



Climate Change and FNQ

<p><u>The Problem</u></p>	<p>Failure is not an option. Cairns has been identified as one of the most vulnerable cities on the Australian mainland to the impacts of climate change, and stands to be greatly impacted by sea level rise and increased frequency and intensity of cyclones. Many leading scientists have predicted large-scale species extinctions and biodiversity loss in the Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef. Furthermore, climate-related changes in travel habits combined with this long-term damage to our natural icons are likely to result in huge losses to the region's main industries of tourism and development.</p>
<p><u>The Solution</u></p>	<p>CAFNEC will work to strengthen the regional call for action on climate change by all sectors of the community and ensure this message is translated into effective advocacy that leads to real policy shifts.</p> <p>The world is already starting to experience the effects of climate change. CAFNEC is concerned that the levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are already above safe levels and the current stance of the Federal Government both through its Renewable Energy Targets and the current version of its Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) will not effectively reduce carbon pollution to safe levels. We have therefore joined a coalition of environment organisations who have called on the Federal Government to commit Australia to a new approach to tackle climate change. We are seeking stronger emission reduction targets for Australia and significant investment in renewable energy industries and adaptation measures.</p> <p>We also support a Plan B of five priority areas where we could achieve significant pollution reduction in the next few years and make deep cuts in emissions over the next decade. We believe the Plan B agenda will provide tens of thousands of green jobs based on saving energy; enable a fast transition away from coal and towards renewable energy; and protect precious native forests with their rich biodiversity, and establish carbon sinks.</p>
<p><u>Opportunity</u></p>	<p>Community and business support for strong regional actions on climate change is rapidly building as the implications for our key industries become clearer. This business support for action represents an unprecedented opportunity for building a new voice for change and for securing significant new investment in reshaping our future as a key regional economic hub for the 21st century. Your investment in strengthening this voice can help deliver these necessary environmental and energy policy outcomes</p> <p>FNQ has two nationally and internationally recognised World Heritage Areas which will be directly affected by climate change. Much of it also falls into the marginal Federal seat of Leichhardt. Therefore strong public support for greater action on climate change from North Queensland is likely to make a significant difference to Federal Government decisions in the wake of the Copenhagen Conference and in the lead up to the next Federal election in 2010.</p>



A Climate Change Project Officer Position

With funds raised from this appeal CAFNEC will employ a **Climate Change Project Officer**. The Project Officer will be responsible for coordinating a public campaign in Far North Queensland in the wake of Copenhagen and the lead up to the Federal Election in 2010, and supporting climate change awareness, adaptation and education projects in the region.

Focus will be placed on the following key areas for action.

1. Identifying and building strong working relationships with the business, tourism, industry, research and government sectors.
2. Developing strong regional support and community action pre- and post-Copenhagen conference and leading up to the Federal Election, with activities including the Walk Against Warming in December 2009.
3. Communicating regional climate change concerns at the national level through political lobbying and media attention.

Key Outcomes

A Far North Queensland better placed to face the 21st century through:

1. **A stronger voice in the national climate change and energy policy debate**
2. **Greater investment in regional solutions to the threats posed by climate change**