

**REGIONAL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**To**  
**TRANSFORM WOLLONGONG INTO AUSTRALIA'S FIRST SMART HI-TECH ECO-CITY**  
**THE GATEWAY TO THE SOUTH COAST**  
**By**  
**ILLAWARRA FERRIES and SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**  
**WOLLONGONG CITY OF INNOVATION**

**ILLAWARRA NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY IN HARMONY**

**1. Introduction and Background**

The three year Wollongong Eco-City Plan aims to be a practical, user friendly document - containing highly achievable development and marketing strategies, with actions prioritised for implementation on a year by year basis under each of its key focus areas.

As background, Destination NSW, in conjunction with each Regional Tourism Organisation and Planning & Infrastructure NSW, wishes to progressively develop a set of Regional Destination Management Plans for each region of New South Wales as per the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan.

With the combined resources of Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, Bega Council's and Jervis Bay Territory. The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation, Destination NSW, Planning & Infrastructure NSW and the RDA Illawarra and RDA South Coast, a Tourism Plan for the region will be developed focussing on the core areas of development and marketing.

It is essential that the development and marketing components of the Plan are integrated in terms of the life of the Plan (three years) and beyond.

Where possible, the consultation process required in developing these plans will also seek to complement that undertaken by the NSW Tourism Strategy and NSW Visitor Economy Taskforce reports being developed over the same time frame as well as Ecotourism Australia and the federal government T-Qual accreditation plans.

**Development Component**

For the purposes of the Development Component, regional development encompasses:

- Infrastructure development
- Attractions, accommodation, visitor facilities and investment opportunities
- Transport development  
Roads, signage, airports, ports, rail, intra-regional transport links, access information and services
- Product development/enhancement
- New product development opportunities and enhancements to existing regional hallmark attractions, products and events.
- Industry development
- Industry training needs, professional development, structures, management and resourcing.

The Regional Destination Management Plan will be of value to industry in the region by providing the essential rationale, focus and direction for future development activity. Activity aimed at:

- enhancing the visitor impact of a region and enhancing visitor yield whilst at the same time managing and protecting the region's key tourism assets (including attractions) and facilitating sustainable tourism practices,
- identifying the most important opportunity and need areas in relation to market sources, market segment options and visitor interests; regional product; infrastructure development; industry development; integrated destination marketing and development of regional alliances,
- helping build the region's genuine competitive strengths,
- establishing a time frame for undertaking priority actions,
- identifying responsibility for actions and resources allocated to actions.

**Marketing Component**

For the purposes of the Marketing Component, marketing encompasses:

- Generally, activities that build on the development activities (arising from the Development component) as well as existing identified product strengths

- Key products (including product, packages and experiences) to be taken to market
- Key source market, distribution and marketing channel considerations
- Promotion activities - Campaigns, public relations, etc
- Development of regional alliances and integrated destination marketing aimed at enhancing the experience/activity range and options for visitors.

The Marketing Component will be of value to industry in the region by providing the essential rationale, focus and direction for future marketing activity. Activity aimed at:

- increasing visitation and visitor yield,
- identifying the most important opportunity and need areas in relation to market sources, market segment options and visitor interests; integrated destination marketing and development of regional alliances,
- marketing the region's genuine competitive strengths, thereby ensuring the marketing promise is matched by the experience and product delivery,
- establishing a time frame for undertaking priority actions,
- identifying responsibility for actions and resources allocated to actions.

Successful implementation of the Plans priority actions will encourage regional dispersion of visitors and help New South Wales maintain its position as Australia's leading visitor destination.

#### **HI-Tech Consulting responsibilities:**

HI-Tech Consulting will work jointly with Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama City Council's and South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation and Destination NSW and Planning & Infrastructure NSW to deliver the objectives, development processes, plan components and outputs outlined.

**Consultation process** - key activities here will include:

Following close consultation with Planning & Infrastructure NSW, Destination NSW and Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama City Council's and Illawarra Regional Tourism Organisation, HI-Tech Consulting will be jointly responsible for the organisation of the regional consultation process.

A whole of government approach is envisaged particularly in relation to those agencies running parallel regional development programs or engaging in related infrastructure development and planning processes. Examples would include Department of Premier and Cabinet, State and Regional Development, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Office of Environment & Heritage, Land & Water Conservation, NSW Fisheries, NSW Forestry, Roads & Maritime Services, Small Business, etc. Investigating linkages and alliances with these agencies and key regional industry stakeholders through the consultation process will be important.

Where possible, the consultation process required in developing the Plan will also seek to complement that undertaken for the NSW Tourism Strategy and NSW Visitor Economy Taskforce on Tourism reports being developed over the same time frame.

HI-Tech Consulting, Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama City Council's and South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation and Destination NSW, will mutually determine the most desirable duration and process for the consultation workshops.

## **2. Strategic context of project**

The project will assist in fulfilling the following objectives and strategies in relation to Government policy, the Destination NSW Tourism Master plan, the Regional Destination Management Plan and the key tourism objectives of the designated Tourism Region:

- Achieve increased regional dispersion of visitors to New South Wales.
- Help broaden the appeal of the regional destination and highlight regional identity, character and diversity.
- Develop quality products and experiences that best motivate and meet customer demand and expectations.
- Match the region's products/experiences to Australian and (where relevant) International target market needs.
- Create an agreed development path for the region, realistically reflecting its level of maturity, as well as the reality of its product and market strengths, in a competitive environment.
- Identify the destination strengths of the region in relation to enhancing future marketing activity.
- Identify and facilitate development of infrastructure for transport, accommodation and visitor services to support the regional/product/experience development strategy.
- Create an agreed marketing direction for each region.

## **3. Objectives of project**

Development of a highly focused, reader friendly and achievable three years Wollongong Eco-City Plan, containing clear annual priorities for development and marketing activities.

## **4. Key performance indicator for project**

Production, in a timely fashion, of the Wollongong Eco-City Plan to the satisfaction of the clients (Wollongong City, Planning & Infrastructure NSW and Destination NSW) with evidence of desire by the identified key stakeholders in that Region to help progressively implement the Plan's priority strategies and actions.

The key final output will be a simple, reader-friendly and practical Wollongong Eco-City Plan.

The key outcome sought from the plan's development is the city's and RTO's successful implementation of its priority actions within the timeframes set down in the plan.

Other outputs will be the results from the analyses of the current product mix and market analysis, and related relevant research and findings that will inform the Plan.

## **5. Project Area/Scope**

Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama City Council's and South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation and Destination NSW.

The area of focus applicable: Wollongong, Shellharbour, and Kiama City Council's

The project will need to also consider, and use as reference points, those studies and strategies developed to include (but not be restricted to) land tenures and facilities administered by Federal, State and Local Governments - as listed elsewhere in this brief with reference to a whole of government approach.

## **6. The process**

The project should encompass

Product Audit and Market Assessment:

An assessment of markets (intrastate, interstate and international), holiday types (short breaks, touring by car, meetings & conventions, family, repeat and first timers), pertinent market trends and processes (including decision making) and of factors critical to achieving success in the tourism industry.

The compilation of an assets register of tourism resources. This should include man made and natural including attractions, national parks, forest reserves, resorts, hotels, motels, B & B's, transport services (air, road, sea, rail, etc). Regional hallmark attractions, experiences and events should be identified.

An analysis of current tourism products and infrastructure available to meet market needs in the short (1-3 years) and medium (3-7 years) terms. This would include a product lifecycle analysis of existing major and hallmark tourism products, so as to identify product maintenance and enhancement opportunities.

### **Development:**

Based on the above analysis, identification of product/experience gaps leading to new product and infrastructure development projects (including transport) but especially high quality, unique experiences that both fill those gaps and meet market demand and needs in the short and medium term. These new opportunities will need to enhance the visitor experience to the region and assist in the growth of visitation to the region.

An assessment (in conjunction with relevant stakeholders) of skills/knowledge of tourism operators and managers in the region and identification of programs (and/or practical initiatives) that will help improve the level of professionalism of the tourism industry and operators in the region.

A prioritising of the development opportunities and identification of possible funding options and timeframes to implement the projects.

A simple inbuilt monitoring and evaluation system which will provide a mechanism whereby Councils and the RTO can report annually, for a three year period, from completion of the project, detailing the implementation of the plan and its outcome in the region, including:

- visitor numbers to the region;
- community and industry acceptance of, and actual commitment to, the strategies;
- extent of successful implementation of the strategies in the region;
- changes in visitor numbers to the region resulting from the implementation of the strategies;
- changes in tourism investment in the region resulting from the implementation of the strategies, and
- changes in employment and income/revenue/profitability created through the implementation of the strategies.

### **Marketing:**

Based on the above analysis, identification of product and experience strengths (especially high quality, unique experiences) that meet market demand and needs in the short and medium term. These new opportunities will need to enhance the visitor experience to the region and assist in the growth of visitation to the region.

- A prioritising of the marketing opportunities.
- Identification of the marketing activities that will realise these opportunities.
- Identification of possible funding options and timeframes to implement the projects.

A simple inbuilt monitoring and evaluation system which will provide a mechanism whereby Councils and the RTO can report annually, for a three year period, from completion of the project, detailing the implementation of the plan and its outcome in the region, including

- visitor numbers to the region;
- community and industry acceptance of, and actual commitment to, the strategies;
- extent of successful implementation of the strategies in the region;
- changes in visitor numbers to the region resulting from the implementation of the strategies;
- changes in non-regional awareness of the region resulting from the implementation of the strategies, and
- changes in employment and income/revenue/profitability created through the implementation of the strategies.

Key phases in delivering each plan include:

- scoping.
- desk research and preliminary analysis of likely development issues facing region (see above), familiarity with the RTO's three year marketing, undertaking of audit of tourism assets and resources and familiarisation with key regional tourism product and infrastructure, marketing assessment.
- development and implementation of a simple and effective regional consultation process (including advance and ongoing liaison over the life of the consultancy) which is appropriate to each region's circumstances & needs, and will build regional ownership.
- identification of key issues, including a product lifecycle analysis for region's hallmark attractions, the key regional alliances for successful pursuit of the development plan, desirable market positioning of the region and appropriate destination marketing strategies.
- further research (if necessary).
- preparation of draft plan.
- facilitated presentation of draft plan to regional stakeholders and gathering of feedback on draft plan, including prioritising of core action under each focus area for each year of plan and assessment of likely sources of resources and funds for plan implementation process & structure.
- plan finalisation and sign off by key parties in readiness for production and printing.

#### **7. Focus of each Plan - its key components**

As more fully defined in section 1, the core strategic areas identified as essential to the preparation of a successful regional tourism plan are as follows:

##### **Development:**

- Infrastructure development
- Transport development
- Product development/enhancement
- Industry development
- Generally, activities that build on the development activities (arising from the Development component) as well as existing identified product strengths

##### **Marketing:**

- Key products (including product, packages and experiences) to be taken to market
- Key source market, distribution and channel considerations
- Promotion activities - Campaigns, public relations, etc
- Development of regional alliances and integrated destination marketing aimed at enhancing the experience/activity range and options for visitors.

#### **8. Key delivery requirements and outputs of Hi-Tech Consulting**

Assistance as required with the development of a precise and achievable Wollongong Eco-City Plan in accordance with this brief.

Delivery of all regional consultations necessary in the development of the Plan and the regional/industry liaison processes surrounding these.

The research, compiling, development and writing of draft plans as required, with a focus on the identified key component areas and to a format advised and approved by Destination NSW and the regional client group.

A short debriefing report on the project identifying the key lessons learnt in relation to the project's objectives and those project development phases with which HI-Tech Consulting was directly involved.

HI-Tech Consulting will submit regular progress reports - indicating advancement of the project - through its key development phases.

#### **9. Critical success factors & considerations for project & plans**

- Clear goals and methods
- Keeping it simple
- Identifying win/win/wins
- Flexibility (particularly in relation to understanding and capitalising on other partner's existing & planned programs and priorities)
- Realistic implementation loads and demands within given or projected resource constraints
- Clear priorities and a project process to determine these
- Firm regional ownership and commitment to implement with responsibility lines clearly identified and monitored
- Each plan tailored to each individual region's circumstances, needs and best opportunities (within the market context applicable)
- Desirable level of integration between final Tourism Plan and relevant plans/strategies of Destination NSW as well as other key government and industry players.

##### **Potential threats:**

- Plan content not ultimately strongly connected to, and inspired by, each individual region's needs, market & resourcing realities, current development status & circumstances, and best opportunity areas
- Failure to achieve strong regional and stakeholder ownership over plan, and timely implementation of its actions

- Results of consultation process and best of strategic brainstorming process not strongly reflected in end document
- Unwieldy document produced which fails simplicity, accessibility and achievability test.
- Unrealistic deadlines set.
- Insufficient funds to fulfil actions e.g. stemming from unrealistic assessment of available future resources for use on plan implementation.

## **10. HI-Tech Consulting expertise**

HI-Tech Consulting will supply a professional profile which demonstrates the specialist skills and experience which will be brought to bear in meeting the project's delivery criteria, including:

Appropriate industry and planning qualifications or experience in those key areas of expertise necessary for successful delivery of the project's objectives and outputs.

Extensive experience in the development, analysis, implementation and evaluation of tourism plans and strategies, and desirably at a regional level.

A strong understanding of the operations of the travel and tourism industry in Australia and of tourism product marketing, especially as it relates to the core strategic areas identified in section 7.

Knowledge of tourism activities at local, state and federal government levels, including relevant local government mechanisms (roles/responsibilities) and processes, and of the inter-relationship of these three levels.

Good knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting regional tourism development in NSW including intrastate, interstate and international competition and consumer trends. Also knowledge and understanding of industry needs.

Project management experience combined with good business acumen.

Proven experience in successfully planning, developing, promoting, organising and facilitating industry consultation processes.

An ability to communicate effectively with industry associations and operators, and an appreciation of the mechanisms required for win-win project outcomes.

Strong research and writing skills.

HI-Tech will provide details of all personnel who will undertake the project. The information should focus on the following

- roles and responsibilities of team members, their professional backgrounds, qualifications and capabilities;
- identification of any sub-consultants who will be involved

## **11. Project timelines**

Project start: February 2016

First progress report due: at end of initial scoping phase April 2016

The presentation of first draft of the Tourism Plan (including marketing and development components) is due May 2016.

Response to the draft plan will be obtained from key stakeholders with their feedback, where necessary, incorporated into the final document provided to the regional client body and Destination NSW by July 2016.

HI-Tech Consulting will be required to produce a detailed work/production schedule which identifies the key steps necessary to meet the project development phases for which they are responsible.

## **12. Project expenditure and budget**

HI-Tech Consulting will supply - in advance of the project's commencement - a breakdown of anticipated expenditure allocations under their fee payment. This will include identifying all key cost components required for successful implementation of the various activities and services that their role on the project will entail. (As identified in this brief.)

The fee payment for HI-Tech Consulting complete delivery of all his/her responsibility areas in relation to the project will not exceed \$100,000.00 (including 10% GST).

One third of the fee will be paid at commencement of the project.

One third of the fee will be paid on submission of the first draft by May 2016.

One third of the fee will be paid on completion of the project (ie. submission and acceptance of the Tourism Plan to Destination NSW due July 2016)

## **13. Destination NSW and regional responsibilities in relation to planning and development of Plan**

Research assistance to consultant through access to the TNSW Information Resource Centre.

All pertinent data held by Destination NSW, other relevant government agencies and South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation will wherever possible be made available to HI-Tech Consulting for use in relation to the project brief.

Joint planning of the Plan's development process including industry consultations with the consultant, and approval of the final process and approach to be adopted in keeping with the brief.

In general, joint sign off on final content, approach and outcomes sought for all aspects to the project.

#### **14. Project stakeholders**

Destination NSW

- Manager, Sector & Product Development
- Marketing Co-ordinator Western Region, Regional Development Unit  
South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation (Executive Officer)

#### **Key partners:**

- Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama City Council's and South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation Board
- Planning & Infrastructure NSW, Department of State & Regional Development (and relevant regional programs/offices)
- GROW
- LGAs/Councils
- Other relevant government departments and agencies
- RDA Illawarra/RDA South Coast
- Tourism operators and relevant community leaders
- Ecotourism Australia
- Tourism Australia

#### **15. Wider project team (Destination NSW) for project**

The wider project team, involved in the scoping of the project and to be consulted by the Project Manager & Consultant for input and comment at relevant stages over the project's progress, is:

- Director, Industry Development Group
- Manager, Sector and Product Development Unit
- Manager, Regional Development
- Regional Marketing Co-ordinator
- Development Co-ordinator (Destinations)
- Development Co-ordinators (Transport, Sector and Product)
- Indigenous Tourism Development Officer
- Manager, Information and Research
- Manager, Policy & Planning
- Manager, Corporate Affairs
- Manager, Strategy & Evaluation.

Desktop research support:

- Manager, Information Resource Centre.

#### **16. Distribution of Plan**

Planning & Infrastructure NSW, Destination NSW, South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation, Ecotourism Australia and Tourism Australia will distribute the Wollongong Smart Hi-Tech Eco-City Plan in a manner, which fosters successful implementation at the local and regional level. Plan distribution to target key stakeholders.