

**WILDLIFE TOURISM AUSTRALIA
WORKSHOP**

PRESENTATION:

11.40AM

MONDAY 18 APRIL 2005

**CASE STUDY FOR
MARRYING WILDLIFE
TOURISM AND
CONSERVATION:**

**INALA NATURE TOURS-
TONIA COCHRAN**

The philosophy of Inala Nature Tours is underpinned by the belief that Wildlife Tourism and Conservation should be inextricably linked. This business is committed to contributing to conservation in a number of ways, including education and increasing awareness of conservation issues during tours and during interactions with the general public, fundraising for specific conservation projects and participation in a range of conservation issues. It aims to show by example that one can operate a successful Wildlife Tourism enterprise while making such contributions and that indeed these contributions should be made in return for the benefits received from utilizing wildlife in their business. In addition, the belief at Inala, is that incorporating conservation has in fact increased business and made it more profitable.

This presentation identified some of the ways in which Inala contributes to conservation during their business operation, including:

- **Education and increasing awareness and acting as an ambassador for the wildlife and their habitats (includes clients, local school children and the local community)**
- **Active participation in work on threatened species and transmission of information to clients**
- **Sale of Inala merchandise (t-shirts etc) to raise funds for conservation projects**
- **Using donations made by clients for conservation projects**
- **Working with other operators with a similar conservation ethic**
- **Designing minimal impact tours**
- **Caring for injured and orphaned wildlife and involving clients in the experience where possible**

It is hoped that this information may be useful to other Wildlife Tourism operators, and may also be a way to increase the success of their business. In addition to increasing the satisfaction of operators as a result of their contribution to a worthy cause, it also makes good business sense by contributing to long term sustainability of their business by protecting the habitat and wildlife on which they depend for the success of their business.

BIO OF PRESENTER/ AUTHOR

Tonia Cochran is a PhD graduate from the University of Melbourne and has worked in a number of fields ranging from marine biology, to conservation management and tourism. Tonia owns and operates her own eco-tourism business, Inala Nature Tours, which is comprised of both an eco-tour operation and a licensed travel agency. She also consults on conservation management and ecotourism issues and is current Chair of Wildlife Tourism Australia.