

AUSTRALIA'S PROGRAM FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ECOTOURISM 2002



**IT'S OUR CHANCE TO SHOW THE
WORLD WHAT WE DO BEST**



***IYE 2002 is
a never-to-be-repeated
opportunity for Australia to
consolidate its position
as a pre-eminent
'developed nation'
ecotourism destination,
with a leading role in
sustainable tourism practices.***

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



How the International Year of Ecotourism 2002 came about

In 1999, the United Nations designated 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism through the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), in conjunction with the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). The Ecotourism Association of Australia approached the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources to assist in maximizing the benefits to Australia arising from IYE 2002. The Department has funded both the planning and implementation of Australia's IYE 2002 program.

What IYE 2002 in Australia aims to do

The Australian program has been designed primarily to raise awareness about what constitutes ecotourism, defined as 'ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas, that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation'.

The IYE 2002 program should help to consolidate Australia's international reputation as a pre-eminent 'developed nation' ecotourism destination, with a leading role in sustainable tourism.

The program content

In essence, Australia's IYE2002 program consists of over 100 major initiatives and events throughout the year. IYE 2002 events will take place in all states and territories and include seminars, conferences, workshops, festivals and other consumer-focused events, as well as increased operator training, product development, indigenous guide training and the extension of best-practice accreditation schemes. A feature of the program is the number of research projects being carried out by Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs), other university tourism faculties and the private sector.

The national IYE 2002 team

IYE 2002 partner organizations include 'See Australia', the Australian Tourist Commission, Aboriginal Tourism Australia, the Australian Heritage Commission, the Tourism Task Force and the Commonwealth Government.

Major IYE 2002 sponsors include the Nine Network, Tourism South Australia, Voyages Hotels and Resorts, Tourism New South Wales and joint program initiators the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the Ecotourism Association of Australia. All state and territory tourism organizations (STOs) have embraced IYE 2002 at varying levels of sponsorship and support: conservation and land management agencies are also supporting IYE 2002.

High profile IYE Patrons

The four IYE Patrons are: respected indigenous leader Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, former deputy PM the Hon Tim Fischer MP, Mr John Morse (former managing director of the Australian Tourist Commission) and consummate ecotraveller and Channel 9 television presenter Ms Sorrel Wilby, who features in the IYE 2002 poster, produced for national distribution. Free posters can be obtained by contacting the IYE 2002 office (details on back page).

IYE 2002 INITIATIVES IN AUSTRALIA'S STATES AND TERRITORIES

South Australian Tourism Commission

- Hosting the national launch of IYE 2002 at Godfrey's Landing, the Coorong, on Tuesday 5th February.
- State-wide Ecofest Education Program. Flinders University is coordinating an operators forum, with program content established by ecotourism industry members prior to the event.
- Development of strategies for South Australia's emerging heritage / ecotourism regions; in particular, a collaboration between the South Australian Tourism Commission and National Parks & Wildlife South Australia (NPWSA) in the Coorong and on Kangaroo Island. A workshop is planned for March, 2002.
- Workshop to evaluate the findings of TOMM – the Tourism Optimisation Management Model developed by SATC with Commonwealth funding in 1995 and subsequently used as a benchmark process – in March 2002.
- On-going monitoring of SA's environment wherever ecotourism is conducted (linked to the TOMM process described above).
- Providing a subsidy to encourage operators to join the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP).
- Working closely with the Adelaide Convention & Tourism Authority to promote ecotourism.
- Promoting IYE 2002 on SATC and other allied / industry websites, including Flinders University, NPWSA, Earth Sanctuaries and various other tour operators.

- Marketing the Bookmark Biosphere Reserve as an example of best practice ecotourism, including guide accreditation.
- Hosting a workshop for best practice whale watching, plus devising a marketing program for land-based whale watching, along with other initiatives for the South Australia Whale Centre.
- Coordinating workshops to develop partnerships between operators and protected area managers. A liaison group comprising SATC, NPWSA, Flinders University and operators will meet bi-monthly throughout IYE.
- Marketing ecotourism product through the National Parks & Wildlife South Australia Parks web site.
- Production of a new marketing campaign to highlight South Australian ecotourism in 2002.

Other initiatives within South Australia

- Emphasis on Earth Sanctuaries conservation initiatives.
- National workshop on indigenous interpretation in the Flinders Ranges, conducted by the Interpretation Australia Association (IAA).

NEW SOUTH WALES



Tourism New South Wales

Tourism New South Wales

- Implementation of the Tourism NSW Nature Tourism Plan, following on from the launch in early 2002.
- Preferential marketing for accredited ecotourism product in NSW.
- Use of Visiting Journalist Program for ecotourism product where possible.

Other initiatives / projects

- On-going implementation of the Northern Rivers Nature Based and Ecotourism Plan, by The Nature Tourism Task Force of the Northern Rivers, Northern Rivers Regional Tourism Organisation and Invest Northern Rivers (formerly Northern Rivers Regional Development Board).
- Establishment of a self-drive guide to World Heritage-listed rainforests and national parks in Northern NSW and South East Qld. A cross-border initiative involving TNSW, TQ, the NTTF and relevant RTOs / RTAs, plus local government.
- Workshop on ecotourism conducted by the Northern NSW Ecotourism Association (NNETA).
- Expansion of long distance walking trails network in NSW.
- Booyong remnant rainforest preservation project and World Wood Festival, Byron Bay.
- Feasibility study – 'Waterfall Track' walking trail between Armidale and Dorrigo.

TASMANIA



TASMANIA

Tourism Tasmania

- Promotion of IYE 2002 at the World Tourism Convention in November, 2001.
- Involvement in tailored Visiting Journalist Program with ATC.
- Heightened emphasis on guide training (through Tasmanian Environmental Tourism Training Initiative) and 'crossover' operator accreditation – a link between NEAP and Tourism Council Tasmania's respective schemes.
- Regionally-based promotion of ecotourism product across Tasmania.
- Participation in 'Getaway' and other IYE promotional strategies.
- Support for IYE wherever possible, as a participating STO.

Other initiatives

- Sustainable tourism training and linkage to operator licensing, by Forestry Tasmania.
- Opening and operation of the Forest EcoCentre at Scottsdale, by Forestry Tasmania.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
TOURISM COMMISSION**

Western Australian Tourism Commission

- Participation in IYE marketing strategies, involvement in 'Getaway', links to website and support for program as STO.
- Media exposure of the IYE 2002 aims and content, with particular reference to WA operators, research and events.

Other initiatives

- Bibbulmun Eco-team Challenge event on the Bibbulmun Track, near Perth.
- Western Australian Conference on Ecotourism, to be held alongside WA Department of Conservation and Land Management's Travel Industry Expo in May, 2002.
- Incorporation of the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP) into WA's Protected Area Licensing scheme, administered by the WA Government's Department of Conservation and Land Management.
- Establishment of a new indigenous and ecotourism product in the WA Goldfields region.
- 'Living Windows into WA' to feature ecotourism product: an ongoing marketing program by the South West Development Commission.
- Pilbara Ecotourism Festival.
- Sustainable tourism workshops and a tourism information exchange, coordinated by the Forum Advocating Cultural and Ecotourism (FACET), in partnership with CALM and the WATC.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



Northern Territory Tourist Commission

- Comprehensive logistical and marketing support for the IYE 2002 program, including themed media inspections to highlight IYE (for example: the opening of the Larrapinta Trail).
- Tailoring the Visiting Journalist Program to feature Northern Territory ecotourism
- Increasing Indigenous people's involvement in ecotourism.

Other initiatives

- Development of a best-practice tented camp plus establishment of a community trust involving local indigenous people at Ayers Rock resort, by IYE 2002 Gold Sponsors Voyages Hotel and Resorts.
- Training for operators and guides to meet accreditation and licensing requirements in the Northern Territory.
- Pilot program for ecotourism on Aboriginal land in North East Arnhem Land
- Award for the 'outstanding interpretative guide' (a new category in the existing Brologa Awards).
- Guide exchange program, coordinated by Odyssey Safaris.
- Promotion of the Larrapinta walking trail as an emerging ecotourism icon in the Northern Territory.
- Creating ecotourism-friendly 4WD touring, establishing ecotourism safari camps and lodges across the Northern Territory and developing the 'desert park' concept : Northern Territory Parks & Wildlife Commission (NT PWC).
- Project to list and protect the Gayngaru Lagoon, in Nhulunbuy.

QUEENSLAND



Tourism Queensland

- Hosting the inaugural Australian International Ecotourism Conference, to be held in Cairns, Far North Queensland, 21-25 October, as part of the global IYE events calendar.
- Hosting a 'Developing Tourism' conference, focusing on the need for an all-of-government approach to tourism partnerships between government, industry and sustainable tourism.
- Review of the existing Queensland Ecotourism Plan, by November 2002.
- Dedicated media strategy to increase the profile of Queensland nature based and ecotourism product.
- Queensland Tourism Awards: creating a special ecotourism award during IYE 2002.
- Continuation of existing education campaign for the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP).

Other initiatives

- Upgrading of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park environmental practices handbook, by the Qld National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- Report and implementation on a major national impact monitoring initiative by crcTourism, Griffith University.
- Research into the experimental use of vegetable-based oils for use by marine and reef vessels, by Reef Biosearch, a division of Quicksilver Cruises in Port Douglas, Far North Qld.
- Development of a new Wet Tropics Visitor Monitoring System, by the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) in association with the Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre.
- Linking permits for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program and implementing the marketing plan for the WTWHA.
- Marketing and distribution of environmental practice manuals to protected area managers, by the Qld National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- Expansion of Queensland's drive tourism program to link cultural and natural sites of significance.
- Development and launch of Capricorn Caves Ecotourism Adventure Lodge.
- Marketing of "The Two St.Helena's Islands", from Manly, Brisbane (also forms part of the international exchange).

VICTORIA



Tourism Victoria

- Implementation of Victoria's Nature Tourism Strategy.
- Production of a 'Regional Model for Sustainable Tourism' in the Geelong Otway region.

Other initiatives

- Southern Grampians Ecotourism Festival.
- Ongoing internet-based marketing of facilities within Victoria's protected areas, by NRE Forests Service.
- Increase Victorian participation in NEAP, via promotion and workshops, plus training for Victorian operators.

ACT



Environment ACT / Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation

- Production of an Ecotourism and Cultural Tourism Strategy and Grants Program for the ACT in IYE 2002, by Environment ACT.
- Regional seminar / conference on Nature and Ecotourism, to be convened by Environment ACT.
- Introduction of an ecotourism theme into relevant major exhibitions held throughout IYE, by the Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation (CTEC).

IYE 2002 SPONSORS



VOYAGES



HOTELS AND RESORTS



Tourism New South Wales



PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



PROGRAM MANAGEMENT



MAJOR FUNDING



INDUSTRY
SCIENCE
RESOURCES
SPORT AND TOURISM
DIVISION

Initiatives that will cover the country, involve states' cooperation, or will occur throughout the year

- Close liaison with International Year of the Mountains and The Year of the Outback.
- Ecotourism Snapshot project – ongoing research and data collection.
- Focus on ecotourism throughout year by Industry, Science and Resources media unit, plus other Partner Organisations.
- Indigenous Tourism marketing initiative conducted by the Aboriginal Tourism Association, plus the development of Indigenous Tourism business opportunities.
- Expanding the Savannah Guides School to enable it to run courses more frequently, plus participation at major trade and consumer travel shows and marketing the Savannah Guides as a best practice example of ecotourism.
- Investigation into the creation of government tax incentives for conservation and ecotourism initiatives, by the Tourism Task Force.
- Implement and report on a major national Impact Monitoring initiative (crcTourism).
- On-line Ecotourism Information project.
- National launch of 'Nature Wise' program by Conservation Volunteers, Victoria.
- Increase access to natural areas for people with mobility challenges.
- Expansion of Rainforest Rescue scheme beyond Northern NSW and South East Qld.
- Tourism in Protected Areas Forum (TIPAF) meeting, in association with International Ecotourism Conference in Cairns, Oct. 22nd - 25th.

Initiatives helping IYE aims: *expertise development and exchanges, plus education*

- Ecotourism Association of Australia co-ordinated staging of Australia's inaugural International Ecotourism Conference – the final such event on the global IYE 2002 calendar, to be held in Cairns Oct. 21st - 25th.
- International Visiting Journalist Program coordinated by Australian Tourist Commission to feature ecotourism product and experiences.
- Outreach program for ecotourism in the Asia Pacific region.
- International launch of the Conservation Volunteers scheme.
- Liaison with United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) throughout year, to consolidate Australia's profile as an ecotourism leader.
- Expansion of the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP) overseas, through an alliance with Green Globe Asia Pacific.
- High-profile participation by Australia at the World EcoTourism Summit at Quebec in May 2002.

How to find out more about Australia's program for IYE 2002

This document is a brief overview, meant as a representative sampling only. The official website www.ecotourism-australia.info contains the full 2002 calendar, with links to each IYE project – and their home pages / sites as appropriate. The website is being continually updated.

To learn about the Ecotourism Association of Australia its associated activities – including the EcoGuide and Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Programs, just click on the relevant icons on the web site.

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