 farms in its first three years and helped cane farmers to reduce harmful runoff, improve their profitability without any loss to production, and benefit their farm for the long-term. RP161 has since expanded to the Mackay Whitsunday region with a 98-tonne reduction in its first year and to the Herbert catchment, and the Burnett Mary region.

REEF COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD

FINALISTS



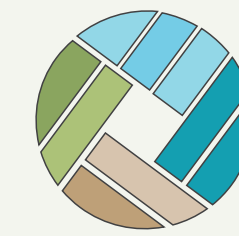
JOLLY ROGERS FISHING CLUB

Jolly Rogers Fishing Club is a not-for-profit organisation whose vision is 'to clear plastic and rubbish debris from our Great Barrier Reef, to sustain its pristine and vital ecosystems for future generations'. The group gathers weekly to remove pollutants from the Fitzroy River. In their mission, since mid-2018, the group has removed over 100 tonnes of debris from the largest river system draining into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. They have inspired the local community with their steadfast passion to make an impact on local ecosystems and have since branched out to several different community outreach programs, including feeding the homeless and opening an op-shop. As a result, volunteer numbers are growing, and greater environmental outcomes are being achieved.



WET TROPICS SUGAR INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

The Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnership model is the first of its kind in Australia – with 17 partners from across the sugar industry, including mills, industry bodies, productivity services, sugar research, natural resource management and government agencies, working together for the benefit of sugarcane farmers and the reef. The Partnership has exceeded its targets and delivered an estimated 10 per cent reduction in dissolved inorganic nitrogen flowing off cane farms to the Great Barrier Reef. This significant outcome has been achieved by engaging with nearly 500 sugarcane growers, of which nearly 300 have made verified practice changes across more than 60,000 hectares.



REEF YOUTH CHAMPION AWARD

FINALIST



WILLIAM DARVENIZA

Will Darvenzia is a district extension officer for a community-designed reef water quality project aimed at reducing the number of agricultural pollutants flowing from water quality hotspot catchments, Innisfail and Tully. He has successfully coupled local knowledge with an ever-increasing understanding of water quality concepts to play a pivotal role in project initiatives. Critical to Will's role is the ability to communicate sensitive and complex data. Using his aptitude for graphic design, he has produced innovative extension resources such as an N loss pathways board game, basin concept maps, site plans and other infographics which have been very successful with many growers. He has also taken on a mentoring role and is sharing his very practical knowledge of sustainable farming in the Wet Tropics.