Norfolk Island Tourism

What opportunities for nature-based tourism development?
Part 3 / 3

BENCHMARKS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATURE-BASED TOURISM IN NORFOLK

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Introduction

The Strategic Tourism Plan (2007 – 2012) is the framework for tourism development on Norfolk. The previous parts of the project showed that the nature-based offer is quite farther from the global objectives set by the Strategic Plan. That’s why a range of new nature-based experiences must be created and the goal of this report is to provide some recommendations to reach these objectives.

The different steps of this report can be sorted in three successive parts (see figure 1). The first part shows that the situation of Norfolk is favourable for further nature-based tourism development. The second part tries to segment the potential demand for nature-based tourism, according to the new target markets. The third part proposes some recommendation what could help to create the four best prospect holidays experiences defined by the Strategic Plan (“Total Norfolk Experience”, “Nature experience”, “Wellness experience”, “Activity experience”).

![Figure 1: The main steps followed by the report](image)

This report is not a comprehensive plan of development; it presents only benchmarks and ideas to improve the nature-based experiences. In fact, no accurate schedule or budget evaluation are included into the recommendations. This work is only the very first step of the creation and implementation of a strategy that could be defined only after close consultations between the main stakeholders (tours operators, National Park, Parks and Forestry, environmental associations...). That’s why one of the first recommendations could be to constitute an “environmental tourism committee” that could focus on the nature-based experiences, and more globally on the sustainability of the local tourism industry.
1. The present context, in favour for nature-based tourism development

1.1 The relevancy to attract more visitors in the natural areas

Before developing nature-based tourism on Norfolk, it’s necessary to wonder if the natural areas of the territory can afford to receive more tourists. During this project, it was not possible to specify the carrying capacity of the island and its protected areas. However it was showed that over-visiting is not an issue, even if the number of tourists per inhabitant is one of the highest among the South Pacific islands. Actually the relatively high density of tourists means a strong dependence on tourism and Norfolk is now facing a decrease of the number of visitors.

The need to “relaunch” tourism development is a big concern among the community. Furthermore the majority of the visitors are elderly people, who are not very active and don’t do many outdoor activities. For example, the current goal of the National Park is to improve the visitors’ experiences and the promotion of the park; it doesn’t have any monitor program to assess tourism impacts, because of the low number of visitors.

That’s why nature-based tourism can perfectly participate in the effort to attract more visitors to Norfolk. That doesn’t mean that the future strategy would not be “environmentally sustainable”; the promotion of “eco-friendly” products could be an option. Furthermore we saw that the scale of each natural attraction is quite small. But it’s clear that there are environmental opportunities to propose more nature-based experiences and that there is a need expressed by the community to take advantage of them.

Figure 1: The reasons to develop nature-based tourism on Norfolk
If it’s relevant to develop nature-based tourism, it seems at least that all further tourism development could not rely entirely on the natural areas. The current low number of visitors in the natural areas is a sign of the opportunity to target new segments of tourists, but it’s important to keep in mind that the **carrying capacity of the natural areas is not infinite** and must be well supervised and monitored. In fact, the protected areas cover less than 10 km² and there is only one safe beach and swimming area. Furthermore the limited “environmental room” implies that development of some tourism experiences is not possible on Norfolk; for example, the size and the relief of the island don’t fit very well with “hard adventure activities” (except for some marine activities like sea kayaking, diving...).

### 1.2 The necessity to target wider markets

The current five years Tourism Strategic Plan (Global Tourism and Leisure, 2008) showed the need to **change the main target market.** Until recently, the main profile of the tourists were elderly people, belonging to the Pre-war generation (born before 1946). But the Baby Boomer generation (born between 1946-1965) is little by little replacing the Pre-War generation and it has different expectations. **The Baby Boomers are looking for different experiences,** that’s why there is a need to propose new products. A **transition process** must be developed if Norfolk wants to attract more tourists in the future (see figure 2).

Furthermore the **Baby Boomers are more active than the Pre War generation** (see figure 3). For instance, it was reported than the Baby Boomers’ rate participation in some nature-based activities are quite high: among the Australian outbound market, almost 1/3 of the visitors who do bushwalks are Baby Boomers (see figure 4).
Figure 3: The rate of participation in different activities depending on the age groups among the Australian outbound market (Norfolk Island Branding Committee, 2008, p.11)

Figure 4: Baby Boomers and Pre-War Generation’s participation rate in some nature-based activities among the Australian outbound market (data from Norfolk Island Branding Committee, 2008)
The combination of the current low number of visitors in natural areas and the quite high Baby Boomers’ participation rate in some nature-based activities reinforce the relevancy of linking the development of nature-based tourism with the profile of the new target market (see figure 5).

The Baby Boomers participate in many outdoor activity, but the majority of them don't seek for a high grade of difficulty: “Although 30% of Baby Boomers say they like tough physical activity (almost twice the level of the Silent Generation), they are less likely than younger generations to undertake sporting, hard adventure or tough physical activities, although they do like swimming and surfing and bush walking” (Norfolk Island Branding Committee, 2008, p.4). That’s why further development must definitively not be focused on hard adventure experiences, all the more so it was showed that the natural assets are limited for this kind of experiences.
1.3 The need to create new holiday experiences

The goal to attract more Baby Boomers to Norfolk could not be successful if dramatic changes into the current offer don’t happen. In fact, the Baby Boomers have different expectations than the Pre-War Generation:

“Younger market segments, including Baby Boomers increasingly seek actively engaging, unique informative and memorable experiences. [...] To a large extent, existing tourism programs in Norfolk Island have been somewhat passive or primarily targeted at the existing predominant market segment. As such, to date they have been adequate and suitable for this market, however, with the need to broaden the market, tourism experiences need to be made more relevant, engaging and meaningful for a different segment of the market”

Global Tourism and Leisure, 2008, p.11

To resume, the holidays sought by the Baby boomers must provide, in comparison on the current offer on Norfolk:
- more interpretation
- more engagement and interactivity
- more possibility to do experiences “on their own”
- more diversity (specially different grades of difficulty)

In this context, Norfolk must propose new experiences for the Baby Boomers, while retaining the interest of the Pre-War generation. The Strategic Plan identifies 6 best prospect tourism experiences to develop (see figure 6):
### Figures

#### Figure 6: Norfolk Island best prospect tourism experiences

(Global Tourism and Leisure, 2008, p.22)
Four of the six best prospect experiences concern nature-based experiences:
- Total Norfolk Island Experience
- Nature
- Health, fitness and wellness
- Activities

So the nature-based offer could play an important role into the new development strategy of the destination. While targeting the Baby Boomers, it could also present a relative diversity of positioning depending on the kind of holidays experiences. If the majority of Baby Boomers seek more engaging experiences, their expectation concerning the natural areas could be quite different, as we will see in the next chapter.

2. Potential positioning of the future nature-based offer

2.1 The unequal importance of nature among the prospect holiday experiences

The Tourism Strategic Plan identified six best prospect holidays experiences for Norfolk. Among them, four could contain nature-based products. However the importance of the nature-based experiences is different in these four holiday experiences (see figure 7). In this context, the natural attractions could play a different role in the reason to travel and in the behaviour of the tourists in the destination.

In fact, the visitors could have different expectations concerning the nature-based experiences, what could be at the centre or at the margin of their holiday. Some visitors could spend most of their stay in natural areas while other would also take time visiting the other attractions of the destination. Furthermore a minority of them would go to Norfolk to do a specific nature-based activity (fishing, birdwatching,…).
Benchmarks for the development of nature-based tourism on Norfolk

Figure 7: The importance of natural assets into the best prospect tourism experiences
2.2 Segmentation of the nature-based market according the “level of specialisation”

It was showed that the future target market could have different expectations concerning the natural attractions of the destination. That’s why it could be necessary to segment the potential demand concerning nature-based tourism, according to the “level of specialisation” of the visitors. In fact, the visitors could seek different nature-based experiences, depending if nature is their main reason to go to Norfolk or if nature is only a secondary experience.

The “grade of specialisation” is one of the main common segmentation of the outdoor activities market. In fact, it was observed that many outdoor activities present “a spectrum of recreational behaviour, ranging from the general to the highly specialised, based on participants’ ownership of equipment and their activity-setting preferences, knowledge about the activity, accumulated experience and skill level” (Hvenegaard, 2002, p.23). Furthermore this segmentation could also be used in many tourism experiences:

“The approach [of segmentation by the specialisation] has been successfully applied to a diverse range of outdoor recreation activities including, inter alia, hunting, bird watching, canoeing and hiking. The approach has also been applied in the tourism context. Kerstetter, Confer and Graefe (2001), for example, present a segmentation study of heritage tourists based on three dimensions of specialisation: previous experience, knowledge and investment. All three of these dimensions were found to be statistically significant in distinguishing between different types of heritage tourist, defined as those with low, medium and high levels of specialisation”

Garrod, 2008, p.38

Concerning each activity, there is a spectrum of specialisation of the part of the tourists (see figure 8) between:
- **Expert/specialist tourist** (high involvement, with high complexity/challenge): here the tourist is engaging in a special-interest activity that is fundamental to and central in their way of life and leisure
- **Novice/dabbler** (low involvement, with low complexity/challenge): this group is characterised by relative inexperience, lack of familiarity with the activity and limited exposure time to it. The ‘novice’ is thus defined as someone who is dabbling in the activity (cf. Kuentzel and Heberlein, 2006).
Depending on the sort of holiday experience, the level of tourists’ specialisation concerning nature-based activities can change dramatically (see figure 9). For example, a visitor whose main reason to go to Norfolk is fishing or birdwatching would seek challenges (catch big fishes, watch rare endemic species) and important involvement (it will spend many time doing the activity) while a tourist who would like to discover the World of Norfolk (“Total Norfolk experience”) won’t spend their entire stay on natural areas and won’t seek to have a very in-depth knowledge of the local ecosystem.
Figure 9: The level of specialisation of nature-based experiences depending on the best prospect holiday experiences on Norfolk.
2.3 Compatibility between current offer and potential demand of nature-based experiences

The “specialisation segmentation” could be particularly useful for Norfolk because now the destination is specialised in elderly people. For instance, the current number of visitors in the natural areas is quite low. The destination face the challenge to attract new target markets, whose difference with the current visitors is to be more active and so to be more likely to do more challenging activities and to seek more engaging experiences. That means the destination must to lead a transition towards a more “specialised” nature-based destination.

In this context, all the potential holiday experiences don’t need the same level of change. Some could be created from the improvement of existing products, while others need the creation of a range of new products. In fact, it was showed previously that the current offers propose mainly nature-based activities for novices/dabblers, while some specialist operators propose challenging or “complex” activities (sea kayaking, diving, birdwatching,…).

There is now a gap between the two extremities of the “specialisation spectrum” and there is not a wide range of nature-based products in the middle of the spectrum, like for example experiences for “nature lovers” who want to experience actively Norfolk natural environment without doing very challenging activities. 3 main types of holidays containing nature-based activities could be identified now in Norfolk (see figure 10):

- “Visiting Norfolk”: it’s the current Primary experience. Visitors want to discover the different aspects of Norfolk Island, through low engaging and not challenging activities. Good examples of these activities are the tours of the generalist operators (Breakfast Bushwalks, general sightseeing,…). They could represent the “base” for the development of the “Total Norfolk experience”, by improving the quality of the interpretation (more interactivity, engagement, modern presentation,…) (see table 3).

- “Relaxing”: it’s a secondary experience; in this case, the visitors go to the natural areas just to enjoy the scenery and the quietness. They do a small number of activities (like having a picnic in a natural reserve or stopping at a lookout) and don’t seek in-depth interpretation or physical activities. Concerning the natural areas, the “Wellness experience” could be created from the current “relaxing experience”, by promoting the natural areas as an aspect of the Norfolk high quality of life (healthy environment, clean air, no pollution,…).

- “Wildoor Activities”: a little minority of the visitors (generally younger) do more challenging and engaging nature-based activities (sea kayaking, diving,…). These activities could also interest the Baby Boomers market, but they need to be more reliable. In fact, they are provided by small operators whose offers are sometimes “irregular” (no regular schedule, low visibility and promotion, dependence on only one person,…).
Benchmarks for the development of nature-based tourism on Norfolk

Figure 10: The level of specialisation of nature-based experiences according to the current holiday experiences available on Norfolk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current type of holiday</th>
<th>Transition Process Improve…</th>
<th>Potential new holiday experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Visiting Norfolk”</td>
<td>Interpretation (engagement, interactivity)</td>
<td>“Total Norfolk experience”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Relaxing”</td>
<td>Image (of Norfolk environment)</td>
<td>“Wellness experience”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Wildoor activities”</td>
<td>Reliability (of the offer)</td>
<td>“Activities experiences”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>Variety (of nature-based activities)</td>
<td>“Nature experience”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The transition process from the current offer to the best prospect holidays experiences
The priorities concerning the implementation of the prospect holiday experiences could be different, depending on their potentialities of development and their compatibility with the current profile of tourists (see figure 9 and table 4). In fact, the “Total Norfolk Experience” represents the Primary Experience; it could concentrate the majority of the effort, in order to develop it as soon as possible. Furthermore it’s closer to the current products targeting the Pre-War Generation and need less important changes than the other potential experiences. Its implementation could be one of the highest priorities: it’s the biggest potential market and could be more compatible with the need of the Elderly Generation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best prospect holiday experiences</th>
<th>Potential demand on Norfolk</th>
<th>Compatibility with current clientele</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Total Norfolk experience”</td>
<td>Big</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Wellness experience”</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Nature experience”</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Activities experience”</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Potential and compatibility of the best prospect holiday experiences

The “Wellness experience” could be integrated into the first step of the destination’s repositioning because it could also fit the current clientele and the target market. At the opposite, the “nature experience” are for more active visitors and the “activities experiences” represents a group of “niche markets”, concerning “experts” or “specialists” in a specific activity (like fishing, birdwatching,…). That’s why these experiences could be developed afterwards, when the destination is already able to attract more Baby Boomers.
3. Recommendations for nature-based tourism development on Norfolk

It was showed that the potential demand of nature-based experiences could be different and be segmented depending on the level of specialisation of the visitors. That’s why the following recommendations are ordered according to the four best prospect holiday experiences (described previously). They concern only the nature-based offer; the improvement of each holiday experience would also need actions in the other fields of the tourism offer.

**A. TOTAL NORFOLK EXPERIENCE**

**Key word:** interpretation  
**Transition’s goal:** improve quality experience

It’s the primary experience on Norfolk. Visitors want to discover all the aspects of the World of Norfolk: the unique natural environment but also the unique culture and historical heritage. They are “generalist tourists”, they are not specialised on a specific activity. So they don’t seek challenging or complex nature-based activities. But they want the same high-quality interpretation for all their experiences (historical, cultural, nature-based).

**A.1 To improve the interpretative facilities for tourists experiencing the natural areas on their own:**

**A.1.1 by creating a high quality interpretation center presenting the natural environment**

The current ‘old fashion’ environmental center (Nature Land) in the Botanic Garden is quite basic and not very attractive. A more interactive and comprehensive display center could be created in the future tourism/cultural/community complex, what could provide ‘one stop’ tourism center for visitors who are interested in discovering both culture and nature of Norfolk. The future interpretative center could use modern media to be more interactive and “multi-sensorial” (i.e. using audio-visual techniques, pushing buttons to hear birdsong records, recreating smell of flowers, touching coral specimens or scale model of fishes, etc…) and would present all the ecosystems (land and marine) and the cultural links with the human community.

**A.1.2 with more and better interpretative signs**

The Kahva (Kingston historical area) put attractive interpretative signs near almost every historical attraction in Kingston and a brochure (see next point) proposes walks linking the different historical attractions, as a complement to the signs. National Park could do the same, because now there are not a lot of interpretative signs (and some are not in good condition, like in Mount Pitt), especially along the walking tracks. National Park could create a “self-guided” trail, with information signs to follow to a specific order along the trail. Furthermore Parks and Forestry Service could also put some interpretative signs in the most popular Public Reserves (Anson Bay, Selwyn (Puppy’s Point), Hundred Acres, Cascade, …).
A.1.3 with more attractive and comprehensive brochure and documentation

All the National Park brochures are not very attractive: no colours, basic maps, few photos,… Once again, National Park could follow the example of the Kahva, who edited a well-designed brochure, representing in colour all the Kahva area. For example, the walking trail brochure could provide a better map, with topographic information (contour lines) and trails in different colours according their difficulty. The Birds Checklist could provide a photo for each endemic species and the Botanic Garden brochure could show pictures of the most emblematic endemic plants. Furthermore Parks and Forestry Service could propose brochures about the different natural attractions (beaches, rocking pools, volcanic geological formations, native vegetation,…) and short walks (Anson Bay, Bumbora Bay, Cristal Pool, Cascade/Cockpit waterfalls (if the tracks are improved), etc…).

A.1.4 by developing electronic based guiding system

A future alternative to a “self-guided tracks” brochure could be an electronic guided system (with headphone) that could provide information to the visitors in different points showed on a map or/and signs on the ground. It could be used by the National Park and Kahva, as an integrated interpretative system for both historical and natural attractions. Unlike the free brochures, it’s a paying service and so it could be a way to associate the wish of the Baby Boomers to discover attractions “on their own” thanks to interactive interpretation and the goal of the destination to increase expanses of visitors who wouldn’t pay for a tour.

A.2 To propose more interactive and engaging tours:

A.2.1 with smaller groups

The official capacity of the Breakfast Bushwalks tours can be up to 140 customers. Actually the groups are usually less important but it shows that many bushwalks tours can’t provide engaging experiences for each customers. Different studies showed that it’s difficult to have high-quality interaction with a guide when the group is bigger than 10 people. Furthermore the walking tracks are (by definition) not very large, that means that the customers would form a very long queue behind the guide, who is very far away from the last ones. The Baby Boomers seek interactive and engaging experiences, so during a tour they would like to have many “personal interaction” with the guide.

A.2.2 with higher level of engagement

The Bottom Boat is a good example of low engagement tours: all the activity were done by the guide. Even if it’s not very easy to provide interactivity during this kind of tour, the level of engagement could be improve by proposing to the customers to do little tasks usually done by the guide: feeding the fishes from the boat, helping the guide to put the boat on the lagoon, trying to identify some fish species and coral (after the guide has provided photos or brochures about the marine fauna),… The improvement of the interactivity could be done in many other tours.
**A.2.3** with more in-depth general presentation of the natural environment
Bushwalk is one of the most popular outdoor activity among the Baby Boomers but all the bushwalks tours are short (less than 2 hours walking) and the guide normally do only few short stops during the walk to present some features of Norfolk environment. But the Baby Boomers wouldn’t need a guide to walk safely from one place to another, but to receive in-depth environmental information. Longer (in duration, not necessary in length) walking tours could be offered, in order to be focused on environmental interpretation (and not on the physical activity itself).

**A.2.4** with “multi-sensorial” experiences
In relation with the low level of interactivity, the majority of the tours are not “calling upon” the different senses of the visitors. However the Bushwalk tours could be the opportunity to experience different ways to “feel” the environment: not only see it, but also smell it (flowers, plants,…), hear it (birdsongs), touch it (leaves, pine needles, “blood” of a pepper tree…).

**A.2.5** with specialised nature guides
The guides have a very good vernacular knowledge of the local environment, but few of them receive in-depth training about professional guiding techniques and fewer are specialised in environmental interpretation. They could receive short trainings showing some guiding techniques what could help them to make the tours more interactive and to explain through an attractive way the natural process and ecosystems to the tourists.
B. NATURE EXPERIENCE

Key world: immersion (in the environment)
Transition’s goals: improve the diversity and sustainability of the nature-based experiences

During a “nature experience” holiday, the visitors spend many time in the natural areas. They have the same need of high quality interpretation than the “Total Norfolk experience” tourists, but they want to have a wider range of nature-based activities. They want to be “immersed” in the natural environment but they are not focused on only one nature-based activity.

They don’t necessarily seek challenging or complex activities but they are more “environmentally aware” than the “Total Norfolk experience” visitors: they are keener to appreciate “sustainable products”. The development of “nature experience” could also provide the opportunity to profile Norfolk as an ecotourism destination, whose offer presents a wide range of nature-based experiences respectful to the local environment.

B.1 To propose a wider range of nature-based activities:

B.1.1 by creating a bigger walking track network in the National Park

There are less than 9 km of walking tracks in the National Park and all the track network is on the East part of the park. The Baby Boomers are more active than the Pre-War generation and some of them would like to spend more time walking in different tracks. Furthermore now there is no option to do a big loop. Some Western service tracks could be transformed as walking tracks; it would allow the visitors to do an half-day walking itinerary Captain Cook Monument – Forestry Zone – Mount Pitt – Mount Bates – Bird Rock – Captain Cook Monument (see map B.1.1).
B.1.2 by creating walking tracks along the coast and improving the condition of the existing ones

There are only few walking tracks along the coast, and yet they could provide different experiences than the rainforest walks. Outside the National Park, private properties make difficult the creation of coastal tracks, but tracks between two public reserves (like between Ball Bay and Two Chimneys Reserves or between Anson Bay and Selwyn Reserve) could offer good lookouts from the high cliffs, good spots for birdwatching… Furthermore the existing coastal walking tracks could be improved and more safe: for instance, the tracks going down the cliffs to rocking pools (Cristal Pool, the Chord) or the track between Cascade Jetty to Cockpit Waterfalls could provide another kind of walking experiences.

B.1.3 by proposing a wider range of interpretative walking tours

Nature-based operators could follow the example of the “Working in the History” tour, that presents to small groups some precise aspects of Norfolk history and culture, through interactive and engaging experiences. New tours could focus on specific aspects of the unique local environment, like for example a tour with a National Park ranger providing “a greater understanding of the great work being undertaken to preserve unique and endangered species” (idea given by the Strategic Plan). Tours operators could also propose more original walking tours in the natural areas, in comparison of the current Breakfast Bushwalks: night walking tours in the National Park to experience another ‘ambiance’ and watch nocturne birdlife, off-tracks tours guided by a National Park accredited guide…
B.1.4 by improving the access to “soft-adventure” experiences
The majority of the current “adventures activities” offer (sea kayaking, mountain biking, surfing, diving,…) are either for beginners or for specialists. There is a gap between the novice and the expert level. For instance, the sea kayaking tours are very easy (in Emily Bay) or quite difficult (from the Chord). The access to the Chord could be made easier (by building stairs in the deepest part of the track), in order to attract more visitors enough fit to do sea kayaking around the Northern Islets put scared by the very deep access track. By the way, the Chord and Cristal Pool could also be more adventurous “snorkelling spot” than Emily Bay. Another example, the access to Phillip Island could be made easier in order to allow less adventurous visitors to have a soft adventure experience in this island.

B.1.5 by improving the promotion of the diversity of the nature-based activities
It could be useful to propose a comprehensive brochure or catalogue describing all the nature-based activities (with clear grading concerning difficulty, complexity, capacity,…). And to create a whole Nature/Ecotourism section in the Norfolk Island Tourism Website.

B.2 To propose experiences “closer” to nature

B.2.1 by changing the “profile” of the walking tracks
Even if cars are forbidden in the National Park, many walking tracks are like 4 wheels drive roads and some of them are used by the vehicles of the National Park. A way to improve the “National Park experience” could be to create more narrow tracks (where walking could be the unique activity possible). More tracks could be like the “West Palm Glenn” track, with low impact on the landscape.

B.2.2 with less motor-dependant tours (less bus)
Walking tours could use as less as possible bus transport. For instance, all the Bushwalks tours provide breakfast in a picnic area accessible by bus, what could be far away from walking tracks (in this case, bus transport is provided between the end of the walk and the breakfast). Even if it could create some logistic problem, it could be worth to integrate “deeper” the breakfast into the walking experiences. For instance, the breakfast could be provided far away from the road networks, in scenic places like Mount Bates or in front of the Northern Islets. This could be possible if the group is small and prefer to have less comfort (no tables or chairs), in order to prolong their experience “deep inside” the park. In fact some visitors could prefer to have a “different breakfast” than to have the same kind of breakfast they could have in a café or at home. And the visitors could help the guide to bring a part of the breakfast and by this way increase the level of engagement of the tour.
B.2.3 by proposing individual and personalised tours
Some visitors could be interesting to experience Norfolk environment with a guide, but without other tourists. They would like to feel having an “exclusive” experience and not to be disturbed by other people while being in natural areas. They are willing to pay more to have a ‘high quality’ experience and also to be in a tour with less potential impact (big groups could be associated with high environmental impacts).

B.2.4 by identifying the best accommodations which could prolong the nature experience
Accommodations surrounded by rainforest and/or located near the National Park could fit better the expectations of the “nature lovers” than accommodations in town near cafés and restaurants. In fact some tourists would seek continuity between the nature-based activities and the accommodation experience. Also they would prefer accommodation built with natural materials (local wood or rocks) than buildings in concrete or cement. Furthermore they would appreciate if the accommodation employees would be able to provide precise information about the local environment, the different nature-based experiences and tours available, etc….
A list of the most “eco-friendly accommodation” could be edited and available online. If necessary, the Strategic Plan presents the option to “develop an ecotourism lodge in a suitable location adjacent to the National Park, where appropriate nature based tourism activities may be included in the overall guest experience”.

B.3 To propose environmentally friendly experiences

B.3.1 by setting up a global program of environmental accreditation for the destination
According to the Strategic Plan, “Norfolk Island [could] become an accredited ‘Green Globe’ destination, or other similar program as assessed and agreed by the people of Norfolk Island and which provides guidance, benchmarking and accreditation for a total destination planning and operational approach to community and environmental sustainability of tourism”. Local environmental association could participate in this process; for instance, some local accommodations have been “Global Footprint” accredited, after an awareness campaign of Econorfolk.

B.3.2 by introducing a specific accreditation for tours in natural areas
The Strategic Plan recommends that the “operators [are] selected by National Parks be accredited through the Australian Ecotourism Guides program, be thoroughly conversant with the unique Norfolk environment, and formally approved by National Parks “. It could provide to the visitors a guarantee of both low environmental impacts and in-depth and accurate interpretation.
**B.3.3 by giving the opportunity to the visitors to be involved in environmental conservation**

A small number of visitors would like to enjoy “usefully” Norfolk’s nature by participating actively in environmental conservation. For example, the Strategic Plan suggests to “develop nature based volunteer tourism programs to assist with nature or endangered species restoration and protection activities”. If these experiences don’t concern the majority of the tourists, it could help to promote Norfolk as an ecotourism destination.

**B.3.4 by promoting local agriculture and food as part of the destination sustainability**

While importations of fresh food are more and more important in Australia and New Zealand, all the fresh vegetable and fruits available on Norfolk are still grown locally, in small farms (at the opposite of “industrial farming”). Furthermore some farmers propose “organic” products and an action group called “Sustainable Norfolk” is promoting Norfolk’s potential for sustainable agriculture. Links could be established between the benefits of the local agriculture (respectful for the local environment), the local food (good for the health of the visitors) and the ecotourism experiences (see also the “health, fitness, and wellness experience”).
C. ACTIVITIES EXPERIENCE

Key word: specialists/experts
Transition’s goals: make the offer of the specialised operators more reliable and “visible”

A little minority of visitors comes to Norfolk to do a specific nature-based activity; they would not have come otherwise. They are clearly “experts or specialists” and they organize their holiday according to their passion. Note the potential of complexity/challenge is not the same for all activities. In fact, it would be more difficult to attract specialists tourists in land activity what would require big distances (bushwalk, mountain bike, horse riding,…), than for marine activities and birdwatching.

There are already operators proposing experiences for “experts” or “specialists” in different outdoor activities. The main actions to improve this kind of holidays experiences don’t concern the current offer but the way it’s promoted and structured.

C.1 To make the specialist operators more “visible” in the market

C.1.1 by setting up niche marketing strategies through Internet
“Specialists” or “experts” are used to form “communities of interest” (about birdwatching, fishing,…), by using specific media, in order to get information and share experiences in relation with their passion: the best spots, new sport equipment and techniques,… While they read specific magazines or watch specific TV channels or programmes, the Internet plays a key role in the interaction between the specialists of a same activity. That’s why the specialists operators could not only have their own web site (that many still don’t have) but also be more present in the “Web 2.0” sites (like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter,…), what could be an efficient and cost-effective way to promote Norfolk’s potentiality for their activity. For instance, a visitor who is planning to go on holidays for fishing would be interested in watching some YouTube videos about fishing experiences before choosing its future destination. Eventually the operators could do an effort to improve the referencing of their websites on the main “Search motors websites” (Google, Yahoo,…).

C.1.2 by developing their “marketing presence” on Norfolk (brochures, premises,…)
Some specialists operators have still not edited documentations, while other provide only very basic brochures. The specialist operators could do an effort to create more comprehensive brochures (with more details about the location, duration, schedule, grade of difficulty, capacity, profile of the guides,…), that could be available in the VIC and accommodations. Furthermore many specialists operators don’t have commercial premises to welcome the tourists and hence to have a first contact with them before the beginning of the tours. For example, some fishing operators could share the cost of a booking center, where visitors could receive in-depth information about all the fishing possibilities on Norfolk (see also next point).
**C.1.3 by creating an association/network of adventures and ecotourism operators**

The specialists operators are small and cannot afford important expenditure on marketing and promotion. That’s why networks and alliances may be useful. Networking could involve cooperation among several firms for the purpose of achieving mutual benefits of various types. It could involve advertising (shared brochures, exchange of links in their websites,…), linking different products (package of different nature-based activities), creating an ecotourism and adventure tourism association (information dissemination, shared an information and booking center, better business practices,…). Alliances between the different stakeholders of the nature-based tourism industry could also help Norfolk to be profiled as an ecotourism and adventure destination.

**C.2 To improve the reliability of the offer of the specialist operators**

**C.2.1 with specialised tours available year round**

Because of the small size of many operators (sometimes only one employee), some tours are not always available on a regularly basis. The activity of some operators depends entirely of the availability of one person, who sometimes has another job. Furthermore the visitors don’t know much in advance the possible schedules of the tours and the only way to know them is usually to phone directly the operator (no information available online). Some operators could at least make an effort to communicate in advance when the tours are available. They could also elaborate an “alternative solution” to propose tours when their only guide is out the island: agreement with another operators, training someone else who could reemplace it…

**C.2.2 by guaranteeeing that tours happen whatever the number of bookings**

Even if there is only one customer, the tour operators should not refused to organize a tour. In fact, some specialists/experts visitors are willing to pay much for doing their favourite activity (what is their main raison to go to Norfolk). For example, a bird watcher could have travelled thousands of kilometres just to see one specific bird specie and would be deeply disappointed if its planned trip to Phillip Island is cancelled just because he is the only one to have booked the tour. Concerning this kind of situation, it could be better that the tour operators propose the possibility to charge extra fees for small groups, who can’t wait several weeks on Norfolk before doing the tour with a bigger group. At least, operators must not accept a booking if they are not sure to do the tour (not an uncommon situation that could provoke deep disappointment among visitors).

**C.2.3 by monitoring better the dependence on weather and sea conditions**

The weather conditions are always important for all outdoor activities, and of course the operators can do nothing but cancel or postpone the tours when the weather is bad. However the management of the uncertainties concerning the weather conditions could be improved. For instance, the visitors are sometimes informed just before the beginning of the tour that it has been cancelled. If it’s not easy to forecast the weather on Norfolk and the weather conditions change very quickly, it could be good that the operators (in relation with the Meteorological Bureau) could inform in advance their customers about the degree of probability of cancelling the tour and have a precise policy (for example, cancelling a tour the day before if the probability of rain or rough sea is above xx %).
D. HEALTH, FITNESS and WELLNESS EXPERIENCE

**Key word:** harmony (between body, mind, spirit and natural environment)  
**Transition’s goal:** to promote Norfolk’s nature as a healthy environment for wellness experiences

Wellness tourism could be basically defined as a change of location by people to promote and restore physical, mental and social well-being. According to the results of different researches, its main features could be: the key importance of life style, self-responsibility for health, the multi-factorial roots of health as well as the exploitation of our potential for a better quality of life.

The wellness experience is not focused on nature-based activities but on specific health and well-being services, like spas, massages, yoga, meditation centers, healthy nutrition… However Norfolk environment could be presented as good for the body, mind and spirit, just by breeding clean air, enjoying the quietness, eating good locally grown food… In this context, a part of the “wellness experience” could be developed in the natural areas.

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**D.1 To use the natural areas as a “frame” for current “wellbeing activities”**  
There are now different people on Norfolk who organize Yoga and meditation experiences. Some of them could take place in some natural areas, whose landscape and atmosphere could help people finding relaxation and concentration.

**D.2 To propose new fitness activities using the natural assets of Norfolk**  
For example, one “fitness trail” could be created in a natural public reserve (like in 100 Acres reserves), where personal training could be provided. Aquarobics sessions/lessons could be also organised in Emily Bay.

**D.3 To create tours focused on the Nature’s beneficial effects for health**  
New tours could be focused on the traditional medical plants that can be found in the natural areas: how identify medical/medicinal plants, how the Islanders (or convicts) traditionally used it, what are the eatable (comestible) mushrooms and fruits found in natural areas, what are their nutritional quality…
Conclusion

Norfolk became little by little specialized in a specific generational market (the Pre-War Generation) which is little by little disappearing. Now the need of changes concerns almost all the offer, and not only the nature-based products. In fact, Norfolk must to implement a global “transition program” of the destination’s repositioning in order to attract wider markets.

The success of this diversification depends largely on the mobilisation of all the stakeholders. In fact the tourists’ satisfaction rely on the quality of all the services provided by the destination: tours, accommodation, restaurants, shops… Furthermore it was showed that the majority of the potential demand would seek a diversity of experiences (nature-based, historical, cultural, wellness,…). So the development of nature-based tourism must be linked with the development of the other types of experiences available on Norfolk.

In this context, the first tourism companies targeting the Baby Boomers play a key role into the diversification of the destination (see figure 11, next page). These “pioneers companies” must be innovative and take the risk to propose new experiences that are not targeted for the current profile of the tourists. They must be successful to set an example to the other operators; otherwise it could “dampen” another initiatives targeting Baby Boomers.

The role of the “pioneers companies” is particularly important concerning the evolution of nature-based experiences, what are more dependant on younger visitors that other types of experiences (like cultural or wellness holidays). Many nature-based activities require a minimum level of fitness; that’s why the current kind of tourists prevents Norfolk to be profiled as an ecotourism destination. This situation could change only if there is a minimum number of “pioneers companies”; a sole tourism operator can not change the image and the atmosphere of a destination.

In case of success of its repositioning into the Baby Boomer market, the destination would have to face up to another specificity of nature-based tourism, i.e. the fragility of the natural areas. In fact, nature-based experiences rely on areas what could be more deeply affected by tourism activities than the other parts of Norfolk. A program monitoring the environmental impacts could be implemented in the future, in order not to damage the resources which the nature-based tourism depends on.

The priority for the community is now to receive more income from tourism but it must not be done to the detriment of the conservation of the natural heritage, which is an important part of the Norfolk high quality of life. According to the current tourism crisis, this report was not focus on sustainability and environmental studies. But the destination could afterwards develop a global and long-range sustainable strategy, by defining clearly the environmental and social limits for further tourism development. The World of Norfolk is diverse but small and it must be a sustainable world in the future to prevent another crisis.
Figure 11: The key role of the “pioneers companies” into the diversification of the destination’s offer
References


NORFOLK ISLAND BRANDING COMMITTEE, 2008, Visitor Market Options – a discussion paper, Norfolk Island Tourism, Kingston