

September 18, 2026

First Chinese guides complete Wet Tropics course

The first Chinese-speaking guides to complete the Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides program are encouraging their colleagues to take advantage of the free professional development to help visitors better appreciate one of the world's oldest rainforests.

Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) Chief Executive Officer Mark Olsen and Wet Tropics Management Authority Executive Director Scott Buchanan presented Pan Li and Rong (Anna) Fu with certificates for completing the advanced Defender level course.

Mr Olsen said it was a significant milestone for Tropical North Queensland's tourism industry, strengthening the ability to share the stories of the rainforest, wildlife and Indigenous people with Chinese visitors.

"With Chinese visitors growing by 54 per cent to 58,000 in the year ending March 2026, Pan and Anna are making sure the rapidly growing independent Chinese traveller segment connect with both the place and the people of the Wet Tropics," he said.

"Delivered by the Wet Tropics Management Authority in partnership with the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and Tourism and Events Queensland, the program supports guides to deliver inspiring, authentic and informative experiences that enhance Tropical North Queensland's global competitiveness."

Mr Buchanan said the Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides program was an investment in guide capability ensuring visitors gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

"The free online learning program helps to build a highly capable tourism workforce as Tropical North Queensland continues to grow its reputation as a world-leading nature-based tourism destination," he said.

"Connecting visitors more deeply with the Wet Tropics' extraordinary natural and cultural values helps to create richer experiences and lasting advocacy for conservation.

"The program has attracted 500 registered learners with the Guardian and Defender levels available and a third Champion level under development.

"We have celebrated 257 course completions, including 110 of the more advanced Defender course, demonstrating strong retention and a clear appetite for continued learning through the program."

Ms Fu owns Blue Pacific Holidays offering private charters for the Chinese market since 2013 taking customers to Rainforestation Nature Park, the Atherton Tablelands and Mossman Gorge to see the Wet Tropics rainforest.

"I found the course very useful and will now be getting my five guides to do it as well," she said.

Mr Pan Li has lived in Australia for more than 13 years, completing Hospitality and Tourism Management at the University of Queensland before working in the tourism industry, most recently as the Operations Manager at Discovery Resort Undara/Mt Surprise and as a Tour Guide with Kango Mate.

"I have always been passionate about nature and wildlife and want my guests to understand Indigenous culture and the importance of protecting nature," he said.

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"All the modules are very interesting, inspiring and fun to learn and it's free."

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides program is designed for those who interact with visitors and is available to anyone wanting to know more about the unique natural and cultural values of this extraordinary landscape. To register or learn more, visit: www.wettropics.gov.au/world-heritage-guides

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TTNQ Contact: Liz Inglis | liz.inglis@ttnq.org.au | 0419 643 494