

INDIGENOUS SOCIAL PROFILE REPORT FOR SEQ RFA

Final report

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Prepared for:

**FAIRA Aboriginal Corporation;
Gurang Land Council Aboriginal Corporation;
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Note: The issues and aspirations outlined in the Social Profile Chapters of this Report are the initial ideas and concepts of Indigenous people who participated in the project. They should not be regarded as a comprehensive list of issues and aspirations of traditional owner groups whose traditional lands are included in the SEQ RFA.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AFFA	Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
DOGIT	Deed of Grant in Trust
DPIE	Department of Primary Industries and Energy
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
NTA	<i>Native Title Act (Cth) 1993</i>
NTRBs	Native Title Representative Bodies
QLD	Queensland
QTB	Queensland Timber Board
SEQ RFA	South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SLA	Statistical Local Area
WAC	Woorabinda Aboriginal Council

Chapter 1: Background to the project and methods used

1.1 Background

FAIRA Aboriginal Corporation, the Goolburri Aboriginal Corporation Land Council and the Gurang Land Council Aboriginal Corporation have been commissioned by the Queensland and Commonwealth governments to undertake an Indigenous Communities' Issues and Social Profile Case Studies Project as part of the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement (SEQ RFA).

The Indigenous Communities Issues and Social Profile Case Studies project has direct links with a/ the Social Assessment Overview Report and b/ other Indigenous projects undertaken in the SEQ RFA. These include the Literature Review of the Impact of Changes in Forest Use on Indigenous Communities and the South East Queensland Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Guidelines project.

The objectives of this project are to:

- Develop a broad community socio-demographic profile;
- Integrate the key variables associated with the nature and level of potential social impacts for Indigenous communities arising from changes in use and management of SEQ forests;
- Identify key issues of concern and interest of the six Indigenous communities that have association with forests in the South East Queensland RFA region.

Information gathered from this project will be incorporated into the final deliberations regarding the development of the options for future forestry operations in SEQ. It was anticipated that an Options Report would be released for public comment before the final round of consultations was undertaken. However, Options have not been released to date.

1.1.1 Project Methodology

Project SE 5.3 Case Study Areas is one of the four projects undertaken as part of the Social Assessment for the SEQ RFA. A Case Studies approach was considered useful in the non-Indigenous context as it was assumed the impacts on forest dependant communities could then be modelled across the region. A Case Studies approach was deemed necessary because of the large size of the SEQ bio-region and the resource and time constraints of the RFA.

The Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) for southern Queensland have been commissioned to undertake a similar project.

Case studies are considered a legitimate research technique for undertaking a broader social assessment. The Social Impact Assessment Unit (SIAU) advocates, "case

studies should be carefully chosen for their relevance and usefulness in the current assessment” (1998:78). Community profiling, through consultation and use of other data, of the case study areas can assist in establishing common issues and possible differences across the region”.

The methodologies established for the project have been developed from social assessment theory and have also been applied within an Indigenous context. This includes appropriate and comprehensive methods for consultation.

It should be noted however, that in an Indigenous context, modelling of regional impacts based on selected case studies is difficult and in some contexts inappropriate because, although some regional issues will arise, discussion is more likely to be dominated by local issues. This is because of the differences in the locally specific social structure and relationships of Indigenous communities (see Section 2.4 for more detail).

Nevertheless, a case studies approach has been adopted due to the absence of resources to directly engage and address the issues of each traditional owner group, native title claimants and historical associates across the whole SEQ region. A case studies approach also co-ordinates the Indigenous social assessments with the general social assessment process which has already been undertaken.

The NTRBs have selected six townships/areas for this project. Each of the three NTRBs selected two case study areas. In total, these case study areas allow an exploration of a broad range of potential RFA impacts on Indigenous communities. The case study areas are:

1. Woorabinda;
2. Hervey Bay;
3. Cherbourg;
4. Glasshouse mountains;
5. Githabul traditional lands; and
6. Beaudesert.

The land areas associated with the six communities include ex-mission lands, Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) lands, production forests, national park and reserve areas, plantation areas, pastoral and other leases and freehold. Some areas are partially under native title claim, while other areas have no known claims at this stage. One area is the traditional lands of one nation (Githabul), another area has been selected because it is culturally significant (Glasshouse Mountains), two are Aboriginal DOGIT's (Cherbourg, Woorabinda) and two are local towns in which Aboriginal people live (Hervey Bay, Beaudesert).

Broad methods for the collection of data will be used for the project. They are:

1. The collation and analysis of secondary quantitative data including, ATSIIC and ABS socio-demographic data, information provided by the Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) and reports developed for previous relevant SEQ RFA projects.

2. The collection and interpretation of primary qualitative data from consultation during the project and from previous primary data collected in relevant previous field work we will need to enter as data sources.
3. Using this information, develop strategies and mechanisms for change management, which maximises positive impacts and minimises negative impacts from potential changes in the use and management of forests.

1.2 Consultation methods

To assist with the consultation methods and to fit in with the short time frame for completion of this project, resources have been allocated to the NTRBs to employ project officers to organise meetings and community contacts. Consultation has primarily been undertaken in the six community areas. Efforts were made to invite other known traditional owners to participate however, due to time and budget constraints not all traditional owners have been identified and located for this Project.

Consultation methods were finalised with the three project officers and NTRBs. They included:

- Local community forums;
- Face to face interviews;
- Phone discussions; and
- Community meetings.

Two phases of consultation have been undertaken. The consultation methods used for each social profile is outlined below:

- For the Hervey Bay Social Profile, two community meetings were held, meetings were organised with relevant Aboriginal organisations, individual interviews were undertaken and phone discussions were held with some people who could not get to the meetings. The consultation included representatives of all three current native title claimant groups and other Aboriginal people interested in forestry in the Hervey Bay area. Updated drafts of the report have been made available to people who have attended each meeting.
- For the Woorabinda Social Profile, community meetings were held at Rockhampton and Woorabinda. Follow up phone discussions have occurred with relevant Aboriginal organisations and with people unable to attend the meetings. The consultation included representatives from all three current native title claimant groups and residents at Woorabinda. Updated drafts of the report have been made available to people who have attended each meeting.
- For the Beaudesert Social Profile, community meetings were held at both Beaudesert and Brisbane in the first round. These were followed up by a second visit to Beaudesert, for a day of personal interviews. A second major community meeting was recently held. The traditional owners from the Beaudesert area were

involved in the discussions. Phone discussions also occurred with people who had further issues to raise from the meetings or who could not attend. Drafts of the report have been made available to people who attended meetings;

- For the Githabul Social Profile, community meetings were held at Muli Muli NSW and a Githabul nation meeting Cherribah Homestead in the first round. In the second round the meetings was held in Warwick. All meetings involved Native Title claimants. There was also follow up phone discussions with individual members. Drafts of the report have been made available to people who attended the meetings;
- For the Cherbourg Social Profile two community meetings were held, at Cherbourg. The meetings focused on the elderly people of the community and their experiences. There were also phone discussions with members who could not attend the meeting or who lived too far away. There were also home visits to other elderly people and people who could not physically make it to the meetings. Drafts of the Reports have been made available to people who have attended the meetings;
- For the Glasshouse Mountains Social Profile, two community meetings were held at Ewan Maddock Dam and then at Morayfield. Follows up phone discussions were held with key people unable to attend the meetings. All native title claimant groups have been involved. Drafts of the Report have been made available to those who have attended the meetings.

1.3 Principles for consultation

Menzies (1993) outlines four principles for appropriate participation, which have been utilised in the project. They are:

- *Collecting information*: about what people need, what they want, and how they feel;
- Taking account of *values*: people have differing values, and these need to be aired and acknowledged so that planning is culturally sensitive;
- *Building support*: participation is critical to those who will be involved in carrying out any plans and have a stake in the plan because they helped prepare it; and
- *Empowerment*: giving the community some control over the decisions that affect their lives, making people more responsible for their own communities, enhancing combined development by having people work together to decide their common future as a community (Menzies 1993:12).

The principles outlined here are relevant to the current project. It is anticipated that at the end of the project all Indigenous people involved will understand the SEQ RFA better, will have their values and issues known to the decision makers and will hopefully have support for ongoing negotiations regarding future decision making about forested lands in the SEQ RFA.

A fifth principle has also been applied in this project, which is appropriate in an Indigenous context.

- That unrealistic hopes or expectations are not raised during the project.

The legal and political recognition of the rights of Indigenous people during the 1990's are slowly being incorporated into statutes, policies and administrative procedures of all levels of government. However, at this early stage of the transition period there is some misinformation within both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities about what these rights mean in practice. Acknowledgment of this fact is important in undertaking consultation.

1.4 Data requirements from consultation

Specific data was required to achieve the stated objectives of identifying key issues of concern and interests and the possible nature and level of social impacts of the SEQ RFA. The qualitative data requirements identified included:

1. Indigenous association with forests including historical attachments, use patterns and economic gains including employment.
2. The aspirations of Indigenous people regarding future protection and management of forested areas;
3. Investigating the existing structures (legal and administrative), both within the Indigenous community and with government, which provide opportunities and impediments for Indigenous people to be involved in negotiations. This will assist in reviewing the capacity of Indigenous people to be involved in future negotiations and the institutional opportunities and impediments to any future negotiations.
4. Identification of areas of common interest or potential conflict between the local Indigenous people and other residents within the broader local community. This may involve further consultation with other communities, community groups and industry.

1.5 Defining Community

A difficulty in the use of the term 'community' is that it does not take into account the complexity of relationships between Indigenous groups when discussing land title and management.

As Lane notes,

The widespread application of the community concept is problematic because it fails to acknowledge the historical forces which gave rise to concentrated Aboriginal settlements, particularly in Queensland (see for example, Chase 1990). It also entails assumptions of a

unitary Aboriginal interests (Lane 1997). Failure to acknowledge the plurality of Aboriginal interests can render the particular interests of some groups invisible. (Lane 1999, p. 19)

As such, it is an extremely complex undertaking to include and have represented all dynamics within the Indigenous communities. Attempts have been made to involve not only those living in the area (both historical associates and traditional owners) but also traditional owners who live outside the region.

Woorabinda is one such example. The township is part of the Woorabinda DOGIT. As an old mission the residents include both historical associates and traditional owners. (Historical associates may be traditional owners of other land in SEQ). A number of traditional owner groups exist in Woorabinda. Their traditional lands include part of the DOGIT and continue outside the DOGIT boundary. Three known native title claims exist on some parts of the DOGIT and continue outside the boundary. The claims overlap slightly.

One major difficulty with development of this project was the lack of time and funds to undertake the necessary anthropological work to identify, locate and involve all known traditional owners from these areas.

1.6 Case Study boundaries

The Case Study boundaries broaden significantly from the towns to include, in many areas, all forested traditional lands of traditional owner groups and native title claimants involved in the project. As outlined above some areas such as DOGIT's have multiple boundaries including the DOGIT boundary, native title claims boundaries which include part of the DOGIT and/or traditional clan boundaries.

The boundaries have been finalised after initial consultations with Indigenous people.

The Hervey Bay Social Profile boundaries are the traditional lands of the Butchulla/Badtjala people. Hervey Bay is central to their lands which includes Fraser Island and other small islands off-shore. Forestry areas to the north, south and west of Hervey Bay are of an interest to the Butchulla/Badtjala people.

The Woorabinda boundaries include the Woorabinda DOGIT lands and the Blackdown tablelands. The Ghungalu, Iman and Wadga nations have native title claims on both of these areas.

The Cherbourg boundaries include the Cherbourg DOGIT lands and Cherbourg people who are traditional owners of the DOGIT lands.

The Githabul boundaries are based on the Queensland aspect of their traditional lands within the south west section of the RFA region.

The Glasshouse Mountains boundaries include the Glasshouse Mountains, forested areas from Bribie Island and north to the Conondale Ranges. Several traditional owner groups with an interest in the Glasshouse Mountains have different boundaries within the broader social profile boundary.

The Beaudesert boundaries include Beaudesert and traditional forest areas of the Yugambeh Language group and clan group tribal boundaries.

1.7 Constraints to the Project

The key constraints to the project included:

1. The difficulty in applying a case studies approach of townships or succinct areas to assessments in the Indigenous domain given the complex make-up of Indigenous communities;
2. The lack of relevance of local township socio-demographic data when applied in the Indigenous domain as it does not include native title claimants and/or traditional owners living outside the township or area and does not include information about what are the traditional lands of the current Indigenous residents; and
3. The current lack of knowledge about traditional owners within the SEQ RFA;
4. Time constraints of four months to complete the project; and
5. The resource constraints for the proposed meetings.

Therefore, the consultation methods used for this project could be considered sufficient to undertake this case studies project but should not be considered appropriate methodology for the involvement of traditional owners in decisions about their traditional lands. Consultation for the purposes of this project have only gone part way to fulfil Government commitments from the SEQ RFA Scoping Agreement to fully consult with Indigenous people and to undertake social impact assessment of forest use options.

Chapter 2: Socio-demographic profile

2.1 Background

The socio-demographic profile undertaken by FAIRA for the Indigenous Social Assessment Chapter is the basis for this Chapter, which has been published in the SEQ RFA Social Assessment Report (1999:73-88).

The data and analysis presented in this chapter is all derived from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) information from the 1996 census. Demographic data on Indigenous people in Queensland are presented as Queensland totals and with breakdowns according to ATSI regions. It is compared with the Queensland total population unless otherwise stated.

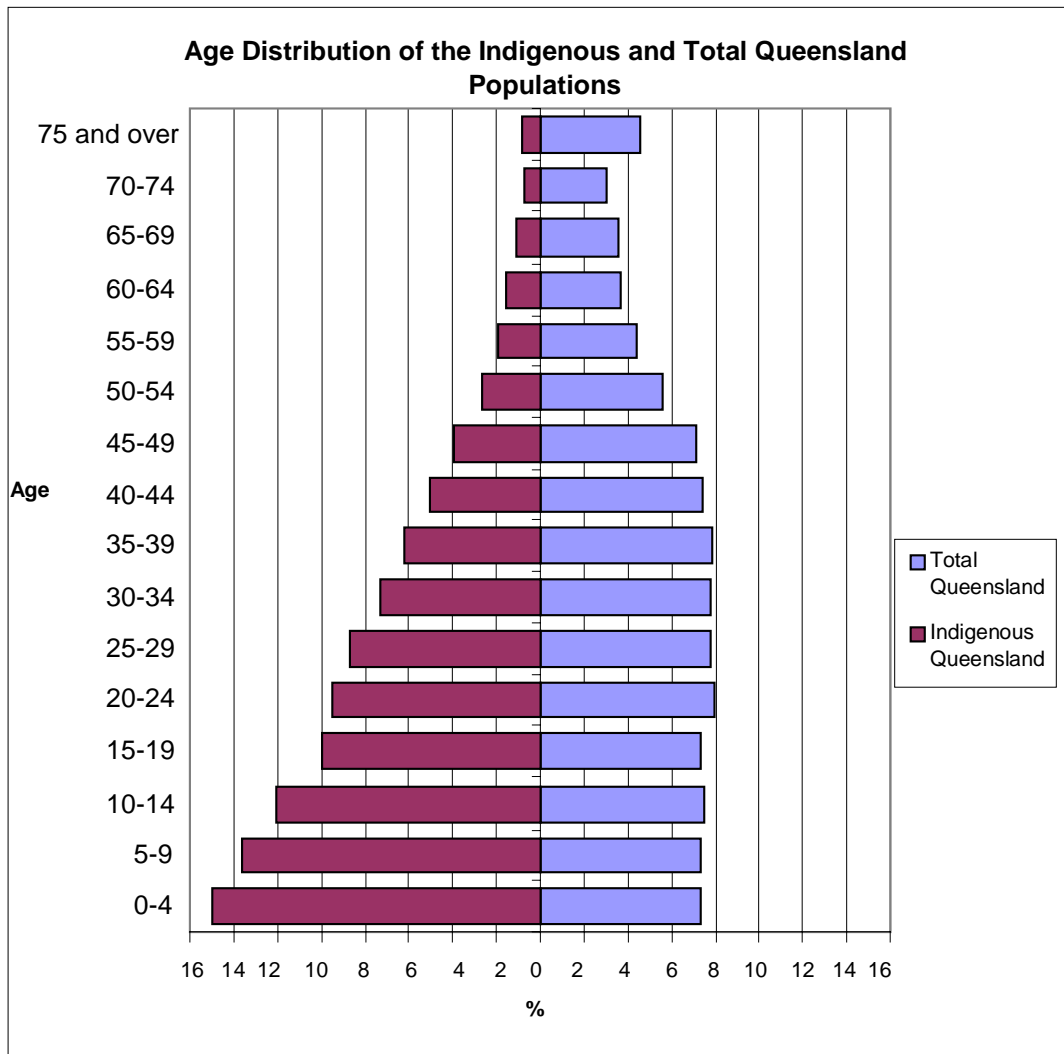
The SEQ RFA bio-geographic region as a planning unit does not correlate with any single ATSI region. Whilst the Brisbane ATSI region falls entirely within the bounds of the SEQ RFA bio-geographic region, the ATSI regions of Roma and Rockhampton also fall partly within the SEQ RFA region.

Most of the graphs shown in this section will include information specific to the three ATSI regions (i) Brisbane, (ii) Roma, and (iii) Rockhampton, which fall into the SEQ RFA bio-geographic region as well as information about the total Queensland Indigenous Population and the total Queensland Population.

The indicators analysed herein are:

- Age structure and Families;
- Unemployment and Income; and
- Housing.

2.2 Age Structure and Families



Graph 1: Age structure of the Queensland Indigenous population and the total Queensland population (Source: ABS:1996).

The age structure of Queensland’s Indigenous people starkly contrasts with that of the whole population of Queensland as highlighted in the above graph. The age distribution of the total population of Queensland is indicative of a stable population with evidence of declining birth rates, and some evidence of a continuing post WWII baby boom.

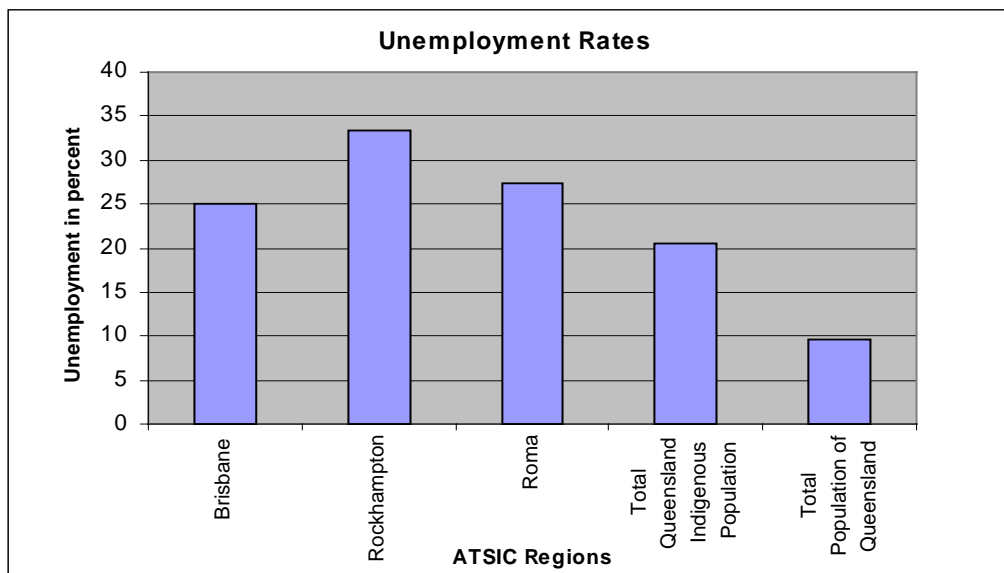
The age structure of the Indigenous population of Queensland shows that there is a very high proportion of young people, and conversely, a very small proportion of older people in the total population. In particular:

- Approximately 50% of the Indigenous population is under 20 while just approximately 30% of the Queensland total population is under 20;
- Less than 10% of the Indigenous population is 50 years old or over, while approximately 25% of the Queensland total population is 50 years old or over; and
- Approximately 5% of the Indigenous population are 60 years old or over, while approximately 15% of the Queensland total population is over 60 years old (ABS:1996).

In relation to families, 2.8% of all families counted were Indigenous families. Relevant family statistics include:

- 17.7% of Indigenous families were couples without children, while amongst other families the rate was 36.4%;
- 13.7% of Indigenous families had 4 or more children while amongst the other families the rate was 5%;
- Indigenous lone parent families were 25.5% of the total Indigenous families while amongst the other families the rate was 10%; and
- The median weekly income for Indigenous families in Queensland was \$523 while for other families it was \$693 (ABS:1996).

2.3 Unemployment and Income



Graph 2: Unemployment rates of Queensland Indigenous populations and the total Queensland population (Source: ABS:1996)

The Aboriginal unemployment rate is far higher than the rate for the total Queensland population. These figures would be even higher if Aboriginal participation in CDEP

(work for the dole) schemes were included. High rates of unemployment are indicative of general poverty. Whilst there is a strong correlation between levels of education and qualification and rates of unemployment, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are still less likely to be employed than a member of the non-Indigenous population with the same level of qualification.

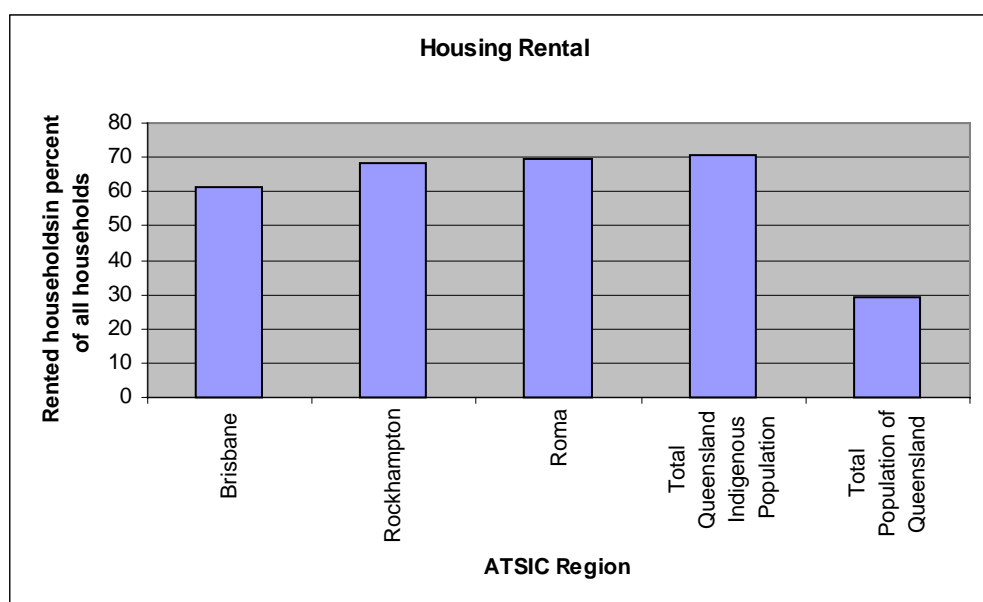
In particular:

- The total Indigenous unemployment rate of 21% is more than two times the unemployment rate of the total Queensland population of just under 10%;
- The unemployment rates of all three relevant ATSI regions are higher than the Queensland Indigenous population average of 21%, with the ATSI Rockhampton region having the highest unemployment rate of approximately 33%; and
- Where 31.5% of the total population of Queensland has a post-secondary qualification, only 12.9% of the Indigenous population of the State has attained a post-secondary qualification (ABS:1996).

Other relevant income statistics include:

- The median weekly personal income for the Indigenous population was \$227 while it was \$293 for the total Queensland population;
- The median weekly personal income for the Brisbane ATSI region Indigenous population was \$234, the median weekly personal income for the Rockhampton ATSI region was \$193 and the median weekly personal income for the Roma ATSI region Indigenous population was \$227; and
- The median weekly personal income for employed Indigenous people of \$363 was 22.8% lower than the total Queensland population (ABS:1996).

2.4 Housing



Graph 3: Household rental rates of Indigenous population and total Queensland population (Source: ABS:1996)

The above graph shows the high level of housing rental within the Indigenous population. A high proportion of people in rental housing may indicate a lack of financial capital available to invest in property. Historically, non-Indigenous Australians have seen home ownership as a key aspiration and high rates of home ownership have been used to represent Australia as a land of relative affluence. In such a context, it is reasonable that rates of housing rental would be seen to be an indicator of poverty, however, this supposes much about aligned aspirations for Indigenous Australians. In particular:

- Almost 70% of the Queensland Indigenous households rented while almost 30% of Queensland households rented; and
- 27% of Queensland Indigenous households owned or were purchasing their property while 68% of Queensland households owned or were purchasing their property (ABS:1996).

2.5 Conclusion

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland are socio-economically disadvantaged when compared to the total population of Queensland. Aboriginal people have an average life expectancy more than two decades less than for the rest of the Queensland population and therefore, the Indigenous population has a significantly different age structure, including a large proportion of young people and a small proportion of older people. The demographic profile shows that Indigenous people have lower incomes, higher rates of unemployment, lower levels of education and higher rates of housing rental than the Queensland population as a whole.

Indigenous people in the ATSI regions, which fall wholly or partly into the SEQ RFA region, are a significantly socio-economically disadvantaged group within society. Further socio-economic impacts could occur if Indigenous interests are not met through the development and implementation of the RFA. Increased involvement of Indigenous communities and people in the SEQ RFA region in the management of local forestry activities and protected areas is one mechanism which could help improve the lives of Indigenous people.

Chapter 3: Social Profile of Hervey Bay

“The most important part of Aboriginal life is the land”. **Olga Miller**

“People are always trying to stop us going on our lands, whether it is through laws, or the signs or the cost of permits to go there.” **Marie Wilkinson**

“Nobody from the government ever talked to us about clearing land for plantations. Never.” **Shirley Foley**

“We want to negotiate with senior decision-makers. We constantly have to deal with junior staff who can’t make decisions. Concerns and issues get lost in the system. We want to establish links with senior decision-makers”. **Fiona Foley**

3.1. Background

Hervey Bay is a coastal township approximately three and a half hours drive north of Brisbane. Forested lands surround Hervey Bay and the town is also known as a haven for tourists or recreational users to visit the Bay and Fraser Island and for fishing, sailing and whale watching.

The traditional owners of Hervey Bay are the Butchulla/Badtjala people. The Butchulla/Badtjala people say their traditional lands continue north of Hervey Bay, west approximately to Maryborough, south approximately to Tin Can Bay and also includes Fraser Island and other islands off the mainland. This area is reflected in the broader Butchulla/Badtjala native title claim submitted to the Native Title Tribunal.

A mission was established on Fraser Island at the end of the last century where Butchulla/Badtjala and other local Aboriginal groups were settled. In 1903 the mission was closed and the bulk of people were sent to Yarrabah because of the terrible conditions at the mission. Some people believe the closure of the mission also allowed loggers to get better access to the forests. Some Butchulla/Badtjala people have always lived in the area but others currently live away from their traditional lands, including people at Yarrabah, Cairns, Cherbourg and Brisbane. Other Aboriginal people, whose traditional lands are elsewhere, have come to live in Hervey Bay over the past two decades.

Due to the short project time frames, Aboriginal descendants of people removed from Fraser Island early this century were not involved in this project until the second round of consultations. The Department of Families, Youth and Community Care undertook research with Butchulla/Badtjala people who were sent to Yarrabah for the Fraser Island and Great Sandy Region Commission of Inquiry. Information from this paper has been used in this report, as well as other issues raised at the second community meeting for this project.

3.1.1 Contemporary Hervey Bay Profile

The statistical information outlined here has been sourced directly from the ABS and is based on the 1996 Census. The material is not published in ABS documentation.

The Hervey Bay Statistical Local Area (SLA) has increased rapidly in population from 20,660 people recorded at Hervey Bay in the 1986 census to 41,806 in the 1996 census. The Aboriginal population in Hervey Bay is growing more rapidly than the rest of the population in percentage terms. There were 202 Aboriginal people recorded at Hervey Bay in the 1986 Census. By the 1996 census the Aboriginal population had grown to 708 Aboriginal people in Hervey Bay. Within Hervey Bay 20% of people were under 15 years old while for the Indigenous population it was 42%. Almost 20% of the Hervey Bay population were over 65 years of age while 2.5% of the Indigenous population was over 65 years of age (ABS:1996).

In 1996, the unemployment rate for Hervey Bay was 16.5%. The unemployment rate within the Indigenous population was 42.5% (ABS:1996).

In relation to housing, 27.7% of Hervey Bay households were renting dwellings, while 58.7% of the Indigenous population were renting dwellings (ABS:1996).

Aboriginal people have access to general services in Hervey Bay. Specific Aboriginal run services include:

- Aboriginal housing of 23 houses including four at Scrub Hill Community Farm;
- Respite Care Centre;
- Community Age Care Packages to provide support for people in their own homes; and
- Emergency Relief.

3.2. Association with forested lands

3.2.1 Background

The following information in this Chapter has been collated from discussions held with Aboriginal people, groups and organisations. The statements are paraphrased and reflect as appropriate the discussions and the range of experiences and aspirations of the people involved.

3.2.2 Historical Context

- Many Butchulla/Badtjala people have always lived on or frequently visited their forested traditional lands. The most important part of Aboriginal life is the land.
- Olga Miller, a Butchulla/Badtjala elder said that from her father and grandfathers perspective, forestry activities were beneficial in the sense that they helped to manage the land. Management included opening the canopy through selected logging and controlled burning, which allowed plants to germinate which in turn

attracted foraging animals. This was important in traditional times to get good tucker and to get plants for food and medicinal purposes and still is.

- Plants and animals in the forests have always been used for food, shelter and medicinal needs etc. For example, bark from the trees was used for shelters, some plants are still used for medicine and bush tucker is still used to supplement people's diets.

3.2.3 Access and the Protection of Culture

- Some Aboriginal people have had continual access to the forests. Access for Aboriginal people has been restricted at different times. People have not always been allowed on forestry land when logging has been occurring.
- Government agencies involved in forestry did not approach people about land issues in the past. There has not been consultation about issues such as access to plants and animals, sacred sites, cultural practices and hunting and gathering with Forestry Departments since logging started.
- Aboriginal people know that culturally significant individual trees, stands of trees and landscapes have been cut down and lost.
- Every time Butchulla/Badtjala people go to the forests they see that further places of cultural significance have been disturbed.

3.2.4 Economic Issues

- There used to be many Aboriginal people employed in forestry. Many people were employed until the 1930's and 40's when bullock teams still brought the wood out. Some Aboriginal people continued to be employed until the last decade or two, both at the mills and as loggers.
- People believe employment in forestry declined due to change of tenure, eg., when State Forests that were being logged were converted to National Parks. It was also recognised that fewer people, including Aboriginal people, were employed in forestry as technology improved.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people have to compete like everybody else to get jobs. There has never been an Aboriginal Employment Strategy for forested lands in the area.

3.2.5 Plantations

- In establishing plantations on traditional bush lands, neither the government nor the timber industry had ever talked to Butchulla/Badtjala people. Nobody from the government has ever talked to Butchulla/Badtjala people about clearing land for plantations or managing the plantations. Never.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people know that culturally significant sites have never been protected within the plantation lands.
- Destruction of sacred sites has occurred in the plantation areas including the loss of Bora Rings.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people believe that land should be assessed properly and the impacts on Aboriginal people understood and managed through proper negotiations before it is converted to plantations.

3.3 Current Issues

3.3.1 General Issues

Aboriginal people consulted believe the key current issues are those in the following list:

- There has been no hand back of traditional lands to Butchulla/Badtjala people. Aboriginal people have not been given ownership or control over management of any of their traditional lands.
- There has been no acknowledgment of Aboriginal people by government or the timber industry. Butchulla/Badtjala people have not been consulted about the protection and management of sacred sites, forest land use and the environment. Most of the forested lands are still government owned but the Butchulla/Badtjala people are still having little or no say in managing them. There are a number of environmental concerns to do with forestry and plantation impacts. In particular, people were worried about waterways and lagoons being affected by silt and herbicide use. One key environmental concern was in relation to the removal of natural vegetation to plant seedlings. The Butchulla/Badtjala people believe it is causing erosion and soil runoff into rivers, streams and waterholes, which is resulting in high turbidity and silt load.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people believe hardwoods should be planted in future plantations. There is continuing concern over the planting of pines in plantations, especially slash pine.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people want to see better management of forestry activities by both government and loggers and proper negotiations with Butchulla/Badtjala people about ongoing management. The Butchulla/Badtjala people believe the role of forestry is to help rejuvenate forests, regulate tourism and their associated environmental impacts;
- There is a need for more employment training and opportunities for Aboriginal people. Present Aboriginal employment on forested lands consists of two people – one National Parks ranger and one trainee. A second trainee has just been laid off.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people are having trouble getting permanent positions for trainees after their one year contract is completed. There should be more mill or softwood industry employment for Aboriginal people and better employment in National Parks.
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people never have been able to set up ongoing commercial enterprises associated with forestry because of the impediments eg. lack of capital resources and infrastructure;
- The Butchulla/Badtjala people wish to develop further cultural tourism ventures. However, the costs make it very difficult. Aboriginal people must pay for permits to set up cultural tourism ventures.
- The continuing loss of areas of cultural significance is causing anguish to Butchulla/Badtjala people.
- Butchulla/Badtjala people believe that their broader rights to land have not been considered an issue by government staff until the recent *Native Title Act*.

- It is only since the *Native Title Act* that Butchulla/Badtjala people have been consulted regularly on land and natural resource management issues. However, consultation has been ad-hoc and has involved no serious negotiations.

3.3.2 Outcomes from the Fitzgerald Inquiry into Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region

- The recommendations of the Inquiry have not been implemented. Virtually nothing has happened. There is no Aboriginal Board of Management and there is currently no Aboriginal sole, joint or co-management system in place for areas on Fraser Island.
- The Island has subsequently been declared National Park without any formal negotiations with Butchulla/Badtjala people.
- There is only one Aboriginal person permanently employed by government as noted above.
- It is extremely difficult for Butchulla/Badtjala people to live on, or regularly visit, Fraser Island. Butchulla/Badtjala people are treated the same as tourists and need to buy permits, pay full price for barge costs and rent or have access to a four wheel drives.
- The same rules apply for permits for Aboriginal people in relation to cultural tourism (camping, to set up tourist ventures).
- People often can't go to places determined by the government to be environmentally off limits including sacred sites.
- There was no money or other resources provided to Butchulla/Badtjala people from the Structural Adjustment Package for implementing the outcomes of the Fraser Island Inquiry.

3.4 Aspirations

The aspirations of Butchulla/Badtjala people consulted in the project were as follows:

- Recognition by the government and other stakeholders of the legal and customary rights to land of Butchulla/Badtjala people.
- The recognition of Butchulla/Badtjala people's rights and interests in relation to potential land use changes and associated land management decisions.
- Butchulla/Badtjala people want to be able to live on their traditional lands and/or be able to easily visit their lands.
- Aboriginal people should have unrestricted access to their traditional lands including forested lands eg., through abolishing the need for permits to go to Fraser Island.
- Butchulla/Badtjala people want to see the reversal of disempowerment. The government should instead support self-determination for Butchulla/Badtjala people by recognising rights to land, negotiating joint management of traditional lands and by establishing economic opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Butchulla/Badtjala people want to negotiate with senior decision-makers. People constantly have to deal with junior staff who can't make major decisions. Concerns and issues get lost in the system. Butchulla/Badtjala people want to establish links with senior decision-makers.

- Butchulla/Badtjala people want to get access and be able to protect and manage areas of cultural significance, including those in the forests.
- Butchulla/Badtjala people want to have continuing recognition of their hunting, fishing and gathering rights.

Similar aspirations have consistently been recorded through the Fraser Island Inquiry and through the Cultural Heritage project recently undertaken for the RFA.

The aspirations of Yarrabah people involved in the research project funded by the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care in 1990, for the Commission of Inquiry, are similar to the aspirations outlined above. They include:

- Inalienable freehold to crown land Islands off Hervey Bay including Fraser Island and Woody Island;
- Lease back of national parks for 99 years;
- Traditional owners should be able to live on, and use, the lands;
- Board of Management for the Park with majority Aboriginal membership;
- Hunting, gathering and fishing rights should be guaranteed;
- Custodianship of sites should be legally recognised;
- Aboriginal rangers should manage and protect sites; and
- Royalties should be paid for logging, mining or tourism activities to Butchulla/Badtjala people (Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, 1990:37-46).

Descendants of Aboriginal people sent to Yarrabah who attended the second community meeting confirmed that these aspirations are still relevant today and should still be pursued.

3.5 Local Organisations

The need for a Land Management Organisation, which represents all Aboriginal interests, has not been discussed in Hervey Bay. Two principle reasons were given for this.

1. They have not had a chance to look into this due to the time restrictions imposed by Native Title issues, claim requirements and constant amendments to the rules; and
2. They have not have the resources to establish a land issues organisation.

However, a number of organisations have been involved in land management activities and issues. They are listed below.

3.5.1 Wondunna (Wund'duman) Aboriginal Corporation

Wondunna (Wund'duman) Aboriginal Corporation is an incorporated group with representation of the Wondunna clan group within the Butchulla/Badtjala nation. The

organisation is responsible for organising their Native Title claim and has been actively involved in land management in the region for a number of years.

Many of the family members have lived at Hervey Bay or Fraser Island. They have considerable experience in land management issues, particularly on Fraser Island. They were active during the Fraser Island and Great Sandy Region Commission of Inquiry and have been involved in many negotiations since. While having a good relationship with government locally, they believe they are not getting enough access to Ministers and senior Departmental Heads of relevant government agencies.

3.5.2 Gari Elders

The Gari Elders was established in October, 1997 as an organisation representing Butchulla/Badtjala elders. They have direct links with Kal'ang Respite Care Centre who administer Aged Care programs. The Group is an inclusive group where any known Butchulla/Badtjala elders can attend.

The group has not often been consulted about land and natural resource management issues to date but they have been active in native title matters and in trying to bring Butchulla/Badtjala people together. For example, a group of Butchulla/Badtjala elders recently went to Yarrabah to meet with other Butchulla/Badtjala people or their descendants who were taken away.

The Elders are currently actively negotiating for the Thoorgine Lease on Fraser Island, which has recently gone into liquidation. Granting of the lease will give Butchulla/Badtjala people the opportunity to access their traditional lands on Fraser Island. The cost of the lease is making it extremely difficult and the Elders are seeking support for different arrangements. The land is approximately 10 acres in size and has some run down infrastructure in place.

3.5.3. Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation

Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation is an incorporated community group which operates a 35 hectare farm called Scrub Hill Community Farm, the only Aboriginal and Islander owned broadacre land in Hervey Bay. Aboriginal and Islander people who live in Hervey Bay operate the farm. Both traditional owners and historical associates are participating. A CDEP program currently employs approximately 75 people. Four of the five houses on the farm have been restored and a community hall and office have been built.

The farm has been developed over the past decade using many permaculture and organic farming principles. Protea and tea tree plantations have been established and Kangaroo Paw and Christmas Bush plants are currently being planted. Market gardens and a bush tucker trail are being put in place. Arts and Crafts have been established and some preliminary cultural tourism enterprises are occurring.

Korrawinga works closely with government agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Primary Industries and other organisations such as Greening Australia. They have considerable experience in applying for and successfully operating grants, including the administration of resources.

Korrawinga has been operating its own training programs (accredited where possible). It has a high level of success with short term and long term education and training programs. Their Small Business Education program delivered in 1997 was assessed as Best Practice by Southbank TAFE where 18 of the 19 students completed the 15 week full-time project. Other Land Management programs have also been popular.

Korrawinga has been dependent on grants and the CDEP program to operate the farm. In the future community enterprises will bring in some income and it is hoped that additional enterprises can be established in relation to the farm.

Korrawinga is interested in getting involved in small scale wood production and manufacturing of wood products. The timing is also right for planning and establishing a number of cultural tourism enterprises at the farm. Korrawinga is seeking continued support for accredited training and education programs and resources for establishing enterprises that can create real jobs on proper wages rather than CDEP being the only option for many Hervey Bay Aboriginal people to work (Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation:1999).

3.6 Conclusion

The Hervey Bay Social Profile shows that Aboriginal people are more socio-economically disadvantaged than other people in the area.

Butchulla/Badtjala people historically were involved in forestry activities. Today no-one is employed. In addition, Aboriginal people were not consulted about the establishment and ongoing management of plantations, forestry activities or national parks within the area.

People have attempted to be more effective in their involvement in land and natural resource management in recent years. The Butchulla/Badtjala people are extremely disappointed that they have not been involved in jointly managing Fraser Island as it was recommended in the Commission of Inquiry. They have a reasonable relationship with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service but would prefer to negotiate better participation of Butchulla/Badtjala people with the decision makers in Brisbane.

When these issues are looked at collectively, the cumulative social and economic impacts on Butchulla/Badtjala people have been severe.

The Scrub Hill Community Farm, and its associated activities, has become the biggest employer of Aboriginal people in the Hervey Bay area. The Farm activities are well managed and they have incorporated appropriate training programs for staff. Support could be given for expanding the cultural tourism projects, the development of a small timber farm and the establishment of a manufacturing base for creating artefacts, furniture and other wood products.

Chapter 4: Social Profile of Woorabinda

“Our leaders who taught us our customs were always in trouble. They even sent some to Palm Island”. **Leo Rebel**

“In subtle ways we are still under the Act. Our youth are always harassed by the police for being outdoors”. **Jill Wilson**

“We are annoyed at constantly having to deal with junior staff who can’t make decisions and convey concerns and interests properly to senior staff. We would like to be taken seriously by senior decision-makers”. **Sean Sandow**

“The biggest problem is that stories are not being passed on. People are losing their cultural identity and existence. We need to be on the land in appropriate places to transmit knowledge. Getting back to country is very important”. **Frank Kemp**

4.1 Background

The Woorabinda Aboriginal community is approximately 170 kms west of Rockhampton. Woorabinda is situated in the Central Highlands region famous for its pastoral activities. Woorabinda was originally established as an Aboriginal mission in 1927 when the Taroom mission was closed for a proposed dam.

Missions were established under the *Sale of Opium and the Protection of Aborigines Act 1897* to house Aborigines who were being forcibly removed from their traditional lands because of pastoral and other activities in the region. The government granting of leases to other people which had resulted in many Aboriginal people being forced off parts of their lands and becoming ‘fringe dwellers’ of the newly established towns.

The Aboriginal people at Taroom were walked to Woorabinda. The people at Taroom were ‘a polyglot of people bought from a wide catchment: Cooktown in the north, Windorah in the west and Kamilaroi people from northern New South Wales’ (Brown, Godwin, Henry, Mitchell and Tyson, 1995: 8). Few traditional owners remained at Woorabinda when it was established as many people had already been sent to other missions. Numerous other Aboriginal people were sent to Woorabinda over the years, eg., many from Cape Bedford on Cape York were sent to Woorabinda during World War Two (WAC, 1997).

People required a pass or an exemption certificate under the Act to even leave Woorabinda. Some people were employed for little or no money for extended periods, eg. on surrounding pastoral properties. The only other people to leave were those sent to Palm Island or other missions for punishment (WAC, 1997).

Others were given twenty one days solitary confinement for:

- Speaking an Aboriginal language;
- Being late for morning role call;
- Being rude to the overseer; and
- Waving to young women in the dormitory (Shelley 1989 cited in Dale, 1993:343).

The people running the mission allowed Ceremonies to continue in an institutionalised way at the weekly dances and at annual shows. Dormitories were used at Woorabinda. Orphans, children taken away from their parents outside of the mission and children on the mission were all institutionalised. The children from Woorabinda were allowed to visit their families on the weekend. No other contact was allowed (Dale, 1993:344).

The Bjelke-Peterson government decided to hand over administration of missions to Aboriginal people in the mid-1980's. At Woorabinda, the Woorabinda Aboriginal Council (WAC) was established in 1985 under the *Community Services Aborigines Act 1984-90*. A lease called a Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) was given to the WAC on 30th of October, 1986, which also included the ownership of 91 houses at Woorabinda and four pastoral properties (WAC, 1997).

4.1.1 Contemporary Woorabinda Profile

Today approximately 1200-1400 people reside at Woorabinda. The population fluctuates as people come to visit relatives and go to seek work daily. Services provided at Woorabinda include:

- Limited shopping facilities;
- Post Office;
- Hospital and Community Health facility;
- Aged Persons Hostel;
- Police station;
- Youth and Women's Centre;
- Licensed Social Club;
- Primary and High school (currently to Grade 11);
- Recreational facilities of pool, football ground and playgrounds; and
- Catholic and Inland Mission Church (WAC, 1997).

The unemployment rate in the Community in 1997 was 94.5%. However, in recent discussions with Gurang Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, the WAC indicated that the unemployment rate was now approximately 97% (including CDEP participants). CDEP work groups build and maintain infrastructure such as housing and roads at Woorabinda.

Virtually all Aboriginal residents of Woorabinda are dependent on Social Security or CDEP. Woorabinda Aboriginal Health estimated in 1997 that 5.5% of the population had incomes which allowed for a reasonable standard of living (WAC, 1997).

At Woorabinda, 95% of housing is rental property (WAC, 1997).

Woorabinda has similar age demographics to Indigenous people outlined in Chapter 2:

- Approximately 55% of the Woorabinda population is under 20 years of age;
- Approximately 7.5% of the Woorabinda population is 50 years of age or over; and
- Less than 1% of the population was 70 years of age or over (WAC, 1997).

The average life expectancy at Woorabinda is 46 years (WAC, 1997).

In relation to families, 98.8% have never married, although many have lived in a defacto relationship. Only 1.2% of the population is married (WAC, 1997).

4.2 Association with forested lands

4.2.1 Background

The following information in this Chapter has been collated from discussions held with Aboriginal people, groups and organisations. The statements are paraphrased and reflect as appropriate discussions and the range of experiences and aspirations of the people involved.

4.2.2 Historical context

Many people consulted had until recent decades lived at Woorabinda. The main points raised during discussion about what it was like living at Woorabinda ‘under the Act’ are described in the following list:

- It was hard to survive on the Mission. People at Woorabinda needed a permit to come and go. Aboriginal people were only allowed out for two days at a time. Aboriginal people were given a piece of paper to get goods and services. No money was given out.
- Aboriginal people went to jail if they practiced traditional customs and beliefs – the standard length was 21 days. Aboriginal leaders who taught people their customs were always in trouble. Some were sent to Palm Island.
- There was a lot of dislocation of families. Parents were separated from kids and boys from girls. The girls were not allowed to recognise boys in public. This was also the case for family members and if they did, they were sent to jail.
- People still required an exemption paper to leave till 1986.
- People still feel like they are under the Act. People still feel restricted about practicing culture. There is still concern for young people who are asked to move on by police if seen to be practicing culture outdoors.

4.2.3 Access and Use

People use many of the plants and animals from the forests. Some of the uses include:

- Leaves for medicinal uses;
- Bark for quinine;

- Stringy bark trees to erect shelters;
- Kangaroos – the skins were used for clothing and mats etc;
- Witchetty grubs in young trees ,considered good bush tucker; and
- Plenty of other bush tucker foods were collected, like goannas and porcupines.

In the Blackdown Tablelands people have been accessing cultural places such as:

- sacred sites;
- bora rings;
- materials for spears;
- scar trees; and
- women’s business areas.

Aboriginal people want to see these and all other areas of cultural significance protected.

4.2.4 Economic Issues

- Aboriginal people were part of bullock and draught horse teams for taking the timber out of the forest.
- Over the years Aboriginal employment has dropped off in forestry.
- Aboriginal people have never worked in the Forestry Department.

In relation to the Woorabinda DOGIT the economic issues raised are as listed below:

- A Sawmill operated at Woorabinda for many years and was the main source of employment in town.
- It is still there but not operating. The mill closed about 10 years ago.
- Woorabinda cannot undertake forestry operations for commercial output, they can only take logs required for use on DOGIT land.
- People used to bring in logs for building at Woorabinda (wood used included wattle, blue gum, iron bark and pine).
- Logs were stamped if cut down locally.
- The wood used to build all the original houses came from Woorabinda land.

4.3 Current Issues Associated with Forested Lands

People were critical of the lack of traditional owner input into the SEQ RFA to date. This issue was raised at both major community meetings. Aboriginal people are upset that the RFA has been happening for over two years and they are only getting a say now, when everything is near completion.

Other current issues about forestry are described in the following list:

- The people have no relationship with the Forestry Department regarding Blackdown Tableland although people have been negotiating with the Department about other forestry lands outside the RFA area.

- There has been no consultation about clearing or protection of tree stands or forest areas.
- Many Aboriginal people at the meeting want to see all logging in the Blackdown Tablelands stopped.
- Concerns over Forest Management includes that there are no cultural site clearance procedures in place for untouched areas, the lack of accountability of forestry personnel (no regulation or monitoring of activities) and that there is no proper monitoring of the environmental status of sites.
- Some Aboriginal people are concerned about overlogging by Forestry and the cutting of trees too close to rivers and creeks. Soil is being washed away and the rivers and creeks are being polluted and in some areas silting up.
- Aboriginal people also believe there are no proper procedures for, or monitoring of, development proposals and prospecting on other traditional forested lands.
- There is no Aboriginal people employed in forestry activities today.

In relation to protected areas, the following issues were raised:

- The relationship between Aboriginal people and the local National Parks and Wildlife Service has been good.
- Aboriginal people have spoken recently with National Parks about co-management of the Blackdown Tablelands. There is currently an opportunity for Aboriginal people to work and be involved in co-managing the area.
- Two rangers are employed in the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the region, but none currently at the Blackdown Tablelands. The Aboriginal people are currently negotiating with the local National Parks office about further employment at the Blackdown Tablelands. Aboriginal people want multiple permanent or semi permanent positions. People do not want only one year traineeships.
- There are no TAFE courses for land and natural resource management for Aboriginal people available locally.

Other issues include those listed below:

- Government has only ever dealt with cultural heritage and not the broader rights associated with lands including those recognised through the *NTA*.
- Government and the developers are sometimes ignorant about cultural heritage clearance.
- Aboriginal people have an ongoing problem of not having access to senior decision-makers within government. People would like to be taken seriously by the decision makers.
- The opportunity to do research on their own lands has only been triggered by development proposals. There has been no support for Aboriginal people to undertake their own research for forestry activities or protected areas.

At Woorabinda people specifically noted that the following are current issues in relation to forestry activities:

- Some Aboriginal people still collect wood on the DOGIT lands to make didgeridoos, boomerangs etc. for commercial purposes.

- Some Aboriginal people at Woorabinda still have a strong attachment to the land and access the forest to supplement their diets with bush tucker, using medicinal plants and by making traditional wood products;
- Aboriginal people are not happy that a cull of kangaroos on the DOGIT lands took place in the last few years – roos are much harder to find now.
- The saw mill stands empty even though a non-Aboriginal person brings a mobile mill in to cut wood on the DOGIT . The mill could be creating jobs for Aboriginal people.
- CDEP are currently making wooden furniture.
- People are trying to encourage the younger generation to become more involved in managing land.
- People still access land to go hunting, gathering and camping.

4.4 Aspirations for the Blackdown Tablelands

All three traditional owner groups in the local area recently started negotiating with the Queensland government regarding co-management of the Blackdown Tablelands. A five year Strategic Plan is currently being developed. All three groups will be involved in outcomes from the Strategic Plan. Aspirations noted at consultation meetings are summarised as follows:

- Many Aboriginal people want to achieve joint management of both National Parks and Forestry lands including being actively involved in management, protection of areas of cultural significance as well as through direct employment. Aboriginal people wanted to see employment opportunities in all activities, including management.
- There was general consensus that Aboriginal people from all three native title claimant groups are willing to come together and unify for negotiation purposes. This is now happening in practice in negotiations with the government.
- There was strong support for the cessation of logging of the Blackdown Tablelands.
- A few Aboriginal people were willing to negotiate about future forestry operations but only if Aboriginal people achieved an agreed negotiated outcome which included social and economic benefits.
- Some Aboriginal people may support current forestry lands being turned into protected areas if they get ownership and joint management rights to the land. Other Aboriginal people indicated they would not support existing forestry lands being turned into national park and would prefer an Aboriginal tenure where they would protect and manage the lands co-operatively with government.
- People would like to go back to country and establish a settlement in the Tablelands. Aboriginal people believe they need to be on the land in appropriate places to transmit knowledge. Getting back to country was considered very important.
- Aboriginal people would like to be more involved in cultural tourism in the area.
- Aboriginal people want to be able to hunt, fish and gather in the Blackdown Tablelands.

- Aboriginal people want to be able to access, protect and manage areas of cultural significance. People want to see no further destruction of any part of their cultural estate.
- Aboriginal people want to see information monitored and controlled. Appropriate procedures and protocols should be developed between Aboriginal people and government agencies and the timber industry.

4.5 Local Organisations

There are a number of organisations, which represent the three traditional owner groups involved in this profile. All groups have come together to work collectively in previous projects.

4.5.1 Nghally Ghungalu Thoonieda Aboriginal Corporation

The Nghally Ghungalu Thoonieda Aboriginal Corporation is an inclusive local Ghungalu organisation based at Rockhampton, which was established in February, 1996. The people involved are those active in land and natural resource management issues.

The organisation has quickly become involved in key land and natural resource management issues including the Bowen Basin Study and the Comet River Dam studies. In addition, the group have been active in cultural heritage assessments for mining companies and other developers.

4.5.2 Central Western Ghungalu Aboriginal Corporation

Other Ghungalu people in the Mackay/Sarina area have established the Central Western Ghungalu Aboriginal Corporation to become more involved in land and natural resource management matters.

4.5.3 Nellie Carmody Jiman Land Culture and Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

The Nellie Carmody Jiman Land Culture and Heritage Aboriginal Corporation was established in 1993. It provides information and support in the Roma area.

The organisation has been involved in many land management projects since its inception including:

- catchment management;
- cultural heritage assessments;
- Water Allocation Management Plans (WAMP's); and
- Recent discussions with Forestry regarding future logging areas.

4.5.4 Boombarra Aboriginal Corporation

The Boombarra Aboriginal Corporation has recently been established as an inclusive Iman organisation to represent Iman people wanting to be involved in land and natural

resource management. The organisation is currently seeking funds to establish an office in Rockhampton.

4.6 Conclusion

The socio-demographic data presented highlights the third world conditions for people living at Woorabinda. The unemployment rate is 97%, life expectancy is 46 years, over 50% of the population are children and only 5.5% of the population were considered to be not living in poverty.

The data, however, reflects too simplistic a story. Many residents love “Woori”. People often leave, many return to visit and just about everyone has family there. An Aboriginal Council operates Woorabinda and Aboriginal people can live their own lives.

Many of the people associated with the three native title claimant groups active in land and natural resource management now live outside Woorabinda. The three groups have been working together on negotiations with government and developers in the region.

In relation to forestry lands, Aboriginal people are currently developing a five year Strategic Plan for Aboriginal involvement in the Blackdown Tablelands National Park. The groups would also like to immediately negotiate with Forestry about more effective input into management including the access, protection and management of areas of cultural significance. Getting back on country was also considered very important.

In the future Aboriginal people hope that the government will recognise their legal and statutory rights to land and assist Aboriginal people to own and jointly manage their traditional lands.

Chapter 5: Social Profile of Glasshouse Mountains

“We are facing cultural extinguishment. They took our land away. They took our children away. They cut down our forests and destroyed the environment. It is all about materialism. What about our culture and what is theirs?” **Ken Dalton**

“The Glasshouse Mountains is not a place to be revered but a place from which your spirit is renewed”. **Lois Gulash**

“We want a better say in management, we also want to be able to live on our land and practice our traditions”. **Drew Gulash**

“In the old days we were famous for our logging skills. We used springboards to get to the top of huge trees”. **Nurdon Serico**

“Nobody talked to us from Forestry. They destroy our sites, they destroy our forests. They have logged it too much”. **Biri Salmon**

“When you talk about consultation in the old days, you must remember we were not even considered human beings”. **Ken Dalton**

5.1 Background

The Glasshouse Mountains are important spiritual landmarks for many Aboriginal people. The Glasshouse Mountains are small jagged mountains surrounded by coastal plains in the east with the Range as the western backdrop. As a consequence, the Glasshouse Mountains can be seen from many vantage points in the Brisbane and North coast region.

The three mountains, Tibrogargen, Coonowrin and Beerwah still retain the Aboriginal words for these special places. Significant Aboriginal stories relate to these three landmarks. Aboriginal people did not walk on the mountains as a way of showing respect to their creators. Even today, Aboriginal people believe that you show respect for the mountains by not walking on them unless it is for special purposes.

The people who were consulted noted that the following.

- The Glasshouse Mountains are important spiritual places. The mountains themselves are part of the religious and spiritual life of the traditional owners, with some of the stories coming through the Glasshouse Mountains. The individual mountains contain special places of cultural significance for the traditional owners, eg. axes were made near the base of one of the mountains.
- Aboriginal people never climbed on any part of the mountains, unless for special ceremonies. Aboriginal people associated with the Glasshouse Mountains continue this tradition.

- The Glasshouse Mountains is not a place to be revered but a place from which your spirit is renewed.
- The mountains are important to many Aboriginal people outside of the area as well.
- The place was a special meeting place where people came for special ceremonies.
- Bora rings in the area were used by other groups at these ceremonies.
- Walking tracks and trade routes ran through the area.
- Smoke signals were sent to other Aboriginal groups to notify them of seasonal changes, eg., when the mullet began to run.

The Glasshouse Mountains have been the subject of native title claims in which all different identifying groups have been involved. All of the groups have been working together to sort out their association with the Glasshouse Mountains. Different identification can be explained by the contradictory historical material about Aboriginal nations, clans and boundaries by early accounts by non-Aboriginal people such as Tindale, W. McKenzie and Tom Petrie and also the wide dispersal of Aboriginal people with association to the Glasshouse Mountains to missions throughout the State. Agreement between the groups has been nearly finalised and should be approved by all participating people soon.

No local socio-demographic profile has been undertaken for the Glasshouse Mountains because firstly, the area is a rural part of Caloundra City Council which a large coastal local authority with nearly all of its population residing on the coastal strip. Secondly, there is not a key local town to use for a profile as there are several small local towns in the Glasshouse Mountains area and thirdly, many of the traditional owners live in Brisbane, Cherbourg or along the Sunshine Coast and hinterland.

5.2 Association with forested lands

5.2.1 Background

All the following information in this Chapter has been collated from discussions held with Aboriginal people, groups and organisations. The statements are paraphrased and reflect as appropriate discussions and the range of experiences and aspirations of people involved.

5.2.2 Historical context

Nearly all Aboriginal people with association to the Glasshouse Mountains were moved to Missions, mainly to Cherbourg. Some people did get to come back to work on properties, in forestry and other projects. They considered they 'worked as slaves'. It is remembered until now that, until now, only a few families paid proper wages to Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal people consulted said that the forests were central to their lives. Some of the uses of the forests are as follows:

- Aboriginal People made all of their housing requirements from the trees.
- There was plenty of bush tucker available in the old days. This area was widely known as porcupine country.
- There were plenty of native bees, which were good bush tucker, but also used for medicinal purposes.
- Aboriginal people used the forests and mud from the banks for medicines.
- Aboriginal people had their own Bunya Pine stands at Mapleton and a few other areas.

In relation to historical Aboriginal involvement in forestry operations the following was noted:

- Some Aboriginal people were employed in logging operations in the old days. People were employed in bullock teams and in cutting timber on or near the missions. A few people were allowed to work in forestry on their traditional lands.
- Logging in the old days is not like now. It took a lot of people to cut down one tree and remove it from the forest. Being involved in logging allowed Aboriginal people to still look after country. Aboriginal people were famous as good climbers who used to use springboards to climb large trees to cut them
- People were not happy that the Bunya Pine stands were cut down. Aboriginal people relate a story about how Tom Petrie got the government to protect the Bunya Pine stands because he recognised how important the trees were to Aboriginal people. The government, some decades later, allowed many of the Bunya Pines to be logged.

The establishment of plantations about 100 years ago caused enormous anguish to Aboriginal people and it is still talked about today. It is said that Aboriginal people sat down and refused to clear their traditional lands. The Aboriginal people were moved to Missions and indentured Kanakas were bought in to do the work.

5.3 Current issues associated with forested lands

In relation to forestry activities the meeting participants noted the following:

- No Aboriginal people associated with the Glasshouse Mountains is employed in logging or in the mills.
- Nearly all Aboriginal people at the meetings have never been consulted by the Forestry Department about logging or plantations. The one exception has been the Gubi Gubi Land Council, which has been involved in forestry management on Bribie Island for approximately five years. They have managed to get access to, and protection of, of some areas of cultural significance and have been consulted about broader forestry management issues.
- To all other Aboriginal people it was believed that the Forestry Department always carried on like they were autonomous. Forestry never talks to Aboriginal people about sites and their sites have never been protected. Aboriginal people know they have lost some areas of cultural significance in the past decade or so.
- Aboriginal people continue to be worried about people going into taboo areas and individual trees or stands of trees being logged.

- Aboriginal people want to see better traditional fire practices put in place. No-one has ever talked to them about traditional fire practices. Aboriginal people want to have more say about plantations. Aboriginal people want to get rid of the slash pine as it is not good for country. People would rather see hardwood planted in the plantations but would prefer to revegetation of the lands, instead of more plantations.

Environmental issues were also raised in relation to forestry activities and are summarised as follows:

- Aboriginal people at the meetings believe that logging as it is done now should be stopped. Aboriginal people believe the loggers now almost clear fell when logging and that they shouldn't be taking so many trees.
- The government is not replanting the forests well enough after logging. Weeds and rubbish are getting in eg. lantana.
- Many of the rivers and creeks are damaged. Too much soil is being washed into the creeks. The herbicides are no good either. They are washed into the creeks.
- Logging causes the loss of moisture in the soil.
- People are stealing rocks from the creeks and rivers. It is not good for the health of the waterways.

In relation to national parks, the following comments were made:

- Aboriginal people have a reasonable relationship with national parks.
- Two Aboriginal people are employed as rangers in the area.
- One Aboriginal person is currently employed at Maleny and sometimes works in the Glasshouse Mountains National Park.
- People have not had any say in managing the Glasshouse Mountains to date. Aboriginal people have had some say in management of other national parks. Eg., Emu Mountain and Noosa National Parks.
- Aboriginal people wish to see no-one walking on the Glasshouse Mountains.
- Aboriginal people may be willing to negotiate Aboriginal guided tours on routes approved by the traditional owners.
- Aboriginal people are worried about the erosion and other impacts the climbers are causing on the mountains.

5.5 Aspirations of Aboriginal people

Aboriginal people want to have a greater say in management of the forests. They wish to see Aboriginal people empowered to protect and manage their culture.

In relation to the Glasshouse Mountains the aspirations of the people at the meetings were as follows:

- Aboriginal people want to be able to maintain the cultural integrity of the Glasshouse Mountains.

- Aboriginal people want to see improved, culturally acceptable management of the mountains **now** by the government enabling Aboriginal people to have an effective say in management immediately.
- Aboriginal people want to eventually negotiate title and joint management of the Glasshouse Mountains.
- Aboriginal people want all people to show respect and leave the mountains alone.
- Aboriginal people want to see only Aboriginal rangers doing cultural tourism, with the input and support of traditional owners.

Aboriginal people also wanted to have more say in lands within their traditional boundaries. In relation to protected areas, the following list summarises comments made:

- There is general support by Aboriginal people for forestry areas becoming protected areas, if they can negotiate title and appropriate joint management arrangements. Aboriginal people believe that too much damage continues to be done on their traditional lands because of forestry activities.
- Aboriginal people want to see some important areas protected properly around Cooroy, Pomona, Jimmy Scrub, the Conondales and Cooran.
- People want to get back to living on their lands.
- Aboriginal people want better protection and management of areas of significance.
- Aboriginal people are seeking more employment for Aboriginal rangers to do this and also want to see Aboriginal people employed as general rangers.

In relation to forestry activities Aboriginal people wanted:

- Replanting of degraded forestry lands;
- Weed eradication projects to be put in place;
- Better management and use of herbicides including using no herbicides if at all possible;
- Better management of logging to prevent loss of soil;
- More sustainable rates of logging operations where fewer trees are logged;
- More employment of Aboriginal people within the industry;
- Better strategies to allow Aboriginal people to protect and manage areas of significance;
- To also be consulted by other users of Forestry infrastructure; eg. phone and power companies using forestry roads and land;
- Cultural education training for people employed in forestry activities; and
- Increased planting of hardwood plantations, if plantations are still going to be established.

5.4 Aboriginal Organisations

5.5.1 Gubbi Gubbi Land and Cultural Association

The Gubbi Gubbi Land and Cultural Association represents Gubbi Gubbi people who still maintain traditional values with land and culture. These people live in the Sunshine Coast, Cherbourg, Brisbane, Logan and Far Northern N.S.W.

The Gubbi Gubbi Land and Cultural Association have recently finalised the purchase of the Diamond Valley property at Mooloolah. A special ceremony will be held in September, 1999 to celebrate the official signing of the property acquisition papers.

The organisation acquired Diamond Valley property through funds allocated from the Indigenous Land Corporation in 1998. Much of the bottom part of the property, which is 450 acres in size, was logged extensively. The top of the property takes in the headwaters of the Mooloolah River. There are untouched forest areas, burial caves and other sacred places on the property.

A Management Plan is currently being developed. Some of the broad aspirations include:

- Building housing and accommodation;
- Establishing infrastructure;
- Replanting degraded lands;
- Protecting and managing areas of significance; and
- Developing cultural tourism operations.

5.5.2 Gubbi Gubbi Land Council.

The Gubbi Gubbi Land Council represents local Gubbi Gubbi people active in land and natural resource management over much of their traditional lands. The organisation is based at Bribie Island and the organisation has been active in land and natural resource management issues including development assessments and forestry activities. The organisation is the only local Aboriginal organisation in all social profile areas that has an ongoing working relationship with the Forestry Department.

5.5.3 Undumbi Aboriginal Land Corporation

The Undumbi Aboriginal Land Corporation is open to all people who support the aspirations of the Undumbi people.

The organisation has been busy for the past five years undertaking their own native title claim.

5.6 Conclusion

The Glasshouse Mountains are sacred and are, in the opinion of indigenous meeting participants, currently being mismanaged. Aboriginal people with traditional

association wish that other people would respect the mountains and acknowledge the continuing cultural significance of the area to Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal people with traditional links are working together to find a way to speak with one voice to government and other stakeholders. Aboriginal people want to have an immediate say in management in a way that respects Aboriginal culture and want to, in time, own and jointly manage the Glasshouse Mountains with the Government. Aboriginal people want to see more Aboriginal people employed in managing the Glasshouse Mountains.

In relation to forested lands, Aboriginal people are concerned about the impacts of forestry activities on their traditional lands and want to see much of the land protected. Aboriginal people want to see much improved management of any forestry activities in the future. Aboriginal people want to be able to negotiate with the Queensland government and private operators about effective participation in management, better employment and enterprise opportunities, protection, access to and management of areas of cultural significance, and recognition of Aboriginal hunting, gathering and fishing rights.

Chapter 6: Social Profile of Beaudesert

“Our forests are about our spirituality, it’s about teaching the children about the stories”. **Uncle Bill Sandy**

“All the different trees have different importance about them, like the Wattle Tree, you can eat honey and berries from them”. **Mununjali**

“As kids, we would go down to Frog’s Hollow and there would be plenty of good wood to make artefacts, spears, boomerangs and to go hunting, ’cause there were plenty of animals too”. **Frank Long**

“We can’t get access because they (non-Aboriginal people) lack the understanding. We have to educate them”. **Uncle Bill Sandy**

6.1 Background

Beaudesert is a rural community one hour’s drive south of Brisbane. Historically, forestry and primary production have been the two key industries.

A number of clan groups make up the larger language nation of Yugambah. The Mununjali, whose traditional lands include Beaudesert is the largest clan group.

The statistical information outlined here has been sourced directly from the ABS and is based on the 1996 Census. The material is not published in ABS documentation.

The Beaudesert Shire has grown from 36,423 people in 1991 to 47,558 people in 1996. The Indigenous population in the Beaudesert Shire has grown from 334 in 1991 to 566 people in 1996. Within the shire 25.8% of people were under 15 years old while for the Indigenous population it was 44.5%. Almost 8.5% of the Beaudesert population were over 65 years of age while 1.4% of the Indigenous population was over 65 years of age (ABS:1996).

The unemployment rate for the whole shire in 1996 was 9.1%, while the unemployment rate for the Indigenous population was 23% (ABS:1996).

In relation to housing, 17.5% of Beaudesert households were renting dwellings, while 41.9% of the Indigenous population were renting dwellings(ABS:1996).

6.2 Association with Forested Lands

6.2.1 Background

All the following information in this Chapter has been collated from discussions held with Aboriginal people, groups and organisations. The statements are paraphrased and reflect as appropriate discussions and the range of experiences and aspirations of people involved.

6.2.2 Attachment to Lands

- In the past, forests used to be all around Beaudesert.
- People in the past always lived in the forest. It provided everything, food, clothing, housing, medicine, the stories and other aspects of their culture.
- Spirituality through the teaching of stories to the children is very important to many Aboriginal people.

6.2.3 Access and Use Patterns

- Some mothers used to take their children down to the local water holes to swim, wash and fish. This used to happen until about 1984. Now property owners don't allow people get down to the water. Local Aboriginal people say there is one man who shoots at you with a gun.
- The Department of Natural Resources has promised access to the river for the past 2-3 years but nothing has happened yet.
- Some people have said that no Aboriginal people have been near the Logan River for about 50 years, but it is not true.
- Traditional bush tucker, the porcupine, is a common food for the local Aboriginal groups located in the area.
- Many of the Aboriginal people feel it is now hard to find specific bush tucker, including Wallabies, Goannas, Porcupines and especially the Native Bee. It is also hard to find the specific trees for gathering Witchetty Grubs.
- It is also difficult to locate the particular trees for use of timber in shields and spear making.
- It was said that some white people did allowed some Aboriginal people to go up onto their properties for hunting and accessing trees for witchetty grubs and berries, also to visit areas of importance for porcupines and they took care not to remove trees.
- The bark on many of the gum trees, were boiled up and used for sores and boils etc on the skin. Just like many different trees had very different and important needs in them. One such was the Wattle trees, where you could eat the honey and berries from the tree.
- The iron bark tree (a dead one) would have very powerful heat in it.
- Some barks and saps from trees, you can eat, as sweets and chewing gums.
- There was also the vine (sarparrerra vine) and the wild violets also.
- The soap trees used in the creek with its bark. The Dandi-lion and pig-weed can also be boiled and eaten as well.

Spring Creek, Christmas Creek and Hillview were all special places to find many of these things. Especially Running Creek and Christmas Creek used to be important places to hold baptisms for the local Murri people. These are reasons why there is the need for protection of these important trees.

- Black (goomble) bee (native bee) were used, as the cone and honey have important medicinal purposes;
- The dead trees were also important as they provide food and shelter etc for people as well as animals; and

- There are special healing herbs, which grow in and around the surrounding forests, which are very important.

6.2.4 Economic Issues

- Aboriginal people used to work in forestry but not any more;
- 10-12 years ago Aboriginal people used to go onto properties and cut timber. Aboriginal people had to pay royalties to the farmers to get the wood;
- There is prejudice from other landholders especially when the property at Mt Barney was first purchased. It was even said that the Aboriginal people who purchased the property (Mt Barney) would steal the livestock from the surrounding properties;
- In the past the local council had employed Aboriginal people, but now there are less than 10 people working for the council;
- Council work is now mostly on contract. It makes it harder to compete for, and get, jobs; and
- There are no Indigenous people employed by National Parks at the moment.

6.3 Current Issues Associated with Forested Lands

6.3.1 In relation to Forestry and National Park Activities

- There has been no attempt to include Aboriginal people in the management of any forested lands around this area;
- There is no aboriginal involvement in forestry operations;
- The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) said they wanted the Mt Barney property to be a joint venture, but nothing has ever eventuated yet;
- There could be an economic benefit through employment in forestry;
- There has been no contact from Government with Aboriginal people in consultation about the land and surrounding forests even in relation to cultural heritage;
- The Canungra Army Base has had a good relationship with Aboriginal people. It has taken 4 years to negotiate access and a three week cultural heritage survey was undertaken. At least twelve months more work is needed on the survey;
- Some development sites and dams etc, just go ahead without consulting the Aboriginal people, eg; Bradford estate, where they are still finding artefacts after the land has been cleared; and
- Some sacred places were going to be developed, now the Aboriginal people are not even allowed to go there.

6.3.2 Access and Loss of Culture

- There was a general feeling that when the Aboriginal people wanted to go down to the forest, white people would always try to stop them somehow.
- Farmers and graziers down near Mt Barney now stop Aboriginal people accessing their land. Now there are only two people that regularly allow access.

- The Traditional Owners have to ask for permission to access areas of forested lands where farmers hold leases to these areas. This is a shame for Aboriginal people.
- Traditional Owners also have to pay to camp on traditional lands including the Lost World and Binna Burra.
- The council is closing camping at Yellowpinch and Flannagan's Reserve and allowing day trips only. This will cause more access problems.
- Before the Mt Barney property was purchased, Aboriginal people had to pay to take their youth camping. However, some parts of their traditional culture can still not be taught because there is no access to forests on private land. This has played a large part in Aboriginal people losing links with their culture.
- There is some access to the Mt Barney and Mt Maroon National Parks, but cultural links are still limited. Many of the significant stories can not be told as their 'places' are on private property.
- Information about some significant places or items, eg; location of scarred trees, have been communicated to Council in order for those sites to be protected and maintained. However they haven't been looked after nor have they been protected.
- Aboriginal people have access to some properties (eg; Tilley's and Johnny Markwell's), but very few other property owners would let allow access.
- There are not many cultural activities for the kids to get involved in as there is the problem of a lack of access to areas for cultural purposes and as a result, education has become a major issue.
- As children, many of the adults today used to learn about bush tucker and animals found in the surrounding forested lands, now the children of today tend to drift away into nearby towns, because Aboriginal people can't seem to access any of the forested areas.
- There is no access to Chingee Mountain on the Lyons road which happens to be a sacred place, a meeting place and a significant massacre site.
- There is no access to visit the massacre sites at Mt Lindsey and Darlington, which are both on private lands.
- At Darlington, a burial site is located on private property, in a tree stump.;
- There has been a loss of culture and protocol with respect to the elderly people.
- In the past, people used to be able to swim and fish and drink the water from the river, however you can't use the water or fish in the river any more.
- There used to be traditional fruit trees in abundance in the area, now the only fruit to be found are lemon trees and these are mostly on private properties and therefore can't be accessed.
- People feel they are not able to use forest materials, especially gathering material for artefact making.
- People feel they cannot access important areas such as burial caves and other areas of significance.
- Many white property owners have continued to deny Aboriginal people access to caves and significant areas.
- Property owners from Drumley Lane have continued to restrict access to the creek.
- There are some locations that need permission to access and this permission must be a letter of access from the Department of Natural Resources.
- Some of the meeting places and camps need a sign for protection The areas of importance start at the Coomera River.

- Kooralbyn, Yellowpinch, Bigriggen, Flannagans Reserve and Binna Burra, and some private lands up behind Johnny Markwell's property and the Tilleys, were all areas where hunting, fishing and cultural places like shield trees and canoe trees were gathered. Some of the area is now overseas owned
- There is no access to Hillview to maintain and look after the area, which is a significant meeting place for many Aboriginal people of the area.

6.3.3 Environmental Issues

- There have been environmental impacts from the fish ladder in the weir.
- There have been algae and silt build-ups found in the river and poisons which were thought to be a direct result of farming activities.
- Weeds and Cox's thistle found along river banks have been poisoned.
- It has been noticed that there has been a loss of particular wildlife at Kooralbyn, Yellowpinch, Flannagans Reserve and Binna Burra, but an actual decrease in numbers is hard to tell because the access rights for traditional owners is very limited.
- All the surrounding hunting and camping grounds are now ruined from run-off from adjoining farms. When people use the rivers now for fishing or bathing the children get sick with diarrhoea and vomiting from the polluted water. This is especially obvious in the Albert River, the Junction and Christmas Creek.
- Rivers have also been affected by trailbikes and 4WDs and introduced animals / species.
- Upstream, there is poison and cattle waste running off into the rivers and once it gets down river, it will all be polluted.
- There has been a lot of chemical run-off from land graziers especially from the chemical injection of trees (ring barking).
- In the surrounding rivers, there has been much removal of gravel and sands.
- The cattle and horses grazing on country are causing too much erosion to the river banks and surrounding land which is affecting the rivers. The trees and ground cover are being ruined and then removed.
- It has been noticed by the community people that the local rivers used to be much higher and cleaner, where as today most rivers have little or no water in them because of tree clearance at the top of the catchment.
- It is felt by some of the members of the Aboriginal community that the trees are most important for oxygen, to provide shade and food for Indigenous people and animals and to assist in the soil stability and the environment in general. The trees are also important as they hold the soil together for the banks of the river, which helps to stop erosion.

6.4 Aspirations

- The potential for employment from co-management of the parks and forests should be realised.
- The community sees that there is a possibility to give Aboriginal people employment, especially through fire management of the area. This would give people dignity and an incentive to get involved in cultural activities again.

- There has been a proposed cultural heritage organisation, complete with a coordinator to assist maintain and protect the local cultural heritage in the surrounding areas.
- Aboriginal people want access to all forested areas for traditional hunting, fishing and camping and to develop cultural trails.
- There is an aim to do cultural trails in National Parks and work as rangers etc and to start work on and with bush tucker, yet still centred on the Mt Barney property as a base.
- Aboriginal people want to begin workshops in the area to help local people get back to the bush.
- Many people also want the opportunity to be able to properly protect and maintain sacred places.
- People want to be able to access all their areas of cultural significance, regardless of who owns it now.
- The community sees there is a need for education of the young children in teaching them about their culture and the need to get back to country. It would be beneficial for camping activities to happen back on forested country in order to teach the children.
- Aboriginal people would like to become involved in joint enterprises (eg: maintain park areas, and Indigenous forest rangers).
- The community would like to see Indigenous people being the care takers for Yellowpin and Flagans Reserve.
- Council are closing certain areas from camping. Aboriginal people think that there should be traditional custodians to look after the areas and continued camping access for Aboriginal people.
- Indigenous people would like to see more employment opportunities in local forest areas. Aboriginal people in the short term want to start joint enterprises to undertake national park maintenance and see more Aboriginal people employed on forestry issues within the Council including a Liaison Officer and a Heritage Officer.
- Aboriginal people want to negotiate with the Army about doing maintenance work at Canungra.
- It is hoped that the local traditional people can provide cross-cultural awareness training to take place in the area for government agencies, local council, local land holders and local businesses.
- The community would like to see that any works done by any government agency be done in consultation with the Aboriginal people.

6.5 Local Organisations

6.5.1 Mununjali Elders

The Mununjali Elders is an organisation, which provides a voice for the views of the elders of the Mununjali clan.

6.5.2 Yugambah Land Enterprises

Yugambeh Land Enterprises is an inclusive Yugambeh organisation established to manage and maintain the purchased property in the Beaudesert area. The property is south west of Beaudesert and is adjacent to both Mount Barney and Mount Maroon National Parks. Many local Aboriginal people have been involved with its management. They received funding from the Indigenous Land Corporation to acquire the property. People are currently deciding future management strategies for the property.

6.5.3 The Beaudesert Aboriginal and Islander Co-operative Society Ltd

The Beaudesert Aboriginal and Islander Co-operative Society Ltd were established to hold the trusteeship of a Bora ring located in the area. They operate under the Mununjali Elders.

6.5.4 Mununjali Housing and Development Company

The Mununjali Housing and Development Company manages the housing in Beaudesert for Aboriginal and Islander people.

6.6 Conclusion

Aboriginal people in Beaudesert have a strong tradition and attachment to forested lands in the area. They have not been consulted by Forestry and have little input into National Parks management for the area.

The main issue that the community saw as important was the right of access to parks, forests, properties and the river. People have not been able to access much of their traditional lands to protect and manage areas of significance necessary to pass on traditional and cultural knowledge to their children.

People are looking to the future. The property is keeping people active and has provided not only a base for traditional owners, but an opportunity to carry out their custodial responsibilities. People aspire to have a better say in managing their lands. They want to be able to negotiate with government and other forestry operators and they want to see more employment for Aboriginal people in the local area.

Chapter 7: Social Profile of Cherbourg

“We want to be able to access the forests so we can gather firewood to make our houses warm in winter time, like in the old days”. **Beryl Gambler**

“There is still no proper consultation with us Aboriginal people”. **Penny Bond**

“Cherbourg should become involved in the forestry again before us old people with the knowledge pass on”. **Swampy Fisher**

“The Giant Tree is a very significant area, it took 14 men with their arms horizontally linked to measure around the base of the tree”. **Beryl Gambler**

7.1 Background

The Cherbourg DOGIT was first established as a government mission known as ‘Barambah Reserve’ in 1904 on Wakka Wakka traditional lands (Malone, 1998:II). The mission consisted of two parts near Murgon and Wondai, totalling 2,805 hectares. In 1925 Cherbourg State Forest was included in the mission. The mission was later named Cherbourg in 1931. By 1973 the mission was 12,745 hectares in size (Guthrie, 1975).

Cherbourg started with approximately 104 residents, a mixture of people from southern Queensland tribes. The population steadily increased as Aboriginal people were sent there from all over the State and from northern New South Wales. By 1920 there were over 600 people at the mission. For many decades it is estimated that half of the population worked as domestics or agricultural labourers outside of the DOGIT lands.

Cherbourg became a melting pot of people from many tribes throughout the State. Malone (1998:II) argues that “because of the push for assimilation the people were institutionalised without regard for family, kinship or language groups”. Men and Women’s dormitories were established and children were taken away from their parents. Disease was rife. Guthrie states that ‘in 1919 for example, there was a death count of 120, including 87 from the world wide flu epidemic. Deaths from Beri Beri, pneumonia and syphilis were also reported’ (1975:17). Like Woorabinda, and other missions, people lived ‘under the Act’ and had to get either exemptions or permits to leave the mission, even for a short time.

A Community Council was first elected in the late 1960’s. The Reserve land was leased to the Council in the mid-1980’s as DOGIT land. The Council operates a number of government programs including CDEP. A number of community organisations at Cherbourg also deliver services to the community. Collectively, the Council and Community organisations operate services for:

- Women;

- Youth;
- Families requiring support;
- Children needing support;
- Day care centre for children;
- Respite care for older people and people with disabilities;
- Aged Persons Hostel; and
- Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre (Malone, 1998: 3-7).

Government services include:

- Health services including a community hospital;
- Education services until the end of primary school;
- TAFE College; and
- Police (Malone, 1998:7-8).

A number of community enterprises currently operate at Cherbourg. These include:

- Emu farm;
- Joinery workshop;
- Swimming pool;
- Arts and Crafts Curio Workshop;
- Dairy farm and cattle farm; and
- Driving school (Malone, 1998:8-9).

Today, there are just over 1000 people at Cherbourg. Other socio-demographics from 1991 in relation to Cherbourg include:

- The unemployment rate at Cherbourg in 1991 was 65%;
- The median personal income in 1991 was \$8,045 per year;
- The median family income was \$23,303 per year;
- Approximately 98% of all housing was rented in 1991; and
- The median age of residents was 17 years.

.7.2 Association with forested lands

7.2.1 Background

All the following information in this Chapter has been collated from discussions held with Aboriginal people, groups and organisations. The statements are paraphrased and reflect as appropriate discussions and the range of experiences and aspirations of people involved.

7.2.2 Historical

- Aboriginal people for many years used to gather food, medicinal plants and animals from the surrounding forests. There has always been bush tucker available.
- Many Aboriginal people worked in the forests in the early days.
- The sawmill operations closed down before Cherbourg became a DOGIT community.
- Before the DOGIT was established, the Reserve included in its boundary a large forest area. This part of the Reserve was separated by the State Government and made into a state forest. The DOGIT did still have a grazing lease on it until recently but it looks like it has not been renewed. This brought money and employment into Cherbourg. People are still not happy that the land was taken away. They were not asked or consulted.

7.2.3 Access, Protection and Use

- As access to forested areas has been hard, people can't collect materials for making artefacts. This had led to several social problems, in particular the education of the children and teaching them about their culture and tradition.
- Many Aboriginal people from the Reserve have a history of camping in the bush. People went and lived on bush tucker and the children were taught their culture and stories.

7.2.4 Economic Issues

- The Reserve ran the sawmill, which employed many men. When the sawmill was closed down, all the people were put off.
- The sawmill was not allowed to cut timber off the reserve or sell timber on the private market.
- Cherbourg would transport timber from their sawmill up to Woorabinda, Palm Island and even Yarrabah.
- The Emu Farm and tannery is now established. The most demand is for the emu egg-shell more than anything else today as the market for the meat has gone down in popularity. Other commercial products from the emus include the feathers, the skin (leather) and eggs. However, there is not much use for the inside (yoke) of the egg.
- The CDEP workers look after, care and feed the birds and other associated light maintenance work around the Emu farm.

7.3 Current issues associated with forested lands

7.3.1 General

- Cattle and horses are not allowed to graze in the back paddocks any more, they now have to stay in the community boundaries with the community people.
- Cherbourg Council bought a mulcher for \$50,000. The timber industry knew that they had purchased one, but they came into Cherbourg and took trees for

electricity poles and then left the remaining materials behind on the ground to rot. They made no contact with the Cherbourg Council for them to use the bits and pieces and make work and money for community members and generate profits.

- There has been little to no contact with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), the Forestry Industry or Department of Natural Resources.
- It is believed the sawmill located at Wondai now makes Cherbourg pay for the timber. Nothing was given back to Cherbourg in return for anything or any economic benefit that was lost.
- Aboriginal people do not have any jobs in forestry or at the sawmill in Wondai.
- Cherbourg now has to buy wood for building materials and even firewood.

7.3.2 Social and Health issues

- As the timber is more expensive, the community has now had to buy cheaper materials to build brick houses with cement floors. There are also health problems and health effects from using cheaper building materials. People say there are now lots of health problems occurring in the community, which include arthritis and gout problems especially in the elderly members.
- When building new houses, the Council now goes and talks to the tenants first about what they want, such as more rooms etc, and being involved in the planning of the houses has given people more pride in their house and garden. Often they are generally bigger houses.

7.3.3 Access and use

- There is talk in the community that the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service is going to take control of the forested areas.
- People used to have access and operational use of the forests., Now Aboriginal people can't hunt in the forests, and can't or don't feel that they can access forests for other purposes either.
- A local grazier needed a dam to be built for his cattle. The grazier has a current lease in the middle of the forest. Now Aboriginal people need to get permission to cross his property to get to the creek, to fish and to use the creek water.
- Aboriginal people were not happy about dams going into the forest and they do not want to see any more built.
- The Cherbourg community have re-applied for the grazing lease again, and are still waiting on a response.
- There are still significant sites in and around the forests, including the Giant Tree. The size of the Giant tree is the same as 14 men arm to arm around the base of the tree. There is also a special area where children have for growing up and where they knew not to go until taken there by the old people at the right time. There are other special places in the forests too.

7.3.4 Environment

- Forestry has not been managing the lands properly. Weeds are getting in and there are no proper firebreaks, as there is no proper fire management in place.

- The boxwood forests seem to be disappearing, the animal numbers seem to be dropping. There used to be plenty of roos, wallabies, porcupines and koalas. Now they are hard to find.
- The local river has a dam and now there is the problem of not being able to use the water in the river. All the houses in Cherbourg now need to have tank water attached to the houses when they are built. There was a loss of a large amount of land lost when the dam was established and built.
- There is not much forest area left within the DOGIT boundary now.

7.4 Aspirations

- Aboriginal people want to see the State Forest land that was taken out of the Reserve returned to Aboriginal people. It is hoped that this forestry land would be handed back to the community as it would be easier for people to access the lands and could create jobs. The community could then collect fire wood for winter, take children out there for educational camps and visit significant areas that old people know about, especially regarding information about the river system and important places such as Green Swamp.
- Aboriginal people are willing to negotiate about wood farms if they own and manage them themselves.
- Aboriginal people should be given more say in the management of forested lands in the area.
- It is hoped that there be training and employment made available for the community.
- The old ranger station is now being changed into a cultural centre to bring schools to the local area to be educated about Aboriginal culture. The centre is only half built and the community has run out of funding. It is hoped tours could be run in the nearby forested lands. There are the possibilities to teach people about the uses and importance of the surrounding forests, including artefacts, bush foods and medicines etc, but there is the need for more funding into the region.
- The people wanted to see the sawmill running again as it would be able to provide employment and training for the younger people. There would be no need to get outside people in for the training, as there is already the expertise in the older people who have that type of training already.
- There are possibilities for the community to develop a social behavioural discipline strategy for the youth. One such example was given at a community meeting, and that was to send troubled kids out to the bush for a few weeks to pick out weeds.
- It is hoped that there will be the opportunity to develop eco-tourism trails, which could visit important sites and include a place of learning and education.
- If possible, the community would like to develop trails that run from and around the boundary of the DOGIT, that start at the Botanical Gardens (which are being developed now on the community) and go up and around the back of the community.

7.5 Conclusion

The Cherbourg Social Profile has involved mainly Aboriginal people from the DOGIT community, including Wakka Wakka people who are the traditional owners of the DOGIT land. Specific issues and aspirations of Aboriginal people whose traditional forested lands are close to Cherbourg have not been recorded separately.

The key issues at Cherbourg involve the lack of employment opportunities, ongoing disputes about forestry near the Cherbourg DOGIT lands and the possibility of developing cultural tourism ventures.

Chapter 8: Social Profile of Githabul People

“In the old days people lived in the forests. The forests are their culture”.

Doug Williams

“Since plantations of the non-native forests, there has been a significant loss in animals for hunting”. **Doug Williams**

“We’ve been here for 40,000 years. It’s only taken 200 years for the white man to bugger it (the environment) up”. **Sam Bonner**

“I’ve been here for 44 years and we have never been contacted by the Forestry about our land”. **Ethelyn Bonner**

8.1 Background

The Githabul nation traditional lands span across the New South Wales and Queensland Border. The traditional lands of the Githabul within the SEQ RFA study area are in the south west corner of the region. The traditional owners now live in both states, with many families in northern New South Wales and Sydney. Much of their traditional lands within the SEQ RFA study area are forested or protected areas.

The Githabul people were involved in a RFA study in New South Wales previously. They were extensively involved at the local level. They were critical of the Queensland RFA and said they had not been consulted enough. They said that the Land Councils could not speak for them or for their country and wanted to be involved in direct consultation with the governments.

No local socio-demographic data was collected for this Social Profile as there is no key local town or Aboriginal population. This Social Profile is about traditional lands. The traditional owners residences are widespread.

8.2 Association with forested lands

8.2.1 Background

All the following information in this Chapter has been collated from discussions held with Aboriginal people, groups and organisations. The statements are paraphrased and reflect as appropriate discussions and the range of experiences and aspirations of people involved.

8.2.2 Attachment to lands

- In the old days people lived in the forests. The forests are their culture.
- The Main Range National Park is a very important place for hunting and fishing.
- The location of burial sites used to be there years before, now they are hard to find as it is very over-grown and not looked after.

8.2.2.1 Employment

- Aboriginal people used to work in the industry as timber cutters. They used to cut a lot of Hoop Pine in the area and also log the rainforest.
- Aboriginal people worked in the forests with white people but did not get the same wage as them. This was also the case for those who worked in the local forestry research station.

8.2.2.2 Cultural heritage

- Never has there been any recognition by forestry of Aboriginal peoples' rights to protect sacred sites and areas.

8.2.2.3 Environment

- Some Aboriginal timber workers in the past refused to cut down marked trees because there were koalas in them.
- There has been tree clearing on poor soils on private land and the shallow soils just wash away.

8.2.2.4 Access

- Aboriginal people have to have a permit to go into the forests (approx \$5.00 / month).
- Aboriginal people also need a licence to use a chainsaw, and there is a restriction on firewood collecting. Now Aboriginal people of the area have for the most part, to buy their firewood.
- Most National Parks have locked gates, and a lot of areas can't be accessed.

8.3 Current issues associated with forested lands

8.3.1 General

- No one has ever talked to Aboriginal people about forestry issues.
- Their sites are being destroyed on the Queensland side.
- In New South Wales the government talks to Aboriginal people all the time, and help them to look after their culture.
- People can't believe someone wants to talk to Aboriginal people about forestry in Queensland.
- National Parks from Queensland never talked to them either.
- Government in Queensland act like traditional owners for this land don't exist.
- Aboriginal people didn't put the Queensland and New South Wales boundary through Githabul traditional lands.

8.3.2 Environment

- The rivers, especially for fishing, have been affected by the build up of silt from the removal of trees on the bank, which causes erosion.
- The removal of trees has now affected the local waterways, and the tree clearing occurring on private and leasehold lands, and going right down to the banks of the waterways is causing siltation etc.
- There is usually fencing-off of many of the properties and therefore it is hard to access or pass through them.
- There has been no contact with the Department of Primary Industries or the timber board, so there are many unresolved problems.
- As a result of the plantations of non-native forests, there has been a great loss of potential for the hunting of native animals.
- The creeks and rivers are not fenced off from cattle and this is causing siltation and causes bank collapses.
- There is some water that you can't drink, except at the top of the catchment (Condamine) because of the contamination.
- There are problems with tourists leaving a mess in the forests, and motor bikes and 4WDs ripping up the country
- There are problems with weeds, and feral animals, especially wild dogs and cross breeds.
- There is the need and want for management of forested lands, because it is felt that the Aboriginal people look after the land far better than the whites currently do.
- There are concerns about mining, because of the destruction to land and Cultural Heritage areas and the environmental contamination mining may cause. People want to have negotiations with the mining companies.
- There are concerns about cattle grazing in the forests, and the fact that the soils are not suitable for hard hoofed animals.

8.3.3 Economic Issues

- Aboriginal people used to work in the Woodenbong sawmill, now there are only a few Githabul people employed by the Woodenbong saw mill (it is unsure of the current number).
- Aboriginal people feel it would be important to receive some funding for things such as men's business and meetings/teachings etc in the forests.
- There are five or six trainee rangers in NSW National Parks, there are none on the Qld side. However, there are many people who do lots of training schemes (six or twelve month traineeships), but there is no employment at the end of the programs.
- Only one person is employed in the NSW State Forests. There are none in Qld Department of Natural Resources or the Department of Primary Industries – Forestry.
- There are Aboriginal people employed by the Warwick Council, but they are not Githabul traditional people.
- There are no enterprises currently owned or run by Githabul people.
- The employment that is present is at the lower end of the employment scale..

- There is no Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) in the Githabul area on the Qld side.

8.3.4 Access

- There is a problem of not only the farmers, but also ‘dope’ growers, who put traps around their plantations and have guns on their properties. This makes people scared to go up there.
- There is a fee to pay to stay or camp in some of the areas, especially in the National Parks.

8.4 Aspirations

- Aboriginal people would be willing to talk to governments about forestry, but they do not think it will happen.
- They also want to have input into the management level concerning the forests and employment in not only the management but also the administration and operational sections of forestry industries, to at least equal the numbers to those of white people.
- People want to see better protection and access to areas of cultural significance.
- From the already established course at TAFE in Warwick, the Githabul people would like to teach in the course and take people / kids out camping and teach them about the surrounding forest areas. Also in the schools they could teach the young kids about Aboriginal culture and education;
- People want employment and equal say for the Githabul people in National Parks and State Forest management on their own traditional country.
- People also want to start up an Indigenous Cultural Tourism venture, but need resources to start it
- There is a need for funding for the Aboriginal people to educate the whites about forest management.
- There should only be tightly controlled grazing allowed in the forests.
- People want access to state forests and National Parks in Qld and keys to access all the locked gates, as they get most access in NSW.
- There needs to be a two-way flow of information and ideas between Aboriginal people and land managers.
- Githabul people want to be able to control and stop damage to significant sites and areas caused by trail bike riding and 4WDs etc.
- Aboriginal people want to promote the history of the Githabul Nation in the local schools, and teach the locals the traditions and language of the Githabul people, through the schools like it is done at the Woodenbong school.

8.5 Local Organisations

8.5.1 United Githabul Tribal Nations Incorporation

The United Githabul Tribal Nations Incorporation's, main aims include land claims and the protection of cultural heritage.

8.5.2 Warwick Aboriginal Housing Co-operative

The Warwick Aboriginal Housing Co-operative manages housing in Warwick for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community.

8.6 Conclusion

The Githabul people have been historically more involved in New South Wales in forestry activities and cultural heritage clearances before logging. They have worked with, and been consulted by, Forestry and National Parks for a long time in New South Wales.

No-one on the Queensland side has ever talked to them about forested lands before. They would like to become more involved in the management of their traditional lands, and they are optimistic that something will happen.

Chapter 9: Potential social impacts of changes in use and management of SEQ forests

9.1 Introduction

It is important to note that a social impact assessment is defined as:

an analysis of the likely effects that a project, policy or program, change or development – will have on an individuals and interest group or on the structure and functioning of a community. The SIA process involves describing the existing social conditions, predicating changes that may occur, assessing the significance of these changes and identifying ways to reduce adverse impacts and enhance the positive (Social Impact Assessment Unit, 1996:2-3).

Social impacts can be both positive and negative and a social impact may include:

- Changes to peoples' way of life;
- Effects on cultural traditions, values, community or individual rights;
- Changes in the demographics, structure, economy, cohesion or other characteristics of communities; and
- Change in the demand or need for services and infrastructure.

The scope of this report provides for the identification of:

- the issues of concern and interest to Aboriginal people and consequently the nature of potential social impacts arising from changes on forest use and management in SEQ RFA context; and
- an outline of an initial conceptual framework for potential mitigation or change management strategies to address the positive and negative social impacts based on the integration of key variables associated with social impacts as outlined in project SE 5.1.2.

Further detailed work will be required in order to progress the strategies proposed in this report. This is acknowledged in the project specification SE 5.2.2 that refers to this report:

“Forming stage 1 of the Indigenous issues research work and can then be used in the SEQ RFA *impact assessment phase*, Stage 2, to undertake a social impact assessment, (in accordance with Attachment 1h of the SEQ RFA Scoping Agreement), of the forest use options including:

- (i) the examination of the potential social impacts for Indigenous communities arising from changes in the use and management of the SEQ forested areas; and
- (ii) the development of impact management strategies” (SE5.2.2 *Indigenous Communities' Issues and Social Profile Case Studies*, Project Specification, QDNR & DPIE).

The potential social impacts of changes in forest use and management, developed through undertaking case studies of forestry and Indigenous involvement world wide, have been outlined in the recent report on the *Impact of Changes in Forest Use on Indigenous Peoples* by Marcus Lane. Lane (1999:48) states that the three key questions relevant to the SEQ RFA are:

1. What are the social impacts of particular resource uses?
2. How can these social impacts be mitigated or managed?
3. What is the capability of Indigenous communities and organisations to participate effectively in resource management?

This Chapter outlines the key points associated with each question. These points will be used to evaluate potential social impacts of changes in forest use to Aboriginal people with association to forested land within the SEQ RFA area.

The first part of this Chapter evaluates whether the frequent social impacts to Indigenous people from forestry or protected areas outlined in the Lane Report are happening to Aboriginal people within the SEQ RFA region. The second part of this Chapter discusses potential social benefits from forestry, whether they have been applied in practice in the SEQ RFA region and potential opportunities for Aboriginal people to gain social benefits from forestry operations and management of protected areas. The third section outlines the existing organisational capacity of Aboriginal people to be involved in land and natural resource management.

9.2 What are the social impacts of particular resource uses?

From consideration of both issues raised by Aboriginal people during the limited consultation process for the SEQ RFA ‘assessment phase’ and the analysis of potential social impacts of changes in forest use on Indigenous people provided by Lane’s Report, there is a range of social impacts to consider. These impacts are commonly derived from the effects of :

- damage to places of significance;
- the lack of involvement over management of traditional lands, and
- the regulatory and management regimes which marginalise Aboriginal people (Lane, 1999:49).

9.2.1 Concern and offence at the perception of damage to culturally significant sites and landscapes

The *South East Queensland Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Guidelines Report* in 1998 by Kate Sullivan for the SEQ RFA highlighted the considerable concerns of Aboriginal people about continuing destruction of areas of cultural significance. The issue was raised time and again though the social profile consultations, even though meetings focussed on issues far broader than cultural heritage. This indicates the level of significance of cultural heritage management to Aboriginal peoples.

The destruction of areas of cultural significance is a reality in SEQ, not merely a perception of Aboriginal people. In Queensland there has been no legislative requirement for Environment Impact Assessments (including heritage assessment and management) of forested lands allocated for logging. The authors, and certainly the Aboriginal participants in this project do not know of one cultural heritage assessment that has been undertaken before logging of their traditional lands.

Logging has always occurred without any adequate cultural heritage regimes, which allowed for the identification or protection of Aboriginal areas of cultural significance.

Stage 1 of the assessment of Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM) in the SEQ RFA area revealed "a lack of systems in relation to cultural heritage management". Key issues are:

- The absence of a whole of Government approach to cultural heritage; and
- The absence of a set of consistent, effective and credible tools to identify, protect and manage cultural heritage." (ESFM Expert Panel, 1999)

Many sites of cultural value (both physical and spiritual) have been lost because of logging practices. Cultural values encompass both cultural heritage and the associated traditional law and customs. Access to traditional lands and places of significance are critical to the on-going cultural maintenance of Aboriginal communities. As stated by Frank Kemp, "The biggest problem is that stories are not being passed on. People are losing their cultural identity and existence. We need to be on the land in appropriate places to transmit knowledge. Getting back to country is very important". Access for Aboriginal people to these sites has also been a long-term, on-going problem.

A second, major social impact in relation to cultural heritage has been the establishment of extensive plantation estates without the consent or even involvement of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people were not involved in any cultural heritage assessments before the land was cleared and the plantations established. Once again, many places of significance (both of material and or spiritual value) have been disturbed, interfered with or desecrated.

Thirdly, Aboriginal people are also concerned about the continuing loss of areas of cultural significance when they are involved in identifying areas of cultural significance for the development assessment of potential projects. People have time and again been asked directly and indirectly to approve the destruction of some areas of cultural significance. This expectation that Aboriginal people will 'compromise' or 'cooperate' in this process is further compounded by Government and developers generally favouring a European or scientific assessment of significance rather than of Aboriginal cultural significance.

Aboriginal people do not want to lose any more of their cultural estate.

9.2.2 Aboriginal custodial owners regret the loss of control over their land and culturally significant areas

The socio-cultural effects experienced by Aboriginal people as a result of loss of control of their traditional lands stems partly from people's cultural responsibilities, based on their inherited right to speak for country and ensure that their traditional lands are looked after and appropriately respected. The lack of control over traditional lands has resulted in Aboriginal people having missed opportunities (maximising positive social impacts) of having their interests recognised and being active participants in the planning, implementation and management processes. The opportunities for gone have included the ability to provide greater social and cultural opportunities for youth, in particular.

An example is the Queensland Government's lack of will to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the cessation of logging on Fraser Island. This has hampered potential avenues to further Aboriginal people's self determination by creating Aboriginal management areas, secure access to traditional country including access to cultural places of significance, allow traditional activities such as hunting and gathering activities to occur and support economic ventures.

Contrary to popular opinion, Aboriginal people have not been given title to one square inch of land within the SEQ RFA region through either the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991* or the *Native Title Act (Cth) 1993*. Even the two DOGITs of Cherbourg and Woorabinda remain as property of the crown. The land is leased to Aboriginal people. Aboriginal groups in the SEQ RFA area, have bought three private properties, with grants from both ATSIC and the funds from the Indigenous Land Corporation.

Aboriginal people have experienced the effects of the social impacts of loss of control of their traditional lands where the current use of traditional lands involves both forestry production (State Forests) and protected areas (National Parks). Despite the legislative and administrative opportunities, and in the case of Fraser Island a Royal Commission recommendation, there has been little or no progress regarding Aboriginal participation in management of any form of tenure or management regime. Likewise on Commonwealth owned lands at Tin Can Bay and Canungra used by the Army, similar issues apply.

The Glasshouse Social Profile is a good example of the loss of control over country and culturally significant areas. Nearly all Aboriginal people involved in the Profile had family sent away from their country because Aboriginal people refused to clear traditional land. Aboriginal people today are experiencing continuing anguish because of what people consider is current mismanagement of both their traditional forested lands and the Glasshouse Mountains. Aboriginal people have not got ownership or a major say in management of their traditional lands, including their cultural estate.

Aboriginal access to, and involvement in, management of forested lands, has declined over the decades. Now Aboriginal people are not even consulted about forestry activities. Aboriginal involvement in managing protected areas has been marginally better. Some Aboriginal people have a reasonable working relationship with local rangers and have been able to get some limited Aboriginal employment. Key employment seems to be 12 month contracts for Aboriginal people as trainees.

Communities seem to have trouble getting the contracts extended or positions upgraded.

The social impacts of protected areas are highlighted through the Hervey Bay social profile. Recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry into Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region recommended that the Butchulla/Badjala people be given a much greater say in management of Fraser Island and other Islands and better employment opportunities. Aboriginal people have not been included in management even though Fraser Island has subsequently been declared a World Heritage Area in 1993 and a National Park in 1998. The Buchulla/Badjala people are also continuing to have difficulty getting more permanent staff on and have recently lost a trainee after the twelve month contract was completed.

The continuing lack of control over country is extremely frustrating for the Aboriginal communities, particularly as they now have legal recognition of their rights to managing land through legislation such as the *Native Title Act (Cth) 1993* and *Aboriginal Land Act 1993*. More than anything, people want to be able to go and live in their traditional lands and have an opportunity to pass on their knowledge to the children and to maintain their cultural and social cohesion. The lack of a settlement or a cultural base makes it difficult for Aboriginal people to easily go back onto country in all social profile areas.

The lack of involvement of Aboriginal people on forested lands has made it extremely difficult for them to protect and manage areas of cultural significance. Many areas of cultural significance require maintenance. In addition, visiting and maintaining areas of cultural significance is an important aspect of their continuing culture.

Access to places of significance is one of the greatest problems for Aboriginal people regarding cultural heritage management. Many forested areas in SEQ are on leasehold or freehold land and Aboriginal people have no rights of access for maintenance and protection of areas with cultural values. A good example is Beaudesert where only two private property owners allow Aboriginal people access and people are often denied access to local rivers. This does not only occur on private lands. Githabul people tell of their frustration with Queensland National Parks and State Forests for sometime padlocking gates while they have open access to National Parks and State Forest areas in New South Wales.

9.2.3 A tendency for the regulatory and management regimes which accompany logging to marginalise local Aboriginal people from their country

Unlike the *Nature Conservation Act 1991*, the *Forestry Act 1957* does not give statutory recognition to Aboriginal people. There are no legal mechanisms for Aboriginal people to own or adequately participate in the management of forestry lands. However, administrative procedures for involvement of Aboriginal people in forestry operations could easily have been developed.

Aboriginal people involved in the social profile areas have not gained any legal or administrative procedures, which allow for appropriate joint management of forestry lands. Nearly all Aboriginal people have not been consulted, let alone involved in

management, by any operators within forestry, including government agencies and private operators. Aboriginal people involved in all social profile areas are frustrated about their complete lack of control over forestry activities on their traditional lands. The cumulative social impacts of forestry have been severe. Historically, in all social profile areas Aboriginal people were employed in forestry and their knowledge was important to the industry. Aboriginal input into forestry activities over the decades has declined. The cumulative social impacts of forestry activities have become exacerbated. Aboriginal people have lost control of their country, have little or no consultation with forestry and no employment in the timber industry.

Until present day, all forestry activities in Queensland have occurred without any Environment Impact Assessments (EIAs), unlike other states such as New South Wales and Victoria. This has meant that logging and plantation establishment has occurred without any legislative requirements for Aboriginal involvement in assessments. The triggering of EIAs would have allowed for the identification, protection and management of areas of cultural significance and also would have allowed for social impact assessments to be undertaken. Through social impact assessments, the social impacts of forestry activities on Aboriginal people could have been identified and mitigation strategies could have been developed and adopted.

Other direct impacts have occurred on the two DOGITS involved in the social profile. Commercial extraction of wood or other products is not allowed to occur on DOGIT lands. Both DOGITS have sawmills, which stand empty. Aboriginal people on the DOGITS used to be employed in forestry activities but are no longer. The DOGITS now have to buy wood, even firewood. In addition, at Cherbourg, land was taken out of the Mission lands and added to the State Forestry Estate. The Council retained a grazing lease on the land but that has also been recently lost.

9.2.4 Conclusion

The cumulative social impacts on Aboriginal people, in the social profile areas, from forestry activities and protected areas within the SEQ RFA region, have been severe and ongoing. All the potential negative social impacts of changes in forest use on Indigenous people outlined in the Lane Report are happening to Aboriginal people with an interest in the SEQ RFA region. Aboriginal people in all social profile areas have lost control over their traditional lands, have not been able to access, protect or manage much of their cultural estate and continue to be marginalised by the regulatory and management regimes being implemented by government agencies within forested areas in SEQ.

The negative social impacts are now greater than ever before because there is no employment for Aboriginal people in forest industries and there has been no consultation about activities occurring on the traditional lands of Aboriginal people.

Outlined below are (i) some of the mechanisms stated in the Lane Report, which have been used nationally, and internationally to maximise positive impacts of changes in forest use for Indigenous people and (ii) whether these mechanisms are currently being applied within the SEQ.

9.3 How can these social impacts be mitigated or managed?

9.3.1 Background

The potential social impacts outlined above can be mitigated through a number of strategies. The first three directly deal with impacts of forestry operations and the remainder about impacts caused by the establishment of conservation regimes.

9.3.2 Opportunities for economic participation in forestry

Some of the potential impacts of forestry operations could be minimised if there was opportunity for Aboriginal people to:

- own forestry operations;
- be employed in operations on their traditional lands, in the broader timber; industry including management and administrative positions;
- develop Farm Forestry initiatives, and
- be involved in manufacturing initiatives.

The Social Profiles have clearly shown that Aboriginal people were important in forestry operations early this century. They were employed in both logging and milling. Aboriginal employment, in forest and other rural industries, slowly declined from the 1940s partly because of technical innovation and rising unemployment. This project has not found one Aboriginal person currently employed in forestry operations within the SEQ RFA area.

In addition, currently there are no Aboriginal people employed in their own or community based manufacturing operations except in arts and crafts.

Specific support should be given to increasing Aboriginal employment in all aspects of forestry operations and assistance given to the establishment of Aboriginal owned manufacturing of wood products. The Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation, which operates Scrubby Hill Farm at Hervey Bay, is well positioned to establish and operate a small manufacturing base in the near future.

9.3.3 Equity partnerships with logging companies/contractors

There are no equity partnerships in place within the SEQ RFA region. Aboriginal groups were interested in forming equity partnerships. Participants at the Woorabinda profile also talked about Aboriginal owned enterprises. However, there are few resources within Aboriginal communities to pursue partnerships without government support.

The Queensland Timber Board and the Queensland Government should begin discussions with Aboriginal people about (i) the most appropriate mechanisms for recognising their association with land and (ii) opportunities for additional economic benefits of logging to accrue to Aboriginal people.

9.3.4 The development of equity partnerships or joint management of forestry activities requires (1) recognition of Indigenous proprietary interests and (2) providing a framework for the negotiation of such arrangements

The SEQ RFA could have been an ideal process to recognise Aboriginal proprietary interests and to adequately involve Aboriginal people in the process so that negotiations could be completed as part of the RFA outcome.

This has not happened. Aboriginal people are not represented on the Steering Committee, have not been funded to identify and locate traditional owners and have not been funded to put in place appropriate consultation methods or undertake comprehensive assessments.

Aboriginal people in this project have consistently spoken about their lack of involvement in the RFA. People are frustrated because they want their interests recognised and they want to be able to negotiate with government and other stakeholders about protecting their interests and become more involved in managing their traditional lands. They do not want to go to Court but will if they have to, to protect their interests.

The protracted disputes outlined in the Wet Tropics Case Study in the Lane Report highlight the problems for government and other stakeholders of not recognising Aboriginal propriety rights and reaching a negotiated settlement before new conservation and management regimes are established.

Aboriginal people in all profile areas wanted the government and key stakeholders to recognise their legal and customary rights in relation to forested lands. Aboriginal people in all social profile areas want to sit down and negotiate legally binding outcomes at the local level, which gives Aboriginal people effective input into the management of, and operations in, forested lands, both those used for production and protection.

9.3.5 Involvement of Aboriginal people in conservation reserves

The Lane Report has identified the potential social impacts and further marginalisation of Aboriginal people through the declaration of conservation reserves. The key mechanism to prevent such impacts is through joint management of conservation reserves. Aboriginal people in the social profile areas were wary of any further increase in national parks because it was perceived that some existing rights could be lost. Aboriginal people at the Hervey Bay, Woorabinda and Beaudesert meetings had concerns about additional protected areas being established, particularly if Aboriginal people do not get to own or manage them.. However, most Aboriginal people were willing to negotiate about further protected areas if their legal and customary rights are recognised and protected.

Aboriginal people involved in all the social profiles aspire to greater involvement in existing conservation reserves including ownership, management rights, employment and the ongoing ability to practice their customs.

International and national conventions¹ require the State and Commonwealth governments to respect preserve and maintain knowledge and practices of Indigenous communities relevant to the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity.

This requires action by both governments to:

- eliminate the impact of government policies that may affect biological diversity through the erosion of cultural diversity;
- encourage traditional sustainable use of biological compatible with conservation and sustainable management;
- eliminate incentives which encourage over-exploitation and loss of biological diversity; and
- in cooperation with indigenous people, undertake entho-biological studies to identify and record traditional knowledge, innovations and practices.

In essence, to comply with international and national conventions, the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments are required to actively support Aboriginal involvement in protected area management.

More effective input into management regimes for existing and proposed conservation reserves within the SEQ RFA region should be included within the Process Agreement.

9.4 What is the capability of Indigenous communities and organisations to participate effectively in resource management?

9.4.1 Background

The capacity of Indigenous communities and organisations to participate effectively in resource management has changed markedly during the 1990s.

The first significant change has been the establishment of Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) through the *Native Title Act (Cth) 1993* throughout most of Queensland. The NTRBs are resourced and actively involved in establishing and administrating procedures for Aboriginal involvement in land and natural resource management.

There are still some differences between how each of the NTRBs work with their constituents during this establishment and transition phase. Some Aboriginal people work directly with the NTRBs on all matters while other people prefer to work through their local organisations on land and natural resource management matters. Over the past few years the links between the NTRBs and local organisations have been strengthened.

¹ such as article 8 of the *International Convention on Biological Diversity* and the *National Convention for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity* particularly objective 1.8.2

The NTRBs have been supporting the self-determination of Aboriginal people and by giving technical assistance to local organisations doing their own business. The involvement of the NTRBs is more direct in areas where there are no local organisations or not enough skills or resources within the local organisation.

The second significant change has been the establishment and/or consolidation of local organisations involved in land and natural resource management issues. Many of the traditional owner groups (or sometimes a family group) have their own incorporated organisation. Many of these groups receive little or no resources and remain dependent on the NTRBs for technical support. However, organisations in the SEQ RFA area, such as Nghally Ghungalu Thoonieda Aboriginal Corporation, the Wondunna (Wund'duman) Aboriginal Corporation and the Nghally Ghungalu Thoowieda Aboriginal Corporation have been involved in a number of projects where they have been resourced to be involved and sometimes have undertaken their own assessments.

Aboriginal people involved in the Social Profiles have become increasingly involved in land and natural resource management projects during the 1990s. There have been a number of development assessment projects in which Aboriginal people have been involved in the identification and management of cultural heritage and Social Impact Assessments including dam proposals, pipeline routes, proposed mining projects and residential estates.

Three Aboriginal organisations own and manage land within SEQ. The Scrub Hill Farm operated Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation is the most established. They are seeking government support for expanding cultural tourism, establishing some wood production and establishing manufacturing of wood products. The other two groups are still developing their own strategies for long term management of their properties. Strategies being touted include rehabilitation, wood production and cultural tourism.

9.4 Conclusion

The ongoing cumulative social impacts to the six Aboriginal communities profiled have been severe. Aboriginal people have lost control over their country and they have ongoing problems accessing, protecting and managing areas of cultural significance and face many challenges in establishing economic enterprises including access to seed money and technical support. Efforts by Aboriginal people to have more effective participation in land and natural resource management projects such as the SEQ RFA have been impeded time and again by governments and stakeholders not respecting or recognising the customary and legal rights of Aboriginal people.

None of the potential social benefits from activities on forested lands are currently occurring. Aboriginal people are not employed in forestry activities, do not have equity partnerships with companies and do not have any ownership or joint management of any lands within SEQ.

The institutional capacity of Aboriginal groups has improved markedly throughout the 1990s. The establishment of NTRBs and local Aboriginal organisations has resulted

in much greater involvement of Aboriginal people in land and natural resource management. Aboriginal people are better prepared now to negotiate about management of forested lands.

Aboriginal people wish to negotiate more effective participation in the management of their traditional lands. They are seeking to negotiate with government and other stakeholders to re-establish Aboriginal customary rights to land and put in place strategies to achieve the above possible social benefits.

Chapter 10: Possibilities for managing potential social impacts

10.1 Background

The possibilities for managing potential social impacts have been outlined in the previous chapter. They included:

- More effective participation in management of protected areas and crown forestry land;
- Access, protection and management of areas of significance across all forested lands in the RFA region;
- Joint equity projects with government and private users of the forest;
- Employment in forestry activities and protected areas;
- Greater support (including resources) for inclusive local organisations; and
- Opportunity to establish forestry operations on DOGIT lands.

This Chapter will outline in more detail what the legal and administrative opportunities and impediments are to maximising the potential positive social impacts.

Each section of this Chapter will only briefly assess the opportunities and impediments of legislation in relation to Aboriginal involvement in land and natural resource management. Numerous papers and books by authors such as Ross Johnston, Marcus Lane, Allan Dale and Demont Smythe have previously reviewed this legislation in detail. Further emphasis will be given to potential administrative procedures to which could mitigate some of the social impacts of forestry activities and protected areas within the SEQ RFA.

10.2 Native Title

The *Native Title Act (Cth) 1993 (NTA)* was introduced after the historic Mabo High Court Case, which recognised ongoing Indigenous, rights to land. It was subsequently amended in 1997 after the Wik High Court Case broadened the scope of Native Title consistency in Australia. The *NTA* recognises that Indigenous people may still retain native title on some Australian lands. There are a number of customary rights, which are retained, and those rights will be different in local areas depending on previous laws and land uses.

In relation to the SEQ RFA, many issues are associated with native title including ownership of forestry products, determining extent of native title within RFA area, compensating lawful effects upon native title and intellectual and cultural property rights (Yarrow, 1998).

Claims under the NTA to date have been time consuming, expensive, technical and difficult for nearly all Aboriginal people involved in the Social Profiles. Currently there are 25 Native Title claims over SEQ RFA lands registered with the National

Native Title Tribunal covering approximately 60% of claimable lands. Other traditional owner groups are currently completing the research to enable Native Title claims to be lodged.

Aboriginal people are now looking at the Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) provisions of the NTA as a way of protecting their customary rights without the enormous costs (including social) of undertaking sometimes divisive formal claims under the NTA. Aboriginal people wish to see their customary rights to forested lands protected.

One mechanism for achieving this is through S.24 of the NTA. The NTA provides for 3 forms of Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA); body corporate agreements, area agreements and process agreements. A process ILUA can provide for a wide range of matters (see NTA s. 24DB) but is primarily concerned with procedural matters for future acts (ie. acts affecting native title). Process ILUAs can also include conditions, which must be satisfied before future acts are done.

The Expert Panel set up to assess Queensland's Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM) systems considered the implications of Native Title on the implementation of tenure and management changes that may result from the SEQ RFA. The Expert Panel explicitly recognised the lack of clarity and certainty arising from the cumbersome formal NTA processes. They recommend:

1. The development of a Process Agreement under the ILUA provisions of the NTA;
2. The development of employment and participation strategies to ensure the involvement of indigenous people in the delivery of ESFM; and
3. That the government adopt and consistently apply a policy that enables indigenous joint management of National Parks (ESFM Expert Panel,1999).

A Process Agreement with the NTRBs could be a mechanism which enables Aboriginal groups to reach satisfactory legally binding negotiated outcomes. Under such an agreement customary rights would be protected and appropriate mechanisms for participation of Aboriginal people in management of forested lands.

A Process Agreement under the *NTA* between the NTRBs and the Queensland Government established before the completion of the RFA is the only possible framework mechanism which could now be put in place at this late stage to mitigate or manage the ongoing cumulative social costs to Aboriginal people. Such an agreement would outline procedures for the appropriate involvement of Aboriginal people in developing their own Land Use Agreements, which protects their own rights and interests before the RFA is implemented

10.3 The Aboriginal Land Act 1991

The *Aboriginal Land Act 1991* was introduced by the Queensland Government to enable Aboriginal people to own and manage land. The Act outlines mechanisms to hand back Aboriginal Reserve land, National Parks and non-urban vacant crown land. It does not include land on which forestry activities occur.

Because of the extensive use of missions and the movement of Aboriginal people throughout the State, the Act enables both traditional owners and historical associates to own and manage land. This is in contrast to the NTA in which people must show traditional ties to the land. This has made the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991* difficult to implement as it has led to conflict between traditional owners and historical associates, particularly on DOGIT lands.

Another major impediment from an Aboriginal perspective is that land must first be gazetted for claim by the Government. Only a few National Parks and Aboriginal Reserves in isolated areas of the State have ever been gazetted for claim (Smythe, 1993, 143-148).

10.4 Nature Conservation Act 1992

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* provides for Aboriginal ownership and joint management of national parks in Queensland. Aboriginal people have several issues with the current Act including those listed below.

- Aboriginal people must sign a perpetual lease back of the national park to the government. This is in contrast with other land rights Acts which allow for 99 year leases with regular reviews.
- Aboriginal people being offered peppercorn rentals for the lease of the national park to the government. Aboriginal people cannot get any economic gain from the land being national park if no rental is paid by the Government or no fees can be collected for people using the national park.
- Aboriginal people cannot hunt in national parks unless it is approved in a management plan.
- Aboriginal people cannot live in national parks unless it is approved in a management plan.
- There is no mechanism to enable Aboriginal people to own and solely manage land as a national park.

Administrative procedures however, have enabled Aboriginal people to participate more in management of national parks. Many Aboriginal communities throughout Queensland have negotiated some co-management arrangements which allow people easy access to land and areas of cultural significance, employment of Aboriginal rangers and trainees and consultation about management. These co-management arrangements are being undertaken at the local level between local rangers and Aboriginal people.

Further administrative procedures could easily be developed with the NTRBs and local Aboriginal groups to enable Aboriginal people to have more effective input into the management of protected areas. These could include:

Procedures to enable effective Aboriginal input into the development of Plans of Management for protected areas;
Procedures to assist traditional owners to easily access their traditional lands, which are protected areas.

Procedures for social impact assessment and possibly cultural heritage clearance to develop legally binding negotiated outcomes between traditional owners and the government before any further protected areas are declared;

An Employment Strategy to increase Aboriginal employment in all aspects of protected areas management, including guaranteed permanent placement of trainees on completion of their contract and the availability of local accredited training for park rangers, administrators and managers; and

Procedures for Aboriginal people to be able to protect and manage areas of cultural significance.

10.5 The Forestry Act 1957

The *Forestry Act 1957* does not have legal mechanisms for Aboriginal ownership or involvement in management of forestry lands. For several years during the 1990s, a Resource Management Bill was touted where all natural resources would be managed through one Act. The current government has decided not to proceed with the new Bill. However, there is still a need to update the *Forestry Act 1957* to include:

- Recognition of native title through Aboriginal rights to tenure and joint management of forestry lands;
- Development assessment procedures for proposed areas of logging and for proposed plantations;
- Mechanisms to enable Aboriginal people to access, protect and manage areas of cultural significance; and
- Aboriginal access and use of forestry products.

Once again, administrative procedures could be quickly developed with the NTRBs and local Aboriginal groups including:

- A Joint Management Policy Paper, which outlines the potential scope of effective Aboriginal input into management;
- Procedures to enable a social impact assessment and cultural heritage clearance to be undertaken by traditional owners before any further allocation of wood or any further establishment of plantations;
- Procedures for Aboriginal people to access, protect and manage areas of cultural significance on forestry lands; and
- An Aboriginal employment policy which seeks employment for Aboriginal people in all aspects of forestry activity.

10.6 Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM) Expert Panel Assessment - social & economic recommendations

The ESFM Expert Panel, convened by the Qld and Commonwealth Governments to assess Qld's sustainable forest management systems, recognised that tenure and management changes resulting from the SEQ RFA may result in substantial social and economic impact on some communities.

In relation to indigenous communities the Expert Panel noted:

Since some of the Aboriginal communities in the region are materially impoverished, consideration needs to be given to the mitigation of impacts arising from major changes in resource use, as well as to ensuring that forest management provides benefits to these communities. In addition, previous efforts at regional-scale socio-economic impact management in Queensland have failed to account for the particularities of indigenous communities in relation to economic issues.

The Social Impact Assessment Unit of the (Qld) Government should be given responsibility for implementing the impact mitigation strategy and conducting socio-economic analyses for tenure conversions." (ESFM Expert Panel, 1999)

Major socio-economic recommendations of the Expert Panel include:

- Socio-economic impact analyses should be conducted prior to major conversion of tenure to ensure that impact management programs are applied in a targeted manner;
- A social impact management strategy should be implemented in the region to respond to the impacts of major changes to forest products as a result of governmental decisions to reallocate the land/resource; and
- It should include a component specifically devised to suit the needs of indigenous communities both in terms of mitigating negative impacts and in terms of enhancing existing and potential economic opportunities." (ESFM Expert Panel, 1999)

10.7 Cultural Heritage

The Queensland cultural heritage legislation is currently under review. Other Projects have addressed cultural heritage issues in the SEQ RFA. However, it must be noted that ownership, access, protection and management of areas of cultural significance has been totally inadequate to date.

Stage 1 of the SEQ RFA ESFM Assessment revealed a lack of systems in relation to cultural heritage management. In order to facilitate detailed consideration of cultural heritage issues, a working group inclusive of State and Commonwealth officers and representatives of indigenous organisations was formed. The working group prepared a report that identified the deficiencies in current systems and proposed a work program to remedy these problems. The major findings of the working group, adopted by the ESFM Expert Panel, appear below.

The key issues the Working Group identified are:

- A restrictive definition of indigenous cultural heritage in the *Cultural Record (Landscape Queensland and Queensland Estate) Act 1987*;
- The absence of a whole of Government approach to cultural heritage;

- Problems in existing institutional arrangements, particularly in terms of the linkages between the lead agency and land management agencies;
- A shortage of appropriately trained personnel which limits the capacity of land management agencies to manage cultural heritage as an integral component of environmental management;
- The absence of a set of consistent, effective and credible tools to identify, protect and manage cultural heritage;
- Insufficient resources for identification and management of cultural heritage;
- Insufficient mechanisms to involve stakeholders and owners of traditional knowledge in cultural heritage issues, particularly in relation to indigenous cultural heritage; and
- A lack of monitoring.

The Working Group has developed a work program to respond to these problems and has identified appropriate responses to the major deficiencies in current arrangements. For more detail refer to the current Report.

In particular, the ESFM Working Group notes an increased management focus on cultural heritage must be accompanied by an increase in resources available to land management agencies for implementation. Cultural heritage protection consistent with ESFM cannot be provided without an increase in resourcing (ESFM Expert Panel, 1999).

10.8 Conclusion

There are still major institutional impediments for Aboriginal people to have effective input into managing traditional forested lands even though laws have been established which recognises customary rights to own and manage lands. The NTA and the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*, while recognising Aboriginal rights to land, has been time consuming, difficult and with no success for Aboriginal people with traditional lands within SEQ. There has not been any institutional recognition of Aboriginal people's rights to land within SEQ to date.

A Process Agreement between the NTRBs and government is possible through the NTA. Such a process would give institutional recognition to Aboriginal people and enable local Aboriginal people to negotiate legally binding agreements for effective input into managing forestry activities and protected areas.

The key Queensland legislation associated with Aboriginal people and the SEQ RFA have also been major impediments to Aboriginal self-determination to date. The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* requires the government to gazette land for claim and this is not happening because of a lack of government will. Aboriginal people themselves also reject aspects such as perpetual lease back terms and the peppercorn rental rate of national parks from the government. The *Forestry Act 1957* does not even recognise Aboriginal rights. Further to this the *Community Services Aborigines Act 1984-90* (CSSA) under which DOGITs operate, prohibits the use of forests or forests products for economic gain.

In particular, S77B of the CSAA provides for residents to use forest products only for non-commercial purposes. The Deed of Grant itself reserves the ownership of forest products on the lease to the Crown; and the Crown can allocate those products to third persons through the normal permit system, which potentially can be the DOGIT residents.

Much is possible in the short term through the development of government administrative policies and procedures, which recognise Aboriginal customary rights on forested lands. This could be done through developing appropriate administrative procedures for protected areas with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and for forestry activities with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Primary Industries.

Chapter 11: Conclusion and Recommendations

The six Aboriginal Social Profiles have each offered their own unique history, local issues and aspirations. People have many land and natural resource management issues specific to their traditional lands. For this reason any future negotiations will need to occur at the local level.

However, there are several generic key conclusions that can be made which can be directly attributed to government policies, both official and ad-hoc, particularly those arising from the *Restriction of the Sale of Opium and Protection of Aborigines Act 1897*. Firstly, in the past the majority of Aboriginal people in all case study areas were moved to Missions, separated from their families, worked for little or no wages and were not counted as part of the Australian population until after the 1967 Referendum. Secondly, Aboriginal people today are socio-economically disadvantaged, with many living in what could only be described as third world conditions. People in the Social Profile areas have extremely high unemployment rates with Woorabinda at 97% the highest, high housing rental rates and low life expectancy. It must also be remembered, when developing change management strategies, that over half the Aboriginal population is under twenty years.

In relation to forested lands the cumulative social impacts have been severe because; firstly Aboriginal people in the Social Profile areas have not gained ownership or joint management of any lands through legislation; secondly, Aboriginal people have not been consulted by government agencies or companies involved in forestry activities; thirdly, Aboriginal people over the years have lost many areas of cultural significance and do not have protection and access to remaining areas of cultural significance; and fourthly, Aboriginal people were employed in forestry activities but employment has declined over the decades. Now there are no Aboriginal people known to be employed in forestry activities in the six social profile areas.

In relation to protected areas Aboriginal people seem to have been consulted more often and in some local areas the relationship with Queensland National Parks has been good. The first key issue is that no national park has been gazetted for claim in the six social profile areas. The second issue is that Aboriginal people feel that they never get to talk to the Minister or senior decision makers in the Environment Protection Agency in Brisbane about more effective input into park management. Thirdly, a limited number of Aboriginal people are employed as Park Rangers or trainees. However, all people in the social profile areas wanted to see more employment opportunities and better access to accredited training programs.

The introduction of land rights legislation in Queensland and the establishment of both Federal and State Native Title laws has meant that Aboriginal people may have both legal and customary rights to land. However, the laws require Aboriginal people to show continuing association with their traditional lands and knowledge of their culture.

Understandably, after the appalling history of the treatment of Aboriginal people in Queensland, the net result of the new laws was considerable conflict within

Aboriginal communities and groups about traditional ties to country. Time and the considerable debate about native title has helped Aboriginal people to understand the details of native title better and to understand what is expected of Aboriginal people under the *Native Title Act (Cth) 1993* .

One significant fact apparent during the social profiles has been the transition in Aboriginal communities from conflict to finding ways of respecting each other and working together. This has been achieved either through the NTRBs assistance and/or through local initiatives with no help or resources from the Queensland Government. Aboriginal groups in social profile areas with multiple interests are establishing mechanisms to enable them to speak with one voice to Government and stakeholders.

Another significant outcome has been the proliferation of local groups becoming involved in land and natural resource management. Groups are becoming involved in regional planning, development assessments, cultural heritage management and co-management of national parks. Aboriginal involvement has been done with little or no resources. Input could be made more effective over time if local groups amalgamate to establish inclusive local organisations. Support should be given to groups to discuss the formation of more inclusive local groups and what resources will be required.

The major impediments to the groups getting more effective participation in land and natural resource management has been the lack of institutional recognition of Aboriginal people's customary and legal rights and the lack of resources to employ people with expertise in the local groups.

Key generic aspirations of Aboriginal people include more effective input into managing forested lands including ownership and sole or joint management of both protected and production areas. Aspirations within these areas include getting back onto country, hunting, fishing and gathering rights, active involvement in fire and environment management, significantly more permanent employment opportunities, protection and management of cultural areas of significance and better economic opportunities. Access and better protection and management of all of their cultural estate across the whole SEQ RFA region was also considered important in all Social Profile areas.

There is an opportunity to mitigate and manage some of the cumulative impacts of forestry activities and the declaration of protected areas by government and other key stakeholders supporting the use of process ILUA's. A process ILUA will enable local Aboriginal people to negotiate legally binding outcomes with government and possibly other local stakeholders which can incorporate the above aspirations and other local aspirations. A negotiated settlement with local Aboriginal groupings is the only mechanism available which can provide certainty to government and key stakeholders such as the Queensland Timber Board and environment groups about the twenty year implementation of the RFA.

The government should play a critical role in facilitating this. Lane (1999:4) states that to manage the impact of change in forest use on Aboriginal people will require the government to:

- (I) formally recognise Indigenous rights and interests;

- (II) facilitate effective participation; and
- (III) provide a framework for negotiation of joint management of forests (for either conservation or commercial purposes).

Recommendation 1

The Queensland and Federal Government's provide an institutional role for Aboriginal people in forested areas.

A legally binding Process Agreement between the Queensland Government and the NTRBs which outlines a process for local negotiations about both tenure and management, (including protection and production areas within the SEQ RFA region), should be implemented. The Process ILUA should be signed concurrently with the State and Federal government's signing of the SEQ RFA.

Recommendation 2

That the government put in place interim procedures until legally binding negotiated agreements are finalised. These should include the triggering of cultural heritage clearance procedures and social impact assessments before any changes to tenure, before establishing any further plantations and before any further wood allocation.

Recommendation 3

That the Forestry sections of the Queensland government, the Queensland Timber Board and other stakeholders undertake negotiations with Aboriginal people about economic initiatives, protecting and managing areas of cultural significance and cultural education within the timber industry.

Recommendation 4

Economic initiatives be introduced, including employment in protection and production areas of SEQ forests, through creating enterprises and introducing employment programs within the Queensland government and through the Queensland Timber Board. Equity partnerships with Forestry companies should also be investigated.

Recommendation 5

That the Queensland government, the NTRBs and local Aboriginal people develop, as part of the Process Indigenous Land Use Agreement, a framework through which Aboriginal people can negotiate access to areas of cultural significance on all lands.

Recommendation 6

The Queensland and Federal governments fund the NTRBs to assist Aboriginal people to form appropriate groupings to negotiate about forestry activities.

Recommendation 7

The Queensland and Federal governments help with seed funding to inclusive local organisations to participate in land and natural resource management projects.

Recommendation 8

That funds be allocated from the Structural Adjustment Package or other appropriate programs to Aboriginal organisations managing land to develop cultural tourism, wood production and manufacturing of wood products.

Recommendation 9

That a 'Development and Employment Strategy' be urgently implemented at both Cherbourg and Woorabinda. This strategy should investigate the impediments to commercial resource usage on DOGITs and the feasibility of re-establishing the sawmill, wood production areas, manufacturing of wood products and other employment initiatives.

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Appendix 1: Agenda for the Two Community Meetings

Draft Agenda

1. Overview of RFA and why the project is being undertaken

2. Previous association to Land

- Attachment to land
- use patterns
- past economic uses/benefits

3. Current Issues

- tenure
- mangement
- social
- economic
- environment

4. Aspirations

- Forested lands
- Forestry
- Protected areas
- other

5. Internal Structures

- Local organisations?
- Been involved in land management projects?

Draft Agenda

Second Community meeting

1. Introductions

2. Review of Social Profile Chapter and draft Conclusions and Recommendations

3. Update on RFA to date

- Options (if released)
- Cultural Heritage
- Negotiations with government and stakeholders about Indigenous Land Use Agreements