

ECOTOURISM AUSTRALIA

MEDIA TOOLKIT

WHO IS ECOTOURISM AUSTRALIA?

50 WORDS OR LESS

Ecotourism Australia (EA) is a not for profit, membership-based organisation inspiring environmentally sustainable and culturally responsible tourism. Internationally recognised through the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, EA designs and delivers certification programs for tourism products and destinations, assuring travellers that these are backed by a strong commitment to sustainability and quality.

120 WORDS OR LESS

Ecotourism Australia (EA), established in 1991, is a not for profit, membership-based organisation inspiring environmentally sustainable and culturally responsible tourism. Internationally recognised through the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, EA designs and delivers certification programs for tourism products and destinations, assuring travellers that these are backed by a strong commitment to sustainability and quality. Currently representing more than 500 responsible ecotourism operators, 1,700 products and a growing number of destinations, Ecotourism Australia also represents the interests of ecotourism operators and destinations through membership on advisory boards, reference groups and industry bodies, working with diverse industry stakeholders to implement and reward sustainable tourism practices. These include operators, protected area managers, state/federal government agencies, local/regional tourism associations, consultants, planners, academics, students and travellers.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

EA's certification programs include:

- ECO Certification
- Climate Action Certification
- Respecting our Culture (ROC) Certification
- ECO Destination Certification
- EcoGuide Certification

WHAT WE STAND FOR

NATURE

We understand that without a healthy environment, our industry cannot exist. That's why we work hard to equip our certified operators and destinations to tackle climate change, minimise their impacts and contribute to conservation, and encourage travellers to preference responsible holiday options.

QUALITY

Our certification programs stringently assess tourism businesses and destinations from every angle – from how they operate and give back to their community, to how they work with Traditional Owners and respond to traveller feedback. That's why our certified operators win 1/4 of all Australian Tourism Awards, and why travellers can rest assured that their experience is going to be better, richer and more memorable.

CREDIBILITY

We believe travellers deserve honesty, and we actively fight against greenwashing. Our ECO Certification program was the first of its kind in the world and its standards are recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council as meeting international best practice in the tourism industry. Our certified operators and destinations are audited regularly to ensure they practice what they preach.

PASSION

We believe that many business owners and travellers genuinely care about making a positive difference. Our certification enables operators and destinations to turn passion into profit and inspires travellers to evolve from interested visitors to educated contributors.

LEADERSHIP

Certified operators and destinations are good stewards of the environment. For operators, this means they get access to extended permits and licences, and for destinations, it means that they're protecting their assets and livelihoods for generations to come. Our members are leaders, not followers, and they continuously influence the industry – including travellers – to do more and be better.

COMMUNITY

We believe global challenges are best tackled together. That's why we've got partnerships with leading international and national tourism organisations, government agencies, researchers and other industry stakeholders. Every year, we bring them together to exchange ideas at our Global Eco Conference – the world's longest running ecotourism conference.

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

- Ecotourism Australia has 500 members and over 1,700 certified products
- The total combined annual revenue of EA's certified members is AUD \$1.6 billion
- Ecotourism Australia's members employ more than 14,000 people in sustainable, regionally based jobs
- Currently, 26 certified operators are in Ecotourism Australia's Hall of Fame for holding certification for 20 years or longer.
- More than 40% of Ecotourism Australia members have been members for over 10 years
- At the 2018 Australian Tourism Awards, Ecotourism Australia certified operators won one in four of all awards.
- Since being established in 1991, Ecotourism Australia's membership has grown steadily, as has the number of applicants for certification.
- EA's certified operators are actively engaged in combatting climate change, with at least four operating carbon neutral, or carbon positive businesses and several others working toward carbon neutrality
- Ecotourism is a fast-growing sector amongst overseas visitors to Australia. Over the past five years, the number of visitors bushwalking has increased by 47%, national and state park visitor numbers have increased by 56% and the number of people whale/dolphin watching has increased by 32%.¹
- Travellers are looking for sustainable travel options: 70% of travellers would be more likely to book an accommodation knowing it was ecofriendly, 62% of travellers would feel better about staying in accommodation with an eco-label, and 71% of travellers think companies should offer consumers more sustainable travel choices.²

LEADERSHIP



Chair
Dr Claire Ellis



Deputy Chair
Innes Larkin



CEO
Rod Hillman

¹ Tourism Research Australia, 2018

² Booking.com, 2019

TESTIMONIALS

- *“Inside our business, the certification process is important as part of the management and operational framework. It acts as a set of guidelines for both best practice and when thinking strategically about future actions and investments.”*
Binna Burra Mountain Lodge, certified since 1997
- *“We have never seen this as a marketing tool - more a business management and development tool. Any promotion or marketing we get is a bonus.”*
Exceptional Kangaroo Island, certified since 1998
- *“The ECO Certification is a very valuable tool that enables you to ensure that you maintain best practice.”*
Kingfisher Bay Resort Group, certified since 1997
- *“The ECO Certification not only helped us formalise our practices, but also provided an excellent baseline to measure continued improvements, as well as helping to create realistic performance targets for the future.”*
Quicksilver Cruises, certified since 1997
- *“Certification, in our view, is vital to our ongoing success. We wouldn’t be without it!”*
Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, certified since 1997
- *“In a world where ECO can be a deciding factor on whether guests choose us or someone else the importance of having a true ECO offering is of paramount importance. It gives guests the comfort in the knowledge that they are experiencing the best the industry has. Guests want to be safe in the view that they are enjoying their holiday while having little impact on the environment and surrounding region.”*
The Frames, certified since 2010
- *“Being Eco certified holds high importance within our business plan. We entered the Whitsunday Tourism industry due to our love of the Great Barrier Reef and its inhabitants and we believe we have a duty of care to educate our guests on respectful interaction with our environment whilst also taking all precautions ourselves to keep it in a pristine condition for all to enjoy. Being Eco certified allows us to be endorsed by a reputable certification and hope that as an industry leader, other companies will follow in pursuit for the sake of our beautiful environment.”*
Red Cat Adventures, certified since 2010

RECENT NEWS

- Overtourism And A Low Carbon Future High On Agenda For New Ecotourism Australia / University Of Queensland PhD Candidates | <https://bit.ly/2K1alnY>
- The Original Sustainability Innovators: 40% Of Ecotourism Australia Members Certified 10+ Years | <https://bit.ly/2WTFSCN>
- Ecotourism In Australia Delivers Over 14,000 Direct Jobs And \$1.6 Billion Annual Revenue | <https://bit.ly/2WSMmSo>
- Ecotourism Australia Members Take Home Over a Quarter of All National Tourism Awards | <https://bit.ly/31Uy99R>

LOGOS & IMAGES

For logos and images, please email Communications Manager Lina Cronin (lina@ecotourism.org.au) and specify how these will be used. To download Ecotourism Australia's logo guide, please visit www.ecotourism.org.au/assets/Ecotourism-Australia-Logo-Guide-2019.pdf

CONNECT WITH US

Website | www.ecotourism.org.au

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Twitter | twitter.com/EcotourismAus (tag @EcotourismAus)

LinkedIn | <https://au.linkedin.com/company/ecotourism-australia> (tag @Ecotourism Australia)

Please use the hashtag #ecotourismaustralia

MEDIA ENQUIRIES - CONTACT

Ecotourism Australia is happy to provide comment on matters related to ecotourism and sustainable tourism in Australia. All media enquiries, including requests for quotes from Ecotourism Australia's Board or Chief Executive, are to be directed to Lina Cronin, Communications Manager:

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