



**Ecotourism Australia
Limited
Annual Report
2012/2013**

ACN: 100755694



“to inspire
environmentally sustainable
and
culturally responsible
tourism”

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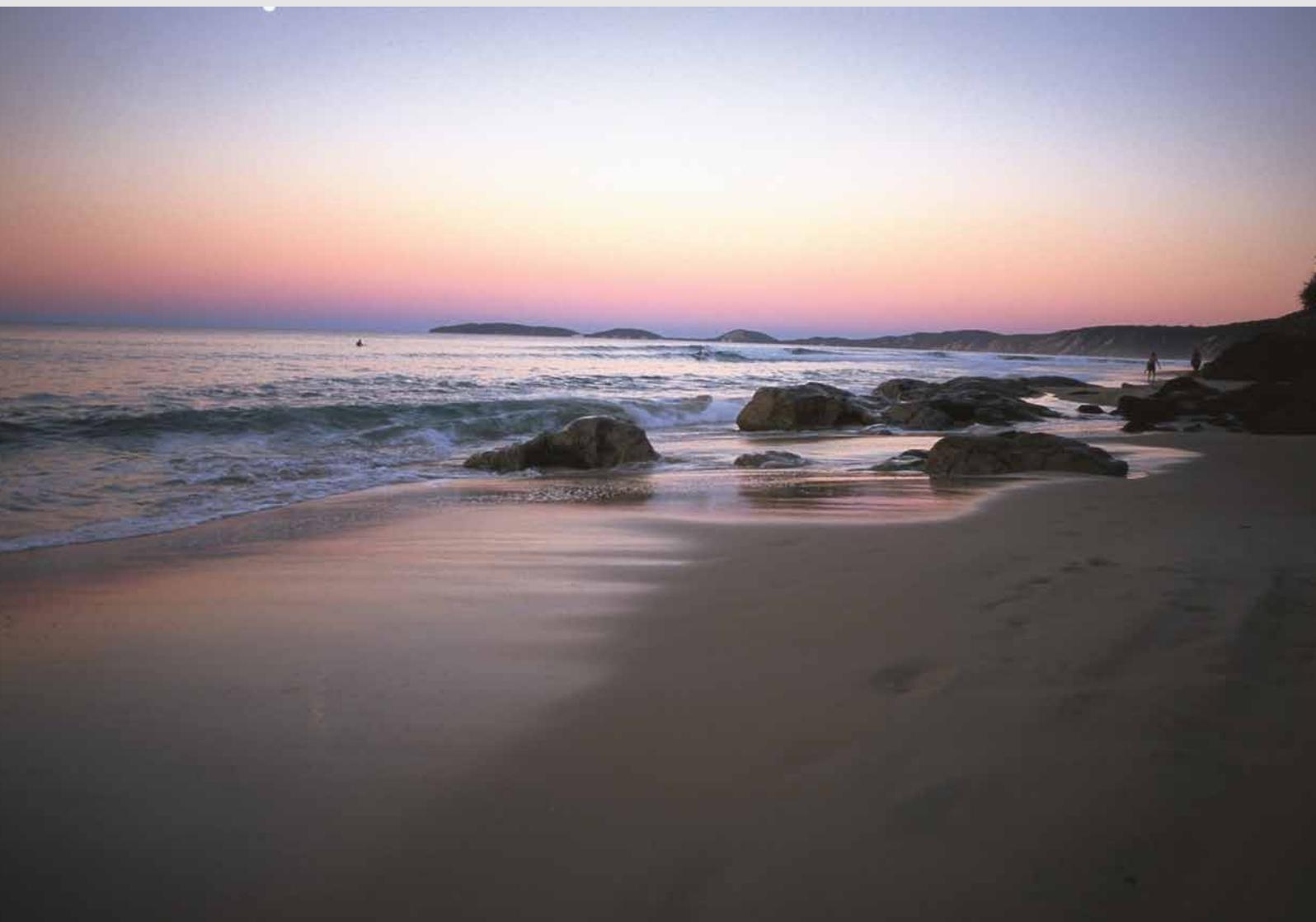
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Chair's Report

Cameron Kerr
Chair, Ecotourism Australia

The past year has seen Ecotourism Australia continue its steady growth with an increase in members and certified operators. This has occurred during tough economic times with an extraordinarily high Australian dollar, declining government budgets and a very long election campaign.

It is also pleasing to see State governments are increasingly acknowledging the importance of eco and sustainable tourism through policy decisions and program initiatives of rewarding certified operators.

This year we saw the departure of an inaugural Board Member, Professor Ross Dowling, who has provided leadership, expertise and commitment over the past twenty years. His wise counsel will be sorely missed. Our Chief Executive, Kym Cheatham, left in February after three years of valuable service and I wish her well as she returns to her studies.

Rod Hillman has now taken up the reigns as the Chief Executive and has hit the ground running with established networks and extensive experience in the sector.

The future of organisations such as Ecotourism Australia will rely, in part, on developing strategic alliances and partnerships to bring benefits to members, and greater influence and relevance. I am excited to announce a new partnership will be developed between Ecotourism Australia and Conservation Volunteers Australia. The details of the partnership will be announced at our Global Eco Conference in Noosa 18th – 20th November.



Ecotourism Australia Board members lead our organisation through a combination of Committees and Working groups that inform the full Board and Management. This year we have initiated the 'Geotourism Forum' where Ecotourism Australia members with a passion for Geotourism have come together to ensure the full Board understands and is advised of issues in this exciting sector of our industry.

The committees are:

- **Awards Committee** chaired by Ross Dowling/Claire Ellis
- **Certification Committee** chaired by Shelley Lavender
- **Conference Committee** chaired by Ross Dowling /Claire Ellis
- **Corporate Governance Committee** chaired by Shelley Lavender
- **Executive and Finance Committee** chaired by Lisha Mulqueeny
- **Policy and Advocacy Committee** chaired by Rick Murray
- **Business Development Working Group** chaired by Andrew Daff
- **Geotourism Forum** chaired by Angus M Robinson

The office team has continued to work tirelessly and has done an extraordinary job in difficult times supporting operators and influencing government decisions. Like most people engaged in tourism we hope to have turned a corner and look forward to sustainable growth across the sector.

I wish to sincerely thank all the members of the Board and management team, who are, without exception a dedicated and engaged group of passionate professionals with the best interests of our industry at heart.

As a membership organisation our purpose is to serve the interests of and bring benefit to our members. We appreciate your feedback and encourage you to become involved in the organisation.

I look forward to working with you in 2013/14, and seeing you at the Global Eco conference in Noosa!

Cameron Kerr
Chair



Key Achievements

Over the past year, there have been a number of significant achievements:

- Developed an exciting and far reaching partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia to bring benefit to our members and programs.
- ECO Certification (Edition IV) Ecotourism and Advanced Ecotourism standards have met all the conditions for full, unconditional recognition as aligned with the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria for Hotels and Tour Operators.
- Held a successful Global Eco Conference in Cairns.
- Undertook a successful review of the eco-certification application process that maintains the strong standards and benefits whilst making the process less complicated.
- Over this last year, our CEOs have been tirelessly representing our sector at a wide range of government and industry forums to ensure that policy planning and decisions take into account our operator's needs.



Chief Executive's Report

Rod Hillman
Chief Executive,
Ecotourism Australia

Firstly, I want to pass on my thanks to the Ecotourism Board for showing the faith in appointing me to this position and give my thanks to Kym Cheatham who put in the 'hard yards' in setting up Ecotourism Australia as an organisation with purpose, respect and with a clear understanding of its role, on behalf of its members.

I see our coming years as a time of opportunity with the industry and the respective governments becoming clearer in their need for quality, an appreciation of Australia's natural advantage and an understanding of the key role ecotourism operators play in conservation and in building the national and regional economies.

Talking to operators, tourism organisations and protected area managers the message is clear. Times are tough and we need to ensure we have relevance and bring benefit to our members. A large amount of energy will continue to be directed to ensuring the views of our members are being heard by decision makers, simplifying our systems and processes, building our influence through partnerships and alliances and bring direct and tangible benefits to our members.

The team at Ecotourism Australia, whilst small, is dedicated to delivering on our purpose. We look forward to working closely with you in 2013/14.

Rod Hillman
Chief Executive