

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE	1
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9 AUGUST 2023

CAIRNS ECOFIESTA 2023

61/7/2 #7228367

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the outcomes of the Cairns Ecofiesta 2023.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

1. Tourism and Events Queensland
2. Cleanco QLD
3. Wet Tropics Management Authority
4. Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
5. Cairns and Far North Environment Centre

Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Cairns Ecofiesta, held on 4 June 2023 at Munro Martin Parklands celebrated the natural environment and community working for its protection, with:

- Estimated 10,000 attendees;
- Over 20 workshops and hands-on educational activities;
- 90 stalls, consisting of community groups, non-profit groups, government and businesses offering sustainable and local-made products;
- 17 music acts and performance groups, and;
- 30 volunteers aiding in event delivery.

The Ecofiesta supports Council's vision, values and focus areas set out in the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2026 and contributes to success of community education and engagement objectives, particularly in the Cairns Climate Change, Resource Recovery and Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategies.

BACKGROUND:

Council has delivered an annual community sustainability event since 2008, as the Sustainable Living Expo, with an estimated 2,000 attendees. In 2021, Cairns Ecofiesta moved from the Cruise Liner Terminal to Munro Martin Parklands and continued to grow in attendance and scale.

Now in its eighth year, the Cairns Ecofiesta, draws diverse crowds and exhibitors to celebrate the region's World Heritage-listed environment and showcase sustainable living in the tropics.

Event participation

The 2023 Ecofiesta attracted over 10,000 attendees for a diverse program (Attachment 1) including 20 workshops and educational activities for all ages and 17 performance groups. It included 90 stalls (Attachment 2), consisting of community groups, government agencies, universities and businesses offering sustainable and local-made products. Over 30 volunteers aided in event delivery.

The event provides a platform for Council's educational messages, with the following stalls reaching over 750 people each:

- Natural Areas Management
- Community Spaces
- Growth & Sustainability
- Cairns Infrastructure Services - Resource Recovery and Water teams
- Libraries
- Disaster Management
- Green Space Our Place

The Cairns Ecofiesta currently has approval for a further two years, upon which time the event will be reviewed.

COMMENT:

The Cairns Ecofiesta has established itself as Queensland's premier sustainability festival, attracting crowds of diverse ages and receiving positive feedback from attendees and stallholders each year. Based on the 2023 survey, 63% of attendees had been the event before, and 37% had not.

Of these, 46% were previously aware of Council's commitment to net zero emissions for its operations by 2030, while only 20% were aware of the purchase of 100% renewable electricity for Council's largest 80 facilities from July 2024.

The 2020 Cairns Climate Change Strategy survey found that 88% of respondents want Council to show leadership and action on climate change, and the event provides a prominent avenue to annually demonstrate Council and its partners' work.

Attendees generally represent an engaged cohort of the community, and in hosting the event they are encouraged to become increasingly informed community advocates for environmental sustainability. This can act as an impact multiplier for Council's investment in on-ground programs and education in local neighbourhoods and households.

The 2023 program of workshops, hands-on activities, performances, stalls and community initiatives advance the following actions in the Cairns Climate Change and Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategies:

- identify and address climate risk and build resilience;
- encourage uptake of locally produced goods and services;

- promote Indigenous land management knowledge;
- collaborate with the health sector on research, education;
- support community emission reduction initiatives through grants and events;
- build community understanding, awareness and resilience for coastal hazard risk adaptation;
- support programs to encourage adoption of energy efficiency measures and; renewable energy and;
- support active transport through events.

Based on responses to a survey at Council's Growth and Sustainability stall, the top 3 interest areas for attendees to learn more about are:

- supporting backyard biodiversity;
- sustainability retrofits for homes and;
- low waste living.

Along with delivering compelling campaigns associated with resource recovery, water security or disaster resilience, the Cairns Ecofiesta actively demonstrates Council's commitment to promoting, protecting, and enhancing our iconic natural environment now and for generations to come.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (Recommended)

That Council notes the outcomes of the Cairns Ecofiesta 2023.

Option 2

That Council does not approve the Cairns Ecofiesta 2023 report.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Risk Management:

The Cairns Ecofiesta 2023 utilised Council's Events Risk Management Framework. This included all required public liability insurances for operators onsite, an improved layout to reduce congestion and additional shade provision. No significant safety events were reported.

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The net cost to Council was within budget, at \$99,421 and breakdown is below:

Revenue Breakdown	
Destination Event Funding TEQ	\$10,000
Sponsorship - Cleanco QLD, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	\$9,000
Vendors / Exhibitors	\$8,418
Total (ex GST)	\$27,418

Expenditure Breakdown	
Marketing and Promotion	\$13,933
Education, Entertainment and kids' activities	\$29,943
Event Management and Infrastructure	\$66,041
Event Delivery - including overtime and traffic management	\$16,922
Total (ex GST)	\$126,839

The event budget for 2023/24 is confirmed, with one further allocation notionally expected in 2024/25, after which Council's delivery of the event will be reviewed.

The economic impact analysis for 2023 is not yet available, however consulting firm, IER, estimated \$237,561 of total direct and indirect expenditure in Cairns from the 2022 event, and \$163,327 in overnight visitor expenditure.

Community and Cultural Heritage:

The event:

- Celebrates World Heritage listed environment.
- Fosters cultural awareness of First Nations groups and traditional environmental management.
- Connects residents to community networks and promotes a sense of belonging.
- Provides volunteering opportunities.
- Builds capacity amongst local clubs and volunteer networks.

Natural Environment:

The event:

- Encourages environmental stewardship and sustainable behaviours by strengthening knowledge through practical workshops and informative stalls.
- Promotes the region's biodiversity and work done by conservation groups, management agencies, tourism operators and researchers.
- Event delivery avoids waste and single-use plastics associated with promotional materials, food and beverage service, with a dish reuse system onsite, waste audit and 'water café' for free refills.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

Sustainability is recognised as one of the major trends and challenges within the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2026. By design, the Cairns Ecofiesta's initiatives and educational content aligns with the below strategies:

Focus One – Robust Economy

- *Optimise visitation and tourism opportunities.*
- *Promote and protect the growth of diverse industries and small business*
- *Grow and sustain education and employment opportunities*
- *Inspire innovation and embrace new technologies*

Focus Two - Natural Assets

- *Prioritise water security to accommodate population growth*
- *Improve resource recovery through new technologies for a green circular economy*
- *Value and protect Cairns' pristine natural environment*
- *Encourage community and business to adopt sustainable practices*

Focus Three – Design for Livability

- *Enhance community wellbeing, safety and natural disaster resilience*
- *Proactive advocacy and collaboration with state and federal governments*
- *Address opportunities for sustainable travel choices*

Focus Four – Community and Culture

- *Support diverse sport, cultural and community groups that contribute to wellbeing.*
- *Promote Cairns as the arts and cultural capital of Northern Australia*

CONSULTATION:

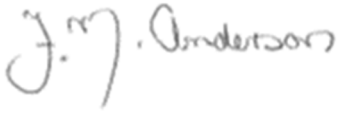
Internal consultation and collaboration was conducted across all service areas and all directorates were involved in the preparation and running of the event.

External consultation was conducted with:

- 214 attendees surveyed for feedback on the event
- Sponsors - Cleanco QLD, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Social enterprise partnership - Cairns and Far North Environment Centre
- Minjil Indigenous Dance and Ceremonies (cultural performance of three First Nations groups - Djabugay, Yidinji and Gunggandji)

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1 – Cairns Ecofiesta 2023 program
- Attachment 2 – Cairns Ecofiesta 2023 –community and conservation stalls
- Attachment 3 - Photos



Fleur Anderson
Executive Manager – Growth & Sustainability



Ed Johnson
Director – Growth, Planning and Sustainability

Attachment 1 - Cairns Ecofiesta 2023 Program



TIME	MUSIC STAGE	WORKSHOP SPACE 1	WORKSHOP SPACE 2	NATURE PLAY FOR YOUNG AND OLD	WORKSHOPS FOR YOUNG AND OLD
10:00	WELCOME TO COUNTRY	RENEWABLE ENERGY PANEL	ART FOR CHANGE BRENNIA QUINLAN AND CHARLIE MCEE	SEED BALLS WITH EARTH MUMMA	POTTING UP WORKSHOP WITH TREEFORCE
10:15	TENNI				
10:30	DRUM INFINITY				
10:45					
11:00	ECOFIESTA CULTURAL PERFORMANCE				
11:15	OFFICIAL OPENING SPECTACLED FLYING FOX RECOVERY TEAM LAUNCH				
11:30					
11:50					
11:55					
12:00	ZAYNAB WILSON	FIRE COUNTRY VICTOR STEFFENSEN	VEGETABLE GARDENING IN THE TROPICS YVONNE CUNNINGHAM		GROW DO IT A MUSICAL INTRODUCTION TO PERMACULTURE AND BACKYARD FOOD PRODUCTION
12:15					
12:30					
12:45					
1:00	KOALITION FT. DJAWARRAY	LIVING KNOWLEDGE PLACE VICTOR STEFFENSEN	CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE AND YOUR HEALTH NICOLE SLEEMAN	CLAY PLAY WITH ASTRID	BASKET WEAVING WITH ROSIE
1:15					
1:30					
1:45					
2:00	DEEP NORTH				
2:15					
2:30		CAFNEC'S MANGROVE WATCH PROGRAM DISCUSSION PANEL	REGENERATING WELL-BEINGS ELISE BRYANT		
2:45					
3:00	FORMIDABLE VEGETABLE				
3:15					
3:30					
3:45		THE POWER OF FILM IN RESTORING RAINFOREST ECOSYSTEM MARTIN STRIMBER	DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING		
4:00					
4:15	PAULY P AND THE DREAM TEAM	RAINFOREST RESCUE FILM		CLOSE	
4:30					
4:45					
5:00		CLOSE		PLUS MORE ACTIVITIES AND ROVING PERFORMANCES	
5:15		MARKETS AND STALLS		COSTA GEORGIADIS	
5:30	MANUKA			CAFNEC GAMES	FACE PAINTING
5:45				PLANT GIVEAWAYS	EARTH MERMAID
6:00	CLOSE	FLORENCE STREET MARKETS 10AM - 3PM	MUNRO MARTIN PARKLANDS COUNCIL, AGENCIES AND NON PROFIT ORGANISATION STALLS 10AM - 5PM	BUGZY BUMBLEBEE	BUBBLE WORKSHOPS
				STILT WALKING	FAIRY QUEST

Attachment 2: Ecofiesta community and conservation stalls (excluding retailers, food and beverage providers)

- Reef Restoration Foundation
- Hartley's Creek Crocodile Farm
- Kuranda Conservation
- FNQ Wildlife Rescue Assoc Inc
- Australian Youth Climate Coalition
- Permaculture Cairns
- Mulgrave Landcare
- Cairns Bats and Trees Society
- Circular Economy FNQ
- Treeforce
- Holloways Beach Coast Care
- Cairns for Refugees
- Cairns Bike User Group
- Birdlife Northern QLD
- Tropical North Region Girl Guides
- Rainforest Reserves
- Minjil
- Skyrail Foundation
- Australian Native Bee Assoc
- Sea Shepherd
- Mandingalbay Indigenous Tours
- Be crocwise
- Cairns Turtle Rehab Centre
- Tangaroa Blue
- Reef Check
- Cairns and Far North Environment Centre
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Wet Tropics Management Authority
- Rainforest Rescue
- The Agile Project
- National Electric Ant Eradication Program
- Biodynamics FNQ
- Orangutan Foundation
- Kuranda Envirocare
- Cairns vegans
- Australian Marine Conservation Society
- Cairns Toy Library

Attachment 3 – Photos, Cairns Ecofiesta 2023

