Sustainable Tourism to Islands on the Great Barrier Reef

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Griffith Institute for Tourism
“Desire to engage clients who seek a step-change in research innovation”

GIFT’s Research Programs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Sustainable Tourism and Climate Change</th>
<th>Customer Experience</th>
<th>Tourism Business in the Asia Pacific</th>
<th>Events: Sport, Culture and Special-interest Tourism</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leader(s)</td>
<td>Prof Becken &amp; Dr Moyle</td>
<td>Prof Sparks</td>
<td>Prof Dahles</td>
<td>Dr Filo</td>
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<td>Impact areas</td>
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<td>Socio-Cultural</td>
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Sustainable Tourism: An Evolving Interdisciplinary Knowledge Domain

What disciplines are ‘missing’ that could potentially make an IMPACT?

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<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Number of theses</th>
<th>Ranking of disciplines</th>
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<td>Political science</td>
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Introduction

- Tourism to the GBR
- Tourism to Islands on the GBR
- Governance of GBR
- Tourism Impacts on the GBR
- Islands as champions of sustainability on the GBR
- Current Research on GBR at GIFT
- Future Research on GBR at GIFT
Tourism on the GBR

• Tourism Research Australia (Dec 2014)
  – Visitation to the entire GBRMP was 2.19 million visitor days (Dec 2014)
  – 2,244,217 international visitors have visited the GBR during their trip in Australia – an increase of 6% compared with the previous year.

• Tourism Research Australia (June 2014)
  – 1,728,000 domestic tourists have visited the GBR during their trip to Queensland. - 27% increase compared with the previous year.
  – Research by Tourism Australia shows that 42% of international visitors rank the GBR as the most appealing tourist attraction in Australia, after beaches and wildlife.
Background to Tourism on the GBR

- Over 100,000 islands across the globe – estimated total of 180,000
- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park covers 344,400 km²
  - Comprises almost 99% of the GBR region
  - Approximately 700 islands on the Great Barrier Reef
  - Bigger than the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Holland combined
- 70% of GBR tourism based on coral reef visitation occurs within the Cairns region of the GBRMP.
- Islands on the GBR support a vibrant tourism industry

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Governance of the GBR

- Complex and multifaceted
- Includes industries such as
  - Commercial Shipping
  - Commercial Fishing
- Tourism to islands on GBR need to ‘co-exist’ with other economic sectors to sustain regional/coastal communities
- Cognitive Dissonance
  - Economic needs vs. Environmental Protection
  - *Becken, Moyle, McLennan (2015)*
Economic Impacts of Tourism on the GBR

- Environmental management charge (EMC)
  - $6 Full / $3 Half the financial year 2014
  - Amounted to a total of about $8.5 million (2014)

- Tourism Expenditure + Employment
  - 6.4 billion (Deloitte Australia, 2012)
    - 5.18 billion value added
    - 64,338 full time employees

- Flow on effects to islands but lack of robust data
Environmental Impacts of Tourism to Islands on the GBR

- Physical damage to coral reef structures
- Impact on marine life
- Interference with the ecosystem
- Pollution / Litter
- Infrastructure development

(Becken, McLennan, Moyle, 2014)
Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism to Islands on the GBR

• Socio-cultural Impacts
  • Sustainable Host-Guest Interactions (Moyle et al., 2011)

– Magnetic Island, Townsville
  1. Avoid economic leakage
  2. Ensure appropriate development
  3. Need for prices remain constant for locals
  4. Local accessibility to favourite recreation sites
  5. Create experiences that showcase local traditions
What we do Know

Islands ARE Champions of Sustainability

TAKE ACTION
Current Research on GBR at GIFT

• Demand for tourism experiences on the GBR
  – International visitor markets identified by TRA
  – China, New Zealand, United Kingdom, North America etc.
  – Environmental Values
  – Intentions pro-environmental behaviour (home)

• Survey in field – data analysed early 2016
  – Also assesses the efficacy of images communicated to globe about the GBR
  – Cognitive Psychology – Negative vs. Positive Imagery
What we need to know

- How to use Tourism to Islands on the GBR as a vehicle to connect human health with the health of the planet
  - Emotions can stimulate pro-environmental behaviour, especially for new and emerging markets (i.e. China)
  - Achieve broader global conservation outcomes
  - GBR is the stage – we need to create the musical

“Think Global Act Local’
OR
“Act Local Shape Global”
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PERSONAL BENEFITS PARKS – CONSTITUENT PUBLIC
Promoting and Managing National Parks into the 21st Century
Dr Brent Moyle, Professor Betty Weiler and Professor Sue Moore

SOCIETAL BENEFITS OF PARKS – CONSTITUENT PUBLIC

Q3. Provision of green spaces
Q3. Provision of clean air
Q3. Protection of drinking water
Q3. Protection of biological diversity
Q3. Increased community pride
Q3. Increased tourism
Q3. Increased community wellbeing
Q3. Improved fire management
Q3. Improved flood management
Q3. Generation of employment
Q3. Conservation of heritage
Q3. Conservation of culture
Q3. Reduction in the cost of healthcare
Q3. Reduction in the effects of climate change

Victoria Community
PV Executive Committee
Human Health and the Great Barrier Reef

Collaboration between GIFT and Heart Foundation Research Centre (HFRC)

**Research Aim**

To explore the connection between emotional arousal and intentions to perform pro-environmental behaviour on the GBR.

Simulated GBR Experiences & Psycho-physiological measures

- Holter monitor with ECG reading
Human Health and the Great Barrier Reef

Collaboration between GIFT and Heart Foundation Research Centre (HFRC)

**IMPACT** – How can GBR contribute to human health? How can we Connect Human Health to the Health of the Reef?

Virtual reality device designed to simulate an emotionally arousing experience with the potential to communicate the shared values of the GBR to the global population.
Should We Prescribe Nature Based Tourism?


You can close your eyes to the things you don't want to see, but you can't close your heart to the things you don't want to feel.

Johnny Depp