

NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub – Project 10.2 Factsheet

Activities and Preferences of Queensland Visitors to Tropical NQ

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Key messages

- The most popular and frequent activity is spending time at the beach.
- The average Queensland visitor to Tropical NQ spends \$733 in the region.
- The most important regional 'draw-cards' relate to the marine environment – healthy reefs, beaches, clear ocean and healthy fish.
- 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 \$10 per person per visit to a fund aiming to reduce various threats to the GBRWHA (improving water quality; protecting top predators; and/or the reducing risk of shipping accidents).

Who comes to the region?

A survey of 1,390 visitors to the Cairns and Port Douglas region was conducted between June 2012 and June 2013. 71 or 5% of them were visitors from Queensland. This factsheet refers to those visitors only.

Just over half of our Queensland respondents (53%) were men, and 47% of those responding were 20-40 years of age. Most of the visitors (47%) were couples, followed by groups of friends (18%) and families with children (15%). Some 32% were employed in agriculture, while 29% were employed by government (including health and education), 20% came from the retail sector (including accommodation and tourism) and 18% from manufacturing (including mining and ports). More than 45% of respondents had been completed university or were currently attending. Visitors were of varying annual household incomes with no specific trend.

For 21% of them, this was the first visit to the region; 15% had already visited once, 12% had visited 2-4 times previously,; while 31% 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 and Cairns were reported as their favorite places to visit in the GBRWHA (Figure 1), while they were looking forward to visiting Cooktown and Mission Beach. Most respondents, 91%, spent some time on the mainland beaches, on average visiting them 3.2 times (Figure 2). This was by far the most popular activity, as only 48% of respondents reported going to offshore reefs, 41% went snorkelling and 41% went to an island (Figure 2).

The average amount of money each Queensland visitor spent in the region was A\$ 733, well below the overall average for regional visitors (A\$ 1,160). Most of this was spent on accommodation, groceries and dining out/takeaways (Figure 3).

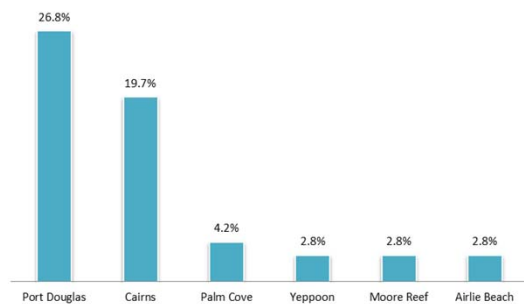


Figure 1. Favorite places in the GBR WHA visited

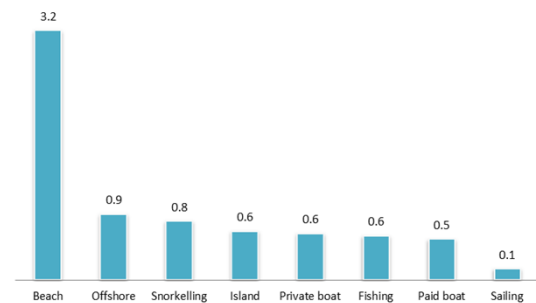


Figure 2. On average, number of times respondents went...



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?

Healthy reefs, beaches and swimming, and ocean water clarity, were the most important factors that encouraged respondents from Queensland to visit the region (Figure 4). Respondents expressed high satisfaction with beaches and swimming and sunshine and warmth, but lesser satisfaction with the health of the reefs, health of the fish, and water clarity. The least important factors affecting decisions to visit the area were business, Indigenous culture and boating/sailing.

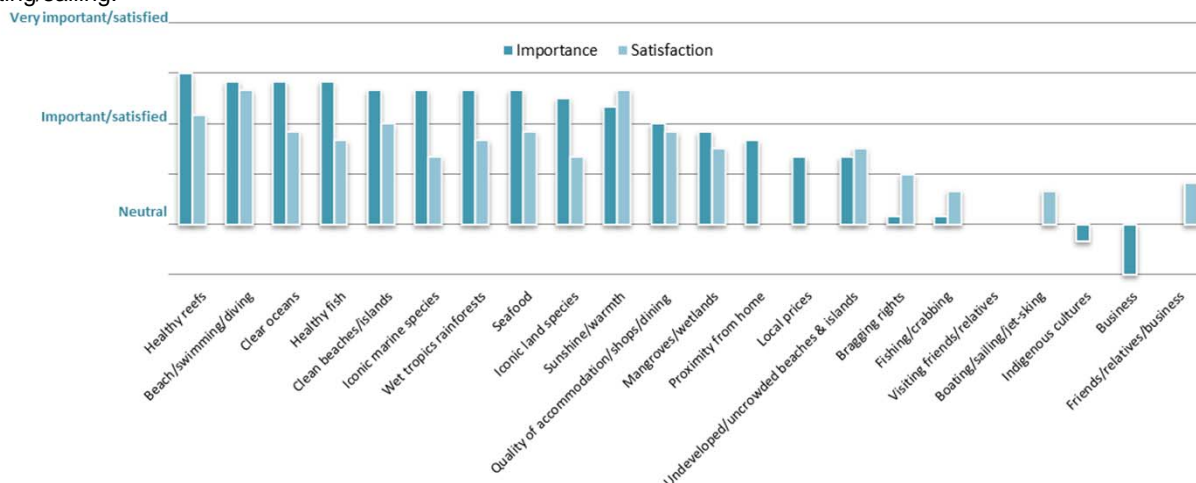


Figure 4. Most and least important ‘draw-cards’ in deciding to visit the region, and satisfaction with those

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 the idea of seeing more oil spills, ship groundings and waste spills, lower ocean water clarity, and/or increases in visible rubbish. Almost half of our respondents (47%) indicated that they would not visit the region at all if there were twice as many oil spills, ship groundings and waste spills. Respondents were least concerned about there being less fish to look at and less chance of catching fish.

On average, visitors were willing to contribute approximately \$10 per person per visit to fund improvements in water quality; protect top predators; and/or reduce the risk of shipping accidents.

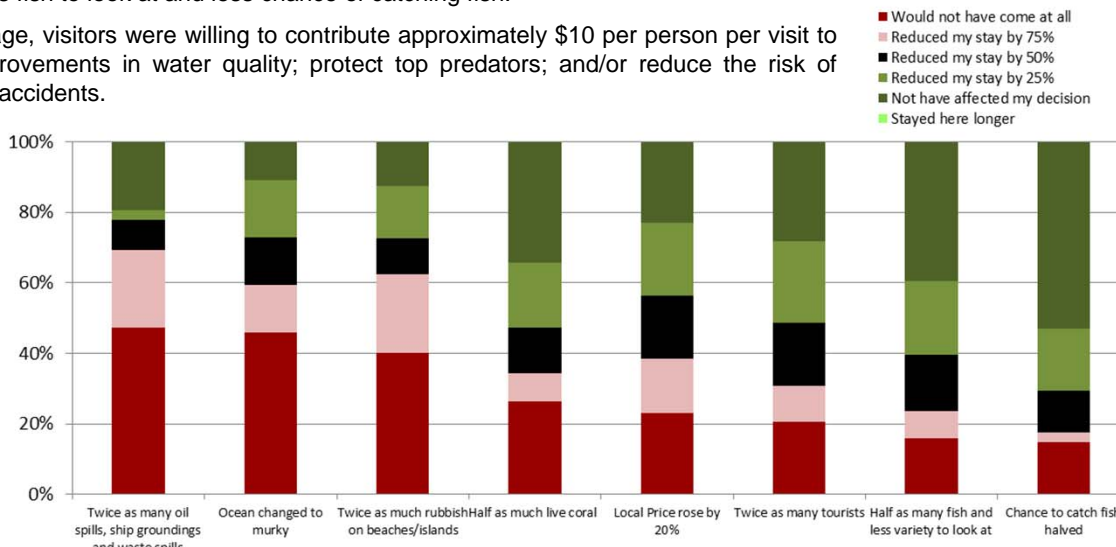


Figure 5. Respondents’ reaction to hypothetical changes in the GBRWHA

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:
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