

# Wildlife Tourism Subprogram



CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd

# Academic Participants

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## **University of Tasmania**

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**36 from  
9 unis**

# Steering Committee

Sir Frank Moore	Chairman CRC
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Stuart Lennox	Tourism Tasmania
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Daryl Moncrieff	CALM, WA
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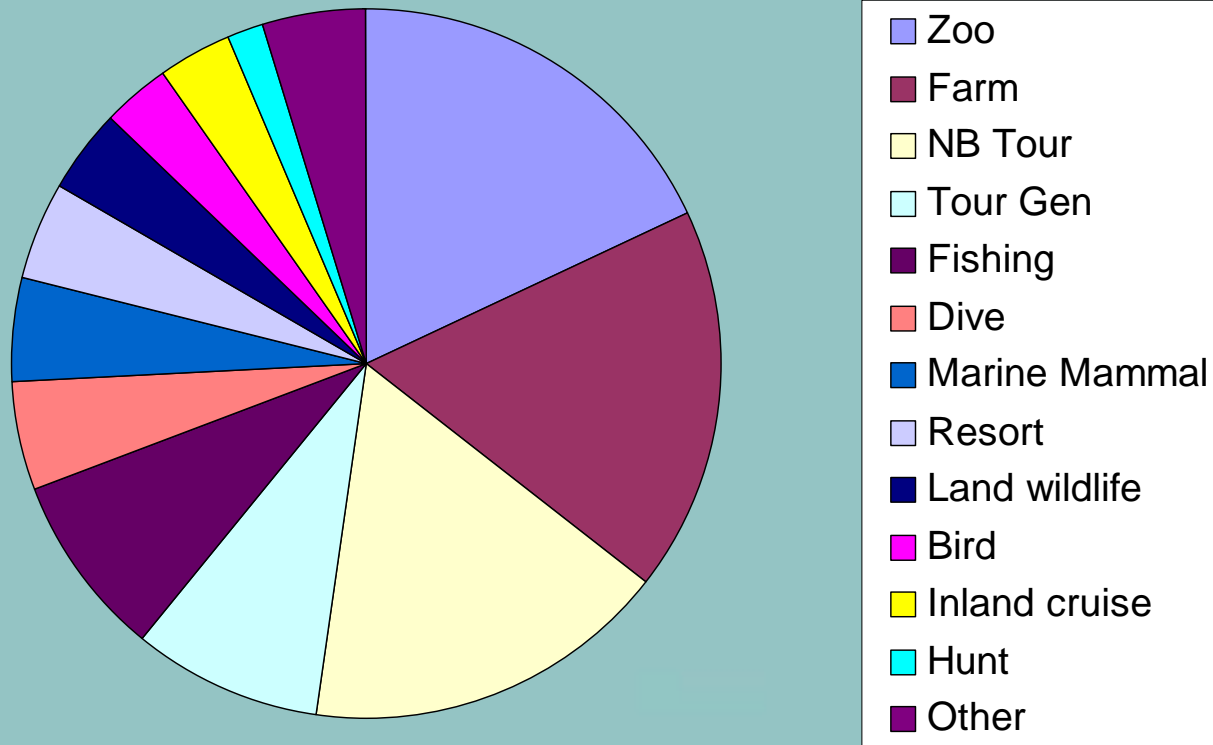
Karen Higginbottom	Research Director
Terry De Lacy	CEO CRC
Trevor Sofield	Uni Tas
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Johannes Bauer	CSU

# The Australian Wildlife Tourism “Industry”

- > 1200 enterprises
- Many involve wildlife as part of a broader general or nature-based experience
- No cohesive “WT industry”
- Diverse activity types



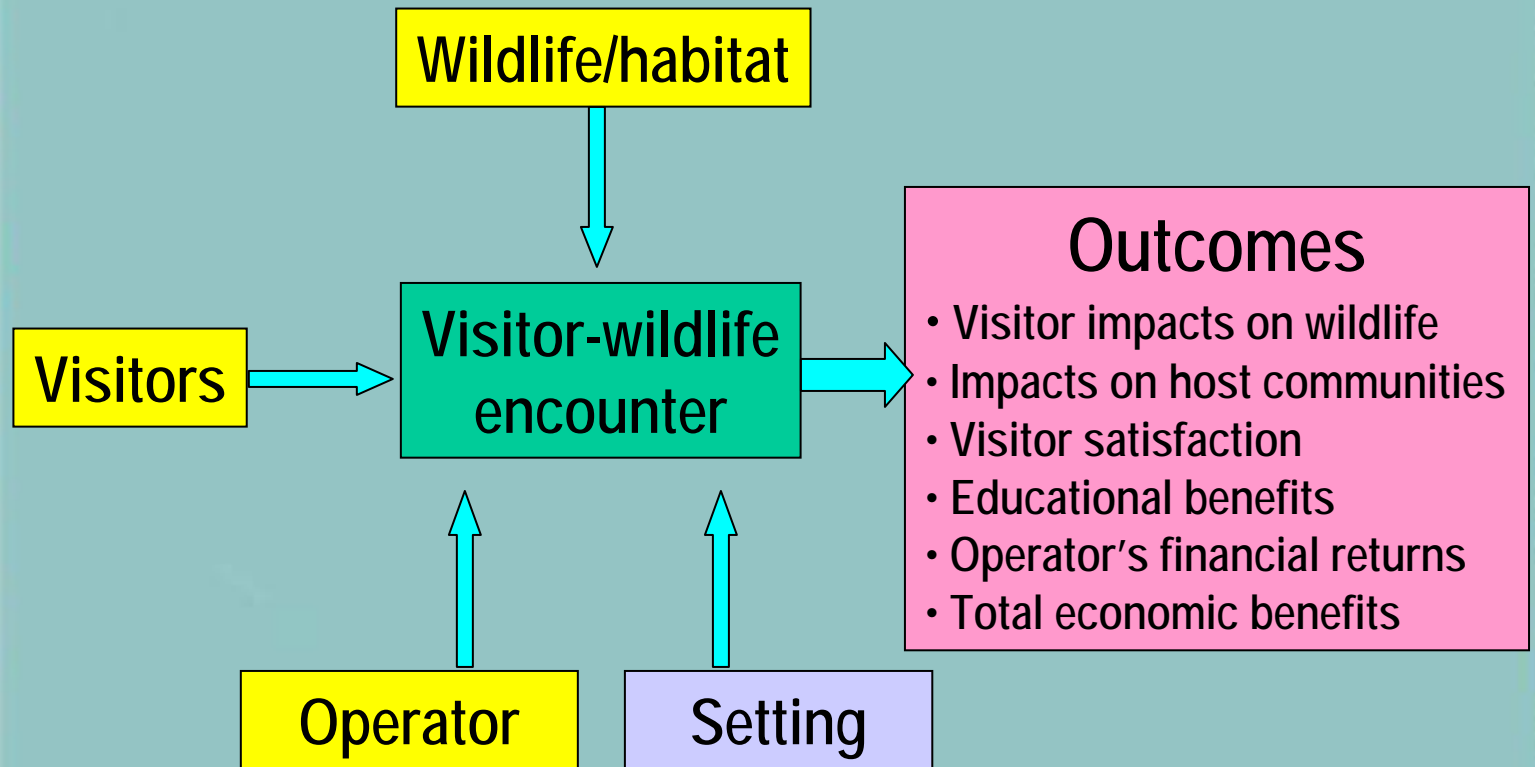
# Wildlife Tourism Sub-sectors: number of operators



# Subprogram Goals

- Identify and realise opportunities for wildlife tourism (WT)
- Facilitate enhancement of sustainability of WT
  - Economic
  - Environmental
  - Social

# Components of the Wildlife Tourism Experience



# Types of Project

1. Review

2. Multi-site, multi-discipline

3. Issues

e.g. private land potential, product development process, role of zoos in wildlife conservation

4. Species/ sub-sector specific

e.g. crocs, whales, fishing,



# Outputs

- 29 CRC research reports
- > 20 refereed academic publications, 1 journal special issue, book in prep.
- 6 PhDs in progress, 5 Hons completed
- Databases:
  - resource (wildlife)
  - operators (national, Tas)
  - visitors
  - literature



# Outputs (ctd)

- Prototype wildlife tourism marketing and interpretive website, with scenario analysis
- Assessment tool for nature tourism on rural lands
- Contributions to development of tourist facilities/ interpretation re kangaroos, glow worms



# Outputs (ctd)

- Australia's first conference on wildlife tourism (with Tourism Tasmania)
- Network of wildlife tourism stakeholders
- .....Wildlife Tourism Australia!



# Economic Importance of Wildlife Tourism to Australia



- > 8 million zoo visits p.a.
- 63 million visits to Nat. Park(s) p.a.
- Australian wildlife re inbound tourism = \$1.8 - 3.5 billion (?)
- Recreational fishing = \$2 billion
- Hunting = \$1 billion
- Whale watching = US\$56 million



## Economic Importance of Wildlife Tourism to Australia...*ctd*

- Phillip Island Penguin Reserve = \$96 million
- Springbrook NP glow worms = \$4 million
- Mon Repos Turtle Rookery = \$1 million
- Potential importance to regional areas
- Growth in in free-range wildlife viewing



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# Opportunities ... (ctd)

## Conservation Importance

- Potential (and existing) contributions to conservation:
  - education
  - economic incentive for conservation
  - revenue for conservation
  - research and conservation work
- Limited formal mechanisms for WT to contribute to conservation (except large zoos), though some operators do so on informal basis.



# Opportunities ... (ctd)

## Demand

- Global growth in participation in free-range wildlife viewing
- 17% of international visitors influenced to visit Australia by presence of native wildlife
- 68% of international visitors want to see Australian wildlife
- Koalas are the species international visitors most want to see and enjoy seeing, followed by kangaroos

# Opportunities ... (ctd)

## International Trends

- Increasing specialisation of wildlife tourism products
- New species and environments
- Increased and improved use of interpretation
- Increased use of technology to facilitate wildlife viewing
- More experiences combining free-range and captive
- Increased synergies between tourism and conservation



# Obstacles



## Obstacles ... (ctd)

# The Wildlife Tourism “Industry”

- Room for improvement in product quality for many operators esp. interpretation
- Many businesses not financially sustainable
- Risks of negative effects on wildlife and habitats
- Low levels of communication, coordination, strategic direction, government support

# Recommendations



## Recommendations ... (ctd)

- Encourage innovation and best practice in product development
- Raise standards of product quality
- Improve effectiveness of marketing
- Build industry capacity to deliver high quality experiences
- Build industry capacity to be financially successful



## Recommendations ... (ctd)

- Improve and expand application of techniques for minimising negative effects on wildlife
- Improve and expand application of techniques for maximising conservation benefits for wildlife
- Make regulation more operator-friendly
- Improve effectiveness of accreditation



# Recommendations ... (ctd)

- Increase government support for sustainable development of wildlife tourism
- Increase role of Indigenous people and issues
- Build communication channels
- Research on critical issues
- Initiate coordination and strategic development

