

HEAD OF POWER

- *Bundaberg Regional Council Advocacy Priorities 2024*

INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to support businesses/operators to become ECO Certified, Sustainable Tourism Certified and/or Climate Action Certified through Ecotourism Australia by offering a cash subsidy incentive.

SCOPE

This policy applies to entities conducting business within the Bundaberg Regional Council area that are deemed eligible to obtain ECO Certification, Sustainable Tourism Certification and/or Climate Action Certification through Ecotourism Australia.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Ecotourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of global tourism and the Bundaberg region has a range of nature-based tourism opportunities that could be leveraged to grow local visitation.
2. The Bundaberg region achieved ECO Destination Certification in January 2023. Council's advocacy position is to continue growing the region's visitor economy through market development as an ECO Certified Destination. This will enable the Bundaberg region to continue being a high-quality and recognisable destination to visitors while further increasing the sustainability credentials of our businesses.
3. Ecotourism Australia offer an ECO Certification Program, a Sustainable Tourism Certification Program and a Climate Action Certification Program for eligible businesses within the Bundaberg region. This certification assures travellers that certified products are backed by a strong, well managed commitment to sustainable practices.

In order to grow the Bundaberg region visitor economy, Council offers a subsidy to local businesses who wish to become ECO Certified, Sustainable Tourism Certified and/or Climate Action Certified through Ecotourism Australia by offering a 50% cash subsidy to eligible businesses/operators to offset the first annual certification fee payable to Ecotourism Australia.

4. Eligibility criteria

- 4.1 The business must be eligible to apply for the relevant certification program with Ecotourism Australia.
- 4.2 The business to be certified will help customers to directly experience the Bundaberg region in a sustainable manner.

- 4.3 All necessary licences, permits and approvals are obtained from relevant authorities and agencies.
- 4.4 The business consistently meets customer service expectations and has defined customer service procedures and is committed to delivery of a quality experience/product.
- 4.5 Economic, social and environmental sustainability principles are core to the operation of the business.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Certification Expression of Interest
- Towards Net Zero Bundaberg Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROLS

Council will review this policy annually or in response to changes in law or best practice.

POLICY OWNER

Director Strategic Projects and Economic Development.