

# Driving



Most of the Cape's roads are unsealed. Driving on them contributes to soil erosion which causes damage to the environment, farming land, waterways, infrastructure and cultural heritage.

When top-soil erodes, it can run off into waterways, ending up as harmful sediment on the Great Barrier Reef and in western Cape waterways.

There is a lot you can do to minimise the impact of driving on the Cape.

## STAY ON PUBLIC ROADS

Drive your vehicle only on established tracks and roads that are open to the public. Respect private property and all track closures – they will be closed for a good reason.

## CONSIDER SEASONAL CONDITIONS

Flooding routinely closes roads during the wet (November-April). Travellers can be stranded between rivers for extended periods.

Most Cape York roads are unsealed. Conditions can change dramatically after heavy rain. Always check road conditions before you leave.

## STAY OFF MUDDY AND BOGGY TRACKS

## REMOVE FALLEN TREES FROM ACROSS TRACKS

If you come across a fallen tree across the track, remove it if you can, rather than driving around it.

## CHECK YOUR TYRE PRESSURE

Reducing your tyre pressure when driving off-road causes less damage to the track. Just remember to increase the pressure when you head back on to the bitumen.

A tyre pressure gauge and compressor for tyre inflation are essential and affordable items for your Cape York kit.

## KEEP OUT OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

Entering private property without permission is trespassing and a major headache for all Cape York landowners. Stick to public roads and obtain landowner permission before venturing down any tracks.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

### TAKE EXTRA CARE ON ALL BEACHES

Sea turtles nest on most Cape York beaches, particularly between July and October, but they can nest at any time of year. Vehicles will destroy nests and kill hatchlings. Seek Council or Ranger advice about local beach driving restrictions, and please drive on formed roads or tracks where they exist. Stay off sand dune systems and closed beaches.



### WATCH OUT FOR ANIMALS

Cattle, horses and native wildlife are all potential driving hazards. Take extra care at dawn and dusk, and when travelling along unfenced roads or tracks.

### WASH OR BRUSH DOWN YOUR VEHICLE BEFORE LEAVING

You might not realise it, but your vehicle may be carrying unwelcome passengers - weeds. You scoop them up as you drive along and they fall off somewhere else, and start growing.

Weeds are a major environmental problem on the Cape, and locals are working hard to control and eradicate them.

You can help by washing or brushing down your vehicle at home, including the tyres, undercarriage and chassis, to remove any seeds or plant material.

Take a dust pan and brush with you to brush down every time you set off on a trip.

### TAKE RECOVERY GEAR

You're travelling in a remote area, on mostly unsealed roads. If you need help, it will take longer to reach you than in cities and towns.

Be as self-sufficient as you can. Bring tools for mechanical repairs, and spare parts you might need.

Carry a UHF two-way radio, and think about getting a satellite phone. Your mobile phone will only have signal close to the main towns and some of the smaller communities.

Carry a first aid kit, and consider doing a first aid course before you travel. Make sure you have an adequate supply of medicines you take or might need.

### GATES

Many Cape roads pass through working properties with gates in place to manage stock. If the gate is open, leave it open. If it's closed, leave it closed.

Gates might be closed to keep stock out, or open to allow them to access water and grass. Work out a system so that your convoy knows whether the gates you pass through need to be left open or closed.

