



BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS& CHAIRS

November 2018

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Chairs



Sofie Formica

Conference Master of Ceremonies

Biography

Sofie Formica will chair the single plenary sessions of Global Eco Asia-Pacific in Townsville Queensland this year. With 30 years of high profile broadcast media experience in Australia and USA, Sofie Formica has earned a reputation as a passionate high-profile advocate for tourism in Australia. Hosting popular television shows along with public and industry events, she is one of the most experienced and trusted presenters in the tourism sector. Along with her loyal audience and social media following, she has extensive networks within the sector and provides a fresh and unique perspective to key industry stakeholders. Sofie is particularly passionate about the future of ecotourism and evolution of this critical sector of the tourism industry.



Alysia Brandenburg

Director, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Alysia has been in the tourism and hospitality industry since her teens, working in the family country hotel in Dimboola, Victoria. Since then Alysia has developed a passion and career in tourism in regional communities, grounded in the realities of small business, competitive marketplaces, changing labour needs and quality customer service. Alysia holds a Masters of Tourism from Monash University, is a Victorian Tourism Award Judge and has worked for multiple entities including resorts, tourism boards, membership-based associations and state governments. She is a personal member of Ecotourism Australia and VTIC.

Alysia has a passion and expertise for engaging with the industry sector in a collaborate manner, particularly focused on sustainable destination planning, accessibility and visitor experience development. She was the architect of award-winning tourism initiatives during her career at Parks Victoria and developed and delivered tour operator reforms to reduce red tape, promote resilience and create enabling environments for operators. Alysia is a strong advocate for accreditation programs and industry standards and champions the importance of maintaining quality standards, compliance activities and skills training. She has a personal commitment to the promotion of the health benefits of engaging with nature and is dedicated to experience development that connects visitors with people, place and storytelling in a sustainable manner.

Alysia has served on numerous tourism organisations, including being Chairman of Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Campaign Committee and TAPAF. She demonstrates strong leadership attributes in governance, financial accountability, strategic planning and membership value. Since leaving Parks Victoria recently, after 19-year career culminating in the senior position of Tourism Manager, Alysia has been working with World Urban Parks, supporting the International Parks and Leisure Congress 2018 in a volunteer capacity.

She is highly regarded as a tourism specialist and industry leader, has a great team spirit, sense of humour and capacity to work together to progress concepts to reality.



Tony Charters AM

Convenor Global Eco Asia Pacific Conference

Biography

Tony has over 25 years experience in tourism planning, development and management in the public and private sectors. He was a founding director of Ecotourism Australia and served continuously on the EA board from 1991-2016. He is Vice-Chair of the Global Eco-tourism Network and is on the Board of the Asian Ecotourism Network.

An environmental scientist and urban and regional planner by profession, Tony entered the tourism industry after a successful career in World Heritage Area and multi-tenure protected area management.

As Principal of Tony Charters and Associates he provides strategic advice to leading industry operators and government on tourism industry planning, development and investment; destination development; and the sustainable management.

Tony convenes the annual the Global Eco Asia-Pacific Tourism Conference on behalf of Ecotourism Australia.

He has served since 2004 as a Finalist Judge in the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards hosted by the World Travel and Tourism Council and is an assessor for the National Geographic's Unique Lodges of the World portfolio.

In 2014 he was awarded an Order of Australia (AM) by the Governor-General for his services to the ecotourism industry, nature-based recreation and environmental education. In 2016 he was made an honorary Life Member of Ecotourism Australia and was the inaugural recipient of Ecotourism Australia's Tony Charters AM Medal.



Lina Cronin

Communications and Audit Manager, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Lina joined Ecotourism Australia in October 2017 as Communications and Audit Manager, having previously worked for the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, Flight Centre Travel Group and EarthCheck. She has written articles for Our Planet Travel, has edited international reports on tourism in the Asia Pacific region and received the Australian Young Talent Award at the World Tourism Forum in Switzerland for a research paper on New Zealand's sustainability commitments.

Lina is passionate about the potential of tourism to create real and lasting change in people's lives and in the natural environment, and has definitely inherited the travel bug from her two German parents. This combination has given her the opportunity to live and work in Australia, Spain, Norway, Germany, Scotland and Taiwan and do work in China, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam.



Dr Claire Ellis

Chair, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Dr Claire Ellis is the Chair of Ecotourism Australia. She has worked for over 35 years in tourism across a variety of roles. During this time, she has been a tourism operator (running her own business in Indonesia), employed by other operators, an academic and researcher, in State Government and is now working as a consultant. As a Director, Infrastructure and Industry Development, at Tourism Tasmania, she oversaw a number of key areas of work including growing the capacity of Tasmania's tourism industry in the digital environment. Claire has also been Chair of the National Long Term Tourism Strategy's Destination Management Planning Working Group. During her six years in Tourism Tasmania she worked closely with key projects including the selection and development of the Three Capes Track. Her consultancy work now takes her across Australia as well as overseas. She has built a reputation for creating long term positive outcomes, particularly in regional areas, and works closely with clients and stakeholders supporting strategic improvements. Claire is also a Board member of Australian Wildlife Journeys, Volunteering Tasmania, and NRM Southern Tasmania and an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Tasmania.



Emily Ellis

Operations Manager, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Emily first joined the Ecotourism Australia team in 2013 as an intern and returned in June 2014 as Operations Manager. She has over 12 years practical experience working in hospitality and tourism industries around the world and across various departments from front-of-house, food and beverage, to reservations and marketing, to general management. Emily has Bachelor degrees in the fields of communications, business, and international

tourism management. Her academic and work experiences have taken her around the globe, with particular industry experience gained in Scotland, Canada, and Samoa.



Daniel Gschwind

Chief Executive Officer, Queensland Tourism Industry Council

Biography

Daniel Gschwind is the Chief Executive for the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC). QTIC is Queensland's peak tourism industry body with more than 2,000 members throughout the state, including 13 regional tourism organisations and 15 sector associations.

Daniel represents QTIC on various committees and advisory boards including the GBRMPA Tourism Reef Advisory Committee (TRAC) and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC, University of Queensland Industry Advisory Board (Business School), the Griffith Institute for Tourism Advisory Board and the Bond University Regional Advisory Board. He is a board member of Jobs Queensland, a statutory authority, and is the deputy chair of the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) and the chair of Australian Tourism Awards.

Daniel is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Queensland Business School. He is the Honorary Consul of Switzerland for Queensland.

Daniel holds an honours degree in economics from the University of Queensland and has worked as a senior economist with Queensland Treasury. He is a Vice Patron of Surf Life Saving Queensland, an Ambassador for the Queensland Museum Foundation, an Ambassador for the 30-Year Queensland Plan and an Ambassador for the World Tourism Forum. Daniel is also on the Inspiring Australia – Queensland program reference group.

He has previously been involved in yacht charter operations in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean for ten years.



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.



Innes Larkin

Director, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Innes Larkin has been active in the outdoors from an early age and remembers climbing Mt Barney for the first time at age 11. Innes has bushwalked and climbed in Australasia, Europe, UK, and Nepal including expeditions to Mera Peak and Ama Dablam. In 2016 Innes was jointly awarded the Australian Search and Rescue award for his services in helping rescue 700 people.

A teacher with a Masters in Outdoor Education, Innes has taught in London, and QLD. In 2006 Innes and Tracey Larkin purchased Mt Barney Lodge and have grown the business 900% since then. Mt Barney Lodge has been ecotourism accredited since 1996 and now holds Advanced Ecotourism Accreditation.

A current member of the advisory committee for the Gondwanan Rainforests of Australia World Heritage property, and a board member of Ecotourism Australia, Innes is passionate about sustainable tourism and the lasting legacies it can bring to a region.

Rick Murray

Deputy Chairman, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Rick Murray runs his own consultancy, Middle Star, offering Tourism Business Development Services to businesses across the north of Australia and beyond. He is now based in Grafton, NSW after spending most of his working life based in Darwin, NT.

Rick Murray, pioneered experience-based, minimal impact tours across the north of Australia with Odyssey Tours & Safaris, the company he established and developed into an industry leading operation. Odyssey was eventually acquired by a major national resort operator as their touring flagship and Rick remained on their Senior Management team for four years.

He has been actively involved at the 'coal face' of nature based tourism for over 30 years and has a detailed knowledge of the interaction between tourism and our natural and cultural heritage right across the north of the continent. His experience covers lands both within Protected Areas and other lands of the north such as Aboriginal Freehold lands and Pastoral Leases. Over the years Rick has spoken at Ecotourism conferences and provided advice in regions as diverse as Sabah Malaysia, Papua New Guinea's Western Province, Tasmania, Central Australia, the Pilbara and the south and west coasts of the Gulf of Carpentaria, commonly on the interaction between government and private enterprise in the development of a sustainable regional economy.

Over the past three decades he has served on several tourism industry committees and Boards, particularly those focussed on issues affecting our natural and cultural environment and on the continual improvement of industry standards among tour operators and guides. He served as a member of the Advisory Board of Tourism NT from 2006 until 2011. Until recently he was Chairman of the Kakadu Tourism Consultative Committee and a member of the Kakadu National Park Board of Management, positions he held since 2002. He has been a Director of Ecotourism Australia Ltd since 2006 and is currently their Chairman. He is also Chairman of Savannah Way Ltd.

Rick served for five years as a Director of the leading, aboriginal owned, tourism business, Nitmiluk Tours Pty Ltd, based in Katherine, NT. He was heavily involved in their joint-venture development of Cicada Lodge in Nitmiluk National Park.

His projects include the collaboration on the Experience Development Plan for Australia's Timeless North and Red Centre National Landscapes and the development of a Visitor Experience Plan for the Garnamarr/Jim Jim/Twin Falls area in Kakadu NP.

In recent times Rick has been providing mentoring support to several aboriginal owned and operated businesses in the Top End, Central Australia, the Kimberley, North West Queensland, Country NSW and Sydney.

In 2016 Rick was appointed Judging Coordinator for the Clarence Valley Business Excellence Awards assist with improving business standards in his new home region.

Keynote Speakers



Dean Bagley

Product Development Manager, SeaLink Travel Group, accepting award on behalf of Kingfisher Bay Resort

Biography

The Kingfisher Bay Resort Group is part of Sealink Travel Group, and incorporates the award-winning Kingfisher Bay Resort, Eurong Beach Resort, Fraser Island Ferry, Fraser Explorer Tours and the Fraser Island Cool Dingo Tour.

The Kingfisher Bay Resort Group is the largest tourism operator on World Heritage-listed Fraser Island and in the Fraser Coast/Hervey Bay region. The company employs some 600 staff in tourism businesses focused on Fraser Island including resorts, tours and ferries. The group has been operating on Fraser Island for more than 20 years, from around the time Fraser Island was World Heritage-listed.

Dean Bagley, is the Product Development Manager for SeaLink in South Australia and has over 30 years experience in the Australian tourism industry. Dean is responsible for developing tourism product on Kangaroo Island including nature & wildlife tours for the Advanced Eco-Tourism accredited business, Kangaroo Island Odysseys. Recently, Dean developed a new 4x4 tour visiting the majestic Flinders Ranges, under the brand Flinders Ranges Odysseys with the same eco-tourism principles as the Kangaroo Island operation.



Douglas Baird

Environment and Compliance Manager, Quicksilver Connections

Biography

With a background in Marine Science in Scotland, since emigrating and becoming a citizen of Australia, Doug has worked solely in the Marine Tourism Industry for the past 24 years. He has been involved in managerial roles for the past 14 years, firstly as manager of a team of Marine Biologists (Reef Biosearch) the research and interpretive arm of Quicksilver Connections. Then as Assistant Operations Manager for the Quicksilver Connections Port Douglas based operation, and most recently (last 9 years) as Environment and Compliance Manager for the Quicksilver Group covering, Quicksilver Connections, Great Adventures, Silver Series, Green Island Resort and Pro Dive Cairns.

He has held seats on a variety of committees such as, Tourism Council Australia Environment Committee, Association of Marine Park Tour Operators Crown of Thorns Steering Committee, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Conservation and Indigenous Partnerships Reef Advisory Committee and Local Marine Advisory Committee. Doug has escorted everyone from President Clinton to Billy Connolly during their GBR experience on Quicksilver cruises and has a regular radio program every 2 weeks.

In his current role Doug's responsible for among other things, measuring and reducing the Groups carbon footprint, maintaining all permits and licences and accreditations including Ecotourism accreditations, managing the Groups Crown of Thorns Control program. In his various roles Doug has logged in excess of 1000 dives and countless hours snorkelling on the GBR. Doug is passionate about the GBR and continues to enlighten guests to leave as ambassadors for reef protection and preservation.



Catherine Basterfield

Chief Executive Officer, Phillip Island Nature Parks

Biography

Catherine Basterfield is the CEO of Phillip Island Nature Parks (the Nature Parks), a State Government conservation organisation funded through ecotourism experiences on Phillip Island. Catherine has worked with the Nature Parks since 2009 in financial and operational leadership roles before being appointed to the role of CEO in March 2017.

Catherine has a passion for the natural environment and enjoys the challenge in demonstrating that our visitor economy can work to protect and improve conservation outcomes.

Prior to joining the Nature Parks, Catherine held roles at KPMG Australia in the auditing field, where she gained her qualification as a Chartered Accountant and at Bupa in the UK in a finance management position.



Prof Susanne Becken

Professor of Sustainable Tourism and Director of Griffith Institute for Tourism, Griffith University

Biography

Prof Susanne Becken is the Director of the Griffith Institute for Tourism at Griffith University in Australia. She has published widely on sustainable tourism, climate change and tourism resource use and was a contributing author to the Fourth and the Fifth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Reports. Susanne is a member of the Air New Zealand Sustainability Advisory Panel, PATA's Sustainability and Social Responsibility committee, and the Whitsunday Climate Change Innovation Hub.



Africa Berdonces

Freelance Naturalist Tour Guide, Galapagos Islands, Ecuador

Biography

Africa grew up in the Galapagos Islands. She had a wonderful childhood exploring the islands with her family and being surrounded by exquisite nature. At the age of 12, she had her first scuba diving lesson off the coast of Sombrero-Chino Island with her father as her instructor. This experience opened up a new and unexplored part of the natural world to her. Africa became enchanted by local marine life and would go on to become a Dive Master and work as a dive guide and naturalist guide in her beloved islands.

With well over 500 dives and innumerable underwater wildlife encounters, she had developed a close relationship with her marine environment, but desired to venture further. She decided to cross the Pacific Ocean on board a traditional Polynesian canoe. Powered by wind instead of fuel, and guided by the stars instead of a GPS, she crossed the Pacific using traditional navigation methods. On this unique voyage she felt an indescribable connection with the ocean—a connection that reinforced her dedication to protecting what she loves: the world's oceans.

With the aim of contributing to the environmental protection of the Galapagos Islands, she obtained a Protected Area Management master's degree in Cairns, Australia. Upon returning to her country, she served as the International Promoter of the country's natural resources and culture. She has also been involved with the Galapagos National Park work team that is tasked with the conservation and protection of her islands. She believes that the Galapagos can one day be an example of humans living in harmony with nature. She has chosen to dedicate her life to the plight of our planet's ocean ecosystems.



Richard Berman-Hardman

General Manager, Skyrail Rainforest Cableway

Biography

Richard Berman-Hardman joined one of Australia's largest ecotourism operations, Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, Cairns, as General Manager in 2016. Prior to this he spent 10 years as Director Operations and Commercial at Australia's foremost outdoor museum, Sovereign Hill, Ballarat and was promoted to the senior team at the National Trust of Australia (Vic) after managing the Old Melbourne Gaol Crime and Justice Experience from 1999-2004. Richard is a graduate of RMIT's tourism program, holds an MBA from Curtin University Business School and has contributed to various boards including Cultural Tourism Victoria and Visit Ballarat.

Richard is passionate about conservation, driven in the pursuit of presenting world-class Australian visitor experiences and is fortunate to have led teams that have netted 5 state and 4 national tourism awards over his career.



Corinne Brimm

Deputy General Manager, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park

Biography

Deputy General Manager Corinne Brimm is a Djabugay descendent who has worked at Tjapukai for more than two decades. Corinne began her career as the only female Stage Manager where her home was the Dance Theatre Sound & Lighting Control Room for the first few years at the Aboriginal Cultural Park. As her career advanced to include the Operations Management position, so did her role as a mentor to young Indigenous Employees wanting to upskill and understand more about the Djabugay culture. An accomplished artist, Corinne's work is displayed at Tjapukai to illustrate the Djabugay Creation story. As a Traditional Owner Corinne is well versed in balancing the needs of the business with cultural sensitivity.



Greg Bruce

General Manager Environmental Services, Division of Planning, Environment and Culture, Townsville City Council

Biography

Greg Bruce has worked in local government on environmental management and sustainability as a practitioner and an executive manager for 20 years. Greg has evolved and delivered innovative, adaptive and a community relevant "system designed for change" in the way sustainability and environmental outcomes are achieved for the city and community. He sees Ecotourism as a major opportunity to assist the planet with sustainability in practice. Greg led Townsville City Council to achieve Advanced Ecotourism Certification in 2006 for their Eco-education catchment tours. The Council has retained this certification. In addition, they have worked closely with Professor Sam Ham for the past 10 years building strategic and on-ground thematic communication practices across and within the community. He has also pioneered with his team and experts, collective learning and advanced technology (STEM) based approaches to NRM and Sustainability, including the cities Rowes Bay Sustainability Centre and NRM Hub.



Scott Buchanan

Executive Director, Wet Tropics Management Authority

Biography

Scott is the current Executive Director for the Wet Tropics Management Authority, a statutory body with the responsibility of managing the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Prior to this role, Scott has worked for the Queensland state Government since 1995 in various roles and agencies including the Department of Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Water, and the Department of Environment and Science.

As the Executive Director, Scott has successfully negotiated the re-formation of the Wet Tropics Board (a board that had been inquorate for almost 3 years), and significantly improved partnerships with community, the tourism industry and Government organisations to deliver on-ground management and improvement of the World Heritage Area.

In previous roles Scott was integral in the establishment of Queensland's Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program and played a central role in getting Indigenous Water Allocations enshrined in law. Scott led the development of the Environmental Offsets Act, and led Queensland's World Heritage policy unit. Prior to joining the public service Scott worked on a number of small crop and sugar cane farms, mainly in Queensland and for a short time in Victoria.

The Authority has 44 staff, currently, and Scott takes pride in mentoring and leading his staff to develop to their optimum. Scott has received two Australia Days Awards for leadership in the public service.

Scott loves the rainforest country of Tropical North Queensland and you will often find him out bushwalking on the weekends.



Jacob Cassady

Traditional Owner & Director, Mungalla Aboriginal Business Corporation

Biography

Born and raised in the Ingham district in North Queensland Jacob is Married with six children. Jacob is a proud Nywaigi/Manbarra/South Sea Islander man. Jacob is a Nywaigi traditional owner of Mungalla Station and the lands around the Ingham region. Jacob teaches Tourism, Business and Conservation and Land Management to indigenous students from all over North Queensland and has studied at the Macquarie University and the University of Technology in Sydney and is currently completing a Graduate Diploma in Land and Sea Management at Deakin University in Geelong. Jacob is the Managing Director of the Mungalla Aboriginal Business Corporation which has operated the multi award winning Mungalla Aboriginal Tours for the past 11 years on his traditional country at Historic Mungalla Station property near Ingham.

A strong advocate for Conservation Land Management Practices and indigenous employment and enterprise development Jacob is extremely passionate about helping change the way Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people think about business opportunities like Tourism, Employment & Caring for Country Projects on their traditional homelands.

Jacob has been on the Mungalla Aboriginal Business Corporation board since inception in 2005 when the Nywaigi people established the Corporation to manage the economic activities of the property. He has been instrumental in assisting the aspirations of his people in developing four economic pillars for the property including Cattle, Indigenous Tourism, Land Management and Indigenous Training and Education as well as establishing a secondary school for disengaged indigenous youth.

In 2016 the Mungalla Corporation won the Queensland Premiers Environmental Award and was a finalist for the Prestigious National Banksia Environmental Awards for the corporations "Restoration of a Wetland" project on the property. For Jacob the vision continues, and in 2017 Virgin Australia has named their new plane after the restored Mungalla Wetlands and this year the corporation won the 2018 National NAIDOC Caring for Country Award all which has been significant milestones in the 60-thousand-year story of success for the Nywaigi people of Mungalla Station.



Jan Claxton

Owner, Ocean Rafting

Biography

Jan Claxton and her husband Peter are owners of two tourism operations in Queensland, one in the Whitsundays, Ocean Rafting, and one at Cape Tribulation in the Daintree region of Tropical North Queensland, Ocean Safari. There are eight vessels in total as well as accommodation at Safari Lodge and the Turtle Rock Café in Cape Trib. Ocean Rafting's seven vessels carry up to 206 guests daily to some of the Whitsundays' best destinations including Whitehaven Beach and Hill Inlet. Ocean Safari's half day eco tour showcases the pristine untouched Great Barrier Reef off the Daintree Coast at Cape Tribulation.

Both Ocean Rafting and Ocean Safari have Advanced Ecotourism Certification, while Ocean Rafting is also a Green Travel Leader and is one of Ecotourism Australia's longest standing operators, being one of only 10 operators Australia wide who have been certified for over 20 years.

Both Ocean Rafting and Ocean Safari have signed up to the Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef and all operations have also signed up to go plastic straw-free through The Last Straw campaign.

Ocean Rafting and Ocean Safari staff complete GBRMPA's Eye on the Reef (EOTR) workshops which trains staff in reef monitoring procedures and providing the workplace with extra information to create unforgettable experiences for visitors. The data from the reef sites are then used as an interpretive tool during marine talks, allowing crew to provide a unique presentation specific to their patch of reef.

Until recently Jan was the deputy Chair of Tourism Whitsunday Board and is still an active board member. Peter is the treasurer of WCBIA an industry body whose membership follow best practise procedures and work with Government and other agencies to the betterment of our marine tourism industry.

Both companies have won a multitude of awards, with Ocean Rafting winning the Australian Tourism Award for Major Tour and Transport Operator three times. Ocean Rafting and Ocean Safari are proud ambassadors for environmentally responsible, ethical and sustainable tourism and are passionate about their duty in protecting the future of the Great Barrier Reef.



Leanne Coddington

Chief Executive Officer, Tourism and Events Queensland

Biography

Leanne Coddington is the Chief Executive Officer of Tourism and Events Queensland. Tourism and Events Queensland is a statutory body of the Queensland Government, and its lead marketing, destination and experience development and major events agency. Leanne brings broad industry knowledge to the role with more than 30 years' experience in the tourism industry. Leanne was previously Group Executive Destination Partnerships, overseeing TEQ's destination team and partnerships with Queensland's thirteen regional tourism organisations. Prior to taking the CEO role, Leanne had responsibility for leading destination and experience development, industry innovation, indigenous tourism, tourism in protected areas, aviation, economics and business attraction. Leanne first joined Tourism Queensland in 1996 as the Human Resources Manager. She has also held the positions of Executive Director Strategic Services and Executive Director Human Resources. Leanne's broad industry experience extends to senior executive responsibilities with the Hyatt Hotel Group, in both Canberra and Melbourne, during the 1980s and 1990s. With a degree in Business (Hospitality Management) from the University of Queensland, Leanne has considerable operational experience in the hospitality industry. Leanne is a graduate with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).



Dr Wendy Craik AM

Chair, Climate Change Authority

Biography

Dr Craik has over 25 years experience in senior roles in public policy. She has held many senior positions including Commissioner at the Productivity Commission, Chief Executive of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission (MDBC), President of the National Competition Council (NCC), Chair of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), Executive Director of National Farmers Federation (NFF) and Executive Officer of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). She has been a director on a number of boards. She is currently a board member of the Reserve Bank, Chair of the Climate Change Authority, Chair of the NSW Marine Estate Management Authority, Chair of the Steering Committee for the 10 year program for the Eradication of Red Imported fire Ants, Chair of the NESP Climate Change and Earth Sciences Hub Steering Committee and a Director of the Australian Farm Institute.

Wendy was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 for service to the natural resource sector of the economy, particularly in the areas of fisheries, marine ecology and management of water reform, and for contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.



Anna Del Rio

Manager Economic Development and Tourism, Shire of Ashburton

Biography

Anna was born and raised in the small town of Bosa, Sardinia, Italy. She moved to Adelaide in 2006 and completed a Bachelor Degree in International Tourism (Cultural Tourism stream) and a Graduate Degree in festival and Event Design & Management at Flinders University.

Anna first started working in tourism while studying, arranging online bookings for people who wanted to stay in Italian monasteries.

After graduating, Lima, Peru captivated Anna's interest and she spent two years there teaching languages and enjoying the Peruvian lifestyle. However, once again Australia called and Anna moved back to Port Pirie (South Australia) to be the Southern Flinders Ranges Tourism Projects Officer, a region rich of nature based and adventure tourism experiences.

It was this role that gave Anna a real taste of all things regional tourism: marketing, adventure & culinary campaigns; product development; destination marketing & social media; events; tourism awards and visitor attraction.

Opportunity then saw Anna move further south to the Coorong region in SA as Tourism & Community Development Officer. A scenic region with National Parks, rivers, small rural towns and canola fields. She worked with local communities and cross regionally to focus on and achieve the basics in tourism.

In 2014 Anna was recognised as South Australia's and Australia's Young Tourism Professional for building tourism from the ground up in her region, with no budget but by engaging the broader community and its operators.

Enticed by the lure of the true Australian outback, Anna moved across Australia and up into the Pilbara region of Western Australia where she is now the Manager of Tourism & Economic Development at the Shire of Ashburton. A breathtakingly beautiful place with the paradisiac Karijini National Park on its doorstep. Her mission there is to put the Pilbara on the map, enhance its branding, mobilise the region and its operators and see the region showcase its unique eco and adventure tourism character.



Deborah Dickson-Smith

Travel Writer and Co-Founder of Diveplanit Travel

Biography

An award-winning publisher, travel writer and blogger, Deborah also specialises in social media marketing and content management. Travel category specialities include diving, skiing, sustainable travel, family travel and travelling with teens. Destination specialties include Australia, Fiji, Japan, Indonesia, Solomon Islands and Thailand.

Deb is the editor of family travel magazine Out & About with Kids, and also writes regularly for Pacific Island Living, the NZ Herald and several inflight magazines as well as a few tourism blogs, including Tourism Authority Thailand, Australia.com and Queensland.com.

Deb is also a director of Diveplanit.com, a dive travel website that aims to get more people on diving holidays and convert them into ocean advocates.



David Edwards

Projects Chief Executive, Special Projects Unit, Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development and the Commonwealth Games

Abstract

Queensland Ecotourism Trails: a chief executive's insight

The Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development's Special Projects Unit is a specialised work unit tasked with achieving economic development outcomes through the delivery of Integrated Resort Developments, Global Tourism Hubs and delivery of new ecotourism infrastructure in regional Queensland.

Led by the Special Projects Unit, Queensland Ecotourism Trails will explore opportunities to partner with the private sector in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of multi-day trails, specialised eco-accommodation and cultural experiences and offer ongoing opportunities for local regional communities and Traditional Owners.

The unit is currently overseeing the detailed design of the Wangetti Trail, a proposed dual use track along the coastal plains and mountain hinterland stretching between Palm Cove and Port Douglas in North Queensland. The development of the trail's Business Case will define the commercial viability and management arrangements as well as the capital costs for construction and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Expected to attract thousands of walkers and mountain bikers to the region per year, the economic and social benefits and impacts of this ecotourism opportunity are inviting. Development of new businesses and expansion of existing businesses, the potential capacity to host competitive mountain-biking events, coupled with skill development and job diversity, all work towards increasing the attractiveness and liveability to this tourism-dependent region.

Biography

David's professional background is in economics, infrastructure, project management and public policy. He has had a distinguished and successful career at senior levels of the State's public and private sectors. David is currently the Projects Chief Executive of the Special Projects Unit at the Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development, with responsibility for the delivery of Queen's Wharf Brisbane, the largest private property development in the nation, Regional Global Tourism Hubs (incorporating Integrated Resort Developments) and other tourism industry development projects including adventure based ecotourism opportunities in national parks.

David was previously the Director-General for the Department of State Development Infrastructure and Planning, the State's central economic development agency. Prior to joining the department, David was the Manager Strategy and Market Development at GHD and before that State Director for CEDA (Committee for Economic Development of Australia).

David is Chairman of Ipswich Grammar School Board of Trustees, Queensland's oldest secondary school, and Chair of Lifetec, a not-for-profit organisation supporting people with disabilities. He is a member of the Board of the Wesley Mission Brisbane, a not-for-profit community service organisation that provides a range of services to support people in need, and a member of the State Advisory Council for CEDA, Australia's oldest independent economic think tank.



Dr Claire Ellis

Chair, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Dr Claire Ellis is the Chair of Ecotourism Australia. She has worked for over 35 years in tourism across a variety of roles. During this time, she has been a tourism operator (running her own business in Indonesia), employed by other operators, an academic and researcher, in State Government and is now working as a consultant. As a Director, Infrastructure and Industry Development, at Tourism Tasmania, she oversaw a number of key areas of work including growing the capacity of Tasmania's tourism industry in the digital environment. Claire has also been Chair of the National Long Term Tourism Strategy's Destination Management Planning Working Group. During her six years in Tourism Tasmania she worked closely with key projects including the selection and development of the Three Capes Track. Her consultancy work now takes her across Australia as well as overseas. She has built a reputation for creating long term positive outcomes, particularly in regional areas, and works closely with clients and stakeholders supporting strategic improvements. Claire is also a Board member of Australian Wildlife Journeys, Volunteering Tasmania, and NRM Southern Tasmania and an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Tasmania.



Andrew Flannery

Eco-Active Business Leader, Spicers Group & Turner Family Foundation

Biography

Andrew “Flanno” Flannery joined the Spicers Group in March 2018 to oversee the creation of the new Spicers Eco-Active business. This new arm of the Spicers Group is dedicated to creating iconic outdoor experiences that combine Spicer’s renowned relaxed luxury ethos with the Turner family’s love of the Australian bush. The jewel in Spicers Eco-Active crown will be their new seven-day walking experience which commences in 2019. Prior to Spicers, Andrew was an executive at the Flight Centre Travel Group for 15 years where he served in many senior roles, including Global Chief Financial Officer and Executive General Manager of their Corporate Travel business.

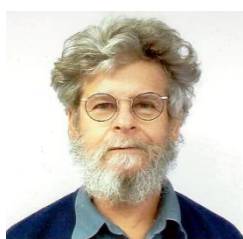


Peter Gash

Managing Director, Lady Elliot Island Eco Resort

Biography

Peter Gash is the managing director of Lady Elliot Island Eco Resort, situated off the eastern Australian coast. This tiny island, which is in reality a cay made of crushed coral and sediment, is located at the southern tip of the breathtaking and expansive Great Barrier Reef. Peter joined a floatplane business dubbed Seair Pacific in the mid-1980s. Fast-forward five years to 1990 and Peter has bought the business, chartering flights to Lady Musgrave Island, which is located north-west of Lady Elliot Island. Tapping into existing infrastructure, Peter made the decision to ditch floatplanes for those with wheels in the mid-1990s and started offering trips to Lady Elliot Island. The secluded spot already had an airstrip – the only one on the Great Barrier Reef – making the process of chartering flights directly to the island a breeze. It also had accommodation by way of the eco resort, whereas Lady Musgrave Island did not. In August 2005, Peter became the leaseholder of Lady Elliot Island Eco Resort along with two other partners. He now co-owns and operates the resort. Peter owns Seair Pacific, offering chartered flights to Lady Elliot Island from a range of departure points in Queensland. In 2011, the resort was a finalist in the Queensland Government Premier’s Climate Smart Sustainability Awards and in 2012 it was a Runner-Up at the Queensland Tourism Awards. It has a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence (2013) and was inducted into the Hall of Fame for Environmental Tourism last year.



Dr Thomas Goreau

President, Global Coral Reef Alliance & Biorock Technology Inc.

Biography

Thomas J.F Goreau was educated in Jamaican schools and hold degrees from MIT, Caltech and Harvard. President and founder of The Global Coral Reef Alliance, he has dived on coral reefs across the Caribbean, Pacific, Indian Ocean and South-East Asia for more than 60 years. He has published more than 150 papers and written and edited books on scientific photography, marine ecosystem restoration, and soil fertility restoration. He is co-inventor of the HotSpot method for predicting coral bleaching from satellite data and of the Biorock method for regenerating marine ecosystems and eroding coastlines.



Lisa Groom

Managing Direct, international PARKtouris, accepting award on behalf of Binna Burra Lodge

Biography

Lisa Groom is the daughter of interNATIONAL PARKtours founders Tony & Connie Groom and grand-daughter of Binna Burra Mountain Lodge founder Arthur Groom. You could say the great outdoors is in Lisa’s blood. Growing up with on the edge of Lamington National Park,

Lisa spent her childhood and teenage years exploring the rainforests and rivers of the Scenic Rim. After completing a Bachelor of Business (Communication) at QUT, she worked as a marketing manager for YHA Qld before taking off to Europe for some extended backpacking adventures. She started working as a tour leader and co-ordinator with interNATIONAL PARKtours in 1991, and took over the helm of the company from her parents in 2001. Leading walking holidays in Australia and Europe, her passion is for regional ecotourism, discovering local characters and showcasing nature from a different perspective.



Michael Groom

Renowned Adventurer and Mountain Climber

Biography

Michael Groom is a Professional Speaker and mountain climber and is unquestionably one of the world's greatest big mountain climbers. In 1995 he became the fourth person in the world to climb the four highest mountains without the assistance of bottled oxygen and in 1999 he successfully climbed Makalu, the smallest but for Michael, the last of the 'big five' - the five highest mountains in the world. Makalu, Lhotse, Kanchenjunga, K2 and Everest - Michael climbed them all without the assistance of bottled oxygen, and all but Kangchenjunga he climbed without the front third of both feet. Michael shares his wealth of knowledge and first hand experiences as a Motivational Speaker. Michael has assisted soldiers going off to war, supported athletes struggling to come back from serious injury and with his powerful story of human endurance he has advised professional people how to get closer to the truth of "no pain no gain".



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.



Shirley Hollingsworth

General Manager, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park

Biography

General Manager Shirley Hollingsworth is the first Traditional Owner to manage the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park. Joining as a retail assistant in 1997, she continuously upskilled to work her way through the business. Shirley is passionate about Tjapukai's role in preserving the language, culture and connection to country of Djabugay people while providing them with economic opportunities. Her belief that Tjapukai gives her and her staff the opportunity to be proud of who they are, combined with her respect for the elders who helped to create the business, motivates Shirley to ensure Tjapukai grows in strength for future generations.



Prof Ken Hughey

Professor, Department of Environmental Management, Lincoln University, New Zealand

Abstract

Can ecotourism get us over overtourism; or, Is getting over overtourism making the real tourism problem worse?

Focusing on the contemporary issue of overtourism it is argued is convenient – the inconvenient truth is that overtourism is symptomatic more so of overcarbon, and that instead of overtourism, dealing to overcarbon should be the tourism industry's focus. If tourism was a country then it would be the third biggest CO2 emitter. As such it needs to take responsibility and set carbon reduction targets – it is morally obliged to do so (even more so if the sub sector is ecotourism). Setting these targets will be challenging (and needs to be supply chain focused with a focus on transport) but in turn, if implemented, deal also with overtourism and deliver benefits across social, economic and cultural measures of well-being.

Biography

Since 1995, Ken Hughey has been a Professor of Environmental Management at Lincoln University, Christchurch, New Zealand. Prior to this, Ken worked for the Department of Conservation. Ken is a member of the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand and NZ Agribusiness and Resource Economics Society as well as being on the board of the Waihora Ellesmere Trust and a committee member of Hurunui Waiau Water Zone Management. Ken's areas of expertise include ecology and wildlife management, environmental policy and planning, bird habitat use in braided riverbeds, river values prioritisation, integrated water resources management, with a focus on Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere, environmental impacts of tourism and triennial survey of New Zealanders' perceptions of the state of the environment.



Jason Jacobi

General Manager, Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service

Biography

In 2017, Jason Jacobi was appointed as General Manager of Tasmania's Parks and Wildlife Service. Jason brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role, having worked extensively in park management operations and World Heritage areas across Queensland for almost two decades. Jason has also led the Strategy and Policy division in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and directed several departmental portfolios in the fields of conservation planning, wildlife management, indigenous engagement and outdoor recreation.



Darren Jew

Wildlife Photographer

Biography

Darren was inspired to explore a career in nature photography by his father's travels in Antarctica. He now pursues a passion for capturing and sharing the wonder of the natural world.

After graduating from the Queensland College of Art, Darren first worked in commercial photography, before taking up a position as a photographer with the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service, where he worked for 8 years.

Moved on in 1994, Darren's work is now published widely in books, magazines and paper products. He's had the opportunity to photograph extensively across Australia and in Africa, Alaska, Patagonia and Antarctica and has introduced many people to the world's great wildlife and landscape destinations first hand, through small group photography tours, predominantly to Africa and Antarctica and the Pacific.

Darren has just won the 2018 AIPP Australian Nature Photographer of the Year.



Ben Klaassen

Deputy Director-General, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

Biography

Ben leads the management of Queensland's parks and forests in partnership with Traditional Owners, protecting natural and cultural values and providing nature based tourism opportunities. He is also responsible for the operational delivery of the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program, in partnership with the Australian Government, to protect and maintain the marine and island ecosystems of the Great Barrier Reef.

Ben's extensive experience in Queensland's public service has included senior positions within the Department of Local Government and Planning and the Department of Innovation and Information Economy, Sport and Recreation Queensland, as well as roles in Queensland Health and the Department of Public Works.

Ben holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Graduate Certificate in Management, and is a fellow of CPA Australia.



Anna Marsden

Managing Director, Great Barrier Reef Foundation

Biography

Anna has worked extensively in leadership roles across not for profit and creative industries for nearly two decades.

Before taking up the role of Managing Director in 2016, Anna was CEO of Queensland Ballet where she led a major change program resulting in enormous growth.

She previously held roles as General Manager – Creative at Rowland, Australia's leading corporate communications agency, Development Director of the Queensland Art Gallery and GoMA, and General Manager at the Institute of Modern Art. Anna holds board positions with Brisbane Festival, Brisbane Powerhouse and Circa.



Amanda Martin

Chief Executive Officer, Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network

Biography

Amanda Martin has worked in philanthropy for over fifteen years, having worked as Executive Officer for the Poola Foundation for four years before helping to establish the AEGN in 2009. She has specialised in environment and Indigenous grantmaking and more recently on building the skills and knowledge of funders on environmental issues as well as building different forms of collaboration. Amanda is a trained and skilled facilitator of groups and regularly uses this in her current role.

Amanda has a background in biodiversity and protected area advocacy and management working in both the public and community sector. She was the Executive Officer of the Victoria National Parks Association, and the Head of Policy and Planning at Parks Victoria. She has a degree in Zoology and post-graduate qualifications in Environment Studies.

Amanda loves the outdoors and finds that fresh air, beautiful places, birds and being underwater gives her a sense of peace and sustenance. Amanda has travelled extensively and knows how lucky we are to have such a biodiverse and clean country to live in. She lives in Melbourne with her partner and daughter and spends time bringing birds back to the suburbs by tending a native garden and walking or cycling where ever she can.



Jeff McAlister

Deputy Director-General, Tourism, Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry and the Commonwealth Games

Biography

Jeff joined the Queensland Government as Deputy Director-General of Tourism and Major Events in October 2016. In DITID he has driven aviation attraction work that has landed major new routes for Queensland and developed new initiatives to grow tourism on the Great Barrier Reef, while also securing significant additional resourcing for the portfolio.

Jeff was previously the Director-General for Asian Engagement, Trade and Investment for the Northern Territory. He delivered a strategic investment attraction and export development framework that attracted major overseas investors for projects including the Port of Darwin, luxury hotel, and cattle stations, and strengthened the Territory's export profile by working with companies diversifying into new industries. Jeff secured and delivered major events notably the inaugural Northern Australian Investment Forum and the Japan-Australia and Taiwan-Australia Business Council meetings.

Before the NT, Jeff worked for the New Zealand Government mostly in international trade and investment roles. He was lastly Ambassador to Brazil where his key successes included more than doubling New Zealand exports, securing approval for major New Zealand agribusiness investment, and developing a new supply chain for new high value South American tourism into New Zealand including direct air services.



Ross McLennan

Owner, Hidden Valley Cabins

Biography

Ross McLennan grew up in a small family tourism business 103 km North West of Townsville called Hidden Valley Cabins. This family business has been owned and operated by the McLennan family since 1986.

After growing up in a remote location the world called and Ross travelled abroad for 4 years, living in England and Canada where he met Chelsea. Returning to Australia in 2006, Ross and Chelsea joined the family business with a vision of niche marketing, expansion of a range of quality products with an environmental theme. That vision proved to be very successful both financially and environmentally.

The resort has also undergone major operational changes. Due to the remote location, Hidden Valley has no town amenities and is totally self-sufficient. In December 2007, Hidden Valley Cabins switched off the diesel generator and moved to an environmentally friendly power source, Solar. Since then the entire resorts electrical needs has been supplied by the sun, saving the resort up to 26000L of diesel and 78 tonnes of CO2 per year. In 2011, Hidden Valley Cabins also added an additional 3 deluxe cabins to keep up with demand.

Hidden Valley Cabins now hosts over 1000 international secondary and university students a year on faculty lead study abroad programs.

The resort has also won numerous awards including the Australian and Queensland Tourism Award for Hosted Accommodation and was recognised for Excellence in Sustainability and a Certificate of Recognition from the Queensland Premier, Anna Bligh for Outstanding Leadership in Environmental Sustainability.



Kauahi Ngapora

General Manager, Kaikoura Whale Watch, New Zealand

Abstract

Ecotourism: building resilient communities. A whale of a tale

Ecotourism built a thriving tourism industry in the small coastal town of Kaikōura (local population 3,500) and rejuvenated an entire community. In Nov 2016 this area was hit by a large 7.8 magnitude earthquake and ecotourism is once again at the forefront in driving long-term economic recovery.

Biography

Kauahi Ngapora is the General Manager of Whale Watch Kaikoura Ltd in Kaikoura, New Zealand. Kauahi is of New Zealand Māori descent with Waikato-Tainui and Ngāi Tahu links. Kauahi has been involved within the tourism and marine transport sectors for 25 years with Whale Watch Kaikoura. Kauahi is a member of Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura, a member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee the Kaikōura Marine Guardians and a member of the Governments Tourism Infrastructure Fund Panel.



Dana Nikanpour

Group Manager, Sales & Marketing, Northern Escape Collection

Biography

Dana leads sales and marketing for Northern Escape Collection, a selection of boutique experiences including Orpheus Island Lodge, Daintree Ecolodge and Mt Mulligan Station, designed to provide visitors with a sustainable yet luxurious break and owned and operated by the Australian family run Morris Group. Dana is also a marketing advisor to the Collection's parent company Morris Group and its philanthropic arm, Morris Family Foundation.

Dana joined Northern Escape Collection after launching handmade online marketplace Etsy.com in Australia and working in marketing roles for Visit Victoria, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and Melbourne Food and Wine Festival. Her career has been defined by encouraging people to try new experiences where they can learn something new and connect with others while doing so.

Dana is passionate about the natural world and the Collection's philosophy: You can balance profits with a positive impact on communities and the environment.



Ben O'Hara

General Manager, Land and Environment at Turner Family Foundation

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.



Andy Ridley

Chief Executive Officer, Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef

Biography

Andy Ridley is CEO of a new foundation - Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef. The organisation is being developed to engage millions in the future of the reef, and by implication the future of our planet. Central to the development of the organisation will be the use of digital connectivity and the role of the circular economy in reducing emissions and providing a prosperous future both in the region and globally. A focal point is the use of digital to activate citizens behind our common purpose. Launch will be late 2017.

Prior to this Andy led the rapid growth and evolution of Circle Economy in Amsterdam. He believes the circular economy provides many of the answers to some of the biggest environmental challenges that we face as population grows beyond 9 billion, and we address the great generational challenges such as climate change. At Circle Economy, they focused on practical and scaleable tools and programs to help accelerate the adoption of the circular economy in cities, businesses and communities around the globe. These circular principles form the base for his work on the Reef.

As founder and CEO of Earth Hour, Andy spent eight years growing the award-winning campaign from concept and inaugural event in Sydney, to the largest mass participation movement in history, engaging hundreds of millions of people in more than 7000 cities on every continent. Earth Hour was not only a 'lights off hour' but also delivered significant environmental outcomes through local digital and on the ground campaigns in multiple countries around the world, including leading to the protection of several protected areas in South America and Russia.



Meaghan Scanlon MP

Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development, Queensland Government

Biography

Having grown up in one of Queensland's major tourist destinations, the Gold Coast, Meaghan is committed to ensuring the continued growth and success of Queensland's tourism industry. Meaghan is the Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development, following the re-election of the Palaszczuk Government.

Meaghan was elected to the seat of Gaven on the Gold Coast on 25 November 2017.

Prior to being elected, Meaghan worked as a solicitor and advisor to a federal Labor Senator. She attended Guardian Angels Primary School and Aquinas College.

Meaghan completed a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) at Griffith University on the Gold Coast and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice (GradDipLegPrac) at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT).



Molly Steer

Straw No More Campaign

Biography

Molly Steer is a 10-year-old from Cairns in far north Queensland, Australia, who is making waves of exactly the right kind. After watching the documentary "A Plastic Ocean" in February 2017, Molly began a campaign to rid schools in her local community of all single-use plastic straws. In just a little more than a year, this inspiring environmental activist has over 600 schools around the world, totalling more than half a million students who are currently not using plastic straws at schools every day. In addition to this number, over 1000 individuals have taken the pledge, and 500 businesses. Molly is a natural public speaker, she spoke on local and national radio and gave an inspiring talk at her local TedX Cairns event. But even more inspiring than the reach of her campaign, is her no-nonsense approach to activism. Molly tells it like it is. Straws really do suck.



Albert Teo

Managing Director, Borneo Eco Tours, Malaysia

Biography

A graduate in Economics from University of London in 1977, Albert Teo has been in the tourism industry for the last forty one years.

His companies Borneo Eco Tours (1991) and Sukau Rainforest Lodge (1995), a charter member of National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World have both won numerous international ecotourism awards including the 2012 SKÅL International Sustainable Development in Tourism Award for Tour Operator, 2015 PATA Tourism InSPIRE Awards 2015 - Best Independent Accommodation, Asia's Leading Green Hotel at the 17th World Travel Award 2010.

Albert is presently focusing his energy on developing social entrepreneurship through his community/environment foundation, Borneo Ecotourism Solutions and Technologies or BEST Society. www.bestsociety.org. Among its many projects is the integrated community-based tourism project 'Kiulu Farmstay', and the 7.7 acres of forested land which BEST Society has initiated in 2017 under Borneo Land Conservancy (BLC) for the purpose of wildlife conservation in Sukau. BEST Society received the 2013 UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Non-Governmental Organizations.

Albert is also Fellow/Adjunct Lecturer of Edith Cowan University, Australia and Adjunct Professor of University Malaysia Sabah.



Sarah Vickory

Environment Manager, Ocean Rafting

Biography

After finishing school, Sarah went on to work for her parents, being a hostess and deckhand, before completing her Master 24> and Marine Engine Driver Grade 2. She worked as a skipper for a few years and she was also a bus driver, worked in the office, and helped her mother with the marketing. They travelled all over Australia attending tourism events. Seeing how much Australia had to offer, made her want to see it all! A place which definitely captured her attention was the Whitsundays, everything that was going on there was unbelievable.

After three months of working two jobs to get her sea time up, Sarah landed my dream job, Ocean Rafting! She has now been with Ocean Rafting for 7 ½ Years. She has worked her way up the ranks and she is now a Head Skipper, the Environmental Manager and also assist in the office. She is assigned her own vessel to run (Riptide) and she am able to choose where to take guests on her tour and the snorkeling sites, given the many fantastic permits Ocean Rafting has. She visits the most beautiful beach in the world, Whitehaven Beach, every day and at times she stands on that beach, being the only person leaving footprints in that gorgeous pure white sand.



Paul Victory

General Manager Growth & Innovation, SeaLink Travel Group

Biography

Paul Victory, is General Manager of Growth and Innovation at the SeaLink Travel Group and has a long history in tourism and leisure services in the Australian tourism industry. The SeaLink Travel Group is one of Australia's leading Tourism and Transport businesses, having listed on the Australian Stock Exchange in September 2013. Paul has been with SeaLink's management & executive team for the past decade, having spent a long period in international sales, business development and marketing in SeaLink's South Australian operations. Paul was General Manager at SeaLink Queensland and SeaLink Northern Territory for six years (2011-2017) managing services throughout Northern Australia with services based in Townsville and Darwin. Paul has recently taken on a national business growth and innovation role for SeaLink, establishing SeaLink's Tasmanian operations. Paul has been a Director of Townsville Enterprise Ltd since 2013, chairing the Regional Tourism

Committee and Chairman of the Museum of Under Water Art Board. SeaLink while providing extensive ferry transport operations to 19 destinations around Australia are actively involved in tourism, the Australian cruise ship industry tendering and travel wholesaling. Paul has been instrumental in the development of new products nationally focussing on Australian wildlife, the north Queensland islands and indigenous tourism.

Paul has been active in developing tourism opportunity for the community of Palm Island in North Queensland and in the remote Tiwi Island's in the Northern Territory. Paul instigated, and is leading a team to deliver the Museum of Underwater Art project for Townsville and is working with Government and the Honeycombe Group on the development of a marine tourism precinct for Townsville. Paul established SeaLink's Darwin operations in 2013 working closely with the NT Government and has further growth planned across the remote, East Arnhem region. Paul has tourism industry network across Australia and in international business communities. SeaLink is one of the largest transport operators in Australia, employing over 1600 people with sales of over \$200m, servicing around 8m passengers annually. Paul graduated from Victoria University in 1997 with a Masters Degree, having completed an undergraduate degree in Adelaide and post graduate business studies in Perth.



Dr David Wachenfeld

Chief Scientist, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Biography

Dr David Wachenfeld is the Chief Scientist at the Great Barrier Marine Park Authority. Working at the Authority since 1997, he has covered a diverse range of Marine Park management activities, including: adaptation to climate change, development of Marine Park zoning, improving sustainability of fishing, development of COTS control program, and development of reef restoration techniques.

He has dived on coral reefs all around the world, conducting research, taking photographs, teaching people and working to protect the environment.

In 1993, he completed a PhD studying the behaviour and ecology of coral reef triggerfish in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Although his career has concentrated on coral reef management he has also worked in reef tourism and science.



Darrell Wade

Intrepid Travel Co-Founder and Intrepid Group Chairman

Biography

During the course of his career, Darrell has been recognised as a leader in entrepreneurship and as a passionate advocate for sustainable tourism. Leading Intrepid's climate management program, the company realised its goal of becoming carbon neutral in 2010. Darrell was also one of the first Australians to complete Climate Project training with the Hon Mr Al Gore.

Darrell's achievements include winning the NAB SmartCompany Award, and being named the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year in 2002.

Darrell is a board member of Melbourne-based social enterprise Good Cycles, a mentor for the University of Melbourne's entrepreneurship program, and member of the Executive Committee of the World Travel and Tourism Council. He is also Chair of the Dawn Wade Foundation, a Victoria-based discretionary investment trust in Australia.

A dynamic leader and natural communicator, Darrell's enthusiasm for and dedication to sustainable adventure travel continues to grow after decades in the industry.



Karla Way-McPhail

Director, NAIF

Biography

Ms Way-McPhail is Chief Executive Officer of a number of northern Australian mining and training firms, bringing extensive experience in operations and business. She also brings extensive board experience, having served on the boards of the Resources Industry Council Central Queensland and the Capricornia Chamber of Commerce.

In 2012, Ms Way-McPhail was the recipient of the prestigious Hudson Private and Corporate Award at the Telstra Queensland Business Women's Awards. She is currently Patron of the Mining Womens Support Group.



Barry Weare

Director of Operations, Cooee Traveller

Biography

Barry Weare is the Director of Operations at Cooee Traveller, a subsidiary body of Indigenous Business Australia (IBA).

Born and raised in Far North Queensland, Barry works extensively in leadership roles across all assets in Cooee Traveller's portfolio and has helped transition tourism businesses in South Australia, Queensland and Northern Territory into entities that meet the cultural, social and economic needs of the stakeholders and communities.

A keen cricketer, Barry is passionate about working in ecotourism, as it creates opportunities for traditional owners to live, work and share their country, whilst also providing economic and social benefits to the communities.



Katherine Zischka

Director, Australia Committee for IUCN Inc.

Biography

Kathy is the Director of the Australian Committee for IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature (ACIUCN). She has built a career in environmental conservation through her work in marine research, environmental conservation, international environmental law, ecotourism, policy and management. Kathy has worked with award winning non-government organisations, government and academia in Australia, Europe and the Pacific. As an active member of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), she co-led the WCPA Marine Young Professionals Task Force from 2014-2017. Kathy has a BSc (Hons) in marine and environmental biology and a Master of environmental management.

Kathy is passionate about the outdoors, exploring remote wilderness on foot, scuba or by boat, and ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of our world's spectacular natural places.