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Inaugural tourism sustainability report documents priorities

Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) has published its first annual Sustainability Report charting the extensive work undertaken to guide the industry towards reducing carbon emissions and contributing to the local environment and community.

TTNQ Chief Executive Officer Mark Olsen said the industry had taken many steps forward in recent years after establishing the brand promise in 2020 that visitors would: See Great, Leave Greater.

"Global expectations are rising for the tourism industry to move beyond providing experiences to ensuring that tourism is sustainable and contributing to the future of our natural environments and our communities," he said.

"The TTNQ Sustainability Report 2024 highlights that Tropical North Queensland has the greatest number of eco-accredited businesses in any region in Australia and one of the highest in the world.

"We have 84 operators and 191 experiences with Ecotourism or EarthCheck accreditation, which accounts for 21% of our total membership at TTNQ.

"The region is on-track to reach its Net Zero aspiration in 2050 by aiming to reduce the average carbon emissions per visitor from 55kg per day to 42kg in 2032 through the adoption of sustainable aviation fuel, emissions reductions by businesses through solar, reducing waste to landfill and transitioning to renewables.

"At least 20% of TTNQ members are measuring and offsetting their impacts through local conservation programs such as Reforest's Mabi forest rehabilitation for the endangered tree kangaroo on the Atherton Tablelands.

"We appointed a part-time Sustainability Coordinator in September 2023 to support members on their sustainability journey and established a Sustainability Leaders Cluster Group which has increased from 71 to 113 members in the past year.

"The TNQ First Nations Tourism Plan was launched in May 2023 recognising that all tourism is on Country, supporting Indigenous experiences to develop, and encouraging more visitors to connect with culture, and since then the number of Indigenous experiences in the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse has almost tripled from 12 to 32.

"TTNQ uses media and marketing activities to help the public to understand challenges we can't control, such as bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef, and how they can be more involved in making a difference so they can See Great and Leave Greater.

"Initiatives like the Guardian of the Reef program add value by rewarding consumers for learning about the Reef and its challenges.

"This program earned \$7 million in accredited product sales last year with 55,000 people using the platform delivering 18,000 bookings, while more than 60 global media articles worth \$20 million reached 200 million people around the world.

"The sustainability journey is a long one, but it is a journey that TTNQ and our members are committed to as we continue to promote our unique destination to the world with the promise that every visitor will not

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only see great, but they will also leave greater knowing they have contributed to the protection and management of World Heritage areas."

Read the TTNQ Sustainability Report 2024: https://tourism.tropicalnorthqueensland.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/TTNQ_Sustainability_Report_2024_Final_Single.pdf

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Image: TTNQ's Corrinne Singleton, Kirsty Boase, Tara Bennett and Harriet Ganfield planting trees at Reforest's Mabi forest restoration site on the Atherton Tablelands.

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