

# NATURE BASED TOURISM STRATEGY

NATURE | ABORIGINAL | ADVENTURE



YOUR  
MARGARET  
RIVER  
REGION



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Your Margaret River Region acknowledges the Wadandi people of the region as the traditional custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

## INTRODUCTION

### Destination Description

Located 250 kilometres from Perth in Australia's spectacular South West, the Margaret River region is the most visited regional destination in Western Australia. Geographically defined by the boundaries of the City of Busselton (CoB) and the Augusta Margaret River Shire (AMRS), the area welcomed more than a million visitors who spent more than \$520 million in 2014. The region is an enticing mosaic of pristine natural wonders, premium wineries, relaxed microbreweries, world-class restaurants, spectacular beaches, towering forests, inspirational artisans and warm and friendly locals. From the tranquil waters of Geographe Bay in the north, down the ancient cave carved Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge, through the picturesque vineyards and karri forest of the heartland, to the desolate beauty of Cape Leeuwin in the south it is a place of splendid diversity and contrast.

### Nature position

Recognised as one of Australia's and the world's most biodiverse hotspots it presents an array of nature and adventure based activities to engage all visitors from inland, underground cave and coastal based experiences. Pristine landscapes connect visitors to the environment, invoking a sense of value for its conservation and motivating preservation for its sustainability.

When considering what tourists want from a holiday in the Margaret River region we automatically think of the usual response – wine, food, events and world class surfing breaks.

WA Tourism Research conducted in 2014 however reveals that what people want from a holiday is fourfold –

1. Unique / extraordinary natural sights
2. Beautiful beaches / coastal scenery
3. Unspoilt / pristine natural environment
4. Good food, wine, local cuisine & produce

The Margaret River region provides all this and in the words of focus groups members involved in this research – nature at its best and more than wine.

Interstate and overseas travellers when asked to rank the Margaret River region in comparison with other wine regions in Australia were also more than impressed by the region and primarily by – the coast, the caves, the natural environment.

The Margaret River environment is not a background issue. No significant part of the Margaret River region's economy will survive if its environment is destroyed, especially the tourism industry. When referring to the environment we are not referring to cuddly animal nostalgia but the whole region's biodiversity, its naturalness and its aesthetic appeal. The importance of the environment to our lifestyles and livelihoods cannot be dismissed as a 'greenie' issue but instead needs to be front and centre in our minds, and in all of our actions and plans.



## INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

There is no denying the Margaret River region is highly mediated. It is no way an intact wilderness area, but one which has been highly modified by human habitation. From the early days of group settlement, to the logging days in Boranup Forest, to our current vineyards and their associated activities people have shaped the landscape we have today. As a consequence our environment faces significant issues – threats to our biodiversity such as environmental weeds, pests and disease and species decline as a result of habitat destruction and fragmentation.

It is important to note that Aboriginal cultural values cannot be separated from the environment. Land is fundamental to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people. The land is not just soil or rocks or minerals, but the whole environment that sustains and is sustained by people and culture. For Aboriginal Australians, the land is the core of all spirituality and this

relationship and the spirit of ‘country’ is central to the issues that are important to Aboriginal people today. The region contains sites of significance for the Wadandi people because of Dreaming stories associated with those sites. This strategy seeks to recognise the intrinsic relationship that the Wadandi people have with their ‘country’.

The environment refers to a broad church of values, issues and activities – flora, fauna, landscape, marine & terrestrial, nature activities, sustainability, conservation, species decline, global warming, weeds & feral species, science, recycling, bushfire, water quality, biodiversity. People don’t always see all the key elements of the environment... the plants, the insects, everything that makes up a healthy functioning environment.

There is currently a large array of organisations and groups with roles in protecting the environment in the Margaret River region – Department of Parks & Wildlife (DPAW), private landowners, local government, Department of Water, Department of Environmental Regulation, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Department of Agriculture, South West Catchments Council (SWCC), Cape to Cape Catchments Group (CCCG), GeoCatch, traditional owners, Universities, South West Development Commission (SWDC), Department of Fisheries, Department of Planning, Friends of the Cape to Cape Track, South West Aboriginal Land & Sea Council (SWALSC), community service clubs, Conservation Council, and Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association (MRBTA).

There is no doubt the region's environment is coming under increasing pressures. Population growth for the region is forecast to be high with the Shire of Augusta Margaret River forecast to increase to 25,000, and the City of Busselton forecast to increase to 50,000 in the next 10 years. This growth brings with it increased urban development and the many associated pressures on our special natural environment.

MRBTA has positioned itself well for the predicted growth in tourism forecast for our region. Our new branding reflects the key elements that make this region special. The ‘Green Thumb’ sits as a key marketing element in the MRBTA brand strategy. Many would argue the green thumbprint is pivotal to the viability of all aspects of the region's tourism industry. As without a healthy, aesthetic natural environment the other elements of the brand will ultimately fail.



## INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

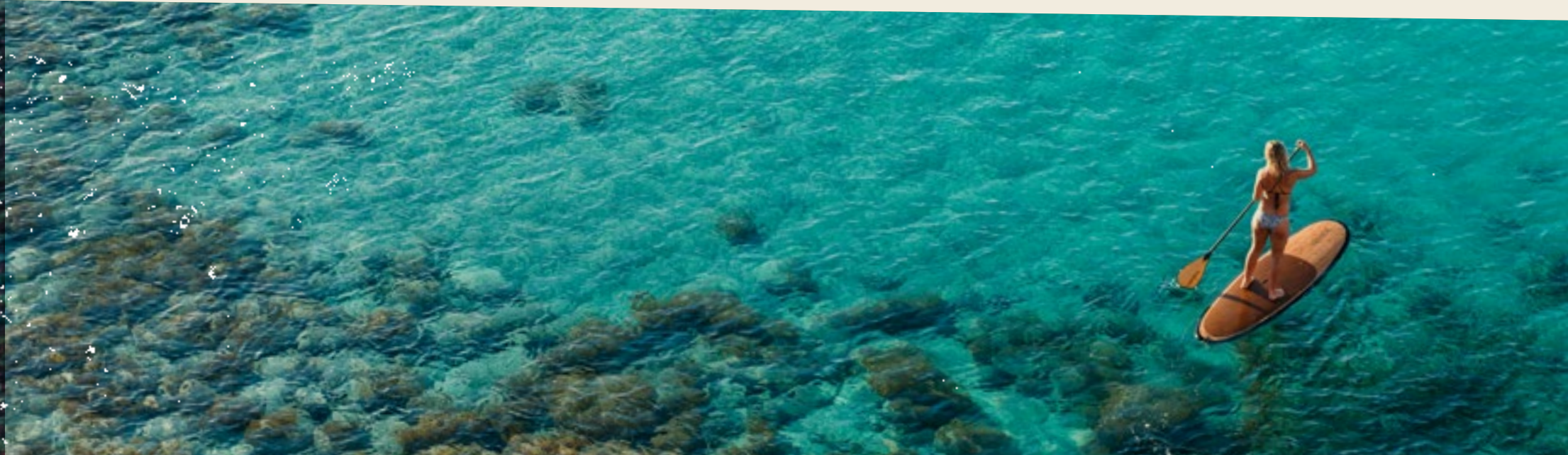
### Role of MRBTA

The Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association (MRBTA) is the local tourism organisation (LTO) who launched the Your Margaret River Region (YMRR) consumer brand in July 2015 to harness opportunities for the new era of tourism in the region. Targeted in approach, strategic plans have been developed to optimise operation, marketing and visitor servicing functions. Defined objectives, strategies and metrics from these plans direct the organisations destination consumer marketing, visitor servicing management, attraction asset management and conservation teams to target outcomes. Cohesive implementation plans are driving positive growth for the destination in total visitation numbers and increasing commercial returns for the MRBTA attraction assets. In this way, the MRBTA supports the Regional

Tourism Organisation's (RTO's) goal to increase the value of tourism in Australia's South West (ASW) to \$2 billion by 2020, and the State Tourism Organisation's (STO's) goal to double the value of tourism to Western Australia (WA) from \$6 billion a year in 2010 to \$12 billion a year by 2020.

MRBTA plays a role in environmental protection protecting its assets, the caves and lighthouses and the land that surrounds them, in many instances natural bushland of high biodiversity value. But there are other assets in our environment equally as important to protect – the vegetation which lines our country roads, the stingrays that visit Hamelin Bay, the blue wren nesting in local bushland. MRBTA's interest and responsibility needs to be for the whole package, all of the environment, if it is to succeed in maintaining the tourism value of the region.

There are opportunities to inspire the local community and tourists alike with our special natural environment – raising community awareness of environmental values through citizen science activities and events; focusing on species decline, larger ecological restoration projects, DPaW's move to the south west and their added focus on terrestrial and marine parks in our region; trail development; special sites of interest; contributing to larger strategic environmental restoration like that aspired to by Gondwana Link; the development of a sanctuary to protect and showcase our wildlife; a botanic gardens to introduce our unique flora and assist people to care for their gardens, are just some potential initiatives.



## INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

### Nature based statistics

Recent research and current travel trends to Australia highlight the growth in nature based tourism from international markets. Tourism & Transport Forum – Nature based Tourism Australia report March 2014 indicates nature based tourism out performed overall tourism market on all fronts. In terms of 2012 – 2013 expenditure international visitors increased by +8.2%, domestic overnight +12.3% and domestic day trips up +8.6%. It reported that nature-based visitors generate higher yield on average, spending +17% more and staying +22% longer than an overall visitor.

The International Visitors to Australia year ending Dec 2015 report indicates specific nature based activities such as visits to botanical gardens and events were up 17%, farm visits were up 14% and state and national parks were up 13%. Participation in sailing, windsurfing and kayaking spiked, up by 26%.

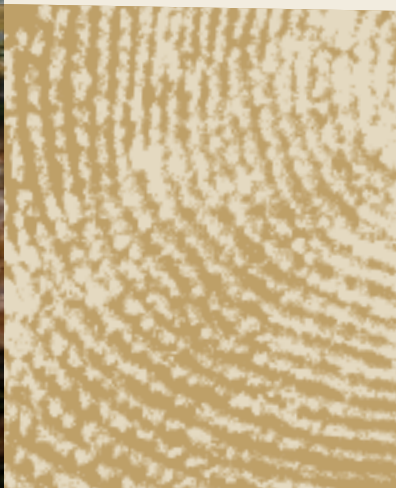
In Western Australia in the past two decades nature-based tour operators increased from 50 in 1994 to 349 in 2010 as reported by TWA in their Review of Nature-Based Tourism report. Access to protected areas such as national parks, state forests, marine parks, and other reserves are of key importance for international visitors to Australia and the west.

As outlined in Ecotourism Australia's (EA), Blueprint for Sustainable Future policy paper the importance of ecotourism for our regions is significant as it is a major economic generator to rural communities, providing employment opportunities that can replace declining labour markets and agriculture and resource sectors. Often small to medium sized enterprises succeed developing local pride and conserving natural areas central to business operations. A critical point to highlight in this Ecotourism Australia policy paper is the mitigation plans implemented for environmental sustainability reducing impacts on climate change. The policy positioning statement focuses on building regions, creating jobs, inspiring visitors and protecting the environment.

The Ecotourism Australia brand pillars are

1. Protect (our parks)
2. Involve (the operators)
3. Invest (in the future) and
4. Incentivise (quality).

In the Ecotourism Australia Limited Annual Report 2014/2015, the CEO reports that the 'broad based marketing of 'Nature Australia' has gone missing. The focus on Restaurants, and now Coasts and Islands, is welcome but there remains a need to maintain and build the broader marketing collateral for the diversity of nature based experiences throughout Australia. Ecotourism Australia will build a co-ordinated marketing strategy to promote Australia's greatest asset – the nature experiences.



## INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

### MRBTA Strategic Nature Plan & 'Nature' defined

The specific objectives and strategies of this 'Strategic Nature Plan' is to vertically integrate with the existing portfolio of MRBTA strategic plans to support and, or further develop penetration of the YMRR brand to target audiences. The 'Strategic Nature Plan' dovetails into the overall YMRR Strategic Marketing Plan guiding the MRBTA's efforts to increase preference for and travel to YMRR, in a way that optimises budget, builds on experience, leverages partnerships and is responsive to the dynamic travel environment. The target is to engage nature travellers at an earlier stage of their 'travel cycle' as a competitive destination of choice.

Within the YMRR Brand Architecture Nature & Environment, and Active & Adventure are two of the five brand pillars that define the destinations brand position, as below in Fig 1.1.

For the purposes of this strategic plan, the regions natural icons, landscapes and attractions (nature, Geoparks and Geotrails), adventure (experiences and tourism product), eco-accredited (experiences and tourism product), wildlife and extractive experiences (eg fishing), nature retreats and Aboriginal tourism will be included and represented under the broad title of 'Nature' as a combined sector. This reflects Tourism WA's definition of nature based tourism which is:

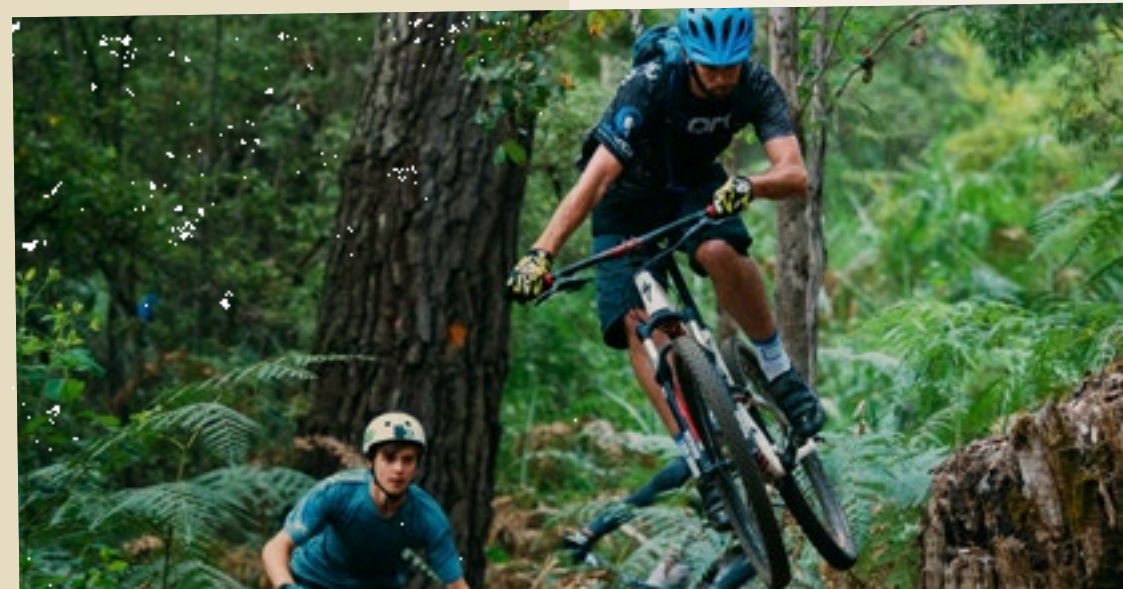
*Tourism that features 'nature' is generally termed 'nature based tourism'; a broad term that includes a range of tourism experiences including adventure tourism, ecotourism, and aspects of cultural and rural tourism such as farmstay. Aboriginal culture is included as part of nature based tourism because of its inextricable link with the natural environment. Nature based tourism is distinguished from other tourism forms by its natural area setting.*

Ecotourism as part of the nature tourism sector defines visitors as having interest in the environment with a desire to learn, to appreciate, to understand and to conserve. The focus is on the experience rather than the destination as described in TWA's Jumpstart Guide. YMRR is positioned well to attract the eco minded traveller to compete with destinations owning this space with unique and diverse product offerings.

Geotourism, nestled under Eco-Tourism is an emerging global phenomenon which fosters sustainable tourism based upon landscapes as defined by Geotourism, Geoparks and Geotrails – A Tourism Development Opportunity for Australia, Ecotourism Australia report. A Geopark seeks to conserve significant geological features, and explore and demonstrate methods for excellence in conservation and geoscientific knowledge achieving its goals through conservation, education and tourism. Geoparks stimulate economic activity and sustainable development through geotourism.



FIG 1.1 YMRR BRAND ARCHITECTURE



## INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

### Assets & Brand

The YMRR natural destination and commercial attraction assets create a leadership opportunity for the MRBTA in this sector by capitalising on specific biodiverse unique selling points (USPs).

The existing YMRR brand values of Authentic – Pristine – Diverse – Connected when applied to the Nature & Environment and Active & Adventure brand pillars can be further optimised for target audiences by developing specific sustainable, clean, green, biodiverse ‘nature’ messaging within marketing communications.

Applying the MRBTA brand strategy to the Strategic Nature Plan through marketing communication will drive a lead ‘nature’ message to elevate the experiences of Nature & Environment and Active & Adventure brand pillars. This works within the existing brand framework when reaching

niche target audiences. ‘Nature plus’ experiences will be supported by the additional brand pillar experiences to round out the YMRR brand position. Conversely when talking to broad audiences or other niche markets, nature will be the add-on extending brand perceptions to existing audiences.

No one brand pillar is mutually exclusive and all communication of the YMRR brand is supported by the five pillars in context of a target audience.

Equally layering a YMRR ‘preservation’ attribute over the existing nature pillars will strengthen existing market positioning plus increase a sense of experiential ‘value’ for visitors to the region. An invitation to participate at an environmentally conscious level encourages ‘buy in’ giving visitors the opportunity to contribute to our brand. This results in visitors feeling as if their visit made a difference adding to the ‘preservation’ of not only the natural assets for future generations but equally the community culture.

WA is identified in equal terms with ‘Australia’ destination attributes, having lots of natural experiences and wildlife to share in. However, to penetrate international and interstate markets and cannibalise competitors share of voice consolidated YMRR hero products are required. Defining hero products will assist to amplify key selling points to compete with other Australia nature based destinations plus create a focus on ‘nature’ as well as the ever growing prominence of the YMRR food and wine brand proposition.

Relevant ‘hero’ call to action product will aim to motivate earlier travel cycle engagement promoting our world class ‘nature’ products and sustainable nature tourism industry.



FIG 1.2 'NATURE' CAMPAIGN MESSAGES



FIG 1.3 'NATURE' MESSAGING STRATEGY FOR MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS.



## INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

This 'Strategic Nature Plan' is the first of its kind for the MRBTA and addresses the destination and commercial objectives of the MRBTA organisation to:

### 1. Destination

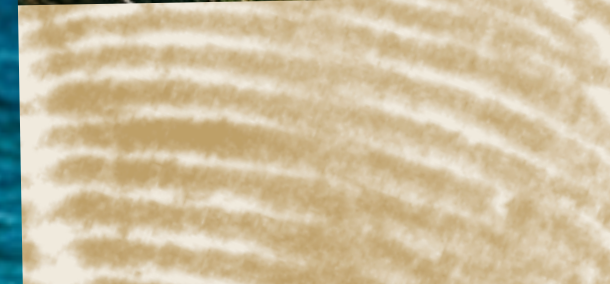
Elevate the 'nature' pillar of the destination brand to increase visitation to the region based on engagement in nature and adventure based experiences.

### 2. Commercial

Create integrated strategies to elevate the 'nature' brand pillar to drive economic growth for the MRBTA commercial attraction assets (which will benefit conservation goals).

Overall the aim is to make sustainability the backbone of the strategy. The UN World Tourism Organisation in 2004 outlines that sustainable tourism guides the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes and biological diversity. With this in mind our implementation and action plans will be managed with these guiding principles.

MRBTA reports such as the recent MRBTA Precincts Weed Control Plan indicate the commitment to conservation specific to the MRBTA commercial attraction assets.



## MARKET CHALLENGES & SWOT ANALYSIS

Where sustainability is concerned there are challenges. It must be taken into consideration that increased visitor numbers reflect increased impact on the natural environment. This poses challenges for land managers to preserve and conserve natural environments effectively where demand requires maximum environmental and economic returns without the visitor experience being compromised.

The Tourism, Transport Forums – Conceptualising The Value of Protected Areas report incites how prospective non-government fund sources, governance and management models must strike a balance between environmental conservation and economic viability. It highlights the contribution tourism can make to the management of Australia’s iconic natural estate arguing that improved tourism and park management has the potential to deliver triple-bottom line returns – economic, environmental and social. These insights are particularly relevant for the implementation of this strategy to complement the needs of the MRBTA Asset Management and Conservation teams.



## Strengths

- Quality and diversity of ecosystems
- Accessibility of natural environments
- National Parks and public lands
- Longest whale watching season in Australia
- Product strength of trails for bushwalking, cycling and mountain biking
- Home of Cape to Cape MTB event
- Internationally known icons and walks such as Lake, Jewel, Mammoth & Ngilgi Caves and Cape to Cape walking tracks
- Cape to Cape walking track now part of Great Walks of Australia (TA)
- Augusta & walk to lighthouse
- Key government stakeholders MRBTA, AMRS, CoB, DPaW and community groups working together to grow, manage and facilitate sustainability
- Community group involvement and advocacy
- Community culture sustainable, eco-friendly and 'green' minded
- Diversity of experiences
- Proximity of nature based experiences to town centres / amenity
- Direct flights to Busselton-Margaret River Regional Airport
- Remote location (internationally) – last frontier

## Opportunities

- Promotion of whale watching season longest in Australia
- Establish the Margaret River Region as a World Heritage site, Geopark or similar
- Geotrail acknowledgement and promotion
- Increasing the take-up of sustainable practices and carbon reduction initiatives by operators and communities
- Increasing communication to potential visitor market on initiatives adopted by the nature tourism industry to minimise its impact on climate change and protection of biodiversity
- Increasing native wildlife tourism products – refocus on WILD FLOWERS
- Linking and integrating experiences with other tourism strengths
- Promotion of Ngari Capes Marine Park
- Destination Certification (ie. Ecotourism Australia)
- Alignment of National Park and destination brand
- Trails networks that include Cape to Cape as part of Great Walks of Australia (TA), Department of Parks and Wildlife and Department of Sport and Recreation tracks and networks
- Increasing guided interpretation offerings by DPaW or commercial operators
- Seek to Strengthen and establish Strong partnerships with DPaW
- Seek to establish a strong partnership with Cape to Cape Catchments group
- Seek to establish a strong relationship with South West Geocatchment group
- Increasing partnerships with Aboriginal community
- Increasing/creating conservation and volunteer tourism products
- Attracting private sector investment
- Support funding of SAMR and CoB Community Gardens Grants Program, local schools' garden projects in 'tourism gives back' programme strategy in lieu of VOT investment.
- Eco accreditation of MRBTA's assets
- Increased Aboriginal interpretation on country
- Improvements in MTB and walk trail infrastructure
- Appeal of the Margaret River (ie. waterfalls, weirs, rivermouth)
- Vasse Wonnerup Wetlands – Ramsar Convention 'Wetlands of International Importance'

## Weaknesses

- Lack of YMRR brand awareness and low consumer perceptions of nature based adventure activities in interstate and international markets.
- Lack of unique biodiverse 'nature' – 'Geopark' brand to position YMRR in a competitive marketplace
- Low yield products
- Lack of products to cater for 'comfort in nature' visitors
- Historical lack of co-ordination of tiers of government, industry and communities
- Limited private investment
- Price sensitivities and appropriate accommodation for discerning international visitors
- Undersupply of experiences/events to cater to current and emerging international nature-based tourism markets
- Low significance by tourism operators in the region accredited and promoting their 'nature' products
- Limited co-ordination and focus on sustainable destination planning, development and management of key nature based tourism products, in parks and outside parks
- High yield product gaps including accommodation, activities and amenities surrounding key natural attractions

## Threats

- Potential international visitors are being discouraged to fly long haul destinations like Australia due to the impact of the carbon emissions produced by air travel
- Competitive domestic locations 'owning' nature, adventure and eco experiences and events
- Visitors will go to other destinations where nature based experiences meet market demands
- Worldwide competition from other nature based destinations that have high quality sustainable facilities in spectacular natural environments
- Time needed to develop infrastructure and products
- Value of tourism remaining low in the community
- Lack of community engagement from those who see tourism as a disruption to the environment

# SWOT ANALYSIS

## VISION

### DESTINATION



Your Margaret River Region will be recognised as the leading sustainable nature-based, Geopark and adventure tourism destination, in Australia renowned for diversity, proximity and accessibility to its natural attractions.

### COMMERCIAL

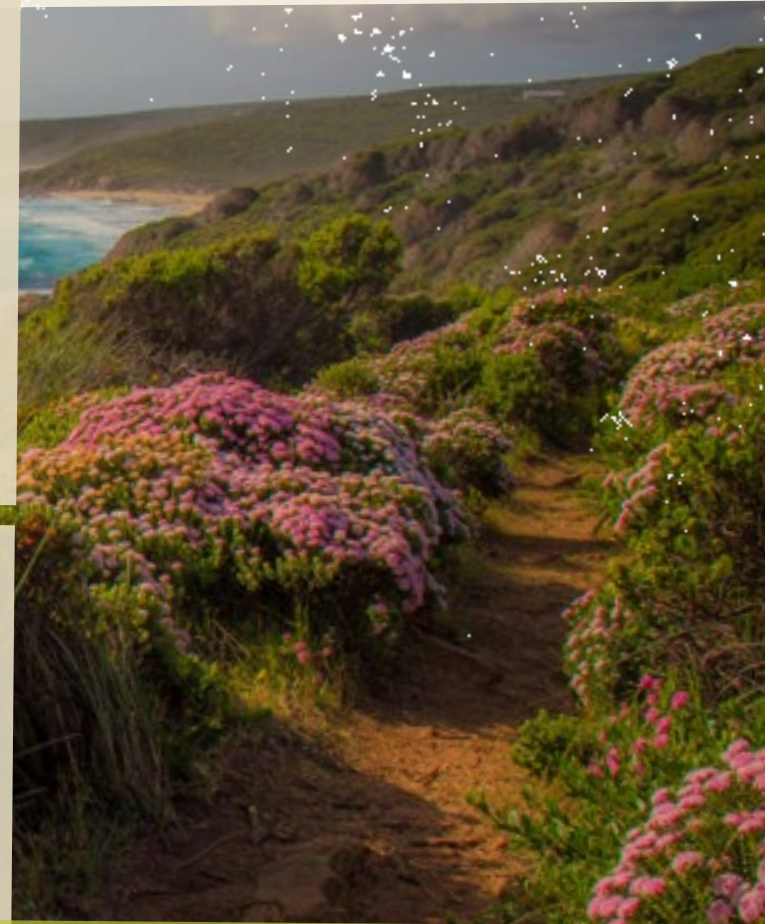


YMRR's vision for nature-based tourism is founded on sustainability, attracting public and private investment into high yield products, integrating government, community and industry effort, and focusing on experiences that offer high levels of visitor engagement.

### THE MUTUAL ISSUE FOR ENVIRONMENT GROUPS AND MRBTA IS:

How to engender sufficient community engagement and resources to safeguard the environmental condition of the Margaret River region to keep it clean, green and pristine.

Environmental groups build understanding and support for the environment's value to the region. MRBTA builds understanding and support for tourism's value to the region. Together, they need to work in partnership



## PRODUCT OVERVIEW

As referenced in the brand pillars, the tourism activities falling into Nature & Environment, and Active & Adventure are not mutually exclusive. Our existing adventure product is set in our natural environment and varying coastal and inland landscapes. Below we note activities generally related to nature and adventure as defined by tourism statistics.

YMRR Nature based products included in these are activities are visiting national and state parks, visiting wildlife parks, zoos or aquariums, botanical or other public gardens, bushwalk, whale and dolphin watching or participation in varying watersports.

YMRR Adventure activities include surfing, kite surfing, windsurfing, stand up paddle boarding, hiking, mountain biking, canoeing, fishing charters, whale watching, quad biking, horseriding.

### Destination

The pristine natural environment of the YMRR and iconic natural attractions such as the underground cave networks, forests, coastline and meeting of two oceans and their respective flora and fauna makes a YMRR visitor itinerary unique and

extraordinary. The diversity, proximity and accessibility to a variety of land and coastal experiences endorse our ‘nature’ brand, a key competitive strength for the region.

Our nature tourism product is defined by two categories:

#### 1. Land

#### 2. Marine

### HERO PRODUCT DEFINED

Existing product strengths that offer the destinations’ unique selling points feature in our key marketing messages as the ‘HERO’ product. A review of these products has outlined existing ‘HERO’ product and potential development opportunities to fill the gap of market demands with world class, aspirational ‘HERO’ products.

### EXISTING HERO PRODUCT

- Cave experiences
- Lighthouses
- Where the Two Oceans meet
- Whale watching
- Cape to Cape Walking Trail
- Event – Drug Aware MR Pro
- The Underwater Observatory at Busselton Jetty
- Koomal Dreaming

### POTENTIAL HERO PRODUCT

- Geopark, Geotrails
- Big 5 – Megafauna
- Whale watching – Australia’s longest season
- Trails – walk, bike, quad bike, horseride
- Mountain biking
- Voluntourism
- National Park
- Botanic Gardens
- Coastal experiences – coasteering, stingrays
- Cape to Cape Cultural Tours

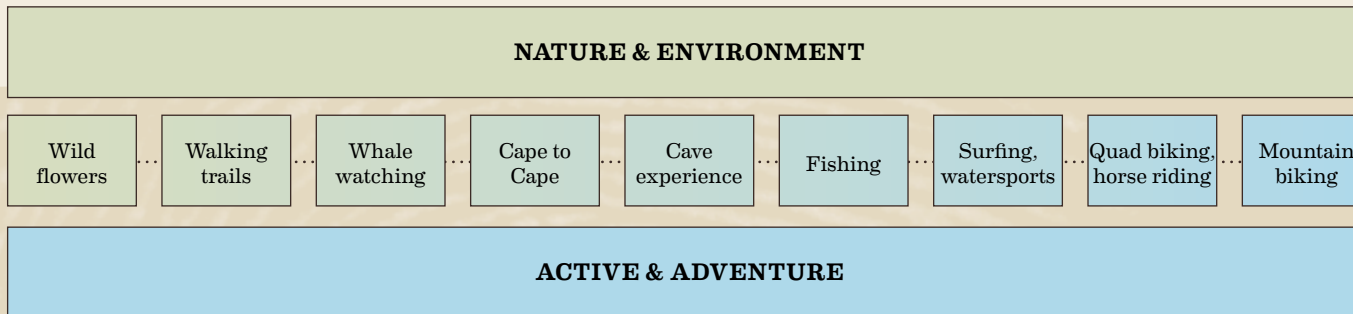


FIG 1.5 EXAMPLE HERO PRODUCTS

## PRODUCT OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

### Tourism Australia 2016 stakeholder strategy

Tourism Australia has a 2016 Aquatic and Coastal Experiences promotional push backed by research from 11 of Australia's most important inbound markets including China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, UK and USA.

#### KEY INSIGHTS FOR YMRR

- Australia is the highest rating destination when it comes to 'world class beauty and natural environments, ahead of Hawaii, New Zealand, Canada & Switzerland.
- Aquatic wildlife tops the list of Australian experiences with 47% appeal
- Australian beaches considered the most appealing Australian attraction with 46%

Utilising tourism industry stakeholder research, marketing intelligence and campaigning offers YMRR, and its international trade representation through Australia's South West and Tourism WA, leverage in key international markets.

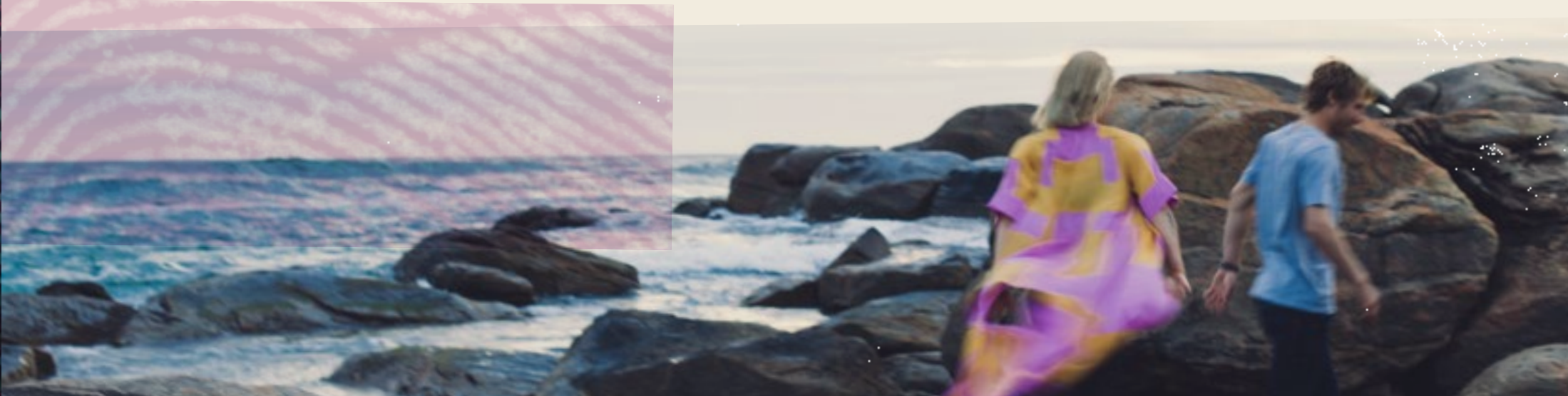
### Commercial MRBTA

The MRBTA tourism cave attractions are commercial assets of the MRBTA driving revenue for the organisation. As custodians of Jewel, Lake, Mammoth and Ngilgi caves the MRBTA are responsible for the protection and preservation of cave and karst features within four precincts. The MRBTA Attractions Asset Management and Conservation Strategy defines a set of conservation, recreational, tourism, education and research values applied to the operations and marketing of each site.

Commercial ticket sales for each of the four precincts is packaged to value add the iconic cave experiences to all potential and in-market visitors within their travel cycle. Product innovation, wholesale packaging and online booking has increased attraction sales by 10% in the past two years.

#### OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE REVENUE INCLUDE:

- Increase ticket price with additional value product inclusion or merchandise inclusion
- Develop interactive 'tour' product
- Extend the tour experience with aboriginal content from existing precincts
- Grant funding
- Research funding
- Retail product merchandise
- Partner with DPaW to operate Contos / Jarrahdene campgrounds to deliver nature-based brand experiences and elevate existing and potential hero product and develop new hero product
- Partner with DPaW with a potential co-location of national park/visitor servicing



## PRODUCT OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

### Product Accreditation

A variety of tourism accreditation and certification programs are recognised and endorsed within the broader industry to increase awareness and reward the commitment of sustainably focused and operating businesses. Globally there are accreditation programmes that will elevate a destination and its geographical and areas to landscape of international significance. The value in terms of tourism product sale conversion is difficult to evaluate. An overview of current programs and networks are below:

#### • Global Geoparks Network

- The Global Geoparks Network (GGN), of which membership is obligatory for UNESCO Global Geoparks, is a legally constituted not-for-profit organisation with an annual membership fee. It aims to develop models of best practice, setting high quality standards for territories that integrate the preservation of geological heritage into strategies for regional sustainable economic development.

Geoparks are not the same as National Parks. They are the vehicle for fostering community based sustainable regional economic development. Geopark includes geology heritage, landscape stories, flora and fauna, aboriginal culture and heritage as well as our early European culture. Geotourism on the other hand is nature based with a focus on the environment, culture and conservation. MRBTA has an opportunity to partner with Depaw & Eco Tourism operators to present Geo trails.

- The focus on Geoparks is on promotion and appreciation of geological heritage, geology and landscapes. These earth heritage sites are part of an integrated concept of protection, education and sustainable development. It also allows a comprehensive understanding about tourist behaviour without the need for actual engagement.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – International Geoscience & Geoparks Programme (IGGP) – Currently 120 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 33 countries.

#### • Tourism Council WA

- Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP)
  - × Marine Tourism Accreditation – a module of ATAP designed to help WA Marine Tour Operators with Best Practice Standards and reward their commitment to professional and ethical conduct whilst operating in WA's pristine marine environment.
- EcoPlus Accreditation – a tool to assist businesses in achieving environment sustainability and to recognise a businesses' commitment to environmental management.

#### • UNESCO World Heritage

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.
- The Convention recognises the way in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.



- Being party to the Convention often serves as a catalyst to raising awareness for heritage preservation.
- The concept is so well understood that sites on the List are a magnet for international cooperation and may thus receive financial assistance for heritage conservation projects from a variety of sources.
- Sites inscribed on the World Heritage List also benefit from the elaboration and implementation of a comprehensive management plan that sets out adequate preservation measures and monitoring mechanisms. In support of these, experts offer technical training to the local site management team.
- Finally, the inscription of a site on the World Heritage List brings an increase in public awareness of the site and of its outstanding values, thus also increasing the tourist activities at the site.

#### • **Ecotourism Australia**

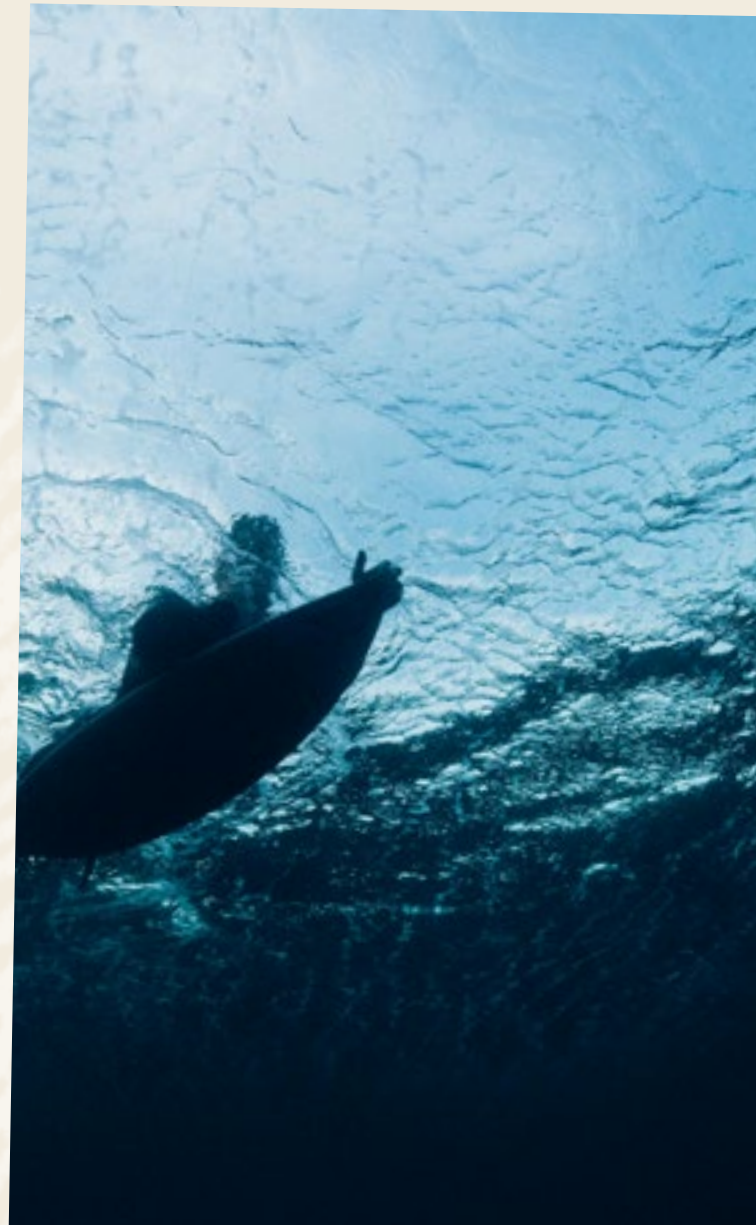
- EA is Australia's peak industry body, representing over 500 eco-tourism operators and members since 1991. EA's product development tool - ECO certification - is a world recognised program with a Memorandum of Co-operation with UNESCO World Heritage Centre, recognition by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and winner of 'Tourism for Tomorrow' Award issued by the World Travel & Tourism Council. Ecotourism Australia's ECO certification is recognised and incentivised by all Australian Protected Area Management agencies, reducing their risk and compliance costs whilst promoting high quality visitor experiences.
- Ecotourism Australia's Ecotourism Destination Certification Program is designed as a platform to demonstrate to visitors and the rest of the tourism community the leadership of Australia's protected area management agencies. It also places emphasis on

the strength, value and opportunities of collaborative, dynamic partnerships and implementation of industry best practice initiatives. It is aimed at a select number of high visitation protected areas that provide significant opportunities for nature-based tourism and visitor experiences, including those delivered by third parties such as commercial businesses under a lease or licensing arrangement. The Program has been based on the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria for destinations and adapted to ensure relevance to large-scale and high-visitation protected areas. The GSTC criteria provide a guide to implementing international best practice for destinations and encourage an interdisciplinary, holistic and integrative approach, which is fundamental to ensuring the planning and management of our protected areas is sustainable.

- The Respecting Our Culture (ROC) program encourages the tourism industry to operate in ways that respect and reinforce Indigenous cultural heritage and the living cultures of Indigenous communities. ROC certified tourism operators are committed to protecting cultural authenticity and integrity, developing sound business practices, environmental protection and acknowledging Indigenous peoples spiritual connection to the land and water.

#### • **EarthCheck**

- Earth Check is the leading scientific benchmarking certification and advisory group for the travel and tourism industry.
- EarthCheck Evaluate is an entry level program that evaluates an operators economic, social and environmental impact and recognises organisations that engage in sustainable practices. Queensland Tourism Awards has adopted EarthCheck Evaluate as one of their criteria recognised programs for entrants.





## COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Destinations offering world class activities that own 'must do' experiences reflecting our USP activities (as noted below) can be referred to as competitor destinations.

### 1. Land

such as bushwalking, hiking, trekking, cycling, mountain biking, wildlife, flora, aboriginal, horseriding

### 2. Marine

such as surfing, water based activities, whale and marine wildlife watching

Competitive tourism destinations that are recognised for their natural assets and valuable nature and adventure based activities are at a glance:

#### Local

- Rottnest Island
- Great Southern

#### Interstate

TTF – Nature-based Tourism in Australia report March 2014 highlights:

- Larger states naturally dominate in volume terms for share of all nature based visitors these being NSW, VIC, QLD
- However propensity for nature based activities within visitors to each state and territory reveal greatest propensity among both international and domestic visitors to NT and Tasmania reinforcing both destinations' strong natural heritage brands
- WA ranked 3rd with high domestic overnight visitors participating in nature-based activities

#### TOURISM PRODUCT

- **Northern Territory**
  - Katherine (Nitmiluk) Gorge – connecting nature based tourism with unique culture
- **Tasmania**
  - Cradle Mountain
  - Bruny Island
- **South Australia**
  - Kangaroo Island
  - Naracoorte Caves – caving & climbing
  - Flinders Ranges rock climbing destination
- **New South Wales National Parks**
  - Blue Mountains National Park - Mountain Biking
- **NSW**
  - Jenolan Caves
- **Queensland**
  - Fraser Coast & Sunshine Coast – Australia's Native Coast
  - Ironman Cairns
  - Carbon neutral resort – Paluma Range, Townsville
  - Eco tourism backpacker resort – Bungalow Bay Koala Village, Magnetic Island
    - × Animal rescues, land regeneration, bush tours and insight in the environment.
  - Cairns Zoom & Wildlife Dome – adrenalin rushing ziplines of varying heights and lengths
- **Victoria**
  - Wilsons Promontory National Park – All Terrain Wheelchairs
  - Great Ocean Road



## COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

### International

YMRR by comparison with international competitive markets has a low number of nature and adventure tour operators and infrastructure, however high level of accessibility to pristine land and marine experiences that free independent travellers (FIT) and working holiday makers (WHM) demographics are highly attracted to. In review below we take a look at overall 'nature' international markets and a mountain bike specific snapshot.

### OVERALL 'NATURE' APPEAL INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

- **New Zealand** – competitive in-market adventure tour product
  - 100% Pure New Zealand tagline #nzmustdo
  - Adventure, adrenalin brand – abseiling, bungy, canyoning, caving, climbing, hunting, jet boating, off-road driving, paragliding and hang gliding, parasailing, rafting, skydiving, ziplining
  - Cycling mountain biking – promotes trail, biking tracks, itineraries, tours, events, travel time and distance calculator. 22 Great Rides along New Zealand Cycle Trail.
  - Nature & wildlife – whale watching, dolphins, horse riding, penguins, volcanic & geothermal, gardens, world heritage sites, zoos & wildlife parks,
  - Walking and hiking – New Zealand Walking Guide – day walks, multi day hike. Milford Track
  - Water activities

- **South Africa** – wildlife specialists
  - Go on safari – Big Five – buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion and rhino
  - Iconic wildlife parks, beaches, coastal cape environments
  - Adventure is real, frontline with the wildlife from sharks, game reserves, tandem paragliding
- **Canada** – adventure products
  - Keep Exploring – tagline. From coast to coast, Canada is filled with unexpected wonders that are sure to awaken your inner explorer
  - Events & festival
  - Nature & wildlife
  - On the water
  - Outdoor adventure
  - Road trips & train travel

## COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

### Mountain Bike specific snapshot

YMRR is targeted to grow as a mountain biking destination within broader WA stakeholder strategies such as the WA Mountain Bike Strategy 2015 - 2020 and the related South West Mountain Bike Master Plan, which includes the development of the Bramley National Park trail network. Significant economic input has been reported in specific world class mountain bike tourist destinations examples include:

- **Canada**
  - 2010 Crankworx Mountain Bike 10 day Festival contributed \$18.5 million to the local economy
- **Scotland**
  - \$214 million is the value of mountain biking visitors to the Scottish economy. Over 400,000 riders visit the 7 Stanes mountain bike trail centres each year generating \$36 million for the local economy.
- **New Zealand**
  - 200,000 visitors mountain bike whilst travelling each year. \$2.5 million spectators at the 2006 UCI Mountain Bike World Championships in Rotorua. \$9.5 million is generated by recreational mountain biking in Rotorua's Whakarewarewa Forest annually which is 5 times its timber revenue.
- **Cairns, QLD**
  - 10,000+ spectators watched the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup in Cairns in 2014, bring an estimated \$10 million to the QLD economy.



## GOALS

The overall Nature Strategy goals underpin those outlined as primary in the Strategic Marketing Plan 2015/2016 which are to:

### **Increase visitation to YMRR**

in particular during off peak periods

### **Increase visitor spending in YMRR**

through increased length of stay and dispersal

### **Preserve the Margaret River region's environment**

in a sustainable manner so it will remain clean, green and pristine

In addition to these it is to increase perception of the region as a nature based destination and to be recognised with international accreditation (ie. World Heritage, Geopark).



## NATURE BASED TOURISM TARGETS

Nature based tourism forms a significant component of Australia's visitor economy. It is a key motivator for international visitors to travel to Australia. Capitalising on land and marine tourism experiences YMRR can engage specific target audiences from its international and national target markets and visitor segments.

For nature based tourism, visitors are now seeking experiences and destinations that are actively reducing their impacts on climate change and the size of their carbon footprint. We can refer to nature based travellers as those interested in, visited or who part took in visiting natural attractions, undertook adventure activities or sought to experience our wildlife.

Destinations recognising sustainability as a key promotional factor are actively implementing measures across industry to address their impact on climate change issues at a community level. The MRBTA has world class conservation and preservation programs in place across six of their asset precincts. Market leading initiatives authenticate sustainable 'nature' key messages of the YMRR brand to target nature – ecotourism targets.

### Nature Based Tourism in Australia SNAPSHOT, Year Ending Dec 2014 – Griffith University

The top international nature-based markets to Australia were China (15%) the United Kingdom (11%), New Zealand (11%) and the United States (9%).

TTF – Nature-based Tourism in Australia report March 2014 highlights over 13 years to 2013 growth markets participating in nature-based tourism had -

#### GROWN FOR THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES:

- China +16pt, 61% to 77%
- France +12pt, 69% to 81%
- Indonesia +11pt, 47% to 58%
- Korea +11pt, 70% to 81%
- Switzerland +8pt, 75% to 83%

#### DECLINED FOR THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES:

- New Zealand (-10pt, 48% to 37%)
- Thailand (-9pt, 67% to 58%)
- USA (-8pt, 75% to 67%)
- Singapore (-7pt, 60% to 53%)
- Taiwan (-6pt, 84% to 78%)

As outlined above New Zealand, USA and Singapore indicated a decline nationally over a 10 year period to participate in nature based experiences, however they are listed in YMRR's top five source markets. It would be safe to assume that 2015 visitor engagement with nature based or adventure activities may fall closer into line with YMRR visitation growth. It is more than likely that USA and Singapore were higher yielding markets than a possible working holiday making New Zealand visitor.

### Demographics

- International nature-based visitors tend to be younger than other visitors with 33 per cent being aged 15–29 years.
- International nature-based visitors tend to travel unaccompanied (46%) or as an adult couple (24%). However, they are less likely than other international travellers to travel unaccompanied.
- The majority of domestic overnight visitors travelled in an adult couple (29%) or a family group (28%). Domestic overnight visitors participating in nature activities tended to be aged between 30 and 59 years (56%).

In the TTF Tourism & Transport Forum, Nature-based Tourism Insights 2013 report it indicates:

#### NATURE BASED TOURISM VISITORS TO AUSTRALIA 2012 – 2013

- 63% of all international visitors
- 20% of all domestic overnight visitors
- 9% of all domestic day visitors

#### NATURE BASED TOURISM V OVERALL TOURISM YOY 2012 TO 2013 TREND

- International increased +8.2% v Overall tourism +5.1%
- Domestic overnight +12.3% v Overall tourism +2.6%
- Domestic day +8.6% v Overall tourism -0.6%

A key finding is that the average nature-based visitor generates a higher yield, spending more and staying longer than overall visitors. Two activities highlighted within the nature-based segment over 2012–2013 were 'Whale/dolphin watching' and 'Visit to National Park' experiences. Below indicates the upward trend of visitor desire and engagement specific to land and marine experiences.

## NATURE BASED TOURISM TARGETS (CONTINUED)

### GROWTH IN SPECIFIC AUSTRALIAN NATURE-BASED TOURISM EXPERIENCES:

#### Whale/dolphin watching

- International +25%
- Domestic Overnight +36.4%

#### Visits to National Parks

- International +7.8%
- Domestic Overnight +14.2%
- Domestic day Visitors +7.2%

While 63% of international visitors participate in nature-based activities, the traditional markets of Europe, North America, Korea, Taiwan and Japan rate the highest. Emerging Asian markets are still maturing with their nature-based activity of choice being botanical garden visits, however followed by an upward trend of whale/dolphin watching. China as a specific market indicates growth up 19% from 14% for all nature based activities in 2013. Wildlife Parks, snorkeling and bushwalking were scored however much weaker preferences.

### NATURE BASED TOURISM PARTICIPANT TYPES

Nature based tourism participants can be divided into two types and tourism product can be easily appropriated for each category:

#### 1. Skilled in nature

#### 2. Comfort in nature

Skilled in nature - nature-based tourism participants tend to have a high level of interest and knowledge of the activity, seek out hard physical challenges, are prepared to stay in more remote locations with limited or no facilities, will travel to destinations solely to undertake the activity, and are more likely to be self-guided. Skilled in nature participants represent a smaller percentage of nature-based tourism visitors and overall are lower yield.

European and North American are market examples with high level of participation of this kind.

Comfort in nature – nature-based tourism participants have a more casual interest but do seek out immersive experiences in the natural environment that provide learning opportunities. These participants will undertake activities for shorter durations, many lack the skills to undertake the activities without a guide, they require appropriate accommodation and facilities, and make up a large proportion of the market for nature-based tourism. They seek out a broader range of tourism experiences, including food and wine and cultural heritage. Comfort in nature participants are a higher yielding market. Emerging Asian markets would fall into this participant type.

### SPECIFIC YMRR TARGET VISITOR SEGMENTS BY TOURISM PARTICIPANT TYPE

#### Of the YMRR visitor segments

1. Dedicated Discoverers – skilled in nature
2. Aspirational Achievers – comfort in nature
3. Grey Explorers – comfort in nature/skilled in nature
4. Family Connectors – comfort in nature

### YMRR INTRASTATE, INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONAL TARGET MARKETS

For a detailed overview of the YMRR target markets and demographics refer to the YMRR Strategic Marketing Plan. Some nature-based statistics are referenced below:

- The Margaret River Region is heavily reliant on the intrastate market, with around 85% of all visitors originating from within the state (TWA, Margaret River Region Fact Sheet, YE June 2015).
- Despite interstate and international markets relatively small contribution to overall visitation, at 7% and 8% respectively (TWA, Margaret River Region Fact Sheet, YE June 2015), these are considered key future growth markets – particularly with the announcement that the Busselton Margaret River Regional Airport will be upgraded to accommodate direct interstate flights within the next three years.

### INTERNATIONAL

- The current top five international visitor markets to YMRR are United Kingdom (21%), Singapore (16%), New Zealand (8%), USA (7%) and Malaysia (6%) (TWA Margaret River Region Fact Sheet, YE June 2015).
- TWA's international marketing forecasting undertaken by Market Planning has indicated that China shows the biggest growth potential along with other SE Asian markets. Markets such as UK, USA, and New Zealand will also be key contributors to future growth and regional dispersal.
- At a high level, international Experience Seekers to Western Australia are seeking holidays that offer coastal/aquatic, wildlife and food and wine experiences. Aboriginal and cultural experiences also rate highly (TWA, Strategic Approach to Promoting WA, 2015 WA Tourism Conference).



## OBJECTIVES

### Objective 1 – ‘Nature’ brand message development

- Develop ‘nature’ key messages to position YMRR as a market leading tourism ‘nature’ destination, selling our clean, green, sustainable and biodiverse attributes. Educating how visitors contribute to the critical phases of ‘preservation’ and ‘conservation’ that sustain the cycle of reinvestment for environment management and operations. This will:
  - strengthen the existing nature and adventure YMRR brand attributes
  - and create the foundation for further branches of development in the ‘nature’ portfolio for high yield attractions and innovative nature based products
- Develop and syndicate content assets that across marketing platforms to support nature/adventure/aboriginal experiences.

### Objective 2 – Hero Product Development

- Identify existing ‘HERO’ products and events to develop key messages
  - Land
    - × Trails
    - × Aboriginal
  - Marine
    - × Surfing
    - × Whales
- Identify the potential of specific bio-diverse attractions/products/events for ‘HERO’ status mapping partnership, investment and marketing targets
  - Land
- World Heritage / Geopark status
- Geotrails

- Marine
  - × Whale watching – longest season in Australia
  - × Lighthouses – where two oceans meet
- MRBTA revenue raising channels/product for ‘conservation projects’
- Volunteer tourism product with conservation organisations
- Consider development of not for profit charity independent of MRBTA to contribute to conservation funding and to disseminate to community programmes (in lieu of VOT strategy).

### Objective 3 – Aboriginal product links

- Link ‘nature’ to aboriginal tourism
  - Koomal Dreaming
  - Cape Cultural Tours
- Highlight aboriginal culture and product as component of Geopark , botanic garden etc. initiatives

### Objective 4 – Industry Engagement

- Define accreditation commitments for MRBTA attraction operations
- Review Ecotourism status of existing membership
- Research current market ‘eco’ – ‘sustainability’ stakeholder accreditations
- Grow nature and adventure tourism products

### Objective 5 – Consumer Engagement

- Attracting and servicing visitors at every stage of the travel cycle from dreaming stage, planning stage, booking stage, destination stage, sharing stage.
- Attract consumers who are passionate about sustainability and their impact on the environment selecting certified products as a purchase preference.



## STRATEGIES

### Destination

- Create key 'nature' messaging with distinct unique selling points (USPs) to position YMRR as competitive destination with other world class natural attraction destinations.
  - Sustainable message of 'visit our special, clean, green, biodiverse pristine environments and help us re-invest in preservation and conservation outcomes'.
  - Create Mega-Fauna messaging sub-brand that sells YMRR's 'Big Five'
- UNESCO/World Heritage/Geopark accreditation and promotion.
- MRBTA member endorsement and promotion of eco-tourism accredited products.
- Destination certification (ie. Ecotourism Australia).
- Collaborate with government, municipal, community and interest groups working to improve infrastructure that supports nature and adventure based tourism activities.
- Promotion of Rails to Trails pathway as USP, extensive pathway route from Busselton foreshore to Margaret River.
- Target 'comfort in nature' travellers specifically Asian markets with whale and marine watching experiences. Develop campaigns to promote 'Australia's longest whale watching season' USP as a HERO product. Malaysian, Singaporean and China markets travel May to August.
- Ongoing promotion of WA's iconic Wildflower season. Increase the image library with highly engaging wildflower inventory for online and social media visual campaigns.
- Partner with adventure sport media, event organisers, specialist sport travel trade and corporate incentive networks to reach passionate sport enthusiasts willing to travel independently and in groups. Activity targets for activities such as hiking, walking, water-based activities such as surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, kayaking and fishing.
- Event Strategy – engage in Cape to Cape MTB event partnership to leverage all year round promotion of 'home of Cape to Cape MTB'. Leverage awareness of the event to niche biking enthusiast target audiences raising the profile of YMRR as a world class biking, cycling, trails destination.
- Event Strategy – assist key stakeholders to procure 'adventure' events within the region to increase visitation ideally in lower season periods and for infrastructure investment. MTB South West Strategy recommends an improvement in mountain biking infrastructure to plan towards international events being held in YMRR. AMRSC have investment and development plans for trails in place. See AMRSC Trails document in appendix.
- Develop opportunities to link aboriginal and nature tourism product with reference to WAITOC's 2020 goals. The MRBTA is a contributing stakeholder to the National Trust on the conservation, interpretation, education and community engagement potential for Ellensbrook House. The view is to establish a world class heritage site for the benefit of community and visitors. Promoting the stories and reconciliation opportunities of the Aboriginal people and early colonists in a historical context. This project links Aboriginal and nature product by telling stories of the natural world and how the environment has been shaped by human intervention.
- Review Australia's National Landscape Programme (ANL) which is a Government lead initiative led by a partnership of Parks Australia and Tourism Australia. There are currently 16 designated National Landscapes. With its integrated focus on landscapes as a whole, the development of geotourism within each landscape aligns with the core and sustainable development of each landscape region. Current WA landscapes included in the ANL are Kimberley, Ningaloo-Shark Bay and the Great South West Edge.





## STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

### Commercial

- MRBTA complete and be identified for eco-tourism accreditation for cave precincts, authenticating 'new nature brand position and to align with networks to leverage marketing distribution channels.
- Review accessibility, accommodation and amenity demands from nature and adventure travellers specific to the Cape to Cape Track with a view to increase accessibility and to meet the market demands of eco-minded international markets.
- Look to innovate product development for International Youth and Adventure 'voluntourism' market, with particular focus on opportunities around cave conservation and preservation.
  - Engage travel wholesale or voluntourism retail distribution network to generate awareness of YMRR brand and experiential travel opportunities. Example [www.statravel.com.au/conservation\\_volunteers](http://www.statravel.com.au/conservation_volunteers).
  - Partner with Conservation Volunteers Australia to reach their distribution and programs. [www.conservationvolunteers.com.au](http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au)
- Provide environmental/aboriginal interpretation at MRBTA sites to educate visitors to the region.

### Partnerships

The MRBTA appreciates and leverages resources through strategic partnership alignments, agreements and MOU arrangements. Existing and enquiring organisations must clearly understand the destination and commercial objectives of the organisation before proposing partnerships of financial contribution and sponsorship for infrastructure projects. The MRBTA's destination function is in a marketing capacity, resourced to collaborate with tourism and non-tourism industry organisations and businesses for the mutual benefit of increasing social, economic and environmental benefits for the regions resident and business communities. The MRBTA's function is not to be confused with government or grant funding organisations.

Partnerships form part of the strategy to reach high yield target audiences amplifying travel opportunities to the region whilst conserving and preserving its natural assets.

### STRATEGIC PARTNER PLANNING IS AS FOLLOWS:

- Commit to partner with local, state and federal government to support the economic development plans of regions municipal planning such as AMRS, COB and SWDC targets.
- Commit to partner with a university or similar to track the connection visitors to the region have to its environment over time.
- Align with adventure sport, community conservation, cultural groups and commercial events offering efficiency and coherent integrated planning for shared outcomes and financial benefits. Currently MRBTA are engaged with WestCycle, Department of Sport & Recreation, Department of Parks and Wildlife and West Australia Mountain Bike Association (WAMBA) on progressing the implementation of the Western Australian Mountain Bike Strategy 2015 – 2020 and the South West Mountain Bike Master Plan.
- Aim to increase natural tourism partnerships to deliver greater funding for destination and commercial asset conservation, to innovate natural tourism products and to increase economic returns to enrich the visitor experience and understanding of our parks.
- Work with education institutions in Western Australia with existing Voluntourism programs to leverage, learn and create networks for partnership development to benefit the regions land and marine assets through research and conservation projects.
- Advocate for planning provisions that encourage innovative nature based tourism product to be developed.



## STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

Strategic partnerships with public and private sector ideally will be based on shared rewards and risks. The Tourism & Transport Forum's, Natural Tourism Partnerships, Action Plan 2.1, Scope of Natural Tourism Partnerships report outlines the need to capitalise on private sector investment to deliver a wide range of benefits for tourism and conservation.

### POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- Conservation services
  - Cave conservation, weed & pest control, bush regeneration and other land management.
- Visitor experiences
  - Such as self-guided and guided cave experiences, whale watching, cycling, mountain biking, fishing, wildlife tours, caving, bird watching, bushwalking, trekking, conservation volunteering, study tours and other innovative hospitality and natural tourism visitor experiences.
- Accommodation experiences
  - Tented safari camps, demountable cabins, huts, tree houses and eco-lodges; and adaptive re-use of existing buildings such as historic farm and mining structures, government stations.
- Visitor management services
  - For example: marketing, visitor information, signage, interpretation, merchandising, cleaning, waste services, maintenance, parking and entrance gates.
- Parks visitor infrastructure
  - For example: power, water, sewerage, roads, trails, bridges, pontoons, car parks, visitor centres, visitor rides, canopy walks and zip lines, scenic rail, walking tracks and lookouts.

### Value of Tourism

- Agree to provide a representative on the Cape to Cape Catchment Group committee to ensure there is tourism representation.
- Fundraising for conservation. Create partnerships to exercise philanthropic endeavours, encourage 'buy in' from the community and engage in co-operative reinvestment. Promote and provide funding to like-minded organisations such as Forum Advocating Cultural & Eco-Tourism Inc (FACET) and the Foundation for WA Parks, Cape to Cape Catchments, Possum Center Busselton Inc and Friends of the Cape to Cape Track.



## IMPLEMENTATION

Enhance the competitive position of YMRR as a destination with world class natural attractions and adventure activities through initiatives including:

### Destination

- Define YMRR nature key messages through 'HERO' product marketing campaigns.
- Promote high yield operator product to support 'HERO' experiences.
- Partner with CycleWest, Western Australia Mountain Biking Association, MRORCA and Cape to Cape MTB event to support the implementation of the WA Mountain Bike Strategy 2015 – 2020 to raise the awareness of recreational, sport and tourism profile of Western Australian mountain biking. Reference page 18 – Objective 4: Tourism & Marketing.
- Supply visitors with local knowledge from dream to in-market travel cycle providing accessible information and up-selling of nature travel product and tours.
- Curate and procure high quality nature-based tourism images and new media to represent HERO product/assets consistently on MRBTA marketing platforms.

### Commercial

- Promote MRBTA attraction assets as iconic YMRR 'must do' experiences
- Cross over with Attraction Strategies development and conservation

### Partnerships

Collaborate with stakeholders to innovate existing strategies to attract investment, develop tourism product to improve the visitor experience and increase reach of the YMRR nature brand through partner distribution channels.



## IMPLEMENTATION (CONTINUED)

### CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS ARE LISTED WITH SPECIFIC PRODUCT/PROJECTS BELOW:

- Tourism Australia, National (TA) Great Walks of Australia
  - local product Walk into Luxury
- Tourism WA, STO (TWA)
- Australia's South West, RTO (ASW)
  - MOU International Marketing Partner
- Great South West Edge - passive
- Department of Parks & Wildlife (DPAW)
  - (lighthouse landlord) partnership
    - × Campgrounds - National Parks eg. Contos Campground development
- City of Busselton
  - Busselton Jetty - Observatory
  - Interpretive Centre in Busselton
  - Rails to Trails - Wadandi
- Augusta Margaret River Shire
  - Consultation on The Economic Development Strategy - Curtin University
  - Trails Project
  - Rails to Trails - Wadandi
- South West Development Commission
  - Grant funding, strategic marketing partnerships
  - International Voluntourism Forum Program 2016
    - × <https://www.borneoecotours.com/bestsociety/givingback.php>
- Education, Environmental & Community Groups
  - FACET - Forum Advocating Cultural & Eco-Tourism Inc, WA Parks Foundation
  - Cape to Cape Catchment Group, Geocatch, Friends of the Cape to Cape Track
  - Murdoch University - Flinders Bay Whale Research Project - Cetacean Research Unit
  - Curtin University, involvement International Voluntourism Forum program
  - Dolphin Discovery Centre, Bunbury
- Aboriginal Community
  - WAITOC
  - Cape Cultural Tour, product development assistance
- Cycling
  - MTB Cape to Cape Event
  - WA Mountain Biking Strategy 2015 - 2020
  - South West Development Commission
  - CycleWest, Western Australia Mountain Biking Association (WAMBA), Department of Sport & Recreation, Department of Parks and Wildlife
  - Margaret River Off Road Cycling Association (MRORCA)

### Value of Tourism

- Investigate ways to work with partners to capture a potential visitor donation to assist the environment such as the DPaW WA Foundation.
- Utilise the attraction locations to promote and leverage App using i Beacons, asking visitors to donate whilst captured in the moment.
- Leverage exposure community group and partner organisation networks for publicity of funding assistance to impact and improve the objectives for the Value of Tourism Strategy.

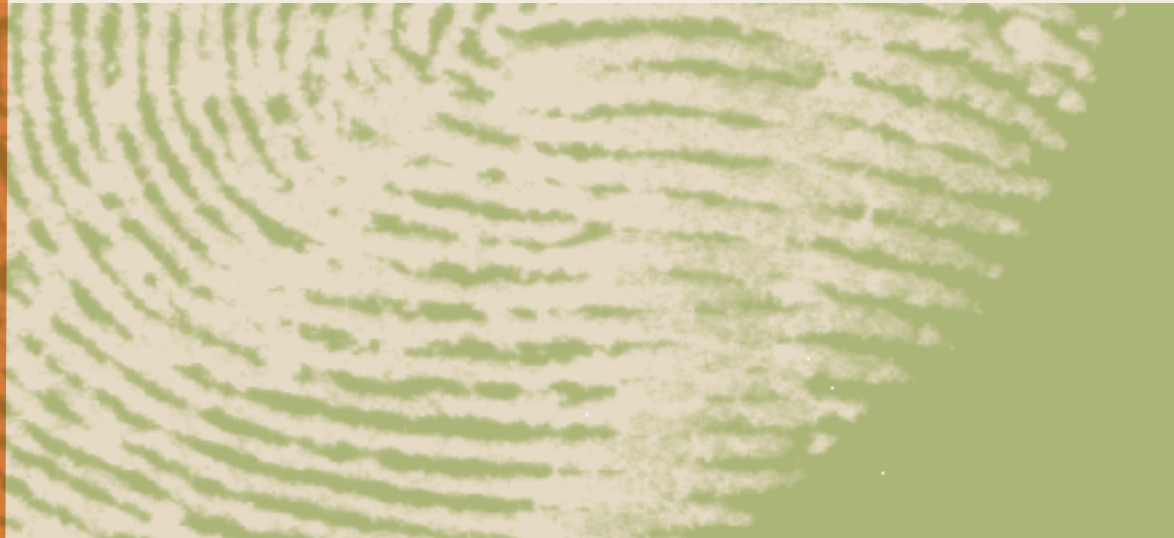
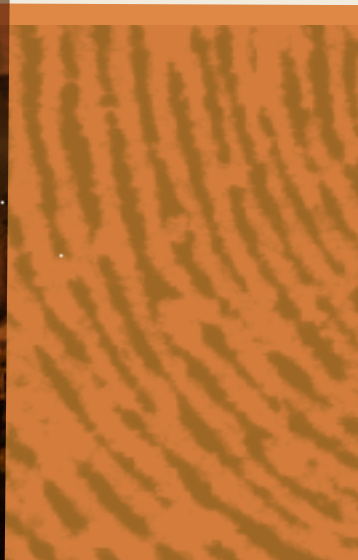
### Accreditation

- Research, commit and complete appropriate operator eco-certification for MRBTA commercial asset product and operations
- Research, commit and complete appropriate eco-certification for YMRR
- Activate marketing, PR promotions and engagement through accreditation networks

## MEASUREMENT

The following outcomes and metrics will define return on investment value and ongoing commitment for YMRM marketing campaigns and partnership planning.

- Accreditation – Ecotourism Australia Accreditation, World Heritage recognition, Geopark & Geotrail approval
- Member adoption of tourism industry eco – sustainable certification/accreditation
- Publicity endorsing brand position
- MRVC nature & aboriginal product bookings
- Track, path and traffic counters
- Digital engagement around nature
- Fundraising revenue
- Product Packaging
- Existing operators increasing tours
- Development of tourism operator/products in market
- TWA/ASW/SWDC Market Research
- Councils – Shire reporting
- Peer group recognition
- Operator/visitor/member satisfaction
- Value of investment and employment
- Conservation outcomes



## APPENDIX

- MRBTA Precincts Weed Control Plan
- Ecotourism Australia – Geotourism, Geoparks and Geotrails, A Tourism Development Opportunity for Australia June 2015
- Ecotourism Australia – Annual Report 2014 2015
- Ecotourism Australia – Blueprint for Sustainable Future 2014
- National Trust of Australia – Ellensbrook, Brief & Call for Proposals. Community & Stakeholder Consultation.
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River – Trail Projects update July 2016
- South West Development Commission – South West Regional Blueprint
- Tourism Australia – Coastal Fact Sheet 2016
- Tourism & Transport Forum – Conceptualising The Value of Protected Areas
- Tourism & Transport Forum – Natural Tourism Partnerships – Action Plan
- Tourism & Transport Forum – Nature Based Tourism In Australia March 2014
- Tourism WA – Jump Start Guide – Types of Tourism Businesses, Naturebased tourism and ecotourism
- UNESCO – The International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP). Statutes of The International Geoscience & Geopark Programme
- WestCycle Australia - Western Australia – Mountain Bike Strategy 2015–2020, Unlocking the Potential

