



TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND
FIRST NATIONS

TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2023-2025

ALL TOURISM IS ON COUNTRY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the spirit of Country and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as carrying custodial responsibility.

We pay our respect to the Ancestors and Elders, past and present.

We recognise the deep relationships, connections and responsibilities to lands, waters and skies integral to First Nations Peoples' identity and culture and we give regard to their connections as central to Culture and being.



Artwork by Jedess & David Hudson for TTNQ as part of our Reconciliation Action Plan.
The design elements in this Action Plan are drawn from this original artwork

Cover page: Guugu Yimithirr Country, Elim Beach, Hopevale

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	4
OUR FOUNDATIONS	5
TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND FIRST NATIONS TOURISM ACTION PLAN	6
FIRST NATIONS TOURISM: A SNAPSHOT	7
OUR STORY: FIRST NATIONS TOURISM IN TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND	8
OUR PROCESS	9
OUR ACTION PLAN	14
VALUE 1: COUNTRY	19
VALUE 2: CULTURE	21
VALUE 3: COMMUNITY	23
VALUE 4: CAPACITY	25
VALUE 5: CONTINUITY	26
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	27

This Action Plan was developed by the TNQ First Nations Tourism Steering Committee, on behalf of the TNQ Indigenous Experience Cluster Group. This was made possible by funding from the Queensland Government Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport and the support of Tropical Tourism North Queensland and Costello Consultancy.

FOREWORD

This First Nations Tourism Action Plan for Tropical North Queensland was developed by the local, all indigenous Steering Committee (refer to page 27 for the membership) under the guidance of the TNQ Indigenous Experiences Cluster Group and the Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

JUAN WALKER

CO CHAIR - FIRST NATIONS TOURISM ACTION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

It is an honour to present this Action Plan for First Nations tourism in Tropical North Queensland. At a time when there is a national reimagining of tourism we have actively engaged and listened with our communities from the Torres Strait to the Gulf and Cape on how they want tourism to operate on Country. I sincerely thank our communities and operators for their participation in this process. We heard your message clearly - all tourism is on Country and as such tourism must be led by First Nations people. Our tourism sector must commit to assisting local communities to design and deliver appropriate tourism experiences that deliver sustainable benefits to our communities and ensure culture and Country for future generations. In return we will work with the sector to educate, collaborate, and deliver awe-inspiring destination experiences that will position Tropical North Queensland as a global leader in tourism. I thank



the dedication of our steering committee, government and industry who have supported the development of the Action Plan. I invite everyone to embrace the vision and join us in moving beyond reimagining to becoming reality. I encourage our First Nations people to embrace the opportunities, take initiative and utilise the plan. With commitment and persistence you can achieve your goals.

DALE MUNDRABY

CO CHAIR - FIRST NATIONS TOURISM ACTION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Tourism Plan 2020-2025. That Plan led to the Year of Indigenous Tourism and to the establishment of industry organisations like the TNQ Indigenous Experiences Cluster Group and the Queensland First Nations Tourism Council. I am proud to present this Action Plan as a road map to make a significant impact on the sector through embracing the potential of First Nations tourism. Implementing the actions contained within it will create a trajectory toward reshaping tourism to empower our local communities to create new tourism enterprises, build capacity of our existing businesses and partner with industry and government to unlock the potential legacy of the Brisbane 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games. Our Action Plan is unapologetically bold and visionary, and connecting visitors in a respectful way to our Country, culture and people is at the heart of it.



Our Action Plan builds on the momentum gained through the hard work and footsteps of our Elders that have forged a path for us to follow. The foundations they put in place have led to the momentum in recent times with the QTIC Indigenous Champions Network, Destination IQ, and the Queensland First Nations





OUR FOUNDATIONS

Noting the right to self-determination under both the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People¹ and the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019², our First Nations Tourism Plan also recognises the 2012 Larrakia Declaration on the Development of Indigenous Tourism. The Action Plan embraces its six Principles and focuses on leveraging a flourishing First Nations tourism economy by sharing authentic, memorable and culturally enriching experiences.

2012 SIX LARRAKIA DECLARATION PRINCIPLES

- Respect for customary law and lore, land and water, traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions, cultural heritage that will underpin all tourism decisions.
- Indigenous culture and the land and waters on which it is based, will be protected and promoted through well-managed tourism practices and appropriate interpretation.
- Indigenous peoples will determine the extent and nature and organisational arrangements for their participation in tourism and that governments and multilateral agencies will support the empowerment of Indigenous people.
- That governments have a duty to consult and accommodate Indigenous peoples before undertaking decisions on public policy and programs designed to foster the development of Indigenous tourism.
- The tourism industry will respect Indigenous intellectual property rights, cultures and traditional practices, the need for sustainable and equitable business partnerships and the proper care of the environment and communities that support them.
- That equitable partnerships between the tourism industry and Indigenous people will include the sharing of cultural awareness and skills development which support the well-being of communities and enable enhancement of individual livelihoods.³

¹<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/community-guide-un>

²<https://sbctc.com.au/documents/Qld%20Human%20Rights%20Commission%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

³World Indigenous Tourism Alliance

THE TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND FIRST NATIONS TOURISM ACTION PLAN

Australia's First Nations peoples, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have lived in harmony with Country for tens of thousands of years.

The Tropical North Queensland First Nations Tourism Action Plan sets the framework to recognise all tourism is on Country.

The Action Plan leverages our First Nations stewardship and cultural heritage of Country, together with Tropical North Queensland's distinctive mix of tourism product offerings.

It seeks to inspire the development of a thriving First Nations' tourism sector that offers engaging, diverse, authentic and sustainable tourism experiences and promotes greater engagement of First Nations peoples in tourism.

Kubirriwarra Eastern Kuku Yalanji Country, Cooya Beach



FIRST NATIONS TOURISM: A SNAPSHOT

INTERNATIONAL

Tourism is a **\$2.5 trillion** global sector, and the business volume of tourism surpasses that of oil exports, food products or automobiles.⁴ According to the UNWTO Panel on Indigenous Tourism: Promoting equitable partnerships:

"As one of the most thriving economic activities, tourism is well placed to contribute to Indigenous people in improving their livelihoods. If managed responsibly and sustainably, Indigenous tourism can spur cultural interaction and revival, bolster employment, alleviate poverty, curb rural flight migration, empower women and youth, encourage product diversification, and nurture a sense of pride among Indigenous people".

NATIONAL

Australia's tourism product strengths of aquatic and coastal, food and wine and nature, wildlife and culture attracts some **9.3 million** international visitors, creating a lucrative tourism industry generating **\$43.9 billion** for the Australian economy.⁵

First Nations Tourism is a growing sector of Australia's tourism industry because it presents entrepreneurial opportunities and economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. One in six employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples work in the tourism industry.⁶

Tourism Australia reported that in 2019, **1.4 million** international visitors (17%) participated in an Indigenous tourism experience while visiting Australia, a **six percent** year-on-year increase since 2010. For domestic travellers, the figure was **one million**, an increase of **13%** each year since 2013.



QUEENSLAND

Tourism in Queensland is a **\$17 billion** industry and is Queensland's third largest export sector. Tourism generates **\$56.6 million** a day in overnight visitor expenditure across the state, creating **174,000** direct and indirect jobs and contributing **4.6%** to Queensland's Gross State Product.⁷

In Queensland for the year ending December 2019, **472,000** visitors partook in an Indigenous experience, supporting **\$496.3 million** in visitor expenditure.

TOURISM EVENTS QUEENSLAND RESEARCH HAS FOUND:

- Indigenous tourism supports **2,500** full time jobs.
- **73%** of businesses are optimistic for business growth.
- **Nearly half** of all Indigenous tourism businesses are making a profit, while **31%** broke even.⁸

⁴UNWTO 2019 International Tourism Highlights

⁵Tourism Australia 2019, International Tourism Snapshot

⁶Jobs Qld Tourism Workforce Report 2017

⁷TEQ – Queensland Tourism Economic Key Facts 27 Sept 2022

OUR STORY: FIRST NATIONS TOURISM IN TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND

First Nations tourism provides a key point of differentiation for Tropical North Queensland's tourism offering. Tropical North Queensland has historically been and continues to be a leader in First Nations Tourism experiences in Australia. Visitor interest in participating in an Indigenous experience creates opportunities for existing and new First Nations businesses, traditional custodian groups and communities. Queensland is the only state in Australia in a position to offer experiences with two First Nations groups: Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. Tropical North Queensland is the home lands of these two groups.



TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND REGION

The region has geographical coverage of 20% (340,645 km²) of the State's total area. Our destination stretches from Cardwell in the south to the Torres Strait in the north and west to the Northern Territory border. Tropical North Queensland is known as one of the world's most inspiring nature-based destinations. It is the gateway to hundreds of accessible experiences set on the stage of the Great Barrier Reef, Earth's oldest rainforest and the outback. Inhabited by an ancient culture, Tropical North Queensland is shared by passionate locals.



Over the past 10 years, there has been significant work undertaken by First Nations business operators, Traditional Owners and tourism champions, together with local and regional tourism industry bodies, Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC), Tourism and Events Qld (TEQ), key Government departments and other organisations to build a strong First Nations tourism sector in Queensland.

KEY FACTS ABOUT FIRST NATIONS TOURISM IN TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND⁶

- TNQ host **300,000 international visitors** who have an Indigenous experience (35% of international visitors);
- Only **57,000 domestic visitors** (3%) who travel to the region have an Indigenous experience;
- The region gets **20%** of Australian visitors, and **14%** of all international visitors, making the destination one of the leading destinations for Indigenous experiences;
- TNQ has statistically developed, along with the Northern Territory Top End, as the **leading regions for Aboriginal experiences** in Australia.
- Over the past decade the region has slipped from #2 to **#3 most visited region for Indigenous experiences** domestically (behind Central Australia and the Top End in the NT).
- It is estimated that only **12%** of all visitors to the region have an Indigenous experience.
- In 2019, pre-pandemic, the region received over **3 million visitors**, and more than **800,000 locals** and visitors went to the Great Barrier Reef each year.

Upon analysis, our strength for Tropical North Queensland First Nations tourism is that it is already a known region and leader

⁶Cummings Economics from Tourism Research Australia, IVS



OUR PROCESS

Our Action Plan has emerged from a consultative process with community, the industry and key stakeholders over 18 months, including:

- Regular FNTAP Steering Committee meetings;
- Monthly Indigenous Cluster Group meetings;
- 30+ Consultations and Workshops;
- An extensive desktop review of local, state and national plans, policies, and research;
- One-on-one meetings with relevant stakeholders, agencies, tourism operators, and
- The culmination of tourism expertise, knowledge and industry experience.

OUR EXTENSIVE PROGRAM IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING KEY FACTORS:

- Tourism occurs on Country, and all visitors should connect to Country and culture.
- Recognition and respect for Country and First Nations people requires industry and government to reframe the relationship with First Nations people by supporting tourism development to be locally led and implemented.
- Respect includes developing and actioning Reconciliation Action Plans, protocols, guidelines and accreditation within the sector.
- Creation of a First Nations regional structure, that facilitates networks and hubs.
- There is agreement on the need to build capacity and deliver improved training to ensure the sustained growth of First Nations tourism in Tropical North Queensland.
- There is acknowledgement of the range of benefits derived from the production and delivery of First Nations tourism experiences.
- There is a desire to increase the quantity and quality of First Nations market-ready tourism products in the region that requires dedicated investment and funds for products and infrastructure.

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
The story that emerged from these voices across Tropical North Queensland, is that all tourism is on Country. The dreams and aspirations for First Nations people is to build a resilient First Nations tourism sector that positions the region by 2032 as the number one tourism destination for First Nations tourism experiences in Australia.

BENEFITS OF FIRST NATIONS TOURISM

SOCIAL

- Enable visitors to develop an understanding of the unique relationship First Nations people have with our natural environment.
- Reconciliation and truth telling occur through First Nations tourism that enriches all Australians and visitors.
- The positive development of local communities.
- Education of the local community and visitors of the 65,000 years of continuation connection to Country and survival of the world's oldest living culture.

CUTURAL

- Self-determination and capacity building.
- Revitalises and sustains tangible and intangible cultural heritage, language and traditions to build a sense of pride and belonging for First Nations people.

ECONOMIC

- Source of diverse employment generation.
- Supporting self-determined Indigenous tourism businesses is a vehicle for creating business opportunities and sustainable economic activities in local communities

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Sustainability and caring for Country.



CHALLENGES FOR FIRST NATIONS TOURISM

SOCIAL

- Better tourism infrastructure investment for increased visitation, remoteness and seasonality.
- Strengthening profile and awareness of First Nations tourism experiences in the region.
- Grow diversity and number of market-ready product offerings.

CUTURAL

- Representation of First Nations people in the sector.
- Developing First Nations peoples' knowledge of, and experience with, the tourism industry(& vice versa).
- Upskilling an increased workforce and increased capacity of businesses to ensure quality and consistency in tourism product offerings.
- Availability of key staff due to cultural obligations such as Sorry Business, and need to develop strategies to accommodate for this important practice.

ECONOMIC

- Simplify and reducing government red-tape, and increase access to business capital and sustainable support.
- Increase compliance with cultural license and intellectual property.
- Increased partnerships, coordination and collaboration across the sector both internally with First Nations and externally.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Managing visitor impacts on Country.
- Land tenure resolution and an understanding of Native Title and associated leveraging opportunities.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIRST NATIONS TOURISM

SOCIAL

- Contribute to truth-telling, reconciliation and cultural expression and language reclamation.
- Build on the momentum generated by the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and be well positioned to leverage the visitor economy and future events in the State.
- Foster and support strong industry leaders to champion the sector and showcase local identities, groups and the benefits tourism has for the social, environmental and wealth prosperity in community.
- Expand First Nations tourism networks and develop mutually beneficial private/public partnerships with the broader tourism sector and supply chain.

CUTURAL

- Utilise natural assets and resources, together with First Nations cultural heritage, to strengthen Tropical North Queensland's unique point of differentiation in the marketplace.
- Promote and celebrate the diverse First Nations bio-cultural region stories in TNQ through the growing demand for Indigenous Art, products and merchandise.
- Leverage, as a unique selling point, that Tropical North Queensland is home to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

ECONOMIC

- Leverage Queensland's market share of international and domestic tourism to grow awareness of, and demand for, First Nations tourism in Tropical North Queensland.
- Build on existing strong foundations to support new and established market-ready First Nations tourism experiences in our region.
- Secure long-term and sustainable funding support from government and through mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Inclusion of local Indigenous interpretive content to be integrated into infrastructure and signage.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- The ability of First Nations tourism providers to promote and deliver educational experiences on sustainability and regenerative tourism.
- Develop tourism business opportunities for Traditional Owner groups including leveraging Native Title and National Park management.



THREATS FOR FIRST NATIONS TOURISM

SOCIAL

- The potential over burdening of communities and Grow diversity and number of market-ready product offerings.
- Fake art production and appropriation intellectual.
- Racism and lack of respect from the sector.
- Property.

CUTURAL

- Better tourism infrastructure investment for increased visitation, remoteness and seasonality.
- Representation of First Nations people in the sector.

ECONOMIC

- Lack of investment funding.
- Red tape and regulation.
- Internal and external politics impacting delivery.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- The potential over burdening of communities and environments by high volume unmanaged tourism.
- Land tenure resolution and an understanding of Native Title and associated leveraging opportunities.



Janbal Gallery Eastern Kuku
Yalanji Country, Mossman



Boodjamulaa, Waanji Country, Lawn Hill Gorge

OUR ACTION PLAN



Our Plan focuses on growing our innovative and sustainable First Nations tourism sector in Tropical North Queensland by being locally led, drawing on respect for our stewardship of culture and Country and building capacity to foster the development of authentic, engaging, and sustainable tourism experiences that respect First Nations cultures, knowledges and connections to Country.



GUIDING STATEMENT

All tourism is on Country, and all visitors should make a connection to Country when in Tropical North Queensland. Respect for Country is central, and tourism on Country will be led by local First Nations people, and supported by industry and government to deliver social equity, cultural vitality, environmental sustainability, and wealth prosperity for First Nations people.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ↓ ↓ Tourism should recognise and respect our First Nations connection to Country (all tourism is on Country)
- ↓ ↓ The tourism industry should work in partnership with First Nations communities through authentic engagement (it starts with a conversation)
- ↓ ↓ Tourism should preserve and enhance our Country and provide meaningful employment (for future generations)
- ↓ ↓ The tourism network needs more First Nations voices (our local people set our direction)
- ↓ ↓ Experiencing culture is a privilege, not a commodity (respect our ancient knowledge)
- ↓ ↓ Tourism must be a two-way street for communities (seeing real benefits, at all levels)

OUR BIO CULTURAL REGIONS



Throughout the consultation it was recognised that not all parts of Tropical North Queensland are at the same stage of development in tourism, it was identified that the region is made up of smaller regional groupings that align more closely to the bio-regions than traditional boundaries and as such a Bio-region overlay is provided (see over page).

THE TORRES STRAIT

Where we are now:

- Early stages of tourism product, expanding to the outer islands
- Further accommodation and product required

Where we need to focus:

- Further consultation on suitable tourism and culturally aware markets
- Support local indigenous tourism operators to succeed
- Support and respect those that don't want tourism



CAPE YORK

Where we are now:

- Seasonal tourism peaks
- Limited cultural tourism product
- Communities see potential

Where we need to focus:

- Business support is needed
- Visitor management is a priority
- Community led projects are needed

GULF SAVANNAH

Where we are now:

- New product emerging and potential to expand
- Stronger partnerships needed with non-Indigenous products
- Seasonal peaks

Where we need to focus:

- Support product expansion
- Build stories into existing product
- Reposition the Savannah Way with cultural connections



WET TROPICS

Where we are now:

- Highly developed tourism product
- Significant potential to grow cultural experiences
- Authenticity in stories and connections are vital
- Yarrabah Torres Strait local tourism plans
- Jabalbina Tourism Management plan
- The Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021-2031

Where we need to focus:

- Guide training and accreditation
- Support new Indigenous experiences
- Greater presence for existing products



Kubirriwarra Eastern Kuku Yalanji, Mossman Gorge

GREAT BARRIER REEF

Where we are now:

- Established tourism product, limited Indigenous content
- All visitors should connect with culture
- Support new Indigenous experiences
- Tourism Management Action Strategy 2019

Where we need to focus:

- New partnerships and training
- Opportunities for new products
- Regenerative tourism potential



VISION



Every person who visits Tropical North Queensland will make a connection with Country and culture and become an ambassador for the region

VALUES



- 1** COUNTRY
- 2** CULTURE
- 3** COMMUNITY
- 4** CAPACITY
- 5** CONTINUITY

TARGETS



20% of all visitors will have an Indigenous experience by **2025** & **30%** by **2032**



Indigenous employment in our tourism industry should double by **2032**

The number of indigenous experiences listed in the region will double by **2032**



All tourism entities in our region should formally acknowledge country by **2032**



The number of visitors participating and contributing to 'regenerative tourism' supporting Country and Culture should double by **2032**



EXPLANATORY NOTE:

The Actions outlined below under each Value are those identified for immediate action through the consultation process. The Steering Committee will take this action list and review them regularly at the TNQ Indigenous Experiences Cluster Group (IECG) and through the lead agencies subject to budget and resourcing. Some lead agencies are identified already, and other potential lead organisations will be contacted and invited to participate. The priority projects will be initially flagged for action through ongoing consultation with the IECG participants and engagement with the lead agencies. To get involved in the IECG contact **indigenous.experiences@ttnq.org.au**

VALUE 1: COUNTRY

Goal: Promote recognition and respect for First Nations people and their cultures, stories, connections to and ownership of Country.

SUPPORTING TARGETS

1. The percentage of visitors that have completed a pledge to protect Country
2. The level of dispersal of visitors to suitable sites
3. The level and number of cultural sites supported by tourism

INDICATORS	ACTIONS
<p>1.1</p> <p>PERCENTAGE OF VISITORS THAT ENGAGE IN A PHYSICAL ACT OF CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY AND CULTURE</p>	<p>1.1.1. Create a set of First Nations Tourism operating guidelines for tourism businesses to increase compliance with cultural license and protection of intellectual property, including guidelines for acknowledgement of Indigenous art (QTIC and DTIS to lead).</p> <p>1.1.2 Develop a set of regional and localised protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country to enhance coordination, collaboration and implementation of First Nations Protocols (IECG, QTIC to lead).</p> <p>1.1.3 Adopt a region-wide program of recognising and respecting intellectual property rights (IPR) to ensure adequate recognition of cultural products, knowledge and expressions to bring an end to unauthorised use such as in storytelling, fake art and inappropriate dances. (IECG, QTIC and TTNQ to lead).</p> <p>1.1.4 Develop a set of guidelines and protocols to enable the tourism industry to work more appropriately and effectively with Traditional Owners and undertake annual workshops across the bioregions to increase understanding of Native Title and associated legislation. (IECG, QTIC to lead).</p> <p>1.1.5. Work with the tourism industry to create a 'pledge' for visitors to commit to protecting Country on their journey (TTNQ, DTIS and IECG to lead).</p> <p>1.1.6. Tourism and conservation groups to work with Traditional Owners and Indigenous land-care projects to direct carbon offsets towards Indigenous conservation partnerships (TTNQ and NRMs to lead).</p>



VALUE 1: COUNTRY

INDICATORS

ACTIONS

1.2

TOURISM ACTIVITIES
CONNECTING
VISITORS TO COUNTRY
AND CULTURE ARE
DISPERSED TO MATCH
CAPACITY OF COUNTRY

- 1.2.1. Utilise existing First Nations heritage and natural environment processes to increase and **strengthening existing tourism operators' understanding and stewardship of First Nations peoples' conservation practices** (IECG, TTNQ, DTIS).
- 1.2.2. Encourage First Nations people (as tour operators and guides) to have greater access to resources within national parks and marine parks to **demonstrate and showcase authentic cultural practices** (DES, IECG).
- 1.2.3. The tourism industry to work with the protected area managers to lobby for improvement and ongoing **maintenance of public infrastructure in national parks and World Heritage Areas**, according to master and destination planning developed alongside Traditional Owners (TTNQ, GBRMPA, DES and WTMA).
- 1.2.4. Work with the Master Reef Guides (GBRMPA) to **incorporate contemporary presentation of Indigenous connection to Country** and Acknowledgement of Country into each training program (IECG, GBRMPA, TEQ).
- 1.2.5. Promote **engagement activities, programs and educational tools that increase industry and community respect** and understanding of Indigenous cultural values, connection to Country and appropriate Acknowledgement of Country, to enhance connection with the diverse cultural landscapes of Tropical North Queensland (IECG, TTNQ, TEQ, QPWS&P, GRBMPA, WTMA).

1.3

PERCENTAGE OF
VISITORS, OPERATORS AND
SUPPORTERS WHO PLEDGE
TO RESPECT AND PROTECT
COUNTRY AND CULTURE OF
OUR REGION

- 1.3.1. Develop **face to face and on-line cultural training resources** targeting stakeholders in mainstream tourism to increase cultural awareness and cultural safety throughout the tourism system (IECG, QTIC).

1.4

NUMBER OF CULTURAL
SITES SUPPORTED BY
TOURISM

- 1.4.1. Encourage all tourism industry bodies (from Tourism Alliances to Local Tourism Organisations) to develop a **Reconciliation Action Plan** and traditional custodians engagement (IECG, QTIC and TTNQ to lead).
- 1.4.2. Increase government and agency support for First Nations peoples establishment and development of tourism businesses through new **mentoring programs** (DTIS to lead).
- 1.4.3. Partner with Local Governments, airports, and managers of key entry points and significant locations (including islands and National Parks) to **develop a communications strategy that acknowledges the traditional custodians** of the land and the traditional names in entry signage and interpretation to increase the profile of First Nations to visitors to Queensland (IECG, QTIC, TTNQ, DES, WTMA and LGAQ).





VALUE 2: CULTURE

Goal: Grow the number of First Nations tourism operators and range of authentic experiences in Tropical North Queensland.

SUPPORTING TARGETS

1. Tropical North Queensland has the most Indigenous operators on ATDW and in Discover Aboriginal Experiences of any region in Australia
2. The increased level of mix of experiences by type in our region
3. The increased value of tourism marketing of Indigenous experiences by TTNQ

INDICATORS	ACTIONS
<p>2.1</p> <p>INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS OPERATORS IN TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND LISTED ON THE AUSTRALIAN TOURISM DATA WAREHOUSE (ATDW)</p>	<p>2.1.1. Establish mechanisms for effective collaboration across the tourism sector between First Nation tourism businesses, government agencies and the corporate sector to improve and encourage greater participation of First Nations cultures, interpretation and businesses into the visitor economy (DTIS, DSDSATSIP).</p>
<p>2.2</p> <p>EXPAND THE RANGE OF CULTURAL TOURISM PRODUCTS ACROSS THE BIO CULTURAL REGIONS</p>	<p>2.2.1. Develop effective industry clusters by expanding external links and cross sector networks (including with the environment, arts, and small business and training sectors) to ensure First Nations tourism businesses leverage the strengths of existing organisations in the tourism system and increase opportunities for co-management of First Nations tourism businesses (IECG, TTNQ and QTIC).</p> <p>2.2.2. Develop meaningful and effective long-term partnerships and/or joint ventures between regional and local government agencies and First Nations tourism businesses that will increase the provision of economic development programs, capacity and export readiness, mentoring, advocacy, leadership and representation (DTIS, LGAQ, QTIC).</p> <p>2.2.3. Support Traditional Owners to develop products arising from immersive, multiday experiences for ecotourism, international education, and people with disabilities that will link to the visitor programs for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games (DTIS, DES).</p> <p>2.2.4. Support Traditional Owners to develop more ecotourism experiences including provision of tour guide programs in protected areas like national parks, the Great Barrier Reef, Riversleigh and the Wet Tropics (GBRMPA, DES, WTMA, QPWS&P and EHPP).</p>



VALUE 2: CULTURAL EXPRESSION

INDICATORS

2.2

EXPAND THE RANGE
OF CULTURAL TOURISM
PRODUCTS ACROSS THE
BIO CULTURAL REGIONS

ACTIONS

2.2.5. Lobby for **multi-year funding programs for assisting new businesses** to survive the start-up phase and existing businesses to consolidate and expand their products and services (IECG).

2.2.6. Support the producers of **major First Nations festivals and events** to develop a Queensland First Nations Festival and Event strategy that is funded multi-year by Commonwealth and State arts and cultural agencies (TTNQ).

2.2.7. Utilise **technology and innovation** to enable and support First Nations peoples to connect their culture, stories, and value of Country to domestic and international visitors (IECG, TTNQ, DTIS, QTIC).

2.2.8. Create a program to **connect business event visitors to Country**, starting with authentic Welcome to Country for all events, and expanding to include deeper cultural immersion for conference delegates (TTNQ to lead, TEQ).

2.2.9. **Elevate First Nations art** through the programs supported by the Regional Art Services Network (RASN) aligned to the State Governments Creative Together Roadmap 2020-2030 to realise the regions potential in First Nations Art and cultural expression in the lead up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Arts Qld, RDATN, Cook Shire).





VALUE 3: COMMUNITY

Goal: The social, wealth and environmental prosperity from tourism growth in the region positively flows to our local communities

SUPPORTING TARGETS

1. The number of accredited operators in cultural awareness
2. The estimated visitor spend on cultural experiences
3. The level of community support for tourism (social impact survey)

INDICATORS	ACTIONS
<p>3.1</p> <p>ENSURE ONGOING COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TOURISM ON COUNTRY</p>	<p>3.1.1. Partner with Tourism and Events Queensland to explore research to understand the social impacts of tourism and events on First Nations community members. Explore options to undertake research in First Nations tourism and event development and report on Indigenous community members support for tourism and events in their region (DTIS, TEQ and TTNQ to lead).</p> <p>3.1.2. Provide annual reporting of Indigenous employment, and the percentage of total employment in tourism per region to ensure the communities are gaining the maximum from the growth in tourism (DTIS and IECG to lead).</p>
<p>3.2</p> <p>INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF VISITORS HAVING A FIRST NATIONS RELATED EXPERIENCE ON COUNTRY</p>	<p>3.2.1. Build on the momentum generated by the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and identify opportunities for the co-creation and management of First Nations events across the region (IECG, TEQ, QTIC to lead).</p>
<p>3.3</p> <p>INCREASE THE POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS MEASURED THROUGH THE TOURISM EVENTS QUEENSLAND SURVEY THAT LINK TO CLOSING THE GAP</p>	<p>3.3.1. Support First Nations to develop a First Nations Tourism marketing strategy for the region that respectfully promotes First Nations communities, culture, and language and influences positive operator and visitor behaviours in communities, for use in mainstream tourism marketing collateral (IECG, TEQ and TTNQ to lead).</p> <p>3.3.2. With First Nations jointly establish clear regional destination brand propositions through Destination Management planning and leverage, as a unique selling point, that Tropical North Queensland is the home-lands to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures (IECG, TEQ and TTNQ to lead).</p> <p>3.3.3. Increase the presence and trade readiness of First Nations tourism businesses at state, national, and international trade shows and forums to expand the numbers of First Nations tourism experiences offered for sale in international distribution channels (IECG, TEQ and TTNQ to lead).</p>



VALUE 2: CULTURAL EXPRESSION

INDICATORS

3.4

INCREASE THE VALUE
OF VISITOR SPEND
AND THE FLOW ON
WEALTH PROSPERITY TO
COMMUNITY

ACTIONS

3.4.1. Expand and increase the **development and distribution of regional marketing collateral** to promote the unique cultures of Tropical North Queensland First Nations (IECG, TTNQ and TEQ).

3.4.2. Drive **increased First Nations representation on tourism boards** and committees to ensure the adequate and appropriate inclusion of First Nations tourism in governments' development of policy, marketing, product development, leadership and partnerships (IECG).

3.4.3. Develop **collateral that is specifically targeted for local community, organisation and governments** to understand the role and socio cultural benefits of well planned cultural tourism (IECG, TTNQ and TEQ).

3.4.4. **Improve data and insights** by working with universities, industry and government partners to deliver strategic priorities based on research and tourism market intelligence from multiple and informed sources (IECG, TTNQ and DTIS).



Mamu Tropical Skywalk,
Wooroonooran National Park

VALUE 4: CAPACITY

Goal: Develop capability for First Nations tourism businesses and grow a secure and skilled workforce with employment that generates sustainable socio-economic outcomes for individuals and communities.

SUPPORTING TARGETS

1. Increased number of First Nations people trained and employed in the tourism sector in Tropical North Queensland
2. Increased number of start up businesses in Tropical North Queensland

INDICATORS	ACTIONS
<p>4.1</p> <p>INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED AND RETAINED IN EMPLOYMENT</p>	<p>4.1.1. Increase access to existing education and training support and develop specific training programs to increase understanding of the industry for participants, advance the careers and develop new products or experiences in the sector in partnership with local university and education providers (QTIC).</p> <p>4.1.2. Assist Indigenous businesses to grow and effectively integrate into the tourism supply chain through aligning existing government programs (e.g. IIEP) and QTIC resources and programs (e.g. capacity building program and governance course) (QTIC).</p> <p>4.1.3. Work with the industry, government and education providers to strengthen localised pathways into employment in the tourism sector through leveraging national programs like Indigenous Skills and Employment Program and a link to the Queensland Government's Paving the Way: First Nations Training Strategy (IECG).</p> <p>4.1.4. Foster and support the development of strong industry leaders to champion First Nations tourism sector through the development of a First Nations Tourism Leadership Program (IECG, QTIC, TTNQ).</p> <p>4.1.5. Regionalise QTIC's Indigenous Champions Employment Network activities with an intent to promote careers and job opportunities through attraction, recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff (IECG, QTIC).</p> <p>4.1.6. Investigate the benefits of developing an Indigenous community focused program for capacity building (pilot) (IECG).</p>
<p>4.2</p> <p>INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF START-UP BUSINESSES IN THE TNQ INDIGENOUS CLUSTER</p>	<p>4.2.1. Establish access to experienced First Nations operators and mentor programs like the National Indigenous Tourism Mentoring Program to assist First Nations tourism businesses at various stages of development to get practical advice and support from industry (QTIC, NIAA).</p> <p>4.2.2. Establish a program of ongoing market research and analysis to monitor market trends, best practice, market expectations (QTIC, Universities).</p> <p>4.2.3. Work with government, industry, universities and training providers to develop new programs that build in-depth knowledge of Queensland's unique natural and cultural histories (QTIC, IECG, DES).</p> <p>4.2.4. Work with Government and industry to enhance visitor infrastructure and investor awareness of the opportunities to support further investment in the First Nations tourism sector (IECG, TTNQ, DTIS).</p>





VALUE 5: CONTINUITY

Goal: Observing the generations-old cultural law practices of operating on Country, ensuring the ongoing implementation of the Action Plan and realising the continuous improvement of the Action Plan.

SUPPORTING TARGETS

1. The development of an Accreditation program for the region
2. The Action Plan is adopted, implemented, annually reported on to, and reviewed with, community and industry

INDICATORS	ACTIONS
<p>5.1</p> <p>INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ACCREDITED OPERATORS ON COUNTRY</p>	<p>5.1.1. Work with State and National Tourism (and ecotourism) bodies to develop /adopt an accreditation program for culturally appropriate tourism in our region (QTIC, TEQ, and Ecotourism Australia to lead).</p>
<p>5.2</p> <p>THE ACTION PLAN IS BEING IMPLEMENTED, MONITORED, CELEBRATED AND REVIEWED ANNUALLY</p>	<p>5.2.1. Coordinate the implementation of the Tropical North Queensland First Nations Plan and maintain ongoing industry and Indigenous community engagement across the state and across all interest groups (IECG, TTNQ, QTIC).</p> <p>5.2.2. Establish a 'voice' for Tropical North Queensland First Nations Tourism that provides leadership, advocacy and links to the established bodies, for the sustainable development of authentic First Nations tourism experiences (IECG, QTIC).</p> <p>5.2.3. Support local areas to develop and implement First Nations Tourism Action Plans, or adapt existing plans to link to this TNQ Action Plan, to localise implementation of the Plan (IECG, TTNQ, QTIC).</p> <p>5.2.4. Support and guide Local Councils that are developing, or have tourism development plans, so as to better align priorities and link infrastructure, jobs, and economic development activities to support new tourism ventures in the regions (IECG, TTNQ).</p>

DES	Department of Environment and Science
DSDSATSIP	Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
DTIS	Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport
EHPP	Environment and Heritage Protection and Policy
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
IECG	Indigenous Experiences Cluster Group
IIEP	Indigenous Innovation and Entrepreneurs Program
LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
NIAA	The National Indigenous Australians Agency
QPWS&P	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services and Partnership
QTIC	Queensland Tourism Industry Council
RDATN	Regional Development Australia Tropical North
TEQ	Tourism & Events Queensland
TTNQ	Tourism Tropical North Queensland
WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority





Dreamtime Dive and Snorkel, Gunggandji Sea Country, via Cairns

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of our Plan would not have been possible without the input of First Nations Peoples, community members and tourism operators from across Tropical North Queensland. We would like to acknowledge and thank all that contributed.

We acknowledge the Tropical North Queensland First Nations Action Plan Steering Committee: Co-Chairs Juan Walker and Dale Mundraby, Willie Enoch-Tranby, Alicia Haines, Gavin Singleton, Yarrabah Mayor Ross Andrews, Joann Schmider, Fraser Nai, and Kirsty Burchill.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Queensland Government for the development and consultation of this Plan. In addition, we would like to thank our corporate supporters.



