

NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub – Project 10.2 Factsheet

Activities and Preferences of Domestic (non-QLD) Visitors to Tropical NQ

Hana Sakata¹, Marina Farr¹, Michelle Esparon¹, Silva Larson^{1,2} and Natalie Stoeckl^{1,2}

¹ James Cook University School of Business; ² Cairns Institute;

Key messages

- The most popular and frequent activity was spending time at the beach.
- The average Australian (non-Queensland) visitor spends \$1,378 in the region, above the regional average of \$1,160.
- The most important regional 'draw-cards' relate to clear ocean, sunshine and warmth, healthy reefs and clean beaches.
- The strongest potential deterrents (things which would make visitors shorten their visits or not come at all) were twice as many oil spills, ship groundings and waste spills, murky ocean water and rubbish.
- On average, visitors were willing to contribute approximately \$13 per person per visit to a fund aiming to reduce various threats to the GBRWHA (improving water quality; protecting top predators; and/or reducing risk of shipping accidents).

Who comes to the region?

A survey of 327 domestic visitors to Tropical NQ region was conducted between June 2012 and June 2013. 22% of those visitors were from Queensland, and they are described in a separate factsheet. This factsheet concentrates on domestic visitors from outside QLD. Most of these were from Victoria (38%) and NSW (31%); 4% were from SA and around 2% from each NT and WA.

Most of these visitors (48%) were couples, followed by families with children (26%) and groups of friends (9%). Most (39%) were employed by government (including health and education) and in agriculture (35%); 16% came from retail sector (including accommodation and tourism) and 8% from manufacturing (including mining and ports). More than 58% of respondents had been to university or were currently attending. Visitors were of varying annual household incomes, but had higher average incomes than visitors from Queensland. For 38% of them, this was their first visit to the region; 9% had already visited once, 30% had visited 2-4 times previously; while 9% had been to the region more than 10 times before.

Where do people go, what do they do and how much do they spend?

Port Douglas, followed by Cairns, were reported as their favorite places to visit in the GBRWHA (Figure 1), while they were looking forward to visiting Cooktown and the GBR. Most respondents, 90%, spent some time on mainland beaches, on average visiting them 3.3 times (Figure 2). 63% of these visitors went to offshore reefs, while 58% went on a paid boat trip (Figure 2).

The average amount of money these visitors spent in the region, A\$1,378, was higher than regional average (A\$ 1,160) and much higher than average spending of visitors from Queensland (A\$733). Most money was spent on accommodation, followed by dining and groceries (Figure 3).

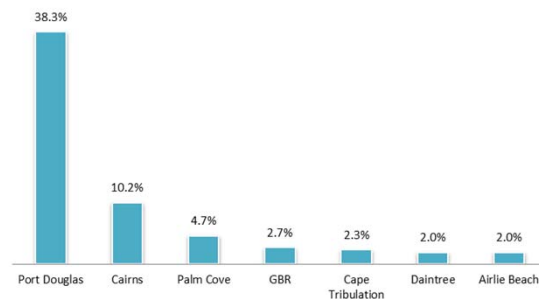


Figure 1. Favorite places in the GBR WHA visited

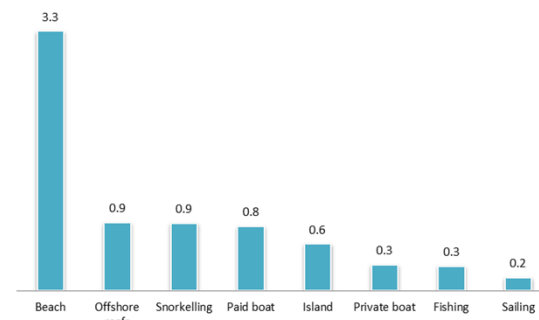


Figure 2. On average, number of times respondents went...

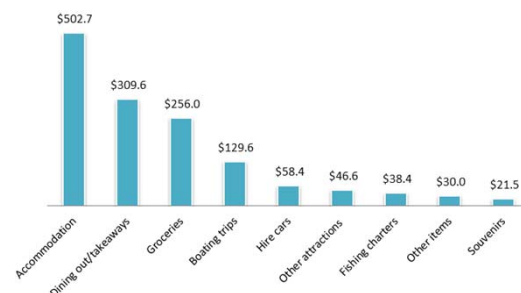


Figure 3. Expenditure per person per visit, on average

What are the most important 'draw-cards' to the region?



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What are the most important 'draw-cards' to the region?

Clear ocean water, sunshine and warmth, healthy reefs and clean beaches, were the most important factors that encouraged respondents to visit the region (Figure 4). Respondents expressed high satisfaction with sunshine and warmth and cleanness of the beaches, but lesser satisfaction with ocean water clarity, health of the reefs, and the ability to see iconic marine and land species. The least important factors affecting decisions to visit the area were business, proximity from home and fishing/crabbing.

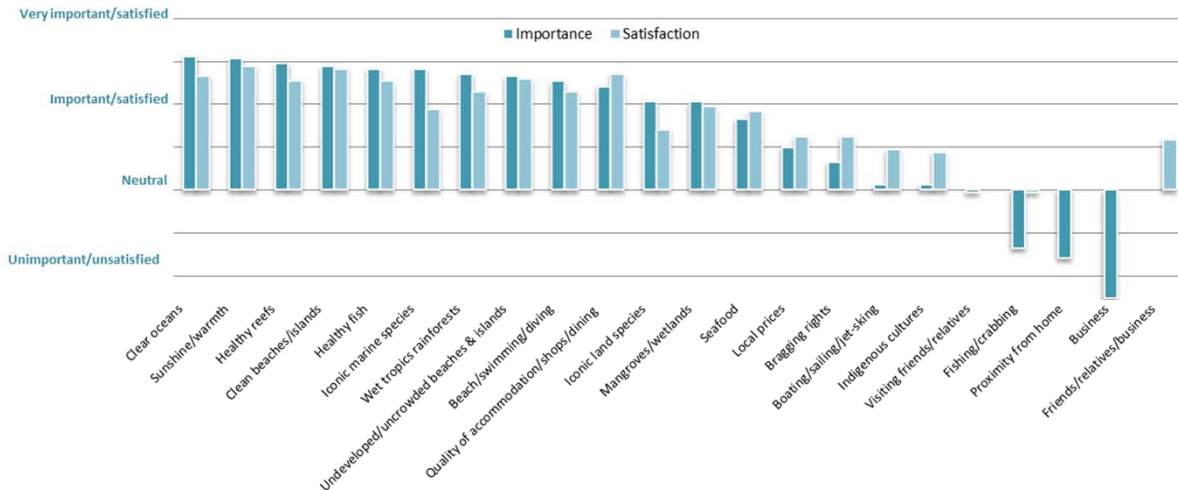


Figure 4. Most and least important 'draw-cards' in deciding to visit the region, and satisfaction with those

How would potential changes to the GBRWHA impact their visitation?

Figure 5 below shows the reaction of respondents to hypothetical changes to the GBRWHA. Respondents appeared to be most sensitive to ideas of seeing more oil spills, ship groundings and waste spills, lower ocean water clarity, and increases in visible rubbish. Two-thirds of our respondents (64%) indicated that they would not visit the region at all if there were twice as many oil spills, ship groundings and waste spills; while half of them would not have come if ocean changed from clear to murky. Respondents were least concerned about local prices and the chance of catching fish.

On average, these visitors were willing to contribute approximately \$13 per person per visit to fund improvements in water quality; protect top predators; and/or reduce the risk of shipping accidents.

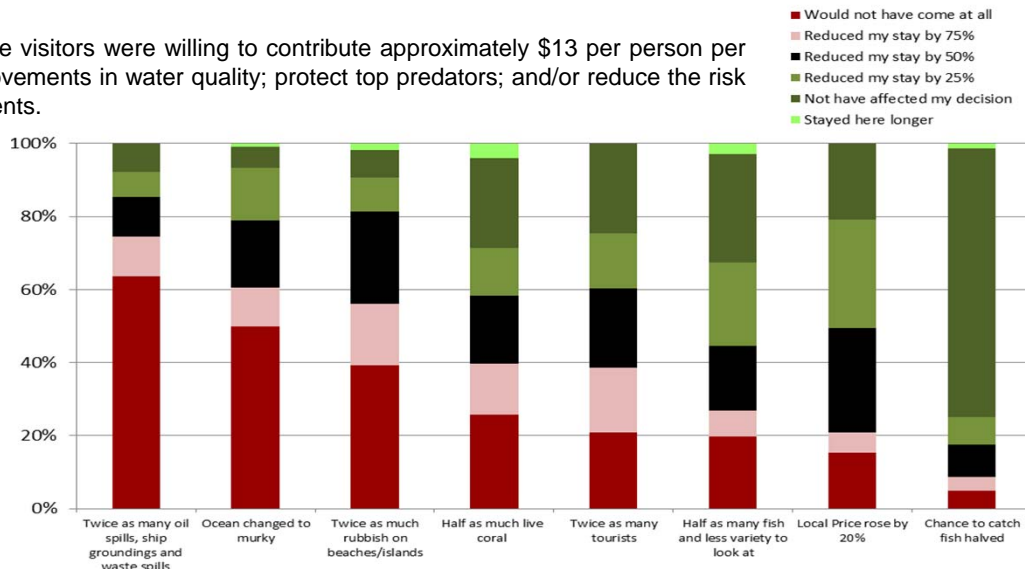


Figure 5. Respondents' reaction to hypothetical changes in the GBRWHA

Find this project at www.nerptropical.edu.au
 Theme 3: Managing for resilient tropical ecosystems
 Program 10: Socio-economic value of GBR goods and services
 Project: 10.2 Socio-economic systems and reef resilience

For more information, copies of this fact-sheet or a Technical Report with more details, please contact:
 Prof Dr Natalie Stoeckl
 JCU School of Business and The Cairns Institute
natalie.stoeckl@jcu.edu.au