**Conflicting views**

**Tourism**

Until recently, the tourist market in northern Queensland was quite specialized, and appealed only to a few. Although Cairns has several large resort-style hotels, most tourist investment further north was limited. Most tourists have been back packers, or travelers who have taken a year out from university or employment. They tended to be attracted to the area, as it remained relatively unaffected by mass development.

Now investment is changing.

* Japanese investment here has resulted in several golf courses.
* The Sheraton and Radisson international hotel chains have developed large resorts in Port Douglas.
* A number of Hollywood films have been made here, helping to publicize the area to a more ‘up market’ clientele.

**Growth and change in Port Douglas**

Although the population of Port Douglas is only 3000, it is rising rapidly, and expanding as more accommodation is developed for tourists. The number of apartments and hotels has also led to other developments.

* A large supermarket built in the village centre, has changed the way people shop and small local shops have suffered.
* McDonalds built.
* A property boom has led to rises in house prices, which is affecting local people.

**Environmental Groups**

They are concerned, as they want to protect the ‘special’ nature of the Daintree. Several protests have taken place against the development, as they feel it will take over the coast. They believe that the coast is fragile and needs protection.

* A protest took place in the late 80s about the extension of a road northwards through the Daintree; protestors felt it would bring unwelcome change to the coast and rainforest environment.

**Farming**

This has been the main economic activity along this coastal region for over 100 years. Although the sugar cane industry has been hit by falling world demand for sugar, it still occupies large estates consisting of huge fields of cane. In addition, the climate is ideal for growing a range of tropical fruit, and mangoes, pineapples and banana plantations are common; They crops support the other industries, such as the sugar mill at Mossman.

**Timber**

The timber industry would dearly love to cut the timer in the forests. They argue that less than one fifth of rainforest in Queensland is used for timber and that there is still plenty to cut. In the past, rainforest has been cut to make way for sugar-cane farms. The timber companies say nobody complained then. They support those who want to build and extend the road. They say that environmentalists who want to protect the forest are depriving people in Queensland of jobs.

**Home-based industries**

As well as large employers, such as the sugar cane factory, the Daintree has attracted many small, home industries, run by people who were originally attracted to the Wilderness quality of the Daintree. Many ‘alternative’ lifestyles have developed here with industries such as organic farming and pottery – making.