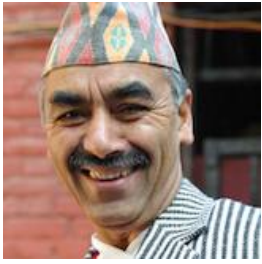




BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

27 – 28 November 2017



Bharat Basnet

Chairman, The Explore Nepal Group

Abstract

For more than 20 years, we have been striving to combine quality and excellence in organizing experiential tours within the Himalayan ranges of Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet.

Today, with random deforestation, overrun trails, pollution waste due to over-consumption, the Himalayan region is facing a grave crisis. Tourism Industry which is growing at a phenomenal pace, has its contribution in environmental and cultural degradation of the region. Through this awareness, we devise tours that provide minimal negative impact to the region.

We would certainly welcome your full cooperation and any further advice to promote eco-tourism.

Biography

Mr. Bharat Basnet, is the Managing Director of The Explore Nepal Group together with a group of hospitality related products.

When he was a young man in 20's Mr. Basnet arrived in Kathmandu from his native village of Khotang in the foothills of the eastern Himalaya. He pursued his undergraduate degree working part time in the oldest and largest travel company called Yeti Travels. He also later worked in the world-renowned wildlife resort in Chitwan National Park called Tiger Tops. From his experience in both these places, he formed a passion in tourism offering people beautiful experiences in Nepal, through his love for his country's culture and nature. He has since then become an activist in environmental protection and heritage preservation.

As a pioneer in sustainable Tourism, Mr. Basnet was the first one to start mountain biking in Nepal. He started the leading companies in white water rafting, and trekking in the Himalayas. Realizing the richness of Nepal in birdlife, he was the first one to start bird watching holidays in Nepal, where he also opened the first wildlife camp in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. He now operates a travel company that offers exclusive sustainable holidays to travelers of all needs.

Today, his company The Explore Nepal Group, consists of the travel company, an authentic Nepali Restaurant called Bhojan Griha, a boutique hotel in the Himalayas called Gaun Ghar, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Camp and Kantipur Temple House. His idea behind these hospitality products is to build not just a standardized tourist oriented hotel, but an authentic home which is driven by the passion for conserving Nepal's rich architectural heritage. September 1998 Our heritage buildings include Bhojan Griha in Kathmandu city, which was once the residence of the King's Priest. After the end of the monarchy, the then priest left the building and it fell into disrepair. Bharat Basnet, founder of The Explore Nepal Group was able to take this building on under rent and has turned it around from a derelict building into a stunning organic restaurant Built in 1997 and opened in December 1998, Kantipur Temple House located in the heart of Thamel, is a superb example of Malla era-inspired, Newari architecture. Gaun Ghar in Bandipur is one of the oldest buildings in the "living museum" hilltop village. This building was renovated by The Explore Nepal Group in 2008-09 after 25+ years of neglect and now serves as a testament to the beauty and resilience of traditional Newari building style. Gaun Ghar is now a hotel and restaurant in the heart of Bandipur, serving organic snacks and meals as well as comfortable and homely rooms with all the eco-friendly hallmarks of The Explore Nepal Group.



Elaine Bensted

Chief Executive, Zoos South Australia

Animal & Human Interactions- best practice

Abstract

Animal /human interactions can be a wondrous experience and create a connection with nature that has longer term conservation benefits. Animal/human interactions can also have negative impacts on animal welfare or create a poor perception of ethical practices. Given the growing global trend in increased wildlife tourism, we want operators to show leadership in terms of animal interactions. We know that an engaging message delivered close and personal with an amazing animal can be life changing but we must ensure it is done right regarding animal welfare. Elaine will outline the Zoo and Aquarium Association approach to this and encourage discussion about ensuring best practice in animal/human interactions.

Biography

Elaine Bensted is Chief Executive, Zoos South Australia commencing 3rd September 2012. Since being in the role Elaine has led an improvement in the financial position of this conservation charity and an increase in Zoos SA membership base from 26,000 to over 43,000. She also led the work that culminated in the release of a 20 year Master Plan for both Adelaide and Monarto Zoos in early 2015.

Prior to being appointed as Chief Executive, Zoos South Australia Elaine held the position of Chief Executive, Office of TAFE SA.

Elaine has previously held senior positions in State and Local Government, and the private sector in the finance industry.

Elaine's qualifications include an MBA and a Masters in Public Policy and Management as well as qualifications in finance. She has experience in both the private and public sector in management, marketing and community engagement.

Elaine was the recipient of the 2014 Australian Institute of Management Not for Profit Manager Award.

Elaine is also a Board member of Nature Play SA, Zoos & Aquarium Association (ZAA), Children's University Advisory Board, the Uni SA Under Graduate Advisory Board, The Australian Rhino Project Board and the International Koala Centre of Excellence Advisory Board.



Brendon Bevan

Manager, Arkaba Conservancy & The Arkaba Walk

Biography

To say that Brendon is qualified for his role as Arkaba's General Manager is an understatement. From the age of 4 years Brendon was introduced to the glorious African outdoors when his father purchased a small game reserve in the North West Province of South Africa. It was here Brendon's love and passion for the environment was spawned! Later in life he enjoyed a career as a guide on many reserves and private lodges throughout the Southern African region with his guiding career taking him as far as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa.

Brendon has been chief wildlife warrior, conservationist and property manager of Arkaba since 2010. He is the chairperson of the South Australian Arid Lands North Flinders Group and has been actively engaged with South Australian National Parks' 'Bounceback', a landscape scale conservation program. He has participated in programs to make Arkaba a role model conservation property as a buffer property on the edge of the Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park and also sits on the South Australian Natural Resources Management and Arid Lands Group, an interaction and sharing of ideas around natural resource management. Brendon loves applying a variation of the knowledge gained over years in Africa to an ever changing environment in the incredibly diverse ecosystems at Arkaba.



Jillian Blackbeard

Marketing Manager, Botswana Tourism Organisation

Biography

Jillian, following her return to Botswana in 2011 has worked in the tourism industry, joining Botswana Tourism Organisation in 2014 and becoming Executive Director for Marketing in 2016. She has been part of the implementation of tourism diversification strategies that look to develop tourism product diversification and promote the country globally.

"The privilege of living with free roaming, naturally safe wildlife cannot be reserved for this generation only, we need to individually act as part of a greater whole today to ensure that this continues forever".



Tony Charters AM

Convenor, Global Eco Asia-Pacific Tourism Conference

Biography

Tony has over 25 years experience in tourism planning, development and management in the public and private sectors. He was a founding director of Ecotourism Australia and served continuously on the EA board from 1991-2016. He is Vice-Chair of the Global Ecotourism Network and is on the Board of the Asian Ecotourism Network.

An environmental scientist and urban and regional planner by profession, Tony entered the tourism industry after a successful career in World Heritage Area and multi-tenure protected area management.

As Principal of Tony Charters and Associates he provides strategic advice to leading industry operators and government on tourism industry planning, development and investment; destination development; and the sustainable management.

Tony convenes the annual the Global Eco Asia-Pacific Tourism Conference on behalf of Ecotourism Australia.

He has served since 2004 as a Finalist Judge in the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards hosted by the World Travel and Tourism Council and is an assessor for the National Geographic's Unique Lodges of the World portfolio.

In 2014 he was awarded an Order of Australia (AM) by the Governor-General for his services to the ecotourism industry, nature-based recreation and environmental education. In 2016 he was made an honorary Life Member of Ecotourism Australia and was the inaugural recipient of Ecotourism Australia's Tony Charters AM Medal.



Joselito Costas

Tourism Officer, Cebu Provincial Government

Biography

Joselito Costas organized the Bojo Aloguinsan Ecotourism Association and developed the Aloguinsan River Eco-cultural Tour in 2009. The association won the 2015 Tourism InSPIRE AWARDS for Best Community-Based Tourism Initiative given by the Pacific Asia Travel Association, the United Nations Environment Programme and the European Union. The same project also landed in the TOP 100 SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL DESTINATIONS in 2016 and 2017, and was awarded the 2017 ASEAN Award for Best Community Group in Ecotourism.

He spoke at the 2012 Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference in Monterey, California, USA; the 2014 Fil-Am Empowerment Conference in San Diego, California; and the 2015 Ecotourism and Sustainable Conference-North America in Tampa, Florida.

He is a 2016 University of California in Berkeley Environmental Leadership Fellow. He also attended the 2013 Global Conservation Programme for Leaders and Conservation Managers at the Zoological Society of London in the United Kingdom.

Philippine Airlines recognized him as one of the Six Inspiring Filipinos for 2016. The Department of Tourism awarded him the Philippine National Tourism Award (KALAKBAY) in 2003 for his “exemplary service and commitment to excellence in his field.”

He is at present the Tourism Officer of the Cebu Provincial Government.

Hiran Cooray

Chairman, Jetwing

Biography

The casual visitor to Jetwing House may see the tall, informally dressed figure pass by, offering a warm smile and a soft spoken ‘ayubowan’ of welcome, and never guess that he is one of the most respected and pivotal figures that drive the tourism industry in Sri Lanka today. Hiran Cooray – Chairman of Jetwing and the only son of the company’s founder Herbert Cooray is living proof that a father’s vision can blossom and grow through his children: a dream fulfilled beyond expectations, and evolving still. Carrying forward the legacy of his father and a 40 year history of continuous success is by no means a small responsibility, but to Hiran it is a mantle he carries with pride. His father’s guiding tenets of passion, honesty, integrity and tenacity are also his own. The calm, quiet presence of stability and strength being characteristics as much inherited as the determination and drive to achieve despite obstacles.

His achievements are numerous and much acclaimed. Educated at St. Joseph’s College, Colombo, Hiran graduated from the University of North Carolina, USA and also followed a General Managers course at Cornell University. Taking his motherland to the world in more ways than one, Hiran has represented Sri Lanka on the Board of Directors of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) as well as being the past Chairman of the organization (2010/12). He was the Chairman of PATA Sri Lanka Chapter (2003/4) and President of the Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (2005/8); and was appointed an Alternate Member of the UNWTO – World Committee on Tourism Ethics for 2013-2017. A dynamic presence in promoting Sri Lanka tourism, Hiran is currently serving a second term as President of Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka 2014-2016 and sits on the Board of the Sri Lanka Tourist Development Authority.

In addition to these responsibilities, he holds over 50 directorships in various hotels and related companies. A fierce advocator of youth development and education, Hiran is a much sought-after speaker and panelist at tourism related forums both locally and overseas. Much like his father, Hiran too has a clear vision for Jetwing: “...to be the most respected company. To be a company that is honest, deliver what it says to the employees as well as customers; a company that respects the environment, local communities - for me those are very, very important factors. Financial success is well and fine, but it is not the only factor. The 3Ps are equally important, people, planet& profits. You cannot isolate any of these. So, we are a company focused on all three areas and we continue to grow that way...” Hiran is a devout Catholic, he is also deeply family oriented: his wife Dharshini, and sons Dmitri, Hashan and Harin are his world. Keeping the family tradition, Hiran’s son, Dmitri too has joined Jetwing helping to continue the vision to the next generation.



Andrew Fairley AM

Chairman, The Sir Andrew and Lady Fairley Foundation

Biography

Andrew Fairley has a distinguished association with ecotourism, conservation, parks and resort management over many years and significant international tourism experience. He is the immediate past Deputy Chair of Tourism Australia and the immediate past Chair of Parks Victoria.

Andrew is Chairman of Equisuper, an industry superannuation fund which manages \$7.5 billion in assets for the energy and water sector. He is regarded as one of Australia's leading superannuation lawyers and practises as a solicitor with Hall & Wilcox.

He has a long involvement with the philanthropic sector, and is Chair of the Luke Batty Foundation and the Sir Andrew Fairley Foundation.



Atticus Fleming

Chief Executive Officer, Australian Wildlife Conservancy

Biography

Atticus Fleming is the inaugural Chief Executive of the non-profit Australian Wildlife Conservancy, which manages almost 4 million hectares across iconic regions such as the Kimberley, the Top End and central Australia. AWC protects some of the largest remaining populations of many of Australia's most threatened species.

Prior to AWC, Atticus worked as an advisor to Australia's longest serving Federal Environment Minister, the Hon Robert Hill, and as a constitutional lawyer (Federal Attorney-General's Department) and a corporate lawyer and commercial lawyer (Mallesons).

Atticus was one of four WA finalists in the 2014 Australian of the Year awards and in 2016 was named by Australian Geographic as one of 30 people who have had the greatest influence on conservation of Australia's wildlife over the last 30 years.



Dr. Jenny Gray

Chief Executive Officer, Zoos Victoria, President of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums

Biography

Jenny Gray is the chief executive officer of Zoos Victoria. She has a background in transportation, engineering and ethics, which provides a unique set of skills to tackle the challenges of transforming the three zoos of Zoos Victoria.

Jenny's career history boasts a strong mix of commercial and public sector roles. Her work within the transport sector has given her an in-depth understanding of infrastructure maintenance and development management, while her work in the financial sector delivers strong fiscal management skills. This combination of strengths has proved to be invaluable in zoo management.

Jenny has Masters Degrees in ethics, engineering and business administration.



Anthea Hammon

Managing Director, Scenic World

Biography

Anthea Hammon is the Managing Director of Scenic World, a third generation family business which has been operating in the Blue Mountains for over 70 years. As Australia's most visited privately owned tourist attraction, Anthea has led the company through a strong period of growth and played a leading role in the company's evolution, including the \$30 million redevelopment of the Scenic Railway.

More recently, Anthea has strengthened the company's focus on responsible tourism with the development of a targeted Corporate Social Responsibility program, Scenic World Shared. The program, which builds on decades of local philanthropy, donates three percent of net profits to local philanthropic causes with a focus on the environment, education and community. Anthea is actively involved in the local tourism industry and sits on the Board of Blue Mountains Economic Enterprises as well as the Executive of the Blue Mountains Accommodation and Tourism Association.

As mechanical engineer, Anthea also contributes to the tourism and leisure industry as Chairperson of the ME51 Amusement Rides and Devices, Australian Standards Committee. She is passionate about sharing the Blue Mountains with Scenic World visitors and helping them to craft memorable moments with their loved ones in a safe and environmentally sustainable way.



Rod Hillman

Chief Executive Officer, Ecotourism Australia

Biography

Rod has a life-long involvement in tourism, protected areas management and education with lengthy stints as a tour operator, National Park Manager and teacher all over Australia, and many years overseas.

He has been involved with Ecotourism Australia since 2001 when he was elected as a Board member (then Deputy Chair) for six years where he created the 'Tourism in Protected Areas Forum' (TAPAF) and managed the Annual Conference program. After four years in Papua New Guinea, managing the Kokoda Track, he returned to Ecotourism Australia as its Chief Executive.



Hon Ian Keith Hunter MLC

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray and Minister for Climate Change

Biography

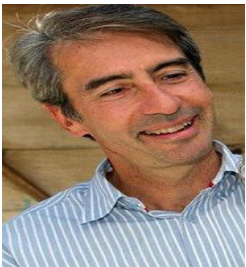
Ian was born in Broken Hill and grew up in the Adelaide suburb of Holden Hill. He attended Gilles Plains High and graduated from Flinders University with a Bachelor of Science (Honours), majoring in Microbiology and Genetics.

At university, Ian was active in community politics, becoming president of the Flinders University Gay Society and later going on to help found the South Australian AIDS Action Committee. He was involved in a variety of campaigns in the LGBT community, including a successful move to have sexuality included as a grounds for discrimination in 1986 under the Equal Opportunity Act. After graduating from university, Ian worked as a Research Assistant in the Department of Clinical Immunology at Flinders Medical Centre, a Policy adviser to the Federal Government and as South Australian State Secretary of the Australian Labor Party. Ian was first elected to the South Australian Legislative Council in 2006 and became a Minister in 2011, holding the portfolios of Communities and Social Inclusion, Social Housing, Disabilities, Youth and Volunteers.

Ian is currently Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray and Minister for Climate Change. Ian's policy interests include science and science education, climate change and environmental sustainability, reconciliation and social justice. Ian married his long term partner, Leith, a visual artist, in Spain in 2012.

Cameron Kerr

Director and Chief Executive, Taronga Conservation Society Australia



Biography

Cameron commenced his career as an agricultural scientist in animal health. He joined the Taronga Conservation Society Australia in 2000, and has held various senior management positions responsible in life sciences, conservation, education, communications and stakeholder management. In his current role as CEO, Cameron has personally overseen a significant cultural and physical transformation of the Taronga organisation and its two zoos. A number of key milestones in Taronga's development include initiating a national strategy for the Tasmanian Devil, being the lead agency for the Regent Honey Eater and Corroboree Frog breed and release programs; developing a youth zoo volunteer program that has now been adopted by a number of zoos across Australia; a major campaign against the illegal wildlife trade through in partnership with Google, TRAFFIC and recently San Diego Zoo Global. Taronga's conservation science and field programs now span from the Republic of Congo to Tasmania.

Cameron is also Vice President of the Zoo and Aquarium Association of Australasia, a Board Director of the International Rhino Foundation and past Chair of the accreditation organisation Ecotourism Australia. Cameron also sits on the Advisory Boards for the Sydney Institute of Technical & Further Education and the University of NSW Faculty of Science.



Joep Koster

Managing Partner, Soel Yachts

Biography

Raised and educated in the Netherlands where marine innovation and sustainability are key values, Joep gained his Masters Degree in Maritime Technology at TU Delft. From there he developed an expertise in energy efficiency and hydrodynamic hull shapes whilst working as a Naval Architect/Designer for a Dutch superyacht design company. During that period, he became increasingly passionate about the combination of luxury and sustainability, and decided to pursue what he saw as a gap in the market.

Together with David Czap (Naval DC), he founded Soel Yachts to design and build solar electric boats. The first production model, the SoelCat 12 was unveiled in Auckland, New Zealand earlier this year, to praise from the likes of boats.com and Business Insider. The company was also nominated for an innovation award at the World Travel and Tourism Council Global Summit 2017.

The SoelCat12 is now sailing in the pristine lagoon water of French Polynesia, operated by the Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort and Spa, who are proud to be the first resort to take eco-tourism to the next level.

Delia Lowe

Deputy Chair, Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council

Biography

Hi, my name is Delia Lowe I am a Miga Balaang (Senior Woman) and I come from the Jerrinja Clan of the Wandj – Wandian Nation, my languages are Dharawal, Dharumba and Dhurga of the South East Coast of Australia. My Community is Located 200 kilometres South of Sydney.

I have been a strong Advocate for my people at a Local, Regional, State, National and International level. My life journey began as a spokes-person for land rights and the protection of sacred sites for the Jerrinja Tribal Council.

Aboriginal Liaison Officer for the NSW Parliamentary Select Committee upon Aboriginals. Ministerial appointment as an Interim Council Member of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) under the NSW Land rights Act, 1983 as amended. Elected as a Councillor for the South Coast Region.

Co-ordinator of the Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council administration office.

NSWALC representative at Indigenous Working Group Forums at the United Nations, Geneva.

Representative for the Federation of Aboriginal land Councils at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

Member of the Corunbun (Jervis Bay) Marine Park Advisory Committee.

Member of the National Aboriginal Committee for Aboriginal Employment, Education and Training.

National Save Corunbun (Jervis Bay) Campaign Committee, NSW Council Member for the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Throughout my life's experiences as an Aboriginal person I believe that the natural justice of my people is still outstanding in Australia.



Rashmini Mather

Consultant, Tourism Strategy

Tourism in Sri Lanka: A Story of Untapped Potential

Biography

Rashmini Mather is a consultant for the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority and heads the Tourism Task Force Secretariat.

A communications and government relations professional with over 12 years' experience in the UK and Sri Lanka, Rashmini fell into a role in tourism by chance in 2015. What began as writing a simple tourism industry paper for the then newly elected government and Prime Minister, turned into a labour of love. She conceptualised a Roots Tourism Philosophy based on her interest in natural and cultural heritage conservation. Working pro bono for two and a half years, Rashmini authored Sri Lanka's Tourism Vision 2025 and architected the Tourism Strategic Plan 2017-2020 to chart a new course for the country's untapped tourism sector. All documents, and more importantly the process of consultation, have been acclaimed locally and internationally.

Rashmini's career began in print media, followed by strategic communications for the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games, the UK's Great promotional campaign and for the UK Prime Minister's Office. She holds a Master's degree in Media & Communications from the London School of Economics & Political Sciences and a Bachelor's degree of Science in Geography from the University of Bristol.



Cameron Miller

Chief Executive Officer, Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation

Biography

Cameron is from Alice Springs and operates from a strong background of 20 years in financial and retail management, including a 12 month stint in operations management for a local construction industry leader. Cameron’s experience includes 15 years working directly with remote community stores, community government councils, health services and Aboriginal Corporations.

Since starting with Ngurratjuta Accounting Service as a bookkeeper in 2003, his career has progressed through to Assistant Manager of the Accounting Service, General Manager of the Corporation and has now been in the role of Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation since March 2016.

Cameron provides a high level of financial, administration and corporate governance support to the members, directors and clients of Ngurratjuta. Cameron has a strong commitment to people living sustainably on their homelands and outstations through business development, investments and community development opportunities. Cameron has completed the Desert Leadership Course in 2013, Australian Institute of Company Directors Course (MAICD 2015), holds a Cert IV in Frontline Management, Diploma of Management and is part way through a Bachelor Of Business. In 2013, Cameron was awarded the Most Outstanding Management Student of 2013 by the Charles Darwin University.



Dr. Chuwit Mitrchob

Deputy Director-General, Designated Area for Sustainable Tourism Administration

Sustainable Tourism Development through Community Based-Approach

Abstract

Roles of communities are crucial for sustainable tourism development since they are actually the owners of tourist attractions. The Thai government has attached a particular concern on community-based tourism (CBT) and assigned Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) to drive CBT in a systematic way. The presentation explains how CBT works and plays a significant role for sustainable tourism development in Thailand.

Biography

Dr. Chuwit holds a Doctoral Degree of Business Administration (DBA) in Human Resource Development from Southern Cross University, New South Wales, Australia as a Royal Thai Government Scholarship student.

He was Executive Director for Competitiveness Development at the Office of National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), dealing with tourism development planning at national level. He was also a member of National Committee on Tourism Policy of Thailand. He was one of supporters in establishing the Asian Ecotourism Network (AEN). He played an important role in encouraging agencies concerned to apply the GSTC’s criteria for sustainable tourism development in Thailand.



Dr. Young Ng

Member, Geotourism Standing Committee of the Geological Society of Australia

Biography

Dr. Young Ng is a founding member of the Geotourism Forum of Ecotourism Australia as well as a member of the Geotourism Standing Committee of the Geological Society of Australia.

He is a pioneer in geotourism, geological heritage conservation and geoparks in the Asia Pacific region and has been awarded various medals for his contributions including the Hong Kong Government's Medal of Honour. He is the original proposer and advocator of the UNESCO Hong Kong Global Geopark.

Being an advisor of several global geoparks and world heritages in China, Young is experienced in training, planning, nomination, assessment and revalidation of national and global geoparks and world heritage sites since 2006. He teaches and researches in geotourism, geological heritage conservation, geoparks and sustainable development.

Sandy Pitcher

Chief Executive of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

Biography

Sandy Pitcher commenced as the Chief Executive of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources in January 2015, where she has focused on includes developing a vibrant nature-based tourism strategy for South Australia, connecting people to parks and delivering on the state's ambitious Climate Change agenda. Sandy was the Deputy Chief Executive of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for 5 years.

She was responsible for many areas, including the South Australian Cabinet Office, the Economic Analysis Division and the Strategic Engagement and Communications division. In 2012 Sandy was awarded the South Australian Telstra Business Woman of the year for the Community and Public sector category, and went on to win the national title in November 2012. Sandy has worked in London, primarily as the head of Corporate and Parliamentary Affairs in the UK's Commission for Racial Equality, and has previously worked in Commonwealth public sector roles in Canberra and Sydney.

Educated at the University of Adelaide, Sandy has degrees in law and the humanities. She was raised in Mannum.





Dr. Russel Reichelt

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Biography

Russell Reichelt joined the GBRMPA in 2007 as Chairman and Chief Executive. His background is in national oceans policy, fisheries research and development and environmental management and conservation.

He has worked as a research scientist at AIMS in the 1980s studying the ecology of coral reefs. Other roles include CEO of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, member of Australia's State of the Environment Committee; Chairman of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation Board, the National Oceans Advisory Group, and CSIRO's Wealth from Oceans Flagship Advisory Committee.

He is currently a board member of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

Professor David G Simmons

Principal Research Strategist Professor of Tourism Lincoln University, New Zealand

Biography

David is the leader of Lincoln University's tourism programme and a founding staff member of the Social Science, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Group. He has been at Lincoln University since 1978 and a faculty member since 1980.

He is the University's Research Strategist and Professor of Tourism. He has recently completed two nationally funded programmes examining financial, economic, and sustainable dimensions of tourism yield, and their spatial effects. Prior to that, he led the investigation into a national government funded study into tourism planning, tourist flows and destination management. Most recently he has been engaged as a member of the writing team for the New Zealand National Tourism Framework (Tourism2025) and annual state of sector reports (2011 – 2016)

From 2008 – 2010 he was Director of Research for the Australian Federal Government's 'Sustainable Tourism CRC' before returning to Lincoln University. He has contributed to formal tourism planning exercises in Cambodia (WWF), Mauritius (UNDP), Niue, Vanuatu (UNWTO/UNDP), Nepal (ITTO, MFAT and WWF), India (WWF), Sarawak (E. Malaysia), and DPR (North) Korea (UNWTO).

In 2015 he was elected as a fellow to the International Academy for the Study of Tourism and chairs the Earthcheck Global Research Institute that provides science and benchmarking for evidencing pathways to sustainable tourism.

Professor Simmons has published 3 books (2 electronic); 25 Book Chapters; 34 refereed papers; and in excess of 62 technical and industry reports.



Keith Sproule

Executive Director, Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy

Biography

Keith has served as a senior adviser to government ministries on three continents, with long- and short-term consulting assignments in SE Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, North Africa, the Middle East and Southern Africa.

Keith is the Executive Director of Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy (AKP) managing a portfolio of strategic investments with partner communities in every country where A&K has an office.

Keith spent five years in Namibia working for the World Wildlife Fund on joint-venture (JV) tourism investments and conservation planning in communal land areas. With 48 established JV lodges, the Namibian model for attracting private sector investors to partner with communities committed to conservation continues to be a global example for how to balance conservation / community development / tourism growth.

He previously worked on the Tourism Investment Strategy for the Republic of Georgia, and was the tourism lead with project teams in Kosovo, Cyprus and Brazil. He was Deputy Director of the USAID funded Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative in Egypt and was the first Ecotourism Adviser for the Supreme Commission of Tourism and Antiquities in Saudi Arabia.

Keith was a Fulbright Scholar focused on ecotourism planning in Belize. He has been a Field Judge for the 2005, 2008 and 2011 World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) "Tourism For Tomorrow" Awards program, and is an overall WTTC Judge for Finalist Selection in 2014. He is a past two-term chairman of The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and currently serves on the board of Sustainable Travel International (STI). He is a long serving board member of the Charture Institute in Jackson Hole, WY.

He is the founder and managing director of the Bentwood Inn, a luxury lodge in Jackson Hole, WY. www.bentwoodinn.com

Specialties: Sustainable tourism, destination development, ecotourism policy and planning, public relations, SME development, training, finance, budgeting and cost management.



Shu Tan

Founder & Director, Sapa O'Chau

Biography

Shu was a simple village girl who live with her parents in the mountains. Her family depend on the rice terraced fields for subsistence. Her parents could not afford to send her to school, and she dropped out at 3rd grade. Shu followed her mother to sell handicrafts to tourists on the streets. She seized the opportunity to learn English from tourists. At night, she would make use of internet cafés to study more English. As Shu learnt sufficient English, she began to work as a trekking guide. At 19, she became a single mother. That did not stop her from building the first ethnic minority owned homestay in her village for her widowed cousin in 2009.

In 2010, Shu started the Sapa O'Chau cooperative. This is the first boarding facility where youth could board and study at the government high school only located in town. Youth also learn English from international volunteers and got their tour guide licence after a course with an NGO. Three years later, Shu established Sapa O'Chau Travel, the first ethnic minority owned tour operator with international tour operator licence. Lonely Planet featured it. In 2016, Sapa O'Chau Travel won silver for World Responsible Tourism Award - Poverty Reduction and Inclusion and a finalist for World Tourism for Tomorrow Award.

This year, Sapa O'Chau Travel Social Enterprise is formally renamed to reflect its new social enterprise status. Shu was one of the model citizens commended by the Central Government. Sapa O'Chau won the Blue Swallow award by Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is a finalist for World Responsible Tourism - SDG8 and 12 awaiting final results.



Derek Tse

General Manager, HKTraveler.com Ltd

Biography

Mr. YueTak (Derek) Tse is the General Manager of HKTraveler.com Ltd., Hong Kong with its subsidiaries of Eco Travel Ltd and Hong Kong Ecotourism & Travels Professional Training Centre. With over 10 year's experiences in the field of education and sustainable tourism industry, he specializes in developing sustainable tourism business model, plan and strategy. To contribute to the tourism industry, he is currently the Training Committee Member of Hong Kong Tourism Council and the Recommend Geopark Guide (R2G) of Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark. He actively promotes the sense of sustainability, has been the keynote speakers and trainers in the field of sustainable tourism, ecotourism, geotourism and cultural tourism for government authorities and education institutes in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and Mainland China.

He holds a Master's degree of Arts in Cultural and Heritage Tourism; and Postgraduate Diploma in Education, Bachelor's degree of Arts in Geography from The University of Hong Kong.



Alfred Wellington

Chief Executive Officer, Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council

Biography

49 years old, raised on Jerrinja community – Roseby Park at the mouth of the Crookhaven River, 24 kms east of Nowra, 5 km north of Jervis BAY on the south coast of NSW. I have a brother and sister who are twins 3 and a half years younger. I have 8 children and 5 grandsons. Jerrinja people clan group are from the dharawal and dhurga language speaking groups.

My favourite areas of work are: • Culture and photography immersion (See Jerrinja Exposed on our facebook page • Ecotourism and sharing culture with the wider community • Aquaculture and sustainability • Cultural Heritage protection and land management and the possibility of developing a caring for country team.

Learned about culture at an early stage, went on 1st cultural heritage assessment at 15 years with an archaeologist, grandfather and elders and continued this work right through to the present. I have learned a lot from my grandfather, grandmother, mother up until today as well as extended clan group uncles etc. Through the late 80's and early nineties the Jerrinja community with leadership through my mother started working with Tranby aboriginal college in Sydney providing a culture awareness program on Weekends on BUNDARWA (Beecroft Peninsular) for non-indigenous people to learn aboriginal culture, sense of being and political system and ways Jerrinja people were being locked out of country through political systems and non-indigenous boundary's.

Andrew Wright

General Manager & Master, Calypso Star Charters



Biography

Andrew Wright (34) has been involved in the Shark Cage Diving industry in Port Lincoln since 2002, starting as a deckhand with Calypso Star Charters before becoming skipper in 2005 then buying into the business and becoming General Manager in 2006. Since 2006, Calypso Star Charters has expanded from 1 employee to up to 25 staff and passenger numbers have increased from 200 to over 8,000 per annum. Calypso Star Charters has been advanced Eco Certified since 2012 and became a Carbon Neutral Business in 2016 and a Climate Action Leader in 2017. Calypso Star have won multiple SATIC Tourism Awards and Bronze medals at the Australian Tourism Awards in 2015 and 2016.

Andrew has significant experience in dealing with Government through the White Shark Tourism Review and has seen the industry transition from annual permits to 5 year and now a 10 year licence. He is well heeled in dealing with public perception of a sometimes controversial tourism activity and has seen the activity grow into an iconic attraction for South Australia. Calypso Star have long supported shark research, assisting the CSIRO, SARDI and more recently Flinders University and have an agreement in place with the Southern Shark Ecology Group at Flinders University to collect donations from guests to contribute to additional research.

Calypso Star also offer guests the opportunity to swim with the endangered Australian Sealions. The tour has increased in popularity in recent years with passenger numbers now exceeding 1500 and is available as a stand alone tour or as part of a combined tour with shark diving (in separate locations!).

A qualified vessel Master and Engineer, Andrew has spent close to 2000 days shark cage diving at the Neptune Island Marine Park.