

INTERPRETATION PLAN



Broken Paradise

****Please note: This example is completely fictitious - it should give a good idea of how this template can be utilised in your business ****

NAME	DATE	SIGNED
Plan Prepared by		
John Doe	01/04/2019	John Doe
Plan Reviewed by	Annual Update / Review	
John Doe	01/04/2019	

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OVERVIEW OF THE INTERPRETATION PLAN

SCOPE

Our business is located within the “Broken Head Nature Reserve” which is home to a vast number of flora and fauna species.

Flora

Littoral rainforest is predominant in the area but is also under threat from coastal developments. Banksias and tuckeroos line the coast and provide shelter from salt-laden onshore winds and allow the rainforest to thrive behind them. Brush box, native elm, hoop pines, burrawangs, bungalow palms and pink-leaved maidens bush are all found within the region.

Fauna

Scrub and sea birds inhabit the area, including hite breasted sea eagles, brahminy kites, green-winged and rose-crowned pigeons, koel-rings and whipbirds.

Pests

Introduced flora species include bitou bush, lantana, madeira vine, morning glory and glory lily. Introduced fauna species include cane toads, feral cats, feral dogs and foxes.

Culture

Broken Head Nature Reserve land belongs to the Arakwal people of the Bundjalung tribe. The land, waterways, plants and animals in the region feature within their culture and the dreaming stories and cultural learnings are still passed on today.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

At Broken Paradise, our objective is to provide adequate and accurate interpretation material in our lodges that promotes and supports environmentally conscious travelling. By providing material in an easy to understand way and sharing our knowledge with our guests during their stay, we hope to reduce the risk of environmental impact and promote best practices.

We hope to influence our guests positively by demonstrating the benefits of ecotourism and our operations, so that they can absorb the information during their stay and have some knowledge and inspiration to take away.

Whilst our main focus will always be on conservation, environmental and cultural education, we aim to provide guests with a comfortable and relaxing experience that they'll never forget.

INTERPRETATION TOPICS

We provide our guests with a range of interpretive material during their stay.

The material includes:

- Our business' initiatives and policies
- Local Indigenous culture
- Local fauna and flora species
- How to be a 'green traveller'
- How to measure and reduce your carbon emissions while travelling
- How climate change affects the local environment and what is being done to address it
- Appropriate guidelines to interact with the local wildlife
- Energy, water and waste minimisation during their stay

INTERPRETATION RESOURCES, MATERIALS AND DELIVERY

SUMMARY OF INTERPRETIVE MATERIALS

We have an awareness package that each guest receives upon arrival that outlines our vision as an eco-lodge and why we started our operation. The information in this package includes guidelines on animal interaction and feeding, energy saving, waste and water minimisation and pollution. It also contains information on how our guests can become more eco-conscious and aim to be a 'green traveller'.

The package provides educational material that explains why it is important to conserve water, energy and waste. Facts and figures outline what initiatives we have on-site to help reduce our footprint, some details on the impact conventional tourism is having on the environment and some of the benefits of ecotourism.

We encourage guests to use a bike to travel into Byron Bay and surrounding areas, outlining the personal and environmental benefits of cycling. All this information is provided in a laminated folder and not reprinted for each guest.

In-room material

Information regarding waste disposal and recycling is provided to guests within their lodge, identifying which bin is used for different material (general waste, recycling, organic waste). The dangers of rubbish entering the ocean and the possible effects on marine life are outlined as well as our efforts to eliminate marine pollution.

We have a range of books available in each lodge that contain information on whale watching, local walking tracks, bird identification, climate change, ecotourism and a range of other topics. We also provide each lodge with a small book on the local Indigenous Arakwal people which has a map and information of culturally significant sites found in the region and some information on each. It also provides a short Dreamtime story of the 'Three Sisters Rock' (also known as Two Sisters), a formation sacred to the Arakwal people off the headland at Broken Head.

DETAILS OF INTERPRETIVE CONTENT

Interpretive resources include:

- Welcome pack
- Books on local Indigenous culture
- Photos of the region
- Local walking tracks
- Bird watching guide
- Whale watching information
- Species identification books
- Website information
- Climate change information
- DVDs available

Active interpretation includes:

- Welcome speech
- Site tour
- Chef speech – identifying the benefits of local produce and growing your own food

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Reference books, such as
 - Cleary, M. (2017) Byron Trails: 50 Walking Adventures in Byron Bay and Beyond
 - Curtis, L. (2012) Queensland's Threatened Animals
 - James, J., & Savage, G. (2001) A Practical Guide to Evaluating Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation
 - National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW (2004) Place of Plenty booklet: Culturally useful plants around Byron Bay
 - The Cape Byron Trust and the Arakwal Aboriginal Corporation (1999) Special places: Exploring Aboriginal heritage Cape Byron, Australia
- Fact sheets and guest training materials provided by Ecotourism Australia
- Best practice guidelines in protected areas from IUCN
- Climate change information
 - Byron Bay Council website
 - Just For Kids: What's Climate Change? And What Can I Do? - The Climate Reality Project
- Website Arakwal People of Byron Bay: <http://arakwal.com.au/>

INTERPRETATION FOR TARGET GROUPS

- Our welcome pack and some brochures are available in multiple languages to ensure guests understand our sustainability policy, guidelines and safety information.
- We have a number of educational books for children about nature and local wildlife.
- Safety information is provided at eye level for printed text.
- Captions for multimedia content are provided.

PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN INTERPRETATION QUALITY

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

We encourage our guests to provide any feedback they may have about their stay. This can be done in a variety of ways, including:

- Verbal feedback during the stay (face to face)
- In our guest book (each lodge has their own)
- Feedback via email, Facebook or phone
- We also have a guest feedback section on our website

With this feedback, we review what we're doing well in and what needs improving throughout our operation. We look forward to receiving feedback and comments from guests, in particular ariybd how they found our educational aspects and contributions towards conservation and protection of the environment. Our visitors have the opportunity to rate their satisfaction with our interpretation content and delivery on our feedback form.

EVALUATION OF INTERPRETIVE MATERIALS

We continuously evaluate our interpretive materials to ensure we are providing guests with accurate descriptions, policies and procedures of our services. By going through these evaluations, we can improve our interpretive materials for guests so that the information is clearer and easier to understand.

When negative impacts from guests occur, we identify how interpretive material and messages can be improved. This involves a review of current material and the development of new or the amendment of the current material. We also aim to regularly update any information provided to our guests and found on our website.

If any information is found to be confusing or misleading from guest feedback, it will also be reassessed and corrected. As we try to encourage guests to support us in our environmental policies and procedures, if we find there is confusion or a lack of clarity with signage for guests (e.g. reusing towels, turning off lights etc.) we will amend these.

Any equipment provided for guests within the lodges such as kitchen appliances, electronics, air conditioners and others, is also taken into account for evaluation as we must ensure guests understand how to use these effectively and in ways that are energy efficient and safe.

Regarding the evaluation of our climate change information, we strive to keep up to date with new developments and research being done by leading scientists and government bodies. This is so we can continuously provide guests with accurate and current information regarding climate change. New solutions regarding lessening impacts of climate change will also be included.

STAFF & GUIDE TRAINING AND INITIATIVES

All staff must undergo an induction before commencing work that covers potential environmental impacts and all policies associated with our operation.

Our induction process includes:

- Introducing all new staff to our chef, who is responsible for training staff on how our recycling and composting systems work so this information can also be relayed to any interested guests.
- How to conduct a site tour that demonstrates to our guests where:
 - nesting boxes are located,
 - the native flora species are found in the gardens and
 - where and what the vegetables, fruits and herbs are that we grow on site.
- How to effectively communicate with guests (language, body language, etc.)

Training regarding the monitoring of the solar panels, energy consumption and water usage is done at a management level. The owners, manager and key staff are all trained in this area and are capable of explaining all aspects to our guests. They are educated on how each function, where to take measurements from and how frequently, as well as how to record this data into our spreadsheet records.

We have monthly staff meetings to discuss any issues staff may wish to clarify and to give updates on the savings we have made during the month.

Staff involved in providing cultural information have followed the cultural induction program by the Arakwal people (<http://arakwal.com.au/cultural-induction-program/>).

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Additional information is to be placed in rooms that will demonstrate our outputs for each month. These will include waste production, water usage, energy consumption, energy production and GHG emissions. This will be to educate guests on the benefits that our systems are having on our local environment and the savings that can be made through careful planning and environmental consciousness.

AWARDS

2018 Qantas Australian Tourism Award – Gold medal in the ‘Unique Accommodation category’. The Qantas Australian Tourism Award recognises the excellence and achievements of tourism operators in Australia. This is our first time winning a gold medal in the unique accommodation category, and we are extremely proud of this achievement and excited to win more awards in the future.