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**MEDIA RELEASE:**

**Major Queensland tourism industry bodies collaborate for long-term industry sustainability**

Nature-based tourism operators in Queensland are being given a boost this month thanks to a new agreement between long-term industry partners, Ecotourism Australia (EA) and the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) to cross-recognise each other's certification programs.

EA certifies Australian nature-based tourism operators and destinations through its ECO, Respecting our Culture, Climate Action and destination certification programs. QTIC certifies Queensland-based tourism businesses through the national Quality Tourism Accreditation program.

Thanks to the new agreement, Ecotourism Australia's over 200 certified operators in Queensland will receive all benefits of the Quality Tourism Accreditation program (QTAB).

These benefits include licencing to use the nationally recognised Quality Tourism Accreditation branding, access to their own ReviewPro online reputation management dashboard and automatic eligibility for the Queensland Tourism Awards. Operators will also only be charged one, unchanged fee and be subject to a single, triennial audit.

Chair of Ecotourism Australia, Dr Claire Ellis, praised the agreement, saying it was a logical evolution of the organisations' long-standing relationship.

"Our industry relies on strong partnerships and now, more than ever before, it is vital we work together for the benefit of our operators and the industry more broadly. This will not only make businesses stronger and save them money but enable ourselves and QTIC to provide more integrated support as we work towards the sustainable recovery of our industry," said Dr Ellis.

Shane O'Reilly, QTIC Chair and Managing Director of O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat, an Ecotourism Australia Hall of Fame entrant, said that the agreement was a solid reflection of how both organisations focus on their members, their future sustainability and viability and engage them in ways to make their members more robust, and more resilient.

"While this will eventually strengthen both EA and QTIC as well, it is [the organisations'] focus on their members rather than themselves which makes this sharing of benefits such a special initiative. Tourism businesses need this type of initiative and grounded support and I encourage others in the political arena to take notice."

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ADDITIONAL INFO

**Ecotourism Australia (EA)** is a not for profit, membership-based organisation inspiring environmentally sustainable and culturally responsible tourism. Internationally recognised through the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, EA designs and delivers certification programs for tourism products and destinations, assuring travellers that these are backed by a strong commitment to sustainability and quality. For more information visit [www.ecotourism.org.au](http://www.ecotourism.org.au).

**The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC)** is the peak industry body for tourism in Queensland, acting as “The Voice of Tourism”. QTIC is a not-for-profit, private sector, membership-based organisation representing the interests of Queensland’s tourism and hospitality industry and working in partnership with government agencies and industry bodies at a local, state and national level to strengthen the voice of tourism in all relevant policy forums. For more information visit [www.qtic.com.au](http://www.qtic.com.au).

Ensuring Ecotourism Australia’s certification remains world’s best practice and reflects current global trends in nature-based tourism and ecotourism, as well as promoting and profiling EA-certified tourism businesses, destinations and guides are key recommendations from Tourism and Events Queensland’s recently released [Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2021–2024](#).