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Land Clearing Reaches Crisis Point

New figures released yesterday show there is an environmental crisis occurring in Queensland.

The State Government has revealed that over 1 million hectares of bushland was destroyed in the State between 1999 and 2001 – an increase on the previous two year period.

“What is needed immediately is a 6 months moratorium on the issuing of any further clearing permits” said Rob Palmer from the Wilderness Society, “The lack of action by the Queensland Government is a clear indication they have not taken this issue seriously. A joint funding package from the State and Federal Governments is required to end land clearing in Queensland”

“The Premier is calling those landholders who have illegally cleared 61,000Ha of bush ‘cowboys’ – however his government has sanctioned the clearing over 1 million ha of native bush – so who is the cowboy?” continued Mr Palmer.

“Far North Queensland is not immune to the clearing crisis” said Cairns and Far North Environment Centre (CAFNEC) coordinator John Rainbird. “we are witnessing a progressive demise of a range of critical habitats and vegetation types – over 80% of our lowland forest systems have been cleared and thousands of hectares have been cleared on the Tablelands over the past two years. In the process we are losing untold numbers of birds, mammals and other animals.”

“Scientific experts have repeatedly demonstrated that land clearing is the prime cause of salinity and the number one threat to native wildlife. On top of that it is uneconomic, poor farm management” said Mr Rainbird.

We cannot let this wholesale destruction of Australia’s landscape continue.” concluded Mr Rainbird.

CAFNEC will be launching its own landclearing campaign on March 15 to make the people of FNQ more aware of this crisis, and to ensure our priceless environmental assets are not destroyed by this unsustainable and devastating practice.

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For further Comment Contact:

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