



POLICY PRIORITY

LAND TENURE AND LEASE REFORM

PROPONENTS:	Advance Cairns / RDA FNQTS
COUNCILS:	All Tropical North Queensland
STATE ELECTORATES:	Cairns / Barron River / Cook / Hill
FEDERAL ELECTORATES:	Leichhardt / Kennedy


ISSUE

Land tenure issues in Northern Australia are hindering investment.

RECOMMENDATION

The region’s priorities for tenure reform to facilitate a significant increase in investment are:

- **Establish an Office of the Coordinator General for Northern Queensland to effectively coordinate strategic regional land use planning and major development approval, supported by associated tenure resolution efforts.**
- **Enhance water planning and allocation by developing stronger water equity principles, supply options and area-based approaches to vegetation management in the Gilbert and Mitchell catchments, and further development of the Cape York Water Resources Plan and planning for strategic water use in the Lakeland sub-region.**
- **Stronger coordinated support to improve the capacity of Indigenous land holding entities to plan the future of their estates and negotiate tenure-based issues enabling financing and investment attraction to achieve their development aspirations.**
- **Review the currently prohibitive costs for Indigenous land holding entities and third parties to determine Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA).**
- **Continued State efforts in leasehold reform to progress freeholding in strategic locations and to increase the flexibility needed to enhance diversification in the pastoral lease estate.**



CURRENT FOCUS

Establishment of an Office of the Coordinator General to coordinate regional land use planning and major development approval, enhanced water planning and allocation, capacity raising of Indigenous land holding entities, review of costs to determine ILUA and leasehold reform to progress freeholding in strategic locations and to increase diversification in the pastoral lease estate.

OVERVIEW

A recent James Cook University (JCU) and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) report into land tenure issues in Northern Australia identified the key actions required to ensure land tenure arrangements facilitate rather than hinder investment.

Importantly, the report identified that Indigenous land interests cover some 94% of Northern Australia, however there are limited arrangements to support Traditional Owners in leading development opportunities within these various tenures.

The report also recognised that existing Tropical North Queensland pastoralists and cattle farmers need more support to increase their tenure security and extend or roll over their existing leases to allow them to capitalise on the growth of export markets.

Finally, the report recognised that conflict over land use at regional scale is often a higher order issue facing development than underlying tenure issues per se.



PROJECT LOCATION

Tropical North Queensland (TNQ) and Torres Strait RDA Region

CONTACT

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Advance Cairns' Infrastructure and Policy Priorities are developed in collaboration with leading regional advocates. They are regularly reviewed and updated.

