



GET CLOSER TO

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

LIGHT COUNTRY |
South Australia

December 2022



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COUNTRY
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge that the Light Region's economic wellbeing is built upon the traditional lands of the Ngadjuri and Kurna traditional owners and recognise their continuing custodianship of the land, waters and culture for over 60,000 years.

We pay our respects to them and their elders past and present. We are privileged to learn from them in the way we care for and share our regions diverse nature and culture, and we strive to walk humbly in the footsteps of those who have walked these paths before us.



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PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Light Regional Council developed its Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025 (the Plan) and continues to develop and implement supporting plans to deliver the Plan. All plans are guided by Council's Vision of "Respecting the past, partnering with our community, and sustainably creating our future" and three key themes being: Community, Environment, and Investment.

Responsible for supporting growth and demand for the Light Region as a destination, Council recognises the value of tourism, and its potential as a sustainable economic driver for the visitor economy. The visitor economy and tourism support businesses and enhance job opportunities in the Light Region in addition to adding to the social vibrancy of our local communities.

Analysis by Lucid Economics identified tourism as a competitive advantage for the region as referenced in the Light Regional Council Economic Development Plan 2020 -2030.

The natural environment of Light Regional Council supports the lifestyles, livelihoods and the liveability of the Council area. It provides fresh water, clean air, food and shelter and underpins our economy.

Council recognises the role it can play in supporting the address of environmental challenges and in its desire to contribute to a sustainable future as referenced in its Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027.

Sustainability is a journey - not a destination. It is about the steps taken and an ongoing commitment to improving sustainability efforts.

This paper has been developed to share what is currently occurring with Sustainable Tourism and what Light Tourism is working to action to support the Light Region tourism industry in remaining competitive in a rapidly evolving, sustainably focused society.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”

Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.

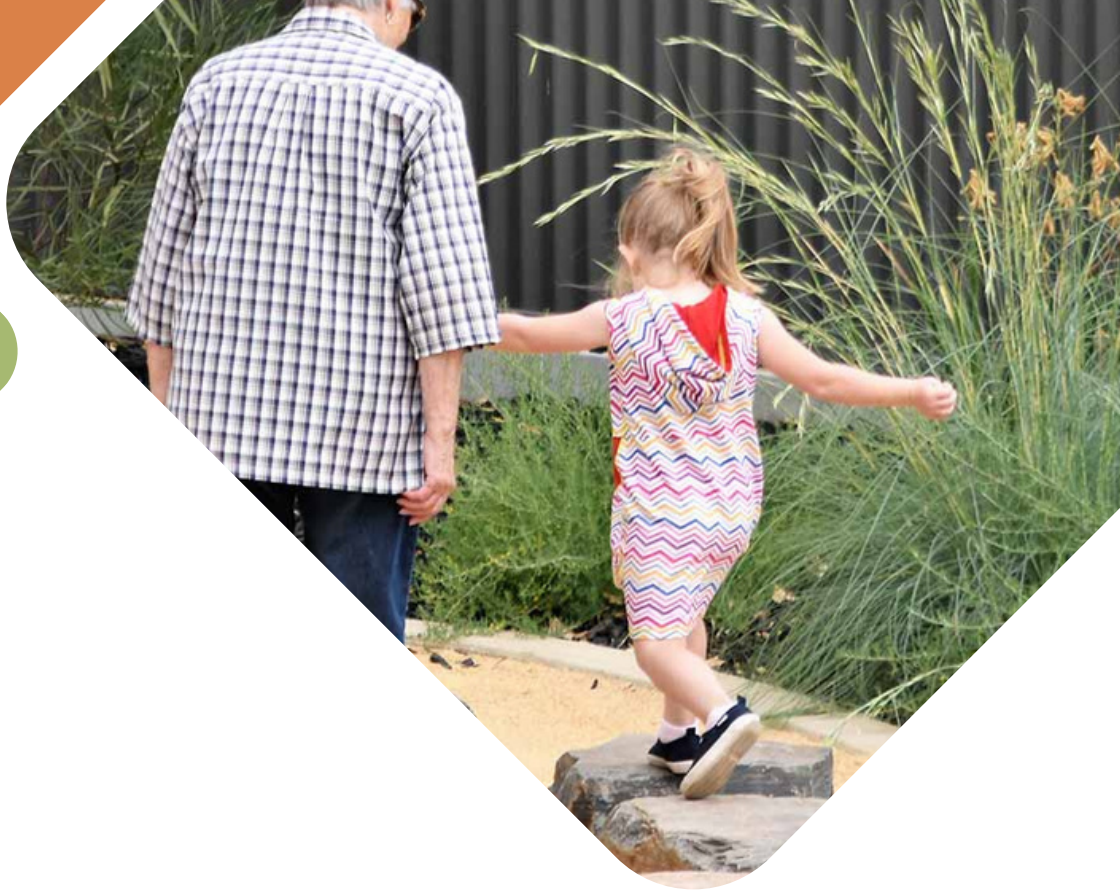
Source: United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

At Light Regional Council, we use the term sustainability to mean: 'The integration of environmental health, social wellbeing and economic vitality to create thriving, healthy, and resilient communities for this generation and generations to come'.

Source: Light Regional Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027

Sustainable tourism includes protecting and restoring our natural environment, helping to conserve our regions natural assets and cultures, so they can be enjoyed today and by future generations. It also means fostering a profitable industry that delivers employment opportunities and economic benefits to communities, and in turn helps improve the tourism experience for our travellers and the quality of life for our residents.

Council has an important role to play in championing and elevating the importance, and the appeal, of sustainable tourism, through our voice of advocacy and education, and actions. Our communication platforms and stakeholders can help Light Region tourism businesses to better communicate their sustainability success stories; and, by doing so, help encourage others to follow their lead.



A COMMITMENT

Driving awareness of, and capability for sustainability is a strategic priority for Light Regional Council and aligns with Council's corporate values and vision for the future Light Region economy.

Vision

The Light region will be a thriving regional economy that:

- Delivers rewarding local career options for existing and future residents,
- Grows at a rate among the highest in regional SA, in a manner decoupled from environmental degradation,
- Builds upon our enviable lifestyle, landscapes and history, and
- Remains resilient and adaptive to disruption and change

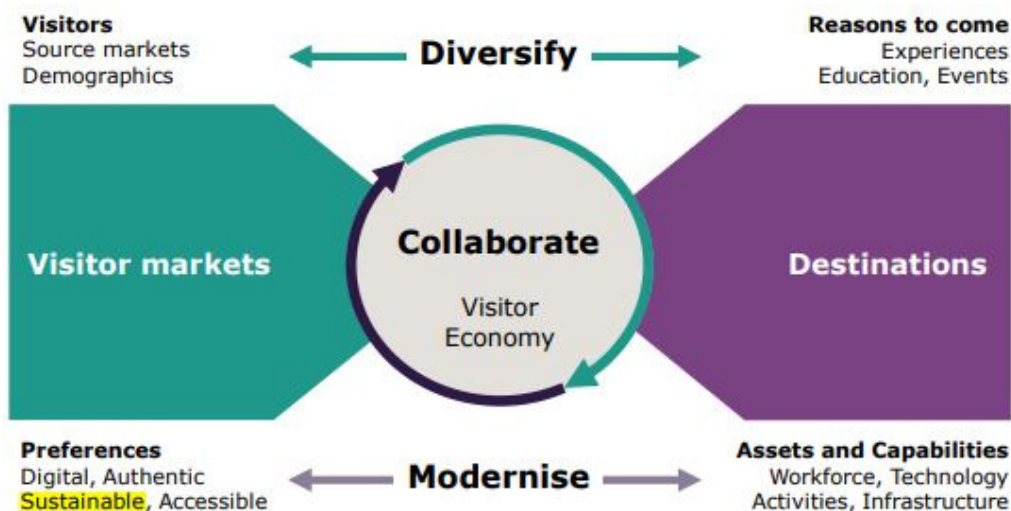
Source: Light Regional Council Economic Development Plan 2020-2030

WHAT CONSUMERS ARE SIGNALING



"While tourism markets are diversifying, modern visitors are also looking for authentic, sustainable and accessible experiences. Destination businesses, sector industry bodies and governments at all levels may collaborate more to meet visitor needs, and to build resilience into the Visitor Economy".

Figure 1: Diversify, modernise and collaborate



Source: Opportunities for the Visitor Economy A modern, diversified and collaborative path to 2030. Australian Trade and Investment Commission



WHY APPLY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRINCIPLES?

According to Booking.com (2022), 81% of travellers confirm that sustainable travel is important to them, while research from Expedia (2022) found that 7 in 10 consumers have avoided a travel destination or transportation option due to scepticism that the commitment to sustainable practices was real.

Source: strive 4 SUSTAINABILITY Tourism Australia and ECO Tourism Australia

PRINCIPLES

Our approach for the tourism industry in Light Region is shaped by the following sustainability principles aligning with Tourism Australia:

- We honour our First Nations people from whom we have much to learn.
- We support others in tourism in adopting practises to operate more sustainably, with positive impact on our land, people and culture.
- We provide a voice for sustainability in our region: a voice of advocacy and education.
- We prioritise doing business with those in tourism who support sustainability.
- We promote and share tourism stories that inspire sustainability.
- We partner with like-minded organisations to increase our impact and reach.

A photograph of a wooden sign for Don Helbig Conservation Reserve. The sign is split into two horizontal sections. The top section is light green with the text 'Don Helbig' in large black letters and 'Conservation Reserve' in smaller black letters below it. The bottom section is dark green with the Light Regional Council logo, which consists of a stylized sun and landscape icon, and the text 'Light Regional Council' below it. The sign is set against a background of green grass and foliage.

Don Helbig

Conservation Reserve



Light
Regional
Council

THE FOUR PILLARS OF TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY

1

Sustainable management

Effective sustainable management:

- Plans and policies
- Legal compliance
- Health and safety / risk management
- Responsible marketing
- Customer satisfaction
- Visitor education on sustainability
- Staff sustainability education and training

2

Environmental impacts

Maximising benefits to the environment and minimising negative impacts:

- Environmental Management Plan
- Green supplier policy
- Emissions measurement and reduction
- Location and site selection
- Efficient buildings, construction and landscaping
- Energy conservation
- Water conservation
- Waste minimisation and management
- Cleaner transport
- Minimal disturbance to wildlife
- Contribution to conservation



THE FOUR PILLARS OF TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY

Cont.

Source: Strive 4 Sustainability Eco Tourism Australia

3 Socio-economic impacts

Maximising social and economic benefits to the local community and minimising negative impacts:

- Community support and engagement
- Impact on local communities
- Equal opportunity and fair treatment
- Anti-harassment and anti-exploitation
- Accessibility
- Staff training and development
- Local employment
- Local purchasing and supporting local businesses

4 Cultural impacts

Maximising benefits to cultural heritage and minimising negative impacts:

- Acknowledgement of Country
- Consultation and training
- Cultural interpretation
- Visitation of culturally sensitive sites
- Protecting and presenting cultural heritage
- Indigenous arts, crafts and goods



OUR 7 KEY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AREAS OF FOCUS

- 1 Advocacy:** showcasing sustainable and purpose driven tourism products, experiences and examples of best practice.
- 2 Leadership:** educating and enabling greater capacity for sustainability in our tourism industry.
- 3 Brand:** integrating sustainability into Brand Light Country to meet growing consumer demand and drive uptake of sustainable tourism experiences.
- 4 Industry support:** highlighting and encouraging industry best practice and raising awareness of tourism's sustainability credentials and opportunities.
- 5 Footprints:** support reduction of the regions general footprint by continuing to manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment in an ecologically sustainable manner.
- 6 Procurement and partnerships:** sourcing from sustainable suppliers and engendering sustainable tourism credentials and opportunities with our stakeholders.
- 7 Culture:** embedding sustainability as a core value within our culture, actions and behaviour.



1 ADVOCACY

Advocacy: showcasing sustainable and purpose driven tourism products, experiences and examples of best practice.

What Light Tourism will do:

- Provide mentoring and referrals for advice and assistance to engender Sustainable Tourism best practice
- Advocate for the authentic and respectful promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Market and promote sustainability best practice tourism products and experiences to showcase exemplary tourism operators
- Develop and market itineraries of Sustainable Tourism best practice tourism products and experiences to target markets



2 LEADERSHIP

Leadership: educating and enabling greater capacity for sustainability in our tourism industry.

What Light Tourism will do:

- Monitor, explore and share opportunities and updates on Sustainable Tourism best practice with our stakeholders
- Show and lead by example Sustainable Tourism best practice in tourism and visitor services operations
- Represent and advocate for State enabled Sustainable Tourism training and support in Light Region
- Aid in the delivery of the Light Regional Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027



④ INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Industry support: highlighting and encouraging industry best practice and raising awareness of tourism's sustainability credentials and opportunities.

What Light Tourism will do:

- Investigate the ability to prioritise industry support within our strategic priorities using existing resources
- Connect and share with tourism operators' external opportunities to support progress with tourism sustainability
- Showcase aspirational and successful tourism sustainability product and experience examples
- Investigate opportunities for mentoring from exemplary tourism sustainability champions to other operators



5 FOOTPRINTS

Footprints: aid in the reduction of the regions general footprint by continuing to manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment in an ecologically sustainable manner.

What Light Tourism will do:

- Provide feedback from the tourism industry that aid Council in achieving attainable sustainable environmental outcomes
- Update tourism operators on Council's sustainability activities through communications channels
- Factor tourism sustainability best practice when promoting nature-based experiences to visitors
- Aid in the delivery of the Light Regional Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027



⑥ PROCUREMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Procurement and partnerships: sourcing from sustainable suppliers and engendering sustainable tourism credentials and opportunities with our stakeholders.

What Light Tourism will do:

- Factor sustainable supplier practices when implementing and developing brand assets for visitor services
- Investigate local suppliers for Kapunda Visitor Information Centre retail lines
- Openly encourage tourism operators to attain tourism credentials and participate in education opportunities
- Partner with organisations and businesses who can assist tourism sustainability growth and education



7 CULTURE

Culture: embedding sustainability as a core value within our culture, actions and behaviour.

What Light Tourism will do:

- Incorporate sustainability awareness and activities into staff meeting agendas and trainings
- Share tourism sustainability news with Council managers and staff
- Update Council's broader communication channels with tourism sustainability information when available
- Investigate opportunities to collaborate with community to highlight tourism sustainability for our region

STAYING COMPETITIVE

Sustainable Tourism Certification

Launched by Ecotourism Australia in 2022 in partnership with Tourism Australia, the Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard is a pathway for any tourism business or business supporting the tourism supply chain in Australia.

To support the Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard, Ecotourism Australia developed the Sustainable Tourism Certification program for businesses wanting to progress on their sustainability pathway.

Quality Tourism Accreditation

Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) is the national representative body for tourism.

The role of ATIC is to provide leadership and industry representation through a national voice for tourism, and to manage national industry development programs. ATIC is the owner and licensor of the Quality Tourism Framework and Brandmark.

The Australian Tourism Accreditation (managed by TiCSA in South Australia) certifies tourism businesses that meet specific quality assurance criteria ensuring they are committed to exceeding consumer expectations with great customer service and the highest standards of business practice. All quality tourism accredited businesses undertake regular onsite audits to ensure compliance for:

- Quality
- Reliability
- Professional customer service
- Accuracy in advertising
- Sound environmental practices
- An appropriately licenced and qualified operator
- Adherence to a Code of Ethics

SUPPORT

Light Regional Council
tourism@light.sa.gov.au
Phone: 08 8525 3200

Regional Development Australia - Barossa, Gawler, Light, Adelaide Plains (RDA BGLAP)
Anita@barossa.org.au or admin@barossa.org.au
Phone: 08 8563 3603

Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TiCSA)
info@ticsa.com.au
Phone: 08 8231 3085

South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC)
Kathryn.galpin@sa.gov.au or financebusinessservices@sa.gov.au
Phone: 08 8463 4500

REFERENCES

Light Regional Council - Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025

Light Regional Council - Tourism Plan 2018 - 2023

Light Regional Council - Economic Development Plan 2020 - 2030

Light Regional Council - Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027

Ecotourism Australia - Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard Program

Tourism Australia - Corporate purpose, Tourism Australia Act 2004

Australian Trade and Investment Commission - Opportunities for the Visitor Economy 2030

**Contact Light Tourism
for more Information**

tourism@light.sa.gov.au

08 85253200



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