



THE HON WARREN ENTSCH MP

Federal Member for Leichhardt

27/02/2025

Entsch Exposes Sham Conservation Fundraising: “Daintree Not at Risk”

Federal Member for Leichhardt, Warren Entsch, has slammed the Gondwana Rainforest Trust for what he calls blatant deception, accusing the organisation of misleading donors by falsely claiming that land in the Daintree Rainforest is at risk of development.

At the centre of the controversy is Lot 92 Cape Tribulation Road, a property the group is actively fundraising for under the pretence that it must be “saved” from destruction. However, official advice from Douglas Shire Council has confirmed that the site is not at risk of development under any circumstances.

“The claims being made by Gondwana Rainforest Trust are completely false,” Mr Entsch said. “They are telling donors that this land is under imminent threat of clearing and development, when in reality, it is zoned for conservation and cannot be built on, cleared, or developed in any way.”

Council Confirms: No Development Possible

In written advice provided to Mr Entsch’s office, Douglas Shire Council has stated that Lot 92 is within a protected conservation zone and has no development rights. The land falls within Precinct 1 – General Conservation, meaning that unless there is previous lawful clearing on the site—which there is not, based on historic aerial imagery—it cannot be lawfully developed or altered.

“This isn’t speculation. The local government planning authority has confirmed in writing that this land cannot and will not be developed. Yet Gondwana is still running a public misinformation campaign—claiming that Lot 92 is zoned for development—to con well-meaning donors into thinking they’re ‘saving’ something that was never in danger in the first place,” Mr Entsch said.

False Advertising and Potential Fraud

The Gondwana Rainforest Trust is currently running 24 separate advertisements on social media platforms, soliciting donations with misleading claims that the Daintree Rainforest is under threat. These advertisements use sensationalised imagery and even feature Sir David Attenborough, despite no evidence that he has endorsed their campaign.

Mr Entsch says this raises serious legal and ethical concerns.

“This is nothing short of fraudulent. Under Section 408C of the Queensland Criminal Code, it is illegal to dishonestly obtain a benefit or advantage through deception,” he said.

False advertising in charity fundraising is also unlawful, and Mr Entsch is now calling for the appropriate authorities to investigate.

Communities Under Siege by Fake Environmentalists

Mr Entsch, a long-time advocate for balanced environmental conservation that respects both the land and the people who live there, says groups like Gondwana Rainforest Trust do not engage with local communities but instead operate as ideological activists.

“For decades, we have seen outsider groups parachute into the Daintree and dictate to the locals as if they don’t belong there,” he said. “This is yet another example of a group profiting off deception while undermining the very people who actually live in and care for this environment.”

Entsch to Meet with Daintree Locals Next Week

These developments come as Mr Entsch prepares to visit the Daintree early next week to meet with local residents and discuss ongoing conservation efforts.

“I will be up there meeting with the community, hearing their concerns, and standing with them against these deceptive fundraising tactics. The people who live in the Daintree deserve to be respected—not vilified by self-serving activist groups,” he said.

“It is deeply disturbing that organisations like this keep springing up in the area. I suspect that their aim is to land bank solely for their own financial benefit. They weaponise these emotional claims of rainforest destruction—which couldn’t be further from the truth and actually only serves to hurt the reputation of the Daintree community,”

“I honestly would not be surprised if one day these organisations suddenly became the future developers of some of these sites that they’ve already acquired,” he said.

Mr Entsch is urging the ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission) and consumer protection authorities to investigate whether the Gondwana Rainforest Trust is in breach of their obligations as a charity.

“According to ACNC financial records the Gondwana Rainforest Trust is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars annually between fundraising activities, communications and advocacy. These efforts are not just within Australia, they are soliciting donations from overseas as well,”

“If you’ve donated to this campaign believing this land was under threat, you’ve been misled. I suggest you ask for your money back.”

ENDS

MEDIA CONTACT

Office of Warren Entsch MP - Samuel Batt (07 4051 2220) | Samuel.Batt@aph.gov.au



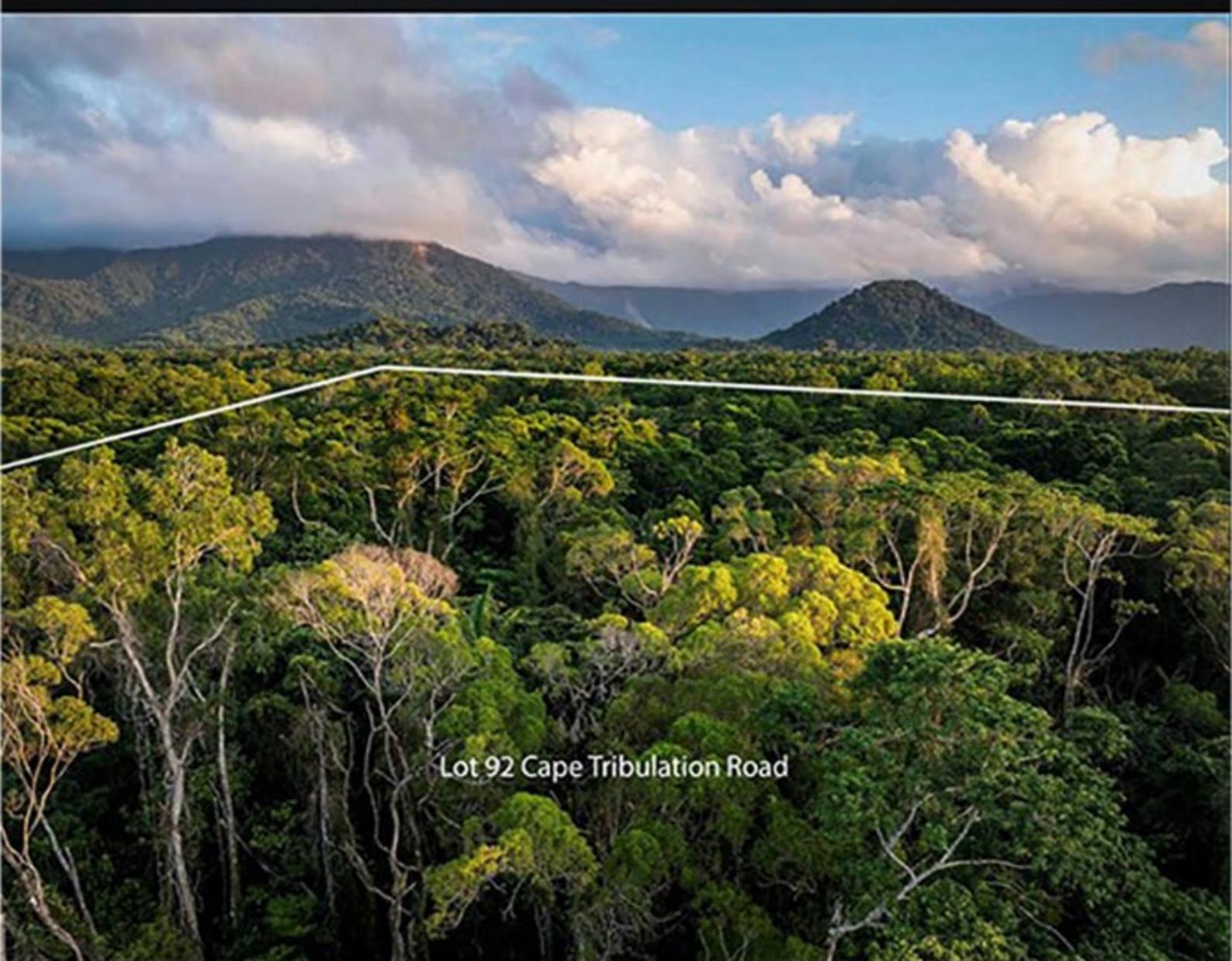
You can [Save the Daintree Rainforest](#). When Lot 92 Cape Tribulation Road was offered for sale by a real estate agent we acted quickly and raised the funds for a deposit. Now we have the option to buy this 8.9 hectare freehold property and ensure it's protected forever. Every \$5 you donate will purchase and protect 1 sqm of Lot 92 Cape Tribulation Road at Cow Bay. Please see more information and donate now at <https://www.savethedaintree.org/lot-92-cape-tribulation-road>

The beautiful rainforest on Lot 92 Cape Tribulation Road deserves the same level of protection as the Daintree National Park that borders it, **but this freehold property is currently zoned for rural residential development by the Douglas Shire Council.**

For just \$5 a square metre, you can help us purchase and protect this incredibly important piece of the Daintree Lowland Rainforest.

#SaveTheDaintree #DaintreeBuyBack #daintreerainforest

@followers



158

11 comments 19 shares

Like

Comment

Send

Share

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

Planning Scheme Zone Map

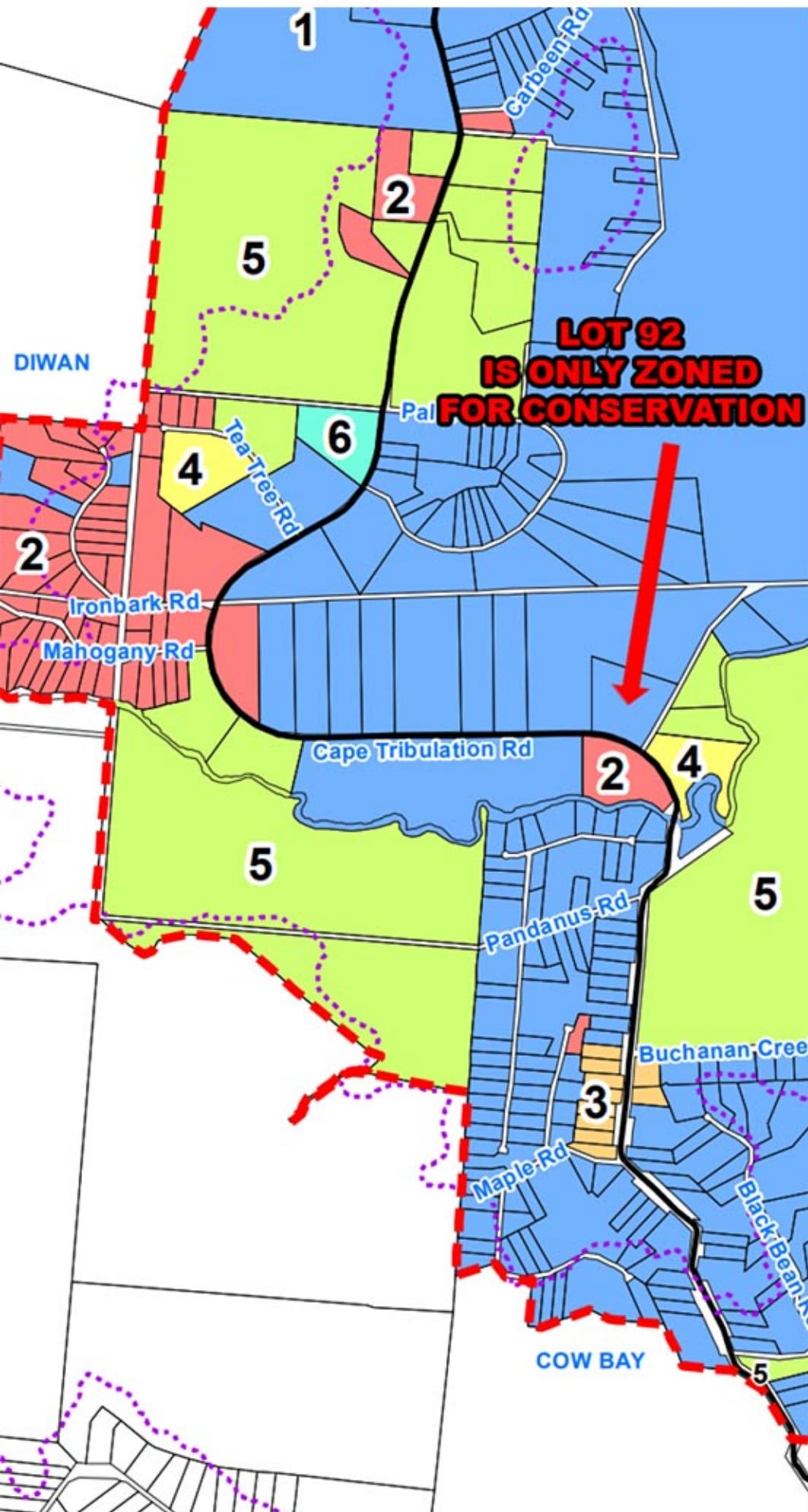
Zones:

Low Density Residential	Environmental Management
Low-medium Density Residential	Conservation
Medium Density Residential	Industry
Tourist Accommodation	Tourism
Centre	Community Facilities
Recreation and Open Space	Rural

Low Density Residential	Environmental Management
Low-medium Density Residential	Conservation
Medium Density Residential	Industry
Tourist Accommodation	Tourism
Centre	Community Facilities
Recreation and Open Space	Rural

Rural Residential	Rural
Recreation and Open Space	Special Purpose





**Cape Tribulation /
Daintree Coast
Local Plan Precincts
(Diwan / Cow Bay Area)**

Local Plan Precincts:

- Local Plan Boundary (Red dashed line)
- Major Road Connections (Black arrows)
- 60 metre contour (Purple dotted lines)
- Precinct 1 - General Conservation
- Precinct 2 - Low Impact Residential
- Precinct 3 - Low Impact Commercial
- Precinct 4 - Low Impact Community Purpose
- Precinct 5 - Low Impact Rural Production and Tourism Enterprise
- Precinct 6 - Low Impact Tourism Accommodation

From: Daniel Lamond <daniel.lamond@douglas.qld.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 27 February 2025 1:53 PM

To: Batt, Samuel (W. Entsch, MP) <Samuel.Batt@aph.gov.au>

Subject: L92 on RP738933 Cape Tribulation Road

Hi Sam,

Thanks for your enquiry regarding land use rights and status of Lot 92 on Cape Tribulation Road.

The current planning scheme (2018 Douglas Shire Planning Scheme) zones this land within the Conservation zone.

The planning scheme also includes 'local plan' precincts which trump the zoning of land and give or restrict land use rights.

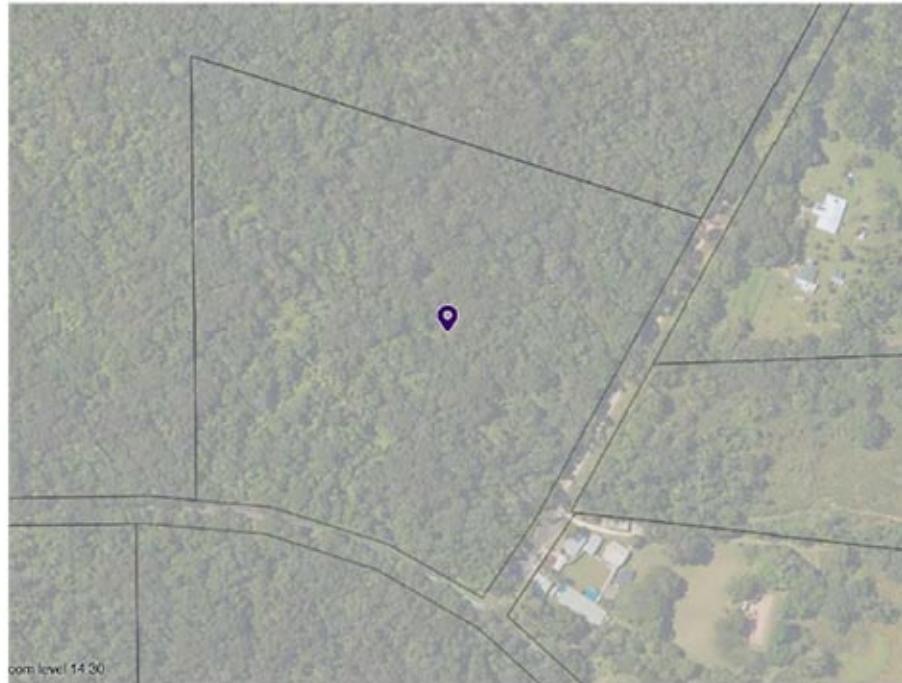
Lot 92 is within Precinct 1- 'General Conservation'. This means that if there is no lawfully established and maintained clearing on the site, then it has no land use rights and cannot be cleared or developed. So if an applicant submitted a development application for a land use, they would have to provide evidence of lawful clearing on the site, and demonstrate that the clearing has been maintained, as part of the Development Application documentation. This is fairly easy to assess because we have access to historic and current aerial imagery.

Historic imagery on the qld governments Qimager website shows no clearing in the last decade from what I can see.

See the local plan mapping from the planning scheme here: <https://douglas.qld.gov.au/download/planning-scheme/LPM-002-Diwan-Cow-Bay-Local-Plan-Precincts-Map.pdf>

I can provide the sections from the planning scheme which set this framework out if necessary.

See imagery below of the site with no clearings:



Essentially this site is not at risk of development.

Kind regards,

Daniel Lamond | A/ Team Leader Planning

Environment & Planning

P +61 7 4099 9456 | W douglas.qld.gov.au



Launched January 2025

24 ACTIVE ADVERTS RUNNING ACROSS 2 FACEBOOK PAGES

Active

Library ID: 543969015337045

Started running on Jan 23, 2025

Platforms

3 ads use this creative and text

[See summary details](#)

Gondwana Rainforest Trust
Sponsored

Millions of years in the making, an ancient rainforest can vanish in an instant.

A timeless masterpiece of nature, sculpted over millions of years, these forests are vanishing before our eyes.

The Daintree rainforest, where 'the rainforest meets the reef' in Australia's Wet Tropics continues to be threatened by development to this day.

You can make a difference. Every dollar you give transforms into a shield, guarding precious rainforest land that adjoins the Wet Tropics World Heritage area. These rainforests shelter a treasure trove of life, from the enchanting Bennett's Tree-kangaroo to the elusive Striped Possum, along with countless other vulnerable species.

Time is of the essence, and we must act quickly.

Your monthly donation is a lifeline for the extraordinary wilderness that calls the tropical rainforest home. Your support will protect not only the land but also the countless creatures in it.

What could be more profound than leaving a lasting legacy on this planet?

Your regular support isn't just an act of kindness; it's a promise to the future, a commitment to safeguarding the life that graces this ancient rainforest.

The rainforest and its inhabitants are counting on you. You can ensure this vital piece of natural heritage endures for generations to come.

EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE TRANSFORMS INTO A SHIELD GUARDING PRECIOUS RAINFOREST LAND THAT ADJOINS THE WET TROPICS WORLD HERITAGE AREA

SAVE THE DAINTREE

Active

Library ID: 1061628572438744

Started running on Jan 23, 2025

Platforms

3 ads use this creative and text

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WHAT CAN YOU FIND IN ONE OF THE DAINTREE RAINFOREST?

Active

Library ID: 2037545400021224

Started running on Jan 23, 2025

Platforms

3 ads use this creative and text

[See summary details](#)

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AND IT'S NOT THIS ONE.



Gondwana Rainforest Trust

24 ACTIVE ADVERTS RUNNING ACROSS 2 FACEBOOK PAGES

Ad 1 (Left)	Ad 2 (Right)
<p>Active</p> <p>Library ID: 652573690651195</p> <p>Started running on Jan 23, 2025</p> <p>Platforms </p> <p>3 ads use this creative and text</p> <p>See summary details</p> <p>Gondwana Rainforest Trust Sponsored</p> <p> Millions of years in the making, an ancient rainforest can vanish in an instant.</p> <p> A timeless masterpiece of nature, sculpted over millions of years, these forests are vanishing before our eyes.</p> <p> The Daintree rainforest, where 'the rainforest meets the reef' in Australia's Wet Tropics continues to be threatened by development to this day.</p> <p>You can make a difference. Every dollar you give transforms into a shield, guarding precious rainforest land that adjoins the Wet Tropics World Heritage area. These rainforests shelter a treasure trove of life, from the enchanting Bennett's Tree-kangaroo to the elusive Striped Possum, along with countless other vulnerable species.</p> <p> Time is of the essence, and we must act quickly.</p> <p> Your monthly donation is a lifeline for the extraordinary wilderness that calls the tropical rainforest home. Your support will protect not only the land but also the countless creatures in it.</p> <p> What could be more profound than leaving a lasting legacy on this planet?</p> <p> Your regular support isn't just an act of kindness; it's a promise to the future, a commitment to safeguarding the life that graces this ancient rainforest.</p> <p> The rainforest and its inhabitants are counting on you. You can ensure this vital piece of natural heritage endures for generations to come.</p>  <p>WHY DID THE CASSOWARY CROSS THE ROAD?</p>	<p>Active</p> <p>Library ID: 1020411826790352</p> <p>Started running on Jan 23, 2025</p> <p>Platforms </p> <p>3 ads use this creative and text</p> <p>See summary details</p> <p>Gondwana Rainforest Trust Sponsored</p> <p> Millions of years in the making, an ancient rainforest can vanish in an instant.</p> <p> A timeless masterpiece of nature, sculpted over millions of years, these forests are vanishing before our eyes.</p> <p> The Daintree rainforest, where 'the rainforest meets the reef' in Australia's Wet Tropics continues to be threatened by development to this day.</p> <p>You can make a difference. Every dollar you give transforms into a shield, guarding precious rainforest land that adjoins the Wet Tropics World Heritage area. These rainforests shelter a treasure trove of life, from the enchanting Bennett's Tree-kangaroo to the elusive Striped Possum, along with countless other vulnerable species.</p> <p> Time is of the essence, and we must act quickly.</p> <p> Your monthly donation is a lifeline for the extraordinary wilderness that calls the tropical rainforest home. Your support will protect not only the land but also the countless creatures in it.</p> <p> What could be more profound than leaving a lasting legacy on this planet?</p> <p> Your regular support isn't just an act of kindness; it's a promise to the future, a commitment to safeguarding the life that graces this ancient rainforest.</p> <p> The rainforest and its inhabitants are counting on you. You can ensure this vital piece of natural heritage endures for generations to come.</p>  <p>HELP SAVE THE WORLD'S OLDEST LIVING RAINFOREST</p>



Launched December 2024



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Library ID: 3341358305997353

Started running on Dec 8, 2024

Platforms

This ad has multiple versions

[See ad details](#)

Gondwana Rainforest Trust

Sponsored

Help protect Lot 463 Black Bean Road in the world's oldest continuously existing tropical rainforest, the Daintree. Donate now at <https://www.savethedaintree.org/lot-463-black-bean-road>

Located in Cow Bay, Far North Queensland, the Daintree Rainforest and the Wet Tropics has been described by David Attenborough as "the most extraordinary place on earth." A refuge for the world's most ancient flowering plants and unique and endangered animals, the Daintree has a lineage of more than 150 million years, making it the world's oldest continuously existing tropical rainforest.

Lot 463 Black Bean Road is a 1.4-hectare (14,000 square metre) property located in Cow Bay, adjacent to the World Heritage-listed Daintree National Park. This property is home to endangered species like the southern cassowary and the spectacled flying-fox, but it's the rainforest itself that is critically important.

We need to raise funds now so this property can be protected forever and managed for conservation. By protecting Lot 463 Black Bean Road, we ensure connectivity across the landscape, preventing fragmentation of the rainforest that is critical for biodiversity.

Fragmentation occurs when forests are divided into smaller blocks, creating what is known as the "edge effect." This has been shown to harm biodiversity by disrupting natural processes, such as the movement of species and the regeneration of native plants.

The vegetation on Lot 463 Black Bean Road is classed as Regional Ecosystem 7.11.1a and 7.3.10a, which are listed as "Of Concern" under the Queensland Vegetation Management Act 1999. It provides critical habitat for species like the endangered southern cassowary and the spectacled flying-fox. Managing this land for conservation will ensure their long-term survival.

For more information about this project, visit our FAQs <https://www.savethedaintree.org/daintree-buyback-faqs>

Make your tax-deductible donation now at <https://www.savethedaintree.org/lot-463-black-bean-road>

Gondwana Rainforest Trust is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

WWW.SAVETHEDAINTRIE.ORG
NOT AFFILIATED WITH META

Protect Lot 463 Black Bean Road: Help Create the Black Bean Rainforest Refuge

Help protect Lot 463 Black Bean Road in the Daintree Rainforest. Located in Cow Bay, Far North...

[Donate Now](#)

...

Library ID: 9068136709873380

Started running on Dec 8, 2024

Platforms

This ad has multiple versions

[See ad details](#)

Gondwana Rainforest Trust

Sponsored

Help protect Lot 92 Cape Tribulation Road in the Daintree Rainforest—your donation can prevent further development and protect this important piece of rainforest for future generations. **Lot 92 is home to endangered species like the southern cassowary and rare plants, but it's at risk of being developed.**

Every \$5 you donate protects one square metre of this 8.9-hectare property. We need to raise \$445,000 to secure, protect, and restore Lot 92, preventing further fragmentation of the Daintree lowland rainforest. By securing this property, we can maintain crucial habitat and connectivity for wildlife.

Donate today to protect the Daintree Rainforest and its unique fauna and flora. Your support is critical in ensuring this property is managed for conservation.

Make your tax-deductible donation now at <https://www.savethedaintree.org/lot-92-cape-tribulation-road>

For more information, visit <https://www.savethedaintree.org/daintree-buyback-faqs>

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WWW.SAVETHEDAINTRIE.ORG

NOT AFFILIATED WITH META

Secure Lot 92's Future in the Daintree Rainforest Today

Help protect the Daintree Rainforest: Your donation will secure vital habitat at Lot 92 Cape Tribulation...

[Donate Now](#)

...

Library ID: 1305457370382039

Started running on Dec 8, 2024

Platforms

This ad has multiple versions

[See ad details](#)

Gondwana Rainforest Trust

Sponsored

The Daintree Rainforest Needs You!

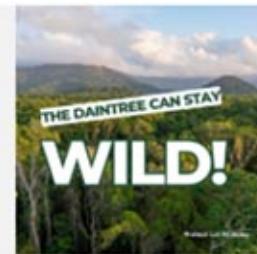
Lot 92 Cape Tribulation Road is a high-priority site for conservation, home to rare species and fragile ecosystems.

For just \$5 per square meter, your donation will help secure this vital rainforest property and support critical restoration efforts. **Together, we can protect Lot 92 and ensure it's never lost to development.**

Every square meter saved makes a lasting impact on this extraordinary natural wonder

Donate now to join us in safeguarding the Daintree for generations to come!

<https://www.savethedaintree.org/lot-92-cape-tribulation-road>



WWW.SAVETHEDAINTRIE.ORG
NOT AFFILIATED WITH META
Act Now to Save Lot 92 and Protect the Daintree's Future!
Help Save Lot 92 - Donate Today

[Donate Now](#)WWW.SAVETHEDAINTRIE.ORG
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Protect Lot 463 Black Bean Road: Help Create the Black Bean Rainforest Refuge

Help protect Lot 463 Black Bean Road in the Daintree Rainforest. Located in Cow Bay, Far North...

[Donate Now](#)



Launched November 2024

Active ...

Library ID: 1222941168814123

Started running on Nov 25, 2024

Platforms

This ad has multiple versions

[See ad details](#)

Active ...

Library ID: 547317274928366

Started running on Nov 15, 2024

Platforms

3 ads use this creative and text

[See summary details](#)

Gondwana Rainforest Trust
Sponsored

Help protect Lot 463 Black Bean Road in the world's oldest continuously existing tropical rainforest, the Daintree. Donate now at <https://www.savethedaintree.org/lot-463-black-bean-road>

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Fragmentation occurs when forests are divided into smaller blocks, creating what is known as the "edge effect." This has been shown to harm biodiversity by disrupting natural processes, such as the movement of species and the regeneration of native plants.

The vegetation on Lot 463 Black Bean Road is classed as Regional Ecosystem 7.11.1a and 7.3.10a, which are listed as "Of Concern" under the Queensland Vegetation Management Act 1999. It provides critical habitat for species like the endangered southern cassowary and the spectacled flying-fox. Managing this land for conservation will ensure their long-term survival.

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Save the Daintree Rainforest

Launched January 2025

24 ACTIVE ADVERTS RUNNING ACROSS 2 FACEBOOK PAGES

Active ...

Library ID: 2487758794899106
Started running on Jan 19, 2025
Platforms [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#)
Categories [Environment](#)
Estimated audience size: >1M [1](#)
Amount spent (AUD): A\$1.5K - A\$2K [1](#)
Impressions: 300K - 350K [1](#)

[See ad details](#)

Save the Daintree Rainforest
Sponsored • Paid for by Gondwana Rainforest Trust

Unapproved clearing and settlement is destroying critical rainforest habitat in the Daintree Rainforest. We're calling on Douglas Shire Council to enforce its local planning laws to protect the Daintree Lowland Rainforest. This ancient rainforest is home to endangered species, including the Southern Cassowary, and requires immediate action to preserve its biodiversity. Join us in urging the Council to enforce existing planning laws and prevent further unapproved clearing.



[Sign the petition!](#) [Sign up](#)

Active ...

Library ID: 939497578161781
Started running on Jan 19, 2025
Platforms [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#)
Categories [Environment](#)
Estimated audience size: >1M [1](#)
Amount spent (AUD): A\$1.5K - A\$2K [1](#)
Impressions: 300K - 350K [1](#)

[See ad details](#)

Save the Daintree Rainforest
Sponsored • Paid for by Gondwana Rainforest Trust

Electric ants are spreading in the Daintree Rainforest, threatening its ecosystem and economy. Since October 2022, new infestations have been found, requiring urgent action. As one of the world's worst invasive species, electric ants impact the environment, wildlife, agriculture, tourism, and human health. We call on Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek to increase funding and take immediate action to protect the Daintree for future generations.

[Sign the petition!](#) [Sign up](#)