



## BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS



### CONCURRENT SPEAKERS

Wednesday, 23 November 2016

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## Morning Streams (8:30am – 12:20pm)

### Ecotourism Planning and Development Chair

#### Rick Murray

Chairman, Ecotourism Australia

### Ecotourism Planning and Development Speakers



#### Neal Muller

General Manager, Industry Development, Tourism Division, Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games

*Help for Ecotourism Investors: finding the right path*

#### Abstract

With the Queensland Government having launched its *Qld Ecotourism Plan* in September 2016, there is clear strategic support to drive innovation in ecotourism experiences as well as stimulate investment in new and refurbished ecotourism opportunities.

Ecotourism Operators are both a partner and contributor to the conservation of Queensland's special places. In striving for ecotourism development best practice it also needs to be acknowledged that there is an additional complexity in the planning and development processes than applies in non-protected areas.

To assist developers and investors, the Qld Government has produced an *Ecotourism Development Toolkit* which is principally a navigation tool with substantial guidance and a series of tailored flow-charts based on what land tenure is being targeted. The Toolkit is designed to provide practical high level guidance and information to assist in determining approval processes and requirements for construction, operation or major re-development of buildings and facilities.

Application of the toolkit is most relevant during the concept formulation stage and it is envisaged could save investors time and money in 'choosing the right path'.

#### Biography

Neal Muller is the General Manager, Industry Development of Tourism Division, in the Queensland Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. In this role he leads a team involved in the coordination of activities including aviation investment attraction, planning reform, business capability, tourism infrastructure, ecotourism and drive market enhancements.

Neal has combined strategic policy and industry sectoral development experience with commercial contracts management and has been well positioned to lead his department's tourism industry development agenda, one dimension of which has been the investigation of low impact eco-tourism projects in the state's protected areas.



## Ted Hall

Proprietor Luridgii Tours, East Kimberley WA

*Jaliwang - the Diamond Dreaming Story (of the Argyle Diamond Mine)*

### Abstract

Moving from Diamond Mine tours to eco-tourism is the latest challenge facing Ted Hall, the owner and operator of the renowned Luridgii Tours at the Argyle Diamond Mine in the East Kimberley. The East Kimberley region of Western Australia remains a remote and beautiful part of Australia which under the custodianship of the Miriuwung and Gija peoples, as well as other traditional owners, has maintained its rich beauty and culture and is a growing attraction to visitors.

Titled Jaliwang Tours; Ted's diamond mine tours have become as renowned for their ancient stories of the Barramundi as they have for the allure of diamonds. Now these tours are reaching the end of their lifetime. With the Rio Tinto owned Argyle Diamond mine likely to close in a few years' time traditional owners, like Ted Hall, are seeking a new way forward – developing eco-tourism on their traditional lands. However traditional owners face exceptional challenges. Not only do they grapple with the universal question, can we make it pay? But they face enormous barriers to secure investment to develop their own businesses and as individual entrepreneurs must tackle complex land assembly processes to gain appropriate land tenure for enterprise development.

Ted Hall describes his individual journey to self-sufficiency through tourism.

### Biography

Ted has owned and operated Luridgii Tours for nearly 10 years. He is a respected Miriuwung man from Mandangala in North East Kimberley (just south of the township of Kununurra). Ted also has a background in radio and has become well known for his Jaliwang Tour - the Diamond Dreaming Story (of the Argyle diamond mining area of the East Kimberley). Ted relishes the opportunity to tell his story.



## Adrian Bold

CEO, Mount Wellington Cableway Company

*Moving Mountains – Aligning Everything Against the Odds for Eco-Tourism*

### Abstract

The Mount Wellington Cable Car is the most exciting prospective tourism venture in Tasmania today. Already one of the state's most popular destinations, the development, first mooted in 1905 will see visitor numbers to the summit soar to over 680,000 by 2020 in a far more environmentally sustainable and memorable way. The untold story of the project lies in the successful methodology used to reverse decades of anti-tourism policy and planning schemes as well as the unorthodox approach to develop the proposal with community input central to everything, not just an after-thought.

The Mountain holds many fascinating stories, from its geological formation, aboriginal heritage, colonial exploitation and its modern day recreational and spiritual value. The cable car project aims to showcase these in a state where the economy has traditionally focused on extracting the natural environment, indigenous tourism is practically non-existent and a deeper connection to country is being called for.

## Biography

Named in 2009 one of Australia's 'Top 30 Under 30 Entrepreneurs', and Australasian Student Entrepreneur of the Year by RMIT & the University of St Louis, Adrian brings 12 years of property development experience, a passion for triple-bottom line business values, clever architecture and smart design in our built & natural environments triple to the tourism industry.

Adrian is responsible for the several years of careful amendments to the planning scheme to enable the Mount Wellington Cable Car's assessment. Adrian is also consulting on several other exciting cableway projects in Australia and South Africa.



## John Huggins

Director of Brand and Communications, IBA Tourism Asset Management

### *Indigenous Tourism Development*

#### Abstract

In light of mixed results across the Australian Indigenous tourism landscape, Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) formed a wholly owned subsidiary company tasked with providing management services and a national Indigenous tourism brand. IBA Tourism Asset Management Pty Ltd (ITAM) began in October 2015 and has significant interest in developing Indigenous tourism.

IBA's current assets include South Australia's Wilpena Pound Resort, Ikara Luxury Safari Camp and Air Wilpena. In Queensland there is Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, Minjerribah Camping and Holiday Inn Townsville while in the Northern Territory ITAM's assets include Cooina Lodge, Yellow Water Cruises, Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel and Adina Vibe Darwin.

As an asset-led organisation, ITAM sets out to enhance their asset's financial and operational performance; increase Indigenous employment, training and supply chain opportunities; create management structures providing economies of scale; create a viable corporate structure whose benefits are realised at the asset ownership level, and; create a profitable and diversified portfolio of products and services that provides clients and customers with authentic cultural experiences with a strong eco focus.

ITAM's presentation explores some of the successes and challenges in implementing these goals at asset level and will provide a clear view for future success. With a national scope for developing Indigenous tourism with an emphasis on cultural product development.

## Biography

John Huggins is Director of Brand and Communications for IBA Tourism Asset Management Pty Ltd (ITAM). ITAM is a wholly owned subsidiary company of Indigenous Business

Australia (IBA) established to provide management services and develop a national Indigenous tourism brand to generate sustainable returns for IBA's portfolio of tourism and accommodation assets. John specialises in brand and product development as well as the management of communication platforms across ITAM and its assets. John has previously been involved with content and marketing campaigns for Tourism Australia as well as creating and editing content for print and digital platforms.

## **Justine Thompson**

Project Manager, Ecoline / Tree Tops

### *Maximising the Potential of a Site with Sustainable Initiatives*

#### **Abstract**

This presentation will guide participants through the most effective tools to evaluate sites. It will explore potential initiatives to provide increased visitation using the tree tops with financial, social and environmental sustainability. As a project manager of Ecoline, Australia's leading tree top adventures designer and operator, Justine Thompson will present how to evaluate your site for potential activation. Justine will focus on how to accurately appraise your site for the most suited sustainable initiatives that will activate the space as well as raise environmental awareness through interpretation, education and promotion opportunities. She will identify the benefits of activation for parks and forest management organisations. She will also discuss the tools Ecoline has created to keep a project on track.

Key Learning areas for the session

As a result of participating individuals will

- be given a form to take away for site assessment.
- consider various options for assessing and understanding who are their target markets and what attracts them.
- see examples of sites that produce a financial return for the landholder and a sustainable partnership with ecotourism operators.

#### **Biography**

Justine joined Ecoline in 2009. She was attracted to the passion of the business owners and their desire to develop exciting projects whilst protecting the environment, participating in the local community's well-being and fostering educational experiences of the natural environment.

The company designs and builds custom-made facilities in the tree tops with a WOW factor. They take pride in being innovators, and, by using the best technology, they design adventures where even toddlers can enjoy an exhilarating treetop experience in total safety.



## **Carl Solomon**

Partner, Destination Marketing Store

### *Sink or Swim: developing and promoting sustainable tourism in the Coral Triangle*

#### **Abstract**

Developing and Promoting Sustainable Nature-based Tourism in the Coral Triangle is an Australian Government funded initiative implemented by WWF. It aims to assist the six countries of the Coral Triangle Initiative to develop a long-term approach to more sustainable tourism in the region.

The vision is that the region is known as offering the world's best sustainable coastal and marine tourism experiences with environmental, economic, social, and cultural benefits involving communities, governments and private enterprise.

Sustainable tourism is essential to conserving the Coral Triangle's coastal and marine resources and to ensuring food security and livelihoods for millions of people in the region. It provides an opportunity to harness a dynamic industry to preserve one of the world's most unique ecosystems and areas of high conservation value.

In the first stage, sites have been identified in Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, selected for their high marine conservation value and low levels of existing tourism development. They will provide the case studies for this presentation.

Nature-based and adventure tourism are growing annually by 10-30%, currently accounting for up to 25% of the world's tourist market (UNWTO). This growing demand provides an incentive to move away from mass-based tourism. However, tourism, if left unchecked, can compromise the sustainability of the Coral Triangle's finite coastal and marine resources and negatively impact local culture.

This paper will explore the challenges and importance of developing and promoting sustainable tourism in the region, providing insights gained from the three initial sites.

## **Biography**

Over recent years, Carl has led significant reform in the nature and cultural tourism industry; engaging communities and delivering innovation solutions to attract more visitors and increase revenue. He has created and executed award-winning brand, marketing, digital engagement and education campaigns. He has designed and delivered sustainable tourism action plans and experience development strategies. Carl has extensive experience in complex stakeholder consultation and communication.

Throughout his career, Carl has worked across the community, business and government sectors with or for organisations such as NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), Tourism Australia, Parks Australia and the United Nations, including as the inaugural Executive Director of Olympic Aid (now known as Right to Play) and ten years on the NPWS Executive including as Director of Tourism & Partnerships. Carl is currently a Director of Science for Wildlife and served as a Board Member of Australia for UNHCR for five years.

## **Ben O'Hara**

General Manager Land and Environment, The Gainsdale Group

*Developing a Great Walk in Queensland*

## **Biography**

Ben has more than 20 years of experience in the finance and property industry. He has worked in management, client management and origination roles with local and international



institutions that saw him develop skills in project analysis and assessment, investment analysis and execution, relationship management, strategic planning, instigation and ongoing review and business development.

In 2012 Ben began working in the environmental sector as General Manager for the Queensland Trust for Nature where he oversaw the extraction of QTFN from the Qld state government, engage with practical work in establishing wildlife corridors, ecological restoration and biodiversity offsets within QTFN the revolving fund. Ben joined Gainsdale in March this year to assist develop the Turner Foundation, the ecological vehicle of Graham and Jude Turner. The Turner Foundation is currently developing the Hidden Vale UQ Wildlife Facility and the Little Liverpool Range Initiative, a community led wildlife and ecological corridor.

## Ecotourism Quality and Standards Chair

### Michael Collins

Deputy Chairman, Ecotourism Australia and Principal, CF Global

## Ecotourism Quality and Standards Speakers



### Li-Yi Huang

Member, Taiwan Ecotourism Association

*Securing The Excellent? The Case of Whale Watching Ecolabel Scheme in Taiwan*

#### Abstract

Unlike command-and-control tools that are back up of laws and regulations, using voluntary tools such as self-agreement, certification scheme, and environmental management system in ecotourism/ sustainable tourism area is to provide a flexible mechanism for setting out clear requirements of enterprises or other stakeholders in tourism market. In many circumstances, it may be felt that such non-statutory schemes are sufficient to bring about the sustainable development awareness or changes in behavior in both tourism operators and tourists. Nonetheless, questions remains in such voluntary schemes. Whale Watching Ecolable (WWE) scheme in Taiwan is such a case. Taiwan has the fastest growing whale watching industry since 1997, which requires an innovative management strategy. The whale watching management in Taiwan experience a self-agreement to a WWE scheme that mainly designed by government officials, academics, and NGOs opinions. Further, the WWE scheme was developed in order to manage this new tourism activity, and a committee was formed to take charge of coordinating issues: in particular, adapting the criteria of WWE from global to local conditions. Yet it is still searching for a best solution in solving the problem between tourism and dolphin/whales protection. The case shows that, while the role of governments is important to support the certification process and should also continue to give support as schemes develop, the establishment of the WWE scheme takes into account a series of events as well as a set of actors and their interactions as these influenced policymakers' attitudes.

#### Biography

Li-Yi is from Taiwan, and received her confirmation of Ph.D. candidature from the School of Management and Government in Murdoch University, Western Australia. The concept of sustainable tourism, incorporating the natural and cultural environment in all aspects, underpins areas of her research interests. Some of Li-yi's specific interests include small island management, interest groups, policy implementation, and policy instruments in the context of policies for tourism sustainability. In addition to research, Li-yi is a member of Taiwan Ecotourism Association, and had experiences in establishing the Whale Watching Ecolabel scheme. Li-yi likes to work at NGOs, she is an executive secretary at the Friends of Daan Forest Park Foundation, Taiwan. She enjoys mountain climbing, bird watching, and leather crafting in her spare time.



### **Rod Hillman**

Chief Executive Officer, Ecotourism Australia

#### **Biography**

Rod has a life-long involvement in tourism, protected areas management and education with lengthy stints as a tour operator, National Park Manager and teacher all over Australia, and many years overseas. He has been involved with Ecotourism Australia since 2001 when he was elected as a Board member (then Deputy Chair) for six years where he created the 'Tourism in Protected Areas Forum' (TAPAF) and managed the Annual Conference program. After four years in Papua New Guinea, managing the Kokoda Track, he returned to Ecotourism Australia as its Chief Executive.



### **Jerry Spooner**

Principle Accreditation Officer, Vanuatu Department of Tourism

#### **Biography**

Jerry Spooner is the Principle Accreditation Officer for the Vanuatu Department of Tourism Who is in charge of the Vanuatu Tourism Accreditation Program. Jerry Has worked with the Vanuatu Tourism Government since late 2012 which from then has developed Vanuatu's Tourism Accreditation Program. His working relationship with the Eco Tourism Australia team started in early 2015 resulting in the contracting of Eco Tourism Australia with the assistance of the New Zealand Government under the Vanuatu Strategic Tourism Action Plan to assist in developing an Operational Plan to execute the Program developed and also the next program is to introduce Eco Tourism Certification in Vanuatu, an understanding agreement between Eco Tourism Australia and the Vanuatu Government through an MOU. The Establishing of a Sustainable Tourism Sector Standards and also the introducing of an Eco Certification Program suitable for the Pacific Island nations is his big aspiration.



### **Leonie Bowles**

Program Manager, Ecotourism Australia

*Australia's First Ecotourism Destination Certification*



## Abstract

Nature based tourism in Australia has been growing at a positive and sustained growth rate of 4% per year since 2010. Protected Areas play a major role in nature based tourism as spending time in natural areas is a prime motivator for both international and domestic travellers. In 2015, international visitation to national parks increased by 13%. This growth is expected to continue as more people seek to experience and enjoy their leisure time in nature. As a result, it is increasingly important that Protected Area Management Agencies have access to a simple and effective framework to assist them manage and conserve the natural and cultural values of their protected areas while also demonstrating leadership to visitors and the tourism industry.

Ecotourism Australia's Nature-based destination certification is an Australian-developed program designed for the Australian context. It is based on the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's Destination Criteria and applies 'protected area specific' verification and interpretation.

The Program comprehensively covers four main objectives of sustainable destinations:

- Demonstrating effective sustainable management
- Maximising economic benefits to the host community and minimising negative impacts
- Maximising benefits to communities, visitors, and culture and minimising negative impacts
- Maximising benefits to the environment and minimising negative impacts

## Biography

Leonie Bowles is the Program Manager at Ecotourism Australia responsible for developing Australia's first nature-based destination certification for protected areas. Leonie has worked with Ecotourism Australia since 2011. Leonie also currently teaches at the University of Queensland. She has worked for the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, EC3 Global and Conservation Volunteers Australia. In 2015 she was awarded the Young Talent Award at the World Tourism Forum recognising her leadership and research in environmental ethics and tourism.

### Russell Boswell

Manager, Savannah Guides

*A New Era for EcoGuides*

### Dr. Yung-Song Chen

Assistant Professor, Department of Biotechnology and Animal Science, National I-Lan University and Supervisor of Taiwan Ecotourism Association (TEA)

*Implications of More Developed Offshore Islands in Taiwan for Developing Marine Ecotourism on Remote Orchid Island, Taitung*

## Abstract

Surrounded by sea and having more than eighty offshore islands, including Kinmen and Matsu, Taiwan is initially an island country. However, the recent history of martial law associated with China's potential attack have inhibited the development of ocean



exploitation and marine culture in Taiwan. With the formal lifting of martial law in 1987, the government aspires to transform Taiwan into a progressive ocean nation. Nevertheless, most inhabitants of the offshore islands are concerned over their future and want to upgrade their current status in the face of a new era and fresh challenges.

Orchid Island is the most unique of the offshore islands of Taiwan. Strongly influenced by the Kuroshio Current and with a unique geography and varied landscapes, Orchid Island has a traditional and oceanic flying fish culture or is dubbed as Yami/Dao tribe culture. Numerous people are concerned with preserving the flying fish culture on Orchid Island into the future. Whether Orchid Island follows the path of other more developed offshore islands to enhance its tourism industry or establishes “A Cultural Orchid Island” or “A World-class and Self-governing Aboriginal Area”, as originally proposed by the local Dao writer Syman Rapongan, the debate will continue for years into the future. The perspectives of this study are based on my field study surveying flying fish on Orchid Island, and on my personal visits to other offshore islands during recent years. Whether Orchid Island will be influenced by future policies adopted in realizing an Ocean Taiwan.

### Biography

Dr. Yung-Song Chen has been involved in whale watching (ww) research for almost 10 years on the impact of whale-watching on dolphin behaviour in the coastal waters of eastern Taiwan together with project coordinator, Prof. Lien-Sian Chou, NTU. Their research mainly focused on the ww impacts from the ww boats upon the cetacean behavioral changes in the coastal waters of Ilan county. Dr. Yung-Song Chen had conducted the project on flying fish investigation for several years and have paid nearly 10 times visit to the indigenous island i.e. Orchid Island to survey the status of local people’s important food supply from flyingfish. The talk is based on his field study surveying flying fish on Orchid Island, and on his personal visits to other offshore islands during recent years. He also dedicates a lot of his time to promote organic aquaculture as well other organic agriculture sectors presently.



### Cherise Addinsall

PhD Candidate, Business and Tourism Southern Cross University, Lismore

*Engaging the Tourism Industry in Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) in the South Pacific.*

### Abstract

The tourism industry in the South Pacific rely on essential ecosystem services such as healthy reefs, biodiversity, landscape beauty, clean fresh water systems, and cultural heritage. These services are often provided by smallholders on customary land through sustainable traditional land management practices and are vital for providing for livelihoods. Yet although it is universally recognised as to the importance of these ecosystem resources to the tourism industry, there is little empirical analysis or practical examples of the tourism industry supporting ecosystem services. Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) is a possible avenue for funding and supporting ecosystem services provided by rural smallholders.

Partnerships that enhance ecosystem services can have long term positive outcomes for biodiversity conservation in the South Pacific whilst supporting rural livelihoods and the sustainability of the tourism industry. Findings from a stakeholder workshop and semi-structured interviews with tourism stakeholders and rural smallholders in Vanuatu found that

the concept of PES is a complex and dynamic concept that can be difficult to understand. This complexity is an immediate inhabiting factor to selling the concept to the tourism industry. In addition to this the formal criteria for PES could be unfeasible and inappropriate in a South Pacific context. Therefore further research is needed to establish the most effective criteria and economic transactions in a South Pacific context to support positive outcomes by strengthening linkages between rural smallholders and the tourism industry.

### Biography

Cherise Addinsall is a PhD candidate in the School of Business and Tourism at Southern Cross University, Lismore and currently works on a range of international projects in the School of Environmental Science and Engineering. She holds a BA with First Class Honours in Environmental Tourism Management with University Medal for outstanding academic achievement. Cherise has been involved in a range of research projects seeking to enhance the livelihoods of rural people in the South Pacific and remote Australia through the CRC for Remote Economic Participation, SPREP, ACIAR, FAO, Live and Learn, and the Nakau programme. Her research focuses on agroecology and sustainable livelihood options for rural smallholders, enhancing the livelihood of rural smallholders through avenues such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) (with particular focus on the tourism sector), and sustainable/ecotourism/agritourism/agroecological and cultural tourism development.

## Supporting Sustainable Tourism in Marine Reserves Chair

### Hilary Schofield

Director, MPA Branch, Parks Australia

## Supporting Sustainable Tourism in Marine Reserves Speakers



### Jason Mundy

Assistant Secretary, MPA Branch, Parks Australia

*Maximising the Tourism Benefit of Commonwealth Marine Reserves*

### Abstract

### Biography

Jason is head of the Marine Protected Areas Branch at Parks Australia and responsible for the management of Australia’s network of Commonwealth Marine Reserves. This includes the implementation of a new marine tourism work program, delivery of a national scientific research and monitoring program, assessments and compliance, and stakeholder engagement in the marine reserves.

Prior to his current role, Jason was General Manager, Strategies Branch at the Australian Antarctic Division (from 2011 until January 2016). Before that, he worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on overseas postings in the Philippines and Thailand, and positions in Canberra, including Director, China Political and External Section.

Jason has also worked as a Senior Adviser in the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and as a senior adviser in the International Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. He holds an MA (International Relations), a Graduate Diploma (Foreign Affairs and Trade) and did his first degree, a Bachelor of Arts and Law (with First Class Honours in law), at the University of Tasmania.

### **Hilary Schofield**

Director, MPA Branch, Parks Australia

*The Spectrum of Opportunities*

## **Ecotourism Futures: a national nature-based tourism strategy Chairs**



### **Peter Cochrane**

*Director, Ecotourism Australia*

#### **Biography**

Peter has over twenty years experience in senior executive leadership and governance roles in the public and private sectors. He consults on environment and sustainability issues, and is an adviser for the national State of Environment Report 2016 focused on building its audience and utility, and its potential form post 2016.

He chairs the Steering Committee of the National Environmental Science Program's Marine Biodiversity Hub and is an Adjunct Fellow at the Fenner School of Environment and Society at ANU. He is a Director of Ecotourism Australia, the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute and Tangaroa Blue Foundation. He sits on the Steering Group of the Protected Area Learning and Research Collaboration. He is an associate with two consulting companies: Futureeye and Empowering Engagements. Peter was Director of National Parks and head of Parks Australia from 1999-2013. Peter is also a member of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Executive and Steering Committees, and a candidate for the next IUCN Council as a regional Councillor for Oceania.



### **Dr. Claire Ellis**

*Consultant, Claire Ellis Consulting*

#### **Biography**

Claire is a yacht owner who understands and recognises the challenges and rewards of marine tourism experiences. Together volunteering at her local yacht club, Dr Claire Ellis runs her own consulting company, based in Tasmania. Recent projects include working with SATC to develop the South Australian Strategic Tourism Plan 2015-20, working with AVANA on both the Welcoming and Servicing Chinese Visitor national projects, and with National Landscapes, particularly projects in the Kimberley, Flinders Ranges, Kangaroo Island and Great Ocean Road. Claire also is an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Tasmania actively researching in several areas including employment issues for

international students, cruise shipping and volunteer tourism. Prior to consulting, Claire was Director, Infrastructure and Industry Development, at Tourism Tasmania for 7 years, and also spent 14 years living and working overseas, mostly in Indonesia, Vietnam, China, USA, and within Australia in Perth, Darwin and Canberra as well as Tasmania across tourism and conservation.

## Ecotourism Futures: a national nature-based tourism strategy Speakers



**Peter Cochrane**

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## Afternoon Streams (1:30pm – 5:00pm)

### Innovative Approaches to Ecotourism Workshop Chair

**Lizzie Corke**

CEO, Conservation Ecology Centre, Cape Otway

### Innovative Approaches to Ecotourism Workshop Speakers



**Fiona McKenzie**

Superpod Pty Ltd

*Near Zero Energy Passive House Provides Optimum Comfort*

#### **Abstract**

The world needs urgently to change the way we build and renovate so that we conserve power, instead of wasting power. Wasting power contributes to climate change.

Superpod follows world's best practice in building - the Passive House Standard" as scientifically proven using building physics.

This Standard provides:

- a) optimum comfort and health;
- b) draft free;
- c) much cooler inside without an airconditioner in hot climates;
- d) moisture control and mould prevention;
- e) less pressure on infrastructure (eliminate blackouts?);
- f) up to 90% less power consumption on heating/cooling bills.

Our innovative patent pending Superpod® system also provides:

- g) extremely fast build time, minimising site impact (eg 4 weeks);
- h) low maintenance, long life prefab materials.

Ecotourism is the perfect opportunity for an industry to lead change to the way we build because:

- 1) The tourist can stay in and experience something truly "new";
- 2) They will come back if the accommodation is really comfortable, with stable temperatures, fresh air and draft free;
- 3) The Operator is motivated to innovate because they pay less for power/infrastructure;
- 4) In remote areas , diesel can be reduced <90-100% (with renewables);
- 5) The Operator can guarantee tourist comfort without active energy consumption or blackouts.

Superpod® offers a new solution for Ecotourism. We also offer a sustainable integrated



fitout with unique furniture designs.

Early adopters and innovators can offer a truly mindblowing experience for travellers - and we hope that this will kick start the growth of a new building standard across all types of buildings across the world.

That is Ecotourism that really makes a difference.

## Biography

Fiona McKenzie - designer of Certified passive house system, patent pending, recipient of Good Design Award, journalist and blogger on how to save energy in buildings, improve health and comfort, and save the planet.



### Melanie Grevis-James

Director, Our Planet Travel

#### *An Innovative Approach to Ecotourism Marketing*

#### Abstract

Melanie from Our Planet Travel will present a 'grass roots' look at responsible and ecotourism marketing in Australia, and showcase the new social enterprise campaign that Our Planet Travel is developing to bring the eco message to Australian travellers, and the travel industry. Where and how do consumers find 'green' travel products? Are we marketing our products adequately to meet the growing interest in responsible travel? No, we aren't! Current global research shows that consumers are keen to find and purchase responsible travel experiences but don't know where to find them, or what 'responsible' travel actually means. The focus of the presentation is on the need for ecotourism and responsible travel products to gain more awareness in the media, and in the mainstream tourism industry. The push to encourage more travel suppliers to become sustainable needs to come from consumer pressure – which can only occur if consumers are aware of it in the first place. How can ecotourism products gain more exposure in the marketplace, in particular smaller operators with limited funds available? How can we collectively educate travellers on what responsible travel means, what it looks like, and where to find it? All these questions will be addressed. Our Planet Travel aims to raise consumer awareness in Australia about more responsible travel choices through an innovative campaign (to be launched later this year). Everyone can get involved in this. Our Planet Travel works closely in partnership with the tourism industry, and Ecotourism Australia.

## Biography

Melanie Grevis-James has an extensive career in tourism marketing within the Australian tourism industry. Her experience spans 26 years in key marketing roles across all levels of the tourism industry; including with Regional, State, and Federal tourism organisations, private tourism operators, and as a marketing consultant for tourism associations, local councils and private operators. Melanie has operated a successful tourism marketing business since 2001; and currently operates Banksia Marketing and Our Planet Travel, based in Brisbane. Melanie launched Our Planet Travel in mid-2012 to raise consumer awareness of responsible and 'greener' travel choices. Melanie is passionate about the environment and travel. She works with tourism operators across Australia on a regular

basis, which provides a real insight into the current state of tourism marketing across the country. Melanie has a Bach. Business (Tourism/Hospitality Management) degree; and speaks German fluently. Our Planet Travel magazine is available in newsagents in Australia, and online.



### **Penny Spoelder**

Senior Consultant, TRC Tourism

*Shift happens! Changing the Way Tasmania is Experienced by Visitors*

#### **Abstract**

Shift happens! Changing the way Tasmania is experienced by visitors  
Tourism 21 – The Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy 2015-2020 identifies Investment in Quality Infrastructure as one of four priorities to guide the growth and development of Tasmania's visitor economy. A critical action identified to deliver against this priority is for Government and Industry to work together to develop and implement a Tasmanian Visitor Engagement Strategy.

Challenging the status-quo, Tasmania's four Regional Tourism Organisations have partnered with the State Government and the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania to deliver upon this critical action through the design and implementation of an Engagement Blueprint.

Fostering a 'paradigm shift' in thinking and behaviour in how Tasmania is experienced by all visitors, the Visitor Engagement Blueprint identifies seamless, innovative and intuitive ways for visitors to be guided around the State. It challenges accepted practice and is creative in its recommendations about how to make the visitor experience in Tasmania even more outstanding than what it currently is. This paper outlines the back story to creating the brave new blueprint and summarises the research used to challenge current thinking. It summarises the ideas and recommendations and how visitors will experience Tasmania in the future.

#### **Biography**

Penny has over 25 years' experience in tourism with extensive experience in destination, visitor experience, infrastructure and investment planning. She works extensively on regional destination planning across Australia including WA, NSW, VIC, Tasmania and the NT. Penny has extensive experience in the public and private sectors and has worked directly with LTO's RTO's and State and Federal Tourism organisations. She brings an exciting, innovative approach to helping destinations and organisations achieve their potential. Her work has been recognised nationally through numerous awards from the Planning Institute of Australia and Parks and Leisure Australia.



### **Dr. Nam Nguyen**

Director, Malik Institute

**Co-author** – Prof. Ockie Bosch, Director of System Modelling, Systemic Excellence Group, Berlin, Germany

## *The Unique Malik ManagementSystems® and their Range of Powerful Instruments for Fostering Innovation and Sustaining Excellence in Ecotourism*

### **Abstract**

We are living in an increasingly complex world, in which all economic, social, environmental, cultural and political factors and processes are evidently interconnected. Traditional problem-solving approaches through simple linear thinking and “quick fixes” that solve issues in isolation have posed various shortcomings, including failures and even counterproductive consequences. As ecotourism is a business and “it is growing across the globe at an extraordinary rate”, the complex problems in this business as well as in our constantly changing world require better approaches and supporting tools for “bringing economic, community and environmental benefits”. International expert in innovative general management solutions and trusted partner to all kinds of organisations, global market players as well as governments, Malik’s foundations are the sciences of complexity and dynamics, including systems science, cybernetics and bionics. Our solutions focus on the fundamental positions of the system, customer value and social responsibility. Our approach aims at maximising governance effectiveness and enabling organisations to transform themselves in order to excel at a time of great challenges and profound change. This presentation introduces the work of Prof. Malik and the associated pioneers at the Malik Institute – with the key principles of rigorously testing their scientific results in real world practical applications. The presentation also provides an overview of the unique Malik ManagementSystems® and their unique range of powerful methods and instruments. They encompass what organisations and executives need to navigate or “look 25 years into the future” for fostering innovation and sustaining excellence in Ecotourism.

### **Biography**

Nam Nguyen is a Director (Australia and SE Asia) of Malik Institute, Switzerland (the world’s leading organization for holistic, system-cybernetic management, right governance, and responsible leadership).

Nam is also a Hon Visiting Research Fellow in the University of Adelaide Business School; a Founder of Think2Impact Pty Ltd in Australia; a recipient of the prestigious 2011 Australian Leadership Award; a member of the Scientific Board of the Business Systems Laboratory, Italy; a Vice President (2012-13; 2015-17) of the International Society for the Systems Sciences (ISSS) and a VP (2014-16) of the International Federation for Systems Research (IFSR).

As a systems scientist Nam’s research is trans-disciplinary in nature which cuts across a wide range of disciplines and themes, e.g. management, leadership, governance, sustainable development, systems thinking, systems design and complexity management, tourism development. His consulting projects vary from city development, healthcare, strategy development to ecotourism innovation and management, etc.



### **John Hamilton**

The Tasmanian Nature Company

*Let’s do an Unzoo*

### **Abstract**

The change from a typical Australian family run wildlife park to a model "Unzoo for the future" is a story of innovation, challenges and cutting edge conservation.

After 10 years of effort the former Tasmanian Devil Conservation Park on Tasman Peninsula in South East Tasmania has shut down animal cages, taken down the boundary fence so wild animals can come and go as they wish and created a native botanic garden that is now home to nearly 100 species of wild birds. Binoculars and bird books and pencil cams that peer into bushland nest boxes so visitors can see the inhabitants on hand held screens are all part of the Unzoo philosophy.

Behind it all Tasmanian Devil Unzoo is the major partner in the Peninsula Devil Conservation Project that has saved the only isolated, safe population of wild Tasmanian devils on the planet. Daily monitoring of a strategic group of these precious animals with special infra-red night cameras is funded through a Devil Tracker 4WD tour operation onto a neighbouring farm.

Tasmanian Devil Unzoo also is raising funds for a \$500,000 project to reduce road kill in the region. This involves solar powered Night Owl wildlife alarms set up along roadsides that are triggered by car headlights at night to emit an unpleasant screech together with flashing lights that frighten wildlife away from the road. Trials with this European developed technology indicate it can reduce native animal collisions with cars by 85%.

The Unzoo is the concept of international designer Jon Coe.

## Biography

John Hamilton is a pioneer of nature tourism in Tasmania. A winner of the Qantas Award for Outstanding Service to the Tasmanian Tourism Industry, he served on the National Committee of the Ecotourism Association of Australia in the 1990s. He presently operates Tasmanian Devil Unzoo and Devil Tracker tours on Tasman Peninsula in South East Tasmania.



### Alex Stathakis

Director, Conversio Pty Ltd

#### *Tourism in a Low-Carbon Economy – Adjusting to a Carbon-Constrained Future*

### Abstract

Greenhouse gas emissions from the tourism sector make up approximately 5% of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions as the result of transport to and from the travel destination, accommodation, and tourist activities.

The contribution of the tourism and travel sectors are expected to further increase considerably over the next 20 years because of strong growth in international tourism in terms of number of people travelling, travel frequency and distance. The question is how the tourism industry can tackle the challenge of reducing their environmental impact and do so in a credible and cost-effective manner.

Committing to sustainable tourism and reducing greenhouse gas emission is no longer just a 'nice-to-have', and it is more than having a logo.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions requires incorporating sustainability and carbon management into day-to-day operations, which leads to greater operational efficiencies, reduced emissions and cost savings. Understanding the key drivers affecting greenhouse gas emissions allows tourism operators to assess emission-intensive processes, and identify improvement opportunities through an assessment of abatement options and costs.

Based on this assessment, operators can re-evaluate, for example, operating procedures, procurement policies, service delivery or the interaction with the transportation sector and related carbon offset programs.

An integrated, properly-aligned approach is vital and evaluating available strategies can lead to new insights about the environmental challenges, risks and opportunities for the tourism sector as a whole and individual participants.

## Biography

Alex Stathakis is Director of Conversio Pty Ltd, a Brisbane-based boutique carbon consultancy specialising in providing effective carbon and energy management solutions for small and medium-sized businesses. He has more than 8 years' experience in the carbon and energy sector as an advisor, consultant and manager. An analyst for Low Carbon Australia Limited, Alex played a key role delivering the Australian Government's National Carbon Offset Standard Carbon Neutral Program, working closely with businesses pursuing carbon neutral certification. As the Queensland program manager for City Switch Green Office, Alex supported commercial office tenants to improve office energy and waste efficiency.

He has lectured at UQ Business School on corporate sustainability, climate change and strategy, and has published articles on carbon reporting, climate policy, and adaptation to extreme weather events and climate change.



### Peter Cochrane

Director, Ecotourism Australia

*The Blue Mountains Low Carbon Tourism Project*

### Abstract

Rigorous audits of energy, water and waste, and effective action over recent years by major hotels, restaurants, cafes, activity providers, and bed and breakfast operators are leading to significant reductions in the carbon footprints of a range of tourism businesses in the Blue Mountains.

The project, funded by the CRC for Low Carbon Living, has recently launched a web-based app to promote businesses that reduce their carbon footprints and to encourage residents and visitors to reduce their own carbon footprints by patronizing these local businesses. Recent surveys of residents and visitors show a high understanding of carbon footprints and a strong interest and willingness to preferentially patronize businesses that are reducing their environmental footprint.

Consistent with the protection and promotion of the World Heritage values of the Greater Blue Mountains region the project, initiated and managed by the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, is helping to develop an additional and complementary point of difference for regional tourism.

Reductions of up to 15 per cent carbon reductions in one year have been made by some businesses. With tourism making up 5.6 per cent of Australia's emissions, this project could be easily replicated in other communities.



## Biography

Peter has over twenty years experience in senior executive leadership and governance roles in the public and private sectors. He consults on environment and sustainability issues, and is an adviser for the national State of Environment Report 2016 focused on building its audience and utility, and its potential form post 2016.

He chairs the Steering Committee of the National Environmental Science Program’s Marine Biodiversity Hub and is an Adjunct Fellow at the Fenner School of Environment and Society at ANU. He is a Director of Ecotourism Australia, the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute and Tangaroa Blue Foundation. He sits on the Steering Group of the Protected Area Learning and Research Collaboration. He is an associate with two consulting companies: Futureye and Empowering Engagements. Peter was Director of National Parks and head of Parks Australia from 1999-2013. Peter is also a member of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Executive and Steering Committees, and a candidate for the next IUCN Council as a regional Councillor for Oceania.

## Geotourism Forum Chair



### Angus M. Robinson

Managing Partner, Leisure Solutions® and Chairman, Geotourism Standing Committee, Geological Society of Australia

#### Biography

An exploration geologist by profession, Angus established Leisure Solutions® in 1993 joining Ecotourism Australia Ltd as an early member. In recent years he has served as inaugural Chair of the Geotourism Standing Committee of the Geological Society of Australia and is also a member and inaugural chair of the Geotourism Forum of Ecotourism Australia.

After 20+ years working in technology and industry development executive roles, he is now engaged in ecotourism activities in Queensland’s Scenic Rim as an eco-certified tour operator and in developing geotourism in the Red Centre and Blue Mountains/Jenolan Caves national landscape areas. In earlier years he has enjoyed roles as the Director, Commercial Services at Taronga and Western Plains Zoos, as the inaugural Director of Sydney’s former redeveloped Geological and Mining Museum (The Earth Exchange), and has managed the Mt Hotham Alpine Resort in Victoria during its early developmental period.

## Geotourism Forum Speakers



### Angus M. Robinson

Managing Partner, Leisure Solutions® and Chairman, Geotourism Standing Committee, Geological Society of Australia

*Role of Geotourism in Australia’s Nature Based Tourism Strategy 2025*

#### Abstract



Ecotourism Australia has been working with key industry stakeholders to prepare Australia's Nature Based Tourism Strategy 2025 and Action Plan. There is currently no collaborative, nation-wide strategy to maximise and realise the potential for nature-based tourism by bringing key stakeholders together to draft a strategy that builds on current state and territory based plans, previous successes, lessons and learnings.

The strategy's stated vision is that Australia should realise the potential of nature-based tourism to make a major contribution to the development of more diverse, sustainable and resilient regions. Regional Australia is suffering from declining resource sector jobs and investment, a dwindling revenue base and demographic shifts as people move to seek employment opportunities in cities. Whilst nature-based tourism is offered as part of the solution with the recognition that a focused, co-ordinated, innovative and co-operative approach can make a meaningful difference to many regional communities, this strategy does need to embrace geotourism as a key delivery mechanism.

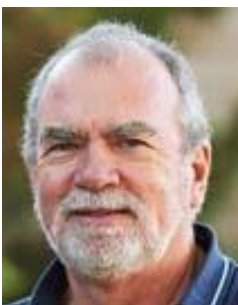
Geotourism is an emerging global phenomenon which fosters tourism based upon landscapes. Its definition has recently been defined as a form of tourism that specifically focuses on the geology and landscapes which shape the character of a region. This advances an earlier concept of geotourism as strictly 'geological tourism' to the extent that it is now accepted globally that geotourism offers strong experiential characteristics, embracing all elements of natural and cultural heritage, inclusive of ecotourism and indigenous tourism values.

Geotourism inspired initiatives, detailed in this presentation, are now emerging throughout regional Australia.

## Biography

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### Alan Briggs

PhD Candidate, Murdoch University

*Gunduwa – A Case Study for Geotrails*

### Abstract

The Gunduwa Conservation Region (GCR) is situated over a convergence of biological, cultural and geological attributes that are of international significance. Located in the Midwest region of Western Australia the GCR also straddles the agricultural industries of cropping and grazing, and pastoral lands. Gunduwa is the Aboriginal name given to the

prominent rocky outcrop now known as Mt Singleton which lies on Ningham Station, between Dalwallinu and Paynes Find on the Great Northern Highway. There are many other geological features within the region, some with interesting early explorer connections. During 2016 the potential for establishing geotrails in the region was investigated. This paper relates the concepts developed in considering what makes good geotrails, the overlaying structure for deriving heritage touristic information and also looks at preliminary findings of research into the community's perceptions of establishing a Geopark in the region.

## Biography

After 40 years in Western Australian government in forest and land conservation and management; recreation and tourism, Ministerial office for Forests and the National Trust, Alan retired from the government way of life. After achieving his MBA, Alan lecture in tourism at Edith Cowan University from 1997, becoming an Adjunct Lecture in 2009.

Alan established Natural Heritage and Culture (NHC) taking on consultancy tasks. A long term committee member of Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco-Tourism (FACET) he has strong interests in Eco-tourism, Geo-tourism and Geoparks and Indigenous engagement in land management, tourism and geoparks.

In 2011 Alan lectured full time in tourism on campus at Murdoch and subsequently, until mid-2016, lectured part time in Sustainable Tourism. Alan commenced a PhD in March 2012 at Murdoch University. The PhD research focuses on stakeholder perceptions of establishing a Geopark in the Wheatbelt of Western Australia.



### Nikolett Csorvasi

Geotourism Researcher, Eötvös Loránd University

*A New Form of Geotourism with Great Marketing Value: mass geotours in Hungary*

#### Abstract

Geotours possess significant tourism potential. They enable geotourism even at places with no visitor centres or nature trails. They offer interesting programs which attract new visitors, as well establishing connections between geotourists and locals and have economic benefits. They focus public attention on local geoheritage and geotourism through their marketing. The author divides geotours into two categories: group geotours with few participants and mass geotours with hundreds of visitors. The latter allows a more significant nationwide marketing campaign. Due to the high participant number, mass geotours are organized in a different way than group geotours. There is a starting location where participants get an itinerary and instructions. They walk along an allotted, marked trail and only meet with the geotour guides at checkpoints where spectacular geological formations are presented. Participants get back to the starting point at the end of their walk where they receive a "Geotourist" badge, food and drink. Mass geotours (named "Talking Rocks") have been organized since 2012 in Hungary by the author. This year, the number of visitors reached 730 per day. Since 2015, information about the participants (age, address, hiking habits) has been collected at the registration. Visitors come from all over the country for these one-day events, and all age groups are represented. An on-site survey consisting of a self-administered questionnaire was also applied in 2016 to rate the event and to find out the visitors' motivation for participating. Based on 240 responders, mass geotours are more preferred than group geotours.

## Biography

Nikolett has been working in geotourism since 2010 primarily in Hungary, Europe. She is the founder and organizer of the mass geotour event series “Talking Rocks” which attracts hundreds of people per day. Nikolett coordinates the marketing, designs the promotional and educational materials and trains the geotour guides for the events.

She worked at Lapilli LP for 3 years which has been carrying out geological works for the Bakony-Balaton Geopark (survey of geological heritage, development of geotrails and exhibitions).

Between 2012 and 2013, she participated in the “Geohub” project at Torquay Museum, England which built a stronger connection between the English Riviera Geopark and the Museum through outreach and educational programs.

She has been running research projects in geotourism since 2010. Her research interests are in the impact of the geotour services in regional development and geotourism marketing, custom and motivation surveys, geotourism potential surveys, geological heritage protection and geoparks.



### Angus M. Robinson

Managing Partner, Leisure Solutions® and Chairman, Geotourism Standing Committee, Geological Society of Australia

*UNESCO Global Geoparks – Pointers for Australia*

#### Abstract

UNESCO Global Geoparks are single unified geographical areas and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development. These designated areas give local people and communities a sense of pride in their region and strengthen their identification with the area. The creation of innovative local enterprises, new jobs and high quality training courses is stimulated as new sources or revenue are generated through geotourism.

With UNESCO formally creating the Global Geoparks program in November 2015, the Global Geoparks Network 2016 conference held in the UK in September afforded the first opportunity to discuss new protocols and key issues for UNESCO Global Geopark nomination. This conference also afforded the opportunity for representatives of Ecotourism Australia's Geotourism Forum to attend given that Australia is now progressing two Pre-Aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks.

The Geotourism Forum representatives were able to learn from both the experience of existing UNESCO Global Geoparks and other pre-aspiring and aspiring nominations from other countries such as the UK, Canada and the USA. In particular, insights were gleaned about timeframes necessary to develop successful nominations, the imperative of community engagement as well as the emerging issue of geoparks been seen to contributing towards community health and wellbeing.

Given that geopark development in Australia is now being considered as a valuable mechanism to drive regional development, the presentation will address these issues and

provide some highly relevant pointers for community groups and government agencies seeking to progress other nominated areas.

## Biography

An exploration geologist by profession, Angus established Leisure Solutions® in 1993 joining Ecotourism Australia Ltd as an early member. In recent years he has served as inaugural Chair of the Geotourism Standing Committee of the Geological Society of Australia and is also a member and inaugural chair of the Geotourism Forum of Ecotourism Australia.

After 20+ years working in technology and industry development executive roles, he is now engaged in ecotourism activities in Queensland's Scenic Rim as an eco-certified tour operator and in developing geotourism in the Red Centre and Blue Mountains/Jenolan Caves national landscape areas. In earlier years he has enjoyed roles as the Director, Commercial Services at Taronga and Western Plains Zoos, as the inaugural Director of Sydney's former redeveloped Geological and Mining Museum (The Earth Exchange), and has managed the Mt Hotham Alpine Resort in Victoria during its early developmental period.

## Ralph Bottrill

Mineralogist, Mineral Resources Tasmania

### *Tasmanian Geotrails*

## Abstract

An exceptionally diverse range of geological features are readily accessible and prominently exposed in Tasmania. The relatively small island includes ancient, glaciated mountain ranges, through to relatively young volcanoes, including world class ore bodies, rare and beautiful minerals, and fossils and rocks from all the major geological periods of Earth history. Three main geotrails have been created in northwest, southeast and western Tasmania all designed to provide information about the geological backdrop to Tasmania's iconic landforms and mining history. These are all self-guided trails have been designed and supported by different groups and individuals. They are:

- THE LYMINGTON GEOLOGICAL TIME TRAIL created some decades ago by a Cygnet tourist operator to highlight some unusual rock types, well exposed in several sites along the Huon river banks, some associated with gold deposits.
- CREATED FROM CHAOS: This geotrail, supported by local councils, along the central to northwest coast of the state, promotes 13 spectacular coastal geological features.
- THE LIVING EARTH: This West Coast GeoTrail was developed in 2015 by the Government's Mineral Resources Tasmania and the West Coast Council to enable visitors and locals to understand and appreciate the geological processes which formed not only the spectacular landscapes and rocks well exposed in the region, but also highlighting areas of climate change, and the formation of mineral deposits in the State's mines. The West Coast GeoTrail highlights 16 roadside sites. In time, it is hoped that this project will extend around the state to provide the geological story of Tasmania to travellers.

## Biography

Ralph Bottrill is a mineralogist/petrologist with Mineral Resources Tasmania, and an honorary research associate with the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the Queen Victoria Museum and art gallery. He has a BSc (Hons) and MSc in geology and mineralogy

from the University of Adelaide and University of NSW respectively. Since graduation he has worked in the exploration and mining industries and geological surveys sometimes as a geologist, but mostly on varied mineralogical, petrological, geochemical, pedological and metallogenic studies , including many gold, mineral and forensic investigations. He has worked mostly on Tasmanian topics since 1985, and has recently rewritten the Catalogue of Minerals of Tasmania.

## Ecotourism in Protected Areas Forum Chair



### Wendy Hills

Acting Director Customer Experience Division, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service

#### Biography

Wendy has spent the last 23 years working in the tourism industry in various marketing and development roles, including destination, product and industry development with a proven expertise in sustainable indigenous tourism and the importance that this sector plays in identifying Australia's cultural strengths and 'point of difference', in a very competitive global marketplace. She has worked for private enterprise companies, two State Tourism Organisations and Tourism Australia as the head of the Australian Experiences team, responsible for the development and marketing of Australia's 7 key experiences, including 'Natural Australia' and 'Aboriginal Australia'.

In November of 2008, Wendy joined Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), the federal agency responsible for assisting Indigenous Australians maximise opportunities for wealth creation through home ownership, businesses enterprise and/or equity investments. Wendy joined the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in December 2011, in the role of Manager, Cultural Tourism, responsible for the development of cultural tourism experiences within relevant NSW National Parks and Reserves. For the past 3 years, she has managed the Tourism and Partnerships Unit, and is currently acting Director of the Customer Experience Division. She is a Board member of the Booderee National Park joint Board of Management and a Director of Ecotourism Australia.

## Ecotourism in Protected Areas Forum Speakers



### Dr. Matt Curnock

Regional Liaison Manager, Tourism and Stewardship, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

*Sustaining Marine Tourism through a Major Environmental Incident: adaptive management strategy and responses to the 2016 coral bleaching event on the Great Barrier Reef*

#### Abstract



Between March and May 2016, the Great Barrier Reef (the Reef) experienced its worst coral bleaching event on record, with 93 per cent of surveyed reefs being affected to some degree. The threat to the Reef’s \$5.2 billion tourism industry, from impacts to tourism sites particularly in the far north of the Reef, has been exacerbated through inaccurate portrayals of the extent of coral bleaching in the Australian and international media. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has used its Coral Bleaching Response Plan (the Plan) to provide a strategic, adaptive approach for monitoring bleaching risk and assessing impacts to reefs. The Plan includes an early warning system, incident response, and communications strategy. Engagement and communication activities have focused on enhancing stewardship of the Reef and reducing cumulative impacts (e.g. from overfishing, coastal run-off). An expanded crown-of-thorns starfish culling program is helping to protect key reefs from an ongoing outbreak and promote faster recovery of bleached areas. To assist the tourism industry, a Marine Tourism Incident Response Group has been established through the Marine Tourism Coordination Framework for Environmental Incidents, and a Marine Tourism Contingency Plan enables impacted operators to temporarily relocate to an alternative site following a severe environmental incident. While the threat to the Reef from climate change must be addressed at a global scale, at regional and local scales our collaborative efforts to abate other major threats and improve Reef resilience will be equally critical for the long-term survival of the Reef and its dependent industries.

## Biography

Matt Curnock is a Regional Liaison Manager in the Tourism and Stewardship Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Matt has a background in social-ecological science for natural resource management, with a long history of research partnerships focusing on ecotourism in northern Australia, particularly in marine environments and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.



### Patricia Wilkinson

Tourism Strategy – Senior Project Officer, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

*Values or Value – An Innovative Approach to Marketing Our National Parks*

### Abstract

This paper will explore the relationship between values and travel behaviour and in particular the link between conservation and tourism. Currently ecotourism, especially in protected areas such as national parks, is viewed as a way to encourage advocacy from the wider community however does the messaging around ‘conserving and protecting’ increase demand for nature based travel? Are there other factors that are more important for attracting visitors than the intrinsic value of nature and cultural, heritage and environment values?

Innovation in marketing requires targeted messaging that has a demonstrated link to holiday choice. Consumer perceptions suggest that marketing should not be based on ‘objective reality’ but on the altered perception of value, price and quality by the consumer.

This paper will explore if a values based approach to marketing impacts on the broader nature based market or is demand more likely to be realized through increasing benefits, reducing barriers and reinterpreting real value.



Key messages for an innovative approach to marketing parks

1. Appeal to 'wants' and 'desires' of visitors
2. Recognise the vast diversity in motivation when marketing nature-based offers.
3. Offer easy and safe options.
4. Awareness, reassurance, quality information and access are important factors.
5. Utilise distribution channels that potential visitors are already accessing to maximise reach, frequency and build awareness to grow the market.
6. Aim for messaging that encapsulates genuine personal and emotive recommendations
7. Focus on the story that interprets the experience or connects visitors to the local community.

CASE STUDY - NSW NPWS

## Biography

Based in the Snowy Mountains town of Tumut, Patricia is passionate about regional tourism having worked in tourism roles throughout regional NSW. From 'on the ground' positions at both RTO and STO level Patricia has been involved in applied research, planning and campaign development. Patricia has also worked for the Commonwealth supporting new tourism infrastructure projects.

Patricia currently works for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in strategic development and recently played a significant part in applying an evidenced based approach to the development and implementation of the NSW NPWS Tourism Masterplan 2016-2021.

Patricia has recently completed a Master in Economic and Regional Development focusing her thesis on Marketing Australian Parks: nature based tourism, a value system and visitor behaviour. Her studies explore the key drivers for nature-based tourism and investigates if marketing Australia's national parks around a value system influences behavior and ultimately demand for nature based travel.



## David Lake

Manager Planning and Special Projects, South Australian Tourism Commission

### *Great White Shark Cage Diving*

#### Abstract

Great White Shark Cage Diving is an iconic tourism experience in South Australia. Located in the Neptune Islands Marine Park, and accessed from Port Lincoln, the park is an internationally-significant site for Great White Sharks and the only place in Australia where you can get up close to this protected species in their own environment.

Consumer demand has grown significantly in recent years, with approximately 9,000 people now participating in tours each year. This industry segment is now thriving, contributing more than \$11 million to the State's economy annually, and supporting approximately 70 jobs.

There are three active tour operators, Calypso Star Charters, Rodney Fox Shark Expeditions and Adventure Bay Charters, who all operate a variety of Great White Shark tours. In November 2014, the Government announced that the licenced operators would be offered ten year licences to provide certainty for the industry.

In consultation with the tour operators, the South Australian Tourism Commission, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and shark scientists are preparing a revised policy for shark cage diving which will underpin how the ten year licences will operate. The policy is designed to be an adaptive framework to support a socially responsible, environmentally sustainable and economically progressive Great White Shark tourism industry in South Australia.

The presentation will provide an overview of the shark diving industry, the key planks of the revised policy and the benefits to the industry and visitor.

## Biography

Originally from New Zealand, David has worked in strategic and policy roles in local and state government since 1990, in both New South Wales and South Australia.

Since 2007 David has worked at the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), with a primary focus on identifying where planning, policy and project objectives of government bodies can be utilised, influenced or improved for the benefit of tourism. This includes advocacy on behalf of the tourism industry to highlight the value of the visitor economy so that government policy decisions are supportive of tourism.

While at SATC David has enjoyed involvement in a wide range of projects, including regional and sector based tourism planning, policy analysis and advocacy, infrastructure funding, tourism research and providing advice to assist with development of specific tourism proposals. David works with all three levels of government and has a strong liaison role with industry, both individual operators and the South Australian Tourism Industry Council (SATIC).

A recent focus has been working closely with the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) on developing the State's Nature Based Tourism Strategy, '*Nature like nowhere else, Activating nature-based Tourism in South Australia*'.



## Leonie Bowles

Program Manager, Ecotourism Australia

*Tomorrow's Profession*

## Biography

Leonie Bowles is the Program Manager at Ecotourism Australia responsible for developing Australia's first nature-based destination certification for protected areas. Leonie has worked with Ecotourism Australia since 2011. Leonie also currently teaches at the University of Queensland. She has worked for the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, EC3 Global and Conservation Volunteers Australia. In 2015 she was awarded the Young Talent Award at the World Tourism Forum recognising her leadership and research in environmental ethics and tourism.



## Chris Thomas

Program Manager, Parks, Partnerships and Resource Protection, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

*Nature Like Nowhere Else, Activating Nature-Based Tourism in South Australia*

### Abstract

Tourism in South Australia currently employs 32,000 people and generates approximately \$5.4 billion per annum for the South Australian economy. But we plan to grow this to \$8 billion and 41,000 jobs by 2020.

Nature-based tourism will be an important part of this. By 2020 nature-based tourism businesses will have created 1,000 new jobs and inject \$350 million into the State economy every year.

The South Australian Tourism Commission has collaborated with the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources in developing a Nature-based Tourism Strategy. The Strategy, called '*Nature like nowhere else, Activating nature-based Tourism in South Australia*' outlines the State Government's vision and actions to make South Australia a world leader in nature-based tourism, while supporting the ongoing conservation of our State's natural and cultural heritage. The Strategy, launched in February this year, was prepared with valuable advice from the tourism industry, Traditional Owners, Local Government, Non-Government Organisations, Friends of Parks and interested community members.

The presentation will provide an overview of the Strategy, including the four key themes (and related actions) where there is opportunity to further develop experiences that are sustainable, have potential for growth and have proven demand:

- Standout walking journeys across the landscape, for example the Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail.
- Unrivalled native wildlife experiences close to Adelaide, for example Cleland Wildlife Park.
- Immersive marine wildlife experiences without equal, for example cage diving with Great White Sharks.
- Cutting edge sensory experiences that leave a lasting impression, for example developing experiences that enable South Australia's Traditional Owners to share a deeper appreciation of their culture.

### Biography

Chris immigrated to Australia from the UK in 1993 with an honours degree in Marine Geography and a passion for the outdoors. Chris spend his first 10 years working for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as the Director of Togurosm and Recreation before moving to South Australia in 2004 to help set up a network of marine parks. Chris is currently the State Manager for Marine Parks and Nature-based Tourism at the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.



**Michael Johnson**

Director, Moonlit Sanctuary Wildlife Conservation Park

*Innovative Exhibit Design on a Budget*

**Abstract**

Moonlit Sanctuary is a private wildlife conservation park 50 minutes south-east of Melbourne, located in the Western Port Biosphere Reserve. We are Green Travel Leaders with Ecotourism Australia and past winners of the Victorian Tourism Awards in Ecotourism. We are open daily and also conduct evening tours where visitors are able to encounter nocturnal animals.

Opening in 2001, Moonlit Sanctuary is dedicated to endangered species conservation and as well as an educational role is actively involved in threatened species recovery. Operating a wildlife park necessitates the construction of enclosures and exhibits. When doing so we use the following objectives to guide design and construction:

- Minimal environmental impact
- High level of animal welfare.
- Visitor engagement and interaction.
- Visitor assessability.

All this while constrained by limited availability of funds.

This talk will demonstrate how these objectives were achieved in three very different exhibits:

- Wallaby walk
- Glider volplanery
- Wombat enclosure

**Biography**

Michael Johnson is founder and Director of Moonlit Sanctuary and is dedicated to threatened species conservation and recovery. The most important project on his agenda at the moment is a breeding program for the critically endangered orange-bellied parrot to provide birds for release to grow the wild population.

**Creating Walking Destinations and EcoLodge Design Chair**



**Dr. Claire Ellis**

Consultant, Claire Ellis Consulting

**Biography**

Claire is a yacht owner who understands and recognises the challenges and rewards of marine tourism experiences. Together volunteering at her local yacht club, Dr Claire Ellis runs her own consulting company, based in Tasmania. Recent projects include working with SATC to develop the South Australian Strategic Tourism Plan 2015-20, working with AVANA on both the Welcoming and Servicing Chinese Visitor national projects, and with National Landscapes, particularly projects in the Kimberley, Flinders Ranges, Kangaroo Island and Great Ocean Road. Claire also is an Honorary Research Associate at the University of

Tasmania actively researching in several areas including employment issues for international students, cruise shipping and volunteer tourism. Prior to consulting, Claire was Director, Infrastructure and Industry Development, at Tourism Tasmania for 7 years, and also spent 14 years living and working overseas, mostly in Indonesia, Vietnam, China, USA, and within Australia in Perth, Darwin and Canberra as well as Tasmania across tourism and conservation.

## Creating Walking Destinations and EcoLodge Design Speakers

### **Ben Clark**

Business Enterprise Coordinator – Three Capes Track, Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service

*A Walking Experience at the World's Edge – The Birth of the Three Capes Track*

### **Scott Verdouw**

Director, Jaws Architects

*Three Capes Lodge Design – Part of the Experience*

### **David Mason**

Director, Mountain Trails

*Trail Design – More than Putting One Foot in Front of the Other*

### **Andrew Hennessy**

General Manager, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys

*Building a Sea Leg into a Walk*



### **Hitesh Mehta**

President, HM Design

*Ecological Design for Walking Destinations*

### **Biography**

Hitesh Mehta is one of the world's leading authorities, practitioners and researchers on sustainable tourism, ecotourism physical planning and both the landscape architectural and architectural aspects of ecolodges. Hitesh has specialized in working with indigenous communities and ensuring that their settlements are enriched and the neighboring habitats are protected from the money received through Tourism. He has over 15 yrs of work Improving Human Settlements, promoting Ecological Restoration and Low-Carbon

Development and the Social Economic Benefit Gained to the local communities. In 2015, Hitesh was the recipient of United Nations (UNEP/GFHS) “Outstanding Achievement Award” for his work with alleviating poverty and protecting sensitive ecosystems.

Hitesh’s firm *HM Design* is currently working on environmentally and socially friendly projects in Australia, Indonesia, Galapagos, Philippines, Nicaragua, Kenya, Colombia, Ivory Coast, Dominica and Tanzania. Hitesh has vast experience in Protected Area Physical Planning and has worked on Sustainable Tourism Plans that protect the last remaining endangered habitats and thereby addressing climate change. In July 2006, National Geographic Adventure magazine identified Hitesh as one of five Sustainable Tourism Pioneers in the world mainly because of his Master Planning work to protect endangered habitat and alleviate human poverty. Hitesh also conducts one-of-kind Ecolodge Planning and Design workshops around the world. In this conference, he will be running the ecology design component a ½ day masterclass on “Designing Multi-day Walks and Ecolodges”.



**Ian Johnstone**

Director/Owner, The Maria Island Walk

*The Great Walks Success Story – The Benefits When Competitors Work Together*

**Abstract**

Tasmania has long been known as the walking state of Australia with potential to become a world leading destination for guided walks.

When The Maria Island Walk commenced operating its 4 day walk in Tasmania the local guided walking community was quite fragmented and territorial.

It was clear to the operators that whilst they were each competitors within the walking sector, their major challenges were not so much each other but rather other factors outside their control (eg other new destinations, exchange rates, government legislation, other competing lures for the consumer holiday spend or holiday time).

It was also recognised that walkers generally didn’t repeat the same walk but rather had a bucket list of other quality walks.

So the came about of bringing the leading guided walk operators to work together to make the make the pie bigger rather than competing against each other for a bigger slice of the same sized pie.

In 2008 a group of 6 operators the Great Walks of Tasmania groups was formed with a vision to

1. Improve awareness and understanding of the walking sector (ie consumers, trade and the media)
2. Promote Tasmania as a global walking destination
3. Sharing our collective experiences to help one another and the wider walking sector



This collective was groundbreaking for the adventure sector and generated many benefits for the walking industry. In fact it was so successful that Tourism Australia took this model to support the development of The Great Walks of Australia as part of its Best Of experiences collective.

## **Biography**

Ian set up the four day Maria Island Walk in 2003 after a career of nearly 20 years working around Australia and overseas as a Civil Engineer.

Ian was inspired by the quality tourism experiences he had seen whilst working in Africa, New Zealand and Tasmania and over the past 14 years of operation the business has developed into one of the industry's leading tourism experiences winning 7 national awards and 12 state tourism award.

Strong believer in working together with fellow operators, Ian has been one of the founders and the inaugural Chairman of The Great Walks of Tasmania and The Great Walks of Australia.

Ian received Outstanding Contribution By An Individual Award in the 2010 Tasmanian Tourism Awards and was recently lauded by Fairfax media as one of the tourism industry's visionaries

Establishing and running a tourism business in the very competitive premium end of the market has been a challenging and also rewarding journey for Ian and his wife Bronwyn who, apart from the business interests are kept entertained raising three young boys.