



# TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL & THE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT FUND PRESENT THE: **URBAN NATURE - YOUTH ECOTOURISM FORUM >>**

A UNITED NATIONS - *DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT* EVENT  
TUESDAY 31 OCTOBER & WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER, 2006

AS PART OF THE 2006 INTERNATIONAL ECOTOURISM  
CONFERENCE

**“SUSTAINABLE TOURISM - SUSTAINABLE FUTURE”**

Townsville City Council and the Community Environment Fund are proud to present the **Urban Nature-Youth Ecotourism Forum**. This event, in partnership with Reef HQ, Townsville high schools, James Cook University (Tourism Department and TESAG) and Reef Check Australia, is a student-based Forum which builds on and follows the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) Urban Nature workshop held earlier this year in Cape Town, South Africa as part of the ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability International World Congress.

The forum will be held as a complimentary event of the 2006 International Ecotourism Conference and will feature keynote speakers from Tourism, Business and Environmental organisations.

The forum will link **secondary students from Townsville with youth from around the world, all exploring the theme of ecotourism**. This will provide our young people with a chance to present, discuss and debate issues and challenges relating to tourism and their environment. This will also provide opportunities to celebrate the diversity and interconnectedness of our Global Urban Nature and facilitate an exciting co-learning environment for our future leaders and decision-makers.

The Forum's discussions will be held around the following broad themes:

- Ecotourism from and Business perspective;
- Ecotourism from the Environmental perspective; and
- Ecotourism from a Community perspective.



The main objective of the Forum will be for students of Townsville, working with youth worldwide, to develop and deliver an Ecotourism Youth Charter. This Charter will incorporate students' ideas and views about ecotourism, sustainability and our communities. The Charter will be formulated by the students and be presented by nominated schools' representatives at the final plenary session of the 2006 International Ecotourism Conference to the attending delegates. The Charter will form part of a greater Conference Proceedings document.

The theme for the Urban Nature – Youth Ecotourism Forum is “Sustainable Tourism – Sustainable Future” and will be complimented by an innovative and exciting project “Urban Nature Ecotourism Puzzle Map” showing at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery and the 2006 International Ecotourism Conference.





## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

### Tuesday, 31 October

- Part I. Exploring Ecotourism –Urban Nature  
 Venue: Mayoral Reception Room - Townsville City Council  
 Administration Building, Walker Street, Townsville City.  
 Part I-a. Learning about Ecotourism from Experts

Facilitator: Dr. Alastair Birtles

- 8.45** Refreshments and Registration
- 9.00** Welcoming Introduction- Briefing: Ecotourism and Urban Nature – Youth Ecotourism Forum Objectives  
- Dr. Alastair Birtles, James Cook University
- 9.15** **Keynote speaker 1:** Ecotourism and Community Development  
- Vanessa Silveira - Sao Paulo Forest Institute
- 9.35** Group activity - summary
- 9.45** **Keynote speaker 2:** Ecotourism from a Business Perspective - Gideon Amboga, Kenya Wildlife Service
- 10.05** Group Activity - Summary
- 10.15** MORNING TEA
- 10.40** **Keynote speaker 3:** Social Sustainability in Ecotourism: incorporating local and indigenous communities - Dr. Lea Scherl
- 11.00** Group activity - summary
- 11.10** **Keynote Speaker 4:** Ecotourism and the Great Barrier Reef - Roger Beeden, Reef Check Australia
- 11.30** Group activity - summary
- 11.40** **Keynote speaker 5:** How certified SCUBA divers value coral reef environments - Dr. Dean Miller, GBRMPA
- 11.55** LUNCH BREAK

Part I-b. Sharing experience and exploring on Ecotourism

- 12.45** Role playing: Ecotourism Business Case
- 13.05** Interactive activities to draft Youth Ecotourism Charter, exploring issues/challenges, solutions and actions
- 14.30** Nomination of Charter delegates and Final Brainstorming
- 14.40** Close

Refreshments will be offered to students, teachers and mentors during the afternoon session

### Wednesday, 1 November

During the day, the nominated student representatives will work with Townsville City Council staff to develop the Charter.

- Part II. Exploring Our Global Urban Nature:  
 International Videoconference  
 Venue: Reef HQ Aquarium, Flinders Street, Townsville City

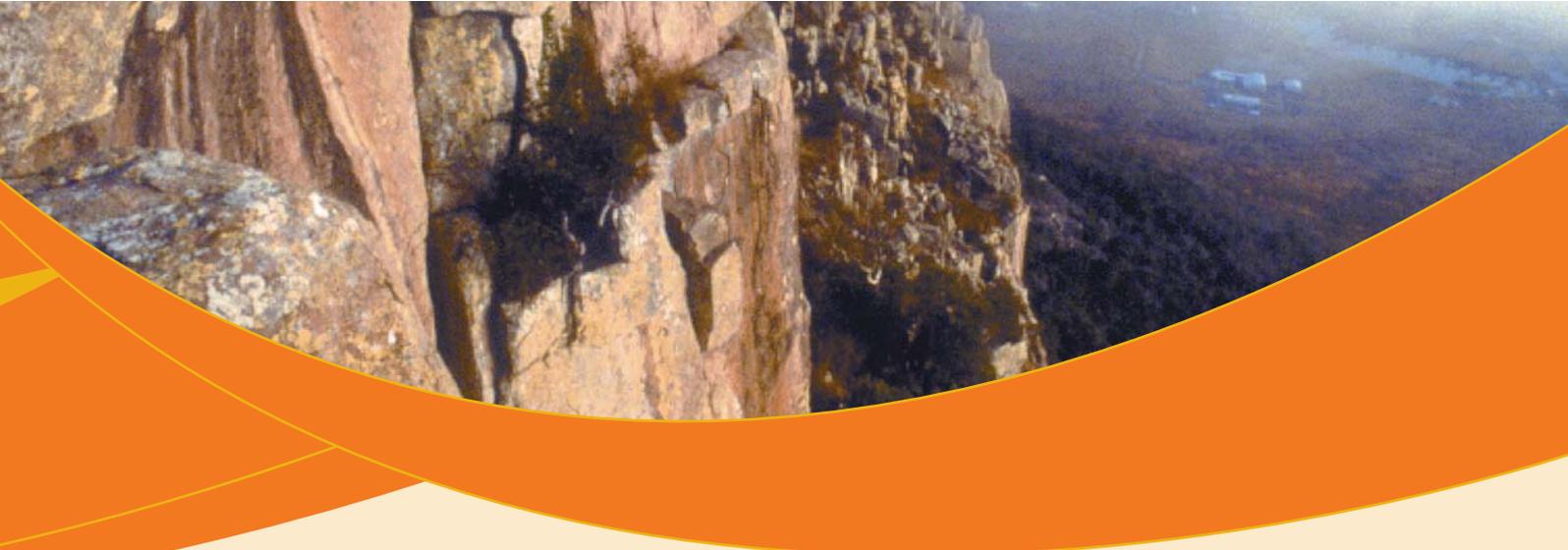
- 19.00** Students arrive – pre-video conference dinner
- 19.30** Video conference starts (times and countries to be advised soon)- provide input and share experiences on Ecotourism
- 21.00** Close

### Thursday, 2 November

Part III. Sharing our Ideas and Findings

- 09.00 onwards** Finalisation of Ecotourism Youth Charter taking into accounts suggestions from International students
- 16.20** Ecotourism Conference Plenary Session 4 - Nominated Students present Ecotourism Youth Charter as a Keynote Address (5 mins)





## DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS

### Part I. Exploring Ecotourism – Urban Nature

The workshop will involve students from local Secondary Schools, mentored by James Cook University students and Reef Check volunteers to explore effective ecotourism as well as issues and challenges for a sustainable tourism future. High School students will learn from and connect with experts on current Ecotourism trends, issues and opportunities around the three main broad themes: business, environment and community.

They will then explore challenges, issues and actions on ecotourism according to what they have learnt from their mentors prior to the conference, the morning presentations and what they learnt from and shared with other students. Afternoon Ecotourism interactive activities will foster discussions and ideas to come up with elements to include in the Ecotourism Youth Charter.

### Part II. Exploring our Global Urban Nature – International Video Conference

This event will connect young people from diverse cultures and backgrounds and bring together a unified dialogue for a sustainable tourism future. Townsville will connect with young people from Cape Town, Scotland, France, Philippines, Brazil and Malawi (and possibly other countries) to share and combine thoughts, ideas and issues on sustainable tourism in their Global Urban Nature. Nominated school students will list these ideas to incorporate them in the final Ecotourism Youth Charter.

*The findings from these two events will be presented by two Townsville student delegates at the final Conference plenary session on Thursday 2 November 2006.*

### Complimenting project: Art in Schools Urban Nature Ecotourism Puzzle Map

The “Art in Schools” program is about young people producing exciting artwork that reflects their view of their local environment. The Urban Nature Ecotourism Puzzle Map artworks will reflect how primary school students view their Urban Nature and will be displayed at the Perc Tucker Gallery during the 2006 International Ecotourism Conference from the 30th October to the 3rd of November.

The project is funded by the Townsville City Council through the Perc Tucker Gallery and Environmental Management Services.

Over 300 students from Year 1 through to Year 7 will be participating in the project. The final project will incorporate a total size 4m x 6m 3-dimensional interactive map that children can walk through, reflecting the natural environment of their local area. They may wish to make the focal point of their piece a native bird, natural habitat, waterway or mountain. The pieces of the puzzle are only limited by one’s imagination. They may be portrayed through collage, paint, sculpture or any medium of art they desire.

#### SUPPORTED BY:



*Thanks to NQ Water, Kelly Sharp & GBRMPA for images*



## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

### ***Dr. Alastair Birtles - Facilitator of the plenary session***

Dr. Alastair Birtles has a Zoology honours and PhD background and a multidisciplinary professional experience, including 14 years in the James Cook University Departments of Marine Biology and Zoology and 14 years in Tourism Program, School of Business. Dr. Birtles has 35 years experience in environmental research, marine interpretation and diving consultancy in a wide range of conservation and ecotourism NGOs, and as a conservation

officer with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. His current research and teaching focuses on ecologically sustainable management of wildlife tourism in a unique interdisciplinary approach, which has been increasingly acknowledged by a range of stakeholder groups and at national and international levels. Dr. Birtles has numerous publications in journals, books, magazines, interpretative brochures and pamphlets and several films.

### ***Gideon Amboga***

Gideon Amboga has been working for Kenya Wildlife Service, a government conservation agency, for over 30 years. There he initiated 10 ecotourism projects in 4 protected area ecosystems, aimed at protecting the environment whilst providing economic benefits to local communities, reducing conflicts and enhancing visitor enjoyment. These projects included tented camps,

eco-lodges, community game sanctuaries, campsites, cultural manyattas and local community lifestyles exhibitions. Gideon gained experience in sustainable ecotourism development both locally and abroad. He has been in charge of various protected areas in different parts of Kenya, and has worked with pastoral communities on conservation initiatives.

### ***Roger Beeden***

Roger Beeden obtained his BSc Hons in Environmental Biotechnology from the University of Westminster in 1992. After graduation Roger worked in the Pharmaceutical industry in various sales and marketing roles in the UK and NZ. Roger recently completed his MAppSc in Natural Resource Management at James Cook University, which included a content analysis of spontaneous

comments from Queensland's recreational fishing community, supervised by Dr Stephen Sutton. His current research interests include community participation in the management of marine resources, with particular interest in coral reef ecosystems. He is currently the marketing and communications manager of Reef Check Australia.

### ***Dr. Dean Miller***

Dean Miller works for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as the Tourism and Recreation Group's Industry Engagement Officer. In this position he is breaking new and exciting ground in ways to engage with crew and staff working on the many marine tourism vessels on the GBR, an extremely important sector of the tourism industry. In the lead up to this position Dean completed a PhD in tourism and environmental studies at James Cook

University that examined ways to make the dive tourism industry more sustainable and of higher value to both tourists and tour operators. Dean also has a degree in biological science with honours in marine biology, and enjoys the connections he is able to make between the natural and social sciences for sustainable solutions in natural resource use and enjoyment.

### ***Dr. Leah Scheri***

Dr. Scheri is a senior social scientist and environmental psychologist. She has over 18 years of experience within a wide range of planning and management in the delivery of environmental management and rural development programs/projects. She has worked in a wide range of cultural contexts, acting as a "bridge-builder" between developing and developed countries' perspectives, various levels of governance, and a wide range of stakeholders, from non-governmental to Government sectors, scientific communities,

bilateral and multi-lateral funding organizations, and the private sector. She has strong expertise in social dimensions of environmental planning and management, poverty eradication and sustainable development, governance, rights and equity as well as stakeholder participation and integration. She also has expertise in the field of tourism, ecotourism and environmental planning and management.

### ***Vanessa Silveira***

Vanessa Silveira has a Bcs in Tourism and holds an Ecotourism degree from SENAC College. She works at the São Paulo City Green Belt Biosphere Reserve, as the Youth Program (an eco-job training initiative for needy youth communities at São Paulo Metropolis periurban zones) field manager. Ms. Souza developed an innovative sustainable tourism project, called the

"Join-Effort Tourism", where green belt youth groups conduct mutual visits with the intention of creating low-budget local itineraries, networking similar ecotourism initiatives and stimulating the launch of small tourism businesses.