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**Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP**

Premier and Minister for the Arts  
Level 15, Executive Building,  
100 George Street,  
BRISBANE. QLD. 4000

By email: [thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au](mailto:thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au)

Dear Premier,

**Re: Daintree National Park – Infrastructure decline and lack of funding for environmental management**

The Douglas Shire Sustainability Group (DSSG) represents residents of the Douglas Shire on environmental sustainability matters. The organisation has existed for ten years and has over 70 members.

DSSG members are staunch advocates and activists in regard to the protection of the Daintree Rainforest.

The Daintree Rainforest is widely recognised as iconic, the “Jewel in the Crown” for local, regional and national tourism. The area north of the Daintree River receives over 500,000 visitors per year and is a major draw card for tourism, our main industry.

Since the funding packages in the 1990’s (Daintree Rescue) and State Government funding for buyback of conservation land in 2006, funding to the area had diminished significantly from both State and Federal Governments. National Parks claim underfunding and lack of resources for their inability to provide & maintain infrastructure in the area north of the Daintree River.

Over the past few years lack of maintenance, removal of infrastructure and a failure to replace damaged infrastructure which, if allowed to continue unabated, will negatively affect the visitor experience in the Daintree and will lead to a corresponding decrease in environmental, economic and social benefit to the region. Queensland Parks and Wildlife

Services (QPWS) have demonstrated a lack of communication (probably due to lack of funding) with local stakeholders with regards to the management of infrastructure north of the Daintree River.

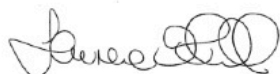
In recent years the following infrastructure has been negatively impacted as follows:

- Public toilets at the Marrdja Boardwalk were destroyed as a result of fire damage in 2006. These toilets were never replaced.
- QPWS removed the BBQ's from the picnic area at Dubuji, Cape Tribulation. This was several years ago. 'Removed for Refurbishment' signs were placed at the site of each BBQ at the time but they have never been replaced.
- The Public Toilets located at Cow Bay Beach were demolished by QWPS in 2015 with no warning or public notification because there was some maintenance required to the tanks and the floor. There are no plans to replace this infrastructure.
- Public Toilets at Kulki-Cape Tribulation Beach were vandalised on New Year's Eve, 2014. There is still no sign of replacement toilets 5 months later.
- Jindalba Boardwalk is in poor condition with most bridges sign posted warning that only ten persons should be on the bridge at any one time.
- In July 2014 QWPS invited a small selection of tour operators (local community members and accommodation business owners were not included) to a meeting regarding the future of the Dubuji Boardwalk at which they proposed to reduce the boardwalk due to lack of funding. QWPS advised that there would be public consultation prior to finalisation of plans. After nearly a year QPWS have finally advised that 950m of the 1.2km interpretive boardwalk is to be removed with works to start in July 2015 and no further public consultation planned.

The securing of funding for the provision and maintenance of visitor infrastructure should be a priority and we need a coordinated approach from Local, State, Federal and Private Sector stakeholders to resource, maintain, manage and improve on current infrastructure. The Douglas Shire Council is currently funding the Daintree Gateway Project, but the State and Federal Governments MUST provide adequate funding for the very asset to which the gateway leads. It is vitally important that the State Government fund National Parks so that facilities can be retained, maintained and replaced. It is simply not good enough to allow facilities like this in an iconic area to decay, and then be removed.

With the recent formation of the joint Daintree Management Group which aims to involve all agencies, including Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Jabalbina, Terrain NRM as well as business, tourism and community representatives, I ask the State Government, as a matter of urgency, to expedite funding for the immediate replacement of vital tourism infrastructure in the National Park north of the Daintree River and to assist in formulating short, medium and long term strategies and funding for the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the Daintree Rainforest.

Yours Sincerely,



Laurene Hull

Secretary

C.C'd

**Hon Jackie Trad MP**- Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade

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