
Monday 17 November, 2008

SA LEADS THE WAY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Seven South Australian tourism operators will today become some of the first in the world to gain climate action certification.

The tourism operators have successfully taken part in a world-first pilot program, run by Ecotourism Australia, to certify operators who are taking action in response to climate change.

Tourism Minister Jane Lomax-Smith will officially launch the Climate Action Certification program, which is being sponsored by the South Australian Government, at today's opening of the inaugural Conference on Green Travel, Climate Change and Eco Tourism in Adelaide.

Dr Lomax-Smith says South Australia is already a leader in the field of ecologically sustainable tourism development, with around 15% of the nation's Eco Certified tourism operators based here.

“The new Climate Action Certification will allow our tourism industry to take its environmental commitment to the next level,” she says.

“That won't just be good for the environment, but also for the State's economy, as more visitors come here to take holidays that have minimal carbon footprints.

“More than one million ‘nature-based’ visitors already come to South Australia each year. That number is set to climb, as increasing numbers of domestic and international travellers choose ‘green’ holiday experiences.”

More than 70 Eco Certified tourism experiences are available to visitors in South Australia.

These experiences range from swimming with dolphins and cave diving to camel safaris through the Outback.

More than 20% of South Australia is protected as reserves for conservation – a greater percentage than any other mainland State.

Around 400 conference delegates will experience South Australia's ecotourism experiences as the State hosts the inaugural Conference on Green Travel, Climate Change and Eco Tourism this week.

Three levels of Climate Action Certification are available to tourism operators under Ecotourism Australia's new program, to be launched at today's opening of the conference.

Tourism operators can become certified as Climate Action Businesses, Climate Action Innovators or Climate Action Leaders, depending on their level of action towards reducing their carbon footprint.

The South Australian tourism operators to be congratulated on receiving their certificates under the new program today are:

Birds Australia Gluepot Reserve (Climate Action Leader)

Phone Duncan MacKenzie on 8332 1204

Adelaide Convention Centre (Climate Action Innovator)

Phone Jodie van Deventer on 0427 408 588

Banrock Station Wine and Wetland Centre (Climate Action Innovator)

Phone Tony Sharley on 0418 808 475

Quorn Caravan Park (Climate Action Innovator)

Phone Bronwyn Lucas on 8648 6206

Bellevue Bed and Breakfast (Climate Action Innovator)

Phone Ciaran Cryan on 8323 7929

Adventure Tours Australia Group (Climate Action Business)

Phone Vicki Beard on 8132 8200

Adelaide Central YHA (Climate Action Business)

Phone Anna Cornelisse on 8132 8280