Evidence-based, resident-driven and participatory generation of research initiatives: Visitor dispersal in the Australia's South West

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Australia’s South West Tourism Region

- Size: 63,000 km²
- Population: 255,000 inhabitants
- Industries: Manufacturing, Construction, Mining, Tourism
3.2m overnight visitors

4m daytrip visitors

USD 72 – 126 Avg night spend (international – domestic)

Holiday & VFR main purposes of visit

8% Gross Regional Product

9k Direct jobs

Beach & recreation
Wine, food & events
Heritage sites

National parks
Caves & forests
Adventure activities
### Australia’s South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory

**Tourism Research Cluster**
- Curtin University

**Working group**
- Tourism Western Australia
- Australia’s South West
- Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- Royal Automobile Club

**Operation implementation**

**Participatory decision making**
- Data collection/analysis support
- Advise and control

**Partner organisations**
- Tourism Research Australia
- City of Busselton
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River
- Busselton Water
- Waste Authority
- Western Power
- WaterCorp
- Expedia
- Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
Resident survey project

- Annual project starting 2020
- Aims to support local stakeholders in data collection and analysis for evidence-based decision-making
- Online questionnaire around 3 key areas
  - Tourism impacts
  - Tourist behaviour
  - Tourism management
- Partnerships with local governments

‘Tourists are friendly, respectful, adaptive to the local environment and appreciative of local cultures’

‘Tourists concentrate on popular hotspots’

Problem identification

Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia
Visitor tracking project

- Specific project 2023-24

- Aims to
  - Understand visitor mobility patterns
  - Trial spatial dispersal strategies

- Partnerships with
  - Technology company
  - Tourism attractions
  - Tourism accommodation

Expected outcomes

- Visitation trends at tourism attractions
- Effectiveness of specific interventions to disperse visitors

Problem solving

Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia
The role of the Australia’s South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory: From problem identification to problem-solving

- Resident survey
- Visitor tracking
- Problem identification
- Problem solving
- Resident-driven
- Participatory
- Evidence-based
Tourism policy cycle

- Agenda-setting
- Policy formulation
- Decision-making
- Implementation
- Evaluation

Observatory evidence generation

- Problem identification
- Problem solving
- Solution impacts

Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia
Thank you

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