

Project Update

February 2014

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Product

Enterprise Cooperation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism: project update

Understanding cooperation among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises can identify the potential to increase this activity in the future and provide valuable information to help boost existing training and funding support from government and other agencies. This research study is still running, and we expect to report on outcomes by the middle of the year. But this means that eligible enterprises still have time to participate! In early January an operator kindly notified us that the online survey was down. Thanks to their information, we quickly solved the problem and got it operating again for participants. But it will close on Friday the 21st of February, so have your say before time runs out! We understand that many people are away during the holiday season. We hope that once the kids heading back to school, people can get back on deck and be inspired for the coming year. We urge operators big or small to take part. The information will be valuable in our efforts to facilitate cooperation among remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises in the future. For more information please contact Damien Jacobsen: (02) 6620 3042, or damien.jacobsen@nintione.com.au

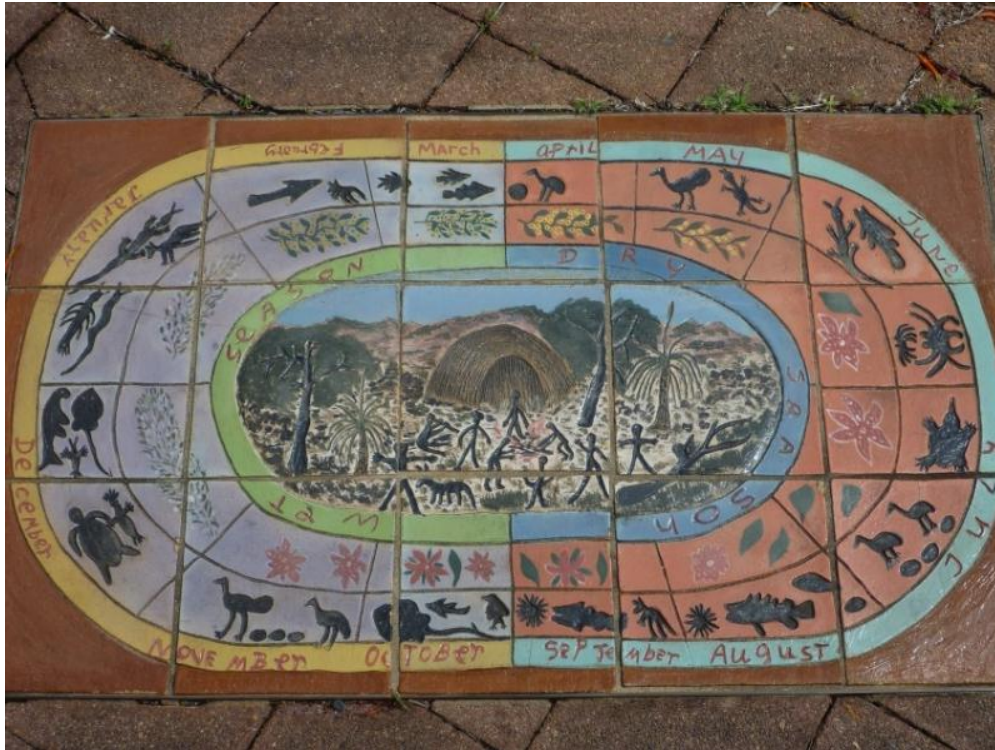


Photo above: courtesy Damien Jacobsen



Conference Presentation: Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference

Principal Research Leader, Dr Damien Jacobsen, delivered a presentation at the Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference in Alice Springs, October. The speech was part of the Strong Businesses Know their Markets break-out theme. PRL's presentation, (titled *Understanding Tourists Visiting Remote Australia: Update from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Project*), gave the audience an overview of the work on remote tourism visitors carried out as part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Product Project.



New Remote Tourism Initiatives: Gangaar Tours

Our sub-project designed to understand the development processes of new remote tourism initiatives has been working closely with Gangaar Tours in Cooktown, far north Queensland. We have been investigating the marketing testing approach to business model development, establishing partnerships, product development, market research needs and other issues. We also know that life can be chaotic! Balancing an enterprise and everyday obligations can be challenging! We are investigating how to assist people to develop their new tourism initiative and fulfil their everyday obligations at the same time.

The new remote tourism initiatives work is about capacity building and transferring existing skills to enterprise development contexts. Gangaar Tours represents a significant step for Traditional Owners in the Cooktown area. It not only is an opportunity for employment and enterprise for different generations of Gamaay people, it also realises the dreams of Elders past and present. Gangaar are close to finalising their business plan and aim to be operational for the 2014 far north Queensland tourism season.



Gangaar Tours on location refining their tour in Cooktown with PRL Damien Jacobsen

Photo above: Damien Jacobsen



Advisory group meeting(s)

We are very proud to acknowledge the generous time and energy from our Tourism
Advisory Group members:

- Bridget Garay – Journey Forward
- Greg Bowman – Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation P/L
- Ian Kean – Tourism Services
- Martin Darcy – Parks Australia
- Yvonne Webb – Charttes



In 2013 the group held two meetings. The first was in Alice Springs at the Desert Knowledge Precinct in April, with special thanks going to Bob Taylor of RT Tours also hosting the group. The second meeting was convened via Skype, with members joining

in live from Kununurra, Darwin, Canberra, Brisbane and Lismore. While the group have expressed satisfaction with the tourism project so far, they have offered valuable insight to strengthen the relevance of our work to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in tourism.

Photo above: Tourism Advisory Group visit to Telegraph Station, Alice Springs. Courtesy Damien Jacobsen



Choice behaviour of international visitors



This PhD study carried out by Janine Ashwell has uncovered a range of insights about international tourists that visit Aboriginal tourism enterprises in remote Australia. Some of the insights include:

- Factors such as travel party, length of stay and participation in a guided tour can increase the probability of international tourists to travel to remote destinations
- Single travellers, couples and retirees are the main age segments of international tourists that travel to remote destinations
- Many international visitors hold stereotypical perceptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Aboriginal tourism experiences
- For international tourists, online sources (websites, youtube etc.), news and word of mouth are important sources of information about remote Aboriginal tourism.

This study is scheduled to finish in mid-2014, and the detailed outcomes will be available on the CRC-REP tourism project webpage.

Photo above: courtesy Damien Jacobsen



Marketing remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism to Australian tourists

An improved understanding of domestic consumer perceptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism and insight in to the marketing activities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote tourism operators is essential, especially to ensure that all opportunities are maximised by enterprises in remote locations. This PhD study is conducted by Skye Akbar and, even though only the first phase of the study is complete, the work draws attention to the need to increase domestic visitor resources in the sector. Interviews with a collection of operators found that:

- Existing support for new enterprises has limited focus on domestic visitors
- Some respondents indicated that as enterprises mature, support dwindles and challenges tend to increase
- There are limited existing marketing resources to facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises to target domestic visitors
- Small remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises report the need to compete with large non-Aboriginal companies offering Aboriginal 'content' to visitors, but the playing field is uneven
- Respondents raised the ongoing challenges of visitors having stereotypical perceptions and negative media exposure of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in general

The next step is to survey domestic consumers to find out their needs, and to explore other insights related to this market that can boost existing knowledge and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote tourism enterprises. This study is scheduled to finish in mid-2015, and the detailed outcomes will be available on the CRC-REP tourism project webpage.



Photo above: courtesy Skye Akbar



Stay in Contact

We invite you to pass this update onto colleagues and friends who might also be interested in this research. We always value feedback – contact details are below, So please stay in touch or contact us for further information.

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