

Understanding local context and ensuring local relevance of monitoring and reporting

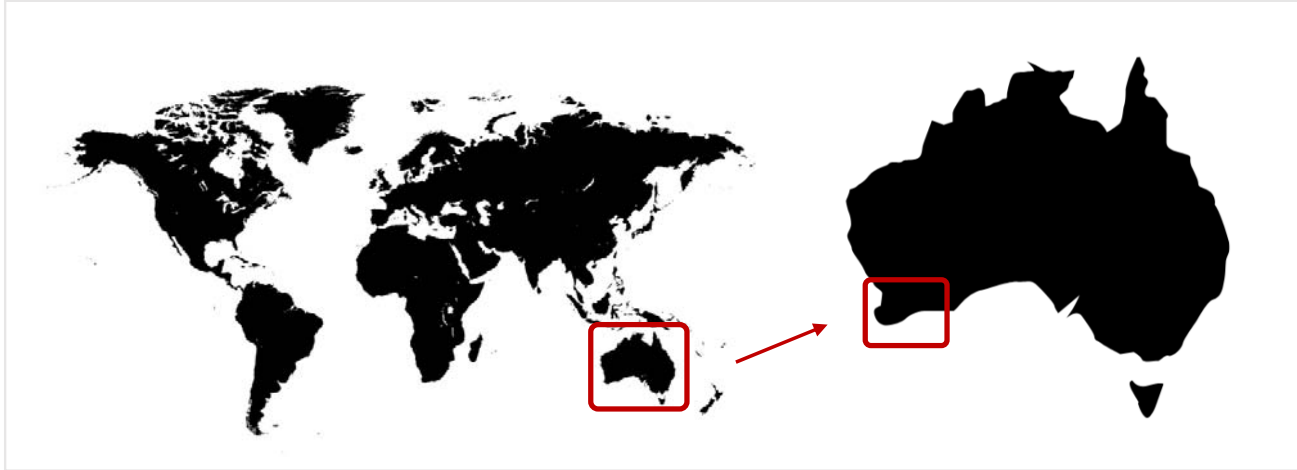
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Australia's South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory
Tourism Research Cluster, Curtin University, Australia

Misery Beach, Torndirrup National Park
Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia

Australia's South West Tourism Region



63,000
km²



260,000
inhabitants



**Manufacturing
Construction
Mining
Tourism**



Event Coordinator, Margaret River
Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia

3.3m
overnight
visitors

4.2m
daytrip
visitors

**Holiday
& VFR**
main
purposes
of visit

USD 142
Avg daily spend

9%
Gross Regional Product

13k
Direct jobs

Beach & recreation
Wine, food & events
Heritage sites

National parks
Caves & forests
Adventure activities



Olio Bello, Margaret River
Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia

Australia's South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory

Tourism Research Cluster

Curtin University

Operation implementation



Working group

Tourism Western Australia
Australia's South West
Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
Royal Automobile Club

Participatory decision making
Data collection/analysis support
Advise and control

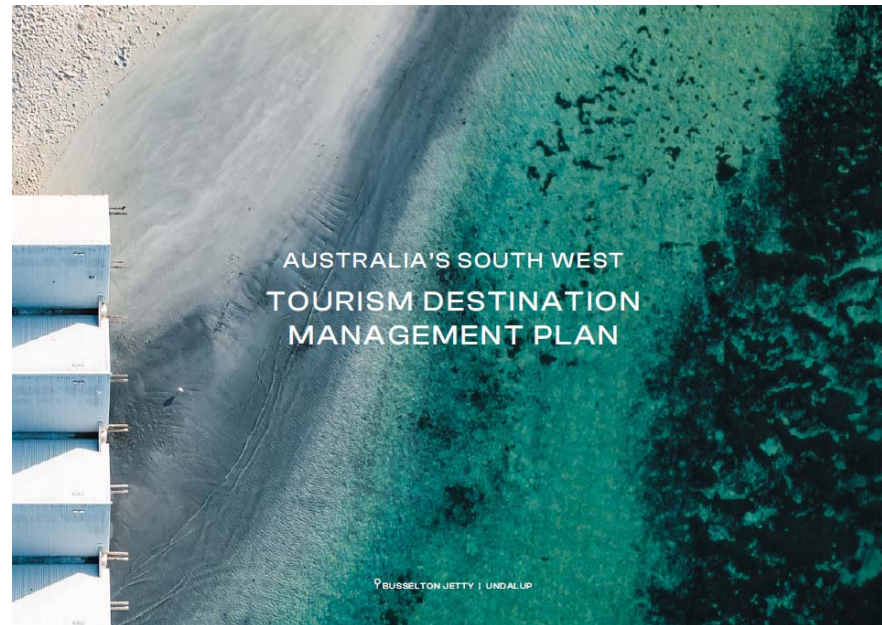
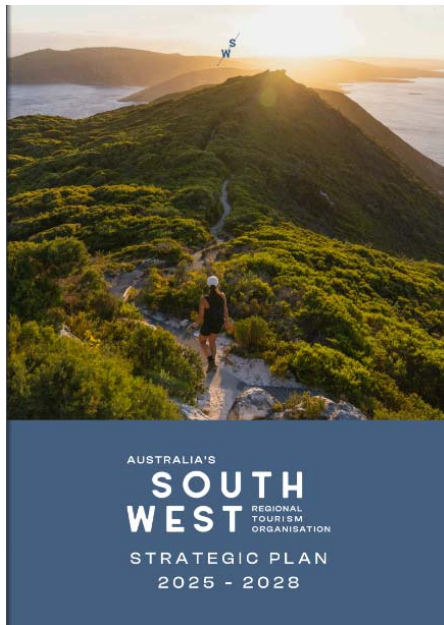
Partner organisations

Tourism Research Australia - City of Busselton - Shire of Augusta Margaret River - Busselton Water - Waste Authority - Western Power
WaterCorp - Expedia - Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation - Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Understanding local context: Destination governance

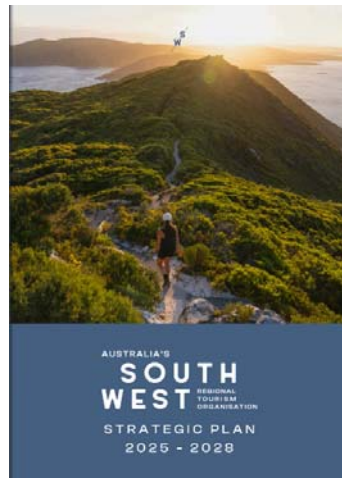


Understanding local context: Tourism management plans



Linking the observatory's activities to local plans

- Supporting data driven decision-making
- Providing insights into tourism dispersal in the region
- Investigating special interest areas (e.g. wellness tourism, agritourism)



Format of reporting and local relevance

 Curtin University
 



Annual Progress Report (2022/23)

Australia's South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory:

Tourism for Regional Development in a Sensitive
Environment

August 2023

Authors: A/Prof Michael Volgger, Prof Ross Taplin, Prof Christof Pflor, Carolina Ines Garcia, Massimiliano Apolloni, Sara Cavalcanti Marques, Clayton Dias

Curtin University, Tourism Research Cluster (TRC)

Perth, August 2023

The project is co-funded and/or supported by Tourism Western Australia, Australia's South West, WA Government – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions – Parks & Wildlife Service, RAC and the Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association.













ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

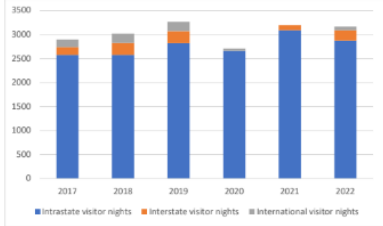
4. KEY SUSTAINABILITY AREAS

4.1. Tourism Seasonality

4.1.1. Visitation Overview

The Australia's South West Tourism Region represents less than 3% of Western Australia's territory and around 9% of the state's population. Despite its relatively small size compared to the state overall, the region is crucial for tourism. In 2021, it accounted for 24% of Western Australia's 48.6 million visitors nights and accommodated 3.2 million annual overnight visitors. In 2022, the region accounted for 19% of Western Australia's 61.1 million visitors nights and again accommodated 3.2 million annual overnight visitors (Figure 10, Figure 11, Table 3).

Figure 10. Visitation to the Australia's South West Tourism Region (000s)



Year	Intrastate visitor nights (000s)	Interstate visitor nights (000s)	International visitor nights (000s)	Total (000s)
2017	2,500	200	100	2,800
2018	2,600	200	100	2,900
2019	2,800	200	100	3,100
2020	2,500	200	100	2,800
2021	3,000	200	100	3,300
2022	2,800	200	100	3,100

Note: Based on the TRA – IVS and NVS 2017-2021, in collaboration with Tourism WA (2023b). Own illustration.

ASWTO

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Format of reporting and local relevance

    International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories

Resident perceptions of tourism survey results Australia's South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory

Professor Michael Volgger
Carolina Ines Garcia

Tourism Research Cluster, Curtin University
Perth, August 2025

   Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions   

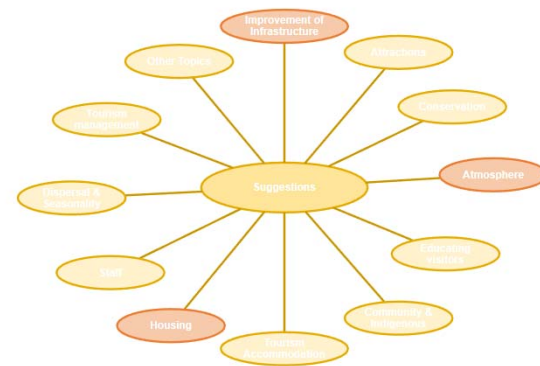
    International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories

Suggestions from residents

Overview of main areas of respondent suggestions 2025 (n=658)

Participants were asked to comment on an open-ended question:

What in your view are the critical areas for development required to capture the future opportunities for tourism in your region?



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graph TD
    S((Suggestions)) --- I1(Improvement of Infrastructure)
    S --- A(Attractions)
    S --- C(Conservation)
    S --- Atm(Atmosphere)
    S --- E(Education facilities)
    S --- Com(Community & engagement)
    S --- T1(Tourism development)
    S --- H(Housing)
    S --- Stf(Staff)
    S --- P(Protected & designated)
    S --- T2(Tourism development)
  
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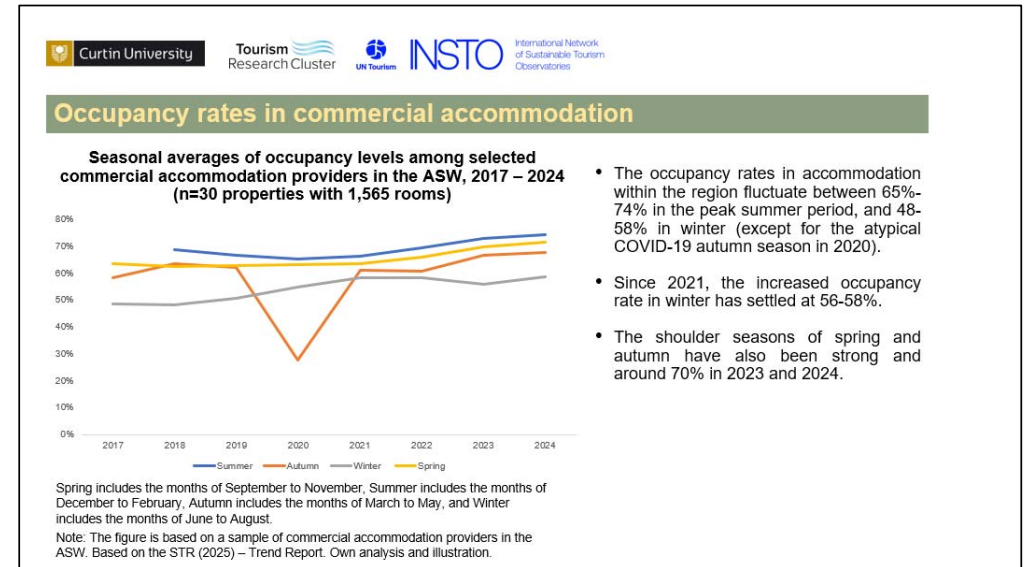
    International Network
of Sustainable Tourism
Observatories

Annual Progress Report Australia's South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory

Professor Michael Volgger
Carolina Ines Garcia
Anna Wolf

Tourism Research Cluster, Curtin University
Perth, May 2025

   Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions   



Format of reporting and local relevance

Format : What's next?

- Exploring interactive dashboards
- Offering interpretations – not just data
- Making it accessible



Stirling Range National Park
Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia

Content of reporting and local relevance



Singlefile Wines, Denmark
Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia

Content: Areas of focus

- Offering current insights
- Ensuring topic relevance

Key sustainability monitoring areas... Tailored to local needs



Tourism governance



Tourism seasonality



Tourism employment



Destination economic benefits



Resident satisfaction



Sustainability and climate action



Inclusion and accessibility



Water management



Energy management



Waste management

Content of reporting and local relevance

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION

Climate trends in the ASW

Top 10 tourism sites by risk score in Western Australia

Rank	Tourism site	Score	Category	Flood	Rain	Wind	Storm	Hail	Heat	Drought	Bushfire
1	Kalbarri National Park	41	Rainforest / National Park								
2	Karijini National Park	39	Rainforest / National Park								
3	Cable Beach	34	Beach								
4	Purnululu National Park	34	Rainforest / National Park								
5	Margaret River wine region	32	Vineyard / Garden								
6	Turquoise Bay	30	Beach								
7	Busselton Jetty	29	Scenic Road / Railroad								
8	Kings Park and Botanic Garden	29	Vineyard / Garden								
9	Ningaloo Reef	25	Beach								
10	Shark Bay	25	Beach								

Source: Zurich Resilience Solutions, Mandala Analysis in Zurich & Mandala (2024).

- Wind and heat are the major sources of risk in Western Australian tourism sites.
- Two of the most impacted tourism sites by risk score in Western Australia are in the ASW: the Margaret River wine region and the Busselton Jetty.
- In the Margaret River Region, major sources of risk are bushfires followed by rains and droughts.
- For the Busselton Jetty, the major source of risk are floods followed by rains.

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Sustainability standards – TCWA Sustainable Tourism Accreditation

The Sustainable Tourism Accreditation program is run by Tourism Council Western Australia (TCWA).

The aim of the program is to guide businesses in adopting best practices across all aspects of sustainable tourism operations including:



- Environmental Management
- Social & Cultural Responsibility
- Codes of Ethics and Professional Conduct
- Customer Service, Safety & Protection
- Staff Wellness and Human Resources
- Sustainable Business Operation
- Social and Regulatory Licencing Compliance
- Sustainable Tourism Marketing & Promotion

>300
accredited businesses
in the ASW

Approximately
1,300
accredited businesses
in Western Australia

Source: Tourism Council Western Australia (2025). Own illustration.






International Network
of Sustainable Tourism
Observatories

Sustainability standards - Ecotourism Australia Certification in the ASW

- There are 24 businesses in the ASW that have been certified by Ecotourism Australia.
- Most of them have received the ECO certification.
- Regarding location, most certified businesses are located either in Augusta-Margaret River or Busselton.

24
certified businesses
in the ASW
accounting for
32% of all
certified operators
in WA

Certified businesses in the ASW per certification type

- ECO Certification: 22 operators (9 in Nature Tourism, 7 in Advanced Ecotourism and 6 in Ecotourism)
- Climate Action Certification: 1 operator
- Sustainable Tourism Certification: 2 operators
- ROC Certification: 1 operator

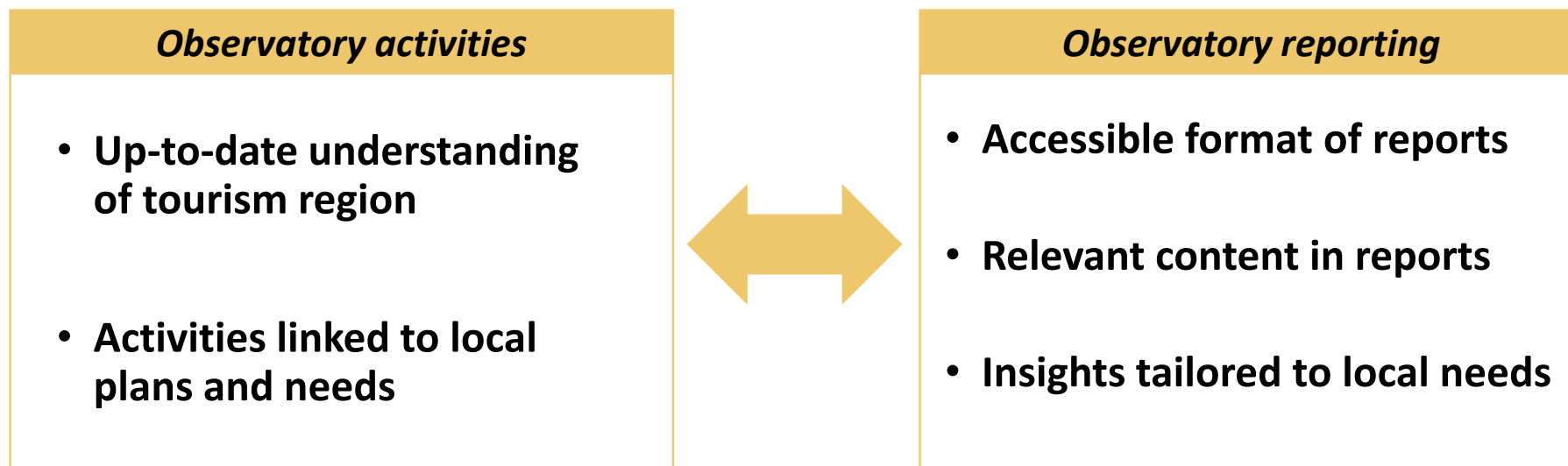
Certified businesses in the ASW per Council

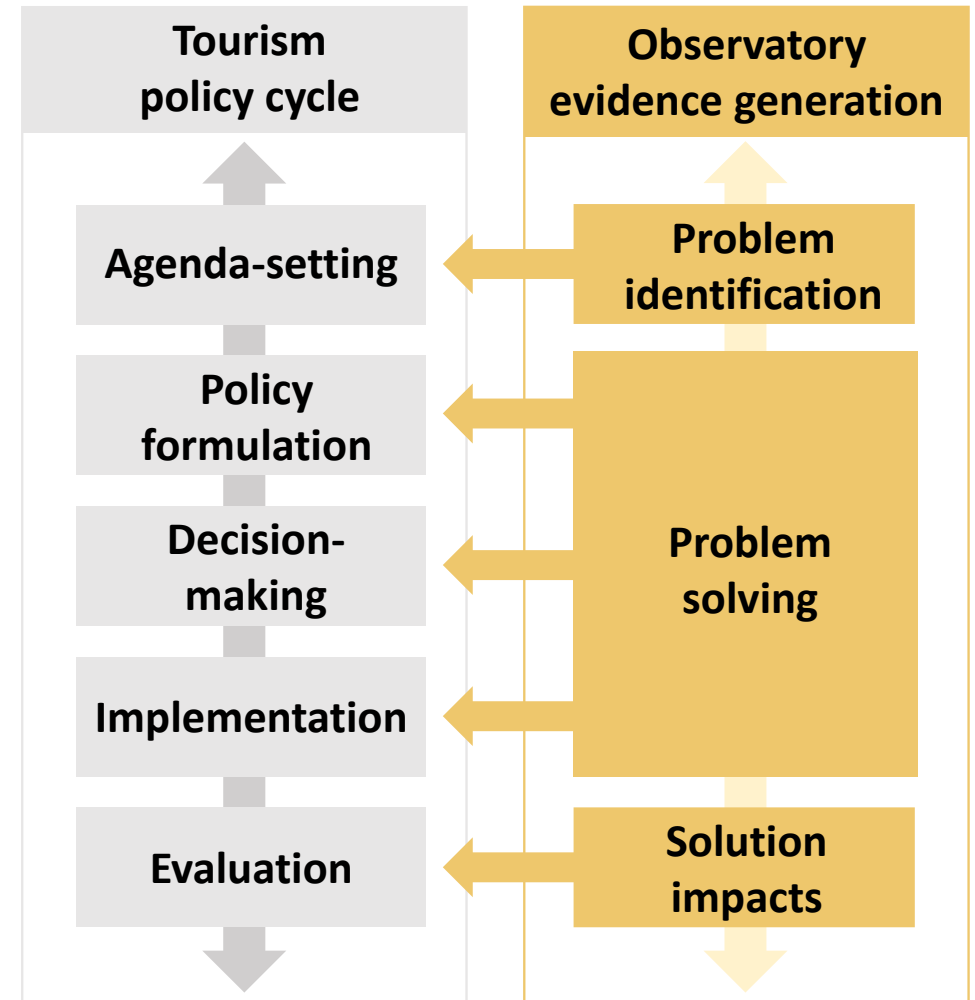
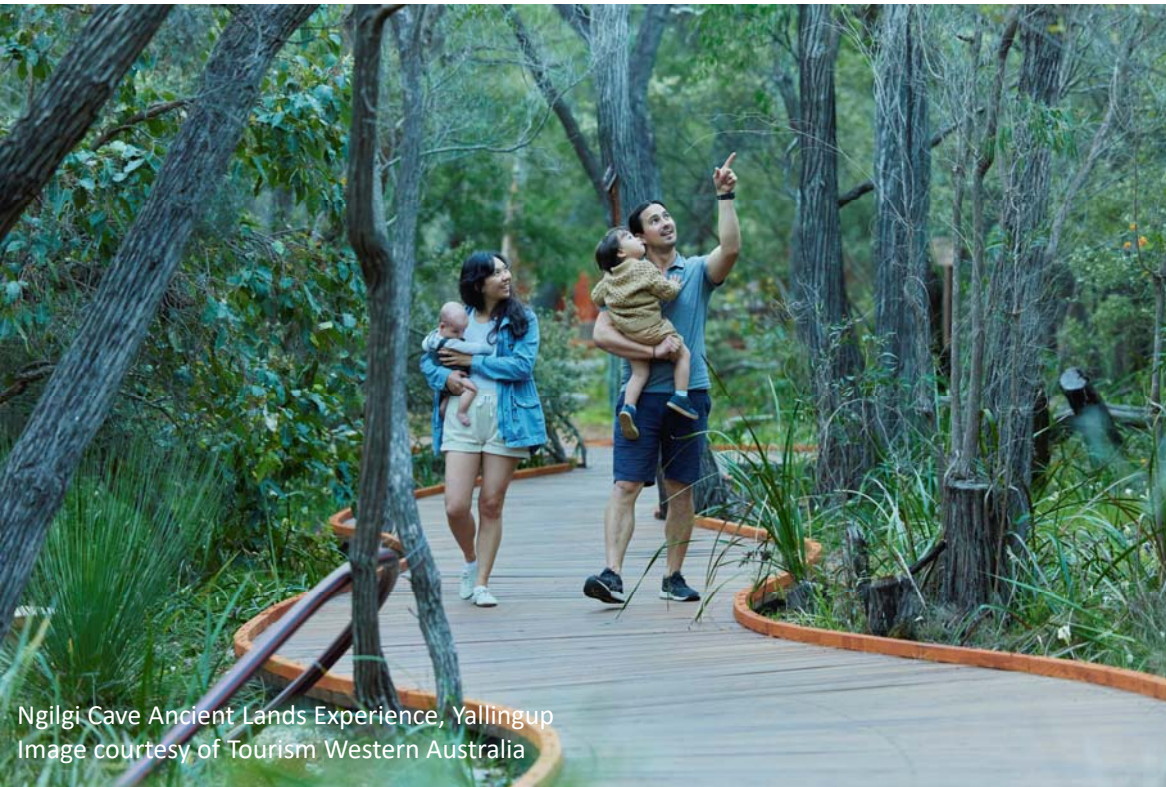
- Augusta-Margaret River Shire: 11 operators
- City of Bunbury: 1 operator
- City of Busselton: 10 operators
- Denmark Shire: 1 operator
- Manjimup Shire: 1 operator

* Businesses can hold Climate Action and/or ROC on top of their ECO or Sustainable Tourism Certification (i.e. multiple certifications).
Source: Ecotourism Australia (2025). Own illustration.

Understanding local context and ensuring local relevance of monitoring and reporting

Key insights





Thank you

Australia's South West Sustainable Tourism Observatory
Tourism Research Cluster, Curtin University, Australia

Boranup Forest, Margaret River Region
Image courtesy of Tourism Western Australia