

## ECO-CROCODILE CRUISE GLIDES INTO HALL OF FAME

DAINTREE River Cruise Centre owner Kianna Lafferty believes it's the little, sustainable wins that help her business unleash its ecotourism potential.

The local eco-cruising business, which features four river boats powered by low emission, fuel efficient four-stroke outboards, was inducted into the Ecotourism Australia Hall of Fame, alongside Sailaway Port Douglas and 25 other businesses.

It comes as Douglas Shire Council has continued to improve its eco-tourism credentials, achieving a higher level of certification with 90% of [Ecotourism Australia's](#) criteria.

Douglas Shire and tourism operators were celebrated in a [Global Eco Conference 2020](#) which finishes in Margaret River today.

Due to COVID-19, the conference introduced innovative design to cater for both a live conference and a virtual conference via live streaming.

The Daintree River Cruise Centre, which offers nature and crocodile cruises, has been audited every year since it was first eco-certified 21 years ago.

Ms Lafferty said she finds using sustainable tourism practices a very worthwhile process. "It's not always the cheapest way of doing things, but it is the best way to protect these wonderful wilderness areas and the best way for people to experience it – that's why we look after it," Ms Lafferty said.

"My father was very environmentally-minded when it was not the cool thing to do and back then, we did things like re-using fuel canisters and using eco-friendly cleaning products."

In 2019, Douglas Shire made history by becoming the country's first certified ECO destination. The criteria make sustainable development concrete, objective and demonstrable by completing actions in six themes:

- 1) Destination Management
- 2) Nature Scenery
- 3) Environment & Climate
- 4) Culture & Tradition
- 5) Social Well-Being
- 6) Business & Hospitality

Council's Sustainability Officer Ada Pasanen said the higher certification shows Council continues to achieve measurable improvements to the sustainable management of the destination.

"While the Council has worked on several projects that increase the sustainability in the region, the new certification doesn't come without the amazing work that our tourism industry has been doing," she said.

"The certification is internationally recognised and shows the operators' commitment to deliver quality tourism experiences that celebrate the environment we live in."

Tourism Port Douglas Daintree (TPDD) Chief Executive Officer Tara Bennett said the new level of certification strengthened the region's credibility in the ecotourism market.

## MEDIA RELEASE

"Reaching the Ecotourism level of certification demonstrates we are committed to the path of continuous improvement," she said.

"Now more than ever sustainable travel is seen as must and our region's credentials are being talked about globally."

Ms Lafferty encouraged other businesses to get ecotourism certified.

"The accreditation is about explaining what your business does and saying yes we need to make a profit, but we also need to make decision based on what's best for the environment," Ms Lafferty said.

She said she believed a lower speed limit for all vessels on the Daintree River could help protect the wildlife.

## ENDS

For more information, please contact:

Tara Bennett, Chief Executive Officer

Tourism Port Douglas Daintree

Phone: 07 4099 4588

Email: [eo@visitportdouglasdaintree.com](mailto:eo@visitportdouglasdaintree.com)

Web: [www.visitportdouglasdaintree.com](http://www.visitportdouglasdaintree.com)