



National Environmental
Research Program

Transforming the Wet Tropics Landscape: Can We Create an Ecosystem Services Economy



Allan Dale
Karen Vella
Ruth Potts



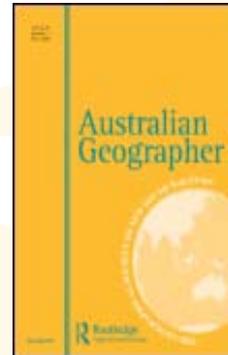


National Environmental
Research Program

THIS PAPER SYNTHESIZES 4 TE HUB PUBLICATIONS



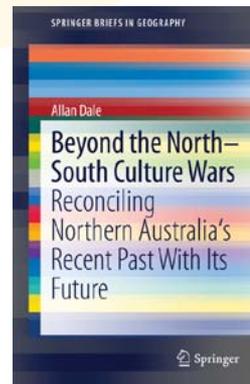
Dale, Vella and Potts
Governance Systems Analysis:
J Public Admin and Governance



Dale and Vella
Landscape Scale GGA Domain
Australian Geographer



Dale, McKee, Vella and Potts
Carbon, Biodiversity and NRM
Australian Planner



Dale
North-South Culture Wars
Springer International



THE CONTEXT

- Australia and the wider world are ever-so-slowly inching towards the emergence of an economy that will value and pay for ecosystem services.
- The Wet Tropics region has internationally significant biodiversity, cultural and carbon values that potentially make it a “jewel in the crown” product.
- We explore how such markets are already evolving.
- Our regional community will have to lead by example in the development of appropriate policies that support their evolution.
- **This will achieve transformational landscape change.**



EMERGING CONTEXT

- Rapidly growing voluntary markets and standards in biodiversity, carbon and cultural services credits are setting the scene for regulated markets.
- A newly established Government purchasing market, opening the door to international and eventually a national market for NRM+ carbon.
- Existing Federal and State regulated offsets markets.
- These are irrevocable signs that globally, we are heading to major economic reform that values the consumptive cost of ecosystem services.
- Foundation legislative reform has determined “limits to growth” and ecosystem service markets (not welfare) will deliver the rest.



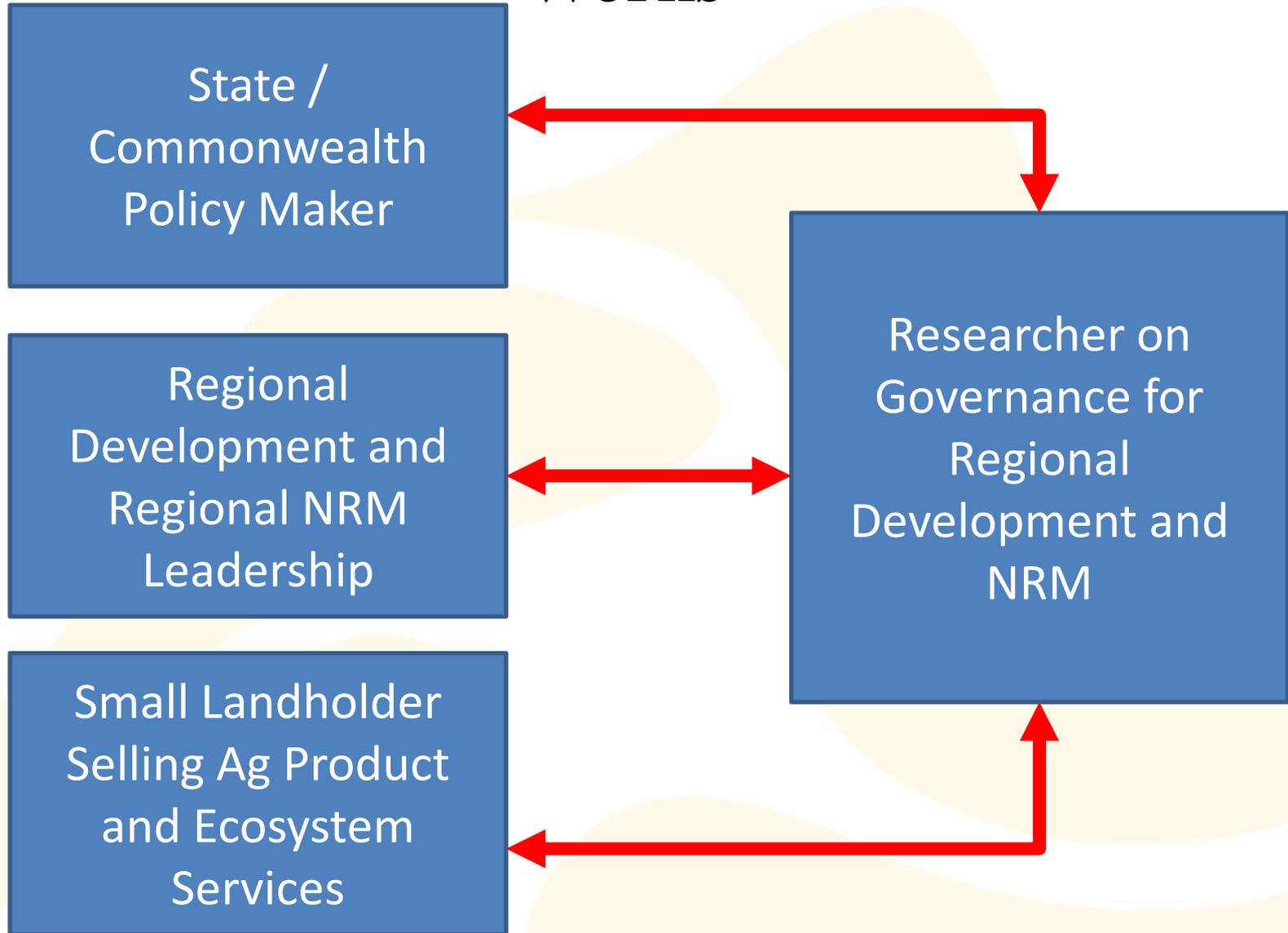
WHAT'S NEEDED FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

- Transformational change looks like restored ecosystem function across the landscape, significant threat abatement and declining water pollution.
- Everything relies on a strategic and **integrated governance system**.

Four Governance Foundations Are Key

- Bilateral policy frameworks for regulation, markets and NRM integration.
- Regional scale and adaptive NRM planning and effort alignment.
- Consistent and continuously improving property scale planning systems.
- A fully integrated landscape-scale RD&E system.

Crossing Boundaries: How Allan's Mind Works





KEY STEPS TO TRANSFORMATION

- Securing a much stronger and integrated policy framework for at least biodiverse carbon markets and NRM governance reform over 3 years.
- A major NRM, Industry and Regional NRM partnership to establish the regional design of a cohesive, aggregated and bundled ERF approach within that time, partially through an integrated NESP investment.
- A strong regional alliance between the science community, RRRC, NRMs, RDA, industry and State to partner the Commonwealth in policy reform.

Up To 80 Regulatory Instruments With Spatial, Outcome or Practice Requirements



Thinking About the Boundaries

Basis for Support

Potential for Reform

A

Ecosystem Services
Over and Above
Production

Basis for Market Investment in Delivery
of Ecosystem Services

B

Regionally Agreed
Innovative Practices

Foundation for Investment for Market
Premiums and Improvement to Regional
Agreed Practices/ Measurable Outcomes

C

Rough Approximation of
Duty of Care

Government Articulates Single Farm
Scale Expectation and Approval
Coordination – Link to 3rd Party Audit

D

Breaking the Law

Opportunity for Regional Regulatory
Cooperation and Reform Services



National Environmental
Research Program

CONTACT

Name: Allan Dale

Organisation: The Cairns Institute, JCU

Phone: 0418 736 422

Email: allan.dale@jcu.edu.au