

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

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**NEW HORIZONS AND OPPORTUNITIES: Cape York Peninsula Investment Prospectus**  
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**August 2010**



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ACRONYMS

AQIS	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
CYPLEG	Cape York Peninsula Live Export Group
CYSF	Cape York Sustainable Futures
DEEDI	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
PDR	Peninsula Development Road
NPA	Northern Peninsula Area
OESR	Office of Economic and Statistical Research
QPWS	Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service



Tip of Cape York



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CAPE YORK IMAGES





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### USING THIS PROSPECTUS

The Prospectus provides an overview of the Cape York Peninsula today and the current level of economic activity. Potential opportunities identified in a number of forums over the past few years are included with an indication of their implementation potential, market capacity, where they fit within the overall Cape York Peninsula economy and development requirements. Where possible, linkages and clustering between investment and development options are noted to maximise resource and funding usage.

The document will be of benefit to existing and potential investors in Cape York Peninsula, communities and Government. It is expected that the Prospectus will be of interest to:

- potential new investors
- existing industries/investors looking to expansion
- all levels of Government
- existing/potential landowners (recognise avenues for diversification, new practices)
- regional and community organisations

The document covers:

- strategic implications and competitive advantages of the Cape York Peninsula region
- external trends and emerging situations which may create opportunities
- legislative and regulatory environment
- existing commercial activity and investment
- opportunities for new initiatives/expansion of existing activities
- potential markets (local, regional, state, national, international)
- development needs – e.g. physical, governmental, community
- overview of sources of data, information and assistance
- organisations or individuals to take a leadership role where relevant

This document should be read in conjunction with the information and resources document, Cape York Peninsula Investment Guide which contains detailed information on resources, infrastructure, services and communities. The Guide can be obtained from the CYSF office or downloaded from the website [www.cypda.com.au](http://www.cypda.com.au).

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF CAPE YORK SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

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Over many decades Cape York Peninsula has contributed to the economies of Australia and Queensland, and its residents are proud to continue that tradition. The Peninsula is well placed to continue to play an expanding role in Australia's future. There are many investment opportunities on the Peninsula: in primary production, new green industries, land management, tourism, small business and trades. Over the past few years, as the number of visitors to the Peninsula increases, we have seen the need for more services and infrastructure. We welcome new businesses and investors with open arms.

In this changing environment we have to deal with climate change, the possibility of World Heritage nomination and the demands of conservation initiatives. We see these as opportunities, not threats. We, the people of Cape York Peninsula have the capacity to create a bright and sustainable future and we believe that our livelihood and the protection of our environment are symbiotic.

We encourage the public and private sectors to examine the investment potential of Cape York Peninsula, to be innovative in enabling its long term and sustainable development and to engage in creating a healthy economic and social environment, not only for the future generations of Cape York Peninsula, but for all Australians.



President CYSF

John McDowall



Agricultural Production Lakeland Downs

## NEW HORIZONS AND OPPORTUNITIES CAPE YORK PENINSULA

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world that is Cape York Peninsula is a dynamic, changing canvas  
opening up new opportunities and creating fertile ground  
for the entrepreneur and business strategist.

Cape York Sustainable Futures, working in conjunction with the communities of Cape York Peninsula, the three tiers of Government and numerous agencies identified the need to develop an understanding of the opportunities and challenges that will shape the future economic development of Cape York Peninsula.

This Investment Prospectus summarises that assessment. It has been designed to assist decision-making for activities that will stimulate new economic development for the region. The Prospectus is supported by a detailed account of the investigation, the *Cape York Peninsula Investment Guide*, which should be used as a reference source for further information

### .CAPE YORK PENINSULA IN PERSPECTIVE

Cape York Peninsula is closer to Asia and PNG than Brisbane, and is further from Brisbane than Melbourne is. This gives an indication of the Cape's physical remoteness and of some of the challenges that Cape York residents and businesses face as a result of their geographical isolation. It also accentuates the strategic location of the region.

Cape York is a key portal to Australia and as such is a key player in Australia's role as a tropical first world economy. It has a wealth of assets to contribute to tropical science, knowledge and innovation. The residents of Cape York Peninsula have verified a commitment to the region's future through their involvement and input into this project and numerous of other planning initiatives for the Peninsula. Their concerns and aspirations must be central to future planning, balanced against environmental issues and heritage conservation.

Grazing opened up and established the early economy of Cape York Peninsula, which has since been augmented by mining activities. Alongside this economic development, significant areas of 'pristine wilderness' have been maintained by the traditional owners.

### GLOBAL INFLUENCES, TRENDS AND EMERGENT SITUATIONS

Cape York Peninsula is Australia's front line of defence against the spread of infectious bird, plant, animal, and human diseases, illegal importation of animals, foods, and goods as well as illegal immigration. This role impacts upon the Australian economy and society.

A significant International and national influence is attached to a potential World Heritage Convention listing of areas of Cape York. Cape York's proposed nomination is still in its infancy, as various Government agencies research and plan the process. The International Charter contains regulations under which nominations are processed and it is understood that they must provide positive economic and social outcomes for locals, allowing communities to gain livelihoods from the World Heritage zone or in unrelated areas of endeavour.



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## THE CAPE YORK BRAND

The 'Cape York' land mass is an immediately recognisable brand; a ready-to use asset for investors. Cape York's physical profile encapsulates the history, landscapes, culture, environment and industry of the region and is not only of obvious value to tourism, but also to those in small business, trades, retail, services and environmental services in providing a ready-made marketing icon upon which to establish their presence.

## FUTURE INVESTORS IN CAPE YORK

The profile of a future successful investor in Cape York Peninsula is likely to encapsulate the values of Cape York Sustainable Futures. The investor should be concerned for the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the region, be collaborative and inclusive in their dealings, and be prepared to accept stewardship responsibility for future generations.

Now is the time to seek new horizons and embrace change, not be hampered by traditional pursuits. Cape York Peninsula is a dynamic, changing canvas opening up new opportunities and creating fertile ground for entrepreneurs and business strategists.

## REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Cape York Peninsula is home for 15,000 people, over half of whom are Indigenous Australians. The region has a tropical climate experiencing a 'dry' or winter period from April to October and a 'wet' or summer monsoon period between November and March. Winters are mild and dry, with hot humid summers when Cape York Peninsula is lush and green.

The regional economy of Cape York Peninsula relies on primary industries and resources. Mining, cattle grazing, fishing and cropping are the main private sector industries. The public sector is the dominant employer via public administration, defence and community services. Tourism is perceived as an increasingly important source for sustainable economic development with significant investment by the Queensland Government in the Cape York Peninsula and Torres Tourism Development Action Plan 2008, which has initiated a number of tourism proposals and initiatives. Modern education services are available across the region and up to date sport and recreation facilities exist at all larger centres.

Transport is a key component and major determinant of economic development on Cape York. Reliable, adequate, efficient and consistent transport systems are essential for significant business and industry development. Because the Wet Season closes roads for up to 4 months each year, Cape York relies heavily on air and sea freight and although the Peninsula Development Road is maintained by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, repairs wait upon the return of the dry.

Provision of infrastructure is a major challenge, and offers an immediate opportunity for investment. The majority of Cape York's communities rely on major diesel power generation systems with only the townships in the far south-east of the region connected to grid power.

Mobile phone and internet coverage is also accessible in most settled areas of the Cape. Telstra 'Next G' network has coverage within proximity of most towns and beyond that, satellite phones are necessary due to the remoteness created by vast uninhabited distances.

Cape York is overlaid by a legislative framework of Acts and Regulations that place clear guidelines on development. Existing and pending legislation are important control mechanisms, but can sometimes form significant hurdles to regional development. This said, it should be noted that there are many examples of free enterprise arrangements that work successfully within the current legislation framework.

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## INDUSTRIES AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

#### *CATTLE*

Historically the cattle industry has been the key player in the economic development of Cape York and is still the major land user in the region. Peninsula primary producers continue to play a role in land management, feral pest control, quarantine and fire management. Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) predictions for 2011 suggest that beef profitability will recover and live cattle demand will expand, fuelling herd expansion in the north.

There are investment opportunities associated with improved land and stock management processes and the live cattle export industry.

#### *FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE*

With the growing demand for seafood and diminishing resources, aquaculture is likely to become an emerging priority for Queensland's coastal areas. There are opportunities for production at various locations on Cape York Peninsula, subject to economic feasibility and environmental sustainability studies.

#### *AGRICULTURE*

The main cultivation areas on Cape York are near Lakeland Downs and Cooktown. Bananas, sorghum, corn, melons, legumes, and range of tropical fruits are produced at Lakeland Downs and Cooktown's Endeavour Valley. Investment opportunities could exist in extending the production of tropical plants and fruits, industrial bamboo production and bio-medical research into medicinal properties of tropical plants.

#### *TIMBER*

Although there are small scale saw milling businesses at Napranum and Cooktown, a sustainable timber industry is yet to be established on Cape York Peninsula. This may come from timber resources felled prior to the conduct of mining operations or from sustainable reforestation projects established on pre-cleared land. This is already being trialled by the ICT project at Lakeland Downs, and such projects may have substantial benefits on mine-site rehabilitation projects.

#### *MINING*

Cape York has three significant established mines: Rio Tinto Alcan's Weipa Bauxite mine (mining world class bauxite mineral accumulations), Cape Flattery Silica Mine (the world's largest exporter of silica sands) and the Skardon River kaolin mine, where Minerals Corporation recently began commercial mining operations.

Waratah Coal Inc was granted two exploration permits in the Laura basin in 2007, and active prospects are held for gold, kaolin, cassiterite and tungsten in the region. Mining will continue to provide the impetus for expansion of small business, trade and light industrial activities.

#### *TOURISM*

Cape York Peninsula contains a wealth of spectacular natural environments and attractions that are experiencing increasing levels of attention from within Australia and abroad. Tourism is a rapidly growing industry with 60,000 visitors to Cooktown and lower Cape York in 2009 per year. About 20,000 tourists travel to the Tip of Cape York Peninsula. The current level of infrastructure is not sufficient to cover demands, creating opportunities for investment in bush and safari camps, accommodation and amenities. Local tourism industry providers struggle to meet peak demand, with business, systems development and customer services training identified areas of need.

Although locally owned and operated tourism companies operated by small family businesses are located at various centres on the Cape, all of the larger tourism companies work from outside of Cape York Peninsula, offering tours into and through the region. The main operators offer 4WD and small bus tours.

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Future investment will rest on a number of development options, including developing and improving tourism experiences, provision of support services, creation of specialised tours, provision of infrastructure and accommodation and expanding the tourism season 'shoulder' by embracing "Green Tourism" in the wet season.

LIGHT INDUSTRY, RETAIL AND SERVICES

Mining operations on Cape York Peninsula are expected to continue until 2064 and will be the main source of growth for the light industrial and retail sectors. In addition the increasing development of the tourism industry base following essential improvements to the Peninsula Development Road will provide key local opportunity development and create new employment for the region.

ACCOMMODATION

During peak season month there is an accommodation shortage across Cape York. Limited flights into most centres necessitate that business visitors stay overnight and as a result, accommodation facilities are often fully booked.

A significant opportunity exists for the development of accommodation facilities in Coen, Lakeland Downs and at each Indigenous Community. This need will escalate as road conditions improve and tourism numbers increase.

BUSINESS CENTRES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Cooktown and Weipa are the two significant population centres on Cape York Peninsula. Cooktown, just over 300kms from Cairns via a standard sealed highway, is the region's most accessible town. It is also the most northerly centre on Australia's east coast. Hope Vale, an indigenous community of 1,200 people, located approximately 30kms west of Cooktown also relies on the Cooktown business district for much of its needs.

Weipa is the region's largest, fastest growing town. The Rio Tinto bauxite mine, Weipa's major employer, has been the catalyst for the township's growth over the past 50 years.

The remaining communities are typically smaller service centres that provide essentials to local population and travellers. Bamaga, the exception to the rule, is a small well serviced township at the tip of Cape York Peninsula, a centre around which a number of other indigenous communities cluster.

Lakeland Downs, Laura, Hann River, Musgrave, Coen, Archer River, Moreton and Bramwell Junction are important traffic stop-points on the Peninsula Development Road where fuel, food, rest areas, and (for the majority of these places) overnight facilities are available.

Major infrastructure investment opportunities include airport improvements, accommodation, port improvements and a wind farm at Archer Point

## INTRODUCTION

### STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

The Cape York Peninsula Investment Prospectus was prepared with cognisance of the many pressures and demands being placed on the region by a wide range of political, environmental, economic and community interests.

The future significance of Cape York Peninsula to the Australian and international community lies in ongoing and successful custody and stewardship of its environmental and heritage values while at the same time providing for the economic and social wellbeing of Cape York Peninsula residents.

Cape York Sustainable Futures (CYSF) recognises that the sustainable future of the region demands a strategically planned and coordinated approach to investment compatible with the retention of its environmental and cultural values. This is in accordance with this organisation's stated objectives.

#### **CAPE YORK SUSTAINABLE FUTURES VISION STATEMENT**

Cape York Sustainable Futures will foster:

- An ecologically, economically and culturally sustainable environment in Cape York Peninsula;
- A cohesive viable community with improved quality of life for residents, and,
- Broad promotion and representation of the priorities and values of Cape York Peninsula



Twin Falls



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## CAPE YORK PENINSULA IN PERSPECTIVE

Cape York Peninsula has a vibrant and chequered history - from the days of early exploration, establishment of a government outpost at Somerset by John Jardine, the Gold rush which put Cooktown on the map, early surveys for the Overland Telegraph Line and mining potential, establishment of the settlements for Aboriginal people, to the commencement of bauxite mining in the 1960s and growth of the pastoral industry.

Today, over 15,000 people call Cape York Peninsula home. Their future, their concerns and aspirations must be an integral part of future planning, alongside issues of environmental and heritage conservation. These interests, human and environmental, should not be seen as being conflicting or incompatible.

Despite the existence of cattle grazing for around 150 years, Cape York Peninsula has a well earned reputation as a 'pristine wilderness', corroborating that the region has been exceptionally well managed for several thousand years. The proposed nomination of Cape York Peninsula for World Heritage status is testament to the fact that the level of development to date has not impacted adversely on the values of the region - and yet the region has made a significant contribution to the national economy.

The preservation and conservation of Cape York Peninsula's environmental and heritage values is the lynch pin of World Heritage focus. However communities of people cannot be 'preserved'. On Cape York Peninsula we are dealing with dynamic and changing societies endeavouring to cope with the trials and pressures of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The right of the 15,000 residents to a positive and productive future on Cape York Peninsula and enhanced liveability of their communities are issues of social justice which cannot be disregarded.

Productivity, economic progress, income generation and employment are possible within World Heritage and environmental parameters.

## GLOBAL INFLUENCES, TRENDS AND EMERGENT SITUATIONS

Cape York Peninsula is, and will continue to be, impacted by global influences. Sea level rises will impact the coastal areas, a phenomenon already occurring in the Torres Strait. Global food and water shortages will place arable and productive lands at a premium, with a need to maximise usage within environmental constraints. Peak oil is nearly, if not already, upon us driving economies to look for alternative energy sources, particularly for remote areas currently reliant on diesel. Cape York Peninsula is also strategically positioned in the tropics, providing its residents with an opportunity to take advantage of its location, with their intrinsic understanding of environmental management and conservation, economic activity and liveability in a tropical world.

These global influences create a range of new investment and employment opportunities in carbon sequestration, regional and land management and ecosystem services.

Global and external pressures being exerted on the Cape York Peninsula region derive from international conflict, illegal activities, climatic influences and spread of infectious diseases from the north. Cape York Peninsula is in the front line of Australia's defence as a barrier to the spread of vectors of infectious diseases, illegal importation of animals, foods and goods from the north and illegal immigration upon the Australian economy and society.

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## WORLD FOOD AND ENERGY NEEDS

Forward thinking governments are already planning for maintenance of food supplies beyond 2030. Close to home, the Arab states are buying cattle and sheep properties in Australia including southern Queensland, to ensure food security for their populations. Arable land will be at a premium and it would be wise not to alienate this valuable resource from use in the longer term.

Globally, nations are looking for alternative and renewable sources of energy whether it is solar energy, wind power, hydroelectricity or biofuels. The new 'green economy' opens up many opportunities for innovation.

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## WORLD HERITAGE LISTING

The Cape York region has been proposed for nomination for World Heritage listing which would require reconciliation of a range of issues. There are many global examples of World Heritage regions and sites that are relevant to the Cape York situation. Working examples include multiple land uses, including viable grazing leases, Aboriginal owned and occupied lands, communities and community infrastructure, with management regimes that directly involve local stakeholder participation. World Heritage listing for Cape York Peninsula or parts of the region must also provide positive economic and social outcomes for its residents, enabling communities to gain livelihood from the area, either unrelated to World Heritage or as a result of it.

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## ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

The communities of Cape York Peninsula are in a position to demonstrate world's best practice land management capabilities borne of many generations. The quest to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and cope with the impact of global warming is of great significance for the future of the region and creates opportunities for development of carbon sequestration and ecosystem services projects.

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## QUARANTINE AND HEALTH ISSUES

Changing climates are creating variations in vector populations and disease patterns, and could facilitate the global march of vectors like mosquitoes and biting midges.

Australia is encircled to the north by a ring of countries which are classified as 'hot spots' for the development of infectious diseases, posing a great threat and a biosecurity risk to Australia.

It is essential therefore to maintain a strong land management presence and surveillance through Cape York Peninsula. Commentary on specific biological concerns is contained in Appendix 1.

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## THE CAPE YORK BRAND

'Cape York' is a brand that is immediately recognisable and a ready to use asset for an investor. The Cape York brand encapsulates the history, landscapes, culture, environment and industry of the region. Cape York Peninsula is a highly recognisable part of the Australian land mass and has been used in logos ever since they became fashionable. The brand is something that no investor needs to buy – it already exists, provides instant recognition and as such is a major asset.

The Cape York Brand is not only of obvious value to tourism, but also to those in small business, trades, retail, services and environmental services in providing a ready-made marketing tool.

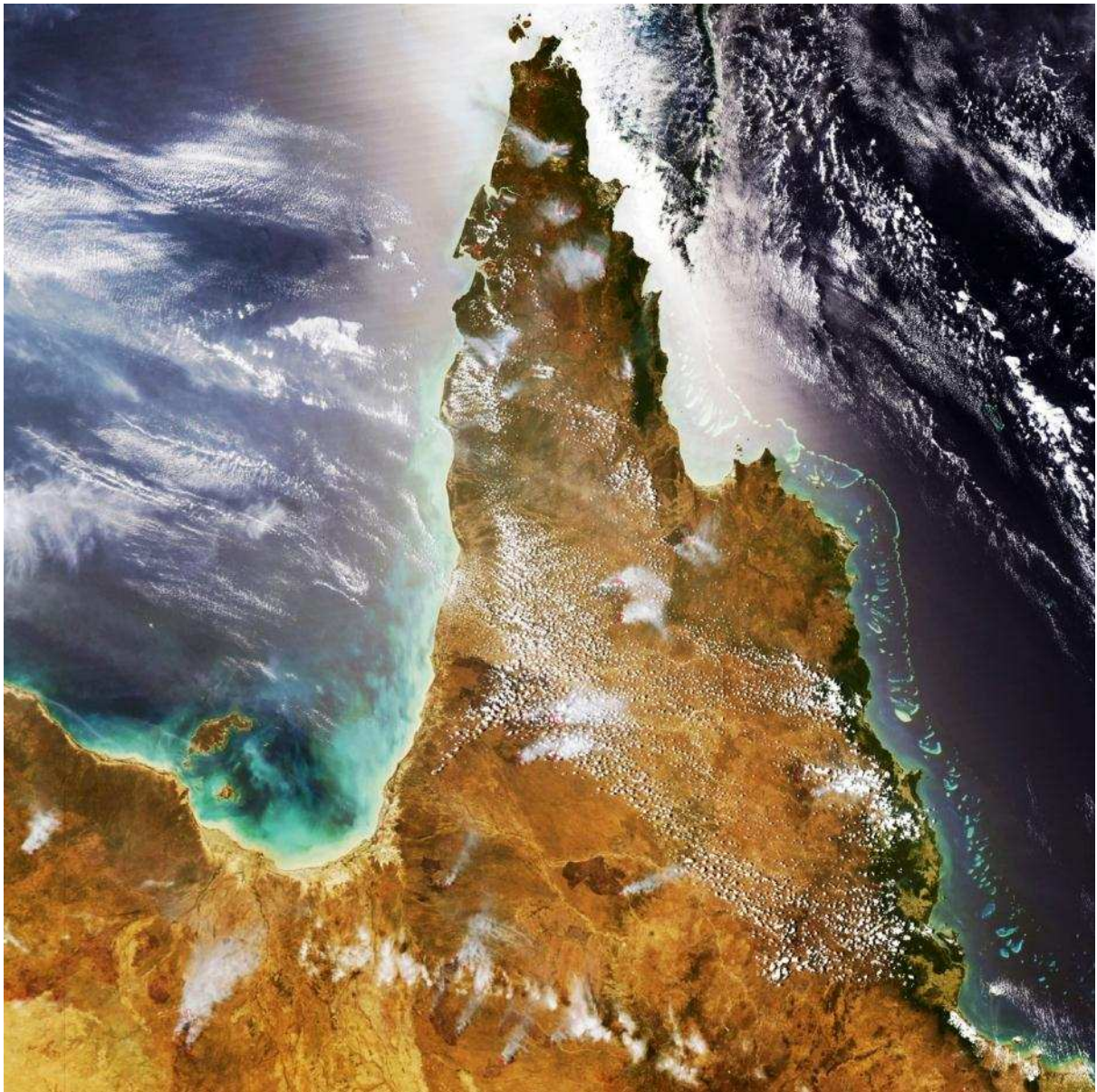
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## FUTURE INVESTORS IN CAPE YORK

The profile of a future successful investor in Cape York Peninsula is likely to reflect the values of Cape York Sustainable Futures: an individual or agency concerned for the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the region, collaborative and inclusive in dealings and prepared to accept stewardship responsibility for future generations.

Now is the time to seek new horizons, not be bound by traditional pursuits and embrace change. The world that is Cape York Peninsula is a dynamic, changing canvas opening up new opportunities and creating fertile ground for the entrepreneur and business strategist.

### Satellite View of Cape York Peninsula





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CAPE YORK PENINSULA INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT SCAN	
<p><b>Competitive Advantages</b></p> <p>Location as Gateway to southern Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proven vital strategic role of CYP as a buffer between southern Australia and islands to the north – PNG and Indonesia</li> <li>Growing significance of Northern Australia and CYPs place within the trade and community network</li> <li>Tropical Science Knowledge &amp; Innovation importance across north Australia</li> </ul> <p>Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proven capacity as grazing region and live cattle export source</li> <li>Mining to continue for decades</li> <li>Tourism compatible with environmental conservation</li> <li>Agricultural and services centre at Lakeland Downs</li> <li>Remote area telecommunications network in place</li> </ul> <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brand “Cape York Peninsula” is well known nationally and internationally</li> <li>Proximity to markets, ready access from and into Weipa from ports to the west and north</li> <li>Existing regional airport network</li> <li>Access to southern markets via Cairns and Townsville</li> </ul> <p>Environment and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historic legacy of large areas of virtually untouched landscape</li> <li>Environmental and heritage values of world standard</li> </ul> <p>Human and social capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resident population has intimate knowledge of landscape and committed to future of region</li> <li>Comparatively high indigenous population ratio and a young population</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities – addressing the gaps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships with indigenous communities, clan groups and individuals</li> <li>Infrastructure – development and maintenance of an improving road network; short term housing; Weipa live cattle export; Road to Cooktown sealed</li> <li>Agriculture, horticulture and timber – niche developments</li> <li>Tourism – high end safari and eco style tourism, fly in-fly out; bush camps; green season tourism and tag-a-long tours; Pajinka Resort redevelopment; Laura and Coen accommodation; super yachts at Cooktown; hire cars at selected locations; marinas at Weipa and Cooktown</li> <li>Retail and services at various locations</li> <li>Professional services and trades</li> <li>Environmental and eco services</li> <li>Feral pest management and eradication</li> <li>Commercial capture and processing of feral animals – Weipa and Lakeland</li> <li>Carbon reduction/sinks</li> <li>Controlled commercial use of National Parks</li> <li>Property management plans</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Agricultural and horticultural development on communities</li> <li>Tropical knowledge – bio medical</li> <li>tropical environment management training venues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Needs/Gaps in supply &amp; services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure – construction and maintenance</li> <li>Accommodation</li> <li>Power generation</li> <li>Transport – freight</li> <li>Specialist services and trades</li> <li>Extend tourist season</li> <li>Pest management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impediments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncertainty surrounding land tenure</li> <li>Freight Costs</li> <li>Seasonality</li> <li>Infrastructure – roads</li> <li>Legislative barriers</li> <li>Uncertainty surrounding land tenure</li> </ul>



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## BRIEF REGIONAL OVERVIEW

### LOCATION

Cape York Peninsula has historically played a significant role in the development of the Australian continent providing the link between southern settlements, nations to the north and, by way of the telegraph, to Great Britain and Europe.

Cape York Peninsula today shares a commonality of interest with all regions and communities of northern Australian, a connectivity focusing on east-west relationships based on similarity in climate, culture, landscapes and economy across the continent.

The region is strategically placed to continue to play a significant role in Australia's future. Cape York is a key portal to the continent; a front door to Australia, our neighbours being the nations of Asia and the Pacific. Cape York is also a key player in Australia's role as a first world economy straddling the tropics, with a wealth to contribute in areas relating to tropical science, knowledge and innovation on a national and global scale.



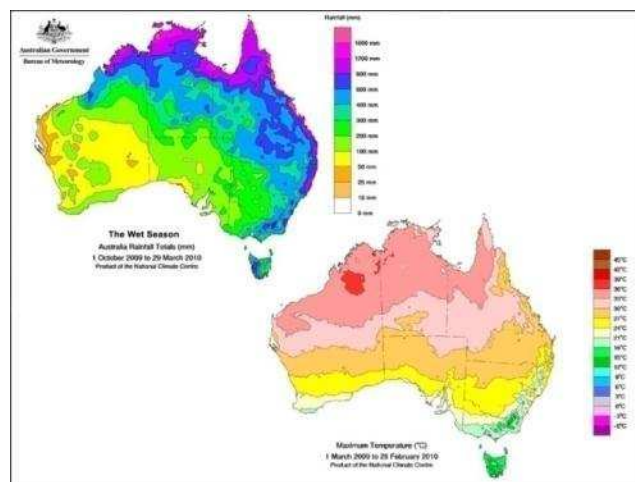
Map 1

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## CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

Cape York Peninsula stretches from Lat 16 South to around Lat 10 degrees South and experiences a tropical climate with strong marine influences. Annually the weather is divided into two seasons – the dry or winter period from April to October and the wet or summer monsoon period between November and March. The wet season is characterised by heavy monsoonal rain and cyclonic depressions.

Winters are mild and dry with an average day temperature of 29C falling to 10C at night in inland centres. Summers are hot and humid with day temperatures between 33 – 40C.



Map 2

Cape York Peninsula is noted for its biodiversity and relative naturalness with bio-geographic and evolutionary linkages to the flora and fauna of Papua New Guinea.

Climate is often expressed as a negative factor with regard to living and working in tropical regions. However as with all environments, the climate provides opportunities for creation of niche activities and entrepreneurial pursuits.

## ECONOMY

The regional economy of Cape York Peninsula is based on resources and primary industries. The mining industry contributes more than half of Gross Regional Product (GRP), employs 12% of the workforce (10 times the national level) and occupies 4.5% of the area. The dominant land use, in terms of area, is cattle grazing (40%). Agriculture and fishing [which includes grazing (2.4%), fishing (2.3%) and crops (0.7%)] together contribute 5.4% of GRP and employ 6% of the workforce.

The public sector is the dominant employer through the Public Administration and Defence (9.7%) and Community Services (36%) sectors, with the latter being boosted through the now reformed CDEP program in indigenous communities. The tourism industry is gaining momentum as a major earner for the region.

## POPULATION AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Cape York Peninsula is an area of 137,200 square kilometres and is more densely populated than other remote areas of Australia, with a population of 15,000, a significant number to be reckoned with. In contrast, the Kimberley has a population of around 38,000 for a far larger region of 424,517 square kilometres and the Gulf Savannah has 10,000 residents for an area of almost 190,000 square kilometres. Around 70% percent of the resident population of Cape York Peninsula is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

There are three distinctive cultures associated with the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-indigenous communities found on Cape York Peninsula. Indigenous cultural values include a strong focus on relationships

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with land, animals and plants. Non-indigenous cultural values include a strong focus on lifestyles, independence and the pioneering spirit. They are not incompatible.

Most people (71%) live in towns of 1,000 people or greater (8 centres), while four percent live on properties with the remainder living in small settlements of less than 1,000 people (17 centres). Residents experience remoteness and isolation, particularly during the Wet season. However this can present opportunities for small scale provision of services.



**Infrastructure and lifestyle**

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007r</b>	<b>2008r</b>	<b>2009p</b>
<b>Local Government Area</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>no.</b>
Aurukun (S)	1,095	1,134	1,128	1,141	1,133	1,129	1,156	1,196	1,209
Cook (S)	3,707	3,735	3,705	3,801	3,717	3,695	3,748	3,825	3,899
Hope Vale (S)	892	887	872	855	845	842	833	832	832
Kowanyama (S)	1,019	1,035	1,042	1,059	1,078	1,101	1,130	1,141	1,156
Lockhart River (S)	650	632	613	603	604	599	604	608	619
Mapoon (S)	209	218	230	239	245	256	260	263	266
Napranum (S)	800	818	840	855	878	908	915	928	930
Northern Peninsula Area (R)	2,095	2,105	2,121	2,132	2,135	2,138	2,222	2,264	2,282
Pormpuraaw (S)	630	636	638	640	646	644	667	673	676
Weipa (T)	2,173	2,292	2,427	2,577	2,807	3,007	3,210	3,291	3,320
Wujal Wujal (S)	373	369	365	357	356	348	344	352	352
<b>Total Far North</b>	<b>13,643</b>	<b>13,861</b>	<b>13,981</b>	<b>14,259</b>	<b>14,444</b>	<b>14,667</b>	<b>15,089</b>	<b>15,373</b>	<b>15,541</b>

## INFRASTRUCTURE (TRANSPORT, POWER, WATER)

### TRANSPORT

Provision of infrastructure is a major challenge for Cape York Peninsula but this in itself can provide opportunities for investment. Transport is a key component for economic development. Improvements in transport system technologies and efficiencies, reducing user costs and increasing productivity have been key drivers in enabling competitiveness on a regional and global level.

*ROAD* access is dominated by the Peninsula Development Road (PDR) which is impacted by road closures during the monsoon season. In the dry season access is possible by conventional vehicles although the road is currently better suited to high clearance or 4WD. The PDR is an essential lifeline for Peninsula residents and vital for economic, social and defence purposes, including quarantine surveillance. The Mulligan Highway to Cooktown is fully sealed.



Road Train

*AIRPORTS* are located at all centres, the largest being Cooktown, Weipa, Horn Island, Bamaga, Coen and Kowanyama.

*PORTS* are located at Weipa, Seisia, Cape Flattery, Skardon River, Cooktown and Quintell Beach at Lockhart River. Weipa is the major sea port for Cape York Peninsula and provides a facility with connections to southern ports and other northern Australian ports such as Darwin and to SE Asia.

### POWER

Cooktown, Hope Vale, Laura (Lakeland), Mossman and Wujal Wujal have mains power supply through the State electricity grid. All other communities are supplied by diesel power generation. In the case of Weipa, Ergon buys power from Rio Tinto Alcan for town electricity supply. The Rio Tinto Alcan plant is also diesel powered.

Despite diesel powered generation being more expensive than the grid, the communities pay the same tariff rate as the rest of the State under an equity scheme. In effect all consumers share the additional cost. Should significant additional supplies be required by a major development, such as a mine, the options are to supply their own power or pay a contribution towards additional generation costs.



Jardine River

### WATER

All communities on Cape York have a reliable, potable water supply for human consumption purposes. Water access for commercial purposes is subject to location, season and legislation and there is currently a reliance on existing bores in most communities.



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Bamaga is supplied from the Jardine River and Lockhart River is supplied from local streams. All other communities have access to bore water which is treated in local treatment plants. Water quality is monitored by locally based environmental health workers.

Across Cape York Peninsula there is a variety of river landforms of water body types including permanent and temporary rivers, lakes, billabongs, lagoons, aquifers and springs however, the monsoonal and cyclonic weather patterns of the region have a pronounced affect on the nature and the availability of the surface water resources.

The Jardine and Wenlock rivers on the west coast, and the Pascoe, Hann rivers and several smaller east coast waterways have perennial flows. The remainder have intermittent flows that can cease for several months during winter and spring and often into early summer.

Access to irrigation is critically important to ensure farming viability for horticultural or agricultural enterprises to succeed and maximise returns on investment in Cape York Peninsula. Whilst it could be argued that there are perhaps a range of crops that could survive and produce reasonable yields based on natural rainfall, the chances of crop failure or reduced yields through insufficient rain at critical times could make long term survival of smaller enterprises with limited financial reserves a concern.

Mining also requires ongoing access to water for bauxite washing operations, haul road dust suppression and providing a water supply to the communities and workforce.

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## LIVEABILITY – ACCESS, SERVICES, COMMUNICATIONS, MAJOR SERVICE CENTRES

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### ACCESS

Cape York Peninsula can be accessed year-round by sea and air and by road during the dry season (generally April/May to October/November). The southern area of the region is accessible year round. There is a combined State-controlled and local government road network of nearly 3,500 kilometres providing access to all towns and communities.

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### SERVICES

#### HEALTH

All communities have Primary Health Care Centres, backed up by a range of visiting allied health and primary care services and the Royal Flying Doctor. Emergency services are provided by RFDS. Regional Hospitals are located at Bamaga and Weipa and a Multipurpose Health Service, including a hospital and aged care facility is located in Cooktown.

#### EDUCATION

Education services are available across the region. Schools to Year 10 are located at Aurukun, and Kowanyama. Classes to Year 12 are available at Bamaga (Northern Peninsula Area Senior Campus serving the NPA region), Weipa (Western Cape College servicing Weipa, Napranum and Mapoon and Aurukun), Lockhart River and Cooktown. The Cape York Campus of TAFE at Bamaga offers a variety of programs and is utilised as a centre for remote area delivery.



RFDS plane

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## SPORT AND RECREATION

Sport and recreation facilities are available at all larger centres with activities such as fishing, tennis, football, golf, swimming and lawn bowls on offer. A number of centres have additional attractions such as bird watching, bush walking, historical buildings and old mine sites and history.

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## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mobile phone and internet coverage is available. Telstra 'Next G' network has coverage within proximity of towns and beyond that, satellite phones are necessary.

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## MAJOR SERVICE CENTRES

Weipa is Cape York's largest, fastest growing and most affluent community with a population of 3,300 growing at an annual rate of 5.2% since 2004. The bauxite mine has been the catalyst for the township's growth over the past 50 years and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. Weipa is not only a mining service centre, but it is also the key service centre for the majority of the communities on Cape York Peninsula. Weipa is just over 800 km from Cairns and just under 800km from Mareeba via the Peninsula Development Road which is the main access road on Cape York Peninsula and is maintained by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. The road to Weipa is open for around 8 months each year. By air, it is a one hour and twenty minute flight from Cairns.



Weipa Hospital

Both Cooktown and Weipa have a range of local service and retail businesses that include the basic necessities such as fuel and vehicle repairs, food and groceries and banking and a whole range of non essential service and retail businesses servicing the local market including: building and construction, cleaning, clothing, computers and electronics, electric, gas and plumbing services, gifts and furniture, hardware and camping, health and beauty, photography, real estate, surveying and transport services.

In addition to the above listed services there are a number of small businesses that cater to the tourist market including: air charters, boats, fishing and sailing charters, car rental, hotels, museums/galleries, tourist information and tour booking services.

Coen and Laura are significant service centres for traffic on the Peninsula Development Road and are regularly used for meetings by government departments due to their central location.

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## GOVERNANCE

### AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

The main Australian Government presence on Cape York Peninsula is responsible largely for matters of national security - quarantine, immigration, import/export and defence and health.

### QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

Most developmental activity relating to land, planning, agriculture, water and infrastructure on Cape York Peninsula will require input from the Queensland Government with some agencies represented on CYP and regional offices located in Cairns and/or Townsville.

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## REGIONAL AND LOCAL COUNCILS

NPA Regional Council, Cook Shire Council and Aboriginal Shire Councils regulate and administer by laws and permits pertaining to local government.

The Weipa Town Authority administers the town of Weipa.

## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS

Agencies such as CYSF can provide a useful service in guiding the potential investor, providing contacts and networks. They should be the first port of call for any investor.



NPA Regional Council Office Bamaga

## LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Any development will require conformity with a range of state and federal legislation and the legislation would need to be assessed on a case by case basis. Details on all the legislation is contained in the Cape York Peninsula Investment Guide.

The key legislative areas involve management of land and water resources. Determination of land tenure and the rights and capabilities that the respective tenures afford the land holder and /or potential developer are one of the primary areas to be clarified.

Ownership of land in Queensland falls under two main categories – freehold (private) and non-freehold (state owned). Freehold is obtained by the issue of a Deed of Grant from the Governor in Council as a result of a State decision to sell unallocated land or the successful application from a party to purchase leased land from the State.

Non-freehold land is controlled by the State. The Land Act 1994 details a set of principles to be followed in the administration of State land: sustainability; evaluation; development; community purpose; protection; consultation and administration. The Department of Resources, Mines and Energy makes the decisions regarding dealings in State land. Legislation relating to Native Title and Aboriginal Land is also of consequence on Cape York Peninsula.

Legislation relating to use of land and water also impacts on potential development proposals. Relevant legislation and amendments include the Vegetation Management Act 1999 and subsequent Vegetation Management (Regrowth Clearing Moratorium) Act 2009; the Water Act 2000; The Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999; Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Wild Rivers Act 2005.

Exploitation of resources is governed by the Mineral Resources Act 1989, Fisheries Act 1994 and the Forestry Act 1959. The Great Barrier Reef zoning plan allows for aquaculture development subject to permission, only in general use zones.

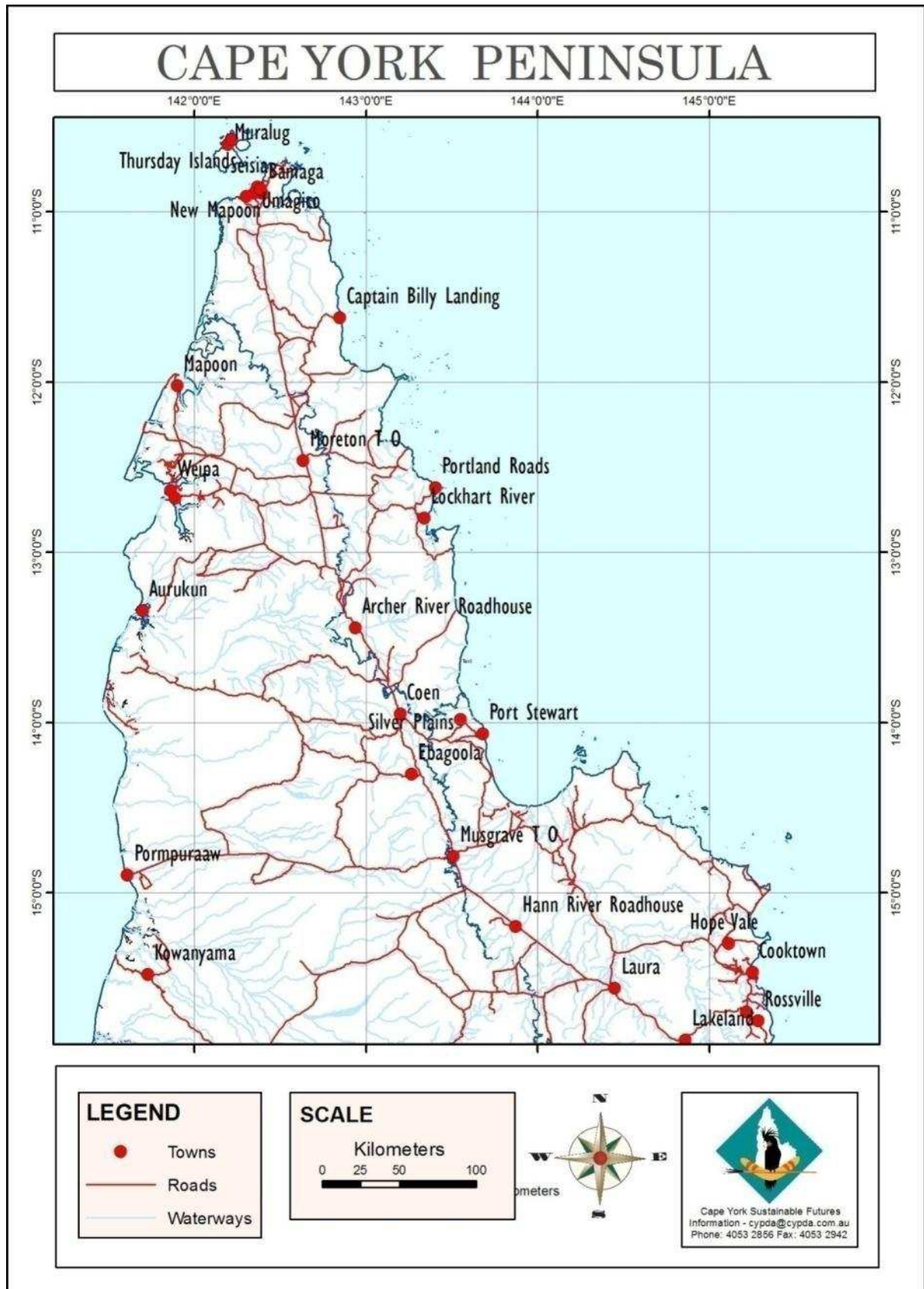
*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*



Cape York Peninsula looking back towards Somerset



*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*



AP 3

## EXISTING INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

### PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

#### CATTLE INDUSTRY

##### INTRODUCTION

Historically the cattle industry has been the key player in the economic development of Cape York and today remains the major land user in the region with just under half (30-40%) of the Cape York Peninsula bioregion being grazed. Peninsula primary producers continue to have a far reaching role in land management, feral pest management, quarantine and fire management.

The area of land under primary industries is however declining, with the Queensland Government's policy to purchase cattle properties for gazettal as National Parks and for de-stocking to occur over time. However, there is an inherent danger in removing the pastoralist role from Cape York Peninsula, as unmanaged land in the far north poses a bio-security threat to the rest of the continent. Additionally there is the flow on effect of removal of the pastoral industry on the socio-economic environment of communities such as Mareeba, Atherton, Cooktown and Cairns as local property owners purchase foods, materials and supply product to the cattle sale-yards at Mareeba and live export at Weipa.

Experience has clearly demonstrated that National Parks gazettal does not provide the level of protection and management previously delivered by the pastoralist. Feral pests are now out of control over vast tracts of land, posing a huge biosecurity risk. Effective land management, including feral pest control and fire management, is an immediate and glaring need.

An 'environmental services' structure, whereby graziers are engaged as stewards of the land, would provide for continued land management and productivity while at the same time protecting environmental values. This would save public funds and retain income from the land under controlled land management plans. This is further considered under 'Environmental and Eco-system Services' in the section on Opportunities.



Fire Management

The future of the industry rests with the adoption of commercial management practices and property management plans whereby grazing is run as a commercial enterprise rather than a lifestyle pursuit. Improved practices enable compatibility with heritage and environmental imperatives.

On those indigenous owned properties continuing to function as cattle enterprises, there are employment opportunities – although cattle husbandry is not necessarily high on the list of young indigenous peoples' preferred jobs, there is potential for indigenous employment on the government acquired properties in a range of areas, for example as professional land managers in partnership with the Queensland Government primary industry sector and AQIS.

##### PRODUCTION

Today, on the 50 remaining productive properties, cattle are bred and grazed for both the domestic and live export markets. The most successful grazing properties are those with large acreage which breed and grow

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the cattle for around 2 years then freight the stock to fattening properties in the south in preparation for market.

Over the years a number of properties have diversified activities to include tourism in order to enhance the property income. Labour requirements on cattle properties are minimal.

*Property ownership profile and distribution:*

Essentially there are three groupings of ownership/management:

- Properties purchased on behalf of Indigenous people by the Indigenous Land Corporation or the Queensland Government
- Private leasehold, held by individuals and companies under lease conditions
- Conservation interests: Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve and Piccaninny Plains owned by Australian Wildlife Conservancy

See Map 4 for cattle property distribution.



Property Planning



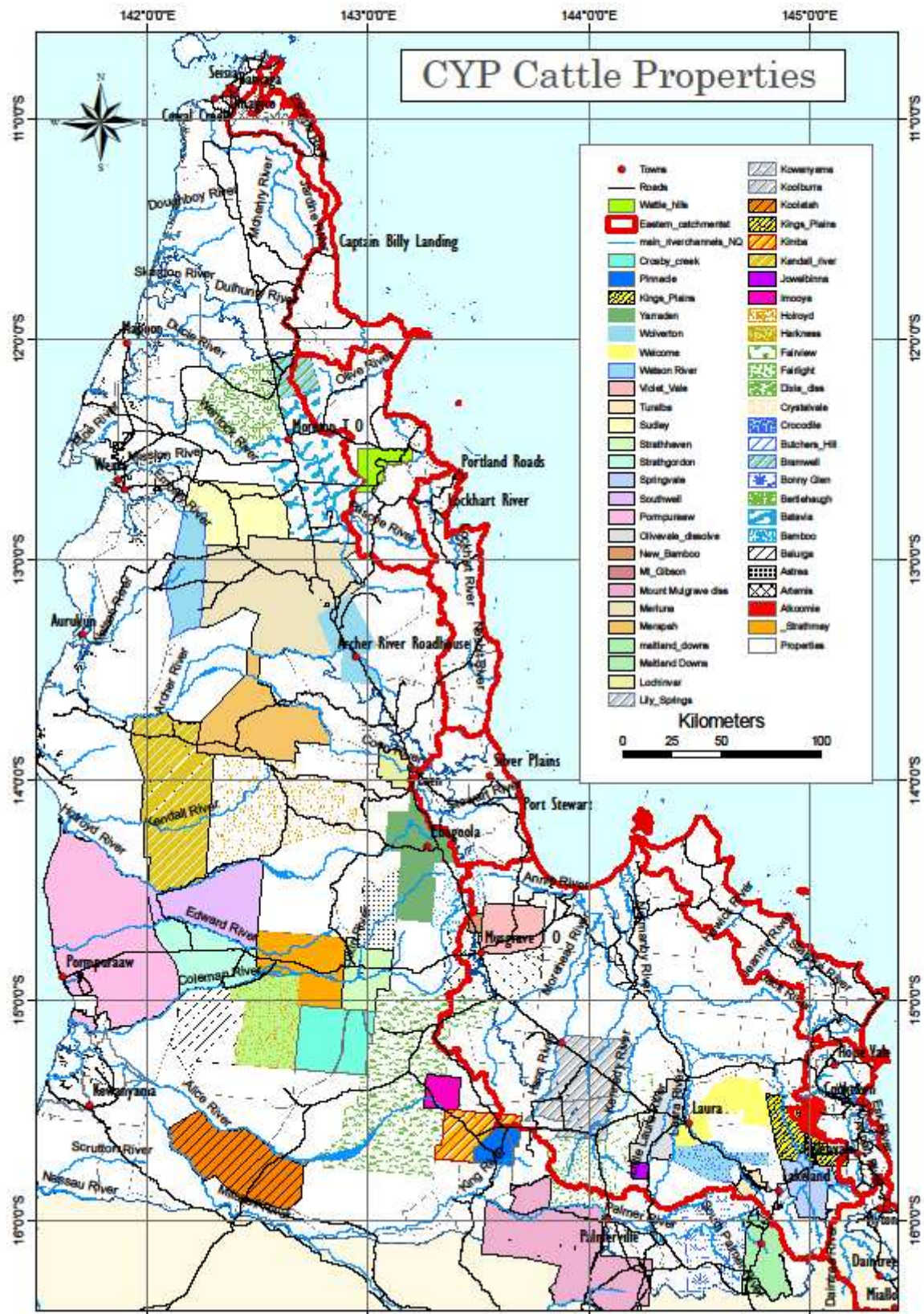
Field Inspections



Cattle breeding



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Map 4 Cattle Properties



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## EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES:

Pastoral properties in the region tend to have minimal infrastructure, particularly fencing due to the large land requirement per head and the subsequent return on investment for fencing and related infrastructure. However, some properties have been carrying out extensive fencing programs to improve herd management.

In terms of access, Cape York's road network is limited by the weather conditions, closing every wet season during the monsoonal rains and opening up again between March/April to October/November. However, in the interests of animal welfare, cattle are not freighted during the hot summer months.

Saleyards are located at Mareeba, Charters Towers and Rockhampton; processing facilities at Rocky Creek Abattoir, Tolga (Domestic) and Swift Australia Pty Ltd, Townsville (Export)

**EXISTING DEMAND:** Meat and Livestock Australia predictions for 2011 suggest that beef profitability will recover and live cattle demand will expand, fuelling herd expansion in the north. The market for live cattle exports has increased substantially since 2005 and is expected to lead demand for Australian beef for the next few years.

**Domestic:** Domestic beef consumption has been showing a steady upward trend over the past decade, slowing only after the global financial crisis hit in 2008. Meat and Livestock Australia are predicting a return to growth in 2010.

**International:** Meat and Livestock Australia reports that Indonesian demand is the foundation for continued healthy growth in the live export trade, with exports up 9% in 2009 and a further 4% growth expected in 2010.

Potential for investment rests with improved husbandry practices to consolidate resources and land usage and to minimise costs for a more commercial outcome.



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## FISHING AND AQUACULTURE

### INTRODUCTION

This is a highly regulated industry with a fair level of self regulation. Opportunities for direct expansion of resource exploitation are limited however opportunities can be developed through partnerships and value adding and processing. An example is the pearl shell and flesh enterprise developed in the Torres Strait between Japanese interests and the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

### WILD CATCH FISHING

Of relevance to Cape York Peninsula are the trawl, line and net fisheries.

*THE TRAWL FISHERY* is Queensland's largest commercial fishery, with about 600 vessels producing up to 10,000 tonnes of product worth about \$110 million each year.

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*LINE-FISHING* is one of Queensland's main forms of commercial fishing, with its catch valued at about \$31 million a year. There are five line fisheries operating in tidal waters from the border with the Northern Territory to the border with New South Wales: Coral Reef Fin Fish Fishery; Rocky Reef Fin Fish Fishery; Pelagic Fishery (which extends throughout Queensland's offshore waters, including the Gulf of Carpentaria, and targets mainly Spanish mackerel and the lesser mackerels); Gulf of Carpentaria Fin Fish Fishery and the Queensland Deepwater Fin Fish Fishery.

*NET FISHERIES* are represented in the Gulf of Carpentaria Inshore Fin Fish Fishery and the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery. Controls have been introduced so that certain species may not be fished all year round. The open and closed seasons vary from species to species.

*MUD CRAB FISHERY.* Commercial fishers mostly use baited crab pots in intertidal waters to catch mud crabs between December and June. Princess Charlotte Bay is a mud crab fishery within Cape York Peninsula.

*HARVEST FISHERIES.* Queensland's harvest (or collection) fisheries cover a wide range of species taken from several individually-managed fisheries. The harvest fisheries attract participants from the commercial, recreational and traditional/indigenous fishing sectors.

There are five main harvest fisheries:

- sea cucumber (beche-de-mer)
- marine aquarium fish
- coral
- trochus
- tropical rock lobster

The harvest fisheries are a valuable component of Queensland's commercial fisheries, with the last economic productivity estimate indicating a combined value exceeding \$14.7 million a year. Export markets are paramount to some of these fisheries, particularly those for which a solid domestic demand has not been established.

*TORRES STRAIT COMMERCIAL FISHERIES.* To gain access to a fishery in the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) non-Islanders must buy an existing licence. Since 1985 the PZJA has not issued any new licences to non-Islanders. This would not preclude partnerships with existing licencees.

The individual fisheries are: prawn; tropical rock lobster; fin fish (Spanish mackerel and other reef species - coral trout, snappers, salmon, and barramundi); pearl shell, trochus, sea cucumber.

## **AQUACULTURE**

Aquaculture is an emerging priority use for Queensland's coastal areas. Given compliance with environmental and fish management legislation, opportunities could exist for aquaculture projects on indigenous owned land, including training in, processing, marketing and business management with a view to Indigenous business ownership.

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## HORTICULTURE/CROPPING

### INTRODUCTION

Soil Types and Land Classifications have been intensively studied by highly competent researchers over many years. The reports are readily available and include considerable detail on chemical and physical properties of soils and why they are suitable or unsuitable for different agricultural and horticultural pursuits. However all are broad brush studies and detailed examination would be needed for more specific proposals on a property or sub-catchment basis. The availability of suitable cleared land for the establishment of large scale farming operations currently limits the potential to expand agricultural and horticultural activities on Cape York Peninsula.

The main areas under cultivation are around Lakeland Downs and Cooktown. Crops such as bananas, sorghum, corn, melons, legumes, and range of tropical fruits are produced at Lakeland Downs. The Cooktown region is also a major supplier of the Queensland passionfruit crop for approximately 3 months of the year.

### PRODUCTION

Research indicates that the total land area suitable for cropping and agriculture in terms of soil suitability is in the vicinity of 2,650,000 hectares, with a significant focus at Lakeland Downs. The majority of good soil locations have access to a supply of irrigation water, either with the use of above ground storage facilities (existing dams) or ground water (existing bores).

*ACCESS AND MARKETS:* Road and sea freight is available to and from Cape York, the only restriction being seasonal road closures during the wet season. The nearest city to Cape York is Cairns. The nearest wholesale markets are located in Brisbane and Darwin.

*EXISTING DEMAND:* Local businesses and some residents on Cape York currently purchase their fruit and vegetables from Mareeba and Cairns, incurring additional freight costs and reducing the shelf life of the produce. Woolworths in Weipa is the biggest supermarket on Cape York Peninsula and it currently sources its produce from outside the region. This provides a niche opportunity for local production.

*ADVANTAGES:* Early season cropping on Cape York Peninsula ensures crops ripen before their southern counterparts, providing them with a window of opportunity at the beginning of each season. Proximity to customers in Cairns provides a ready market with access also open to PNG.

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## TIMBER

A timber industry has yet to be established on Cape York Peninsula, although there is small scale activity at Napranum and an ample and diversified resource across the region.

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## MINING

### INTRODUCTION

Mining has been an important industry in Far North Queensland since white settlement and continues to provide significant opportunity to operators, investors and local employees as well as contributing indirectly to the region through tax payments and the flow on effects of money injected into local communities through direct employment of community members. Ancillary employment in areas such as seed collection and propagation and rehabilitation work are available for community residents.

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Mining has been a major employer in Cape York Peninsula and companies have undertaken specific training in a range of areas associated with the operations.

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## EXISTING MINES

Cape York's bauxite deposits are considered to be world class mineral accumulations and have been mined commercially since 1964. Rio Tinto Alcan's Weipa Bauxite mine has an expected mine life of a further 70 years.

Cape Flattery Silica Mines is the world's largest exporter of silica sands. Minerals Corporation recently began commercial mining at the Skardon River kaolin deposit.

All three established mines on Cape York are located in close proximity to the coast and have built their own infrastructure to load their product onto ocean based transport. The mines have considerably enhanced the infrastructure capacity of Cape York Peninsula and contributed substantially to the socio economic development of the region. A wide diversity of small to medium businesses and light industries has been established on the basis of the mining industry providing a range of employment opportunities and sustaining the local population levels.



Rio Tinto road and rail bridge Weipa

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## PLANNED MINING

Further development is in the pipeline at Aurukun. In 2006 the Queensland Government awarded preferred developer status to the Aluminum Corporation of China (CHALCO), who are considering the development of a world class integrated mine and beneficiation plant at the Aurukun deposit.

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## EXPLORATION AND OTHER LICENCES

Current exploration includes: Coal - Waratah Coal Inc was granted two exploration permits in the Laura basin in 2007.

Active prospects are held for gold, kaolin, cassiterite and tungsten.

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## TOURISM

### INTRODUCTION

Historically, the tourism industry in Cape York Peninsula has been established by businesses from southern centres operating in the Peninsula environment, with a varied level of impact and interaction with local community. Indigenous communities demonstrated interest in tourism as early as the 1980s, for example the commercial activities at Seisia.

While the earning capacity of tourism has grown, control over the investment has resided with externally owned and operated tourism companies with the lion's share of benefits flowing out of the region.

It is expected that in the future, the tourism industry in Cape York Peninsula will see a far higher level of local indigenous control over tourist locations and greater local involvement in delivery and services. There is major potential for partnerships to be created with indigenous knowledge and control over land coupled with external business acumen and dollars for investment. There are examples of this partnership approach in the



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Kimberley region of Western Australia. The Indigenous Land Corporation purchased Home Valley station, East Kimberley and now operates it as a productive property and a training location in range of trades and professions.

There needs to be a shift in the commercial base for more of the benefits to be retained in the region by local individuals and local businesses. The industry must also operate within the environmental constraints. Those activities with the least impact will be the high end, safari style venture rather than large group tourism. Controlled/managed guided safaris, self-drive or tag-a-long tours on selected, interpreted routes such as the Overland Telegraph Line are other options.

#### CURRENT

#### SITUATION

Tourism is a significant industry on Cape York with visitor numbers to Cooktown and the lower Cape York Peninsula of approximately 60,000 per year with around 20,000 of these tourists continuing their journey to the top of Cape York Peninsula, 'The Tip'. A 2007 survey of visitors indicated that three quarters of the travellers are aged between 20 to 59 years; almost 90% are domestic travellers with 11% international; the majority (32%) are driving private vehicles; around 70% opt to stay in bush camps and caravan parks and the main attractions for the visitors are 4WD adventure, cultural activities, historic sites and the natural environment.

Traffic counters are located at Laura, Coen and the Wenlock River at Moreton measuring traffic travelling both directions. In 2009, numbers were: Laura – 57,862; Coen – 41,300 and Moreton – 20,047. Given that the majority of visitors are self-drive, future growth in the sector is anticipated as road infrastructure continues to improve.

Locally owned and operated tourism companies are small family run businesses. All large tourism companies are based outside of Cape York, but offer tours in and through the region. 4WD and small bus tours are the main operators, while large bus tour operators find the logistics of accommodation difficult.

The development of the tourism industry on Cape York is being guided by the Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait Tourism Development Action Plan 2008 – 2011, with Tourism Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland as the joint lead agencies. The Plan can be accessed on the Tourism Queensland website, [www.tq.com.au](http://www.tq.com.au).

Cape York is perceived as a remote and challenging destination and visitors look forward to a strong sense of achievement when they make it all the way to 'The Tip'. Research shows that the sense of adventure experienced by tourists on their journey to Cape York is as important as the destination itself.

Cape York Peninsula contains a wealth of natural environments and attractions that are experiencing increasing levels of demand from within Australia and abroad. The intrinsic nature and values of the region do not support mass tourism. The very factors that slowed the development of the region, its remoteness and



Recreational fishing

limited infrastructure have preserved its integrity creating an opportunity for today's tourists to experience one of the world's last great wilderness areas in its unspoiled form. Existing attractions relate to the visitor's experience of the environment – 4WD experience, fishing, bush walking, visiting National Parks, wildlife and bird watching and experiencing the outback life style.

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Events and festivals also attract a large number of visitors – Laura Dance Festival, Laura and Cooktown races, Weipa Fishing Classic, Cooktown Discovery Festival. The 2012 solar eclipse is already listed as an event to attract a wide range of visitors.

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## RETAIL AND ACCOMMODATION

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### RETAIL, TRADES AND SERVICES

#### INTRODUCTION

Flow on effects of mining have benefited Weipa, Bamaga and to a lesser extent Coen in terms of ancillary business development. The tourism industry also delivers benefits to Cape York Peninsula communities, in particular Bamaga which benefits a great deal from tourism visitation to 'The Tip'. Communities such as Lockhart River and Coen benefit from drive tourism and Kowanyama from recreational fishing.

Retail and service industries supporting mining and tourism point the way for expansion of the small business and trades and services component of the Cape York Peninsula commercial scene, in addition to providing services for government visitors to the region.

A high percentage of core businesses in remote locations tend to be community-owned. For example, Bamaga Enterprises (a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bamaga community), owns the resort, tavern, service station, snack bar and bakery.

#### KEY TOWNS, GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS CENTRES

Cooktown and Weipa are the two major population centres on Cape York. The remaining towns are smaller service centres that cater to the needs of local indigenous communities, farmers and tourist traffic. The exception to the rule is Bamaga at the end of the Peninsula Development Road and which receives an above average share of the tourism dollar due to its close proximity to 'The Tip' and Thursday Island.

Cooktown, located in south east Cape York, is the region's most accessible town with sealed road access to the south. The town has a wide range of service and retail businesses as well as housing the Cook Shire Council offices. It has a steady local population of around 2000 plus a regular flow of tourists which together provide enough demand to sustain a variety of service and retail businesses.

Local service and retail businesses include fuel and vehicle repairs, food and groceries, postal and banking as well as a wide range of non essential service and retail businesses servicing the local market including: builders/construction, cleaning, clothing, computers and electronics, electric, gas and plumbing services, gifts and furniture, hardware and camping, health and beauty, photography, real estate, surveying and transport services.

In addition to the above listed services there are a number of small businesses in Cooktown that cater to the tourist market including: boat hire, fishing and boating charters, car rental, hotels, museums and galleries, tourist information and tour and tour booking services.

Weipa is currently the largest settlement on Cape York with a population around 3300 people. The RioTinto Alcan bauxite mine has been the catalyst for the township's growth over the past 50 years and is the region's major employer.

Almost all service and retail businesses in Weipa exist to service the mining industry, local residents and surrounding communities. There are two shopping centres and a range of service businesses including service stations, government, bank, post office, contractors, construction and maintenance, welding, plant hire, blasting and coating, automotive repairs, survey and mapping, sporting clubs, electrical stores, Mitre 10, video,

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day-care, travel agent, a range of accommodation options, conference facilities, art gallery, cultural centre, car hire and charter fishing businesses.

The towns of Coen and Laura are significant service centres for traffic on the Peninsula Development Road and are regularly used for meetings by government departments due to their central location.

There is a cluster of small townships and communities at the Tip of Cape York Peninsula which includes the Aboriginal communities of Injinoo, Umagico and New Mapoon and the Torres Strait Islander communities of Seisia and Bamaga. Seisia has port access, a supermarket, butchers shop, holiday park and fishing club.

Bamaga is the main township at the Tip of Cape York and is where the tourists are most likely to replenish their supplies before making the journey back to Cairns. The township of Bamaga offers a hospital, prep to year 12 state college, Cape York TAFE campus and a number of quality sporting facilities. The NPA Regional Council is based in Bamaga. Service and retail businesses in the Northern Peninsula Area include supermarkets, a concrete batching plant, general merchandise store, video store, post office, service station / workshop, snack bar, bakery, tavern, fishing charter businesses, government agent, thrift shop, child care centre and a number of restaurants and accommodation options.

The west coast Indigenous communities of Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw, and Aurukun are small town centres providing key services such as a retail store, medical centre and school with a regular air service from Cairns. On the east coast Lockhart River and the nearby Iron Range National Park and Portland Roads are tourist destinations. The Lockhart River airport has motel accommodation and the community is serviced regularly by barge from Cairns. Near Weipa the communities of Napranum and Mapoon are small service centres for the local residents. At the northern end of the Peninsula Development Road are the centres of Seisia and Bamaga with a range of services available, retail and commercial activities and accommodation. This area is a destination for the tourists travelling through Cape York Peninsula.



**Bamaga Enterprises Building**

Hopevale near Cooktown has some small business development activity and a tour enterprise and beach camping facility. Wujal Wujal on the banks of the Bloomfield River, is located on the coastal road to Cooktown through the Daintree rainforest from Cairns and has the potential to provide services and accommodation for the growing tourism visitation.

Many of the general stores and petrol stations in Cape York's Indigenous communities are operated by government or community organisations rather than private individuals.

Due to the small size of most communities, very few professional service providers are based in the region and businesses generally source professional services from Cairns and Townsville. This is an opportunity for a service provider.

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## ACCOMMODATION

A diverse range of accommodation is currently available in Cape York Peninsula including hotels, motels, guest houses, units, caravan parks and camping grounds. However accommodation is at a premium in some centres such as Coen with demand from government agencies, mining companies, tourism operators and independent travellers.

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## TRANSPORT AND FREIGHT

Transport is a key component and major determinant of economic development on Cape York. Reliable, adequate, efficient and consistent transport systems are essential for significant business and industry development. Improvements in transport system technologies and efficiencies, producing reductions in user costs and increased productivity are key drivers in enabling competitiveness on a regional and global level. This is a major challenge for Cape York Peninsula where currently transport services are limited in choice and price.

### ROAD TRANSPORT

The standard of the Peninsula Development Road currently poses a barrier to increased competition in provision of road freight services, creating difficulties for effective and efficient commercial operations. It is essential for the socio-economic future of Cape York Peninsula that this road be improved.

### PORTS

Weipa: Weipa port is the major sea port for Cape York and is wholly owned by Rio Tinto Alcan. It is the only major Cape York port with capability for sea freight movement of significant volumes of goods. It is located on the north-west coast of Cape York Peninsula and is principally involved in the export of bauxite (aluminium ore) from the nearby Rio Tinto Bauxite mine. The port consists of three wharves and also handles fuel and general cargo and at one stage was used by the farming community for the export of live cattle.

- Lorim Point Wharf is used for the export of bauxite. It consists of two ship loading berths and the available depth of water is 12.5 metres.
- Humbug Wharf handles general cargo and heavy equipment with a depth alongside the berth of 8.1 metres.
- The Evans Landing Wharf is used for petroleum products, naval purposes and commercial and recreational fishing activities and the depth alongside being 9.6 meters, with recreational boat ramps adjacent to the wharf.



Trinity Bay at Seisia

Ports are also located at Seisia, (*pictured left*) serving the Northern Peninsula Area; Cape Flattery, Skardon River and Quintell Beach at Lockhart River servicing mines and local communities and Cooktown, servicing the southern Peninsula.

**Sea transport:** Sea transport to Cape York is operated by Sea Swift which offers passenger, freight and mother-shipping services. Sea Swift maintains a fleet of 19 vessels including vessels catering for general cargo, passenger transport, fishing support, barges, landing crafts and tugs.

The company offers a weekly freight and passenger service, visiting Lockhart River (wet season only), Horn Island and Thursday Island in Torres Strait, Bamaga/Seisia and Weipa.

Perkins Shipping (now Toll Transport) has a barge service from Weipa across to Gove and Darwin.



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**AIR TRANSPORT**

Air transport is of critical importance to all communities on Cape York and the appropriate infrastructure has therefore been built to accommodate this. As a general rule, every township has a runway and most stations and other remote inhabited areas maintain airstrips.

The minimum standard of runways on Cape York Peninsula is set by the Royal Flying Doctor Service, whose general requirements are based on CAAP 92-1(1) Guidelines for Aeroplane Landing Areas. This document can be obtained from the CASA website ([www.casa.gov.au](http://www.casa.gov.au)).

Apart from limited connecting flights between Coen / Lockhart River and Kowanyama / Pormpuraaw, Cairns is the hub for all flights, rendering flight around the region difficult and time consuming. This further emphasises the importance of the road network for the region.

Other than to Weipa, aircraft servicing the communities are small commuter aircraft, with no freight capacity to support containers or significant freight movements. Industry proposals requiring export in significant volumes by air-freight out of the region would need to be cost effective.

Cape York is serviced by a number of companies that offer air charter services. The majority of these companies are based in Cairns; however some companies are based in Mareeba, Horn Island and Weipa.



**Cooktown**



**Road north of Bramwell Junction**

## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### INTRODUCTION

The layout of this section is by industry and sectoral groupings, cross-linked where possible (e.g. in terms of development needs to demonstrate value to government on infrastructure investment)

Investment opportunities are focused on development of improved land management practices – on pastoral and government owned land; partnership potential in a wide range of areas; value adding to existing activities and industries.

### PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND AGRIBUSINESS

#### CATTLE

The Tables below, produced with permission of Herron Todd White indicate the competitive advantages of Cape York Peninsula as a cattle producing region. The region produces low volumes of beef per hectare but also incurs low costs of production per hectare.

Research conducted by Herron Todd White suggests that Cape York is a cost effective region to produce beef.

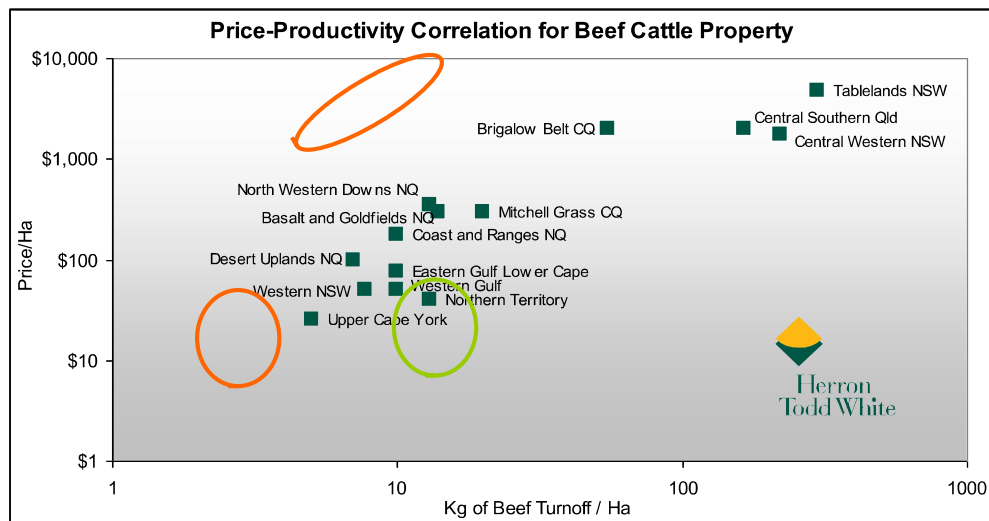
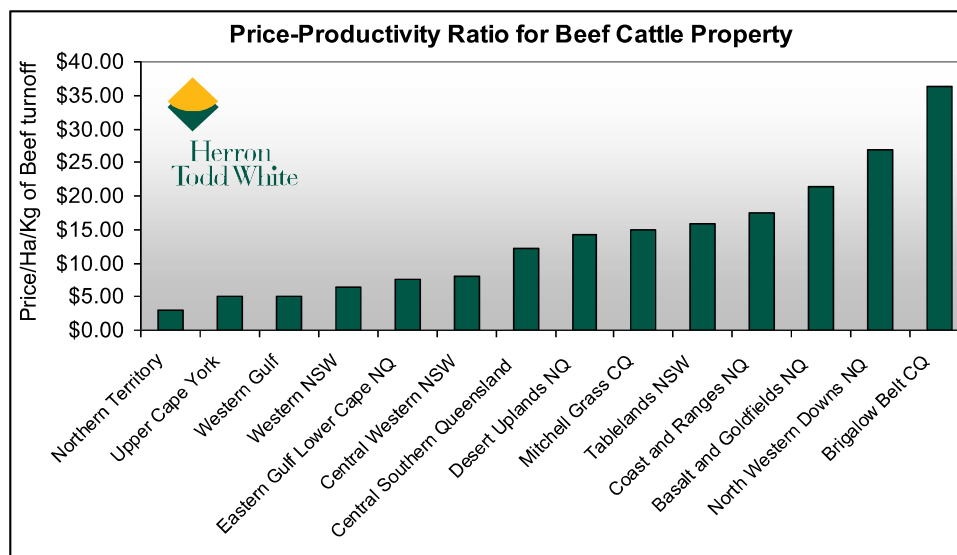


Table 2

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*



**Table 3**

Currently property stocking rates are low, with numbers declining since the 1980's to around 80,000 head today. Some properties are in disrepair and require investment in infrastructure, pasture improvement and stocking rate.

In terms of maintaining the industry on Cape York Peninsula attention should focus on two avenues for future sustainability. Firstly, facilitate operation of the niche market for live cattle export through Weipa. Secondly, and importantly, continued emphasis must be placed on improving and maintaining the Peninsula Development Road south to the Mareeba stockyards for the major cattle movement from the region.

## LIVE CATTLE EXPORT

### OPPORTUNITIES

The live cattle export market is suited to the type of cattle produced on Cape York Peninsula grazing lands. However the viability rests with distance to port and retention of the quality of the stock prior to transportation. The port at Weipa is logistically the only port from which Peninsula cattle can be exported to markets such as Indonesia, with Karumba and Mourilyan being too great a distance to make it economically viable.

The live beef export trade has recommenced through Weipa port, opening up a new opportunity to Cape York beef farmers. 1,700 head were shipped in 2009, as a result of a collaborative effort involving the Cape York Peninsula Live Export Group (CYPLEG) and indigenous elders. To enhance the export market potential and returns for Peninsula cattle, backgrounding prior to export would be an option to improve the industry performance overall and provide employment. Development options include:



**Yarding cattle**

1. Investment in a holding property near Weipa for stock improvement, coordinated with transport and freight across the Peninsula properties and export from Weipa port. This would enhance income and value adding potential for Peninsula properties, such a service to be available for all interested properties
2. Integration of the production, backgrounding and shipment of stock through utilisation of a smaller vessel for live export, obviating the need for a large shipment to be arranged and easier for the smaller output

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from Peninsula properties to handle. Sea Swift, a local shipping company in Cairns, has indicated availability of a vessel with a load capacity of 1,000 head which could undertake 10 trips annually. Turn-off of 10,000 head per annum would be a stimulus for the Cape York Peninsula economy.

With the transfer of Cape York Peninsula cattle properties to traditional owners and tailored training and employment programs, there is potential for a coordinated approach to cattle production on indigenous owned properties. Maximum potential rests with the rationalisation of land use, improved practices and intensification of farming to locally produce stock for both live export and a better quality of beast for southern markets, the latter being contingent upon the ongoing improvements to the PDR. Private partnerships with indigenous organisations/properties present investment options.



Loading cattle Weipa

**MARKET POTENTIAL:** An increasing demand from Indonesia for live export is anticipated by the industry.  
**PENINSULA INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENT:** There is a network of cattle producing properties providing economies of scale for freight and transport. Weipa has demonstrated an export capacity to ship live cattle to Indonesia.  
**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND SUSTAINABILITY:** Road maintenance to Weipa and enhanced port access at Weipa would increase potential.

## FERAL ANIMAL HUNTING AND PROCESSING

### OPPORTUNITY

Cape York Peninsula and in particular the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service have an enormous and increasingly threatening problem with feral pests such as wild pigs.

The incidence of rabies, foot and mouth and cholera close to Australia's north border pose major threats to Australia's economy and lifestyle and spread of disease could decimate the cattle industry. This is not just a Cape York Peninsula or a QPWS problem – it is a national problem. There are strong environmental imperatives for land conservation and protection of native animal populations and local employment would be created. There is considerable potential for joint venture partnerships in feral animal control and processing.

**MARKET POTENTIAL:** Markets include the local pet food industry and, with appropriate management and handling processes, the European market for wild boar.  
**PENINSULA INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENT:** The opportunity has potential for employment on an annual basis. It could ally with a suggestion to operate National Parks on Cape York Peninsula as business centres with appropriate management and control programs funded by private/public partnership investment. Joint management arrangements are already in place and being developed by Indigenous people and QPWS. The outcome would be local employment and enhanced management of feral animal populations and their impact on the environment.  
**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS:** Needs include: mobile abattoirs centred on Weipa and Lakeland (an abattoir already exists at Seisia); storage and refrigeration; training and wild game accreditation.



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## ABATTOIR AT LAKELAND

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### OPPORTUNITY

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Establishment of an abattoir could process feral animals as well as beef, pig, goat, lamb drawing product from across the southern Cape York Peninsula area. It would have the potential to be an all year round operation.

**MARKET POTENTIAL:** The main market is Far North Queensland for local and regional human consumption and pet food, and export of wild boar.

**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS:** Local infrastructure would include refrigeration, storage, and transport. The Mulligan Highway south to Cairns is sealed and open all year.

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## FISHING

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### WILD CATCH FISHING

The Line Net and Mud Crab Fisheries service the domestic market with frozen or fresh fillets, steaks or whole fish, including supply for domestic consumption, the tourism and hospitality trade and local and interstate markets. The export sector specialises in supply of live fish, particularly to Asian markets.

Cape York has the following positive attributes for a sustainable wild-catch fishing industry: an excellent reputation in the international marketplace for high quality seafood; clean, unpolluted waters and proximity to major seafood markets in the Asia-Pacific region with regional airports at Weipa, Bamaga, Horn Island and Cooktown.

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### OPPORTUNITIES

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The growing demand for seafood represents an opportunity for investment and partnership with existing licence holders. Regulations ensure the sustainability of the fish stocks.

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## AQUACULTURE

The depletion of fishing stocks internationally will drive demand for quality seafood domestically and internationally. Queensland has a number of key attributes that will support the sustainable development of a diverse aquaculture industry including:

- ideal growing conditions for temperate and tropical species
- an excellent reputation in the international marketplace for high quality seafood
- clean, unpolluted waters
- extensive aquaculture research programs
- proximity to major seafood markets in the Asia-Pacific region
- freedom from many of the serious diseases affecting aquaculture in other countries

Legislation exists to regulate the industry for the long term benefit of its participants and those affected by it. Those intending to invest in aquaculture activities on Cape York should follow the applicable processes to gain the relevant licences and seek legal advice to ensure that their intentions are legal within Cape York legislation. Customers for aquaculture products will vary depending on the product. It is expected that the bulk of the trade would involve national and international markets.

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Currently there are no processing facilities, coolrooms or other aquaculture specific facilities on Cape York.

## OPPORTUNITIES

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Australia's demand for seafood exceeds by almost double the production capacity of the wild fish industry. On estimate, the value of imported edible fish products (largely frozen and tinned) is around 50% of the total value of Australia's seafood production. This is predicted to rise as wild catch effort continues to be reduced. With the many rivers systems and vast coastline of Cape York, there are significant opportunities to expand aquaculture in the region. This is supported by the Australian aquaculture industry aiming to double output by 2015, and as wild catch opportunities continue to decline. This presents opportunities for the establishment of large school aquaculture projects; however the environmental regulations and establishment costs need to be considered.

On Cape York Peninsula, sites in the western areas away from rivers and using wetlands and/or bore water may have potential given economic feasibility and environmental sustainability, which would need to be considered on a case by case scenario.

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## HORTICULTURE AND CROPPING

A diverse range of crops are commercially produced on Cape York Peninsula, with the largest commercial crops in terms of total value being bananas, corn, melons, and passionfruit. Sorghum, dolicos lab lab, and paw paws also have high total values and a range of other fruits, vegetables, grains, pulses, forage and fibre crops, and exotic fruit tree crops are also successfully produced. Irrigation is required during the dry season.

North of the quarantine station at Coen, Cavendish and Red Dacca bananas are not permitted to be cultivated and mangoes cannot be transported south of Coen. All other produce grown north of Coen must pass inspection at the Coen quarantine station.



Farming at Lakeland

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

## OPPORTUNITIES

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Key locations for opportunities are in Lakeland Downs, Weipa and Bamaga. Lakeland Downs, which is south of the area impacted by Wild Rivers declarations, is well placed to become the growth centre of the southern Peninsula with a growing requirement for ancillary services, freight and transport, trades, service outlets and accommodation. Around Lakeland there is a resource of over 21,000 Hectares of arable land.

Cape York Peninsula is generally characterised as a tropical region with a climate conducive to production of Asian, exotic and tropical species. Exotic plants and fruits thrive year round with appropriate infrastructure and cultivation processes for produce including banana, passionfruit, paw paw, cocoa, lime and citrus, pineapples, vanilla, and heliconia. The tropical climate also provides an opportunity to produce high value exotic and niche crops suited to that environment, and in a number of cases, offers farmers an early season advantage over their southern competitors. The wet season offers opportunities for production of green season vegetable and tropical fruits for local markets or Cairns from the southern Peninsula area. The cut flower industry also presents opportunities for diversification of cropping. Bamboo production is an opportunity under investigation at Hopevale.

Expansion of production will require labour and a need for accommodation, which again provides a potential opportunity for local development. Demand for worker accommodation already exists at Lakeland Downs, where labourers commute by bus from Cooktown daily to work on local properties.

**MARKET POTENTIAL:** Markets include Cairns and Townsville and export.

**PENINSULA INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENT:** Consolidation of effort in existing production nodes will minimise impact and produce efficiencies.

**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS:** Any expansion of effort will require accommodation infrastructure in centres such as Lakeland Downs, creating an investment opportunity.

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## TIMBER

Agri-forestry in northern Australia is in its infancy however there is considerable interest in far north Queensland to pursue agri-forestry as an alternative and sustainable land use option for the tropical landscapes.

### EXISTING RESOURCES

In 2004 the Queensland Department of Primary Industries identified 1.7 million hectares of tall Darwin Stringybark (*Eucalyptus Tetrodonta*) forests on Cape York Peninsula which are outside National Parks and have been labelled as timbers of interest for commercial forestry operations. However, as this represents the largest uncut, old growth timber resource in Queensland, it has been excluded from consideration for conservation reasons. Consideration of timber industry opportunities has been confined to the potential for forestry salvage and harvesting on areas due to be cleared for mining.

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## CASE STUDY

*NANUM TAWAP* is an indigenous enterprise at Napranum near Weipa specialising in sawmilling and the production of cement blocks and pavers. Bauxite mining requires large tracts of land to be cleared before mining operations commence. Historically, this bushland has been clear felled, windrowed and burned, however a local business, Nanum Tawap, has begun to salvage and harvest the timber for commercial uses.

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The hardwood timber is milled and sold locally for use in construction, furniture and floor boards however the company is able to supply timber products anywhere in Australia.

Nanum Tawap also owns and operates the only existing sawmill on Cape York Peninsula and it is currently used to mill Darwin Stringybark and Melville Island Bloodwood from the Weipa area. The workforce is sourced from the indigenous community of Napranum providing training and long-term employment opportunities for local residents.

## OPPORTUNITIES

The key source of timber for any future enterprises is most likely to be salvaged from land to be cleared for mining operations. Marketing of the timber itself and value adding to make timber products will create local opportunities, as Nanum Tawap has demonstrated. The total available resource in the Aurukun area is approximately 3.7 million cubic metres distributed over 0.4 million hectares of harvestable forest with a log volume between 6 and 12 cubic metres per hectare. Where this resource is located on land to be subjected to future mining, it provides a resource for a local timber enterprise. The production of chemically treated poles and strip flooring would supply a relatively inexpensive source of timber for local construction and obviate the need to import housing and construction timber from the south.



Loading at Nanam Tawap

African mahogany (*Khaya senegalensis*) has been grown successfully in the seasonal dry tropics. Other perennial woody crops which can be grown in the dry tropics include shrub legumes, biomass crops for fuel, and trees for foliage cropping for the flower market. Given extraction of sufficient quantities from mining clearance to supply beyond the needs of Peninsula communities, access to markets would be direct south via road and barge to service the local market, or exported directly via Weipa.

**MARKET POTENTIAL:** Consumers have an increasing awareness of the importance of utilising sustainable resources and a growing conscience when it comes to eco-labelling and appropriate sourcing of products. Any timber harvested on Cape York will satisfy those concerns as it will be salvaged from clearance in front of mining operations and be sourced from sustainable forestry operations.

Nanum Tawap has developed a capacity to provide timber products beyond the local market and similar opportunities could be created for the same level of operation utilising salvaged timber. Such an enterprise would provide employment and training opportunities in a region where the majority of the centres have been rated in the bottom 1% of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in Australia. It would however remain a niche opportunity at this stage. There is expected to be demand for forestry projects in all indigenous communities, an avenue that requires further investigation.

Local communities have recognised the potential to use significant areas of mining land for forestry based industries such as biofuel (agave), sandalwood, mahogany, hard woods and the potential to create secondary industries such as extraction and distillation plants.

**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS:** A hardwood milling facility would be required to provide the infrastructure to support a forestry industry. Mobile / portable sawmilling is a worthy consideration given the distances on Cape York. New plantations will need to comprise species which require minimal irrigation at early stages of growth and which can be produced using the natural rainfall thereafter.



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## BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

One avenue yet to be explored is the potential for identification of bio-medical properties of the tropical and dry tropical species of Cape York Peninsula. Commercial exploration and research into the medicinal properties of the wet tropic rainforests near Cairns has made discoveries which could revolutionise the way in which diseases such as cancer are treated. This same potential exists with regard to the as yet un-investigated wet and dry tropical vegetation of the region.

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## AGRIBUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAPE YORK PENINSULA

Cape York Peninsula could well benefit from a perceived trend in international investment in agribusiness. The collapse of the Managed Investment Scheme involvement in forest plantation development - a collapse generally attributed to a failure to observe good practice in product sustainability, risk management and business ethics - has created a vacuum. Major international investors are stepping up to fill that vacuum. Big investors in forestry schemes are now looking for responsible outcomes and seeking positive economic, environmental and social results from their investment, as evidenced in areas of SE Asia, including Cambodia and the Philippines, where forestry development is allied with community involvement, training and employment. They are now looking towards Australia – a country with space, resources to manage and, by world standards, a stable government which minimises the sovereign risk.

To attract the attention of such major investors will require minimisation of lead up time and delays in project development. In other words, issues and negotiations relating to land availability and access, state and federal requirements and community engagement and benefits will need to be discussed and sorted out before approaching international investors with a 'project ready' proposal.

For Cape York Peninsula the key challenge will be identifying suitable land to be targeted, completing negotiations with traditional owners and other local interests and obtaining state and federal support and engagement. The criteria for "suitable land" include: land that is currently cleared, indigenous or other owners are ready to negotiate, land with the capacity to produce crops or trees (the better the land the better the outcome regardless of what is planted) and basic water supply for plant establishment.

Scientific work undertaken in Cape York Peninsula has demonstrated that the land can support a wide variety of vegetation production depending on the soil types and water available – crops for human or animal consumption or biofuel production, plantation forestry for a range of uses including biofuel and tropical fruits and vegetables.

In North Queensland there are companies with the expertise to provide a sound scientific and economic basis for creation of an agribusiness industry in the Peninsula. This can be achieved while meeting the environmental requirements of state and federal legislation and at the same time provide a sustainable training and employment base for communities, an alternative environmentally sound land use with opportunities to lower the carbon footprint and earn carbon credits if that system is introduced.

Cape York Sustainable Futures will be establishing a small task force involving Cape York interests, government and scientific advisers to undertake the preliminary research and local discussions to identify available cleared land and soil types and pursue discussions with owners to develop up projects with potential to funding stage. A stable investment environment will attract investors - and there are already known to be major investors ready to partner with local communities and local businesses in Australia.

The potential for partnerships between Peninsula communities and individuals, scientific agencies and companies, private investors and government has been identified as a long term and sustainable investment opportunity.

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As indicated above, any proposal will need to be 'investor ready'. The following stages should be completed before advertising/canvassing potential investors and involve CYSF, land owners, scientists, government agencies and relevant Councils:

**AGRIBUSINESS PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT:**

**STAGE 1:**

- Suitable land identification and description ( specifically land already cleared)
- Ownership and interest group identification
- Negotiation and discussion on potential range land uses, potential benefits to individuals and/or community (income, training, employment)
- Sustainability and time frames

**STAGE 2**

- Scientific advice on land use – plants/trees for biofuel, timber, multiuse (eg sandalwood and Pongamia)
- Species selection, requirements etc
- Feasibility, market potential and projections
- Preliminary costing
- Establish project working panel involving land owners, scientists, government

**SPECIFIC AGRIBUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

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*BIOFUEL*

Biofuel production has environmental advantages. Production is carbon neutral, it can be accommodated with existing infrastructure and is non toxic to the environment. Biodiesel also minimizes storage and handling environmental risks.

Occupational health and safety benefits include reduction of overall emissions, greatly reduced particulate, CO and hydrocarbon (THC) exhaust gas emissions and 95% reduction in carcinogenic compounds. It is an area open to further research with considerable development potential and opportunities for establishment of partnerships and joint ventures.

*SUITABLE SPECIES*

**Pongamia (Milletia pinata - also known as Kalpa)**

Pongamia is native to Australia and is an excellent source of biofuel for diesel engines, having around 99% of the energy of petro diesel. It has long been used as a source of fuel in India where it powers entire villages. Unlike other biofuel alternatives, it need not displace conventional agricultural crops or any green sensitive areas such as rainforests.

It is an ideal crop for the thousands of acres of sub-prime land around Cape York, and also opens the option of creating secondary industries such as extraction/distillation plants, and a spin off for the cattle industry. The by-products of the extraction process produce high quality cattle feed.



**Pongamia tree (India)**

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Pongamia has the following advantages:

it is a fast growing medium sized evergreen tree with high yield and suitable for biodiesel production. It is an Australian native, can be grown on marginal lands and used as stock feed as well as produce fuel. It is a legume and climatically suited to the Cape York Peninsula region. With a deep tap root it is drought resistant and makes maximum use of available soil nutrients. Legumes are nitrogen fixing plants- beneficial to soil fertility and structure.

With regard to processing, the nuts can be mechanically harvested and managed to assist fire control. Livestock grazing in well established plantations achieve higher stocking rates and better quality pastures due to nitrogen fixation.

Pongamia has environmental advantages. Oil production and treated cake can be used for cattle feed; carbon sequestration is attained through tree growth and soil carbon increases due to nodulation and root growth. Pongamia produces its own nitrogen, decreasing the requirement for fertilisers and cultivation resulting in a lessening of potential soil and chemical runoff into the rivers and streams. Its fungicidal and insecticidal properties decrease pest attacks.

*AGAVE*

Agave is a succulent that is endemic to Mexico and able to survive in the harshest summer heat requiring minimal water. It also has the advantage of being able to survive on marginal land with low operational costs. Yields of 10,000 to 16,000 litres of ethanol per hectare per year are reported.

*MULTIPLE LAND USE*

Plantations of Sandalwood with Pongamia as the host plant to double the value of land utilisation.

*TROPICAL AND EXOTIC FRUITS*

Bananas, papayas, cocoa in select areas.

*MARKET POTENTIAL*

Rising crude oil prices make production of biofuels economically attractive and this will intensify with the approach of the 'peak oil' timeline. Concerns about global warming and the need to reduce greenhouse emissions highlight the potential benefit of plantation development, regeneration of mining areas with valuable species and introduction of energy crops as carbon sinks.

*COMMUNITY BENEFITS*

Training and ongoing employment for Cape York Peninsula residents would be long term outcomes with the potential for joint management and ownership of the resources.



Local Employment Opportunities

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

## POTENTIAL INVESTMENT CASE STUDY

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The following has been developed as a case study for development of agribusiness and agri-forestry on Cape York Peninsula for a variety of applications: land restoration, plantation development for timber, biofuel, community development projects, community beautification and general land care, reef care and river care projects.

A key player is a major north Queensland commercial enterprise with international credentials: **Clonal Solutions Australia Pty Ltd and Yuruga Nursery Pty Ltd.**

**Clonal Solutions Australia**, through its products and services, offers elite genetic material for the establishment of new, profitable, competitive and sustainable industries on Cape York Peninsula, in the following fields:

- **Forestry:**
  - Native high value, low maintenance timber Eucalypts, such as the QDPI developed Corymbia hybrids, Red Mahogany (*e. pellita*), etc.
  - Exotic high value, low maintenance timber such as Teak (*Tectona grandis*), African Mahogany (*Khaya senegalensis*), sandalwood
- **Bio-fuels:**
  - Native essential oil and biofuel trees such as Sandalwood (*Santalum*), Tea Tree (*Melaleuca* spp), Pongamia (*Millettia pinnata*),
  - Exotic essential oil and biofuel trees such as *Jatropha curcus*, Agave, Moringa
- **Food crops:**
  - Bananas, Papaya, Bush foods

**Clonal Solutions Australia** has world-class clonal production facilities including modern tissue-culture laboratory and advanced propagation techniques following Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme of Australia (NIASA) standards (so that plants will be pest, weed & disease free) and a production capacity of over a million plants per month.



Cloned seedlings

**Yuruga Nursery** specialises in growing tropical Australian plants and has vast experience and knowledge of the native plants from all ecosystem types on Cape York Peninsula. This is particularly important for any developments that are required to match plant species to riparian zone specifications such as flood plain zones, 100m from the flood line, 100-500m, etc. Company skills in this area enable matching of the perfect plants for each particular zone outlined in the Wild Rivers Act.

Yuruga Nursery has grown over 1,000 species of native plants originating from Cape York Peninsula, over the last 25 years.

Plants grown at **Yuruga Nursery** are used for:

- Revegetation – mine sites, local council works,

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- Wildlife corridors, roadsides
- Land rehabilitation, Landcare
- Farm forestry
- Gardens and landscaping

Service provision example: mining companies responsible for rehabilitation of mine sites. Yuruga could propagate appropriate species and have them ready at the ideal planting times immediately following the return of the topsoil or alternatively, could provide a mix of high value native and / or exotic timber or trees of economic value.

In relation to biofuels, Yuruga PL is currently producing in excess of 1.5 million biofuel plants, of 3 different species, for various customers in North Queensland. These plants are provided on a very competitive basis and the company works closely with DEEDI to improve R & D partnerships, identify superior genetics and to provide cost effective solutions to customers.

In relation to biomedicinals, the facilities at Clonal Solutions are able to mass propagate any plant that a community identifies and proves as a valuable medicinal species. The service would include (i) collection of plant material from the individual plants identified as superior, (ii) rapid mass multiplication and (iii) provision of high quality, economically viable quantities of plants available to the communities' within development timelines.



**Clonal Solutions laboratory**

Clonal Solutions Australia and Yuruga Nursery are strategically located on the Atherton Tablelands at the gateway to the Cape. Yuruga has undertaken extensive research and collection on CYP and can provide large numbers of economical and sustainable plant-based community development options to the people of Cape York.



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## ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

The concept of ecosystem services is becoming accepted world-wide as a means to provide improved land planning and management methodologies to enhance sustainability of ecosystems and biodiversity. An ecosystem management approach is already being applied to South East Queensland catchments and is becoming recognised as a world leader.

The future sustainable management of Cape York Peninsula land and ecosystems demands a coherent and coordinated strategy with wide community engagement, which would have the benefits of biodiversity conservation, sequestration of carbon and local employment, particularly on indigenous communities and National Park areas handed to traditional owners.

The Queensland Government policy towards pastoral properties on Cape York Peninsula is to purchase them for gazettal as National Parks, thus removing them from productivity (certainly in the longer term), reducing regular observation and monitoring systems and removing the pest and fire management regimes that previously existed.

It would be far more cost effective, and retain the land management processes so necessary for protection of ecosystems, for government to come to a business arrangement with property holders to make payment for Environmental and Ecosystem Services and property management plans and to gazette the land as nature refuges. It would be a negotiated contract between suppliers of ecosystem services (landholders) and a buyer (government). The contract requires the landholder to go beyond the normal duty of care required under the pastoral lease in providing services of future benefit for the wider community.

This not an unreasonable proposal in light of the growing threat to Cape York Peninsula ecosystems from the proliferation of feral animals and weeds and the resultant threat to Australia's bio-security. Arguably, the Queensland Government QPWS has resource difficulties in supplying these services and with the depletion of the number of graziers across the region, the stocks of human capital and land-care knowledge are being dissipated. The land and its natural assets cannot be managed from Cairns or Brisbane; nor can realistic responses to issues of bio-security and the global environmental impacts of climate change be generated at a distance.

Where traditional lands are gazetted as National Parks and returned to traditional owners under an agreed management process, a similar ecosystem management approach should be adopted, providing an essential service for both government and community and creating employment.

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## OPPORTUNITIES

Develop a structure for payment to enable owners and lessees of grazing properties, traditional owners and Aboriginal Shire Councils to provide environmental services such as water quality improvements, nature conservation and restoration, landscape management and carbon sequestration.

A future scenario would be 'multi-function' landscapes with environmental and ecosystem conservation allied with controlled/managed commercial activities such as grazing. Hence ecosystem services would provide sustainable market and income opportunities for land managers and indigenous communities.

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## TROPICAL ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT TRAINING VENUES

With the resources and knowledge of a 'first-world' nation behind them, Cape York Peninsula communities are strategically situated to become examples of world best practice in tropical environment management and to pass on their knowledge of sustainable land management to the wider national and international community.

Their experience and local 'know how' can provide the basis for development of a training network in tropical environment and cultural management and also provide opportunities for cross-cultural training programs for corporations and governments.

## OPPORTUNITIES

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A long term opportunity would involve development of training venues and programs demonstrating world best practice in tropical land management based at Bamaga TAFE and other community centres such as Kowanyama, Western Cape College, Lockhart River. Training would be designed to attract Australian and international participants. Local people, and particularly community elders, would need to play a key role in course development and delivery. Similarly, cross-cultural training could be offered for corporations, schools and government agencies.

Such an enterprise would have a far-reaching impact on the future economy of the region as it would encompass a wide range of activities including land and resource management, scientific and environmental



Ranger training

studies and site interpretation, people management and tourism, structured tourism delivery and marketing, customer services, catering and hospitality, specialised accommodation development and management.

It would require a long term partnership of communities, conservation interests, government and private/commercial interests which could be expected to have long term positive economic and social outcomes for Cape York Peninsula communities. Partnerships have already been established, for example between the Wuthathi Land Trust, the Australian Conservation Foundation and the US-based philanthropic

organisation, The Christensen Fund to foster indigenous traditional knowledge and protect Wuthathi traditional lands at Shelburne Bay.

Examples in other countries can be used as role models, such as the Galapagos Islands, the income from which are a major boost to Ecuador's economy and support the local population in a range of activities and enterprises, such as tour guides, environmental work and conservation, retail and entertainment, information provision, accommodation and restaurant services and travel charters.

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## MINING AND EXTRACTION

Mining exploration is being undertaken for diamonds, coal, gemstones, tin, iron ore, kaolin, gold, bauxite. Gravel extraction related to road construction for the mining industry, Main Roads and Councils is an ongoing need. While the Queensland Government has not programmed any capital works for the next 5 years, maintenance work alone requires around 150,000 cubic metres of quarry material per annum. Borrow pits along the PDR are being identified by the Main Roads Department to ensure reserves for the next 10 years. An opportunity exists for development of a light industry enterprise in supplying the right material for road maintenance purposes.

## TOURISM

Cape York is its own brand. It is a region well known around Australia and in many parts of the world as the northern-most point of Australia, and as one of the world's most diverse wilderness regions. It is widely recognised by its land mass shape and has the potential to be positioned as the ideal destination for a broad range of international tourists. The land mass shape of the Cape is commonly used as the logo or unofficial brand for organisations and businesses.



Endeavour River Cooktown

CYSF is adopting strategies to enhance the visitor experience on the ground and encourage a quality of service that meets visitor expectations. Existing limitations associated with infrastructure (e.g. supplies and roads), knowledge and customer relations and seasonal constraints all provide opportunities for an entrepreneur, such as training, and green season tourism. Growth through increasing the average length of stay in a centre opens up a range of small scale business opportunities for local residents.

Improved road conditions are allowing increased tourist visitation and are the catalyst for changing visitor demographics and activity patterns with a greater proportion of visitors now wanting to visit 'frontier country' in comfort. In 2009 the traffic counter on the southern approach to the Little Laura River north of Laura registered 57,862 traffic movements (including vehicles travelling in both directions). The demand for basic supplies and services can be expected to increase.

There are many opportunities for growth in the Cape York tourism sector as indicated in the Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait Tourism Development Action Plan 2008-2011. The Cultural Tourism Strategy – North Queensland was completed in 2009 and outlined key actions for implementing such a strategy in the region. Up until this report, the market for cultural tourism had remained largely unexplored. With the implementation of these strategies over the coming years, there is opportunity for Cape York to benefit significantly from cultural tourism. The success of the Laura Dance Festival and Cooktown Discovery Festival shows that there is opportunity to market local events to the tourism sector.

### TESTIMONIAL

#### PAUL PIVA & LORRAINE WARRADOO TRADING AS LOCKHART RIVER CAR HIRE

We have been in business now for about 4 years and business is going far better than we initially thought. We started with 1 vehicle and now we have about 13 cars both 2wd and 4wd. These are hired out 24/7 and we are finding that we are always short on vehicles. Most of our business is coming from government agencies but we are now slowly getting into the bird watchers market. In the future we are keen to help others to establish their business across the Cape and any Indigenous people who want to give it a go but are a bit reluctant to take that first step.

Paul Piva, August 2010

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

## Opportunities

### *ESTABLISH BUSH CAMPING FACILITIES*

The establishment of commercial bush camps in certain areas of the Cape (e.g. National Parks) and the potential to link these camps with other tourism attractions (e.g. as a base camp for walking tracks) is seen as a critical service for the Cape York tourism industry, which already receives a large number of self-drive visitors each year. Dialogue with tourism operators, 4WD clubs, tourism agencies, Govt Departments, and other interested parties has already been carried out and has identified the growing demand for such facilities.

Establishment of commercially operated bush camps has the potential to create significant employment opportunities, particularly for indigenous people who are ideally positioned as custodians of the land, enhance the visitor experience to the region, and create fee for service businesses operating within Cape York Peninsula and the National Parks.



### *RE-DEVELOP PAJINKA RESORT*

Strategically situated at the very Tip of Cape York, Pajinka was originally owned, operated, developed, and managed as a high quality resort by a major Airline in the 1980's. The facility was subsequently sold and operated with little success by various interests including Traditional Owners. Eventually the facility closed and has remained so for many years, and according to various accounts has fallen into serious disrepair.

There are a range of opportunities that could be considered for the site as there are considerable numbers of people travelling to the "Tip" each year. Opportunities include reconstruction of the resort, the provision for improved and expanded camp ground facilities, guided tours of the 'Tip', environmental and biodiversity and cultural tours, and the establishment of a range of businesses and services that could be developed and provided by Traditional Owners as individual or collective complimentary businesses (e.g. art and craft).

### *SMALL VOLUME, HIGH YIELD TOURISM*

Cape York is a fragile environment with minimal infrastructure that is not suited to large volume, small profit per head tourism.

It is expected that the development of 5 or 6 star safari camps or eco lodges would attract a new visitor demographic to Cape York and that this visitor demographic would make a significant contribution per head to the local economy. Such accommodation would be developed on a small scale with the concurrence of community residents and allow for a quality product and an exclusive experience.



Pitcher Plant

Examples of similar concepts interstate include Fairfield Station, part of the Aboriginal owned Bunuba Cattle Company in the Kimberley region, Cape Leveque Kooljaman resort north of Broome, Longitude 131' luxury wilderness camp at Uluru; Bammaru Plains luxury safari camp on the edge of Kakadu and Wildman Wilderness Lodge in Arnhem Land.



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*LINK CAPE YORK TO TORRES STRAIT IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING*

Cape York Peninsula is the doorway to the Torres Strait and Australia's neighbours to the north. The Torres Strait consists of 18 island communities and over 270 islands scattered over a geographic area of 48,000 square kilometres which spread north from the Tip of Cape York towards the borders of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Encompassing the Torres Strait when promoting Cape York and developing enterprise options will expand the tourism perception of northern Australia and all it has to offer.

*INCREASING VISITOR NUMBERS*

With improvements to the Peninsula Development Road, high clearance sedans and off-road vans can make the journey to the 'Tip'. Increasing numbers of visitors will require services and supplies creating local business opportunities for new businesses or expansion of existing businesses. The experience of the Savannah Way has shown that travellers will increasingly use local services as they travel and carry less on their trip.

*GREY NOMADS*

Many older travellers tend to prefer serviced accommodation with clean toilet facilities, warm showers and comfortable beds. The opportunity exists for a number of organisations and businesses to enhance their facilities to encourage Grey Nomads and other travellers who prefer to travel in comfort to visit the region.

*DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE IN NATIONAL PARKS*

Cape York has 11 National Parks which cover a significant land area on Cape York Peninsula. Currently there are no facilities within the National Parks and campers and visitors are required to take all rubbish with them when they leave the park. It is widely perceived that in many cases the management of National Parks would be enhanced if commercially operated accommodation and waste management infrastructure were constructed in the National Parks under contract to the government to deliver a service.

In the past, this would have not been possible as the government was not prepared to consider private investment in National Parks, however, this has now changed and 7 sites in Queensland are currently being prepared for tender. CYSF is pursuing this avenue and a number of other opportunities with the government.

*CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL TOURS*

Cape York has a rich heritage which includes extended Indigenous Australian occupation (continuing today), a role played in the foundation of European Australia from sightings by Dutch navigator Willem Jansz to Captain Cook's landing in Cooktown, the gold rush, its role in WW2 and the current mining activity. The potential exists to offer tourism products that focus on each of these aspects of Cape York from European and Indigenous Australian perspectives.

The proposal to develop the 'long walk' from Cairns to the Tip of Cape York also presents opportunities for add on experiences.



**Palm Cockatoo**

*BIRD WATCHING*

Cape York Peninsula is renowned for its variety of birdlife, such as the Palm Cockatoo, *pictured right*, and a Mecca for 'twitchers' keen to catch a sight of both endemic and migratory species. While specialised tours already exist, it is an additional attraction for general tourism groups and specialised tours.

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*SPORT FISHING AND CHARTER FISHING*

Cape York offers sport fishermen world class fishing in an exceptional environment. The opportunity exists to offer additional sport fishing and charter fishing products to domestic and international customers. Locations include Weipa, Seisia, Cooktown, Wujal Wujal, Portland Roads, Lockhart River, Kowanyama, Aurukun and Pormpuraaw and various inland rivers.

*DIVING TOURS*

The opportunity exists for the development of commercial dive tourism products to showcase the far northern section of the Great Barrier Reef as an exclusive low volume, high yield dive tourism product.

*GREEN SEASON TOURISM*

The opportunity exists to recognise attractions that are still accessible during the wet season and promote fly in packages to experience Cape York in the wet. The Wetlands at Lakefield and along the west coast have this potential. Partnerships between operators and the indigenous communities are opportunities to be explored. Bird watching at Iron Range is also an attractive option in the Wet season. The Northern Territory has successfully pursued this policy.



Wetlands



*SOUTHERN CAPE YORK WEEKEND GETAWAY*

Fly in-fly out packages marketed to Cairns, the Atherton Tablelands and Townsville to capitalise on accommodation down time at weekends in southern Cape York centres is worthy of consideration by Airlines and Cape York tourism operators.

*HUNTING TOURS*

Feral pigs are an ongoing problem on Cape York and are a drain on the public purse as government funds the control and management programs. The opportunity exists to set up commercially operated hunting tourism products which would be operated on cattle stations by lessees and on country by Traditional Owners and / or in partnership with a local commercial hunting operator.

*TRADITIONAL OWNERS TO OFFER SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS ON COUNTRY*

Indigenous Australians have control of over one third of coastal land on eastern Cape York and a large tract of land on the eastern side of the Tip of Cape York. This country contains a number of beautiful locations which could be opened up to a limited number of tourists in a sustainable manner, providing tourists with the opportunity to visit exclusive areas on Cape York and providing the Traditional Owners with opportunities to generate revenue and operate small scale tourism enterprises. This is also an opportunity for partnerships with commercial operators for a top of the range safari experience.

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## LIGHT INDUSTRY, RETAIL AND SERVICES

Mining operations on Cape York Peninsula are expected to continue until 2064 and will be the main source of growth for the light industrial and retail sectors. These activities plus the increasing development of the tourism industry base with necessary improvements to the Peninsula Development Road will provide a key source of local employment for the region.

Expansion of the light industry, retail and service sectors will be dependent upon growth in other industries. Existing demand derives largely from local residents (indigenous and non indigenous), government workers and visitors, mine workers and tourists. Businesses heavily reliant on tourism experience seasonal variation in operation and staff requirements. The impetus to encourage 'green season' tourism will enhance business activity.

At the present time, opportunities exist for growth in agriculture, aquaculture and fishing, tourism, and mining. Should these other sectors show significant development, there will be a flow-on effect to the services and retail sector as populations and secondary business demands increase. There is widespread opportunity across Cape York to meet the needs of the growing mining communities.

The opportunity exists for joint ventures and partnerships with businesses that operate on Cape York, or to purchase existing businesses. A number of existing businesses have secure land tenure which in some cases is transferable.

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## OPPORTUNITIES

### LIGHT INDUSTRY

#### *MINING SUPPORT SERVICES*

Based on the location of mineral deposits, mining companies are often required to set up their operations in remote areas where no services are available. If services are not provided by local companies, the mining company must either, expand their own workforce and train them to carry out the task, or pay for contractors to fly/drive in to provide the services. Services currently contracted to Cairns based contractors by Cape Flattery Silica Mines include sandblasting, air-conditioning, refrigeration, electrical, boiler making and catering services.



Bauxite mining

#### *LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT SERVICES*

Local Councils often put certain maintenance and management jobs out to tender. A number of Cape York based businesses take on government contracts such as road maintenance, water cartage, etc as business opportunities.

### RETAIL AND SERVICES

#### *SERVICE THE MINING COMMUNITY*

Mining towns grow at a disproportionate rate to their surrounding areas and therefore often experience shortages in the supply of goods and services. There is widespread opportunity across Cape York to meet the needs of the workers who move to mining communities. Currently Cape York has a general service shortage

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

and opportunities exist to set up businesses that cater to the general needs of the population including health care, grocery shops, gift shops, cleaning and other personal services. The bulk of the population comprises mining workers on significant salaries with little opportunity to spend.

*TRAVELLER SUPPORT SERVICES*

Gaps exist in the provision of services for the Fly in – Fly out market in Weipa and other centres with air services. Large numbers of people travel to and from communities and towns in the region on business. The essential requirements to service the needs of this market are clean, reasonable modern and secure accommodation, access to hire cars (both conventional and 4WD), a reliable coach service to and from airports, communications services at airports, access to meeting rooms and hire offices, access to meal services and laundry services. This would enhance business dealings within Cape York Peninsula's business and economy.

*SPECIAL NEEDS AND LUXURY TOURISM SERVICES*

Improved road conditions and fly in/fly out options are opening up Cape York to a new tourist demographic. These tourists expect service and are willing to pay for creature comforts when on tour. Tourists with special needs such as movement and sight impaired are also not catered for in the region. The opportunity exists to partner with established tourism operators to provide these services.

*TRANSPORT OPERATIONS*

Cape York businesses and residents, dependent on road, sea and air transport services for supplies, currently have little choice in provider and are captive to payment rates for available services. The opportunity exists for competition in this field with entry of other transport operators which would improve liveability for Cape York Peninsula residents and reduce the impost of everyday living expenses, construction and services. This is reliant however on the continued improvements to the PDR, a commitment expected of the state government.

*CAR HIRE*

A 4WD car hire service, with connections in both Weipa and Bamaga, has been identified as an investment opportunity to cater for visiting government officers, tourists and local residents. This would enable a visitor to pick up a vehicle in, for example, Bamaga, conduct business locally in the Northern Peninsula Area communities and then travel south to Weipa, conduct business and then fly out. The reverse could also operate, providing ready access to communities.

*COMMUNITY STORES AND BUSINESSES*

An additional opportunity exists for businesses currently run by communities and local governments to be privatised. As communities expand in population, it may be feasible for these businesses to be sold and then operated by private businesses as profit-making ventures.

*SUPPORT AND DEVELOP THE QUINKAN REGIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE*

Laura is developing as a key stop over point. The Quinkan Land Trust has security of tenure over land abutting the Peninsula Development Road. A partnership with the Trust to establish a caravan park and simple accommodation is an opportunity.

*PROMOTION OF CAPE YORK ARTISTS*

Fine art sourced from Cape York artists is a growing industry with a developing local and international reputation. The opportunity exists to partner with organisations operating on Cape York to help grow the supplier base and develop the market for this unique fine art, with a particular focus on the corporate sector in metropolitan areas engaging with corporate social conscience.



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**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Currently, businesses on Cape York pay a premium for professional service providers to work on their businesses from Cairns and Townsville. The opportunity exists for bookkeepers, accountants and other professional service providers to operate either part time, or full time out of Cooktown or Weipa and Bamaga to service local demand.

**PERSONNEL, TRADES AND SKILLS**

Skilled tradespeople are in demand, including specialist areas such as electricians and refrigeration mechanics, in addition to those providing personal services such as hairdressers. A service of this nature could be developed as a small business and operated on mobile basis out of one of the larger centres such as Weipa. The continuation of mining will perpetuate the need for skilled tradespeople in Peninsula centres.

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**ACCOMMODATION**

**OPPORTUNITIES**

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**COEN AND LAKELAND DOWNS**

A clear need has been identified need for short term accommodation, motel accommodation and duplexes to accommodate government travellers, mining personnel and tourists. A development opportunity exists in a multi-purpose project to upgrade the Coen airport, located 14km from the town and to also establish accommodation at the site to service the visiting government and business travellers. At Lakeland, workers are commuting from Cooktown daily and appropriate accommodation would benefit local industry.

**TESTIMONIAL**

**MUSGRAVE ROADHOUSE – JOHN AND MARY MCDOWALL**

Ten years ago we bought all family shares of the business after 3 years prior leasing the business. Over this time we have watched tourism in CYP expand from about 10,000 vehicles then to over 60,000 now. We have grown our staff in this time from 3 to 7 staff plus Mary & I and we have provided new infrastructure as well in this time. Initially we had 10 units and now have 22 units and have 5 ablution blocks. Our camping grounds have picnic tables and BBQ's and will hold up to 50 vehicles. Now is the time to get business in Cape York as it is going ahead in leaps and bounds particularly if the road is continually improved. It has provided us with a great lifestyle.

John McDowall, August 2010

**ESTABLISH GENERAL ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES**

There is a serious accommodation shortage across Cape York during peak season months. The limited flights into most centres require business visitors to stay overnight and as a result, accommodation facilities are generally fully booked during the week and often on weekends. A significant opportunity exists for the development of accommodation facilities and this need will escalate as road conditions improve and tourism numbers increase as a result.

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**BUSINESS CENTRES AND INFRASTRUCTURE – SNAPSHOTS OF SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES**

In the service centres, particularly Weipa, the full range of retail opportunities exist for investment. Specific localised business and industry opportunities identified include:

**WEIPA**

Car hire service connection between Weipa and Bamaga return

Proposed Marina at Weipa

Barge and ferry service – link to Gove and Darwin. Toll provides an industrial link from Weipa

**COOKTOWN**

Improve port facilities

Marina : liaison with super yacht cluster in Cairns

Expansion of tourism services – safari guided tours, local tag-a-long, bush tucker, bird watching and other specialised ecotourism ventures

**COEN**

Accommodation: short term accommodation for travellers in Coen and near the airport

**LAKELAND DOWNS**

Accommodation: short term for local workers

**BAMAGA/NPA**

Car hire linked to Weipa

Tour guides – local sites

International standard resort development – Pajinka and Somerset as potential locations

**MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE**

**PORT AT ARCHER POINT:**

Potential usage: export game meat culled from National Parks, horticulture, timber and live cattle export

**WIND FARM AT ARCHER POINT:**

renewable and reliable power supply for the region

**AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS: RUNWAYS AND ACCOMMODATION:**

Coen, Pormpuraaw,

**TRANSPORT NETWORK:**

A transport hub based in Innisfail, link to the Tablelands via the Palmerston Highway with connections to Mourilyan as the port for import/export of goods and produce. This would provide a straight line of ingress/egress for freight and produce from Cape York Peninsula and would be reliant upon improvement to the Peninsula Development Road as the economic lifeline (as has occurred for the Gulf Savannah region).

## LAND TENURE

[illegible]

*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

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**BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES**

Investors interested in starting an enterprise in Cape York Peninsula should go to the Queensland Government Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation web site [www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au) and peruse the section on business, trade and investment in Queensland.

Cape York Sustainable Futures is in a position to provide contact information and impartial advice on opportunity potential.

The Australian Government web services include advice on investment, agribusiness, trade and export. Investors should go to [www.austrade.gov.au/invest](http://www.austrade.gov.au/invest) for detailed information on services available.

TropLinks is a Cairns based organisation in a position to provide advice on development issues and export potential. <http://www.troplinks.com/>



Sunset at Pormpuraaw



*New Horizons and Opportunities: Cape York Peninsula*

## CONTACT DETAILS

### CATTLE

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au) > Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)  
Department of Environment and Resource Management  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au) – DERM has a number of publications available which provide guidelines how to deal with the leasing and legislative guidelines on Cape York  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
[www.daff.gov.au](http://www.daff.gov.au)  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)  
Industry Bodies  
Meat and Livestock Australia  
[www.mla.com.au](http://www.mla.com.au)

#### OTHER

Herron Todd White  
[www.htw.com.au](http://www.htw.com.au)  
Cape York Peninsula Live Export Group Inc.  
[www.watsonriverstation.com.au/weipa-kive-export](http://www.watsonriverstation.com.au/weipa-kive-export)

### FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
[www.daff.gov.au](http://www.daff.gov.au)  
Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE)  
[www.abareconomics.com](http://www.abareconomics.com)  
Australian Institute of Marine Science  
[www.aims.gov.au](http://www.aims.gov.au)  
Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)  
[www.afma.gov.au](http://www.afma.gov.au)  
Australian Fisheries Research and Development Corporation  
[www.frdc.com.au](http://www.frdc.com.au)  
Coastal Habitat Resources Information System (CHRIS) <http://chrisweb.dpi.qld.gov.au/CHRIS/>  
CSIRO Division of Marine and Atmospheric Research  
[www.cmar.csiro.au](http://www.cmar.csiro.au)

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

#### OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au) > Information About > Queensland Industries  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)

#### INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS - FISHERIES

Commonwealth Fisheries Association  
Seafood Services Australia  
Queensland Seafood Industry Association  
Queensland Seafood Marketers Association Inc

#### INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS- AQUACULTURE

Queensland Aquaculture Industries Federation (Inc)  
Australian Barramundi Farmers Association  
North Queensland Crayfish Farmers Association  
Aquaculture Association of Queensland  
Queensland Oyster Growers Association Inc  
Australian Prawn Farmers Association  
Queensland Aquaculture Industries Federation

#### OTHER

Australian Aquaculture Portal

### HORTICULTURE AND CROPPING

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au) > Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
[www.daff.gov.au](http://www.daff.gov.au)  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)

#### INDUSTRY BODIES

Western Cape Chamber of Commerce  
Cooktown Chamber of Commerce  
Cairns Chamber of Commerce

### TIMBER AND AGRIFORESTRY

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au) > Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries Forestry  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

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Department of Environment and Resource Management  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)  
Environment Protection Agency /Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service  
[www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au)  
Department of Natural Resources and Water  
[www.nrw.qld.gov.au](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au)  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
[www.daff.gov.au/forestry](http://www.daff.gov.au/forestry)  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)  
Forestry Plantations Queensland  
[www.fpq.qld.gov.au/](http://www.fpq.qld.gov.au/)

## INDUSTRY

### INDUSTRY BODIES

Timber Queensland  
[www.timberqueensland.com.au](http://www.timberqueensland.com.au)  
Australian Forest Growers  
[www.afg.asn.au](http://www.afg.asn.au)

### OTHER

Farm Forest Online: [www.farmforestline.com.au](http://www.farmforestline.com.au)  
Bio-fuel

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au)> Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)  
Department of Environment and Resource Management  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)  
Industry Bodies  
Bio-fuels Association of Australia  
[www.bio-fuelsassociation.com.au](http://www.bio-fuelsassociation.com.au)

### OTHER

Pacific Renewable Energy  
[www.pacificrenewableenergy.com.au](http://www.pacificrenewableenergy.com.au)  
Evergreen Fuels

## MINING AND EXTRACTION

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Interactive resource and tenure maps (updated daily)  
[http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/tenure\\_maps.cfm](http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/tenure_maps.cfm)  
Interactive Resource Data maps  
[www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/interactive\\_resource\\_data.cfm](http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/interactive_resource_data.cfm)

Investing in Queensland – a guide for mining and petroleum investors  
<http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/invest.cfm>  
Queensland Digital Exploration Reports System  
[http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/company\\_exploration\\_reports.cfm](http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/company_exploration_reports.cfm)  
Australian Geoscience Portal  
<http://www.geoscience.gov.au/>  
Australian Atlas of Minerals Resources, Mines and Processing Centres  
<http://www.australianminesatlas.gov.au/>  
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au)> Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)

### INDUSTRY BODIES

The Association of Mining & Exploration Companies (AMEC)  
[www.amec.org.au](http://www.amec.org.au)  
Queensland Mining Industry Council

## TOURISM

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Tourism Queensland  
[www.tq.com.au](http://www.tq.com.au)  
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au)> Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)  
Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/sloj)  
Industry Bodies  
Queensland Tourism Industry Council  
[www.qtic.com.au](http://www.qtic.com.au)  
Tropical Tourism North Queensland  
[www.tropicalaustralia.com.au](http://www.tropicalaustralia.com.au)  
The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation  
[www.recfish.com.au](http://www.recfish.com.au)

## RETAIL AND SERVICES

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
[www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au)> Information About > Queensland Industries  
Department of Primary Industries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

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Smart Licence  
[www.business.qld.gov.au/slol](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/slol)

**INDUSTRY BODIES**

Advance Cairns  
[www.advancecairns.com](http://www.advancecairns.com)  
Cairns Chamber of Commerce  
[www.cairnschamber.com.au](http://www.cairnschamber.com.au)  
Western Cape Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 520  
WEIPA QLD 4874  
Phone: 07 4069 7877 Fax: 07 4069 7909  
Cooktown Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 960  
COOKTOWN QLD 4895  
Phone: 07 4069 5381 Fax: 4069 5423  
[cooktowntourism@fni.aunz.com](mailto:cooktowntourism@fni.aunz.com)  
Coen and District Chamber of Commerce  
C/- Post Office  
COEN QLD 4871  
Phone: 07 4060 1144 Fax: 07 4060 1157

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Hopevale Aboriginal Council  
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C/- Post Office  
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[www.capeyorkpartnerships.com](http://www.capeyorkpartnerships.com)  
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Weipa Port



## APPENDIX 1

### QUARANTINE ISSUES

The range and number of biological pests close to our northern border that could ravage Australia's primary industry and threaten health and wellbeing are extraordinarily high. AQIS has developed the North Australia Quarantine Strategy because of the unique quarantine conditions presented in northern Australia.

It beholds governments to ensure an ongoing and vigilant surveillance of regions such as Cape York Peninsula. This requires maintaining an on-ground presence and a concerted effort and strategy to reduce/control feral pests such as pigs.

Some threats are outlined below.

**Rabies:** Rabies is now at Australia's front door, arriving in the island of Flores in 1997 and only 300Km from Australia's mainland. If the disease spreads to Papua there will be little to prevent its transfer to the Torres Strait and into Cape York. Rabies is difficult to eliminate in any circumstance but authorities are concerned that with the huge feral populations of pigs and dogs in Cape York, eradication would be doubly difficult. The disease, normally transmitted by a bite, can affect any warm blooded animal which will then attack anything in its sight. The threat to the Australia's population (and man's best friend), economy and way of life is obvious.

**Foot and Mouth:** Foot and mouth (FMD) disease remains the greatest single threat to Australian livestock industries. FMD is a highly contagious disease of livestock, such as cattle, sheep, pigs and goats (ruminants). According to the Australian Productivity Commission, national economic losses would be in the order of \$4 million a day should an outbreak occur. For more than 130 years Australia has been free of foot-and-mouth disease, due to being an island and strict quarantine, and that status alone is worth millions of dollars to the Australia. An outbreak of FMD would devastate the nation's livestock industries and cost billions of dollars to eradicate and to regain our trading status. Australia has approximately 100 markets worldwide, trades around \$120 million a week in beef and sheep meats and loss of those markets would be catastrophic. While the US Department of Agriculture lists Papua New Guinea as being free of the disease, immediate neighbours such as Indonesia and Malaysia are not listed. A five-year \$5 million research program, funded by Australia's livestock industries and the Federal Government, has been instigated to address weaknesses in Australia's readiness to control the disease.

**Swine fever:** Classical Swine Fever (CSF) is present in Europe, eastern and central Africa, the Indian subcontinent, China, East and Southeast Asia, Central America and most of South America. Close to Australia's north coast, CSF first occurred in Sumatra in 1994 and gradually spread across the Indonesian archipelago, reaching Papua, on the island of New Guinea, in 2004. CSF is highly contagious and spreads rapidly through direct contact of infected pigs with susceptible pigs, but the virus can also be transmitted on contaminated pens, pig crates, trucks or clothing. A CSF outbreak would have serious consequences for Australia's domestic and export production of pig-meat, since outbreaks can only be controlled by slaughter, by strict controls on the movement of pigs and equipment and by long-term vaccination programs.

If the disease entered Australia, it could spread quickly and wipe out large sections of our pig industry. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry urges people to keep a watch on wild pigs, notify Quarantine immediately if concerned about an animal's health and to report foreign boats on the beach or food washed up on the shore.

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If Classical Swine Fever escaped into Australia's wild pig population, it could spread into the domestic pig population, resulting in disease and death for many animals and the loss of millions of dollars for the pork industry.

**The Varroa Mite, another biological threat:** the 'foot and mouth' disease of the beekeeping industry is also on Australia's doorstep. The Varroa Mite is a major bee parasite and Australia is encircled by nations hosting the pest, including Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Bees are involved in food production in Australia valued between four and six billion dollars a year.

**Mosquitoes:** Native to South-East Asia, the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*) is a major vector for chikungunya and dengue viruses and is cold tolerant. Mainland Australia has so far escaped colonisation, but authorities have intercepted at least 28 incursions in the last 11 years. It will be an ongoing battle, as the species is now well established in Papua New Guinea and the Torres Strait islands, with populations found on at least 10 of the 17 inhabited islands.

A major public health problem would be created if it successfully colonised the more populated southern regions such as Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne.

In addition to the above the AQIS document 'Quarantine Protects Cape York' lists a range of pests including Banana Skipper Butterfly, Melon Fly, Papaya Fruit Fly, Red Banded Mango Caterpillar, Mango Pulp Weevil, Sugar Cane Borer, Screw Worm Fly, Asian Honey Bee, Siam Weed Mite a minute, Fringed Spider Flower, Sugarcane Smut, Citrus canker, Spiked pepper, Black Sigatoka and Limnocharis.



Feral Pigs in Western Cape York - Photo courtesy of Kerry Trapnell.



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