

For Immediate Release

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Unlocking the rainforest canopy

The Daintree rainforest's canopy crane facility will open its doors on Monday, 19 September to allow local researchers, land managers and community groups a rare glimpse of the life of canopy scientists based at the Cape Tribulation research station.

Nestled within the Wet Tropics rainforests, the Australian Canopy Crane is one of only four tropical rainforest cranes in the world. Managed by Cairns' Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), the crane has opened up the rainforest canopy to exploration by researchers and is a unique national facility.

"The canopy crane allows us to characterise the overall biodiversity of Australia's tropical rainforests," says Professor Roger Kitching of Griffith University, who leads a team of researchers studying the ecological processes of the Daintree rainforest. "The facility is soon to be designated a 'Whole Forest Observatory' as part of a global network funded by the United Nations Environment Programme. This will involve our canopy crane in a number of new collaborative research projects."

The day's events will showcase innovative research that is helping researchers to better understand how the canopy functions, its contribution to biodiversity and climate change, and its ability to recover from severe cyclone damage. Participants will also take part in tours of the rainforest canopy in a specially made gondola suspended from the 48 metre tall Liebherr construction tower crane.

Interested members of the community may contact Sarah Boulter of Griffith University for further information on 3735 7962.

