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WORLD HERITAGE IS OUR PROMISE TO THE FUTURE

13 September 2024

Narelle Crichton
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Rainforest Conservation Foundation
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To whom it may concern.

RE: Support for Rainforest Conservation Foundation's proposed methodology for scaling up restoration

The Authority is pleased to support the Rainforest Conservation Foundation (the Foundation) in its endeavour to trial new and innovative restoration methods, to increase the scale of reforestation that will bolster the resilience and vitality of Wet Tropics landscapes and wildlife in the face of climate change.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) is established under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and is responsible for protecting and managing the environment, biodiversity, and heritage values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area).

The Authority is deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. We are already seeing serious and escalating impacts on the Areas biodiversity from climate change, and which if not addressed, will lead to the degradation and possible extinction of many endemic species and ecosystems that exist only in the Area. In response, the Authority has developed and is delivering a climate adaptation plan. Restoration of climate refugia, corridors and expansion of habitat – both within and outside existing protected area boundaries - is a core component of the adaption plan. To support this work, the Authority has helped establish a Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance – a network for almost 30 members who share the goal of scaling up restoration in response to climate change.

The challenges to achieving scaled up restoration in the region are many. One of the significant barriers is costs. Traditional rainforest restoration methods involve costly multi species tube stock planting involving extensive site preparation and maintenance. There is a compelling need to identify other restoration methods that are both effective and reduce costs.

The Authority understands that the Foundation has developed a new innovative methodology that will enable restoration at scale and increase revenue opportunities through the carbon and other markets. It combines traditional restoration techniques with emerging technology and science-based approaches. The proposed methodology strongly aligns with the Authority's commitment to support groups that seek solutions for overcoming the current barriers to undertaking large scale forest restoration.

We wish the Foundation every success in testing this new innovative approach to scale up restoration.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Sean McNamara, Senior Scientist – Climate Initiatives at sean.mcnamara@wtma.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Scott Buchanan
Executive Director