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The contribution of tourism to healthy active [sustainable] communities



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- A healthy, sustainable community is one that is economically, environmentally, socially and culturally healthy
- Healthy people are physically, mentally, socially, emotionally and spiritually active – communities that provide opportunities for all of these are healthy, sustainable communities



Today's presentation:

- Why fostering and supporting tourism development can help to increase the diversity and quality of leisure, recreation, sport, and quality-of-life options of communities
- How tourism can be harnessed to contribute to healthy communities

What is Tourism? Who are tourists?

- **People travelling, usually to visit natural, social and cultural attractions**
 - > Seek new and even foreign experiences
 - > Escape from everyday life
- **Who are tourists?**
 - Anyone who is visiting from at least 50 km away and stays away from home for at least one night
 - They may look different, or they may look and talk and act just like us
 - they are extremely diverse – e.g. volunteer and working vacations, religious pilgrimages, backpackers, golf/ski/other sport tours, people like you on study tours and visiting wineries

Why tourism in your community?

1. Why would you want tourists to come to your community or region?
2. Why would tourists want to come to your community or region?
3. How might you begin to use tourism in your journey toward fostering healthier communities?

1. Why tourists? Why tourism?

- There are many positive aspects for developing tourism opportunities in your region, working with the tourism industry, opening up your community facilities and services to tourists or hosting a tourism event
- There are also negative aspects that communities need to be aware of
- To highlight some of these positives (and negatives), I will use research findings and quotes from

... 3 studies by TRU staff and students:



**Magnetic Island
(Queensland)
Bruny Island
(Tasmania)
Frankston Tourism
(Victoria)**

Landmarks Bridge

Magnetic Island and Bruny Island

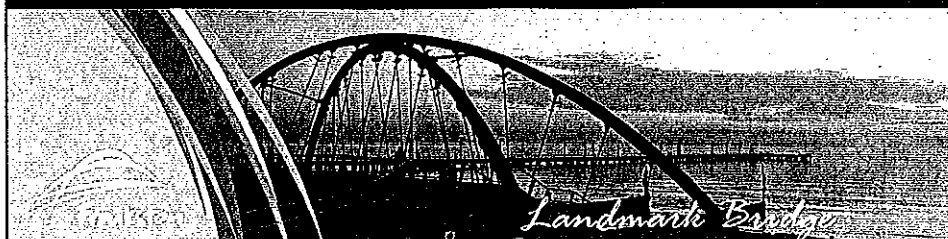


- PhD research surveying visitors and local residents
- no cost to the local community or industry
- findings will help with tourism planning and marketing

Frankston Tourism

**Final year projects under the supervision of Dr Croy –
(also no cost to the industry or community) proposing ...**

- A local triathlon
- A multicultural festival
- A recreational cycling guide
- A summer seaside festival
- Guidelines for greening the inner city
- A self-guided heritage trail
- A night market



How does tourism impact on quality-of-life and community sustainability?

- **Three types of potential impacts from tourism:**
 - Environmental – for countries, regions, communities
 - Economic – as above
 - Socio-cultural – for hosts and visitors
- **Planning and managing for impacts helps make tourism and communities sustainable**
 - Maximise positive impacts
 - Eliminating, minimising, mitigating or avoiding negative impacts

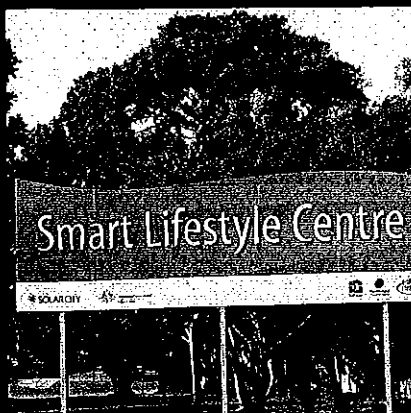
Tourism's environmental impacts

- **Fragile and sensitive areas are often tourism attractions**
 - They are thus more prone to impacts
 - > Arid areas
 - > Coastal areas
 - > Marine areas
 - > Alpine areas
 - > Unique areas
- **An impact to these environments could be very devastating and irreversible**

Positive Environmental Impacts

- **Potential for many positive environmental impacts of tourism**
 - Incentive for conservation
 - Improvements to environmental quality
 - Locals value their area more highly
- **Tourism is an important and even a necessary tool to conserve fragile areas**
 - To raise money and to change behaviour

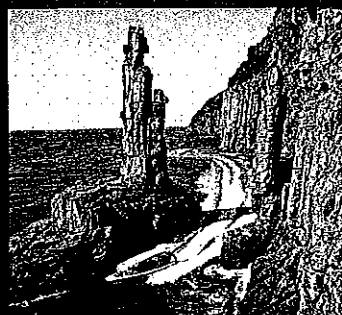
• "World Heritage listing seems to enhance the awareness of tourists to further protect and enhance the environment, but also presents the opportunity for locals to leverage off tourists and enhance their local area, especially with the introduction of the new sustainable energy centre at Horseshoe."



– Magnetic Island accommodation provider

• "We have set up a TasCoast Conservation Fund, to fund the impact of our operation on the environment. A majority of tourists who come here are very sensitive to the environment and want to leave nothing but footprints."

– local business owner



PURE
INSPIRATION
A Part of the Huon Trail



- "There is an opportunity to tax visitors which can be used for environmental programs and management of infrastructure."
 - Bruny Island accommodation provider

Positive Economic Impacts

• Direct, or primary economic impacts



- tourists buy tourism products and services and line the pockets of tourism operators
- tourists also buy petrol, groceries, souvenirs, etc.

Other Positive Economic Impacts

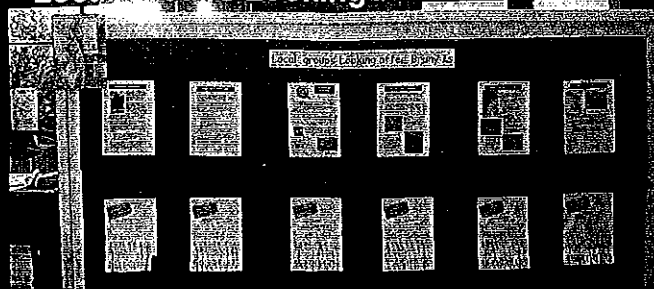
- **Indirect, or secondary economic impacts**
 - Hotels, restaurants, and tourism attractions purchase other goods such as food, equipment, vehicles, furnishings and services such as electricity, plumbing, maintenance, landscaping, catering, laundry,
- **Induced economic impacts**
 - tourism employees spend their money in the community and region

- "Many residents depend on tourism for their livelihood and wouldn't be able to stay on Bruny otherwise - this has flow on effects for the number of children enrolled at the school and number of teachers employed so the economic effects are enormous."

– tour operator



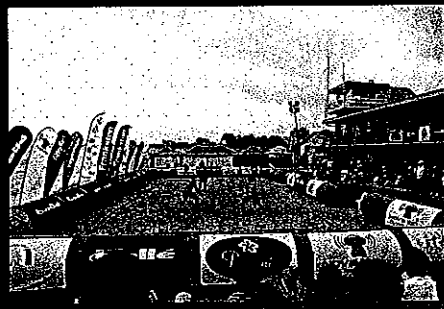
Local Groups Looking After Bruny Island



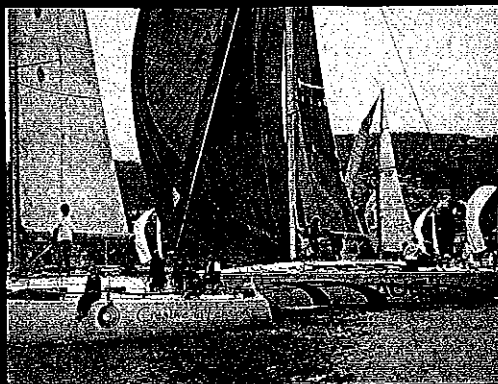
- "Often tourism is the reason people can continue to live on the island. Most of the money we spend also goes back into the local community, including the use of local trades people." – Bruny Island shop keeper

Positive socio-cultural impacts

- increased economic activity provides revenue to maintain, upgrade and build
- Increased demand for events and local facilities ensures their survival



- Tourist dollars make it possible to maintain, renovate and build more specialised leisure and sporting facilities and to host major events



Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism

The nature of the impacts depends on many things:

- Tourists
 - > Number of visitors
 - > Length of stay
 - > Ethnic characteristics of visitors, compared to locals
 - > Economic characteristics of visitors, compared to locals
 - > What tourists want to do and what they actually do
- Destination
 - > Economic state of your area
 - > Degree of local involvement in tourism
 - > Spatial characteristics of tourism development
 - > Viability of your local culture

"In the summer there are activities that bring people together, markets and film nights at halls and stuff, so that gives visitors a chance to interact with locals."
 – Bruny Island business owner

- "... heaps turn out from the community and we all intermingle. Plenty of new friendships and even relationships have developed during the festivals on the island."
 – MI Times newspaper owner

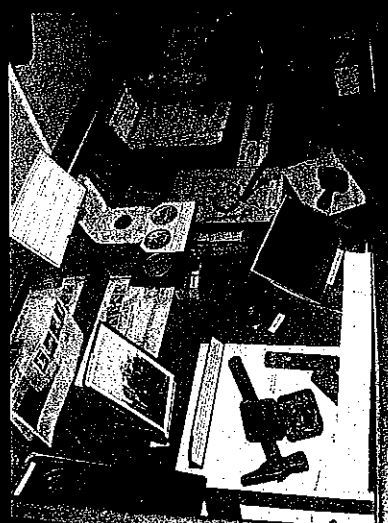


- "... festivals and events which residents are very proud of and which embrace community values. Organisations work very hard to encourage interaction between visitors and locals."
 – member of Magnetic Island community group



Tourism can revitalize and sustain

- ... can increase the importance placed on community values and lifestyles
 - Cultural performances, handicrafts, artwork
- ... can help to built a common vision among groups through their shared values, history and traditions
- ... can help revitalize what might otherwise be lost



- "All of Bruny Island residents living here are proud of its attributes, proud of family contributions to the island. Some families have been here for generations. We have a wealth of knowledge on the culture and history of the island ... that the community wants to share with tourists."
– retired island local

2. Why would tourists visit your region?

- **What do you have to offer in terms of**
 - > Seek new or even foreign experiences
 - > Escape from everyday life
- the city, the country, the people, the ambience
- museums, art galleries, heritage buildings, wineries, cathedrals, even the local university
- the beach, the mountains, the lakes, golf courses, parks and botanic gardens, zoos and aquariums
- events – the football, the cricket, the Grand Prix, the local market, the jazz festival

Why would tourists visit your region?

- "People come for blue skies, peaceful, relaxing lifestyle, ambience, sense of self, health, wellness, also the natural aspects of the island such as sunsets, national parks, waterfalls, beaches but there is also a certain laid back social atmosphere the island has to offer."
 - Tour Operator, Magnetic Island

Why would tourists visit your region?

- Needs marketing research because tourists are as diverse as we are
- Needs careful planning because tourism is a very competitive global industry and every destination is trying to claim that they offer something “unique”

3. How / what can you do?

- **Get (all) stakeholders involved**
 - Who can make it happen
 - Who will be impacted
 - What options are there for the community?
- **Start local but think global**
 - e.g. Frankston Tourism Association – works together to promote Frankston

Summary:

- **Consider what you can offer tourists**
 - > provide new and foreign experiences
 - > provide an escape from everyday life
- **Consider what tourism can do for your community**
 - provide cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits
 - increases the diversity and quality of leisure, recreation, sport, and quality-of-life options of communities

What next?

- **If you think that tourism development (or a change in the current level and type of tourism) might be of benefit to your region or community**
 - Contact your local university or college for help – good for communities, universities and students
 - Learn from other communities and regions
 - Work with locals as well as businesses and planners to develop a plan that will attract tourists while sustaining and enhancing what you are already cherish about your community



Thank you.