



Marine  
and Coastal

National Environmental Science Program

## PROJECT 3.1

### Planning for ecologically sustainable development in northern Australia

#### The challenge

The future prosperity of northern Australia's communities depends upon the sustainable expansion of current industries such as agriculture, grazing, mining, energy and tourism. It also depends on new and innovative approaches to economic development.

Better outcomes for people, the environment and the economy are achieved only by careful planning, the support of a comprehensive knowledge-base, and through greater partnerships between industry, the community, traditional owners and governments.

The research team, during NESP Project 1.32, and other reviews, have concluded that development planning has not always been done well, and that there are many obstacles to best-practice.

Guided by these previous findings, this project will undertake a range of complementary and integrated approaches to address the identified barriers.

## The approach

Project 3.1 will achieve this by: establishing a strong regional planning network; analysing and informing new regional planning efforts; and, ensuring quality practice from the outset. Integral, will be:

- Indigenous, industry and general community inclusion;
- the incorporation of environmental and social sciences;
- knowledge sharing events; and
- targeted capacity building.

The work will be focussed through ‘sentinel’ case studies to obtain learnings for application in future planning.

## Expected outcomes

- Approved approaches to ecologically sustainable development.
- Best-practice regional planning supported and refined.
- Prosperous communities and First Nations supported by well-planned, sustainable economic enterprises.

## Project leader

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*FRONT: Allan Dale speaks at a conference.  
BACK: (Top) Weipa Mission River bridge by Suzanne Long. (Middle) Poor coastal planning resulted in a failed Port Hinchinbrook resort that was wiped out by Cyclone Yasi by Suzanne Long. (Bottom) Cairns City and Trinity Inlet.*



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