



MEDIA RELEASE

MARTIN FERGUSON

Minister for Resources and Energy
Minister for Tourism

SENATOR NICK SHERRY

Minister for Small Business
Minister Assisting on Deregulation and
Public Sector Superannuation
Minister Assisting on Tourism

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NEED FOR INDIGENOUS TOURISM TO TARGET EMERGING MARKETS

New data released today by Tourism Research Australia highlights the need to regear Australia's Indigenous tourism industry towards emerging growth markets to make up for a continuing decline in visitors from traditional markets.

The *Snapshots 2011: Indigenous Tourism Visitors in Australia* has been released on the opening day of the Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference in Perth and looks at the travel and spending habits of domestic and international visitors who took part in at least one Indigenous activity, such as a visit to an Aboriginal site or performance, in 2010.

The snapshot found Australia's Indigenous tourism market was worth \$3.8 billion in 2010. There were 689,000 international Indigenous tourism visitors, a 2.9 per cent fall on 2009. There were 306,000 domestic overnight Indigenous tourism trips, a 17 per cent decline on 2009.

Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP, said the sharp fall in both international and domestic Indigenous tourism visitors since 2007 clearly reflects prevailing economic conditions.

"We know more and more Australians are heading overseas for holidays and that's why we are focussing our efforts on encouraging more Australians to holiday at home with the next phase of Tourism Australia's *There's nothing like Australia* marketing campaign," Minister Ferguson said.

"At the same time this research clearly shows that challenging economic conditions in traditional markets for Indigenous tourism such as the US, UK and Europe continue to affect outbound travel.

"To counter this decline we need to strengthen the appeal of Indigenous tourism experiences for emerging markets such as China to make up for a shortfall from traditional markets.

"The data shows that since 2006 we have seen average growth out of Indonesia (10%), China (9.4%), India (6.1%) and Thailand (5.6%). These are the markets we need to target - this is where growth opportunities lie.

"Under the Australian Government's National Long-Term Tourism Strategy the Indigenous Tourism Working Group, is examining ways to improve the quality and quantity of Australia's Indigenous tourism product.

"City based Indigenous experiences like the Bangarra Dance Theatre and the Darwin Festival have set a high standard of quality that we would like to see replicated in regional areas to maximise opportunities from visitor interest in Australian culture, particularly from the emerging Asian market.

"By getting more Indigenous people involved in producing Indigenous tourism experiences and by tailoring quality tourism experiences to emerging markets, we can help turn this trend around."

Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, said Australia's Indigenous tourism experience is a key asset for the whole industry.

"Australia's Indigenous culture is a key point of differentiation in a highly competitive world marketplace," said Senator Sherry.

"One of the aims of the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy is to improve Indigenous experiences and get more Indigenous people into the tourism workforce.

"The Indigenous Tourism Development Working Group has pilot projects to train Indigenous school-leavers and bring them together with potential employers.

"It's also supporting a training academy at Ayers Rock Resort to develop Indigenous business and entrepreneurial skills," Minister Sherry said.

Snapshots 2011 – Indigenous Tourism Visitors in Australia is at www.ret.gov.au/tra

Media contacts: Cathryn Tilmouth 0401 222 941 (Ferguson), Joe Scavo (Sherry) 0413 800 757