



The definition of ecotourism adopted by Ecotourism Australia is:

"Ecotourism is ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation".



Tourism Naturally is committed to the principles of environmental and socially sustainable tourism development to enhance and protect conservation values.

The facilities and activities undertaken at Jabiru Safari Lodge and the Mareeba Tropical Savanna and wetland Reserve are in a natural setting and there is a focus on natural and cultural heritage in all guided activities and interpretation materials. The activities leave participants with meaningful experiences from which they foster an appreciation and support for conservation efforts either at the Reserve or in their local community. Visitor satisfaction is of high priority and all information is provided in promotional materials and website is accurate.

Cultural heritage: The construction of the wetland system on the Reserve was undertaken with knowledge and respect of the aboriginal cultural heritage. Cultural observers were on-site during the construction phase to prevent any damage to culturally significant areas or artefacts and representatives of the local aboriginal tribes were invited out to the Reserve to point out any sites that were potentially culturally significant.

Environmental management: The Conservancy has produced a comprehensive Environmental Management Plan for the Reserve. An extensive pest plant and animal control program has been instigated to:

- reduce the worst grassy and woody weeds on the Reserve
- reducing the feral pig population
- promote the regeneration of native grasses and habitat
- plant 11,000 native trees around the lagoons for bank stabilisation and erosion.

Our recycling mantra is ‘refuse, reduce recycle, reuse.’ We minimise waste at the Reserve wherever possible by

- refusing excess packaging,
- reducing waste,
- not using plastic bags in our gift shop and paper bags are offered for gift purchases.
- recycle soft drink cans, paper, glass, plastic bottles
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products (Earth’s Choice)
- Recycled toilet paper and paper hand towels.

Tourism Naturally operates low-impact sustainable tourism that amplifies the natural advantages of the landscape. The business model seeks to combine the skills and experience of its partners to achieve economic, environmental and social outcomes. It is a sustainable model that ensures that not only do the customers receive a high quality of service and an authentic experience but the environment or culture underpinning that experience is both protected and enhanced. The innovation inherent in the model is the necessity for all parties to contribute their specialist skills and experience to the venture to achieve positive environmental, social and financial improvements.

Protecting the land and wildlife: Conservancy income from sustainable tourism is reinvested into local conservation work to provide a world class nature reserve for the people of Mareeba and preserve one of the last remaining publicly accessible open sclerophyll woodland Reserves for future generations. Several endangered species occur on the Reserve, and they are actively working to save the endangered Gouldian Finch from extinction with their Gouldian Finch reintroduction program.

Regional tourism: Tourism Naturally has worked hard to promote the Tablelands as an important centre for mainstream and ecotourism. The Reserve provided the first boutique accommodation in the Mareeba area, a contrasting dry savanna experience to the boutique bed and breakfast accommodation on the Southern Tablelands, rainforest and the coast.

We have worked with other local operators to highlight the Cairns Outback as an additional drawcard to tourists. We are members of several regional tourism organizations (TTNQ, TTT, Cairns Outback Tourism Association), as well as the Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, and regularly attend meetings and networking functions on the Tablelands.

Education and research: The Reserve hosts many school visits each year and provide hands on environmental education programs. We also host visits from universities both Australian and overseas, as well as providing a field research site for James Cook University students, who visit each year.

Indigenous Partnerships: Tourism Naturally operates under a business model that encourages collaboration and partnerships with indigenous businesses. The signage around the Visitor Centre was developed in conjunction with representatives of the local Muluridgi people, and many of our signs are in both English and Muluridgi.

Supporting local suppliers

Our policy is to where possible buy locally produced products for use and sale at the Visitor Centre and use local suppliers for services. These have included:

- Showcasing local Mareeba coffee and Nerada tea in the cafe
- Selling local peanuts and dried mango
- Shopping locally for groceries
- Contracting a local grader for road maintenance
- Bulk meat supplies from local butcher
- Selling locally-baked scones and Kuranda Cookies
- Using a local supplier for our Ecocabin solar and 12v equipment

Direct Community support: We respond to many requests from local groups, clubs and schools to donate prizes for their own fundraising activities and events including prizes for raffles, the Mareeba Rodeo, and school fairs. In the last year, this has amounted to almost \$6000 in value.