



MEDIA RELEASE

Far North's prosperity depends on healthy environment

11 November 2013

Over 30 representatives from a range local, state and national environment groups met in Cairns on Saturday to discuss a sustainable future for far north Queensland. Hosted by the Cairns and Far North Environment Centre (CAFNEC), the roundtable identified our collective capacity to strengthen the movement's response to mounting pressures threatening our unrivalled natural assets and quality of life.

The protection of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, the conservation of iconic species such as turtles, cassowaries, frogs and flying foxes and ongoing implementation of sustainability performance in our urban environment are paramount to a broad constituency across our community. Sustainability and environmental protection are the foundation of a reliable economy for our region. Negligence towards the environment will have a profound impact on our social and economic wellbeing.

"Throughout the region we will be working together to better protect the beautiful natural environment we are lucky enough to have in the far north and to encourage stronger environmental and social outcomes," said event organiser and CAFNEC coordinator Anna McGuire.

"We are seeing an assault on environmental protection laws in Queensland and a disregard for science at the local level on issues such as flying-fox dispersals. We have serious concerns for the future of biodiversity in our region and our state."

"Many of the groups share concerns about the weakening of environmental protection laws through the proposed handover of federal environmental assessment powers to state governments."

"Business as usual is not an option if we want a healthy reef and if we want species like the cassowary to survive into the future. Only sound environmental stewardship will ensure these amazing places and species are passed on to future generations."

As CAFNEC President Andrew Picone states, "The movement's resolve to lead community-driven action to protect the unique and spectacular natural environment of the far north has never been stronger."

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