

Nature-based Tourism Strategy

REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD



NATURE-BASED TOURISM STRATEGY

This Strategy will help us prepare for future visitor demand of our natural spaces and ensure that we have a sustainable approach to working with these areas.

Nature tourism is dependent upon a healthy and well-managed natural environment, so the Strategy is being developed in partnership with ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

The Strategy will aim to benefit Canberrans, visiting friends and family, and international tourists, by linking our natural spaces, attractions, amenities, infrastructure and businesses, so we can deliver unique and sustainable tourism experiences.



THE CONVERSATION

The Canberra community provided feedback via an online map tool and survey, and commented on emerging themes. Conversations were held from 13 September to 5 November 2018.

Stakeholders from the tourism and nature-based sectors also provided feedback over the phone and in face-to-face meetings. Conversations were held during March and April 2018.

Locals and visitors alike are very interested in our nature-based experiences – the most popular being our national parks and nature reserves including our lakes' foreshores.

Interpretation was seen as important for most nature-based experiences with efforts needed to improve interpretation methods at Aboriginal sites.

Most people who provided feedback agree that tourism can be an effective partner with conservation and management of our natural areas however, the need to ensure our natural spaces and ecosystems remain healthy and well managed remains a priority.

WHO ENGAGED

The largest proportion of responses were from those aged 25-44:

- 25% aged 25-35
- 28% aged 25-44
- 14% aged 45-54

Women accounted for 56% of the 172 responses to our online survey.

We also met with approximately 50 stakeholders from the tourism and nature-based sectors.

During phone interviews and face-to-face meetings with stakeholders, we discussed key constraints, opportunities and considerations with regards to marketing and conservation of nature-based experiences in the ACT.

Key insights from the community

Local engagement with nature-based experiences in the ACT

1. All Canberrans who provided feedback have engaged with a nature-based experience in the past 12 months.
2. 76% of respondents are taking part in nature-based experiences either fortnightly or weekly, with nature reserves being the most popular locations.

Satisfaction with nature-based experiences in the ACT

3. 85% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their nature-based visit.
4. 85% of respondents agree that the best thing about nature-based experiences in Canberra is the diverse range located closely together.

Role and value of interpreting nature-based experiences

5. The majority of locals agree that it is important for nature-based experiences to provide visitors with an understanding (or interpretation) of their stories and that this contributes to a more memorable visit.
6. However, most agree that interpretation efforts can be improved, specifically with regards to Aboriginal sites.
7. Signage and digital information are the most preferred methods for bringing to the life the stories of ACT's nature-based experiences from a local's perspective.

Relationship between Tourism and Conservation outcomes

8. 72% of Canberrans who responded agree that tourism is an effective partner in the conservation of our natural areas and plays a role in raising awareness of conservation efforts.
9. There is also strong agreement that conserving our natural spaces is a priority and vital to ensuring they remain healthy and well managed into the future.

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WHAT'S NEXT?

The key insights you've provided will be used to shape the framework, guiding principles and strategic themes for the Nature-based Tourism Strategy.

We will continue meeting with key tourism and nature sector stakeholders before a draft strategy is formalised and presented to Government for consideration.

To find out more about the Nature-based Tourism Strategy and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit www.yoursay.act.gov.au.



Key Timings

Step 1 – March to November 2018

Community and key stakeholder consultation undertaken on the key constraints, opportunities and considerations relating to the marketing and conservation of nature-based experiences in the ACT.

Step 2 – December 2018

What We Heard report released
Final tourism and nature sector stakeholder workshops conducted

Step 3 – February/March 2019

Consultation Report and Draft Strategy presented to Government for consideration

Step 4 – June 2019

Nature-based Tourism Strategy and Action Plan announced

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

11,724

people reached on social
media

1,001

people reached via YourSay

172

people completed the
survey

50

tourism and nature sector
stakeholders provided
feedback