

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ECOTOURISM AUSTRALIA

Wednesday 21st October 2020 at 1230 hours AEST

(WA: 1030 hours | NT: 1200 hours | QLD: 1230 hours | SA: 1300 hours | NSW, VIC, ACT, TAS: 1330 hours)

At Ecotourism Australia Office – Unit 1A/88 Buckland Rd. Nundah, Brisbane, Queensland
and online via Zoom.

MINUTES

Members present in person and/or online:

Claire Ellis (Chair, Individual Member), Rod Hillman (CEO), Rick Murray (Individual Member), Innes Larkin (Certified Operator), Noreen Breakey (Individual Member), Wendy Hills (PAM Member), Alysia Brandenburg (Individual Member), Peter Johnson (Certified Operator), Peter Cochrane (Individual Member), Young NG (Individual Member), Melinda Macleod (Individual Member), Caroline Densley (Certified Operator), Michael Collins (Business Member), Janet Mackay (Business Member), Angus M Robinson (Certified Operator), Alyssa Sanders (EA staff), Nadine Schramm (EA staff), Eloise Touchot (EA staff), Erica Johnson (EA intern, observer)

Apologies: None received

Chair: Claire Ellis

Company Secretary: Rod Hillman

Minutes: Alyssa Sanders

Meeting opened: 1235 hours AEST

1. Welcome and apologies

C Ellis acknowledged and thanked the attendees of the meeting and EA staff for organising.

N Schramm briefly explained some housekeeping regarding how to use zoom.

C Ellis acknowledged the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community and paid respects to them and their cultures, and elders past, present and future.

C Ellis formally welcomed Ecotourism Australia's members to the meeting and noted no proxies or apologies were received.

2. Confirmation of Minutes from 2019 AGM

C Ellis tabled the previous AGM minutes from 2019, and sought any questions or amendments to be noted, none received.

Motion: That the minutes of the previous AGM, 16th October 2019 were accepted.

Moved: R Murray

Seconded: A Brandenburg

CARRIED

3. Matters arising from 2019 AGM minutes

No matters arising.

4. Report from the Chair - tabling of Ecotourism Australia Ltd Annual Report 2019/20

C Ellis spoke to her Chair's Report in the 2019/20 Annual Report and summarised the past year noting it had been a very difficult year for all Ecotourism Australia members, regardless of location and type of business. The impacts have been varied and uneven. However there have been some silver linings and changes coming through the horrible times:

- Overall our nature-based tourism products are well suited to the changing and emerging trends around travel
- It has been a year of change
- Ecotourism Australia as an organisation has needed to alter and adapt how to operate due to Covid-19, bushfires, floods and other events.
- Some of the alterations and adaptations that have taken place include:
 - Partnerships with organisations like the World Wildlife Fund Australia to strengthen and support our work in the industry
 - Roll out of the ECO Destination program as part of the international partnership with Green Destinations, helping to support more ecotourism businesses within destinations. Port Douglas Daintree were the first Certified ECO Destination, with an additional 16 undertaking the application process.
 - Adjusting the rollout of the annual Global Eco Asia-Pacific Conference to be held in Margaret River, WA in December 2020. Adaptation has included the rollout of Satellite Node events in regions across the country, offering live streaming of the event to those that cannot travel to WA.
 - Shifting the ECO Certification program for businesses to be online. All applicants now apply fully online, streamlining the entire process. New tools and support systems have also been added to the process. Additionally, many existing products are transitioning to the online platform overtime.
 - Now the organisation has some staff located in Victoria working remotely, in addition the small but strong Brisbane based office. This allows for greater national connections to various stakeholders.
 - Continuing to strengthen the work with University of Queensland through the sponsorship of four PHD students, who have now refined their research topics and work closely with the Ecotourism Australia team.
 - Producing and publishing the State of the Industry report, which highlights to government and key stakeholders the challenged Ecotourism Australia members are currently facing since Covid-19, bushfires and other recent events.

C Ellis also noted there has been a fantastic uptake of new applications with a total of 57 in the last financial year, more than ever received in past years. This shows people recognise the value of ecotourism and certification.

C Ellis thanked the office staff and R Hillman in particular for achieving the above-mentioned goals and continuing to manage the day to day along with navigating the various challenges of the last 12 months.

C Ellis thanked the 2019/20 Board, especially acknowledging the two Directors who stepped down from their positions; R Murray and P Cochrane. C Ellis thanked P Cochrane for his work as a Director especially his help in contextualising and looking at things in a different perspective. And R Murray for his work as a Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board, and the huge contribution that he has given to the Board and the organisation over many years.

5. Finance Report – tabling of Audited Statements

Rod Hillman, the CEO, formally tabled and confirmed the Financial Report for 2019/20 and the fully audited financial accounts for 2019/20 have been circulated and are available to all members.

R Hillman highlighted the report shows a generated a surplus of \$131,000.

No questions were asked.

Motion: That the Financial Reports for 2019/20 be accepted.

Moved: M Collins

Seconded: I Larkin

CARRIED

6. Constitutional Change Proposals

R Murray, Chair of the Governance Committee, spoke to the changes to the Ecotourism Australia Ltd Constitution.

In summary:

- reword section 14.5 'casual vacancies' of the constitution to make it clearer
- amend section 9.5 to say "Refer to section 9.3"
- update examples of membership types and include them in section 7.3; remove section 7.4;
- define voting and non-voting members and their rights.

Motion: That the current Constitution of Ecotourism Australia Ltd, with amendments to 10/10/2018, be repealed and replaced with the document which has been circulated and of which a copy, duly signed and dated this day by the Chair, is tabled at this Annual General Meeting.

Moved: R Murray

Seconded: N Breakey

CARRIED

7. Election of Board Members

R Hillman viewed the election results and advised that there were five (5) vacant positions. The election resulted in the election of the following candidates to the EA Board of Directors:

- A Brandenburg
- C Densley
- P Johnson
- I Larkin
- J Mackay

R Hillman thanked M Macleod and S Buchanan for nominating.

C Ellis congratulated the successful candidates. It was noted that 89 members voted in the election, which is 17% of all members.

C Ellis thanked R Murray and P Cochrane as departing Directors and acknowledged those that considered nominating and those that did nominate.

8. Discussions and questions

C Ellis invited participants to ask questions, now or later by contacting the EA Office. No questions were asked.

C Ellis gave thanks again to all Directors and their contributions.

C Ellis thanked all participants and the EA Office for attending.

Meeting closed: 1304 hours AEST