Australia’s Coastal Wilderness
National Landscape

EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY

June 2011

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness
Embrace Something Wild

[Image of a lighthouse on a coastal landscape]
Disclaimer

The information and recommendations provided in this Experiences Development Strategy are made on the basis of information available at the time of preparation. While all care has been taken to check and validate material presented in this report, independent research and professional advice should be sought before any action or decision is taken on the basis of material contained in this report.

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Cover Image: Point Hicks Lighthouse Reserve, Tourism Victoria
FOREWORD

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness has been admitted to the National Landscapes Program because of its unique and relatively unspoilt natural environment and distinctly Australian towns and villages offering opportunities for visitors to enjoy a very special part of Australia.

This document contains strategies to help make the south-east corner of Australia a must-see place for discerning travellers from around the world looking for an outstanding nature-based experience.

The featured projects have been selected from many ideas put forward during extensive consultation with shire councils, chambers of commerce, tourism operators, Victorian and NSW state government authorities including Parks Victoria and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, regional tourism organisations and individuals. All the projects are strongly supported by the individual organisations responsible for implementing them.

Our aim is that in ten years’ time:

**Australia’s Coastal Wilderness National Landscape will offer visitors a range of world class nature-based and cultural experiences in unspoilt natural environments and unique and welcoming communities. Our tourism industry and community appreciate the benefits of being part of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness and support sustainable developments that protect its natural values**

The strategies outlined in this document will be reviewed annually and updated as required. I commend this Experience Development Strategy to any person or organisation with an interest or involvement in the tourism industry and economic prosperity of the region.

Tim Shepherd
Chair
Australia’s Coastal Wilderness Steering Committee
June 2011
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Located in South Eastern Australia is a relatively untouched stretch of wilderness coastline that offers a unique opportunity to be immersed in nature’s playground.

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness (ACW) is a National Landscape stretching over 300 kilometres that is home to a World Biosphere Reserve and some of the world’s richest diversity of flora and fauna.

The Tourism Australia National Landscapes program identifies places of national significance that offer distinctive Australian natural and cultural experiences, beyond an individual National Park or Government boundary to deliver conservation, social and economic outcomes while offering unforgettable experiences to lure the international ‘Experience Seeker’. This philosophy is epitomised in Australia’s Coastal Wilderness positioning statement:

‘This hidden pocket of Australia’s endless coastline is where you can get close and share your love of nature. Immerse yourself in the natural beauty of tall forests, lakes and beaches in this unspoilt coastal wilderness’

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, with its majestic wilderness, unique and diverse wildlife, ancient and active Indigenous culture and iconic coastal communities, presents a unique range of visitor experiences including:

- The world’s largest population of little penguins;
- Over 200km of trails through unspoilt coastline;
- The Bundian Way – one of the world’s oldest trade routes;
- The site where Captain Cook first sited the Australian mainland;
- Unique welcoming communities adjacent to wilderness areas; and
- Silent forests in the foothills of the Australian Alps.
THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPES PROGRAM

The National Landscapes Program is a national tourism initiative with an international focus, begun in 2007, managed by Tourism Australia and Parks Australia. The Program is a partnership between tourism and conservation and seeks to identify Australia’s superlative natural and cultural destinations/experiences for marketing to Tourism Australia’s target market, the ‘Experience Seeker’, under the Brand Australia banner.

These destinations, whilst encompassing iconic national parks or existing superlative attractions, are characterised by their transcending state, municipal or land management boundaries and are united by their topography, environmental or cultural significance. The NL Program is the first tourism initiative in Australia that disregards borders and land tenures.

The ‘Experience Seeker’ is Tourism Australia’s prime international target market and is high yield in that they tend to stay longer, travel more widely and spend more money than other visitors. They desire authentic personal experiences, active learning, engaging with locals and combining a variety of experiences into a single trip.

As well as tourism outcomes the Program seeks to enhance the role of protected areas in the national and regional economies, and produce conservation outcomes through planning and effective management.

Currently (November 2010) there are 10 National Landscapes which have met the strict selection criteria for the Program, they being Australian Alps, Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, Great Ocean Road, Kakadu, Australia’s Red Centre, Flinders Ranges, Australia’s Green Cauldron, Greater Blue Mountains, Kangaroo Island and the Kimberley. It is anticipated that a maximum of 15 National Landscapes will eventually be announced.

The development of each NL is managed on the ground by voluntary committees comprising a range of government, land manager and industry stakeholders. The NL is not a funding program.
**FOR THE EXPERIENCE SEEKER**

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is located half-way between Sydney and Melbourne and less than 2 hours from the international gateways by air. The National A1 Highway runs through the destination and is supported by a well maintained regional road network enabling the region to be easily explored in a week.

The destination remains relatively undiscovered by international visitors attracting only 53,000 in 2008 (5% of overnight visitation), whereas competing destinations attract a higher portion of international visitors (up to 10%). The opportunity exists to grow the international ‘Experience Seeker’ market, considered to be an ideal, higher yielding visitor market for Australian National Landscapes.

Attracting the ‘Experience Seeker’ target market (refer page 4) is a natural fit for the destination as they are seeking:

- Authentic personal experiences
- To engage with locals and nature
- Adventures and variety
- Something out of the ordinary

**Current Challenges**

Current factors limiting growth in the region include:

- Limited awareness of the experiences
- Few international-ready products
- Increasing global competition
- Lack of ‘iconic’ accommodation
- Few guided and supported tours
- Travel time and costs compared to competitors (e.g. Tasmania and Great Ocean Road)
- Trends towards shorter holidays
- Lack of a unified approach to telling the ACW story
- Few packages or itineraries

Luring the international ‘Experience Seeker’ to Australia’s Coastal Wilderness requires a consistent, partnership-led approach. The Experiences Development Strategy aims to facilitate that partnership.
AN EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A unified approach to the development, promotion and packaging of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is needed to grow its share of the lucrative and growing international ‘Experience Seeker’ market. Led by a multi-regional, multi-agency and cross-border Steering Committee this Experiences Development Strategy identifies iconic world-class experiences matching Tourism Australia’s ‘Experience Seeker’ target market.

The Strategy identifies both Priority #1 projects that link directly to the three priority goals and Priority #2 projects to deliver the vision over the coming decade. As a blueprint for the region’s development the Experiences Development Strategy identifies priority short and medium term projects in a detailed action plan (Part B).

The Experiences Development Strategy builds on the comprehensive suite of existing reports and strategies (see Figure 1) to establish the following vision for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. It does not supersede local, state or national plans, and should complement the conservation and wilderness values of this unique region.

Figure 1: Strategic Context

The vision for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness:

An accessible yet remote coastal destination where you can escape to the lakes and forest, or stand on the beach with no one else’s footprints but your own!

The Experiences Development Strategy identifies three primary goals for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness in achieving this vision:

1. Building a Truly Unique Destination Image
2. Creating Iconic Experiences
3. Delivering the Promise

These three goals aim to address the key barriers and provide a focus for the delivery of world-class experiences for the ‘Experience Seeker’ market.
WILDERNESS VALUES

Within Australia’s Coastal Wilderness there are over 30 protected areas including Nature Reserves, State Forests, Coastal Parks, National Parks and Wilderness Zones. This includes the internationally recognised Croajingolong Biosphere Reserve, part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

All of these protected areas make up an important part of the story and landscape of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. This Experiences Development Strategy seeks to promote and present these conservation values internationally; in doing so it recognises and does not supersede the existing land management processes. That is, all recommendations in this Experiences Development Strategy remain subject to the established and future plans of various management agencies.

A key aim of the Experiences Development Strategy is to increase the value of international tourism balanced against the need to protect this place for future generations. Visitation to the region is primarily domestic overnight and day trips, however the region’s natural assets appeal to the international ‘Experience Seeker’. At present the tourism product does not capture a large share of the potential market. At present less than 1% of all international visitors that visit National Parks in Victoria and New South Wales do so in Australia’s Coastal Wilderness.

Visitors spend almost half a billion dollars ($487M) in the region annually. Of this international visitors spend only 1% (under $40 per night). This is significantly below the state average ($95 per night). A key aim of the Experiences Development Strategy is to both increase the regions share of nature-based visitors, at sustainable rates, and the average spend through appropriate development. A goal of the Experiences Development Strategy is to grow the value of tourism to the region to $1 billion by 2020, without compromising the wilderness values.
1. BUILDING A TRULY UNIQUE DESTINATION IMAGE

A destination brand has already been created for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. The challenge is to now undertake the development of a distinctive brand identity to raise awareness both pre-trip and en-route of the destination’s truly unique experiences. Managers and operators will then have the tools to ensure that visitors can be provided with clear messages that guide them to and through the unique experiences they will encounter.

PRIORITY 1 PROJECTS

- Develop a marketing plan that includes actions for undertaking partnership marketing activities
- Prepare precinct Master Plans for Cape Conran and Point Hicks
- International Destination Management Plans for Mallacoota and Eden
- Interpret and develop the ‘Bundian Way’ Journey, starting with a survey of the route
- Initiate the Coastal Wilderness Way incorporating the Snowy River Shared Pathway and linking bicycle, walk and canoe trails.
- Develop strategies to encourage the delivery of high quality and consistent visitor information and interpretation
- Encourage operator participation in the Sydney-Melbourne Coastal Drive
- Support operators to become internationally-ready
- Develop a motivational and informative website in conjunction with Tourism Australia, Tourism Vic and Tourism NSW
- Develop and distribute an ACW Brand Toolkit with TA and PA to assist stakeholders to ‘live the brand’ in their businesses

PRIORITY 2 PROJECTS

- Investigate transport linkage gaps and other transport initiatives
- Support the development of and signposting of tourist drives in the hinterland
- Investigate the feasibility of a Croajingolong Interpretive Centre
- Upgrading of information gateway centres

Raising awareness of the destination will require strong partnerships and greater industry participation in international promotion. Further, the brand will need to evolve through the interpretation material to engage local stakeholders, operators and the community in telling the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness story.
2. CREATING ICONIC EXPERIENCES

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is truly unique in its mix of charismatic fauna (whales, platypus, penguins, etc), spectacular scenery, an ancient and active Indigenous story, and the limited number of people visiting at any one time. This provides visitors with an experience relatively unaffected by mass tourism. The development of tourism throughout the destination must focus on building upon the many strengths and features of the destination, including Aboriginal Australia, Wildlife & Nature; and Coastal Lifestyle.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- Develop and promote the Monaroo Boberrer Gudu Keeping Place at Eden as a hub of Indigenous tourism experiences
- Distribute completed Brand Toolkit to industry and encourage use to build new product and experiences
- Assist the establishment and promotion of an overnight walk from Cape Conran to Mallacoota
- Develop short walks linked to identified experience precincts, including those identified in the Far East Gippsland Icon Walks Study
- Develop the Bombala Platypus Reserve into a unique visitor experience
- Encourage the development of the Light to Light Walk as a world class guided and independent walking experience including feasibility investigations into eco-sensitive accommodation
- Expand the activities at the Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre (Eden)

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- Encourage guided eco-tours on the walk through the Nadgee Howe Wilderness
- Investigation of a new multi-day walking trail from Merimbula to Eden
- Develop and promote experiences in selected Marine National Parks
- Develop a Conservation Tourism Program
- Build on existing Food and Wine initiatives
- Encourage PS Curlip to become international market-ready
- Provide consistent European cultural activities and history
- Support niche product development including health and wellbeing
3. DELIVERING THE PROMISE

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness offers the promise of a unique and fulfilling holiday experience away from the stress of modern life. Delivering on this promise and meeting (if not exceeding) the expectations of the international ‘Experience Seeker’ is a key challenge for the destination.

PRIORITY 1 PROJECTS

- Undertake industry and product development initiatives
- Attract investors through a Tourism Accommodation Investment Prospectus
- Investigate the feasibility of adapting existing structures at Penders in Mimosa Rocks National Park for accommodation
- Investigate feasibility and sustainability of expanded facilities at the Merimbula Airport
- Develop and implement an Australia’s Coastal Wilderness Communication Plan

PRIORITY 2 PROJECTS

- Grow signature regional events to international market-readiness
- Support an industry-lead ‘Coastal Wilderness Guides’ training group
- Implement an Evaluation Program through research and tracking of results
- Investigate further tourism accommodation opportunities to support the Victorian LandBank process
- Encourage expansion and refurbishment of existing accommodation
- Encourage the establishment of and further development of water-based tour operators
- Build new ‘wilderness’ day-tour products for visiting cruise ships
- Develop and promote new canoe-trails
- Investigate the feasibility of equipment hire options to support the Coastal Wilderness Way (Phase 2)
- Support improved, safe and adequate blue water access at Mallacoota

*Croajingolong National Park, Courtesy of Mark Watson*
WHERE TO FROM HERE

The Experiences Development Strategy aims to provide a strategic direction to inform local, regional and state planning priorities for the future development of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness as an international tourism destination for the ‘Experience Seeker’ target market.

The Steering Committee will play an important role in information dissemination and coordination and management of some projects. However responsibility for leading some projects may rest with stakeholders such as Local and State Government, land managers, the private sector and community.

In guiding the project towards successful implementation the following Key Performance Measures have been developed:

- Contribution of tourism to conservation of the natural environment
- Value of proportion of international visitors to Australia’s Coastal Wilderness
- Projects progressing or completed by 2012
- Brand awareness and media exposure of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness
- Industry participation and international market-readiness
- Satisfaction of ‘Experience Seekers’ with the products, precincts and journeys
- Local support for and satisfaction with Australia’s Coastal Wilderness

PRIORITY 1 PROJECTS
- Develop a set of targets for implementation

PRIORITY 2 PROJECTS
- Continue to engage local stakeholders and adapt the role and membership of the Steering Committee
EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
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ABOUT AUSTRALIA’S COASTAL WILDERNESS

Located in South Eastern Australia is a relatively untouched stretch of wilderness coastline that offers a unique opportunity to be immersed in nature’s playground.

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is a National Landscape stretching over 300 kilometres that is home to a World Biosphere Reserve and some of the world’s richest diversity of flora and fauna (see Figure 1).

The Tourism Australia National Landscapes Program identifies places of national significance that offer distinctive Australian natural and cultural experiences, beyond an individual National Park or Government boundary, to deliver conservation, social and economic outcomes while offering unforgettable experiences to lure the international ‘Experience Seeker’. This philosophy is epitomised in the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness positioning statement:

‘This hidden pocket of Australia’s endless coastline is where you can get close and share your love of nature. Immerse yourself in the natural beauty of tall forests, lakes and beaches in this unspoilt coastal wilderness’

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, with its majestic wilderness, unique and diverse wildlife, ancient and active Indigenous culture and iconic coastal communities, presents a unique range of visitor experiences including:

- The world’s largest population of little penguins;
- Over 200km of trails through unspoilt coastline;
- The Bundian Way – one of the world’s oldest trade routes;
- The site where Captain Cook first saw the Australian mainland;
- Unique welcoming communities adjacent to wilderness areas; and
- Silent forests in the foothills of the Australian Alps.

Figure 1: Map of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness
FOR THE EXPERIENCE SEEKER

The experiences of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness appeal to a range of domestic and international consumers. The destination attracts only 53,000 international visitors or just 5% of international visitation to the region (See Appendix 1). In comparison destinations such as the Margaret River (WA) and Freycinet / Bay of Fires (TAS) receive between 8-15% of their visitor nights from the international market (see Appendix 2).

The Tourism Forecasting Committee suggest that over the coming decade, the domestic market will remain relatively flat while the international market is forecast to grow at almost 4% per annum (source: Tourism Research Australia). The opportunity exists to grow the international ‘Experience Seeker’ market, considered to be an ideal, higher yielding visitor market for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness during the traditional low season as well as throughout the year (see Appendix 2).

This growth should occur within the conservation and tourism principles of the National Landscape Program so ensuring the natural attractions of the region are here for future generations.

Attracting the ‘Experience Seeker’ target market is a natural fit for the destination as they are seeking:

- Authentic personal experiences;
- Social interactions – making friends and developing personal relationships;
- Opportunities to meet and interact with the locals;
- Experience something different from their normal day-to-day life;
- Learning experiences with different lifestyles and cultures;
- To participate in the lifestyle and experience, rather than observing it;
- Challenges – physically, emotionally and/or mentally;
- Authentic destinations that are not necessarily part of the mainstream tourist routes; and
- Exposure to unique and personally compelling experiences.

While the opportunities and initiatives identified in this plan have been considered with the ‘Experience Seeker’ in mind, the importance of the domestic and other international markets should be enhanced, rather the diminished through the implementation of this Plan.

“Experience Seekers are, by definition, looking for unique, involving and personal experiences from their holidays”. www.tourism.australia.com
DESTINATION CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The global tourism marketplace is fiercely competitive, presenting a number of challenges and opportunities (see Figure 2). New and emerging destinations must offer a real alternative to gain a place on the global stage. Yet the global traveller is increasingly time poor so a destination must represent both value for money and time.

In the face of increased competition and improved access through low cost airlines, Australia’s Coastal Wilderness must compete with domestic and international destinations not only in terms of ‘attractiveness’ but also in terms of accessibility if it aims to grow international market share.

Figure 2: Challenges and Opportunities

Promotion

The ‘Australia’s Coastal Wilderness’ brand (see Appendix 1) has been developed but not yet incorporated into Local, Regional or State-wide promotional activities. The opportunity exists to build partnership marketing activities.

Experiencing the Icons

The destination has a number of iconic natural assets that must be conserved and protected; what is needed are more businesses to make these experiences a reality. The opportunity exists to build a reputation for personalised nature, wildlife and cultural tourism. There are sites that would support iconic accommodation and opportunities exist to deliver high quality guided experiences. Opportunities for visitors to contribute to the destination through conservation volunteer programs could create a competitive advantage.

Access

Travel time and cost from the international gateways is a constraint for some travellers to Australia’s Coastal Wilderness compared to competitor destinations. Hire vehicle and direct air access present a real challenge for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. The opportunity exists to turn the challenge into a competitive advantage through a walking, riding and transport network across a range of land tenures. Improved air access is vital to the growth of many international markets and to remain competitive.

Meeting expectations

Servicing the needs of international ‘Experience Seekers’ not only with the quality of the service but availability of ‘local’ product is key to meeting and exceeding expectations and generating word of mouth recommendations. Greater participation in international packaging and distribution is vital to growing the market. The opportunity exists for business mentoring and support programs to encourage more products to become ‘international ready’ and participate in programs such as the Sydney-Melbourne Coastal Drive. A Brand Toolkit will assist operators to build appropriate new product.

Information & interpretation

Without access to a guide many international visitors will miss out on the best that Australia’s Coastal Wilderness has to offer. The opportunity exists to create a greater sense of arrival, reassurance and get beneath the surface of the region through information and interpretation.
UNDERSTANDING THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The *National Landscapes* program identifies places of national significance that offer distinctive Australian natural and cultural experiences, beyond an individual National Park or Government boundary to offer unforgettable experiences to lure the international ‘Experience Seeker’. Australia’s Coastal Wilderness embodies this philosophy.

*The purpose of the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness Experiences Development Strategy is to identify iconic world-class experiences matching Tourism Australia’s ‘Experience Seeker’ target market.*

The Experiences Development Strategy aims to provide a strategic direction for the region’s future growth and follows the completion of an Experience Audit and Brand Strategy. The Experiences Development Strategy builds on the comprehensive suite of existing reports and strategies (see Appendix 3), and draws on established links with local, regional, state and national planning for the growth in international nature-based tourism into Australia (see Figure 3).

The Australia’s Coastal Wilderness Experiences Development Strategy aims to inform new and existing strategic plans, but doesn’t supersede them, and to guide prioritisation of new initiatives by providing a blueprint for the region’s development through the identification of priority short and medium term projects.

While every effort has been made to highlight projects that are viable, sustainable and in keeping with the ‘vision’ for the region, each initiative requires an assessment of its financial feasibility and its compliance with planning regulations prior to development. The *National Landscapes* program provides support and impetus for projects but is not in itself a funding program.

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**Figure 3: Strategic Context**

![Diagram of Strategic Context](image-url)
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This Experiences Development Strategy has been developed through extensive consultation with the project Steering Committee (see Appendix 4) and key stakeholders from across the region, including state and local Government agencies; local, state and regional tourism organisations; community groups and tourism businesses.

A core principle of the National Landscapes program is the delivery of both conservation and tourism outcomes. This principle underpins Australia’s Coastal Wilderness and this Strategy. Through the development of a set of guiding principles, every effort has been made to highlight projects that are viable, sustainable and in keeping with the ‘vision’ for the region. Each initiative requires an assessment of its financial feasibility and its compliance with planning regulations prior to development.

Projects included in the Experiences Development Strategy aim to deliver on the ‘Guiding Principles’ shown in Figure 4:

Figure 4: Guiding Principles

**Support the Brand**
Provide personalised and accessible wilderness experiences that embody a sense of freedom and discovery. Provide opportunities to connect physically and spiritually while ensuring that the environmental values are preserved.

**Be Truly Iconic**
Facilitate experiences of the rivers, estuaries, lakes, forests and quiet, coastal lookouts; opportunities to drive or cycle through tall forests; stay in coastal settlements, experience local characters and hear the stories of locals; walk along the beach for miles; fly over the coast and visit unique places; purchase local produce from local growers and fishers; experience wildlife and birdlife in their habitat, including conservation experiences.

**Be Supported by the Community**
Be sensitive, low impact and complementary to the local natural environment; promote conservation and maintain the sense of wilderness; ensure that the natural features remain the focus of the experience; and support local businesses and communities.

**Appeal to the Target Market**
Provide access to nature/wilderness, people and culture; offer a contrast to everyday life; accessible yet remote Australian coastal lifestyle; opportunities for personal development and learning; a sense of freedom; experiences and stories visitors can ‘brag’ about; and opportunities for meaningful communication with locals.
PART A:

EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
**AN EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Experiences Development Strategy recognises that Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, with its majestic wilderness, unique and diverse wildlife, an ancient and active Indigenous culture and iconic coastal communities has the potential to significantly increase its share of the international ‘Experience Seeker’ market (see Appendix 2). The key challenge is to address awareness, access and delivery of the experiences to create a sustainable, world-class destination.

The Strategy identifies three core themes which aim to deliver world-class product for the ‘Experience Seeker’ target market (see Figure 5).

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**Figure 5: Strategy themes, objectives and key action areas**

1. **1. Building a Truly Unique Destination Image**
   
   **Objective**
   
   To raise awareness both pre-trip and en-route of the destination’s truly unique experiences internationally in partnership with government and industry.

   **Key Action Areas**
   
   - Partnership Marketing
   - Precincts and Journeys
   - Visitor Information & Interpretation

2. **2. Creating Iconic Experiences**

   **Objective**

   Build on the destination’s natural attractiveness through the development of iconic experiences, commercially delivered whilst keeping to the environmental and social values of the National Landscapes Program.

   **Key Action Areas**

   - Aboriginal Australia
   - Nature and Wildlife
   - Coastal Lifestyle

3. **3. Delivering the Promise**

   **Objective**

   Create a network of international-ready tourism products that can meet and exceed the expectations of the Global ‘Experience Seeker’.

   **Key Action Areas**

   - Accommodation
   - Tours and Transport
   - Product and Industry Development

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The Experiences Development Strategy identifies over 40 projects and initiatives which have been identified as being either Priority 1 or Priority 2 projects, and identified in the report as follows:

1. **Priority 1 Projects:** are considered to be iconic coastal wilderness experiences that meet the target market needs, are aligned with the brand and are supported by aligning with a style of development appropriate for the setting and are possible in the short (1-3 years) and medium (3-5 years) timeframe.

2. **Priority 2 Projects:** include longer term projects (5 years+), those which rely on factors outside of the control of key partners and those of local significance or projects that support existing products, but are not iconic experiences.

Priority 1 projects are described in more detail in Appendix 5. Both Priority 1 and 2 projects are included in Part B: Priority Project Action Plan.
WILDERNESS VALUES

The term ‘wilderness’ holds different meanings for different people. Wilderness is both a term used in the management of protected areas and a term visitors use to describe places. For example, the Nadgee, Cape Howe, and Sandpatch Wilderness Zones/Areas are recognised in their respective plans of management or through legislation as ‘wilderness areas’ and are managed appropriately.

Within Australia’s Coastal Wilderness there are over 30 protected areas including Nature Reserves, State Forests, Coastal Parks, National Parks and Wilderness Zones. This includes the internationally recognised Croajingolong Biosphere Reserve, part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

All of these protected areas make up an important part of the story and landscape of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. This Experiences Development Strategy seeks to promote and present these conservation values internationally, in doing so it does not supersede the existing land management processes. That is, all recommendations in this Experiences Development Strategy remain subject to the established and future plans of management agencies.

“In wilderness is the preservation of the world”.

Henry David Thoreau

A core aim of the Experiences Development Strategy is to increase the value of international tourism balanced with recognition of the need to protect the environmental and community values for future generations. Visitation to the region is mostly domestic overnight and day trips (see Appendix 2), however the region’s natural assets appeal to the international ‘Experience Seeker’. The tourism product however does not capture a large share of the potential market. At present less than 1% of all international visitors that visit National Parks in Victoria and New South Wales do so in Australia’s Coastal Wilderness.

Visitors spend almost half a billion dollars ($487M) in the region annually. Of this, international visitors spend only 1% (under $40 per night). This is significantly below the state average ($95 per night). A key aim of the Experiences Development Strategy at sustainable rates and the average spend through appropriate development. A goal of the Experiences Development Strategy is to grow the value of tourism to the region to almost $1B by 2020 (see Appendix 2).
1. BUILDING A TRULY UNIQUE DESTINATION IMAGE

A destination brand has already been created for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. The challenge is now to undertake the development of a distinctive brand identity and to raise awareness both pre-trip and en-route of the destination’s truly unique experiences.

Through the process of developing a brand identity, managers and operators will have the tools to ensure that visitors can be provided with clear messages that guide them to and through the unique experiences they will encounter. That is, effectively delivering the message both in pre-trip planning and en-route through a strong partnership with Tourism Australia and working in concert with state and local Government to embed the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness message in all international visitor communication where possible.

To achieve this, the region needs to:

- Ensure that the destination is promoted to key international markets through agreed partnership activities with the State Tourism Organisations and Tourism Australia including the development of a brand identity;
- Develop and promote Precincts and Journeys that have a specific role in delivering the experience to visitors, including gateway precincts, experience precincts and some key journeys that link these together; and
- Ensure that inspirational information is provided at key gateways to the destination (for example Bombala, Bermagui and Lakes Entrance) to provide information about the experiences through consistent information and interpretation strategies.
PARTNERSHIP MARKETING

Tourism Australia is committed to the ongoing promotion of National Landscapes and has a comprehensive consumer and trade promotional program planned for 2009/10. The State and Regional Tourism Organisations are developing approaches to incorporating National Landscapes into their ongoing international promotions programs. For Australia’s Coastal Wilderness to gain greater awareness in the ‘Experience Seeker’ target market it must maximise the leverage available through its partners – this requires a collaborative approach facilitated through a Partnership Marketing Plan.

The primary objective of a partnership marketing approach is to find agreement between key stakeholders on how to promote the message to the ‘Experience Seeker’ market and the trade without creating confusion or a duplication of effort. Without it, Australia’s Coastal Wilderness runs the risk of duplication and having limited ‘cut-through’. As the first stage, a distinctive brand identity will be established for Australia’s Coastal Wilderness utilising the services of branding professionals. This project will both define the substance of the brand identity for use in telling the story and create the look and feel for the identity including colour, typefaces, photographic and other graphic elements. It will create a brand manual of identity elements for end users including land management agencies and the tourism industry.

Example partnership marketing initiatives include:

- Develop an Australia’s Coastal Wilderness Brand Toolkit enabling all stakeholders to understand what the brand is and “how to bring it to life” in promotions and in product development;
- Investigate the delivery of an Australia’s Coastal Wilderness brand website;
- Development of content for the Tourism Australia National Landscapes site-let including opportunities for ‘user-generated’ content;
- Creating a photo library with Tourism Australia;
- Special interest visitor guides and publications;
- Travel stories (PR) with Tourism Australia and the State Tourism Organisations;
- Itineraries and packages for the niche markets (bird watching, wildflowers etc);
- Editorial coverage in the Sydney-Melbourne Coastal Drive publication;
- Development and promotion of Coastal Wilderness themed events;
- Promote the destination as a location for film and television productions; and
- Dedicated collateral (if required).

PRIORITY PROJECTS – PARTNERSHIP MARKETING

- Reach agreement with Tourism Australia and key partners about the promotion of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness to the ‘Experience Seeker’ market including use of a Brand Toolkit and Australia’s Coastal Wilderness website development and content. Upon agreement by key partners, implement a range of partnership marketing activities that deliver messages throughout the trip planning cycle and explore the feasibility of dedicated collateral for promotion of the destination, including a film and TV location and better utilisation of Tourism Australia’s network including e-newsletters, Search Engine marketing, trade links and other networking tools such as ‘Facebook’ and ‘Twitter’.

AUSTRALIA’S COASTAL WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
PRENCTS & JOURS

The Experience Development Strategy recognises that the traveller will enjoy a range of different experiences that contribute to the whole sense of immersion within a unique coastal wilderness. While some projects would be supported in one setting, they would be inappropriate in another.

The Strategy recognises three settings that support different types of experiences for visitors; they are:

1. Gateway precincts;
2. Experience precincts (including Emerging Experience Precincts); and

GATEWAY PRENCTS

Gateway precincts are significant communities in the region that offer a range of accommodation, visitor services and opportunities to plan, prepare and engage in experiences. Each ‘gateway’ differs in its level of development. While visitors will enter Australia via one of the international gateways (likely Sydney or Melbourne) or through communities such as Canberra, Cooma or Moruya their experience begins at the gateway precinct.

Bermagui & Cobargo: The northern gateways, Bermagui and Cobargo offer established tourism destinations with the services expected by free and independent international travellers. The Visitor Centres will play a key role in gateway information provision and future development should focus on international readiness; greater product depth in terms of Indigenous and cultural attractions (e.g. Montague Island and niche accommodation and dining options showcasing regional food and wine).

Bairnsdale & Lakes Entrance: Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance provide a range of accommodation and visitor services. As key information gateways for those arriving by road or those accessing the East Gippsland Rail Trail, the information centres in both towns should be key sites identified in the proposed Interpretation Plan. Further development of niche accommodation, dining options and equipment hire (e.g. bike hire) will occur as demand increases and should be encouraged.

Merimbula, Bega, & Pambula: The only regional airport, Merimbula represents a critical link in the future development of the destination. The communities of Bega, Pambula and Merimbula offer a range of accommodation and visitor services including tours and attractions, however few, if any of these products are currently active in the international market. Further development of air access, attractions, activities and dining options will be vital to attracting and delivering the promise to international ‘Experience Seekers’. Additional information, interpretation and booking services should also be encouraged.

Bombala & South East Forests: Offering a mix of heritage, cultural and nature-based tourism experiences Bombala and the South East Forests are both a gateway and an emerging experience. A key ‘gateway’ for information and interpretation the area also offers a number of experiences including the Platypus Reserve, short walks in the tall forests and spectacular scenic drives. Emerging experiences are the cultural and heritage sites such as Delegate, Nunnock Swamp and the ‘Bundian Way’ Indigenous tourism experience. Further development of accommodation, dining, attractions and service quality is vital to attracting international visitors.

EXPERIENCE PRENCTS

The ‘Experience Seeker’ target market seeks authentic, adventurous destinations that deliver something out of the ordinary. The following ‘experience precincts’ represent attractions in their own right.

Cape Conran, Marlo & Orbost: Well established in the domestic market, these areas offer a range of accommodation and basic services in the precinct. Key areas for development of the international market include accommodation, dining, attractions (especially night-time, family and wet-weather), and improved access (e.g. road to Cape Conran and the development of bike trails, walking tracks and associated facilities).

Mallacoota and Gypsy Point: Offering a unique coastal lifestyle, spectacular scenery and plenty of guided and unguided experiences, the Mallacoota and Gypsy Point precinct embodies the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness brand. As the gateway, the township of Genoa plays a key information and interpretation role and requires additional infrastructure (e.g. an information bay and public facilities). The town of Mallacoota encapsulates the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness experience offering accommodation and activities and is an ideal base for experiencing the surrounding wilderness, including Croajingolong National Park. While appropriate accommodation exists, further promotion and development will enhance growth of the international ‘Experience Seeker’ market. This precinct offers an ideal mix of access and location, improving key elements of the availability of activities suited to international visitors (including bike, boat and canoe hire) will add to its overall attractiveness as a ‘must do’ experience. This precinct represents a prime location to increase visitor stay and spend.

AUSTRALIA’S COASTAL WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
Eden & Ben Boyd: The nature and wildlife experiences of Twofold Bay and the Ben Boyd National Park are attracting increasing interest from international backpackers, cruise ships, and education travellers. Key areas for future development include servicing the growing outdoor and active travel market looking for extended walks (e.g. Light to Light) as well as delivering quality dining, accommodation and attractions. An emerging experience is Indigenous tourism and the need to develop guided and unguided tours linked to the ‘Bundian Way’ and the established marine tourism industry. Development of Snug Cove and luxury accommodation at Cattle Bay are a priority to create a bustling tourism and marine precinct. This precinct should plan for future growth in international visitation through a Destination Management Plan.

Emerging Experience Precincts

Pioneering international travellers have already begun to access the following ‘emerging experience precincts’, however significantly more investment is needed.

Biamanga & Mimosa Rocks National Parks: These coastal parks between Bermagui and Tathra and the Princes Highway are already popular with locals and their visiting friends and relatives. International visitors can currently follow the established coastal tourist drive to experience these parks. This experience could benefit from the development of commercial facilities such as accommodation development on or near the parks, encouraging more guided tours to establish through longer-term permits and engaging the Indigenous community in further product development.

Nadgee Howe Wilderness: From Disaster Bay and Wonboyn Lake to Mallacoota is one of the most significant areas of Coastal Wilderness in Australia. Straddling the border the Nadgee Howe Wilderness represents a significant opportunity for the establishment of guided and unguided ‘wilderness walks’ through some of the most remote parts of the destination. As a dedicated Wilderness area in New South Wales and Victoria tourism infrastructure will not be permitted under existing legislation, and tourism activity in this zone will be limited.

Cann River, Point Hicks, and Inlets: Through the gateway of Cann River visitors can experience some of the most spectacular coastal wilderness located in and adjacent to the Croajingolong National Park. Increasing popularity with international visitors associated with both the overnight walks and day trips will create pressures on access and accommodation. These are key management issues for delivering a ‘wilderness’ experience. Significant planning and consultation is required at Point Hicks, including a review of access for visitors, day-use and overnight camping, to account for the possible growth in overnight walkers and day trips.

Snowy River & Hinterland Forests: An alternative to the fringing coastal forests are the majestic Snowy River and South East Forests including the Coopracamba, and Errinundra National Parks. There’s an opportunity to develop a network of scenic drives that link some spectacular forests with a number of sites currently under investigation for accommodation development. There are also strong links with the Australian Alps National Landscape. Accommodation, information, signage and interpretation will be needed to encourage greater visitor dispersal.

Priority Projects – Precincts

- Preparation of Precinct Master Plans for Point Hicks and Cape Conran to guide the sustainable growth of existing and emerging experience precincts. The Master Plans should be prepared in accordance with Parks Victoria management planning processes and include consideration of access and other servicing constraints, expansion of accommodation, and developing linkages to existing and planned East Gippsland Icon Walks.
- Develop Destination Management Plans for Mallacoota and Eden to build the capacity to meet the needs of international visitors including product development, packaging, participation in international promotion and service quality and reduce the impacts of seasonality.

Priority Projects

- In partnership with Local and State Government investigate visitor transport gaps and aim to link gateway and experience precincts, building on existing transport providers to improve visitor transport within the region without the use of hire vehicles.
Destinations such as Australia’s Coastal Wilderness present visitors with a vast array of options and possibilities. ‘Journeys’ or linkage devices such as the Sydney – Melbourne Coastal Drive provide a way that visitors can ‘make sense’ of the offer.

Journeys also provide a link between gateway and experience precincts that provides reassurance, guidance and a sense of adventure for travellers.

**Existing Journeys**

- **Sydney – Melbourne Coastal Drive** is an internationally promoted touring product that provides an ideal device for further promotion of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness. Greater operator participation from this region is vital.

- **East Gippsland Rail Trail** is the starting point for the development of a ‘non-motorised’ traveller market. Building on this with additional trail in a staged approach will begin to build the region’s brand for ‘slow tourism’ experiences.

- **Great Alpine Road** while not in the region, it provides an alternative inland path that would support new market growth into Australia’s Coastal Wilderness.

**Opportunities**

Two significant new products emerged in the development of the Strategy. Both have strong links into history. One is the world’s oldest trading route and a journey of global significance. The second is a new way of experiencing the destination that takes us back to a time before the motor-vehicle was our main mode of transport.

- **The Bundian Way** is a 260km ancient trading route established by the Indigenous people of Southern NSW and Eastern Victoria linking the ocean to the Alps. It creates a tangible connection between the coastal and alpine landscapes for international ‘Experience Seekers’. While few will experience the entire journey, the opportunity exists to deliver a series of interpretation points, trails and guided tours. The first step is to survey the route, document the journey’s history and identify the sustainable tourism opportunities.

- **The Coastal Wilderness Way** is a new concept of creating a braided trail, linking existing and emerging walks and trails to link Bermagui to Lakes Entrance for those wishing to explore the region without their own motor vehicle. This exemplar project of ‘slow tourism’ aims to create linkages of walking, bike, canoe and sea kayak trails connected by alternative transport mechanisms including public transport and transport provided by commercial operators. This is a long term project that will rely on commercial operators, so it will not happen all at once.

**Priority PROJECTS – JOURNEYS**

- Develop a Master Plan to interpret and develop the Bundian Way as an Indigenous tourism journey linking Eden to the Alps, including surveying of the route and identifying the most viable components of this project in the short and medium term (guided walks, tourist drive, etc). This will need to be undertaken in consultation with all key stakeholders to identify what developments are possible and appropriate.

- Conduct an audit of existing or proposed trails and transport to develop a concept plan for the Coastal Wilderness Way with the vision of delivering a non-motorised wilderness journey that connects the entire region from Lakes Entrance to Bermagui, including further bike and walking tracks, and canoe trips.

- Assist new operators to participate in the Sydney – Melbourne Coastal Drive promotions and packaging opportunities.

**PRIORITY PROJECTS**

- Support the development and signposting of Tourist Drives in the hinterland with interpretation points along the route. These tourist drives need to be developed in keeping with best practice guidelines in safe and effective tourist drives and provide consistent ACW visitor information and interpretation.
VISITOR INFORMATION & INTERPRETATION

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness covers a large and diverse area with a variety of jurisdictions, approaches and priorities. To encourage visitors to ‘explore’ the region a more consistent and engaging approach to information and interpretation is needed. That is, supporting existing Visitor Information Centres and new visitor information facilities where appropriate, supported by additional on-site and roadside interpretation material that links sites and experiences to encourage longer stays.

At present, visitors could easily travel through the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness region by road and gain only a glimpse of the region’s unique attractions. At natural and established decision-points and stopping places, a network of information and interpretation is needed that introduces the passing traveller to the stories of the region and directs them to key locations to see, hear and experience more.

On-site interpretation at key sites will be vital to delivering the experience of a Coastal Wilderness as for many this will be limited to what they read in the brochure or online prior to travel. Developing the stories, themes and material will be a key part of the development and evolution of the Brand and should reflect the Brand Values. This includes the delivery of information through traditional methods (signs and printed materials) as well as innovative approaches (e.g. podcasts).

Key objectives of the delivery of Visitor Information and Interpretation include:

- To engage local communities in sharing their stories;
- Link to existing infrastructure and stopping places where possible;
- Create a hierarchy of information locations; and
- Be innovative including adoption of new technology where possible.

PRIORITY PROJECT – VISITOR INFORMATION

- Develop strategies to encourage the provision of high quality and consistent visitor information and interpretation across Australia’s Coastal Wilderness including a review of precincts, information centres, consistent signage and interpretation at key sites, expansion of Visitor Information facilities (e.g. Cann River, Genoa), digital interpretation (podcasts, etc) and the construction of pull-over bays and interpretation panels.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- Investigate the feasibility and preferred location of an iconic Croajingolong Interpretative Centre in Mallacoota with a tourism / customer service approach as a hub for activities in the region.
- Upgrading of information at gateway centres including investigation of new facilities at locations such as Genoa (e.g. pullover information bay and public facilities).
2. CREATING ICONIC EXPERIENCES

Australia is known for its unspoilt coastline and many destinations offer a ‘coastal wilderness’ experience. Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is truly unique in its mix of charismatic fauna (whales, platypus, penguins, etc), spectacular scenery, an ancient and active Indigenous story, and the limited number of people accessing it at any one time. However, none of these features in isolation is unique for Australia and the lack of a singular iconic feature (e.g. Great Barrier Reef or Uluru) makes the decision harder for time-poor visitors.

The development of tourism throughout the destination must focus on building upon the many strengths and features of the destination to deliver a range of less tangible, yet iconic experiences for which the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness will become renowned for.

Key experiences for which the destination can become recognised include:

- **Aboriginal Australia** - All products and experiences directly relating to Indigenous cultural heritage, with a focus on providing opportunities for direct engagement with local Indigenous people and immersion in Aboriginal stories and activities;

- **Nature & Wildlife** – Products and experiences that immerse the ‘Experience Seeker’ in unique and personally compelling nature-based tourism experiences with or without the use of a commercial guide or operator, including long and short walking opportunities, guided whale watching, independent and guided scuba diving, platypus viewing, etc; and

- **Coastal Lifestyle** – Opportunities for visitors to immerse themselves in the relaxed lifestyle experience of the unique, accessible and well serviced coastal communities throughout the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, including exploring villages, relaxing in a cafe or restaurant by the water, buying local seafood off the boat and engaging with local people.
ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

There are strong indigenous connections to the Australia’s Coastal Wilderness landscape, and active Aboriginal communities who are keen to share their stories. Encouraging new and existing tourism businesses to develop will improve the economic prospects for the destination as a whole. For example, the Bundian Way, a 40,000 year old indigenous trail from Eden to the Alps established before the ‘Silk Road’, is an exceptional international tourism product development opportunity which has the potential to be a catalyst for the development of viable indigenous tourism businesses throughout the entire region.

Growing from a small base, what is needed is a staged approach to business development for Aboriginal communities and cultural tourism enterprises to deliver face-to-face tourism experiences backed by product development. Training of guides, sharing ideas and experiences of business success and challenges and gaining suggestions and mentoring are key priorities in the area of Indigenous and cultural tourism.

The Experience Development Strategy aims to support new indigenous tourism product linked to tourism experiences and precincts including walking trails near Eden and Ben Boyd National Park (to the Monaroo Bobberer Gudu Keeping Place); indigenous guides for wildlife cruises on Twofold Bay; guided tours including canoe tours (such as Culture in the Catchment at Lake Tyers); re-establishment of the Umbarra Cultural tourism products; and development of new products around the Bundian Way.

These projects and ideas have existed for some time but need a catalyst to make them sustainable.

PRIORITY PROJECTS – ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

- Support the further development of the Monaroo Bobberer Gudu Keeping Place (Jigamy Farm) as a hub of indigenous tourism experiences through a Business Development and Concept Plan and securing safe access. Jigamy Farm should be developed as a gateway to the Bundian Way and training facility for indigenous guides.
- Engage with indigenous communities for the development of cultural tourism product and support for new, existing and emerging indigenous tourism businesses. Draw on a range of existing federal, state and local programs including Indigenous Business Australia.
NATURE AND WILDLIFE

While individually few of the locations in Australian’s Coastal Wilderness are unique in the world (with the exception of the sites such as the Croajingalong World Biosphere and the Gabo Island penguin colony), the close proximity and variety of nature and wildlife experiences available is a unique selling point. To build a truly unique product, the destination must remain true to its vision of ‘value over volume’ and seek to develop nature and wildlife experiences that are personal and enriching rather than appealing to the mass tourism market.

The products and experiences that are needed are those that provide the opportunity for the ‘Experience Seeker’ to be immersed in unique and personally compelling nature-based tourism experiences with or without the use of a commercial guide or operator. The region should aim to be renowned world-wide for engaging and personal nature and wildlife experiences that go beyond the photograph to emotionally and spiritually enriching encounters that are authentic and memorable but require a little more time and effort from the visitor.

PRIORITY 1 PROJECTS – NATURE & WILDLIFE

• Plan and develop supporting facilities to implement a unique and ‘wild’ hiking experience from Cape Conran to Mallacoota via Point Hicks. An overnight East Gippsland walk (promotional name to be developed) would be a key part of the broader Coastal Wilderness Way, developed in accordance with Parks Victoria management planning processes. Key initiatives include brand development, trail mapping and marking and encouraging commercial tour businesses to run guided tours. Due to a number of significant barriers (including crossing of inlets, availability of water and limited existing facilities) a staged approach is recommended starting with the Cape Conran to Point Hicks section (Phase one). NB Elements of this walk already exist in a basic sense.

• Prioritise and progress the development of short walks throughout Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, including progressing the five new walks and upgrade and promotion of existing walks identified in the Far East Gippsland Icon Walks Study and implementation of iconic short walks in New South Wales in accordance with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Plans of Management.

• Develop the platypus reserve in Bombala into a unique visitor experience through additional facilities, landscaping and interpretation.

• Encourage the development of the Light to Light Walk as a world class guided and independent walking experience through progressing feasibility investigations into expanded commercial guided tours and eco-sensitive accommodation for walkers such as the adaptive re-use of existing buildings at Green Cape and at key sites including Mowarry Point.

• Expansion and further development of activities at the Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre including marine discovery tours; presentation of indigenous stories and encouraging the inclusion of indigenous guides on tour vessels; and support for the overall improvement of the Snug Cove environs as a bustling tourism and marine precinct, which people can experience before and after their tours.

PRIORITY 2 PROJECTS

• Attract a tour operator to establish guided eco-tours along the walk through the Nadgee-Howe Wilderness designed to have minimal impact on the site and on public access to the trail. This remote area is a protected ‘wilderness area’, and as such numbers are currently limited.

• Support for the investigation into a new multi-day walking trail from Merimbula to Eden, including the development of feasibility and concept plans and building on the existing coastal link between Tathra and Merimbula.

• Develop and promote iconic experiences in selected Marine National Parks including tour operators, boat hire, and gear hire including a review of accessibility.

• Support conservation tourism programs linked to National Parks (similar to Montague Island) and promote as key experiences. This may require coordination of existing programs with new products and experiences.
COASTAL LIFESTYLE & COMMUNITY

The laid back lifestyle and culture of the coastal and hinterland communities of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is an important element of the attractiveness of the region for the international ‘Experience Seeker’. The opportunity exists to strengthen the delivery of arts, culture, food and wine products and experiences at key gateway and experience precincts throughout the region. Actions in this section that relate to culture refer specifically to products and experiences that facilitate immersion in European cultural heritage.

A key selling point for Australia and Australia’s Coastal Wilderness is the stress free nature and relaxed lifestyle of coastal and hinterland communities. The ‘sea and tree change’ is seen to offer numerous health and well-being benefits in an increasingly stressful world. Australia’s Coastal Wilderness offers a ‘slow tourism’ destination that is equivalent to the ‘slow food’ movement in Europe. It taps into a inherent need by people to take time to appreciate the things in life that are most valuable.

The development of Precincts identified in ‘Building a Truly Unique Destination Image (page 11) should be progressed through Local Government planning and approvals processes (subject to appropriate consultation). In particular, there are Priority Projects identified in this report that will enhance and develop the community and coastal lifestyle.

It is notable that this area of the Experiences Development Strategy does not have a list of identified Priority projects. This is a reflection of the high level of amenities already existing and that the commercial viability of new initiatives relies on other priority projects. High priority initiatives identified elsewhere in the Experiences Development Strategy include:

- Air access to Merimbula;
- Development of Snug Cove in Eden;
- Establishing Cann River as a future activity node; and
- Future development of information centres as gateways.

PRIORITY PROJECTS – COASTAL LIFESTYLE & COMMUNITY

- Undertake an audit of the existing food and wine mentoring and marketing initiatives and build upon these through the establishment of an ACW Food and Wine cluster linked to relevant state agencies. This would include engaging local fishermen and/or local restaurants to deliver and promote local seafood.
- Support where feasible development of the PS Curlip paddle steamer at Marlo as an iconic Australia’s Coastal Wilderness experience.
- Provide a consistent opportunity for visitors to view European cultural activities and history such as shearing demonstrations and historical displays in Bombala.
- Explore the potential of targeted marketing and new product development supporting growth in the niche market of ‘health and well-being’ due to ACW’s available air access points and health services.