

# Life in the Torrid Zone

Cairns, Australia, 24-25 August 2009



## Can 21<sup>st</sup> century brain-power reverse two millennia of prejudice?

Believing that the area near the equator was too hot for habitation, Aristotle dubbed the region from the Tropic of Cancer (23.5°) in the north, through the equator (0°), to the Tropic of Capricorn (23.5°) in the south as the 'Torrid Zone'.

In practice, Aristotle was clearly wrong: approximately one half of the world's population now live in the tropics.

But, in principle, some may argue that he was right. Tropical nations, already among the poorest in the world, face seemingly insurmountable challenges with population growth, poverty, environmental sustainability, economic development, education, public health and governance.

- Are these challenges inherent to life in the tropics?
- Are there corresponding benefits to tropical living which may in the longer term confer competitive advantage on tropical populations?
- Is there a role for the temperate world in helping to overcome present challenges, or to share future opportunities?
- If so, what is the best model? Should we focus on foreign aid and philanthropy, or will investment driven by self-interest prove a more powerful mechanism?

On 24-25 August 2009, James Cook University will host a think-tank comprising around 50 leading thinkers from the world of international aid, philanthropy, social entrepreneurship, industry, research and government.

The outcome of the meeting will be an agenda for a series of ongoing Torrid Zone Symposia that will help develop and implement win-win solutions for the temperate and tropical worlds.

### Program

Part 1 Challenges and opportunities of tropical living: health, agriculture, education, architecture, environment.

Part 2 Evolving models for interaction between the developed and developing world: foreign aid, philanthropy, social entrepreneurship, direct investment, free market.

Part 3 Is there a win-win solution?

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We look forward to working with you to find out.

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