

Ella Bay Development, Far North Queensland
Expression of Interest in Conducting Research:

Research Topic:

‘Adding Value to Science – Sustaining Traditional Ecological & Cultural Knowledge’

How Indigenous traditional knowledge of ecological and cultural heritage within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area adds value to scientific research and environmental education – and how employment of Traditional Owners supports strong and sustainable Indigenous communities in the Far North.

Research Team

Name	Positions	Qualifications
Turton, Steve	Project Manager, ATFI, Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities (=primary research provider), based in Cairns.	Dr Steve Turton is Professor at James Cook University and the Director of the Australian Tropical Forest Institute & JCU/CSIRO Tropical Landscapes Joint Venture. Prior to his current position, Steve was Associate Professor in Geography and Director of Research for the Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre, based at James Cook University. His research interests include tropical climatology, rainforest ecology and natural resource management. Steve has published over 90 scientific papers in these fields of study, comprising refereed journal articles, book chapters and research monographs. He has also supervised over 50 honours and graduate research students during his time at JCU. He is the co-editor of a major book in press: N.E. Stork & S.M. Turton (eds.) 2007. "Living in a Dynamic Tropical Forest Landscape", Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, UK, 620p. Steve is a Councilor of the Institute of Australian Geographers and an ex officio member of the Wet Tropics Management Authority's Scientific Advisory Committee. He was recently nominated to the position of honorary treasurer for the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation, Asia-Pacific Chapter.
Kuehn, Birgit	Research Officer, ATFI, Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities (=primary research provider), based in Cairns	Postgraduate Diploma of Science in Protected Area Management (2000, JCU); Master of Law (equivalent, 1997, Goethe University, Germany) with focus on environmental law; extensive experience in working with Indigenous Traditional Owners in the Wet Tropics, and in communications / media. Research interests include Indigenous involvement in contemporary protected area management, environmental law and intellectual property rights, under consideration of international treaties such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Heritage Convention.
TBA	Research Officer / Assistant (Indigenous / female), Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities, based at the Ella Bay Research Centre	Traditional Owner (Ma:Mu); experience in natural resource management or cultural heritage management, including women's business and significant sites; acknowledged by her peers; good communication skills; Appointment with a degree qualification at Research Officer level, without degree qualification at Research Assistant level. 2 part-time or 1 full-time.

TBA	Research Officer / Assistant (Indigenous / male), Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities, based at the Ella Bay Research Centre	Traditional Owner (Ma:Mu); experience in natural resource management or cultural heritage management, including men's business and significant sites; acknowledged by his peers; good communication skills; Appointment with a degree qualification at Research Officer level, without degree qualification at Research Assistant level. 2 part-time or 1 full-time.
Aboriginal Rainforest Council (ARC)	Advisor / Co-Research Provider	Representative body of and endorsed by the Aboriginal tribal groups of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area; expertise in ecological and cultural knowledge systems.

Background and research questions

The research will:

1. Examine the parameters of cultural heritage sustainability of the proposed Ella Bay Resort, including the potential of new cultural heritage infrastructure, such as a 'Ma:Mu Heritage Information Centre' and Traditional Owner contributions to landscaping of the Ella Bay Resort area, e.g. with the development of a 'Cultural Heritage Trail / Garden';
2. Investigate how Indigenous traditional knowledge of ecological and cultural heritage within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area adds value to scientific research, both within and adjacent to protected areas;
3. Investigate how Indigenous traditional knowledge of ecological and cultural heritage within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area adds value to environmental education & eco-tourism, both within and adjacent to protected areas; and
4. Investigate how vocational recognition of Traditional Owners' expert knowledge in traditional resource management and capacity building in scientific research skills supports strong and sustainable Indigenous communities in the Far North;

Aims, objectives & outcomes

The anticipated outcomes and benefits of this research are that it provides significant contributions to ecologically and culturally sustainable communities and research through

1. Support of scientific research with advice on cultural protocols for field work on traditional country, at the Ella Bay Research Centre and to ATFI researchers;
2. Support of scientific research with advice on cultural protocols for use and distribution of traditional knowledge and on Indigenous intellectual property rights (IPRs), at the Ella Bay Research Centre and to ATFI researchers;
3. Facilitation of contact with Elders and other Traditional Owners relevant for research on Ma:Mu country and by offering translation services where required; and
4. Facilitation of environmental education inclusive of the rich and diverse Indigenous cultural heritage of the Wet Tropics to residents and visitors of Ella Bay community and resort; and, last but not least, by
5. Providing qualified employment and training opportunities for Traditional Owners on their traditional country that respects and acknowledges their expertise in ecological and cultural resource management and their right to speak for their country.

Hereby this research has the opportunity to contribute significantly towards developing 'best practice' procedures on cultural protocols and Indigenous IPRs for researchers – a need that has been identified and repeatedly voiced by researchers of James Cook University in the 2003 audit

on the management of intellectual property in publicly funded research at the former Rainforest CRC at JCU.

Outcomes in the short-term include capacity building and empowerment of Traditional Owners, and breaking through the historical cycle of under-recognition of traditional knowledge.

Long-term outcomes include to honour Australia's international obligations under the Biodiversity Convention and the World Heritage Convention, and to contribute to the sustainable development of Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous coastal communities in Far North Queensland, an area of expertise of the new Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities within the Australian Tropical Forest Institute at James Cook University.

Methodology

This research project proposes the following components for its methodology:

1. Literature review (including the Aboriginal Plan, Regional Agreement, Appropriate Economies, Janke Report and other milestone documents);
2. Exploratory research (including a desktop scoping study and liaison / preliminary discussions with relevant Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders);
3. Employment of two full-time (1 male + 1 female) or four part-time (2 male + 2 female) Indigenous Research Officers / Assistants (appointment at level corresponding with skills level, i.e. candidate with degree or equivalent qualification will be appointed at Research Officer level, while a candidate without degree or equivalent qualification will be appointed at Research Assistant level). Candidates should be Ma:Mu Traditional Owners, so they can speak for the country the Ella Bay Research Centre is situated on, and they should have experience and peer recognition in natural resource management or cultural heritage management, including gender specific business and significant sites, as well as good communication skills. Staffing for these positions will involve representation of the Aboriginal Rainforest Council in the selection process.
4. Research will be conducted at both, JCU's Cairns Campus, based at the Australian Tropical Forest Institute, Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities, and the new Ella Bay Research Centre. After initial training, the Indigenous Research Officers/Assistants will be based at Ella Bay Research Centre. A mentor-trainee concept will be looked into, as will opportunities to support Indigenous Research Assistants to pursue tertiary education towards a higher level of future employment.
5. Research at Ella Bay Research Centre will ensure close collaborative research on the interface of traditional knowledge and western science, and its methodology will evolve with the identification of the unique cultural and scientific requirements, which will be subject of monitoring and evaluation by ATFI and the ARC throughout the research project.

Contact

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Funding

Activity	Funding Requirements	Source of Funding
Exploratory research, including desktop scoping study	10,000	Ella Bay Developments
Salaries, Project Manager @ 10%	In-kind	ATFI
Salaries, Project Officer @ 10%	In-kind	ATFI
Salaries, Project Assistant/Officer – Indigenous1	40,000 – 50,000 depending on level	Ella Bay Developments
Salaries, Project Assistant/Officer – Indigenous2	40,000 – 50,000 depending on level	Ella Bay Developments
Office space + overheads, Cairns	In-kind	ATFI
Office space, Ella Bay Research Centre	In-kind	Ella Bay Developments
Communication & Extension work	5,000	Ella Bay Developments
Travel expenses	5,000	Ella Bay Developments
Project administration	2,500	Ella Bay Developments
Operating costs	5,000	Ella Bay Developments
Total cash contributions	107,500 - 127,500 depending on level	Ella Bay Developments
