Australia’s Green Cauldron

Experience Development Strategy

Prepared for:
Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee
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Acknowledgements

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We would like to acknowledge the effort put into the preparation of this Experience Development Strategy (EDS) by Australia’s Green Cauldron National Landscape Steering Committee, Project Management Committee, businesses and other stakeholders in Australia’s Green Cauldron.

We believe the outcome is a shared strategy.
Executive Summary

Background

Australia’s Green Cauldron is one of Australia’s National Landscapes. It was accepted into the National Landscapes Program due to its volcanic origins. Encompassing the hinterland to the west of the Gold Coast and Byron Bay, it extends north to Tamborine Mountain and west towards Warwick taking in the volcanic semi-circle of the Scenic Rim region. The region is bordered by Border Ranges National Park to the west, Lamington and Springbrook National Parks to the north, with Wollumbin (Mt Warning) National Park in the centre. It includes 12 national parks most of which are part of the Gondwana Rainforest World Heritage Area, several other conservation areas and 2 marine reserves.

An eclectic mix of communities, and areas with high levels of cultural significance for Indigenous people, complete the picture of a special place now referred to as a ‘mysterious melting pot’ of nature and culture.

Australia’s Green Cauldron has great potential for the Experience Seeker market through the provision of focused product development and marketing and by focusing on the region’s existing natural and cultural features and tourism products to showcase the ‘mysterious melting pot’.

Experience Seekers are a varied market differing by age, country of origin and spending power, but united by values, attitudes and motivations. They are typically well educated and are motivated by opportunities for personal growth, fulfilment and learning. They are discerning about experiences, especially the presentation of natural and cultural heritage.

Australia’s Green Cauldron

The distinctive region consists of the remnants of the world’s second largest shield volcano, clothed by relic subtropical and warm temperate rainforest from the ancient southern supercontinent Gondwana. It is bound by a globally recognised coastline and world-class surf breaks. A hotspot of biodiversity, the area boasts more than 1,700 species of flowering plants, 500 species of vertebrate animals, thousands of invertebrate species and is home to many rare and threatened species conserved in several national parks.

Today, the region supports an eclectic mix of towns, quaint villages, and alternative lifestyle, farming, surfing and artistic communities - drawn to lifestyles based upon the region’s unique character, fertile soils, equable climate and unhurried and healthy atmosphere. It has vibrant local cultures expressed in art, craft, music, spirituality and alternative philosophies and holistic healing, as well as in numerous local markets and festivals, quirky places and characters. A commitment to sustainable living and conserving the environment can be seen throughout the region and adds to its distinctiveness.

Despite being one of the most accessible National Landscapes in Australia (due to its proximity to the major population centres of the Gold Coast and Brisbane), Australia’s Green Cauldron has maintained its distinctive unspoilt natural character and cultural identity, providing a very appealing destination for visitors seeking authentic experiences.
Destination positioning

The positioning identified for Australia’s Green Cauldron with stakeholders is as an ancient volcanic hotspot, now a living Gondwanan rainforest.

The proposition to Experience Seekers is grounded in three dimensions:

- a well-preserved volcanic caldera enveloped by rainforests (many of which are World Heritage listed)
- a globally recognised marine environment
- diverse and ‘culturally rich’ communities

The brand promise – Immerse Yourself in a Mysterious Melting Pot - describes the experience that is to be delivered to the Experience Seeker through this strategy. The hero experiences recommended in this EDS have been identified to deliver on this promise.

With all this in mind, it is important to be cognisant of the stakeholder vision for Australia’s Green Cauldron and the guiding principles for developing a destination.

Stakeholder Vision for Australia’s Green Cauldron

Each and every visitor to Australia’s Green Cauldron will leave inspired and touched by their experience of our region’s world class surfing, marine and rainforest opportunities, spiritual values, cultural connections, creative communities and sustainable lifestyles.

Our Values - How we want to develop as a destination

- We want to be front-of-mind for nature based experiences in Australia.
- It is critical that we are known for the right things - conservation, our cultural connections, environmental ethic.
- We do not want to see inappropriate development wreck our landscape and our future – we want to see the environment improved.
- We want a balanced approach between tourism, lifestyle and conservation.
- We want to retain our lifestyle, our character and our sense of place.
- The whole destination needs to offer high quality, seamless experiences and consistent customer services.
- We need the whole community to understand Australia’s Green Cauldron and what it offers for visitors and be committed to it.
Guiding principles for developing as a destination

Visitor experiences

• High quality, seamless experiences and consistent customer services are the basis of the tourism offering.

• Experiences will reinforce the destinations’ positioning and offer immersive and engaging opportunities for visitors.

Sustainability

• Conservation of natural and cultural values is paramount to the visitor experience.

• Visitor experiences and associated infrastructure and services are environmentally, socially, culturally and financially sustainable.

• Development of new tourism product focuses on low volume, high yield opportunities that are consistent with the landscape and long-term sustainability of the destination.

Community benefit

• Growth in tourism provides social, environmental and economic benefits to the community including improved income, employment and investment in community assets.

• Any additional development is consistent with the community desire to retain lifestyle, community character and sense of place.

• New visitor experiences support the community goals of improved conservation and environmental protection.

Authentic Indigenous experiences

• Indigenous stories of Australia’s Green Cauldron are told by local Indigenous people.

• Local Indigenous people have opportunities to be engaged in the tourism industry through training, employment and business support.

Quality

• All visitor experiences and products are high quality regardless of the price point at which they are delivered.

• Interpretation of the region’s values is of a consistent high standard and offers opportunities suited to a range of visitors needs.

Australia’s Green Cauldron Hero Experiences

The two hero experiences express the distinctive essence of Australia’s Green Cauldron as a destination where an amazing diversity of creative, spiritual communities, landscapes and natural wonders can be experienced within short distances of each other. Visitors can experience the coast, seaside resorts, iconic wildlife, rainforest, an ancient volcanic landscape, quaint villages, distinctive cultures, lifestyles, spirituality and creative communities - all in one or two days. It is this packaging of diverse components which provides the uniqueness and key selling points for Australia’s Green Cauldron – the promise of experiencing a ‘mysterious melting pot’. Whilst initially people may be attracted to the hinterland for a day, the experiences on offer will drive growth in visitor numbers and longer stays over time.

One: Touch Australia’s creative and spiritual heartland

Australia’s Green Cauldron’s is the creative and spiritual heartland of Australia. The concentration of communities embracing alternative lifestyles, sustainable living, care of the land and sea, holistic health and wellbeing, spirituality and artistic expression is rarely found anywhere else in Australia. Currently less obvious but equally important, is the spiritual connection to country by local Indigenous people. Australia’s Green Cauldron has a palpable spirit expressed through local art, music, organic products, festivals and events, lifestyle and the commitment of communities towards conservation programs, wildlife recovery and cultural, environmental and economic sustainability. The natural quiet intrinsic to many parts of the region can also be a unique selling point for visitors seeking immersion in sustainable lifestyles.
Two: Immerse yourself within three ancient mysterious calderas as you travel between world class rainforest and coast

Australia’s Green Cauldron is the place where the visitor can become immersed in amazing surf, World Heritage rainforest and delightful rural countryside sculpted by an ancient volcano - all in one place.

One of the important attributes of Australia’s Green Cauldron is its variety of outstanding coastal and hinterland experiences within a short distance. Combining these experiences has the potential to surprise, thrill and enthrall global Experience Seekers by providing an unusual package of activities and landscapes that can fit within short journeys or offer extended stays. Packaging the coastal and hinterland attributes into immersive, fun, exciting and rewarding experiences can be linked and brought to life by telling the big stories that underpin the area’s volcanic origins and World Heritage rainforests.

Taking Australia’s Green Cauldron to the next level

If Australia’s Green Cauldron is to become a compelling destination that delivers on its positioning and achieves the vision of regional stakeholders, the industry and community will need to work together to deliver products, infrastructure, service, accommodation and interpretation that reflects the two hero experiences at a standard compatible with a world class destination.

This process will be a gradual one. In order to stimulate growth as a compelling destination, this Experience Development Strategy identifies a number of catalyst and priority projects. A range of ‘must do’ visitor products which express the hero experiences are suggested to provide a central core of iconic experiences that are a drawcard for global Experience Seekers and around which other products and experiences can be built. Other projects address some of the whole of destination and industry needs (skills, marketing and communications, gateways and infrastructure) that will help bring Australia’s Green Cauldron brand promise to life.

The catalyst projects are as follows:

Provision of key infrastructure to enable the delivery of world class experiences. These are:

Priority One
- development of a world class day walking track, ‘At the Foot of Wollumbin’, showcasing natural and cultural values
- repositioning and enhancement of the Rainforest Way – essential to provide journeys that enable visitors to immerse themselves in the melting pot of experiences that is the region – and of lookouts along the route

Priority Two
- gateway development, including a central gateway at the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre
- identification (and where necessary development) of top walks and cycle touring routes.

Development of distinctive products and a small number of signature experiences that provide a focus for visitors and encapsulate the two hero experiences. These are:

Priority One
- a Creative Arts and Wellbeing Hub
- festivals and events, including a possible signature event
- enhancing the Drumley Walk
- a signature soft adventure – Wild Journeys

Priority Two
- a signature Wildlife Tour
- Volunteer Conservation Program
- an exclusive Gold Coast-Canopy Remote Adventure
- a Canopy to Coast Multisport Event.
**Industry wide projects that will assist in bringing Australia’s Green Cauldron to life as a destination.** These projects will provide part of the framework essential for building the capacity of the region to develop and deliver the hero experiences and ensure that the brand promise is expressed throughout the destination. These are:

- up-skilling the tourism industry to deliver the hero experiences, both in terms of quality services and the development of packages that link the region’s variety
- development of a visual identity for the destination
- marketing and communication
- improving gateways
- improved information signage
- storytelling and interpretation planning.

*Implementation of the Priority One projects has the potential to make a significant contribution to the development and promotion of Australia’s Green Cauldron.*
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Australia’s National Landscapes represent some of the country’s most spectacular natural and cultural areas. They have been established to make Australia a more compelling destination to visit for international travellers, especially those wanting to immerse themselves in outstanding natural and cultural settings.

Thirteen National Landscapes have been announced so far. They include: Australia’s Red Centre, Australia’s Green Cauldron, Greater Blue Mountains, Australia’s Coastal Wilderness, Sydney Harbour, Australian Alps, Great Ocean Road, Flinders Ranges, the Kimberley, Kangaroo Island, Great Southwest Edge, Ningaloo-Shark Bay and Great Barrier Reef.

Established in 2005, the National Landscapes Program is a partnership between tourism and conservation managed by Tourism Australia and Parks Australia. The Program aims to enhance the global competitiveness of National Landscapes through investment in product development, infrastructure, marketing and workforce development.

Australia’s Green Cauldron was accepted into the National Landscapes Program due to its volcanic origins extending from inland to the coast and ancient World Heritage listed rainforest. An eclectic mix of communities, and the landscape’s high levels of cultural significance for Indigenous people, complete the picture of what is now being referred to as a ‘mysterious melting pot’ of nature and culture.

Australia’s Green Cauldron was selected by the National Landscapes Reference Committee (comprising well regarded leaders of Australia’s tourism and conservation sectors) for its great potential to grow its appeal to the Experience Seeker market through focused product development and marketing activity, using the region’s existing natural and cultural features and tourism products as a strong base.

1.2 What is this document about?

A requirement for all National Landscapes is to have an Experience Development Strategy (EDS). The EDS outlines the key experiences that will appeal to Australia’s target market – the global Experience Seeker.

The principle aim of the EDS is to identify opportunities to deliver ‘world’s best’ experiences consistent with the National Landscape positioning that must also balance the long-term economic benefits of tourism with the community and conservation values of the region.

1.3 How was it put together?

The project was guided by a Steering Committee made up of government, Indigenous and industry representatives from Queensland and New South Wales (see Appendix A for a list of members). Consultants were contracted to carry out an agreed 9-step process (see Figure 1).

Consultation was undertaken with stakeholders across the region through group meetings and presentations and one-on-one interviews. An online feedback web page enabled an open forum for stakeholders to respond to an initial Concept Paper and the draft EDS. Overall, the consultants:

• visited a wide range of natural and cultural attractions in the region
• gathered anecdotal information and secondary data from industry, Indigenous and government sources
• compared the international market-ready products and services of Australia’s Green Cauldron with other National Landscapes and other relevant destinations and
• had in-depth discussion with Tourism Australia and Parks Australia over how Australia’s Green Cauldron could be positioned in the international arena.

This EDS was influenced by a combination of data analysis, input from the Steering Committee, stakeholder consultation and the consultants’ experience from other competing destinations within Australia and overseas.
1. Introduction

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Figure 1. The EDS Planning Process
2. Australia’s Green Cauldron

2.1 Overview of the destination

Location

Australia’s Green Cauldron is one of the most accessible National Landscapes in the country. Encompassing the hinterland to the west of the Gold Coast and Byron Bay, it extends north to Tamborine Mountain and west towards Warwick taking in the volcanic semi-circle of the Scenic Rim region. The region is bordered by Border Ranges National Park to the west, Lamington and Springbrook National Parks to the north with Wollumbin (Mt Warning) National Park in the centre. It includes 12 national parks most of which are part of the Gondwana Rainforest World Heritage Area, several other conservation areas and 2 marine reserves.

The National Landscape spans South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales and takes in seven local government areas and several Regional and Local Tourism Organisations (see Figure 2).

Tourism Flows

Tourism flows in Australia’s Green Cauldron are generated out of three major gateways – Brisbane, Gold Coast and Byron Bay. Brisbane and the Gold Coast provide two international airports for the region. Byron Bay acts as a significant destination from which visitors disperse mainly on day trips to other parts of Australia’s Green Cauldron. Figure 3 illustrates the approximate flow of visitors and travel patterns through the region.

Major attractions and visitor flows occur along the Gold Coast and at Byron Bay. Located within an hour’s drive of Brisbane, the central part of Australia’s Green Cauldron experiences almost year-round visitation from Brisbane and surrounding cities. Other entry points to Australia’s Green Cauldron are available by road from the south and west. These are used by lower volumes of tourist traffic travelling north-south and east-west connecting the interior with the Gold Coast and Byron Bay. Relatively minor visitor flows occur between Beaudesert and Boonah and Rathdowney, Kyogle and Nimbin.

A number of hubs and activity nodes make up the region, as illustrated in Figure 4.

The Gold Coast is Australia’s major coastal destination with established international and domestic markets. Its focus is coastal activities, theme parks and fun, although there appears to be increasing day visitation to towns and parks inland from the coast (such as the Tweed Valley and Tamborine Mountain). Currumbin and Burleigh Heads have nationally significant wildlife attractions and conservation programs and walks linking the coast with the hinterland. Currumbin and Burleigh Heads are important experiential gateways to Australia’s Green Cauldron, providing many visitors with their first and only taste of what Australia’s Green Cauldron has to offer.
Figure 2. Location of Australia’s Green Cauldron
Figure 3: Visitor flows through Australia’s Green Cauldron
Figure 4: Hubs and activity nodes within Australia’s Green Cauldron

- **SCENIC RIM**: Self-drive, cycle, weekend escape, camping, Brisbane playground, local food & wine, farmstay, ecotourism retreats

- **TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN**: World Heritage Rainforest, comfort in nature, short walks, local art

- **GOLD COAST**: Australia’s major coastal tourism destination – established and mature product, day trip links to Green Cauldron

- **CURRUMBIN-BURLEIGH HEADS**: Key experiential gateway and link to Green Cauldron, iconic wildlife attractions, easy walks connecting to hinterland

- **RAINTREFOREST WAY**: The Green Cauldron’s main touring route linking communities, attractions & destinations

- **WOLLUMBIN MT WARNING**: Rainforest immersion, spiritual icon, day walks, world heritage rainforest, spectacular views, geological wonder

- **BYRON BAY**: Established destination – coastal lifestyle, marine tourism, health & wellness retreats in and nearby, links to Green Cauldron via day trips & Nimbin

- **SPRINGBROOK, LAMINGTON & BORDER RANGES NP’S**: High standard Ecotourism resorts, World Heritage rainforest, day walks, scenic lookouts, challenging overnight hikes

- **TWEED VALLEY, NIMBIN, KYOGLE**: Eclectic communities, art galleries, local produce, small town festivals, sustainable living, soft adventure, scenic drives
One of Australia’s iconic destinations, Byron Bay provides another visitor hub for exploring Australia’s Green Cauldron, including the alternative lifestyle Rainbow Region around Nimbin. Byron Bay has gained international recognition for creative industries and lifestyle, funky culture, music (e.g. Byron Bay Blues Festival), surfing, and health and wellbeing retreats.

The Scenic Rim is often referred to as ‘Brisbane’s playground’ and is growing in popularity as a self-drive, weekend destination and is also popular for day and overnight walking, camping and rural retreats. Eco-lodge style accommodation and other character accommodation is increasing in this part of the region, building on the success of internationally recognised Binna Burra and O’Reilly’s resorts in Lamington National Park.

The Tweed Valley, Kyogle and Nimbin encompass market gardens, quaint villages and alternative lifestyles that demonstrate a strong affiliation with the landscape through art, design, festivals and other events.

Wollumbin (Mt Warning National Park) is the iconic peak in the centre of the Tweed Valley and the ancient volcanic caldera, encapsulating the Indigenous and natural significance of the region. An obvious visitor drawcard, its visitor potential is underutilised. The current summit walk is against the wishes of the Bundjalung people.

The national parks of the region provide accessible ways to explore the region’s significant geology, rainforests and wildlife, as well as spectacular views from the rim of the ancient caldera. Lamington, Border Ranges, Burleigh Heads, Springbrook, Tamborine Mountain and Nightcap National Parks along with Cape Byron Marine Park, receive the highest levels of park visitation. Day walks and lookouts are key draw cards for Springbrook, Tamborine Mountain, Lamington and Border Ranges National Parks.

Four of Australia’s leading spa resorts are located in Australia’s Green Cauldron – one at Byron Bay, two at the Gold Coast and one at Kingscliff. Many more health and well-being establishments are located across the region.

2.2 Future directions

The outlook for the next 10 to 15 years suggests that existing visitor flows through Australia’s Green Cauldron will intensify, mainly through the Brisbane and Coolangatta gateways and along the current road and rail transport corridors such as the Pacific Highway. By 2025, it is estimated that one quarter of Australia’s population will live between northern New South Wales (especially the Northern Rivers Region) and South East Queensland. This is likely to result in increased visitation to Australia’s Green Cauldron from nearby centres of population and potentially from visiting friends and relatives from other states.

Some local councils associated with Australia’s Green Cauldron have pointed out that projected growth in population and visitor arrivals will drive further investment in transport networks (especially rail and upgraded roads), visitor infrastructure and facilities.

The Queensland Government’s SEQ Regional Plan aims to manage the anticipated high population growth in a sustainable manner, protecting the environment and enhancing quality of life. Landscape and biodiversity is to be enhanced, including the Tamborine Mountain escarpment, the Springbrook and Lamington plateaux, the Scenic Rim and ‘rural, nature-based and ecotourism destinations’.

In relation to Australia’s Green Cauldron, the Gold Coast’s priorities are to build nature-based and outdoor activity tourism in the Gold Coast hinterland, including several nominated projects for tourism development related to World Heritage and rainforest areas in the Lamington, Mt Tamborine and Springbrook areas (see Appendix B for more details). Development of quality sustainable visitor experiences and facilities that showcase World Heritage values is proposed for the Springbrook plateau under the Council’s 2011 Springbrook Visioning Plan.
The Scenic Rim Region sees its priorities as retaining and marketing the diversity of its natural assets and strengthening the rural and small town character of the region. Byron Shire aims to improve the town of Byron Bay as a key gateway and to protect the unique character of towns and villages throughout the Shire. Destination Tweed’s priorities include events, linking the coast to the hinterland, food and sports tourism, more use of the rivers, cycle tourism, village and ecotourism. On a similar theme, Casino, Lismore, Nimbin and Kyogle have priorities to strengthen events, their towns and particularly the transport linkages to the Pacific Highway, Brisbane and other major corridors.

The agencies responsible for management of the national parks within Australia’s Green Cauldron, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, both have policies supporting the development of sustainable nature based tourism in national parks for its benefits to State and local communities and as a way to gain public education and support for conservation. Both agencies also support appropriate partnerships with the community, Indigenous people and commercial operators in developing tourism opportunities.

2.3 International market performance

Excluding the Gold Coast and Byron Bay, international visitors would make up approximately 10% or less of total visitors to Australia’s Green Cauldron. The dominant markets are domestic day and overnight visitors from Brisbane, Sydney, the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers. Not surprisingly, most businesses used to dealing with international visitors are located in the coastal destinations, with a small number of backpacker to high-end resorts spread throughout the rest of the region attracting overseas guests.

Over the last 3 to 5 years, international visitation has remained steady or declined. Arrivals from New Zealand, Japan, the UK, Western Europe and the US have shown decreases, while visitation from China continues to grow at around 10% to 15% per annum. Average annual occupancy rates for commercial accommodation (15 rooms or more) are generally between 35% and 60%, although there are isolated exceptions above 70%. For the next 5 years, forecast growth in total international arrivals to Australia’s Green Cauldron area is less than 5% per annum (with the exception of arrivals from China). The Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018 will provide a boost in international arrivals. Australia’s Green Cauldron is well placed to capitalise on that event through building an increased profile and day and overnight trips from the coast to the hinterland.

There is no specific data on the proportion of international Experience Seekers visiting Australia’s Green Cauldron. A fair assumption (given their interests) is that a few are drawn to the Gold Coast but that many would be drawn to other parts of the region – notably Byron Bay, the Scenic Rim, Springbrook, Nightcap, Lamington and Border Ranges National Parks, Tweed Valley and Tamborine Mountain.

2.4 Summary

The future will see Australia’s Green Cauldron region becoming increasingly populated. Day trips and stays of from one to three nights will dominate the flow of visitation. Domestic visitors will be critical to growing the product development and positioning of the region. The majority of visitors to Australia’s Green Cauldron will continue to come from Northern New South Wales, Brisbane and South East Queensland. Visitors from other states and overseas will make up the rest. Little growth is expected in international arrivals in the short-term, although the Commonwealth Games will provide a boost in arrivals in 2018.

In broad terms, the tourism and conservation plans of local government, Regional and State Tourism Organisations and State parks agencies align with the intent of Australia’s Green Cauldron National Landscape.

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1 Data on market trends for Australia’s Green Cauldron are not recorded for the region. Instead, a composite picture has to be compiled based on the sub-regions that make up the Green Cauldron. The Gold Coast and Byron Bay receive between 10% and 30% visitation from international markets.
3. Experience Proposition for Australia’s Green Cauldron

3.1 Regional Character

The region is a distinctive natural and cultural landscape consisting of the remnants of the world’s second largest shield volcano, clothed by relic subtropical and warm temperate rainforest from the ancient southern supercontinent Gondwana, bounded by a globally recognised coastline and world-class surf breaks. A hotspot of biodiversity, the area is celebrated for more than 1,700 species of flowering plants, 500 species of vertebrate animals, thousands of invertebrate species and many rare and threatened species conserved in several national parks. The area has the highest concentration of frog, snake, bird and marsupial species in Australia. It is also home to many of Australia’s iconic wildlife – such as platypus, koala, kangaroo, wallaby and Albert’s Lyrebird. Dolphins, Humpback Whales and other marine wildlife are seen along the coastline.

The region’s rainforest is inscribed on the World Heritage List as part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia, a series of subtropical, warm temperate and cool temperate rainforest areas stretching from south-east Queensland to Barrington Tops in New South Wales. This rainforest provides living links with the plant communities of the ancient continent of Gondwanaland over 100 million years ago before it broke into the current continents of the southern hemisphere.

The region is also special because of the accessibility of its natural wonders. Close to the major centres of the Gold Coast and Brisbane and traversed by the Pacific Highway, it is more easily visited than many other rainforest locations in more remote regions. The open nature of the rainforest and the subtropical/warm temperate climate also create a landscape that it more accessible for walking and wildlife viewing than dense tropical rainforest.

The landscape, culture and community of the region are inextricably intertwined, adding to its distinctiveness. The area was a rich landscape for the local Indigenous people providing an abundance of food, medicine and other material. It continues to hold great cultural and spiritual significance for its Indigenous communities. Wollumbin - the towering, cone-shaped mountain in the middle of the ancient volcanic caldera and an iconic feature visible from many parts of the region - is a sacred place of clan lore, initiation and spiritual education for local Indigenous people.

Today, the region supports an eclectic mix of towns, quaint villages, and alternative lifestyle, farming, surfing and artistic communities - drawn to lifestyles based upon the region’s unique character, fertile soils, equable climate and relaxed, unhurried and healthy atmosphere. It has vibrant local cultures expressed in art, craft, music, spirituality and alternative philosophies and holistic healing, as well as in numerous local markets and festivals, quirky places and characters. It is also noted for its fresh local produce (grown by both traditional and organic methods) – including macadamia nuts, exotic fruits, coffee, organic fruit and vegetables, vineyards and more traditional sugarcane, dairy and beef farms.

A commitment to sustainable living and conserving the environment can be seen throughout the region and adds to its distinctiveness. It is the heartland of Australia’s modern alternative lifestyle movement, especially the so-called Rainbow Region near Nimbin and Lismore, which began to be settled by people seeking a small-scale, sustainable lifestyle in the 1960s and 1970s. People of the region were also pioneers in conservation of the rainforest (such as the famous blockage against logging at what is now Nightcap National Park) and in eco-tourism (such as the historic O’Reilly’s guesthouse in Lamington National Park).

Today, the emphasis on sustainability can be seen in many different communities and their endeavours – including in the development of eco-tourism, rural retreats and lifestyle products and accommodation. The sustainability ethos is at the heart of the region and is a key point of difference for this National Landscape. In keeping with this sustainability emphasis, the establishment of a Sustainability Centre (which would be a leader in green technologies, research, design, innovation and education) has also been mooted for Nerang on the Gold Coast.
Despite its proximity to the major population centres of the Gold Coast and Brisbane, Australia’s Green Cauldron region has maintained its distinctive unspoilt natural character and cultural identity, providing a very appealing destination for visitors seeking authentic experiences.

3.2 Experience Proposition

Experience Seekers, the target market for National Landscapes, are a varied market differing by age, country of origin and spending power, but united by values, attitudes and motivations. They are typically well educated, motivated by opportunities for personal growth, fulfilment and learning, and discerning about experiences, especially the presentation of natural and cultural heritage.

In summary, Experience Seekers are looking for:

• authenticity of experience
• interaction with, and immersion in, people, culture and places
• points of difference
• challenges and
• learning opportunities.

Feedback from the tourism industry suggests that the Experience Seekers visiting Australia’s Green Cauldron range fairly evenly from those who are budget conscious to mid and upper-range spenders. They seek quality activities (non-guided, commercially guided and self-drive) and value for money. They may have limited time and want clarity about what is best to do during a short stay.

Work began in 2008 to clarify the region’s proposition to Experience Seekers. Initially, the National Landscape boundary was confined to the Wollumbin caldera and greater Tweed Valley, later expanding to include the Scenic Rim, Gold Coast, Byron Bay, Kyogle, Lismore and Casino. Figure 5 illustrates the brand and experience proposition developed during that process and endorsed by the National Landscape Steering Committee.

Immerse Yourself in a Mysterious Melting Pot

Immerse yourself conveys the engaging nature of the destination to Experience Seekers through natural and cultural diversity (including the Aboriginal cultural dimension).

Mysterious suggests a sense of discovery and refers to the mystique of the destination – the natural phenomenon, the phenomenal nature and ‘colourful’ towns and communities and provides an opportunity to include a significant Aboriginal component.

Melting pot represents the eclectic nature of the destination – the coming together of diverse elements that whilst retaining their individual character provide a dynamic mix.

Figure 5: Australia’s Green Cauldron Experience Proposition (Calais Consultants, 2008)

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The proposition to *Experience Seekers* is grounded in three dimensions:

- a well-preserved volcanic caldera enveloped by rainforests (many of which are World Heritage listed)
- a globally recognised marine environment
- diverse and ‘culturally rich’ communities.

Australia’s Green Cauldron brand encapsulates the region’s distinctive integration of ancient geology and rainforests, stunning scenery and beaches, and eclectic, quirky contemporary communities with their characteristic local cultures, creativity, spirituality, lifestyles and celebration of their natural environment.

The brand promise – *Immerse Yourself in a Mysterious Melting Pot* - describes the experience that is to be delivered to the *Experience Seeker* through this strategy (explained further in Figure 6). The hero experiences recommended in section 5 of this EDS have been identified to deliver on this promise.

The destination’s appeal and diversity encapsulate its geology and ecology, its geography (hinterland to coast), history (Indigenous to today), topography (from city skylines, to mountains, steep escarpments, hidden valleys, rural landscapes, ocean headlands and idyllic beaches), atmosphere (changing seasons and moods), creativity (arts, craft and music), culture/lifestyle (traditional to alternative, including alternative philosophies, spirituality and healing) and communities (rural, semi urban and alternative).

Because of this diversity, there is potential for Australia’s Green Cauldron to link to and leverage off the existing positioning for tourism in the various parts of the region - the Gold Coast, the Scenic Rim, Byron Bay and Northern Rivers.

**An ancient volcanic hotspot, now a living Gondwanan rainforest**

*Ancient* refers to the region’s turbulent, volcanic beginnings millions of years ago that created the Caldera, a massive erosion cavity. Together with the word “living”, it conveys the timeless nature of the destination.

*Living* also signifies the flora, fauna, marine life and human habitation that have survived through millennia.

*Now* is about the present and suggests the passage of time.

*Volcanic hotspot* represents the source of hot lava flows that led to the formation of the Caldera, the rich marine system and fertile soils that continue to sustain life on land, in the air and under water.

The prefix *Gondwanan* lends the rainforests their pristine status and a link with Australia even in the absence of an explicit World Heritage label that is more unwieldy to include in marketing speak. It adds a sense of heritage and mystique to the region’s natural assets.

*Gondwanan rainforests* might also suggest that these rainforests are different from those found in the Amazon or other parts of the world.

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*Figure 6: Meaning of Australia’s Green Cauldron Destination Position (Calais Consultants, 2008)*
4. Vision, values and Guiding Principles for Australia’s Green Cauldron

4.1 Vision
Stakeholders developed the following Vision to guide the delivery of the promise of Australia’s Green Cauldron as a National Landscape.

Vision for Australia’s Green Cauldron
Each and every visitor to Australia’s Green Cauldron will leave inspired and touched by their experience of our region’s world class surfing, marine and rainforest opportunities, spiritual values, cultural connections, creative communities and sustainable lifestyles.

In achieving that Vision, Australia’s Green Cauldron will have a discernible impact on:

- Connecting Gondwana World Heritage Rainforests to world class surfing and marine environments: funding allocations will increase, visitor facilities and experiences will improve
- Public awareness and support: local communities will be active supporters engaging in tourism and conservation partnerships
- Indigenous empowerment: Aboriginal communities will be integrated throughout Australia’s Green Cauldron experiences
- Regional and state collaboration: the level of joint venture funding and cooperation will increase dramatically on 2012 level
- International visitors: Experience Seekers from overseas will increasingly choose Australia’s Green Cauldron over other alternatives within Australia
- Domestic visitors: visitors from across Australia will be inspired and motivated to visit Australia’s Green Cauldron attracted by the depth and quality of experiences on offer.

4.2 Values
The communities, government agencies, Indigenous people and industry stakeholders in Australia’s Green Cauldron are very clear about their values and how they want to develop as a destination and how they wish to be seen in the world.

Our Values - How we want to develop as a destination
We want to be front-of-mind for nature based experiences in Australia.
It is critical that we are known for the right things - conservation, our cultural connections, environmental ethic.
We do not want to see inappropriate development wreck our landscape and our future – we want to see the environment improved.
We want a balanced approach between tourism, lifestyle and conservation.
We want to retain our lifestyle, our character and our sense of place.
The whole destination needs to offer high quality, seamless experiences and consistent customer services.
We need the whole community to understand Australia’s Green Cauldron and what it offers for visitors and be committed to it.
4.3 Guiding Principles

The following Guiding Principles have been adopted for development of visitor experiences in Australia’s Green Cauldron, drawing on the Vision for the region and community and stakeholder views on how they want the region to develop as a destination. At the heart of this lies the region’s sustainability ethos and the community wish that, while benefitting the region, Australia’s Green Cauldron experiences and related infrastructure should be delivered in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner that maintains regional lifestyles.

Visitor experiences

- High quality, seamless experiences and consistent customer services are the basis of the tourism offering.
- Experiences will reinforce the destinations’ positioning and offer immersive and engaging opportunities for visitors.

Sustainability

- Conservation of natural and cultural values is paramount to the visitor experience.
- Visitor experiences and associated infrastructure and services are environmentally, socially, culturally and financially sustainable.
- Development of new tourism product focuses on low volume, high yield opportunities that are consistent with the landscape and long-term sustainability of the destination.

Community benefit

- Growth in tourism provides social, environmental and economic benefits to the community including improved income, employment and investment in community assets.
- Any additional development is consistent with the community desire to retain lifestyle, community character and sense of place.
- New visitor experiences support the community goals of improved conservation and environmental protection.

Authentic Indigenous experiences

- Indigenous stories of Australia’s Green Cauldron are told by local Indigenous people.
- Local Indigenous people have opportunities to be engaged in the tourism industry through training, employment and business support.

Quality

- All visitor experiences and products are high quality regardless of the price point at which they are delivered.
- Interpretation of the region’s values is of a consistent high standard and offers opportunities suited to a range of visitors needs.
5. **Australia’s Green Cauldron Experiences**

5.1 **Overview**

Brand Australia identifies seven different experience pillars that have the most potential to encourage international travellers to visit Australia:

- Outback Australia
- Aussie Coastal Lifestyle
- Nature in Australia
- Food & Wine
- Australian Major Cities
- Australian Journeys
- Aboriginal Australia

Recent research has revealed that Nature in Australia and Australian Journeys are the two experience types that are the most motivating to international travellers. Nature and Journeys are also ranked as the most appealing, exciting and relevant. It is well known that experiences suited to the needs of international visitors will also be attractive to domestic visitors.

Australia’s Green Cauldron can readily deliver on Nature in Australia, Aussie Coastal Lifestyle and Australian Journeys. Aboriginal Australia, Food and Wine are emerging experiences in the region.

5.2 **What are experiences?**

Experiences are generated by an interaction between visitors, places and people. One half of the interaction comes from the area, and can include activities (guided and self-guided), the natural or cultural setting, storytelling or interpretation, information (before, during and after the visit), infrastructure and facilities, and the customer service received along the way. They represent the key ingredients and can be managed and changed creating better or new experiences.

Visitors create the other half of the interaction. This includes expectations, motivations, special interests, prior experience, itineraries and other socio-psychological dimensions. Ultimately, the visitor decides what type of experience they have had.

To deliver a quality experience means finding the best match between what is on offer and what the visitor desires. High quality experiences do not necessarily mean high prices, as quality to one visitor is not the same to another. Figure 7 illustrates that the whole experience – people, place, infrastructure, services and storytelling – equals the sum of its parts.

![Figure 7: Supply-side components to visitor experiences](image-url)
Experience Seekers are looking for interaction, learning opportunities and the opportunity to build a connection with the destination they are visiting. The information they get before the visit will firstly affect the decision to visit, and then shape the places they go, the things they do and the way they travel.

Underpinning all this are the stories of the destination and the ways in which they are told to ensure the experience is memorable. The big stories that deliver on each of the hero experiences are described in Appendix C. The stories need to be integrated and told in a range of ways that might include:

- On site interpretation at visitor nodes
- Interactive technology and on line material
- Face to face guided activities
- Accommodation and attraction operators being well informed and able to engage with visitors
- Awareness amongst anyone who interacts with visitors across the whole destination of the positioning and stories.

5.3 The hero experiences

Hero experiences are the standout experiences for a destination that reflect the destination’s brand promise and positioning. They help define the place, its people and stories and provide a focus for marketing the region and differentiating it from other destinations. These types of experiences tend to be few in number but rich in quality. Some examples are provided below.

- Driving the Gibb River Road in the Kimberley
- Staying on an outback station in the Flinders Ranges
- Swimming with the whale sharks on the Ningaloo Coast
- Walking the Overland, Milford and Routeburn Tracks
- Bungy jumping, rafting and jet boat rides in Queenstown, New Zealand
- Diving the Great Barrier Reef
- Trekking in the Annapurna, Everest and Langtang regions, Nepal.

Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee has identified two hero experiences for delivery of the destination’s brand promise.

One: Touch Australia’s creative and spiritual heartland

Two: Immerse yourself within three ancient mysterious calderas as you travel between world class rainforest and coast

The hero experiences express the distinctive essence of Australia’s Green Cauldron as a destination where an amazing diversity of creative, spiritual communities, landscapes and natural wonders can be experienced within short distances of each other. Visitors can experience the coast, seaside resorts, iconic wildlife, rainforest, an ancient volcanic landscape, quaint villages, distinctive cultures, lifestyles, spirituality and creative communities - all in one or two days. It is this packaging of diverse components which provides the uniqueness and key selling points for Australia’s Green Cauldron – the promise of experiencing a mysterious melting pot.

Developing visitor opportunities that connect the different elements is at the heart of the hero experiences. A crucial connection is that between the coast and the hinterland – both in terms of building compelling experiences and attracting visitors into the region in practical terms. Coastal destinations currently have the main pulling power for visitors – with the Gold Coast being the main current destination and gateway for global visitors. There is a need to attract visitors to the Gold Coast and Byron Bay into the hinterland. This concept is beginning to gain traction with some visitors to the Gold Coast and Byron Bay. A small number of tour operators have already developed products based on this opportunity and see further potential for growth.
5.3.1 Touch Australia’s creative and spiritual heartland

Unique Selling Point

Australia’s Green Cauldron is the creative and spiritual heartland of Australia. The concentration of communities embracing alternative lifestyles, sustainable living, care of the land and sea, holistic health and wellbeing, spirituality and artistic expression is rarely found anywhere else in Australia. Currently less obvious, but equally important, is the spiritual connection to country by local Indigenous people. Australia’s Green Cauldron has a palpable spirit expressed through local art, music, organic products, festivals and events, lifestyle and the commitment of communities towards conservation programs, wildlife recovery and cultural, environmental and economic sustainability. The natural quiet intrinsic to many parts of the region can also be a unique selling point for visitors seeking immersion in sustainable lifestyles.

The big stories that characterise the region’s communities are described in Appendix C and include:

• Visionary individuals who strengthened the cause for rainforest protection in the region
• Alternative lifestyles - the migration of East Coast city dwellers to the region in search of a better way of life, spiritual renewal and a more natural environment to live in – which influenced much of the social fabric seen today
• The history and present day array of arts and other cottage and creative industries
• The Indigenous cultural and spiritual significance of Wollumbin and its place in clan traditions, initiation and spiritual education.

Telling these stories in imaginative ways throughout the region and expressing them through visitor experiences and products can assist in developing truly immersive opportunities for Experience Seekers.

Some stories, such as the Indigenous connection with Wollumbin and their other connections with country, should not be seen as commodities. While opportunities exist to tell some of the Indigenous stories through community elders, special events or approved tour guides, Indigenous connection to country – as a concept - is ‘not for sale’. It is up to the relevant Indigenous people whether to tell their stories and how they should be presented to visitors.
Current opportunities

With a few exceptions, the spirit of regional communities is not ‘on show’ or commercialised to any great extent. Rather, it is part of everyday life and is as much for residents as it is for visitors. This is a key attraction of the region for Experience Seekers, as it provides opportunities for authentic experiences of the local people, culture and activities.

For Experience Seekers, the key opportunities are centred on:

• Tweed Valley – self-drive and guided day trips amongst the towns, villages, art galleries (e.g. the Tweed River Gallery in Murwillumbah), pubs, organic farms and the monthly markets and festivals of Murwillumbah, Uki, Tyalgum, and Tumbulgum

• Byron Bay and Bangalow – the Byron Bay Blues Festival and town character

• Nimbin – the hippy capital of Australia and the Rainbow Region

• Lismore Art Trail – linked with Nimbin artists

• the foothills, valleys mountains of the Scenic Rim and Mount Tamborine, which have a diverse mix of wineries, galleries, shops and character accommodation (eco-lodges, farmstays, glamping) and a range of festivals (including Studios of the Scenic Rim, Arts in the Olives, Ancient Arts Revival (Lost World), Tambo Scarecrow and Spring Festivals and Boonah Arts Festival).

Art, creative activities, lifestyle and well-being are a community focus and are becoming more accessible for visitors through promotion, events, awards, publications (such as the planned Art of Australia’s Green Cauldron by Caldera Art) and television exposure. Colour In Your Life – the successful Australian TV series founded by Murwillumbah artist Graeme Stevenson – showcases the art and artists of the Northern Rivers and resulted in extensive art sales, including in the United States.

Places such as Byron Bay and its hinterland are a focus for health and well-being retreats and for participative experiences (such as yoga retreats and teacher training). There are also opportunities in the region for staying at, and learning about, local lifestyles or skills (e.g. farmstays, alternative lifestyle accommodation, cooking classes).
These opportunities are easily accessible for self-drive visitors on flexible itineraries. The Rainforest Way is the main touring route in the region for both cultural and natural experiences. It currently leads through the heart of the region linking the towns of Casino, Kyogle, Rathdowney, Beaudesert, Canungra, Nerang, Murwillumbah, Nimbin and Lismore, with seven side trips. However, this drive route has gained limited traction for a range of reasons, including possible confusion caused by the broad range of choices offered to the consumer and non-targeted marketing.

Opportunities are currently limited for Experience Seekers to connect with Indigenous people. The region is not perceived by international visitors to have strengths in this offering, with the Northern Territory and the Kimberley being seen as the key places by both visitors and tour operators.

Nevertheless, engaging with Indigenous culture is possible at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary’s Yanguwah evening performance; on the annual Drumley Walk between Beaudesert and Southport on the Gold Coast; at the Yugambeh Language and Heritage Research Centre; and the Minjungbal Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Tweed. Other Indigenous tourism businesses such as Bundjalung and Arakwal on the coast and around Kyogle with the Githabul Nation are emerging.

The annual Drumley Walk is a successful regional event that celebrates Indigenous culture and people in southwest Queensland. It is growing as an event that attracts Indigenous people from across Australia over a four-day period. The Scenic Rim Regional Council sees the event as an important link between the Indigenous community and tourism and includes support for the event as an ongoing priority in its tourism strategy.

**Future possibilities**

To harness the potential of existing experiences and provide a framework for new product opportunities, reinvigoration of the Rainforest Way should be seen as a priority for attracting both international and domestic day and overnight self-drive visitors. With a clearer focus on high quality ‘must do’ attractions, it has the potential to provide high quality journeys linking the collective appeal of Australia’s Green Cauldron communities and key experiences and products.

Recent discussions with Indigenous people in the region indicate a strong desire by some to establish Indigenous owned and run businesses, as well as to achieve more employment throughout the tourism sector. This could add a highly appealing cultural dimension for global Experience Seekers.

To engage further with Indigenous culture, greater participation of the Indigenous community is required throughout the industry, particularly on tours, at events and through storytelling. Skills and business development is needed to assist this. Strengthening existing activities such as the Drumley Walk will also help to build profile.
Numerous festivals and events express the spirit, creativity and diversity of Australia’s Green Cauldron’s communities. Greater promotion and potential consolidation or organisation of the events is needed to make them more accessible to global Experience Seekers and other visitor markets. One tactic is to ensure quality events are taking place in each quarter of the year. Comparable examples would be festivals held in the wine regions such as the Barossa, Clare Valley, and Hawkes Bay and Martinborough in New Zealand (where visitors travel between vineyards and small settlements over one or two days).

A creative arts and wellbeing ‘hub’ could build on the many artists and artisans, wellbeing retreats and lifestyle opportunities in the region and grow this into an even stronger experience through the development of more or better events, awards, galleries, publications (such as the planned Art of Australia’s Green Cauldron by Caldera Art), joint venture marketing campaigns, small business development, workshops / experiential learning programs and so on. Such a hub would not be a physical location. It would focus on opportunities for local people (such as artists, craftspeople, organic producers, alternative life-stylers, local industries, health and wellbeing practitioners) to develop boutique ‘behind the scenes’ or ‘creative tourism’ experiences where visitors live and learn about, or undertake training in, the particular way of life and expertise.

*Colour In Your Life* – the successful Australian TV series founded by Murwillumbah artist Graeme Stevenson – showcases the art, region and artists of the Northern Rivers. But this is just a start. Further TV exposure could be developed to showcase the creative art space occupied by the Green Cauldron.
5.3.2 Immerse yourself within three ancient mysterious calderas as you travel between world class rainforest and coast

Unique Selling Point

One of the important attributes of Australia’s Green Cauldron is its variety of outstanding coastal and hinterland experiences within a short distance. Combining these experiences has the potential to surprise, thrill and enthrall global Experience Seekers by providing an unusual package of activities and landscapes that can fit within short journeys or extended stays. There are few places in Australia where visitors can choose to experience all or some of the following:

- stay in a unique colonial cottage at Australia’s most easterly point at Cape Byron, kayak near whales close to the shore at Byron Bay in the morning and drive and walk through World Heritage rainforest in the afternoon
- trek beneath ancient Antarctic Beech forest at sunrise and view the ancient volcanic caldera at Lamington National Park and surf the famous Kirra Point break in the evening
- fly in a hot air balloon over an ancient volcanic caldera and some of world’s most ancient tree species in the morning and learn to surf in the afternoon
- stay at a spa retreat or historic eco-lodge with expansive mountain views, walk through World Heritage rainforest treetops and finish off the day with Stand Up Paddling, snorkelling or surfing on the coast
- see platypus in a wild mountain stream and see and learn about iconic and rare animals in the rainforest or a wildlife park one day and go swimming with dolphins the next day
- kayak a tranquil coastal estuary, bushwalk in rainforest in Nightcap National Park, explore the area of the famous conservation ‘Battle for Terania Creek’ and take in the delights of rural villages, craft and art galleries in the Rainbow Region all in one day
- ride a bike through relaxing rural country lanes with a backdrop of the ancient, rainforest-clothed volcanic mountains, picnic in the rainforest, sample fresh local produce, visit local artists and see how the Green Cauldron landscape influences their life and work, stay in secluded mudbrick cottages, country retreats or luxury tents and return to the coast in the space of one, two or more days.
Its volcanic origins and World Heritage listed rainforest underpin the designation of this National Landscape. Packaging the coastal and hinterland attributes into immersive, fun, exciting and rewarding experiences can be linked and brought to life by telling the big stories that underpin the area’s volcanic origins and World Heritage rainforests. Some of these stories are outlined in Appendix C and include:

- Gondwanan rainforest and volcanic origins – why they are special
- World class surf has produced world class surfers – but the coast has accessible surfing areas with a variety of conditions to suit all ages and all abilities
- Wildlife – the iconic and lesser-known species can be viewed on rainforest walks or wildlife parks
- Conservation success stories – the ‘Battle for Terania Creek’ which was a significant mark in recent rainforest protection, and efforts by local people in wildlife recovery and captive breeding which are helping the survival of the area’s rich biodiversity
- the unique integration of communities and their lifestyles with the region’s rainforest, geology and wildlife.
Current opportunities

Some of the leading opportunities for Experience Seekers currently are:

- viewing the landscape from a range of spectacular lookouts, either as part of a short walk or a road journey on the Rainforest Way – e.g. Springbrook National Park, Mt Tamborine, Greenhills Road in the Scenic Rim, Burleigh Heads National Park, Cunningham’s Gap, Border Ranges National Park
- viewing the landscape from the air – hot air balloon rides and helicopter scenic flights from Ipswich and the Gold Coast
- guided national park tours with several operators
- wildlife encounters at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and David Fleay Wildlife Park
- expansive views of land and sea from Cape Byron, the most easterly point in Australia – which can be combined with heritage experiences
- adventures in the coastal environment – e.g. learning to surf, kayaking at Byron Bay (including near dolphins and near whales close to shore during the migration season), diving and snorkelling at Cook Island
- climbing Wollumbin (Mt Warning) – although the Indigenous community does not support climbing the mountain due to its spiritual significance
- eco-accommodation and a range of rainforest and bushwalking activities associated with O’Reilly’s Rainforest Retreat and Tree Top Walk, Binna Burra Mountain Lodge and Mt Barney Lodge
- the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk
- Tamborine Skywalk
- a wide range of accessible surfing opportunities.

More niche opportunities involve energetic climbs of Mounts Barney, Lindesay, French, Maroon and Edwards further inland, with some guided products on offer. There is also a plethora of walking tracks and other trails in the region – though in many places these are not presented in a way that assists visitor choice (particularly for visitors on short visits).

The region’s road system is well suited for small group cycle touring, as evidenced by the popularity of weekend riding groups from Brisbane, the Gold Coast and elsewhere. Cycle tourism would also fit well within the region’s sustainability emphasis, providing a ‘green’ form of transport that might be marketed and packaged to reflect an environmental ethos.

However, in many cases these opportunities (apart from surfing on the Gold Coast) are not clearly publicised and accessibly packaged to global Experience Seekers and many other visitors. The wide range of choice obscures the ‘must do’ experiences for many visitors, especially those on short itineraries.

Some of the infrastructure associated with natural attractions and visitor interpretation does not meet the world’s best practice standards expected by global visitors in an iconic destination and World Heritage Area. Standards and design of some lookouts and walking trails require upgrading, as well as the range of onsite, interactive and digital interpretation methods.
**Future possibilities**

While there are numerous opportunities and potentially superb linked experiences showcasing the region’s landscapes, these need to be enhanced, actively linked, carefully selected, and packaged and promoted as ‘must do’ experiences to increase their profile for visitors. There is potential to provide experiences suitable for a range of interests, active pursuits and price points that are represented among global Experience Seekers.

Accessible and engaging interpretation of the region’s stories also needs to be provided at key points such as gateways, lookouts, walking trails and national parks, including through contemporary interactive methods either in person or through digital technology. Consideration should be given to using interpretation to deepen the attraction of the region for niche markets (e.g. wildlife tourists, geotourists) who may be attracted to the region by enhanced opportunities. For instance, the Geological Society of Australia has proposed a partnership approach to developing geotrails in the region to appeal to a range of markets.

Assuming reinvestment in the Rainforest Way will be treated as a priority, upgrading of spectacular lookouts along the way would greatly assist in showcasing the variety of landscapes and providing interest to the journey. This should include at least one icon tower or other lookout structure that is attractive in its own right.

A range of iconic walking and cycling opportunities could be developed and packaged – both products that are popular with global Experience Seekers and which build upon current interest in the region. This will require walking trail upgrades and development. Opportunities include a walk near Wollumbin that showcases this iconic and attractive mountain and its rainforest. The dilemma over Indigenous concerns about the summit climb needs to be addressed and a workable solution developed. A similar issue about climbing of Uluru in Central Australia is being addressed by Traditional Owners and park management – dialogue between Wollumbin stakeholders and Uluru may provide guidance on ways to approach visitor experiences at Wollumbin.

Other potential opportunities for longer walks are a potential Border Crossing Walk connecting the mountains and rainforest of NSW and the Scenic Rim in Queensland and enhancement and extension of the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk.

With the two established wildlife parks near the Gold Coast attracting numerous visitors, the presence of a World Heritage Area, a range of national parks and quality wildlife and conservation focussed tours and products, there is potential to build compelling tours that showcase the region’s biodiversity and link the coast and hinterland.
Global *Experience Seekers* are highly interested in immersive soft adventures (either self-guided packages or guided products) which enable them to have close encounters with natural areas and adventurous activities that they would not otherwise be easily accessible to them. A potential soft adventure product combining Indigenous interpretation with a range of activities is being investigated by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service for introduction in Australia’s Green Cauldron.

At the high end of the market, leverage might be gained from the proximity of the Gold Coast as a focus for international visitors by a high end, exclusive soft adventure experience (such as a combined spectacular scenic flight and walking experience).

The varied terrain and many rivers of the region also lend themselves to multisport endurance events - there is already one such event in the region (the Kokoda Challenge). Multisport events in spectacular outdoor settings are popular and can be a significant annual visitor drawcard and way of publicising a region.
6. The Way Forward

How can Australia’s Green Cauldron build a compelling destination that delivers on its positioning and achieves the vision of regional stakeholders?

At a base level, it will be necessary for all stakeholders in the destination to work together to develop opportunities and address weaknesses and threats. An outline of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to building the destination is provided in Table 1, together with the ways these are addressed through this Experience Development Strategy.

Throughout the region, it will also be necessary for the range of tourism stakeholders to enhance, develop and present infrastructure, products, service, accommodation and interpretation so that it reflects the hero experiences at a standard compatible with a world class destination (whatever the price point). To assist this, current experiences in Australia’s Green Cauldron have been assessed for their compatibility with National Landscape objects and their distinctiveness for Australia’s Green Cauldron. Key current experiences are summarised in Appendix D together with suggested improvements and their potential impact on the destination.

This process of enhancing the components of the region will be a gradual one. In order to stimulate growth of a compelling destination and delivery of the hero experiences, this Experience Development Strategy identifies a number of catalyst and priority projects in section 7. A range of ‘must do’ visitor products which express the hero experiences are suggested to provide a central core of iconic experiences that are a drawcard for global Experience Seekers and around which other products and experiences can be built. Other projects address some of the whole of destination and industry needs (skills, marketing and communications, gateways and infrastructure) that will help bring Australia’s Green Cauldron positioning to life.

Finally, the Experience Development Strategy addresses the important issues of Strategy implementation and governance.
Table 1: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for Australia’s Green Cauldron

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close proximity to major gateways, established tourism destinations and large population centres</td>
<td>Lack of profile of Australia’s Green Cauldron in key international markets and only limited profile in the Australian market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity to package coastal and hinterland experiences to suit one day or multi-day itineraries</td>
<td>Lack of a critical mass of unique and compelling propositions in the hinterland to supplement the existing attractions on the Gold Coast and at Byron Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compact offering of creative arts, local produce, World Heritage rainforest and eclectic communities</td>
<td>Multiple political, local government and tourism jurisdictions with established destination brands (Gold Coast, Scenic Rim, Tweed, Byron Bay) can limit collective action in support of Australia’s Green Cauldron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities with a strong commitment and belief in sustainable management of the environment</td>
<td>Lack of regional collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities with a passionate belief in social justice and protection of cultural values</td>
<td>Competition from other regions</td>
</tr>
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Address by
- further development of key gateways for Australia’s Green Cauldron
- improved information and promotion of activities at gateways and destinations such as the Gold Coast
- developing packages and products that encourage coastal visitors to travel to the hinterland
- reflection of community values and vision in products and experiences throughout the region

Address by
- a marketing and communications strategy that includes active partnerships with Tourism Australia to take advantage of National Landscape Program opportunities
- developing a range of compelling products, packages and journeys in the hinterland and connecting the coast and hinterland (see Catalyst projects)
- developing strong representative governance arrangements to progress this Experience Development Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each local government, regional tourism organisation, management agency and tourism operator finds a way to leverage off the Australia’s Green Cauldron concept</td>
<td>Lack of regional collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stronger connections between the coast and hinterland through tours, activities, attractions, infrastructure, signs, interpretation and facilities</td>
<td>Competition from other regions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration of Indigenous stories and experiences throughout the region</td>
<td>Planning restrictions, policy provisions and funding constraints associated with the national parks within Australia’s Green Cauldron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build visitor appreciation of the region’s unique geological history and understanding of how it has created the mysterious melting pot today</td>
<td>Increasing pressure for development in or near some of the more pristine and outstanding areas within the National Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address by</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- developing awareness and up-skilling to assist and encourage delivery of hero experiences</td>
<td>Resource sector conflicts such as coal seam gas and mining</td>
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<tr>
<td>- implement the Catalyst projects</td>
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<td>- work with Indigenous communities to improve tourism skills and business opportunities and implement catalyst projects involving Indigenous people (Drumley Walk, At the Foot of Wollumbin, Wild Journeys)</td>
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<td>- developing interpretive materials and growing opportunities to tell stories throughout the region</td>
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Address by
- strong governance arrangements
- strong development of Australia’s Green Cauldron visitation will provide a strong reason for continuing protection of the area’s natural and cultural values and character

Address by
- developing interpretive materials and growing opportunities to tell stories throughout the region
- work with Indigenous communities to improve tourism skills and business opportunities and implement catalyst projects involving Indigenous people (Drumley Walk, At the Foot of Wollumbin, Wild Journeys)
- developing awareness and up-skilling to assist and encourage delivery of hero experiences
- develop interpretive materials and growing opportunities to tell stories throughout the region
7. Catalyst Projects

There are a number of key projects which will act as catalysts to develop Australia’s Green Cauldron as a compelling destination and deliver on the hero experiences. These have been identified through the analysis of current visitor opportunities (see section 6 and Appendix D) and consultation with regional stakeholders. These catalyst projects have been divided as follows.

**Provision of key infrastructure** to enable the delivery of world class experiences. These are:

**Priority One**
- development of a world class day walking track, ‘At the Foot of Wollumbin’, showcasing natural and cultural values, an alternative to climbing Wollumbin that respects cultural values and significance of the site
- Repositioning and enhancement of the Rainforest Way – essential to provide journeys that enable visitors to immerse themselves in the melting pot of experiences that is the region – and of lookouts along the route.

**Priority Two**
- gateway development, including a central gateway at the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre
- identification (and where necessary development) of top walks and cycle touring routes.

**Development of distinctive products and a small number of signature experiences** that provide a focus for visitors and encapsulate the two hero experiences. These are:

**Priority One**
- a Creative Arts and Wellbeing Hub
- festivals and events, including a possible signature event
- enhancing the Drumley Walk
- a signature soft adventure – Wild Journeys

**Priority Two**
- a signature Wildlife Tour
- Volunteer Conservation Program
- an exclusive Gold Coast-Canopy Remote Adventure
- a Canopy to Coast Multisport Event.

**Industry wide projects that will assist in bringing Australia’s Green Cauldron to life as a destination.** These projects will provide part of the framework essential for building the capacity of the region to develop and deliver the hero experiences and ensure that the brand promise is expressed throughout the destination. These are:

- up-skilling the tourism industry to deliver the hero experiences, both in terms of quality services and the development of packages that link the region’s variety
- development of a visual identity for the destination
- marketing and communication
- improving gateways
- improved information signage
- storytelling and interpretation planning.

Figure 8 illustrates the relationship between Australia’s Green Cauldron destination positioning, hero experiences, catalyst projects and the community’s vision for developing the region as an inspiring and sustainable destination.

The following sections describe and provide the rationale for the catalyst projects and indicate key actions for project implementation.
Each and every visitor to Australia’s Green Cauldron will leave inspired and touched by their experience of our region’s world class surfing, marine and rainforest opportunities, spiritual values, cultural connections, creative communities and sustainable lifestyles.

**IMMERSE YOURSELF IN A MYSTERIOUS MELTING POT**

*Delivered through hero experiences*

- Touch Australia’s creative and spiritual heartland
- Immerse yourself within three ancient mysterious calderas as you travel between world class rainforest and coast

**Creative Arts & Wellbeing Hub**
- Festivals & Events
- Drumley Walk

**Wild Journeys**
- Signature Wildlife Tour
- Volunteer Conservation
- Remote Adventure
- Multisport Event

**Supported by key infrastructure**
- Wollumbin Day Walk
- Iconic Drive Lookouts
- Gateways
- Top Walks
- Top Cycle Touring

**Bought to life by**
- Up-skilling
- Marketing
- Visual Identity
- Signage
- Storytelling
7.1 Provision of key infrastructure

Wollumbin Day Walk – ‘At the foot of Wollumbin’

A flagship rainforest walk in the vicinity of Wollumbin is proposed as a key visitor attraction for the region, building on visitor interest in the iconic peak and its relative closeness to the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre, proposed as the major gateway and interpretation centre for Australia’s Green Cauldron. Such a walk is consistent with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service’s strategic directions.

This walk would also showcase Indigenous culture and offer an alternative to the current summit climb which is contrary to Indigenous spiritual tradition. It could include Indigenous guided activities.

Ideally, the walk would be a loop track (potentially around the foot of Wollumbin) incorporating dramatic features (such as suspension bridges over chasms and streams, canopy walks) and careful trail alignment to stimulate interest in the rainforest, wildlife and volcanic features and stories of the area and provide lookout points to Wollumbin.

Contemporary interpretation opportunities for natural and Indigenous values should be available – such as face to face opportunities with local guides, access to I-applications and other audio and on-site displays.

Preliminary planning carried out for a walk at the foot of Wollumbin several years ago may provide a starting point for the new track.

Site planning, feasibility assessment and involvement of local Indigenous stakeholders will be needed to develop the walk concept and address Indigenous people’s cultural concerns and potential opportunities for Indigenous guiding and other ventures. Key responsibility will lie with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (the manager Wollumbin National Park) and the Wollumbin Steering Committee.

Major steps to progress the concept are:
- seeking agreement and input from the Wollumbin Steering Committee and other Indigenous stakeholders
- detailed planning, design and feasibility assessment with the ongoing involvement of Wollumbin Steering Committee
- seeking funding and undertaking construction. As a high profile flagship project, there is potential to acquire funding from a number of sources.

Priority Project

I1 Develop a concept plan, track design and business case for a flagship walk near Wollumbin and seek funding for construction of the walk.

Iconic Drive Experience Development

An iconic drive experience is a key to link the different elements of the two hero experiences offering a journey that is an immersive experience in its own right. A well-promoted drive route(s) linking a range of special sites and highly engaging and exciting products and with a range of quality accommodation options can provide a compelling and seamless journey enabling the visitor to sample the region’s ‘mysterious melting pot’. Such a drive route is particularly important due to the predominance of self-drive visitors in the region. A drive route will also be a central unifying element for visitors in navigating the variety and complex geography of Australia’s Green Cauldron.

It is recommended that the existing Rainforest Way drive be reinvigorated to provide an immersive way to enjoy the hero experiences. Strong promotion of the drive through Australia’s Green Cauldron gateways could also entice new visitor markets into the region from Byron Bay and the Gold Coast.

Key ways to reinvigorate The Rainforest Way include:
- focus the journey on one main route with a small number of loop options and side trips that encourage the visitor to immerse themselves in the landscape, alternative communities, Indigenous stories and spiritual connections
• link it firmly with the Gold Coast and Byron Bay and highlight the linkages the Rainforest Way provides between Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Byron Bay and the World Heritage Areas in all media and communications

• establish additional high quality visitor sites, including development (or redevelopment) of at least one iconic lookout that offers spectacular views across the ancient volcanic caldera (see next section)

• investigate the feasibility and potential for investment in an exciting new product, such as a rainforest zipline, along the journey

• identify those activities and sites that are ‘must see’/‘must do’ locations along the journey and develop and work with tourism operators and land managers to promote hero experience packages

• work with accommodation providers and investors to link a range of quality accommodation at different price points to the drive route – including upgraded camping facilities to cater for contemporary trends (e.g. camper vans, glamping), character accommodation enabling immersive experiences in the region’s landscapes and lifestyles (e.g. eco-lodges, coastal and hinterland retreats, alternative lifestyle cottages, heritage accommodation at Cape Byron)

• install contemporary interpretive media, including applications that offer choices for visitors with different interests (e.g. downloadable phone applications, use of interpretive art at historic sites or other key points of interest)

• promote the drive as part of an integrated Australia’s Green Cauldron website and social media package

• assess whether the name ‘Rainforest Way’ has currency with the Experience Seeker market and consider re-branding to sit with Australia’s Green Cauldron positioning.

Further development of the Rainforest Way will require the commitment of the many stakeholders who have been involved in its development to date. Effort needs to be focused on improving the overall journey and attracting investment in new product along it - with marketing to be linked to the Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.

Attracting specific site investment will be the responsibility of the agencies that manage land in partnership with other regional stakeholders. The Great Alpine Road case study in Appendix E shows how public and private sector stakeholders collaborated in building the journey.

Priority Project

I2  Re-engage with Rainforest Way stakeholders through the Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee to develop and implement an Action Plan to reinvigorate the Rainforest Way as an iconic drive experience and link for visitors to immerse themselves in the Australia’s Green Cauldron hero experiences.
Developing world class lookouts

The facilities and interpretation at several key lookouts in Australia’s Green Cauldron need to complement the superlative views offered and meet the expectations of global Experience Seekers. In some cases, this may mean investment in capital works, as well as enhanced interpretation.

While not an experience in themselves, lookouts can contribute to a wider experience by providing a thrilling view, a perspective on the region’s coastal, hinterland and rural landscapes and interpretation on the region’s stories. There is potential for lookouts to be incorporated in packages and tours expressing the variety of the region’s landscapes.

There should be at least one iconic lookout on a reinvigorated Rainforest Way which has high standards of design and aesthetics, contemporary on-site and interactive interpretation and adequate visitor facilities. Other lookouts could be incorporated into the route information. The top lookouts could also be promoted through gateways and visitor information thus assisting visitors to select superlative views which showcase the region. Key lookouts include:

- Best of All, Springbrook National Park
- Blackbutt Lookout, Border Ranges National Park
- Cape Byron Lighthouse
- Q1 Tower, Gold Coast
- Jellurgal (Burleigh Heads)
- Fingal Head
- The Pinnacle.

Priority Project

I3 Develop and implement an Action Plan for enhancing and promoting the top lookouts in Australia’s Green Cauldron.

Gateway enhancement

Clear gateways to Australia’s Green Cauldron are essential at key entry points and hubs to drive visitor growth from outside and within the region, establish brand recognition, provide orientation information and information about options for hero experiences. These gateway settings should build on existing visitor interfaces or information centres. Key locations are the Gold Coast, Beaudesert, Currumbin, Byron Bay, Kyogle and Murwillumbah. Redevelopment of existing venues should reflect the brand-aligned design themes established in the Design Plan and Guidelines (see Project B3).

The Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre is well placed to become a central gateway for Australia’s Green Cauldron, while also offering a significant experience in its own right. This could be as a world class centre for interpretation about the Gondwana World Heritage Areas (a need that has been identified for many years) and a key attraction on the Rainforest Way and, potentially, other experience packages. The Centre should have information and interpretation utilising contemporary approaches to bring the region to life for the visitor (see the Case Study on the West MacDonnell Ranges Discovery Centre in Appendix E). The Centre could include:

- high quality contemporary interpretive media, as well as orientation, experience and product information
- a media download centre offering digital content that provides information and interpretation about key Australia’s Green Cauldron themes (rainforest, geology, Indigenous values and wildlife), stories and experiences
- an Australia’s Green Cauldron tour operator base and booking systems
- interactive and flexible brand-aligned opportunities, such as art gallery space, outdoor space for events, tour operator talks
- integration of Australia’s Green Cauldron produce, art and craft.
Redevelopment is required to bring the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre up to contemporary standards for presentation of Australia’s Green Cauldron and the World Heritage Area. It is recommended that a Working Group of local stakeholders be established to oversee the redevelopment, siting (whether on the present or a nearby alternative site), planning, funding and implementation. Representation on the Working Group might include the Tweed Council, local tourism industry and art representatives, local Indigenous representatives, World Heritage Area managers and an Australia’s Green Cauldron representative.

Other gateways for Australia’s Green Cauldron should include:
- a media download centre to access the Australia’s Green Cauldron interactive map, route guides and GPS waypoint and route files
- a static orientation map
- web links to the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre to book with tour operators across the region
- other interpretation or displays linked to the individual gateway’s primary purpose.

**Priority Projects**

14 Conduct a feasibility study and master plan and carry out redevelopment of the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre as a central gateway for Australia’s Green Cauldron and world class interpretation centre for the Gondwana World Heritage Area.

15 Prepare and implement concept designs for other Australia’s Green Cauldron gateways.

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Top Trails – walking and cycling

Walking trails and cycle touring are popular among many global Experience Seekers and other markets as a way to immerse themselves in authentic experiences of a destination.

Identifying a region’s iconic journeys can play a strong role in reinforcing a destination’s positioning. For example, many of Australia’s great walks are in iconic destinations and have become flagships for them (such as the Overland Track for Tasmania, Larapinta Trail for Central Australia and the Great Ocean Walk in Victoria). Some visitors to Tasmania plan their itineraries around the publication ‘60 Great Short Walks’, which offers a range of walks sampling the island’s best walks (see case study in Appendix E).

New Zealand has also been successful in this regard, with its network of eight Great Walks, including such icons as the Milford, Routeburn, Abel Tasman and Tongariro Crossing tracks. The latter walk attracts over 60,000 walkers per year and has stimulated several shuttle and guiding companies to transport walkers to and from the track. The popular Wakatipu Trails Network near Queenstown traverses the area’s lakes and valleys linking settlements, food outlets, historic sites and viewpoints (see case study in Appendix E).

In Australia’s Green Cauldron, walking trails and cycle touring are potentially key ways to deliver on the hero experiences, enabling visitors to get close to, and explore, the region’s people, stories and landscapes. Walking and cycling are also compatible with the region’s sustainability ethos.

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4 The Destination Tweed Tourism Marketing Plan states that redevelopment of the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre is a low priority. By contrast, the Green Cauldron Brand and Product Audit (2008) and the Gold Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan both recommend development of a world-class World Heritage rainforest centre.
Walking trails

While there is a wide array of walking trails in the region, superlative walks for delivery of hero experiences need to be identified and promoted. Attributes to be considered in determining the list include:

• ability to deliver on Australia’s Green Cauldron brand proposition
• ease of access and linkages to the Gold Coast, Bryon Bay and Scenic Rim
• degree of difficulty (a range of levels and lengths is desirable)
• opportunities for engagement with operators/accommodation
• quality of the infrastructure and capacity for growth.

In some cases this may require improvement of existing infrastructure and interpretation and/or construction of new trails or trail sections. Opportunities to link the development of a high quality track (of one or more days journey) with nearby commercial accommodation and the concept of on-track accommodation could also be considered for investment by the private sector.

The lead on walk development will need to be taken by land management agencies in partnership with the tourism industry. The following opportunities are put forward as a potential starting point for selection:

• Border Crossing – a potential new overnight walk to be developed connecting northern NSW and the Scenic Rim
• Burleigh Heads to David Fleay Wildlife Park – connecting gaps between the existing trails and providing a coastal environment experience with potential for packaging with other activities
• Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk – as Australia’s Green Cauldron’s best multi-day hike, with improved infrastructure and accommodation links and potential links to the Gold Coast (a concept mooted in the Gold Coast and Hinterland Tourism Opportunity Plan 2009-2018)
• ‘At the Foot of Wollumbin’ – the new day walk proposed above.

Consideration might also be given to niche walks for more experienced or energetic visitors in the Mount Barney or Main Range areas, building on existing tour products in this area.

Cycle touring

Many of the smaller roads in Australia’s Green Cauldron are suitable for cycle touring, but need to be identified and promoted to be accessible to visitors. The best cycle touring routes should be listed using the same criteria as suggested for walking trails. As a starting point, the following routes are suggested:

• Gold Coast – Tweed Cycleway
• around Wollumbin
• Scenic Rim circuit (Beaudesert – Boonah – Rathdowney)
• Lions Road
• Tweed Range Scenic Drive.

Once routes are established, guided or self-guided small group cycling tour products might be investigated with tour operators, tourism attractions and accommodation providers. Successful examples in other places typically provide packages from 3 to 5 days through to 3 or 4 weeks.

In the longer term, development of rail trails could be investigated for cycle touring in the region. In the Scenic Rim, these include the proposed Bethania to Beaudesert Rail Trail and linking the Ipswich to Boonah Rail Trail to Beaudesert. A rail trail between Casino and Murwillumbah has been mooted for several years, although various community views have been expressed on the future of that closed rail line.

Priority Projects

16 Develop and implement an Action Plan for establishing and promoting the top walks in Australia’s Green Cauldron.

17 Develop and implement an Action Plan for establishing and promoting the top cycle touring routes in Australia’s Green Cauldron.
7.2 Distinctive Product Development

A range of distinctive products is proposed to be developed to deliver on one or both of the Australia’s Green Cauldron hero experiences. The priority products have been chosen based on existing and potential opportunities in the region and to cover a variety of interests and activities found among global Experience Seekers.

Creative Arts and Wellbeing Hub

The distinctive creative arts, produce and health and wellbeing offerings in Australia’s Green Cauldron, with a coordinated effort between stakeholders and building on current products, could be progressively established as a hub for creative arts and wellbeing experiences.

In particular, these aspects of the region could capitalise on the growing interest in direct participation and learning in creative and cultural activities (so-called ‘creative tourism’).

Creative tourism - tourism that offers visitors a creative pursuit (including arts, crafts and cookery workshops), with the opportunity to stay in quality accommodation, and to connect with local people in a distinctive destination. (Catriona Campbell, UK)

Development of creative tourism opportunities is consistent with tourism strategies for the Tweed, Byron Bay, Lismore, Nimbin, Northern Rivers and Scenic Rim areas.

Creative tourism is a recent trend for travellers to explore the world and its diverse cultures. Increasingly, travellers of all ages are no longer content with a superficial spectator view of the countries and regions that they visit. These, often sophisticated, travellers are searching for a learning experience that involves them in the day-to-day lives of the peoples in whose countries they are guests. Sometimes they will enjoy wine tasting at boutique vineyards or participate in cooking classes that specialise in the cuisine of a region. In the Northern Territory, Indigenous culture is shared through activities such as basket weaving or traditional ways of finding and using bush medicines. Outback experiences might include learning how to make damper, sleep in swag and dig for water on a camping trip to the Red Centre. The case study of Nelson, New Zealand, provides another example of how creative tourism has developed in a region noted for its artists (see Appendix E).

There are already several businesses that deliver creative tourism products within Australia’s Green Cauldron – e.g. cooking schools, working farms, yoga schools. The recommended goal is to expand the critical mass and impact of this opportunity. This could be achieved by:
• taking a sector or network approach involving business support (small grants, advice), joint venture marketing, workshops, new products, events and festivals
• delivery of packaged experiences encapsulating different distinctive creative experiences either on one site (at a gallery or accommodation property) or offered by a package between different operators
• contributing to regional public art programs and partnering with other businesses, such as restaurants with artists in residence and exhibitions.

Examples of the types of products that might be developed include:
• cooking schools with regional produce, painting and photography programs
• yoga, music, painting or photography retreats (which could be focused on Australia’s Green Cauldron brand values, such as immersion in rainforest)
• partnerships across the region between mainstream and creative industries to deliver brand aligned messages.

Steps to progressively develop creative tourism experiences include:
• identification of current and potential interested businesses
• workshops on creative tourism and on Australia’s Green Cauldron competitive position
• broadening existing cooperatives and networks of participating artists
• creating a web, TV and social media presence linked to Australia’s Green Cauldron marketing
• on-going business support and mentoring.

**Priority Project**

_P1_ Develop and implement an Action Plan to raise awareness of, and assist the development of, a creative arts and wellbeing hub and participative creative tourism products.

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**Festivals and Events**

The unique and eclectic character and lifestyles of villages and communities across Australia’s Green Cauldron is expressed in numerous small town events, monthly markets, art trails, regional galleries, artist studios, musicians and bands which are valued highly by residents and domestic visitors. Leveraging off such events is a feature of tourism strategies for the Tweed, Byron, Scenic Rim and Gold Coast areas.

These festivals and events also have strong appeal to global *Experience Seekers*, most of whom would currently experience them only by chance. Internationally, the Byron Bay Blues Festival is probably the most well-known event from the region that aligns with the spirituality and ‘melting pot’ aspect of Australia’s Green Cauldron brand. _The Tyalgum Classical Music Festival_ is also recognised among domestic visitors. Some coastal events such as _Swell Sculpture Festival_ and _Bleach_ are growing and becoming increasingly important.

As a first step, information on, and promotion of, the region’s festivals and events has the potential to attract *Experience Seekers* and other markets while they are in the region by providing another means to explore the eclectic creativity of the region. This could be done by developing an annual calendar of existing events which showcase Australia’s Green Cauldron and are consistent with its brand and positioning.

Each event should be examined to identify how it could be developed, linked or leveraged across the region. Each town would play to its strengths but work together to coordinate activities, promote the events and contribute to growing the profile of Australia’s Green Cauldron.

While individual town events are appealing, these will not necessarily be a major draw to global *Experience Seekers*. There is also potential to develop a unique festival built around a series of events showcasing one or more aspects of the region’s cultures, lifestyles, art, music, food and produce. Discussions with some stakeholders indicate that this idea (and variations on the theme) has been around for many years.
There are several models that might be explored:

- a new festival in a single location, drawing products from around the region (see the Hokitika Wild Foods Festival case study in Appendix E)
- a series of events in several towns, either close together (with visitors moving between locations, as in festivals in the wine regions of Barossa, Clare Valley, and Hawkes Bay and Martinborough in New Zealand) or spread over the year (see the Flavours of Monte Cetona case study in Appendix E). The Green Cauldron is potentially well suited to the former approach due to the close proximity of many towns, their clear points of difference and a road system that enables round trips and circuits. Potential locations are taking in places such as Boonah, Beaudesert, Rathdowney, Murwillumbah, Tylgum, Chillingham, Nimbin, Byron Bay and Bangalow. The event could be grown from a few initial communities.

As a starting point a calendar of existing festivals and events could be created and each event examined to identify what aspects could be developed, linked or leveraged across the region.

Establishing an annual calendar would require seed funding for event development and engagement with communities. Two examples are presented in Appendix E to illustrate the opportunity.

Each town would play to its strengths but work together to coordinate activities and promote the events. With the region pulling together and showcasing a cluster of community draw-cards, there is a greater chance of growing the profile of Australia’s Green Cauldron.

A feasibility assessment would be needed to test interest from the community, potential major sponsors (such as food producers, supply and manufacturing companies or economic development agencies associated with Australia’s Green Cauldron) and provide for the development, launching, funding and management of the festival.

Priority Projects

P2 Develop and promote an annual calendar of Australia’s Green Cauldron events featuring arts and environmental themes.

P3 Develop a feasibility study and business case for a unique Australia’s Green Cauldron festival (potentially incorporating events in several locations).

Drumley Walk enhancement

The success to date of the Drumley Walk suggests it can continue to grow as a signature event for the Indigenous community. It also has strong potential appeal for global Experience Seeker visitors, expressing the region’s hero experiences through a unique view of Indigenous culture and stories and as a journey through the region’s landscapes. The Scenic Rim Regional Council sees the event as an important link between the Indigenous community and tourism and includes support for the event as an ongoing priority in the Scenic Rim Regional Tourism Strategy 2011-2016.

Strategic planning, feasibility assessment and focused event management is required to develop, fund and manage the Drumley Walk event. Addition of other components (e.g. activities in different communities, distinctive Indigenous products) and tourism packages should be investigated. Investigation of the potential economic and social contributions of the event to the region and Indigenous communities may assist in achieving funding of event development.
The initiation and conduct of the Drumley Walk has been undertaken by a small team. Expansion or changes to the model will need to be driven by the current management team and include discussions within the Indigenous community. The following steps are suggested to develop the product:

- establish a Drumley Walk Advisory Committee with representatives of key stakeholders
- seek funding for a feasibility study to investigate event development, funding and management
- employ an event coordinator and develop a business plan for continued growth
- investigate a Drumley Walk Foundation as a means of attracting investment in development of the event and spreading the benefits across the community.

Priority Project

P4 Conduct a feasibility assessment for enhancement, funding and management of the Drumley Walk and develop a business case for the preferred model.

Wildlife and conservation experiences

There has been some showcasing of Australia’s Green Cauldron as a biodiversity hotspot through several quality nature study, guided and volunteer experiences and exhibitions and programs at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and David Fleay Wildlife Park.

However, the profile of the region’s biodiversity and opportunities for biodiversity experiences (particularly wildlife encounters) need greater development and promotion to fulfil the region’s potential, particularly to experience the unique combination of marine, coastal and hinterland environments and wildlife. Currently, many visitors do not know where to go to explore the region’s biodiversity. As a significant number of visitors to the coast visit the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and David Fleay Wildlife Park, there is potential to build on this to encourage visitors to venture into Australia’s Green Cauldron to seek out fauna in the wild.

Signature wildlife tour

Development of a signature one-day Australia’s Green Cauldron wildlife tour incorporating coast and hinterland environments has potential to be an exciting experience, drive visitor dispersal through the region and result in greater appreciation of biodiversity and conservation. It might commence at one of the wildlife parks and provide experiences at several sites on the coast and in the rainforest (possibly sites not easily accessible to the public), potentially including observation of iconic and rare species or their habitats and close interaction with wildlife behind the scenes at a wildlife park. The tour might be branded to link it with conservation of regional flagship or endangered species, with a component of the proceeds being dedicated to species conservation. Kangaroo Island Expedition Week is an example of an immersive visitor program of wildlife viewing and information (see case study in Appendix E).

Development of this product will require involvement, partnerships and potentially packaging between land management agencies, wildlife park management, and tour operators.
Volunteer conservation program

Volunteer conservation experiences (where visitors pay to participate in conservation programs arranged by tour companies or non-government conservation organisations in partnership with management agencies or run directly by organisations and agencies) are becoming increasingly popular for visitors seeking immersive natural experiences. A wide range of such experiences is offered around the world, with several in Australia.

Australia’s Green Cauldron has numerous species and habitats with current or potential research and monitoring projects that might be adapted to include a volunteer tourism component of potential interest to global Experience Seekers and other markets. There is also potential to showcase other aspects of the region through accommodation, food and related packages.

Development of such a program(s) would require strategic and business planning involving management agencies, tourism operators and relevant non-government organisations.

Priority Projects

P5 Investigate and facilitate development of a signature Australia’s Green Cauldron wildlife tour.

P6 Investigate opportunities for volunteer conservation experiences and, if relevant, conduct business planning for, and implement, programs.

Nature adventure experiences

Signature products providing soft adventure and interactive experiences of the region’s natural and cultural values have potential high appeal to global Experience Seekers. Two opportunities aimed at different Experience Seeker markets are identified for Australia’s Green Cauldron.

Wild Journeys

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is developing a concept for a Wild Journey tour in Australia’s Green Cauldron. This is envisaged as a fully hosted, all inclusive guided tour through a range of natural environments and places (both on and off park) over two or three days. The tour would offer a range of immersive, active and adventure activities; themed eco-accommodation; and experience of regional hospitality, art and craft, produce and native food.

A distinctive feature of the tour would be its focus on Indigenous culture and story-telling, including Indigenous guides. The National Parks and Wildlife Service plans to use the tour to assist Indigenous employment and business development, with the aim that, once established, the tour could be transferred under licence to an Indigenous enterprise.

Initial establishment of the product in the Green Cauldron will require feasibility assessment, development of the package and partnerships with tourism operators, Indigenous guide training and pilot tours and evaluation.

Gold Coast-Canopy Remote Adventure

Soft adventure experiences linking the coast and hinterland are of potential appeal to global Experience Seekers attracted to the ‘fun’ brand of the Gold Coast. Day or half-day exclusive guided experiences may be particularly attractive to small groups of high end Gold Coast visitors with limited time, including from the growing markets of China, Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea. An iconic, exclusive soft adventure product would assist in positioning Australia’s Green Cauldron through hero images and word of mouth recommendations. While low volume, such products have a high yield for tourism stakeholders. The Siberia Experience in the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area is one successful example (see case study in Appendix E).
Such an adventure might (for example) build upon the existing scenic helicopter flight in the region. It could start from one of the high volume coastal hubs and involve a scenic helicopter ride, hilltop views, rainforest hike and either riverboat pick up or helicopter return, accompanied by gourmet regional food. Implementation would need to include high environmental and conservation standards to protect the region’s values and express its sustainability ethic. The product operator would need to be highly qualified and committed to delivering a quality, sustainable product.

The recommended approach is to:

• seek an initial response from responsible helicopter, scenic flight or other potential operators. This would provide some preliminary advice on the potential viability
• conduct a feasibility assessment, including of market demand, potential low impact routes and approvals required.

Multiple land management jurisdictions and agencies are likely to be involved in assessment of this project. It is recommended that one of the economic development agencies (e.g. NSW Industry and Investment or Queensland’s Regional Development Australia) should facilitate the feasibility assessment and approvals process.

Priority Project

P7 Conduct feasibility assessment, product development and pilot tours for the Wild Journey tour product proposed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

P8 Conduct a feasibility assessment for development of an exclusive one-day adventure from the coast to the hinterland.

Canopy to Coast multisport event

Multisports events have a strong following in both domestic and global markets and generally attract strong media coverage. They can contribute greatly to a region’s profile and generate economic benefits from expenditure by competitors and spectators and tourism growth. They also provide opportunities for local communities and organisations to raise funds through provision of refreshments, evening camp and food services and voluntary work as traffic marshals and crowd controllers. The Coast-to-Coast Multisport Event in New Zealand’s South Island is one such successful event which has contributed significantly to local economies and knowledge of the region (see case study in Appendix E).

The varied terrain of Australia’s Green Cauldron has strong potential for an endurance multi-sport event between the hinterland and the coast (thus also providing another way of showcasing the region’s unique combination of coastal and hinterland environments).

A suggested course might link the Scenic Rim with the Gold Coast over two days. For instance, starting at Boonah, a cycle leg would pass through Beaudesert and Lamington National Park, with a run of part of the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk ending in an evening camp in the Numinbah Valley. On day two, competitors would cycle via Highway 97 (Numinbah Valley) and the Tweed Valley Lookout to Murwillumbah, transferring to a kayak paddle along the Tweed River to Tweed Heads.

Development of such an event will require:

• support from, and involvement of, local Councils and relevant government agencies for planning
• a business plan covering all aspects of the event, environmental and community impact assessment, leveraging with Australia’s Green Cauldron brand and a transparent, fair and reasonable approvals system for environmental compliance, traffic and other controls
• an entrepreneur or professional multisport events management company committed to making the event happen and to working with the aspirations of local communities in the area.

Priority Project

P9 Develop a Business Plan for a Canopy to Coast multisport event.
7.3 Bringing the destination to life

To deliver Australia’s Green Cauldron brand promise - *Immerse Yourself in a Mysterious Melting Pot* – and the hero experiences throughout the region, the capacity of the tourism industry and a framework for presenting the region to markets and assisting visitors experience the region when they arrive is needed. Development in the following areas is essential to achieve this.

**Up-skilling the tourism industry**

Bringing the brand to life is the role of everyone who has contact with visitors to Australia’s Green Cauldron – accommodation providers, tour operators, land managers and retail outlets. Products, experiences, storytelling, hospitality and service need to reflect the positioning in an authentic manner, deliver on the brand and be of the highest quality (whatever the price point) to reflect the added value that global *Experience Seekers* are looking for.

Promotion of Australia’s Green Cauldron is already happening in some places – e.g. Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary has an Australia’s Green Cauldron display; Green Cauldron coffee is now available in the region; and Australia’s Green Cauldron is displayed in the view deck atop Q1, one of the tallest buildings on the Gold Coast.

There are many possible ways for tourism stakeholders to bring the brand to life. For instance:

• reflection of Australia’s Green Cauldron positioning in collateral, merchandise, products and activities and branding of communities (see Case Study *Drive tourism in Provence* in Appendix E as an example of a brand brought to life in this way

• reflecting the region’s ethos (environmental sustainability, lifestyle, creativity and spirituality) in their activities and messages to visitors

• forming partnerships with other operators, park managers and others to offer seamless experience packages that encapsulate the hero experiences. Examples might be:

  - cycle touring experiences linking attractions and activities (such as villages, galleries and studios, produce and food outlets, ‘must do’ walks/tours) and with options for character accommodation (e.g. farmstays, eco-accommodation, glamping, retreats, alternative lifestyle)

  - accommodation/activity packages – e.g. wellness retreats and rainforest walks or activities such as yoga

  - combined coast and hinterland wildlife experiences – e.g. view whales, dolphins and birdlife, combined with a rainforest guided walk learning about and observing rainforest species and iconic Australia animals such as platypus

  - combined coast and hinterland active adventure – e.g. learning to surf or kayak followed by river rafting, cycling mountain roads.

Such experiences and branding activities will need to be developed cooperatively among tourism operators, managers and others to reflect their particular situations and imagination. To facilitate this, tourism operators, managers and other stakeholders need the awareness and skills to be able to appreciate opportunities, develop ways to leverage off and promote Australia’s Green Cauldron brand, develop or enhance visitor products and form partnerships to develop linked products/activities that express the hero experiences.

Up-skilling of Indigenous people in the region can also assist their beneficial participation in tourism and the development of authentic Indigenous dimensions to visitor experiences. There is strong support amongst Indigenous people of the region for integration of Indigenous stories into interpretation in mainstream products. There is also potential for Indigenous owned and operated products and for partnerships between Indigenous people and other operators and national park managers in offering a range of Indigenous cultural experiences.

Tourism training and business support for the region’s Indigenous people will greatly assist them in developing products and gaining employment in Indigenous-run businesses, other Indigenous oriented experiences (e.g. as tour guides) or in mainstream tourism operations.
The Yugambeh Museum Language and Heritage Research Centre already provides programs to encourage Indigenous training and work opportunities, including in the tourism sector. Expansion of this facility as a base for tourism training and business support through appropriate funding and inter-governmental partnerships should be assessed. This could be at the current location or in partnership with others at an alternate higher profile site in the region.

Priority Projects

**B1** Develop and implement workshops for developing awareness and up-skilling tourism operators, other tourism stakeholders and communities in delivery of Australia’s Green Cauldron experiences.

**B2** Develop programs for tourism training and business support through an expanded Yugambeh Centre, including training for tour guides and a business support network.

Developing a visual identity

Development of visual presentation of Australia’s Green Cauldron is a priority need to ensure consistent representation of the destination, as recognised in the 2008 Calais and Associates report on the destination positioning. An Australia’s Green Cauldron visual identity needs to be reflected at every touch-point, including:

- in marketing and promotional material and messaging
- information documents and digital media such as interactive maps, route guides and GPS waypoint and route files
- at gateways, on signage and in interpretation signs, documents and media
- in businesses and products.

Potential use of regional artists and craftspeople in design creation and development should be considered as a way of showcasing the region’s distinctive art and craft.

Creative design and planning needs to occur as a priority to underpin marketing of the destination, consistent development of gateways and signage (see below) and leverage off other brands in the region.

Priority Project

**B3** Develop a Design Guide and Action Plan for representation of Australia’s Green Cauldron in marketing, promotions, communications, signage and facilities.

Marketing and communications

Creating awareness of Australia’s Green Cauldron in the global Experience Seeker market will require a comprehensive program of marketing and communication in a collaborative approach between stakeholders in the region, State Tourism Organisations, Regional Tourism Organisations and Tourism Australia. This needs to be guided by a strategy that addresses current marketing needs and enables assessment of success and adjustment to future changes. It should include:

- assessment of current marketing and promotions and their performance (including relationship with other marketing efforts for the region)
- gaps in marketing activities and the appropriate contemporary channels to reach markets (including website and social media)
- identification of the key marketing and communication messages and measures
- a monitoring and evaluation system that measures the success of the marketing program and analyses results
- monitoring of brand success over the next 3 to 5 years compared to other destinations.

Priority Project

**B4** Develop a Marketing and Communications Strategy based on the Tourism Australia template to raise the profile and impact of Australia’s Green Cauldron.
Signage system

An integrated signage system for highways and roads is essential to define the location of Australia’s Green Cauldron and assist direction finding through its complex geography. Welcome to Country signage is also desirable to recognise the region’s Indigenous people and their values.

Opportunities exist to integrate an Australia’s Green Cauldron brand image into current signage in a cost effective manner (e.g. through wording such as ‘part of Australia’s Green Cauldron’, ‘an Australia’s Green Cauldron journey’ or ‘an Australia’s Green Cauldron community’).

Signage should also follow the designs determined in the Design Guide and Action Plan and be integrated with other information for the region (such as the interactive map, route guides and GPS waypoint and route files).

Priority Project

B5 Include signage design and guidelines in the Design Guide and Action Plan for Australia’s Green Cauldron (see B3) and develop signage.

Planning for engaging storytelling and interpretation

There needs to be a consistent approach to presentation of the stories of Australia’s Green Cauldron to visitors throughout the region. The stories also need to be told, and particular places or activities interpreted, in a way which is both engaging for global Experience Seekers and other markets and meets expectations for immersive experiences. This will include use of interactive methods and digital media - e.g. ‘hands on’ or interactive tours, interactive displays at gateways, ipod tour commentaries, participative products (see creative tourism proposals).

A strategic approach to story-telling and interpretation needs to be developed that:

- identifies key stories, themes and messages
- explores interpretation methods, concepts and opportunities (including partnerships with operators and institutions (such as the Geological Society Australia)
- provides for a range of levels of interest and niche markets who may be attracted to the region (e.g. art, creative tourism, wildlife, geo-tourism)
- takes account of, and where relevant coordinates with, other interpretation initiatives in the region.

Priority Project

B6 Establish a working group involving land management staff from NSW and Queensland in:

- sharing interpretive materials across agencies
- sharing interpretive materials with the wider industry as a basis for up-skilling operators on the AGC stories
- working with the Geological Society of Australia to integrate geo heritage stories into interpretation across Australia’s Green Cauldron.
8. Strategy Implementation

8.1 Governance and Coordination

One of the keys to achieving the vision for Australia’s Green Cauldron and driving the catalyst projects will be effective coordination, leadership and funding commitment by the lead agencies (local government, State and Commonwealth agencies) in partnership with the respective industry and community organisations of the region. The complex jurisdictions in Australia’s Green Cauldron mean there is a risk that fragmentation and competing agendas will undermine success.

Australia’s Green Cauldron is intended to add value to the existing destinations in the region. It is specifically aimed at the international travel trade and consumers to make Australia a more appealing and easier place to book and arrange travel. This growth will be founded on growth in domestic visitors.

In this respect, Australia’s Green Cauldron is an overlay to existing destination brands. The respective destinations, led by their local Regional Tourism Organisation and industry groupings with support from State Tourism Organisations, are effectively in the driving seat when it comes to product development, trade and consumer marketing of Australia’s Green Cauldron, but often have limited resources.

A coordinated approach is the only way to carry out these actions effectively because there is so much overlap between the National Landscape and existing destination brands.

Coordination and leadership will be directed through Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee. However, with its membership drawn from representatives who have other core roles in their agencies and organisations, the Steering Committee is likely to need on-going assistance to manage Strategy implementation.

In similar situations (such as the Australian Alps National Landscape, the Savannah Way Touring Route, the Great Ocean Road and the Great New Zealand Touring Route) the lead stakeholders have established a secretariat or other contracted service to coordinate project activities involving multiple jurisdictions. This approach has generally been effective and is recommended for Australia’s Green Cauldron.

A secretariat could be established with at least 1 to 1.5 staff or contracted personnel and hosted within one of the member agencies on the Steering Committee. It is recommended that a secretariat executive officer/contractor be appointed who has the following qualities and experience:

(i) extensive experience as a tourism professional
(ii) competence in technical and process management with exceptional interpersonal and communication skills
(iii) familiarity with the National Landscape Program or at least tourism in Northern NSW and South East Queensland, and
(iv) a commitment to achieving effective partnerships between conservation, communities and tourism.

The secretariat/contractor would report to a Project Management Group which would have delegated responsibility from the Steering Committee for managing key projects.

Priority Project

G1 Establish a secretariat or contractor to assist Australia’s Green Cauldron in Strategy implementation and project management.

G2 Establish a series of working committees under the Steering Committee to work on actioning various projects under the EDS.
8.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for implementing this Strategy by the Steering Committee and other key stakeholders are outlined in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 9.

Table 2: Implementation of the Experience Development Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Lead Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination of project activities,</td>
<td>Australia’s Green Cauldron Secretariat – a contract for services or staff unit within an existing agency. Reports to the Steering Committee via Project Management Group of 4 Steering Committee members appointed to support, direct and manage the Secretariat / contractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communications, funding grant applications, sponsorship, liaison with RTOs and STOs, Parks Australia, Tourism Australia, other state and regional agencies and industry</td>
<td>Regional and State Tourism Organisations working in close liaison with the Secretariat and Tourism Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade relations and communications, media famils, development of Australia’s Green Cauldron itineraries</td>
<td>Regional and State Tourism Organisations with industry joint ventures – working closely with the Secretariat and Tourism Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer marketing</td>
<td>Regional and State Tourism Organisations with industry joint ventures – working closely with the Secretariat and Tourism Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product development</td>
<td>Coordinated by the Steering Committee but executed by the respective councils, RTOs or economic and trade/industry development agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9: Implementation of the Experience Development Strategy
### 8.3 Implementation Schedule

The catalyst projects for implementing the catalyst projects identified to developing the destination positioning for Australia’s Green Cauldron are summarised below, together with priorities (1 to 3), indicative timeframes for implementation and lead responsibility. The projects are organised according to their broad purpose.

#### Provision of key infrastructure – catalyst projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Lead Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I1</td>
<td>Wollumbin day walk</td>
<td>Develop a concept plan, track design and business case for a flagship walk near Wollumbin and seek funding for construction of the walk. Enhancement of a key visitor destination. Consistent with NSW NPWS strategic directions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012 - 2014</td>
<td>NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service with Wollumbin Consultative Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I2</td>
<td>Iconic drive route</td>
<td>Re-engage with Rainforest Way stakeholders through the Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee to develop and implement an Action Plan to reinvigorate the Rainforest Way as an iconic drive experience incorporating and linking Australia’s Green Cauldron hero experiences. An iconic drive route is essential for integrating the complex region (where driving is the major transport connector) and providing a compelling journey as part of the experience.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2013 - 2017</td>
<td>Rainforest Way Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I3</td>
<td>Develop and implement an Action Plan for enhancing and promoting the top lookouts in Australia’s Green Cauldron.</td>
<td>Needed to bring viewing areas to world class standards. Consistent with Qld and NSW parks agencies’ strategies.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2014 - 2017</td>
<td>Land management agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I4</td>
<td>Gateways</td>
<td>Conduct a feasibility study and master plan and carry out redevelopment of the Murwillumbah Rainforest Centre as a central gateway for Australia’s Green Cauldron and world class interpretation centre for the Gondwana World Heritage Area. A central gateway, which is also allied to presenting the World Heritage values of the region, is essential as a focus for establishing the AGC identity, visitor information, orientation and interpretation.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013 - 2016</td>
<td>Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I5</td>
<td>Prepare and implement concept designs for other Australia’s Green Cauldron gateways.</td>
<td>Gateways at major entry points are essential to define the AGC and provide information.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013 - 2016</td>
<td>Steering Committee and Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I6</td>
<td>Top walks</td>
<td>Develop and implement an Action Plan for establishing and promoting the top walks in Australia’s Green Cauldron. Needed to identify, upgrade (or establish) and promote key walking experiences.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013 – 2014</td>
<td>Land management agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I7</td>
<td>Top cycle touring routes</td>
<td>Develop and implement an Action Plan for establishing and promoting the top cycle touring routes in Australia’s Green Cauldron. Needed to identify and promote key cycle touring routes which in turn can be enhanced through linked products and packaging.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013 - 2014</td>
<td>Councils and land management agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Distinctive product development – catalyst projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Lead Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Creative Arts and Wellbeing Hub</td>
<td>Develop and implement an Action Plan to raise awareness of, and assist the development of, a creative arts and wellbeing hub and participative creative tourism products.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 &amp; ongoing 2012-2018</td>
<td>Queensland or NSW Economic / Industry Development Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing immersive creative opportunities and regional positioning as a creative tourism destination. Consist with tourism strategies for Tweed, Byron, Scenic Rim and Gold Coast.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Festivals and events</td>
<td>Develop and promote an annual calendar of Australia’s Green Cauldron events featuring arts and environmental themes.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2012-2013</td>
<td>Event organisers and RTOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing opportunities for immersion in lifestyle and creativity. Consistent with Tweed, Byron, Scenic Rime and Gold Coast tourism strategies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Develop a feasibility study and business case for a unique Australia’s Green Cauldron festival (potentially incorporating events in several locations).</td>
<td>Building the region’s positioning as a lifestyle and creative destination.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 2014-2015</td>
<td>Queensland or NSW Economic / Industry Development Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Drumley Walk</td>
<td>Conduct a feasibility assessment for enhancement, funding and management of the Drumley Walk and develop a business case for the preferred model.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2012-2015</td>
<td>Yugambeh Centre with Queensland Regional Development Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing an existing and growing event. Consistent with Indigenous peoples’ aspirations for presenting their culture and participating in tourism.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Wildlife tour</td>
<td>Investigate and facilitate development of a signature Australia’s Green Cauldron wildlife tour.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 2013-2016</td>
<td>Queensland or NSW Economic / Industry Development Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation of coastal and hinterland wildlife consistent the AGC experience proposition. Building on the presence of existing quality operators.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Private enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Volunteer conservation</td>
<td>Investigate opportunities for volunteer conservation experiences and, if relevant, conduct business planning for, and implement, programs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 2014-2016</td>
<td>NGOs and private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>An opportunity for immersive experiences consistent with the AGC experience proposition and appealing to an increasingly popular tourism activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Wild Journeys</td>
<td>Conduct feasibility assessment, product development and pilot tours for the Wild Journey tour product proposed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2012-2014</td>
<td>NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing a signature soft experience covering natural, Indigenous and lifestyle aspects of the region. Consistent with NSW NPWS strategies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Exclusive adventure</td>
<td>Conduct a feasibility assessment for development of an exclusive one-day adventure from the coast to the hinterland.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 2014-2016</td>
<td>Queensland or NSW Economic / Industry Development Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing a signature experience for high end visitors to showcase the AGC and encourage coastal visitors to the hinterland. Consistent with Gold Coast tourism strategies. Builds on existing operators.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Multisport event</td>
<td>Develop a Business Plan for a Canopy to Coast multisport event.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 2014-2016</td>
<td>Queensland or NSW Economic / Industry Development Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A potentially signature product consistent with AGC and Gold Coast positioning, and increasing the breadth of appeal for different markets.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Bringing the destination to life – catalyst projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Lead Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Industry up-skilling</td>
<td>To build awareness of AGC positioning and the EDS and capacity to contribute to hero experiences.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012 - 2013</td>
<td>State and Regional Tourism Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and implement workshops for developing awareness and up-skilling tourism operators, other tourism stakeholders and communities in delivery of Australia’s Green Cauldron experiences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Indigenous training and support</td>
<td>Build capacity of Indigenous people to participate in development of hero experiences and benefit from tourism.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013 - 2015</td>
<td>Yugambeh Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop programs for tourism training and business support through an expanded Yugambeh Centre, including training for tour guides and a business support network.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Visual identity</td>
<td>Essential to bring the destination to life on site and in all media.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012 - 2013</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Marketing and Communications</td>
<td>Important to raise the profile of AGC as a desirable destination.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012 &amp; ongoing</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a Marketing and Communications Strategy based on the Tourism Australia template to raise the profile and impact of Australia’s Green Cauldron.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>Essential to welcome and orient visitors through the region and to key experiences.</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>2012 - 2015</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Include signage design and guidelines in the Design Guide and Action Plan for Australia’s Green Cauldron (see B3) and develop signage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
<td>Storytelling and interpretation</td>
<td>Adding depth to visitor immersion in the AGC through the region.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013 - 2014</td>
<td>Land Management agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a working group involving land management staff from NSW and Queensland in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• sharing interpretive materials across agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• sharing interpretive materials with the wider industry as a basis for up-skilling operators on the AGC stories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• working with the Geological Society of Australia to integrate geo heritage stories into interpretation across Australia’s Green Cauldron’.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Governance and coordination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Lead Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>Establish a secretariat or contractor to assist Australia’s Green Cauldron in Strategy implementation and project management</td>
<td>Need for a mechanism to guide coordination of AGC development and implementation of catalyst projects.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012 – 2013 &amp; ongoing</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>Establish a series of working committees under the Steering Committee to work on actioning various projects under the EDS</td>
<td>Active engagement and sharing of specialist skills and locations within the committee on priority projects</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012 – ongoing</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX A: Australia’s Green Cauldron Steering Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Fisher</td>
<td>Chair (EDS program management group) Chief Executive Officer, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane O’Reilly</td>
<td>Managing Director, O'Reilly’s Rainforest Retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Tatchell</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Chief Executive Officer, Destination Tweed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Johnston</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Regional Manager, Northern Rivers Region, National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitch Lowe</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Tourism Services Coordinator, Lismore City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Mills</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) CEO, Northern Rivers Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Tyrrell</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Destination Management Officer, Gold Coast Tourism Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent Randall</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Manager Community &amp; Culture, Scenic Rim Regional Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Slabb</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Indigenous Advisor, NSW National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rory O’Connor</td>
<td>(EDS PMG) Indigenous Representative, Yugambeh Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Morgans</td>
<td>(Acting) Tourism &amp; Promotions Manager, Tourism Communications &amp; Development Officer, Richmond Valley Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Greentree</td>
<td>(Acting) Tourism &amp; Promotions Manager, Tourism Communications &amp; Development Officer, Richmond Valley Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Morrison</td>
<td>Director, Tourism &amp; Visitor Services, Queensland Parks &amp; Wildlife Service, Dept. of Environment &amp; Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricia Howard</td>
<td>Director, Gold Coast Centre, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm Wallis</td>
<td>Director, Tourism &amp; Visitor Services, Queensland Parks &amp; Wildlife Service, Dept. of Environment &amp; Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katrina Luckie</td>
<td>Director, Tourism &amp; Visitor Services, Queensland Parks &amp; Wildlife Service, Dept. of Environment &amp; Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne McMurtry</td>
<td>Director, Tourism &amp; Visitor Services, Queensland Parks &amp; Wildlife Service, Dept. of Environment &amp; Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor Wilson</td>
<td>Tourism Economic Development Officer, Kyogle Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Miller</td>
<td>Tourism Economic Development Officer, Kyogle Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor Wilson</td>
<td>(Acting) Tourism &amp; Promotions Manager, Tourism Communications &amp; Development Officer, Richmond Valley Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Miller</td>
<td>Tourism Officer, Byron Shire Council</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B – Links to other plans

South East Queensland (SEQ) Regional Plan 2009-2031

The Queensland Government’s SEQ Regional Plan aims to manage the anticipated high population growth in the region in a sustainable manner, protecting the environment and enhancing quality of life. The Plan is the pre-eminent planning instrument for the region and must be taken into account in planning and development decision-making processes – which will include processes in the Queensland area of Australia’s Green Cauldron.

The approach in the SEQ Regional Plan has the potential to assist the landscape amenity, tourism appeal and accessibility of Australia’s Green Cauldron.

Future population growth is to be concentrated in compact developments in order to protect the landscape, biodiversity and rural production. Further development on the Springbrook plateau will be limited and vegetation connectivity improved through rehabilitation. Beaudesert South is identified as a future area for urban residential growth and as a Principal Rural Activity Centre with contingent improvements in commercial and service activities, infrastructure and public transport.

Landscape and biodiversity is to be enhanced, including through mapping of landscape values to be protected – which are intended to include the Tamborine Mountain escarpment, the Springbrook and Lamington plateaux, the Scenic Rim and ‘rural, nature-based and ecotourism destinations’.

The SEQ Regional Plan and the Rural Futures Strategy for South East Queensland 2009 aim to expand rural, nature-based and ecotourism and tourism-related enterprises in towns and villages to diversify the rural economy. Under the Rural Futures Strategy, a series of initiatives have commenced to assist tourism development – including Tourism Opportunity Plans, identifying planning and approval impediments, and programs to assist business development.

Gold Coast and Hinterland Tourism Opportunity Plan (TOP) 2009-2018

The Gold Coast and Hinterland TOP provides direction for sustainable tourism development and infrastructure needs to support forecast significant increases in international, domestic and day visitors and in visitors pursuing outdoor and nature-based activities. The Plan seeks to improve the standard of experiences in the World Heritage and rainforest areas in the hinterland, nominating several significant tourism and infrastructure projects with the potential to contribute to tourism development in the long and short term. These projects are:

- Purling Brook Falls Pedestrian Bridge on the Springbrook plateau to enhance a popular destination (the Gold Coast Council is also developing a Visioning Plan for Springbrook tourism)
- an ecotourism cluster to support the Tamborine Rainforest Skywalk
- extension of the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk between Springbrook and the coast, and development of off-track walker accommodation and transport options
- establishment of a World Heritage Rainforest Interpretation Centre
- re-development of Green Mountain Campground at Lamington National Park to improve the camping and budget accommodation offer
- integrated planning for nature based tourism across parks and other tenures in the region.
Scenic Rim Regional Council, Regional Tourism Strategy 2011-2016

The Regional Tourism Strategy for the Scenic Rim Region in Queensland is aimed at building up an emerging destination through broadening its market appeal (beyond a focus on weekend visitor markets), and addressing service quality, industry communication and infrastructure issues. The Strategy also aims to gain leverage from Australia’s Green Cauldron initiatives and has the potential to contribute to Green Cauldron experiences within the Scenic Rim area.

The Regional Tourism Strategy aims to develop ‘genuine visitor experiences that celebrate the region’s unique and world-class natural assets, rural and small town character and community values’. Product development will concentrate on the area’s strengths – including eco-tourism, nature-based tourism, recreation and adventure sports, events, food and wine, arts and culture, and agri-tourism.

The quality of service and experiences will be raised through measures to support tourism operators and raise awareness of markets and market expectations. This will include programs and incentives for skills and awareness development and encouragement of collaboration and partnerships to develop packages. Investment in the region will be encouraged and flexibility for nature-based and agri-tourism development provided in the planning scheme.

The Strategy also seeks to improve the quality of signage, tourism information, touring routes and infrastructure in the area.

Product Development Strategy, Destination Tweed (Draft Report, August 2011)

The draft Product Development Strategy for the Tweed Local Government Area developed by the AECGroup focuses on development of niche products that will build on the area’s existing strengths and potential opportunities to attract existing and new markets. The aim is to increase the number of visitors, increase length of stay and generate higher tourism expenditure. Leverage from the niche products is intended to lead to the development of partnerships, attraction of investment and development of new products over time.

The draft Strategy examined a range of key opportunities identified for the region - including events; linking coast to hinterland through historic pub tours and nature based tours; food tourism; sports tourism; cycling; using the Tweed River; exploration holidays, village tourism and ecotourism (such as biodiversity/educational weekend packages linked to the university).

Potential products were assessed according to their capacity to contribute to tourism – alignment with support from the community, private sectors and local and State government; target market needs; estimated use rages; development viability; and economic, environmental and social impacts.

Three niche products – Iconic Markets, Sporting Competitions and a Tweed Festival Season - are chosen, of which the Iconic Markets and Tweed Festival Season have potential synergies with the hero experiences for Australia’s Green Cauldron. The Iconic Markets product is envisaged as expanding, diversifying and promoting existing markets, building on a high level of interest expressed in the private sector. The Tweed Festival Season aims to streamline regional festivals and events into one season that would be widely promoted. Combination of, or leverage between, complementary events would be sought.
Byron Shire, Tourism Management Plan 2008 to 2018

Byron Shire’s Tourism Management Plan (which was adopted in September 2009) is working towards development of the Shire as a best-practice visitor destination compared with other coastal regions nationally and internationally.

A key focus will be improvement of the town of Byron Bay as an iconic destination and regional gateway through development planning, infrastructure, transport, parking, and visitor behaviour issues and appropriate target markets.

The Shire aims to position itself as offering uniqueness, a quality natural environment, spiritual and cultural diversity, health and well-being experiences and innovative enterprises. The potential for new or enhanced products and collaborative approaches to deliver experiences will be investigated. It is intended to protect the unique character of the Shire’s towns and promote tourism throughout by encouraging accommodation and experience development.

Achieving tourism sustainability is an important goal, and the Strategy aims to develop public and alternative transport links (within Byron Bay and between the Shire’s towns) and to consider promoting itself as an alternative transport destination. This includes investigating village tourism, nature-based and cultural itineraries connected by rail, cycleways, walking tracks, horse riding and road.
**APPENDIX C – The Big Stories for Australia’s Green Cauldron**

**Touch Australia’s creative and spiritual heartland**

### Visionary individuals

Australia’s Green Cauldron region is renowned for the pioneering efforts of local people to protect the rainforest and share it with visitors. Australia’s second national park was established at Tamborine Mountain in Queensland through the efforts of local Councillors, Sydney Curtis and Joseph Delpratt.

Lamington National Park was formed in 1915 after a decades-long campaign to protect the rainforest environments of the McPherson Ranges from logging for red cedar and clearing for agriculture. One of Australia’s first conservation campaigns, it was spearheaded by local identity Robert Collins in the late 1870s and joined by Romeo Lahey from Canungra in 1911.

Visitation to the remote and rugged national park was pioneered in 1926 by the O’Reillys (a local farming family who established a guesthouse at Green Mountain on the boundary of the park) and in 1933 by Romeo Lahey and another local, Arthur Groom (with another guesthouse at Binna Burra). The guesthouse operators played a significant role in early park management and track cutting, while they and other local residents were active in protecting the park from adverse impacts after World War II. Bernard O’Reilly gained book national hero status in 1937 through his celebrated bush rescue of the survivors of the Stinson aircraft crash in the remote ranges. Both these establishments continue today to provide eco-tourism experiences.

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**Alternative lifestyles**

Evocative of the spiritual and creative ethos of Australia’s Green Cauldron is the Rainbow Region around Nimbin, the largest alternative lifestyle concentration in Australia. Influenced by the 1960s counterculture, anti-war and environmental movements, the Nimbin area was settled in the early 1970s by young people leaving the cities to seek self-sufficient, sustainable lifestyles. Initially attracted by cheap land resulting from a slump in the dairy industry and an equable climate, the movement to the area gained impetus with the 1973 Aquarius Festival in Nimbin.

The result was an eclectic and creative society of idealists, spiritualists, environmentalists, organic farmers and artists who established an alternative and self-sufficient ways of living. Ahead of today’s concerns with sustainable living, the area became a centre of innovation. Alternative energy sources and building materials were utilised and local produce, art and craft was marketed locally (e.g. at the now renowned Channon Market). Legal history was made with the development of the first land-sharing cooperatives in Australia, while acknowledgement of Indigenous community’s traditional ownership was pioneered with possibly the first formal Welcome to Country ceremony at an Australian event at the Aquarius Festival.

Forty years later, the Rainbow Region is recognised as an Australian cultural icon. It maintains a strong, diverse community of people who practice alternative lifestyles, sustainable living methods and spirituality. A mecca for New Age and alternative lifestyle travellers, it is also a drawcard for many other visitors.

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Cottage and creative industries
Australia’s Green Cauldron is a melting pot for creative activities and innovative boutique producers in areas as diverse as organic fruit and vegetables, macadamia nuts, wine, breweries and distilleries, coffee, chocolates, cheese, clothing and health products. This has been spurred by its attractiveness over many years as a lifestyle destination or retreat, the 1970s creation of the Rainbow Region and a more recent influx of sea and tree changers throughout the region.

The region has long been home to many creative artists who gained inspiration from its landscapes, lifestyle, spirit and fellow artists. Tamborine Mountain, for instance, has been home to, or an inspiration to, several famous Australian writers such as Mabel Forrest, Judith Wright, Janet Turner Hospital and Raymond Curtis. The famous early to mid-20th century filmmaker, Charles Chauvel, was born in the region and one of his films was inspired by the O’Reilly family story.

Today, the region has a high and increasing concentration of people in the art and creative industries – including the visual arts, music, performing arts, writing and publishing, film and television, design, fashion, audio visual and digital technologies and Indigenous art. The arts and artists of the region are accessible to visitors through the region’s numerous festivals, workshops, performances, craft markets, galleries and activities such as the Scenic Rim Open Studios program.

Wollumbin
The spectacular, solitary peak of Wollumbin in the centre of the Tweed Valley, the first place in Australia to catch the sun’s rays, has great past and present significance for the Indigenous people of the Australia’s Green Cauldron region. It was one of the centres of cultural and spiritual activity in a region rich in natural resources and traversed by interconnecting pathways and social and economic linkages.

The mountain, variously referred to as ‘Cloud Catcher’ or ‘Weather Maker’, features in many traditional Dreaming stories. In one story, Wollumbin was a giant bird speared by a warrior whose spear is still visible on the summit. In others, the thunder and lightning on the mountain are signs of fighting warriors. Under Bundjalung traditional law, Wollumbin is a place for lawmaking, initiation and spiritual education and can only be ascended by certain people.

The Wollumbin story symbolises the deep connection between the Indigenous community and country, where every feature of the landscape had its place in cultural and spiritual life. It celebrates the continuing cohesion of Indigenous culture and connections in the region, also marked in the annual Drumley Walk pilgrimage in Queensland.
Gondwanan rainforest and volcanic origins

The rainforests and volcanic landscapes of the Australia’s Green Cauldron are a living link to the evolution of the world, with species links to the supercontinent of Gondwanaland that began to break up into the present continents about 130 million years ago. It has one of the highest concentrations on earth of plants and animals that are relatively unchanged from the fossil record, including some of the oldest fern and conifer families and primitive plant families linked to the development of flowering plants.

The modern landscape is the remnant of the gigantic Tweed, Focal Peak and Main Range shield volcanoes that were active in the region 20 million years ago. The Tweed Caldera (with its characteristic steep escarpment along the Queensland/NSW border and the remnant volcanic plug of Wollumbin) is the remnant of the world’s second largest shield volcano and one of the best preserved. The rich volcanic soils (in contrast to the poor soils of much of the Australian continent) have provided a refuge for rainforest, including the most extensive surviving area of subtropical rainforest in the world.

The erosion of the volcanic landscape has provided a diversity of habitats (altitude, aspects, peaks, valleys and rainfall regimes) in which are found a wide diversity of rainforest communities and species. Due to the accessibility of the region, visitors can easily experience such contrasting environments as vine forests, forest with emergent spectacular Hoop Pine (one of the world’s oldest conifers), higher altitudes characterised by misty forest of Antarctic Beech, stands of giant pink trunked Brush Box and heath communities on rocky outcrops.

Wildlife

The biodiversity hotspot of the Green Cauldron contains Australia’s highest concentration of bird, marsupial, frog and snake species. It has 500 species of vertebrate animals and thousands of invertebrate species. Many of Australia’s iconic wildlife (such as kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, platypus and varied birdlife) are accessible to the visitor, either in national parks, on wildlife tours or at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary or the David Fleay Wildlife Park (both of which house animals from throughout Australia). Along the coast, visitors may see migratory birds, White-bellied Sea Eagles, dolphins and (in winter and spring) Humpback Whales. The iconic Glossy Black Cockatoo can be observed in the region.

The Green Cauldron contains many species of wildlife that are rare and threatened or endemic to small areas and found nowhere else in the world. Examples are the Eastern Bristlebird (of which there are less than 50 birds in the wild), the elusive Albert’s Lyrebird (which has a spectacular vocal mimicking ability), the Spotted-tail Quoll (a mammal which was once widespread in Eastern Australia), Fleay’s Barred Frog and the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly (with a wingspan of 13 cm to 16 cm).

Less obvious, but fascinating, are invertebrate species with links to the prehistoric Gondwanan fauna – such as trapdoor spiders and the unusual velvet worm. Glow-worms, the larval stage of a small fly, are another Gondwanan remnant. They can be seen emitting a brilliant blue-green light at Natural Bridge in Springbrook National Park.
**Conservation success stories**

Travelling through the rainforest regions of the Green Cauldron, the visitor is constantly in areas that have remained as rainforest through successful conservation efforts, often through local efforts such as for Lamington National Park.

The conservation story has been at times a dramatic one, no more so than the ‘Battle for Terania Creek’, when local counterculture residents near Nimbin in NSW instituted a 5 year campaign (from 1974 to 1979) to prevent logging old growth forest at Terania Creek (now in Nightcap National Park). Gaining wide support throughout Australia and from the Indigenous community, this was the first direct action forest protest in Australia and a watershed event in gaining protection of forests throughout Australia. It featured dramatic civil disobedience activities and arrest of protestors televised throughout Australia. One of the waterfalls on Terania Creek in Nightcap National Park has been named Protestor Falls in memory of the protest that eventually led to establishment of the park.

Today, with much of the remaining rainforest protected, attention has focussed on protection of threatened species through activities such as rainforest regeneration, habitat protection and captive breeding programs, often in partnership with local communities and organisations. Rainforest on the Springbrook Plateau is being regenerated in a partnership between the Queensland Government, the Australian Rainforest Protection Society and volunteers. Members of Local Natural History Societies at Mount Tamborine and Lamington participate in recording occurrences of Albert’s Lyrebird to assist in research on its protection.

David Fleay’s Wildlife Park, now operated by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, was established in 1952 by the internationally famous conservationist, David Fleay (the first person to successfully breed the platypus in captivity). The wildlife park now runs research and captive breeding programs for Australian wildlife, including local species.
APPENDIX D – Current Experience Assessment

The following table assesses the main current experiences in Australia’s Green Cauldron in terms of three significant National Landscape criteria:

(1) ability to drive conservation and tourism partnerships
(2) extent to which key Green Cauldron stories are conveyed
(3) distinctiveness of the product for Australia’s Green Cauldron and for Australia.

These criteria are applied to the experiences (divided into Attractions, Activities and Accommodation) as they are now, prior to any suggested improvement and are ranked from ••• (strongest match with criteria) to • (weakest match with criteria).

Suggested improvements are indicated where relevant and a preliminary assessment of the impact of the suggested improvement is made in terms of Cost, Visitor Impact and Timing. Together, these criteria give an idea of how achievable the improvement is and when the effects would be seen.

Cost is ranked as Low (less than $50,000), Medium ($50,000 - $250,000) and High ($250,000+).

Visitor Impact relates to the effect of the suggested improvement on global markets.

- High - will appeal to international and domestic markets and generate new demand in the short, medium or long-term
- Medium - will appeal to mostly domestic markets adding value to the visitor experience. Over the medium to long-term it will reach global markets with more impact. These markets are likely to come to the region anyway and not as a direct result of the improvement
- Low - would reach both domestic and international visitors once in the region, adding value to the experience but with little ability to drive future visitation.

Timing is ranked as Short (1 to 2 years), Medium (2 to 5 years) and Long (5 years+).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities &amp; product suited to Experience Seekers</th>
<th>Description and examples</th>
<th>C &amp; T Partnerships</th>
<th>Current reach of AGC Stories</th>
<th>Level of Distinction</th>
<th>Suggested improvements</th>
<th>Cost Medium Low</th>
<th>Impact Medium High</th>
<th>Timing Long Medium Short</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ATTRACTIONS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Binna Burra Mountain Lodge and Campsite</td>
<td>Binna Burra is a long-standing and well-recognised hub for accommodation and activities within the rainforest of the AGC. In addition to a range of walking tracks, guided activities and programs, the property is currently developing additional new accommodation. It is recognised as one of Australia’s best environmentally sustainable properties.</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>None recommended</td>
<td>na</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’Reilly’s Rainforest Retreat</td>
<td>O’Reilly's is a long-standing and well-recognised hub for accommodation and activities. In addition to walking tracks and guided programs/activities, the property has a rainforest canopy walk/climb. O’Reilly’s Lost World Spa has recently opened offering a high level health/wellbeing product.</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>None recommended</td>
<td>na</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mt Barney Lodge</td>
<td>An established country retreat with Queenslander style accommodation plus cabins and camping. The award-winning Mt Barney Lodge has secured a niche position in the market offering nature and adventure activities in and around Mt Barney National Park. Caters for both domestic and international visitors and a wide cross-section of segments from families, couples and corporate groups. This wilderness experience is 90 minutes’ drive from Brisbane and the Gold Coast.</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>●●●</td>
<td>●●</td>
<td>None recommended</td>
<td>na</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamborine Mountain Rainforest Skywalk</td>
<td>A privately owned 300 metre canopy sky walk in rainforests with excellent interpretation of the natural and cultural values of the AGC.</td>
<td>●●</td>
<td>●●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>None recommended</td>
<td>na</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gondwanan Rainforest World Heritage Area (WHA)</strong></td>
<td>Complex of national parks in NSW and Queensland with a series of day visitor nodes at key sites (such as waterfalls), campsites, walking tracks and drive routes offering opportunities for immersion in the values of AGC, the WHA and interpretation about the important stories. Some face-to-face interpretation at peak times allows for more interactive interpretation of both natural and cultural stories.</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td><strong>Link WHA brand with AGC brand and promotion.</strong></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Short</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue program of upgrading visitor facilities and interpretation to match market needs.</td>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium-Long</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Investigate opportunities for volunteer in-park programs.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Short-Medium</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Share interpretive material and stories with all stakeholders to provide a conservation platform for tourism experiences.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Short</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other national parks</strong></td>
<td>Other national parks (not in the WHA) also offer opportunities for interpretation and activities within a range of AGC natural settings and landscapes (e.g. Cape Byron, Jellurgal Burleigh Heads)</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>Look at opportunities in other national parks to showcase experiences that reflect Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue program of upgrading visitor facilities and interpretation to match market needs.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wollumbin/ Mount Warning</strong></td>
<td>Wollumbin is an iconic landmark in the centre of the ancient caldera that has a summit climb that attracts numerous visitors. It has cultural and spiritual and cultural significance to the Indigenous people of the region. A short walk is also provided at the foot of the climb.</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>Address Indigenous peoples’ concerns about climbing Wollumbin. Develop high quality alternative walking track that enable views of Wollumbin and provides alternative to the summit walk.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Incorporate face to face Indigenous guiding.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Murwillumbah Rainforest Info Centre</strong></td>
<td>The World Heritage Rainforest Centre operated by Tweed Tourism is promoted as the source of information for the Gondwana Rainforest WHA. It includes displays, information and booking services for the region.</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>•••</td>
<td>Look at ways to reinvigorate the centre as central AGS interpretation centre with virtual links to AGC gateways of Byron Bay, Gold Coast, Currumbin, Beaudesert and Kyogle.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td>Incorporate downloadable information and interpretation as well as a booking centre for AGC activities/tours.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Look at opportunities to partner with Tweed Regional Art Gallery.</td>
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<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary</td>
<td>Currumbin hosts a broad range of Australian native wildlife in extensive grounds with excellent interpretation. The Sanctuary also offers a range of adventurous activities and an evening Yanguwah Indigenous program offered by Jaran. The Sanctuary has a strong conservation ethos and actively participates in fundraising and species conservation.</td>
<td>● ● ●</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>Offer information including downloadable interpretation as a Gateway to AGC linked to Murwillumbah.</td>
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<td>Investigate opportunities to partner with David Fleay Wildlife Park to offer integrated programs that complement each other with a focus on conservation and promotion of flagship species.</td>
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<td>Investigate opportunities for involvement of volunteers.</td>
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<td>Complete the boardwalk connecting Jellurgal Burleigh Heads and Fleays Wildlife Park.</td>
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<td>Explore opportunities to strengthen partnerships with indigenous tourism operators and education to expand the use of facilities at Fleays.</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Fleay Wildlife Park</td>
<td>David Fleay Wildlife Park is located in a natural setting with walking tracks and displays featuring platypus and other native and endemic species. The park offers an educational program primarily for schools.</td>
<td>● ● ●</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Investigate opportunities to partner with Currumbin to offer integrated programs that complement each other with a focus on conservation and promotion of flagship species.</td>
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<td>Investigate opportunities for involvement of volunteers.</td>
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<td>Conduct a series of workshops to involve communities in Australia’s Green Cauldron and to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.</td>
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<td>Villages</td>
<td>The varied villages of Australia’s Green Cauldron offer a range of opportunities for visitors to mix with the local community - including through shops, general stores, cafes, pubs, eclectic accommodation and events (e.g. Uki – Mount Warning Hotel, Mavis Kitchen, Tyalgum, Canungra, Byron Bay, Nimbin, Mount Tamborine, Kyogle). At least one operator offers alternative lifestyle tours (Jims Alternative Tours.)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>●</td>
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**Low** - Low; **Medium** - Medium; **Short** - Short
### Festivals and events

A number of festivals and events occur in the region and offer the opportunity for visitors to meet with local people and explore/celebrate the culture, music and arts of the region. Examples include Tyalgum Classical Music Festival, Byron Bay Blues Festival, Drumley Walk, Kokoda Challenge, Swell Sculpture Festival, Bleach.

- Continue to support galleries to partner with one another as a cluster for visitors.
- Conduct series of workshops to get communities involved in Australia’s Green Cauldron and to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.
- Support operators, artists and galleries to deliver creative arts programs where visitors are encouraged to participate in programs of varying duration (packaged with accommodation).

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<th>Low</th>
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### Galleries

Australia’s Green Cauldron includes many galleries and spaces that showcase the extensive creative spirit of the people. Examples include Tweed River Gallery, Stokers Siding pottery, Art & Soul Gallery and many local galleries across the region and in its townships.

- Continue to support galleries to partner with one another as a cluster for visitors.
- Conduct series of workshops to get communities involved in Australia’s Green Cauldron and to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.
- Support operators, artists and galleries to deliver creative arts programs where visitors are encouraged to participate in programs of varying duration (packaged with accommodation).

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### Yugambeh Museum

The museum is the keeping place for the Yugambeh people and has excellent displays and interpretation about the Indigenous history and people of the area. The museum is also the centre of the language activities and learning for the local community.

- Better promotion of the location of the Yugambeh Museum.
- Seek opportunities for a higher profile Yugambeh indigenous tourism education and training base such as Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary or Jellurgal Burleigh Heads/ David Fleay Wildlife Park.
## Markets

A large number of markets across Australia's Green Cauldron offer opportunities for visitors to mix with local people and see aspects of alternative lifestyles, values and local produce (e.g. The Channon, Nimbin, Bangalow, local Farmers Markets and many others).

- Conduct series of workshops to get communities involved in AGC and to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.

### Vineyards and wineries

Many vineyards and wineries offer cellar doors across the AGC. Examples include Bunjurgen, Kooroomba Vineyard & Lavender Farm, Albert River Wines, Cedar Creek Estate & Queensland Wine Centre, Witches Falls Winery, Tamborine Mountain Distillery, O’Reilly’s Canungra Valley Vineyard, Ilnam Estate, Tathian.

- Conduct series of workshops to get communities involved in AGC and to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.

### Lookouts

Whilst Australia’s Green Cauldron has a host of lookouts offering views of the calderas including on the coast (e.g. Best of all, The Pinnacles, Coomera Falls, Bithongabel, Jellurgal Burleigh Heads and Fingal Head), these are not of themselves an attraction. They need to be considered in the context of other activities such as touring routes.

- Upgrade and promote a series of AGC spectacular lookouts that showcase landscape types across the region.
## PRODUCTS

### Experiencing Local Product

Opportunities to appreciate the regional produce of Australia’s Green Cauldron include cooking schools (e.g. Classi di Cucina; Tamborine Mountain and Worendo/Wild Lime Cooking Schools), working farms (e.g. Majura Tea, Tropical Fruit World, Eltham Valley Pantry, Scenic Rim market gardens), retail outlets (e.g. Witches Chase Cheese, Banana Cabana) seafood related experiences (Catch a Crab and fishing cruises), roadside produce stalls, Farmers Markets and specific products such as Burleigh Beer, Green Cauldron Coffee and Mount Warning Water.

- Conduct series of workshops to get communities involved in AGC and to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.

### Nature study and guided experiences

A number of operators offer guided experiences in Australia’s Green Cauldron, many of them with well-educated and trained staff with a solid knowledge of the natural values of AGC and of the key stories. Examples include EcoSafari Tours, Rock Doctor Geological Tours, Aracauria Tours, Tamborine Tours, Inter National Park Tours, Ethos Foundation, Gondwana Guides, Country Charm Discovery Tour, Nature-bound Australia.

- Train Indigenous Guides who can be engaged by existing operators to add value to interpretation with Indigenous stories and cultural connections.

### Aerial activities

Viewing Australia’s Green Cauldron from the air provides the most complete picture of the landscape and the three calderas. Current opportunities include ballooning, gliding and fixed wing and helicopter scenic flights (e.g. Floating Images Hot Air Ballooning, Pterodactyl Helicopter Tours, Boonah Gliding).

- Provide aerial operators with information about Australia’s Green Cauldron and the big stories (podcasts, phone apps.) for delivery to clients.

- Promote air activities as an excellent way to experience the AGC.

- Support operators to package aerial products with accommodation (e.g. gliding program).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Conservation programs</strong></th>
<th>Bartopia Nature Refuge and Mt Barney Retreat and the Ethos Foundation currently offer educational programs focusing on conservation.</th>
<th>•••</th>
<th>•••</th>
<th>•••</th>
<th>• Establish a data base/cooperative for visitors seeking more intensive voluntary activities in Australia’s Green Cauldron to link with suitable opportunities such as working on farms, helping in Currumbin wildlife hospital, rehabilitation programs, visiting artists in studio or in field.</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Short</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driving – self-drive touring</strong></td>
<td>There are a number of established journeys being promoted across Australia’s Green Cauldron with the best known and most brand aligned being the Pacific Touring Route, Rainforest Way, Connecting Southern Gold Coast, Lions Road, Summerland Way plus a range of local touring routes.</td>
<td>••</td>
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<td>••</td>
<td>• Consolidate the delivery of the Rainforest Way focusing the journey on one primary route that offers the best opportunities to deliver on Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Upgrade facilities and ensure effective interpretation for visitors using the Rainforest Way.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide gateway information for Australia’s Green Cauldron from the other significant tourist routes.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Short</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Walking - short</strong></td>
<td>Multiple short walks (less than 30 minutes through to several hours) right across Australia’s Green Cauldron offer opportunities to experience the landscape.</td>
<td>•••</td>
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<td>• Promote a series of AGC great short walks that showcase landscape types across the region.</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Walking - long</strong></td>
<td>One icon walk, the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk, is available as an independent activity or with operators. The 96km Kokoda Challenge event occurs on Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk. The section from Binna Burra to O’Reillys is also promoted as the Border Track - a product that can be walked in one day or with camping part way.</td>
<td>•••</td>
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<td>•••</td>
<td>• Improvements required to meet target market needs include less long/difficult days, consistent accommodation offer.</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Investigate link from the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk to the Coast.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Encouragement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water sports – surfing</td>
<td>Range of operators offer surfing schools and extensive opportunities for independent surfers. Major surf events occur on the coast, including world championships and nationally important events.</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<td>• Leverage off the Bleach in February festival and Surfworld Gold Coast Museum to create awareness of Australia’s Green Cauldron.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Engage major corporate surfing brands (e.g. Billabong) to raise awareness of Australia’s Green Cauldron.</td>
<td>Short</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water sports - other</td>
<td>Independent opportunities, including a range of sandy white beaches and headlands (Fingal Head, Tyagarah Beach etc), are suited to multiple water based activities.</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing - diving</td>
<td>Operators offer diving/snorkelling at locations such as Cook Island Marine Reserve and Julian Rocks Nature Reserve (turtles, sharks, range of marine fish species).</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing - marine</td>
<td>Whale and dolphin watching are offered by several operators with large vessels as well as kayaking. Many land based viewing sites exist for independent travellers (e.g. Cape Byron, Point Danger, Fingal Head). SeaWorld also offers swimming with marine wildlife.</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Required Actions</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing</td>
<td>A number of operators offer bird viewing both as specialised packages from accommodation and as part of tours. These activities generally interpret a range of aspects of biodiversity. Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and David Fleay Wildlife Park offer a range of opportunities (identified under Attractions).</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings. • Train Indigenous Guides who can be engaged by existing operators to add value to interpretation with Indigenous stories and cultural connections.</td>
<td>Low - Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium - Long</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>In addition to cycleways on the coast and in the Scenic Rim, there is a considerable cycling activity on roadsides.</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings. • Train Indigenous Guides who can be engaged by existing operators to add value to interpretation with Indigenous stories and cultural connections.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Short</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous cultural activities</td>
<td>There are currently a small number of Indigenous guided products generally associated with national parks guided programs. Some Indigenous groups are exploring new tourism product and business ideas. Yugambeh Museum is training community members in language and sees an important role in training local people to offer cultural programs in mainstream tourism.</td>
<td>• Seek funding for training programs to ensure a strong pool of well-trained guides who can add cultural stories to mainstream tourism products. • Establish a tourism business support network (business assessment, planning, mentoring) to advise those communities and people looking to establish tourism businesses. This might include support through staff in local government. • Establish and communicate an Indigenous Guides team that can be engaged in different parts of other AGC to work with mainstream businesses and add cultural content to tours.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium - Long</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACCOMMODATION</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>●</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmstays, guest houses and self-contained accommodation in natural settings</td>
<td>A broad range of farmstays, guest houses and self-contained accommodation offers choice of location and experiences across the AGC. Examples include Mystery Mountain Farmstay, Clouds on Beechmont, Baggs properties, Cedarcreek lodges, Lisson Grove, Pethers Rainforest Retreat, Witches Falls cottages, Mt Barney Lodge, Lillydale Farmstay, Crystal Creek, Ripples, Limonwood.</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium - Long</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and wellbeing retreats</td>
<td>Australia’s Green Cauldron boasts several excellent health/wellbeing retreats that attract visitors in their own right. Examples include Songbirds, Golden Door, The Byron at Byron, Gwinganna, Pethers Rainforest Retreat.</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand in product offerings.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium - Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential accommodation</td>
<td>There are a growing number of accommodation establishments that offer varying products that are targeted at the Experience Seeker market. Examples include Ketchup’s Bank Glamping, Bunyip Scenic Rim and Resort Spicer’s Peak Lodge.</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal accommodation hubs</td>
<td>There is extensive accommodation on the coast that services a broad range of visitor markets.</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>• Encourage operators to cross promote and/or package with other AGC activities and participate in workshops to appreciate ways of leveraging off Australia’s Green Cauldron brand.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Short-Medium</td>
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APPENDIX E – Case Studies

The following case studies have been provided to illustrate some of the types of tourism infrastructure and products which have assisted in providing compelling visitor experiences in other places.

Drive tourism in Provence – an example of a brand brought to life

Weekends are when the towns’ market and antique shops are open (in addition to the artisanal shops, also open on weekdays, that sell regional fabrics, ceramics, and foods, as well as chunky blocks of purple soap that distil the perfume of the area’s lavender fields).

Just about every village in Provence boasts its own workshops and boutiques dedicated to the local specialty, so a leisurely four-day drive through southern France offers the ultimate souvenir crawl. You can stop and start anywhere along the route. While you’ll be taking in all the classic craft towns, don’t call the circuit a shopping trip. You’ll also be sampling a quintessential slice of Provence, as the two-lane rural back roads wind past olive groves, cherry orchards, vineyards, and the stony medieval hilltop towns. Even better, you’ll be discovering one of the epicentres of authentic European artistry, and you’ll be supporting an exuberant cultural legacy that still defines Provence.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

Having vibrant range of arts, crafts, produce and retail creates a cluster that supports brand positioning.

Links to the regional produce at every touch point.

Everyday products and services brought to life tell a story of a destination.

West MacDonnell Ranges Discovery Centre

The Discovery Centre, an initiative of Parks and Wildlife Northern Territory, uses the latest technology to bring the art, culture, history and nature of the West MacDonnell Ranges to life through digital storytelling.

Stories tell of the natural and cultural values of the region, which visitors can download and listen to on their iPhone or iPad while exploring the ‘West Macs’ and beyond. The content not only showcases the national parks of the West MacDonnell Ranges and its rich history and culture but also the local people and their connection to this amazing landscape.

Other resources include a dedicated website, internet podcasts and information that can be viewed on large plasma screens operated by touch screen kiosks at the centre. Entry to the Centre is free of charge and also offers free Wi-Fi access to enable suitable devices to download information.

The digital elements of the project are:

- iPhone/iPad/iPod touch application
- over 200 podcasts on the internet
- a media download centre and digital content at the Discovery Centre that can be viewed through large plasmas operated by touch screen kiosks
- free Wi-Fi access at the Centre, suitable for devices to download stories and take them on their journey through the West MacDonnell Ranges.
The Great Alpine Road – an iconic touring route

The Great Alpine Road is one of Victoria’s primary promoted drive journeys, traverses the vast and spectacular Victorian Alps from Wangaratta in the north-east to Bairnsdale in the east of the state. The route is some 300kms long and has six shorter themed loops leading off it. Development of the journey was guided by a strategic plan with significant engagement by stakeholders, including several local governments, competing ski resorts and private operators. An effective steering committee and marketing plan has assisted investment from government and the private sector. Local governments and Parks Victoria have invested in high standard visitor facilities across all tenures. Some of loops off the primary journey have become strong destinations in their own rights, including a significant Government investment in sealing one of the secondary routes.

Significant funding was directed towards establishing brand aligned interpretation and a broad suite of collateral - including website, interactive map, GPS linked waypoint and route guides.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

A strategic approach to touring route development with all stakeholders committed and involved over an extended period of time is necessary. The strategic plan needs to be the blueprint for all agencies to deliver improvements on their tenure.

There needs to be sustained commitment to development and collaborative marketing over many years.

Engagement of the private sector in developing product is essential to ensure adequate attraction.

Nelson – Creative Arts Capital of New Zealand

The Nelson Tasman region is the undisputed creative arts centre of New Zealand. This is where the World of Wearable Art (WOW) event was born and where the internationally acclaimed Hoglund Art Glass studio has been in operation for 30 years. In a daring move, Wellington City Council bought WOW and relocated it to Wellington because it had become so successful and fitted the capital’s brand as the most vibrant events destination in New Zealand.

Nelson has over 300 working artists (painters, sculptors, ceramic artists, potters, glass blowers, jewellers and writers) who draw energy from the spectacular natural environment of Abel Tasman, Kahurangi and Nelson Lakes National Parks.

The Nelson Tasman region’s tourism website has this to say about its artists:

‘They’re scattered around the lakes, along our rivers, on the beaches, in forest dwellings, high in the hills, low in the valleys and in every little nook and cranny where artists can find artistic, spiritual and creative inspiration. Meet artists, visit their workshops and participate in creating your own art! Learn glass bead making or ceramics. A highly memorable experience is assured when interactive fun is at your fingertips. Enjoy your journey of discovery as you travel around the region.’

Names such as the Suter Art Gallery, McGlashen Pottery, Bronte Art Gallery, Earth Sea Gallery, Wood Pigeon Art Studio, Eyebright – The Country Store and Copper Beech Gallery reflect connections with the landscape, wildlife and community origins.

The sector has grown to such an extent that it now has its own Nelson Tasman Regional Arts Strategy 2009 and a Nelson Bays Arts Marketing Network – both aimed at making a hero experience out of Nelson’s artistic talents.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

The art, wellbeing and creative industries can become a hero experience for a region.

Greater traction can be achieved through having:

• a strategy for growth and management of the sector
• supportive councils, economic development agencies and State Tourism Organisations
• art associations or cluster groups that can attract funding and drive expansion of the creative arts.
Isapori del Monte Cetona (The Flavours of Monte Cetona), Siena Province, Italy

Various events are organized in several towns and villages in the Siena area of Italy (Montepulciano, Chianciano Terme, Celle sul Rigo).

The festival is dedicated to the local products that can be purchased in the town squares during the various events organized. This festival is organised by a series of municipalities in the Val di Chiana Senese. In some villages there are street events, in others restaurants offer special theme menus. All sorts of local products are on offer – for example, cheese, honey, cured meats, sweets, wine and olive oil.

The interesting thing is that all the products are ‘a km 0’, literally zero-kilometre products - which means a product comes directly from the surrounding area. This has application to Australia’s Green Cauldron in promoting it as a place where sustainable living is a core value.

The Hokitika Wild Foods Festival, New Zealand

What was started by a local woman with a home brew of gorse flower wine has grown into an annual event attracting over 15,000 people to the small West Coast town of Hokitika.

The Wildfoods Festival has become an iconic and premier special event in New Zealand, celebrating the wild landscape, food and culture of the West Coast (84% of which is protected as national park or conservation reserve). The first Festival in 1990 attracted a crowd of 1,800 and peaked in 2003 with 22,500 mostly domestic visitors. International visitors to the Festival are increasing. Festival visitor numbers are now capped at 15,000 to maintain a quality and sustainable experience. New wild foods are introduced every year. Wasp larvae ice cream, cucumber fish, sheep milk cheeses and wok-fried clams are some examples. The Festival offers local community groups, individuals and businesses the opportunity to raise funds and profile their products and this now forms an important part of the event.

Although involving only one town (due to distance from other towns and the lack of circular driving routes on the West Coast), the Hokitika Wild Foods Festival illustrates the potential of what an event can do to celebrate its landscape and community. Transferring this example to Australia’s Green Cauldron, it is exciting to consider what could be achieved if four or five communities worked together to showcase distinctive or innovative foods, music, art and lifestyle.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

Community festivals can have significant value in promoting a range of messages about a destination.

Having them across a number of towns allows diversity in the offering, shares the organisational load and offers broader appeal for visitors.
**Tasmania’s 60 Great Short Walks**

With an extensive range of walks across Tasmania on a range of land tenures, a number of years ago Tourism Tasmania invested in identifying the ‘best of the best’ and collateral to promote these.

Tasmania’s 60 Great Short Walks are a mix of walks across the state in a diversity of environments. They offer opportunities for people from 30 minutes to a few hours. Each walk is branded with a standard trailhead signage and information that is distinctive. A guidebook is available to the walks.

The 60 Great Short Walks has been a successful program that has guided agency investment priorities and has been very successful with consumers.

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**Wakatipu Trails Network, Queenstown, New Zealand**

The Wakatipu Trails Network is a successful model providing walkers and bikers with a range of opportunities to explore the high country landscape of the Wakatipu Basin in the vicinity of the popular tourism destination of Queenstown. The Trails Network was developed to link scattered trails and build an integrated network for walking, cycling, mountain biking, horse riding and other non-motorised activities to meet demand in a popular tourism destination. A detailed strategy for trail development has been a key aspect of the Network’s success.

The Trail Network links together settlements, food outlets, vineyards, lakes and valleys, historic sites and viewpoints and is widely supported by Queenstown bicycle hire companies. Walking and riding times vary between one hour and overnight. The Wakatipu Trails Trust oversees and raises funds for ongoing development of the Network.

**Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron**

Visitors like to be assured of the best walks that they can do in the time available to them.

The Wakatipu Trails Network provides visitors with a package of ‘the best’ walks, rides and lookouts for destination Queenstown.

This is an example of a strategic destination – wide approach, rather than a park-by-park approach.

The Trails Network is supported by a good website (www.wakatiputrails.co.nz), brochures and maps available through commercial, retail, accommodation and visitor information centre outlets.

The Trails Network includes on-site interpretation, an integrated sign system and has strong support from the local community and businesses.

Trails pass through or over public and private land providing a seamless experience for visitors unaware of land tenure.
Kangaroo Island Expedition Week

The well known Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island has initiated the Kangaroo Island Expedition (following the success of similar programs on Lord Howe Island). This product is a partnership between the accommodation operator and a local well recognised and highly experienced tour operator. Staying at the high end lodge, ‘expeditioners’ are engaged in a full week program of activities that capitalise on the wildlife of the island. In addition to small group and exclusive wildlife experiences (sea lions, whales, birds, other wildlife), there is a program of hiking and natural history lectures. The week is spent with the guide in an immersive program that is complemented by gourmet food and wine.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

A program such as this could include a contribution towards a flagship species or endangered fauna.

Opportunities for exclusive sites add value to a package such as this where there is an opportunity to interact with wildlife in a way that the general public may not be able to do.

Experience Seekers are prepared to pay for high quality products that offer engaging interpretation and a range of activities with good accommodation.

A range of other options could be offered for immersion in the creative arts sector of Australia’s Green Cauldron.

The Weekend Australian 11-12 February 2012

The things you learn on a luxury getaway. We 20 travellers are two days into an indulgent week-long escape when we are informed, quite unexpectedly, that the male pelican has no penis.

According to Indiana James, the Kangaroo Island artist, teacher and renowned expert on all things ‘Pelecanidae’, genital drag would impede the bird’s aerodynamics so it has evolved without one. Pelicans practise something called cloacal mating instead, ‘where you just roll around until the right stuff goes in the right hole’, James deadpans to his wide-eyed audience. ‘Isn’t that the way we all did it the first time?’

Well I never. Of course, the whole point of being here on South Australia's Kangaroo Island is to explore nature’s wonders, red in tooth and claw and all that, and to become acquainted with this unique corner of the Australian backyard. Pelican penises, or the lack thereof, are just one of the surprising truths we will learn during a week of outdoor education-meets-indoor indulgence.

The seven-night expedition kicks off in late July when KI can be wild and windy one day, calm and sunny the next. But fickle weather is of little consequence when ensconced at Southern Ocean Lodge, one of the nation’s new breed of elite coastal retreats.

The experience is not cheap but guests are guaranteed to be pampered to their hearts’ and stomachs’ content. Picture unfolding days of slow-cooked Southern Ocean abalone, salty-sweet South Rock lamb ham and local marron (among many other gastronomic treats) washed down with a bottomless selection of fine SA wines. Regular feasting in the lodge restaurant is offset with worthy exercise in the form of bracing hikes, wildlife encounters and even a spot of speleology.
Siberia Experience, South West New Zealand World Heritage Area

The Siberia Experience has become one of the most successful low volume – high yield nature based tourism products in New Zealand. This half-day experience draws visitors off a major South Island touring route, the West Coast Highway, and into the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area – Mount Aspiring National Park.

In the space of four hours, visitors can leave their car at Makarora (about one hour from Wanaka, near Queenstown), experience awesome mountain flying, followed by an easy to moderate walk down the beautiful Siberia Valley and an exhilarating jet boat ride down the Wilkin River back to their car. Visitors can then continue on their South Island journey or stay overnight in the Siberia Valley. Pilots and jet boat drivers provide interpretation. The experience continues to receive impressive reviews on Trip Advisor. The number of landings and visitors per day is capped under license to the Department of Conservation to minimise environmental and social effects. As a result, many visitors can enjoy a wilderness experience in a pristine mountainous setting. Other valleys nearby do not allow any motorised access or development. Part of the tourism license fee goes into maintenance of the Siberia Valley track within Mount Aspiring National Park.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

The Siberia Experience shows how visitors with limited time can have an intense, hero experience in a relatively short space of time.

This kind of experience, if priced carefully, could have strong appeal to those visitors staying on the Gold Coast or at Byron Bay and for those travelling through the region.

Access into remote areas by helicopters or fixed wing aircraft can be managed in a way that does not detract from the quality of the experience or national park values.

Coast-to-Coast Multisport Event, South Island, New Zealand

The Coast-to-Coast is considered one of the world’s best outdoor endurance events. Traversing the South Island of New Zealand from the Tasman Sea to Christchurch on the Pacific Ocean, the event can be completed in either two days (individuals or two person teams) or as a one-day event (individuals only). Competitors cycle 140km, run 36km (including 33km through Arthur’s Pass National Park) and kayak 67km.

Starting in 1983 with 79 competitors, the event is now in its 30th year attracting close to 800 competitors, with 100 international participants from 15 countries. It attracts over 10,000 support crew, followers and spectators. The Coast to Coast is the brainchild of event entrepreneur Robin Judkins.

The Coast-to-Coast event and Judkins himself have won multiple tourism and events awards. In 2007, the event won the Department of Conservation Award for its contribution towards the endangered Blue Duck recovery program within Arthur’s Pass National Park. The event is widely recognised for being a smart partnership between conservation and tourism, celebrating the South Island landscape, driving economic benefits, increasing destination profile and putting financial contributions back into maintenance of park tracks, visitor research and wildlife recovery programs.

The Coast-to-Coast has huge volunteer support and provides opportunities for local organisations to raise funds by providing accommodation, food and refreshment, equipment hire and other support services.

Lessons for Australia’s Green Cauldron

An event such as the Coast-to-Coast can be established from scratch or grown from an existing event to raise international profile.

This is an example of a relatively low cost but high impact investment.

A partnership between parks and tourism would be an ideal way to showcase Australia’s Green Cauldron brand values.

Australia’s Green Cauldron lends itself to an event that would link the coast with the hinterland and provide enough challenge and excitement to draw international competitors.