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PROJECT 7.4

Aboriginal training for capacity-building

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The Rainforest CRC maintains a research partnership involving Aboriginal groups, government agencies, Universities and the tourism industry. In keeping with this partnership, the rainforest CRC has made a commitment to provide opportunities for Aboriginal involvement in CRC programs and projects. Program 7, 'Collaboration and Capacity building' reflects this commitment which is highlighted in one of its general objectives; "To Achieve Aboriginal participation in all Rainforest CRC research programs". In order to work collaboratively with Indigenous people in scientific research, it is necessary to build on the expertise of Aboriginal people, extend their skills base and promote the continued learning of science and research methods while drawing on, and recognising the values of Traditional knowledge.

This project forms part of the interface between western and Indigenous science at the on-ground research level, with a focus on training in field research skills and knowledge. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) - Centre for Tropical Restoration (CTR) has already established an Indigenous training program which provides cross-cultural awareness training to government and non-government departments, school-based Indigenous awareness visits, Indigenous traineeships and training in ecological restoration workshops which are closely linked to the TAFE 'Caring for Country' program.

This facility, through TAFE, provides accredited training for Indigenous people in forest restoration techniques. Through an expansion of CTR's current Indigenous program, this project in collaboration with TAFE, QPWS-CTR, CRC and Rainforest Aboriginals of the Wet Tropics, will provide a means by which Aboriginal people are able to develop field research skills and knowledge relevant to management of, and employment within, their own traditional lands.

Increasing Aboriginal involvement in, and understanding of, research that is carried out on their land supports an enhanced understanding between the Indigenous and scientific community and offers opportunity for Indigenous people to utilise additional skills for terrestrial Natural Resource Management within Indigenous Communities.