



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts



Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility

# Towards Accreditation: The Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook

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## Project 4.9.2

### Sustainable nature-based tourism: Planning & management



**Objective Bii: Develop a best practice strategy for creating a Wet Tropics wide integrated rainforest experience theme for visitors**





## The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

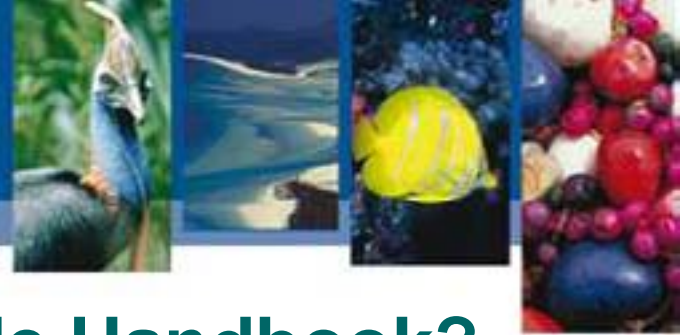
- 8,940 square kilometres
- 100 scenic sites – high & low visitation
- 150 managed walks – short boardwalk to extended treks
- Wet Tropics Great walk (110km)
- Commercial operations
- Free & independent travellers
- Estimated 4.4 million visits annually
- Gross economic value of tourism



\$426 million

(Prideaux & Falco-Mammone, 2007)





## Why a Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook?

- **Wet Tropics Management Authority (1997)**  
***Protection through Partnerships: policies for implementation of the Wet Tropics Plan,***  
**Cairns: Wet Tropics Management Authority.**
- “develop an information sharing system to ensure interpretive material provided to visitors is accurate, appropriate and relevant to opportunities in the Area (this may include use of a “quality control” stamp on interpretive material)” (p.100)





## Why a Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook?

- **Wet Tropics Management Authority (2000)**  
***Wet Tropics Nature Based Tourism Strategy:  
A strategy for the development and  
management of nature based tourism.***
- The EcoGuide accreditation standards developed by Ecotourism Australia will be adopted & refined to meet the specific requirements of the Wet Tropics WHA (p. 24)
- A Code of Practice for Guides for the WTWHA to enhance:
  - Ecological & cultural responsibility in tourism activities
  - Community understanding & appreciation of the Area



## Objectives of the Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook in 2007

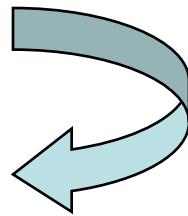
- For tour guides to consistently present and promote the ecological and cultural values of the Wet Tropics WHA with quality information.
- Future voluntary accreditation of tour operators & their guides.
- Incentives for tour operators





## Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook

- 27 sites – 131 operators holding commercial activity permits across these sites
- 52 tour operators participated
- Tour guide input – 400 surveys sent out for guides
- Returned – 29 surveys
- Published information
- Scientists, botanists, geologists & aboriginal elders
- Walking track maps – Dungey & Whytlaw (Footloose Publications)



# Wet Tropics Tour Guide Handbook

## Locations



Kuku Yalanji country. Photo: Julie Carmody





## Interpretative Information

- Geology
- European history
- Aboriginal history, myths & legends
- Botany
- Fauna
- Calendar of events
- Other points of interest



Example of Site Map





## Calendar Example - Jindalba

Jan	The Kuku Yalanji people refer to December - March as the 'proper wet time'. Fruit bats can be seen feeding on ripe Davidson Plums. The first Hercules Moths appear.*
May	Cassowaries usually lay their eggs from June to October, although chicks have been recorded as early as May and as late as January. Saw-shelled turtles spend more time sunning themselves on rocks.*
Sep	Spectacled Flying Fox breeding season begins about now. The Imperial Pigeons also begin to breed.*
Oct	Striped possums feed on flowering Black Bean trees. The first of the Golden-Orb spiders start to appear. The Buff Breasted Paradise Kingfishers fly in from New Guinea. Silky Oaks flower.*
Dec	In 2006, the Daintree recorded almost 6 metres of rain! Mating season for crocodiles begins. Fire flies visible at night.*



## THANK YOU

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