Protected Areas are Australia’s key tourism resource

- Defining Images of a nation – Uluru, Kakadu, GBR, Daintree, Blue Mountains, Twelve Apostles, Cradle Mountain, Seal Bay, Pinnacles, Purnululu
- Key components of ‘Brand Australia’ – whether visited or not
- Without question tourism needs ‘tourism sensitive’ protected area managers and parks need ‘conservation sensitive’ operators
Nature tourism can provide some of the greatest experiences of a lifetime.
Protected Areas are not just tourism resources

- Once the whole world was ‘natural’ with small islands of human activity and settlement – 21C it is reversed AND under serious threat
  - Biodiversity is the supportive ‘web of life’
    - fundamental to economic and social health
    - Nature has rich quantifiable and non quantifiable values
    - Nature is under multiple threats, esp. climate change and needs refuges, strongholds, sanctuaries.
  - PAs most cost effective means of conservation
  - Modern human exploitation is the problem

Perceived Risks

- Every PA icon has been fought for by conservation movement with little industry support
- Lack of interest in issues beyond profit - charm, beauty, landscape, ecological health
- The ‘barbarians’ are coming - push for access, development, commercialisation
- The ‘thin end of the wedge’ eg Thredbo
- Site hardening - the end of atmosphere? ‘Twelve Apostles’
- ‘Tourism centred’ management eg KI
- Indigenous culture stock cube of the tourism soup?
- Park budgets on tourism management, not biodiversity
Tourism-centred management

Protected Area - shaped by tourism demands

Tourism shapes and dominates other PA values

Nature-centred management

Protected Area – shaped by constraints of natural/cultural conservation

Tourism works within the constraints of intergenerational conservation

Perspective is needed!
Perspective is needed!

Banff National Park

Most of our parks do not look like this!
What does the environment want?

- Advocates for the natural environment want:
  - non extractive, economic benefits from natural areas
  - political ‘grunt’ that economic forces generate
  - well resourced, well managed PAS
  - A supportive constituency of people who enjoy and love our land and seascapes
  - The introduction of children to the love of nature
  - Fair involvement and benefit sharing for indigenous and local people

What does the industry want?

- To ‘pep up’ sluggish markets
- To target the ‘Experience Seeker’
- To boost yield
- To manage the sustainability debate
- To populate ‘Brand Australia’ beyond the Sydney, Reef, Rock triangle
- To stimulate regional and indigenous tourism
Advice for the tourism industry

- Recognise all PA values
- Recognise tourism can ‘spoil’ more than ecology
- Support adequate budgets for PAs
- Pay your way
- Be partners in management – eg Echo Point
- Go beyond compliance eg Mutitjulu
- Trace real impacts - Kangaroo Island, Bloomfield Road
- Forget big resorts in PAs!

Moving beyond the icons

- A quality journey, not just the destination
- Champion the ‘Tuscan principle’ – care for the whole landscape, lifestyle, food etc.
- Support conservation policy for all lands/seas
- Combat the ‘charm bypass’ of Australian development
- Get involved in the big issues – climate change, forestry, urban design
Advice for the conservation sector

- Where do you think the next generation of those who care is coming from?
- Visitation can build constituencies of support
- Tourism bring regional development, jobs, friendlier neighbours
- Quality experiences mean greater commitment/political support
- Many TOs are environmentalists
- TOs can communicate the multiple values of PAs and assist in conservation

I support

- Long distance walking trails
- Opportunities for indigenous and historic interpretation
- Local people accommodating and running tours
- Adaptive reuse of heritage
- Standing camps
- School and young peoples access
- Low key affordable accommodation
- Quality experiences with experts
Possibilities: Conservation

- Politically industry supports adequate parks system and budgets
- TOs assist good management thru pre trip info and interpretation
- Regional tourism helps fund programs
- Partnerships between tourism operations and agencies for conservation outcomes -
- Tourism involved in monitoring/research

Possibilities: Marketing

- Co branding – on a strategic, regional basis
- Co-planning – routes, sites, activities, potential products, constraints and ‘no go’ zones
- Co marketing - PAs info rich, cash poor- integrated joint publications, including key management information
- Linkages across websites or regional website
Possibilities: Products

- Industry or joint funded infrastructure eg Trails, viewing platforms, Tahune Airway.
- Standing camps/ in remote protected areas
- Leases over heritage buildings eg lighthouses
- Management as product, ACV, Earthwatch
- Partnerships with indigenous land owners, IPAs
- Partnerships with private land owners eg Bush Heritage, AWC.

Sometimes we do it well
Sometimes we provide wonderful experiences!

Tourism and conservation can be antagonists.
Tourism and conservation can be partners and provide us with some of the best experiences on the planet!