

# Ecotourism Australia – UQ Partnership Update

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## Vision and Purpose

- Partnership which brings together knowledge and skills of UQ staff and students to address challenges/opportunities for Ecotourism
- Production of cutting edge research program
- Translation and communication of research to inform management



### **MEDIA RELEASE:**

#### **Ecotourism Australia / University of Queensland Partnership Aims to Boost Industry-Oriented Research Outcomes**

Last week, Ecotourism Australia (EA) signed a historic partnership agreement with The University of Queensland (UQ). The agreement, signed by EA's new Chair, Dr Claire Ellis and UQ Professor Brent Ritchie, will encourage collaboration to better understand ecotourism and improve its outcomes for communities and Ecotourism Australia members.



## Key Activities in 5 Year MOU

- Work Integrated Learning Activities (guest lectures, placements, PhD placements)
- Identify and secure PhD scholarships aligned to topic areas developed by EA
- Support PhD projects and facilitate access to data for PhD students (EA +members)
- Identify and secure funding for research projects (ARC grants etc)
- Showcase industry orientated staff and student research outcomes at the annual conference
  
- Share research learnings from the MOU with EA and its members (newsletter)
- Identify and secure funding for consultancy projects in Asia-Pacific to build capacity
- Jointly develop training resources (programs, tools) for EA members or explore commercialisation/licencing for mutual benefit



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## PhD Topics

- 4 PhD topics and scholarships secured valued at about \$850,000 over 3.5 years
- Involve supervision across UQ and with EA

### Project 1: Social Licence to Operate (Noreen Breakey)

- Aim: Investigate community attitudes toward commercial tourism in national parks
- Q1: What are the levels of community support for tourism in NPs? Do concerns vary?
- Q2: What factors influence a social licence to operate tourism in NPs?
  - Psychological factors
  - Different activities and ownership models
- Q3: Costs and benefits to different stakeholders (optional)?

### Project 2: Overtourism in Natural Areas (Brent Ritchie)

- Aim: Understand overtourism and possible management solutions
- Q1: What is the level of concern around overtourism? What types of overtourism are more salient and what are their consequences?
- Q2: What are the causes of overtourism?
- Q3: What tools can be used to prevent or management overtourism in natural areas?

## PhD Topics

### Project 3: Sustainable Destinations (Sally Driml)

- Aim: To investigate the emergence of green destinations
- Q1: Enabling factors and barriers of destination certification?
- Q2: Does destination certification spread beyond tourism?
- Q3: How can it be evaluated based on sustainability?
- Q4: Does a sound business case exist?

### Project 4: Low Carbon Transitions (Sara Dolnicar)

- Aim: To examine models for a low carbon transition
- Q1: Data insights from the low carbon future tool? Benchmarks
- Q2: Most effective components of a low carbon system? Are they staged?
- Q3: What pressure points exist that limit transition across businesses?
- Q4: Are carbon offsets used and are they transparent?



**How can we help each other?**