

Rebuilding from a crisis

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Image credit: Coffs Harbour City Council



ECO Destination Certification

- A certification program designed for a recognised tourism destination to demonstrate its sustainable tourism policies, practices and programs
- It aims to create a business environment where tourism businesses chose to follow sustainable business practices
- Green Destinations framework plus 15 Ecotourism criteria and is available in Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific



Image Credit: Blue Mountains City Council

2019/20

Australia Bushfires

- 2019/20 saw Australia's largest bushfire emergency in living memory.
- 34 people died, 8,600,000 hectares burnt, over 1 billion animals killed.
- Gained international media coverage and international travellers ceased to come.
- The crisis created an enormous outpouring of support for charities to assist animals, people and communities to recover and rebuild.



Our partnership with WWF

- WWF approached EA to develop a program to support eight bushfire affected destinations to “Rebuild Better”.
- A tool to assist councils to rebuild better following a sustainability framework.
- Support to undertake the program (2-year period).
- To assist the rebuild of communities as vibrant, resilient and sustainable tourism destinations using the internationally recognised framework

Image Credit: Exceptional Kangaroo Island, Kangaroo Island, SA
(Advanced Ecotourism & Climate Action Business)



The recovery package

- Certification fee for the first two years
- Fully inclusive support package:
- Onsite induction in destination
- Preliminary assessment
- 90 hours of coaching and communications support
- Two x ecotourism product workshops
- Ecotourism product support and incentive funding
- Rego for the 2020 Global Eco Conference
- Entry into Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Competition
- First online and onsite audit fee
- Ecotourism Australia membership benefits
- Opportunity to collaborate and work with other WWF funded destinations

Image Credit: TreeTops, Central Coast, NSW
(Advanced Ecotourism & Ecotourism)



Progress to date

- Eight destinations engaged and progressing
- Phase one of developing a 'Bushfire Recovery Toolkit' completed and now engaged with one community to pilot the program
- Planning underway to deliver a workshop to share the learnings and experiences of the Destinations
- Have needed to adapt to include the needs of COVID-19



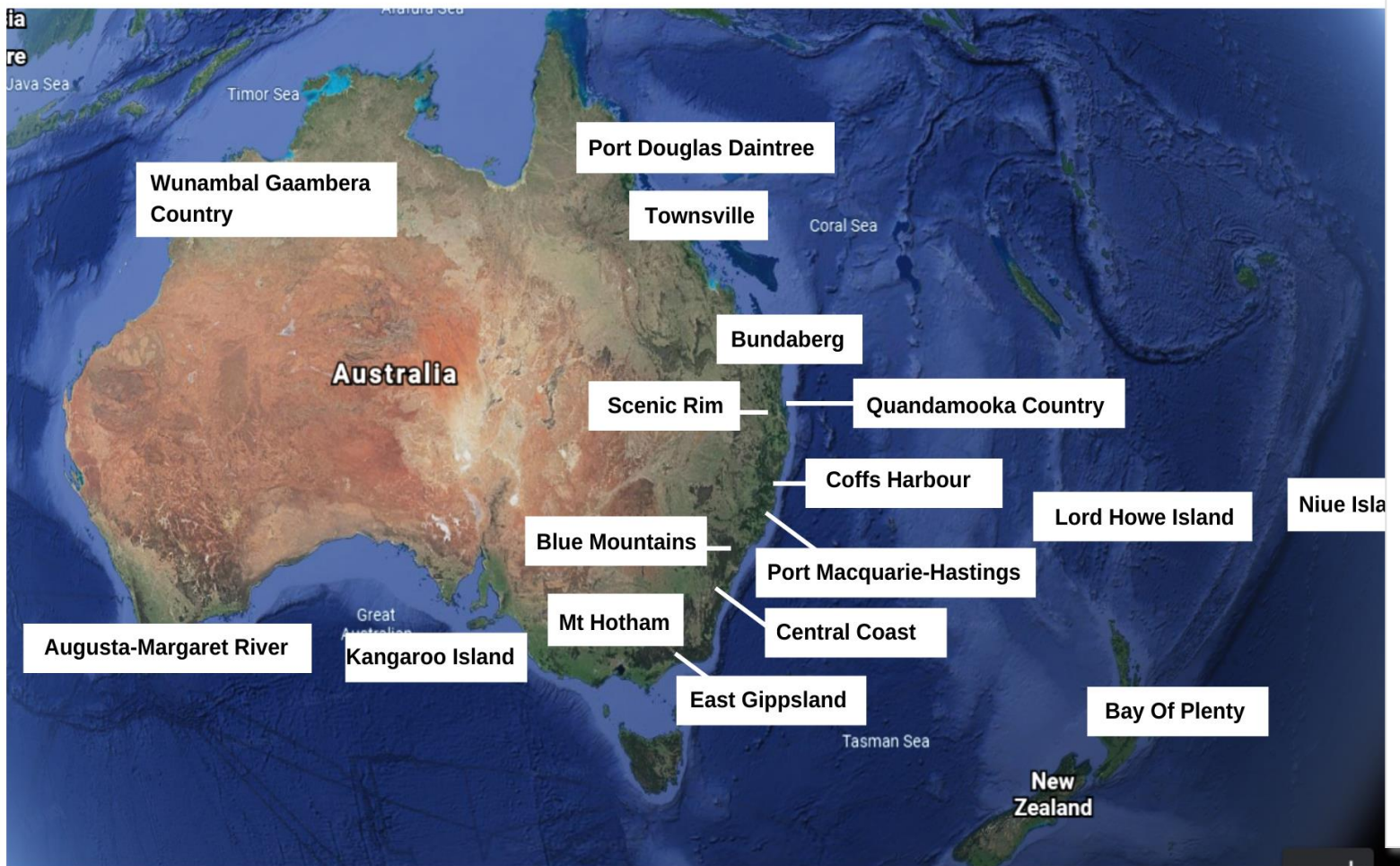
Lessons

- Partnerships are critical to success and can come from unexpected places
- Patience is needed – especially when working with people recovering from a crisis



Image Credit: Mt Barney Lodge, Scenic Rim, QLD
(Advanced Ecotourism & Climate Action Business)

ECO Destinations Update



- Currently 17 certified and aspiring ECO Destinations in Australia, New Zealand & South Pacific
- Douglas Shire has successfully upgraded from Nature level to Ecotourism level
- Has been included within the QLD Nature Based Tourism Strategy



Questions?

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