

QTR 4 • 2021
ISSUE 2
#WALKTHETALK

NEXT

STORIES
FROM
EARTHCHECK

THE PLANET DESERVES MORE THAN HALF MEASURES



EARTHCHECK

NEXT

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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - HEALTH & SAFETY PROGRAM

TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, CANADA



Prince Edward Island (PEI) is on track to be the first Province in Canada to implement a health and safety certification program at the destination level.

EarthSafe

In 2020, EarthCheck developed a health and safety certification product called EarthSafe to help the tourism industry meet the new health, wellness, and hygiene expectations demanded in a COVID-19 recovery. The EarthSafe product provides the user with access to a secure online platform that guides them through implementing a health and safety certification system.

The certification program will be grounded in Canadian federal health and safety guidelines and meet or exceed PEI's health and safety policies.

The primary goal of the certification program is to build resident, operator, and visitor confidence that PEI tourism businesses, products, or services meet their health and safety expectations.

Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island (TIAPEI) is contracting EarthCheck to establish a PEI branded health and safety certification program within the EarthSafe platform. The program will provide access to an online platform to develop and implement policies and procedures, training, risk management, oversight, and audit.

EarthCheck will work with TIAPEI and a Program Manager to manage the beta-testing of the program, refine the system based on stakeholder feedback, and provide training for the project authority, manager and auditors.



EarthSafe

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Our Island will leave
an imprint on *your heart.*



Return the favour when you visit by
only leaving footprints along our shores.

Come find your Island

*Prince
Edward
Island*
CANADA
ExplorePEI.com

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT TWEED REGION

TWEED SHIRE COUNCIL, AUSTRALIA

EarthCheck has partnered with Tweed Shire Council and Tweed Tourism Co to align with Council's climate action strategy, build a sustainable tourism plan, and support the wider regional environmental management programs underway across the Shire.

A key part of the project involved a comprehensive mapping of Councils' existing policy and planning projects to not replicate existing work but rather to complement and create outcomes.

The destinations program which has been developed for Council takes a holistic approach to destination management and planning. The program which is currently being delivered provides:

- Capacity building and training workshops for a cluster of tourism and hospitality operators across the areas of risk, crisis management and sustainable business practices.
- A Resilience and Sustainability Action Plan for the tourism industry that will support and underpin Council's tourism positioning and leadership as a responsible and sustainable destination.
- The delivery of the EarthCheck Sustainable Destinations program provides benchmarking and certification for the entire region and a reporting platform that measures and tracks the region's carbon footprint and celebrates its achievements.

In addition to the formal planning documents, a sustainable tourism pledge is being designed for operators, the community and visitors. The pledge will be an outward symbolisation of the regional commitment to sustainability, a communication tool to engage with visitors and a visitor management technique to support behaviour change among those visiting the region.

The EarthCheck Sustainable Destinations program is being applied to support existing plans and strategies within the Tweed Region. The program provides a framework to measure and manage energy, water and waste usage, aligning directly to Council's Climate Change - Net Zero by 2030 strategy by offering a consistent framework for reporting, and the Cities Power Partnership by measuring and benchmarking energy usage.

The program provides the Tweed Region with credibility behind its sustainability aspirations and marketing efforts. By entering the program, the Region (destination) has established clear goals, strategies and measurements. Taking both a top down (destination certification) and bottom-up approach (operator workshops), the program also provides operators with insight into practical solutions to manage and measure their impact and bring the community together through shared goals and commitments. Destinations cannot be sustainable alone, it requires commitment from the businesses that operate within them. This partnership approach creates positive outcomes for all stakeholders within the destination building capacity and positive, sustainable outcomes.

"TOURISM CAN PROVIDE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN SUSTAINABILITY. BY BUILDING CAPACITY ACROSS TOURISM BUSINESSES, WE ALSO CAN BUILD CAPACITY AND PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES."

Stewart Moore, CEO & Founder, EarthCheck

THE BARRAMUNDI HIGHWAY

MACKAY & ROCKHAMPTON REGIONAL COUNCILS, AUSTRALIA



With over 830,000 fishers living in NSW and ACT, there is a significant opportunity for fishing experiences among a domestic market – as international markets are unlikely to rebound to pre-COVID-19 levels for a number of years, a focus on core domestic markets is essential for regional communities. Queensland's fishing market has increased significantly over the past five years, reeling in a new market of younger recreational fishers. Creating transformational experiences for these visitors presents opportunities to stay longer and spend more in region.

Advance Rockhampton, Mackay Isaac Tourism and Mackay Regional Council have joined forces to formalise the “Barra Highway”, a compelling drive routes that hooks visitors with a suite of experiences and that brings benefits to both regional destinations.

Given the growing popularity of fishing and the changing market demographic, now is the time for the region to develop and deliver a comprehensive market offering that ensures the regions are the go-to destination for barramundi fishing in Queensland.

“THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMBINED RECREATIONAL FISHING PRODUCT WILL ALLOW US TO CAPTURE THE STRENGTHS OF EACH REGION IN ONE MARKETED PRODUCT. THE SUCCESS OF SUCH A ROUTE WILL REQUIRE A STRONG SET OF AUXILIARY EXPERIENCES TO ENSURE THAT FISHERS HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES AND FACILITIES DURING THEIR ADVENTURE.”

Nigel Russell, General Manager, Consulting of EarthCheck.

A collaborative approach will be activated to offer visitors a fishing holiday experience that is both desired and diverse, positioning the wider region as Australia's premier fishing destination for barramundi fishing along with other sought-after species.

EarthCheck is a market leader in themed touring routes, experience development and interpretation and has a proven track record of developing innovative activation strategies. There is a window of opportunity to capitalised on growing drive markets and niche tourism opportunities. Explore how your region can make the most of its natural assets and attractors today.



Ras Al Khaimah to Become the Regional Leader in Sustainable Tourism by 2025

Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) recently launched its comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Destination Strategy that will see the nature-based Emirate become the regional leader in environmentally conscious tourism by 2025.

visitrasalkhaimah.com



RAS AL KHAIMAH: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

BECOMING THE REGIONAL LEADER IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BY 2025, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?

Sustainable tourism delivers positive economic, social and environmental outcomes with consideration to the needs of the visitor, industry, community and environment. This involves protecting the natural environment and as well as being considerate of locals, their communities, customs, lifestyles, and social and economic systems.

Source: Sustainable Tourism
Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC)

The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) commissioned EarthCheck to develop the Ras Al Khaimah Sustainable Tourism Strategy, providing a framework that supports the emirate on developing the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry.

Ras Al Khaimah is rich with natural and cultural tourism experiences, and with the impact of COVID-19 notwithstanding, is a rapidly growing destination with rich and diverse tourism appeal. The development of this strategy will set out actions and principles that the RAKTDA can use in the preparation of the new Destination Strategy, positioning Ras Al Khaimah as a globally recognised sustainable tourism destination.

Driven by the vision set out by his highness Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Ras Al Khaimah has embarked on this journey of sustainable tourism to drive destination development and achieve tourism-driven economic growth. This vision to become a leader in sustainable tourism by 2025 will ensure that the visitors and the destination will nurture the economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable values that the emirate holds.

The strategy set out a program of actions within seven focus areas, as a way for the RAKTDA to lead a strong partnership between government, tourism agencies, environmental management organisations, the tourism industry, and the local community.

The following seven focus areas are:

Forming a Sustainable Tourism Commitment:

Outline a vision and objectives for the destination and establish a shared policy commitment between stakeholders. A shared policy commitment between partners is a crucial first step for the successful implementation of the strategy.

Leadership and Creating Impetus: Establishment of RAKTDA as the lead agency for sustainable tourism in the emirates while also introducing governance and partnerships. These partnerships between RAKTDA and relevant agencies are essential for the development of shared commitment and visions by key stakeholders.

Communication and Quick Wins: Communicate existing success stories and project while also integrating sustainable messaging into consumer and destination marketing. Effective communication and leadership are critical to ensuring that all operators are following the actions of the strategy, especially in tourism where there is a mix of small and large businesses.



"WORKING CLOSELY WITH EARTHCHECK, A GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM EXPERT, WE ARE CO-CREATING GENUINE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ACROSS OUR HOSPITALITY PORTFOLIO, INCLUDING INCREASED RECYCLING, DECREASED WASTE AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION, GREEN PROCUREMENT AND CLEAN UPS AT KEY TOURISTIC HOTSPOTS."

*Raki Phillips, Chief Executive Officer
Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development
Authority (RAKTDA)*

Measurement Essentials: Track sustainable destination health by working with a range of sustainable tourism group partners to form a data and measurement program and to introduce a carbon calculator to be used by businesses and benchmark the data of Ras Al Khaimah against similar destinations. The data from measuring the impacts of tourism ensures credibility to back-up sustainable tourism processes.

RAK Sustainable Tourism Programs: Seek out sustainable tourism destination accreditation and establish a new Ras Al Khaimah tourism business accreditation program. The twin challenge of meeting national and international climate obligations while also meeting growing demand for sustainable tourism means that a strong management framework is necessary.

"OUR GOAL TO PROMOTE RAS AL KHAIMAH AS A WONDERFUL TOURISM DESTINATION, AND TO HELP ENERGISE ALL ECONOMIC SECTORS, IS ALIGNED WITH THE LONG-TERM VISION OF THE LEADERSHIP TO ESTABLISH THE EMIRATE AS ONE OF THE PREFERRED PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK."

*Raki Phillips, Chief Executive Officer
Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development
Authority (RAKTDA)*

Pilot and Signature Sustainability Programs:

Develop new pilot programs with environmental and community partners with the aim to engage visitors and identify new and existing tourism experiences that reinforce Ras Al Khaimah's sustainable tourism credentials. As a partner to the sustainable tourism certification, pilot projects are valuable means of introducing new and innovative initiatives.

Continuous Improvement and Evaluation:

Establish mechanisms and programs to ensure ongoing review and evaluation of performance is undertaken. As sustainability is constantly evolving, the evaluation and monitoring of processes is important to routinely update. For each of these seven focus areas, there was an Action Plan developed to produce tangible actions that the RAKTDA and supporting partners could follow to ensure the successful outcome of the Ras Al Khaimah Sustainable Tourism Destination Strategy.

Ras Al Khaimah is now the fastest-growing destination in the region and was named the Gulf Tourism Capital for 2020 and 2021 by the Gulf Cooperation Council. The destination supports several progressive policies that promote employee well-being, with Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority gaining certification as a 'Great Place to Work' in the Middle East 2021, the first and only organisation to be awarded this certification in Ras Al Khaimah.



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BY NATURE

ORKNEY ISLANDS: EAGER ASSESSMENT

THE DESTINATION ORKNEY PARTNERSHIP COMPRISES ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL, HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS ENTERPRISE, VISITSCOTLAND, NATURESCOT, HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND AND DESTINATION ORKNEY (LTD).



**"ORKNEY, WITH ITS NEOLITHIC SITES AND PANORAMIC VIEWS, HAS BEEN NAMED THE BEST
SCOTTISH ISLAND "**

Daily Mail

Orkney is an archipelago off the northeast coast of Scotland. Comprised of 70 islands, it is steeped in 5,000 years of history. Low lying landscape means the islands are exposed to the elements. Rugged coastlines, coastal cliffs, meadows and moorland habitat make the region naturally intriguing all year round. Orkney has a rich history with Neolithic, Iron Age, Norse and Wartime heritage, this is embraced and shared across the islands. Influence of the rich natural and cultural heritage can be seen across the tourism experiences, food and drink, events and local producers.

The islands are home to a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, which includes the world-renowned Skara Brae neolithic village and the mysterious Ring of Brodgar.

For any island group, accessibility is key and the Orkney mainland is served by four ferry routes and direct air links to all the major Scottish airports with both air and sea links to the smaller islands.

To assist Destination Orkney in developing their approach to sustainable tourism leadership, EarthCheck was commissioned by Orkney Islands Council to work with the destination to identify current sustainable management approaches and make recommendations that could support a formalised approach to sustainable destination management. Given the focus on sustainable tourism, EarthCheck prepared an EarthCheck Assessment & GSTC Evaluation Report (EAGER), identifying strengths and opportunities for the Orkney Islands.

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council's (GSTC) Destination criteria and indicators, and EarthCheck's Destination Standard, assessment criteria and indicators, were used to guide the principals of the assessment.

The report acts as a 'health check' for Orkney. It is not a pass or fail process. It is designed to assess tourism sustainability and build capacity, to assist the region in identifying current sustainability performance, and provide recommendations and support mechanisms for the region to take action.

The report supports the vision of Orkney's Tourism Strategy 2020-2025 that 'By 2025, Orkney will be a world-class sustainable destination enriching the lives of its people and visitors'. The destination's sustainability agenda is clearly articulated through the vision and again through the objectives of the strategy:

- Increase economic prosperity of the islands, improve existing and create additional quality jobs.
- Extend the visitor season and increase spend.
- Sustainably manage visitor numbers to protect the quality of experience, the key sites and routes to the sites, for visitors and local residents.
- Disperse the benefits of tourism throughout the whole of Orkney.
- Conserve the islands' natural and cultural heritage.

Destination Orkney clearly identifies not only environmental sustainability objectives but also social objectives for both visitors and residents of the islands.



Seeking a world of big skies, pristine beaches and the room to relax, recharge and rejuvenate? Join the Orkney space programme.

ORKNEY.COM

Visit
ORKNEY

The EAGER process is intended to bring key stakeholders together to understand and engage with a common set of sustainability criteria and outcomes. It helps provide an understanding of the sustainable management practices and monitoring in place within the region and associated recommendations, that can be used to assist the destination to improve its sustainable positioning over time. These measures, in turn, can be used by local communities if they decide to pursue certification as a sustainable destination. Or to put in place the first steps towards a more sustainable future. The analysis has yielded a set of observations and associated recommendations, particularly regarding strengths, issues, and priorities considered material to the region's tourism management and future development.

The report encourages a destination to explore its current levels sustainable practices to build capacity and to identify areas for improvement.

As global travel reignites, visitors will increasingly be looking for destinations, experiences and accommodation with a genuine commitment to sustainability. Find out what steps your destination can take by speaking with the EarthCheck team today.

**"THE EAGER PROCESS IS INTENDED TO BRING
KEY DESTINATION STAKEHOLDERS
TOGETHER – UNDERSTANDING THAT LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS AND DESTINATION
MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS NEED TO BE
INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS. IT HELPS
PROVIDE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE
SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
AND THE EXISTING MONITORING IN PLACE
WITHIN THE REGION."**

*Dr Natasha Montesalvo
Principal Consultant, Destinations,
Strategy & Insights
EarthCheck*



BUILDING RESILIENCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR BUSINESSES AND DESTINATIONS

AUSTRALIA

An old Army term - VUCA - has never been so true for global business. It describes the nature of the world we are operating in, one with a significant rate of change, Volatile, one that brings Uncertainty, where interrelated forces create Complexity across networks and one where there is Ambiguity across situations, expectations and actions. It is due to these challenges that a focus on resilience is growing in importance.

EarthCheck has been working with businesses across the east coast of Australia to build knowledge, capacity and consequently business resilience.

By understanding how tourism businesses fit within a broader disaster resilience network, we can identify some of the barriers and opportunities within communities. The tourism industry has a critical role in community resilience, both due to its resources and the touch-points it has with staff and visitors. Understanding that building resilience across a business can also build resilience in the broader community is critical in enhancing community resilience. The implications of this should be seen in policy and disaster management strategies and plans. By ignoring the tourism sector, vulnerable visitors, unaware of what to do in a crisis, may be neglected and further reputational damage may spring from the event.

Building resilience in tourism businesses is not something that happens instantly. EarthCheck's deep-dive program builds understanding and engagement in principles of business continuity and risk management. Through hands-on activities, operators can start their journey toward resilience or review and strengthen their practices in line with global best practices.

It's not about heroism in hindsight, it's about action today! Start your journey towards resilience now.

"IT'S NOT A CASE OF IF A DISASTER WILL HAPPEN, RATHER WHEN. IN ORDER TO BUILD OUR RESILIENCE, WE FIRST NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT OUR VULNERABILITIES ARE AND ADDRESS THEM."

*Dr Natasha Montesalvo
Principal Consultant, Destinations, Strategy & Insights
EarthCheck*





CERTIFICATION AS A PATHWAY TO RESILIENCE

Resilience and risk management play a key role in sustainable destinations and businesses. The EarthCheck Certified program signifies scientific excellence, better environmental, economic, and social performance, improved community interactions, and savings through more efficient use of resources. All of this means resilient and sustainable businesses and communities.

The program explores operational risk and compliance and requires businesses to integrate controls and risk management programs to reduce associated risks. It promotes business continuity through process, structure and understanding of how to respond and recover efficiently. Business resilience doesn't just impact a business in isolation, there are a network of stakeholders and interested parties who create the tourism industry, understanding the impact of changes to supply change and external stakeholders is also a core part of the sustainability approach.

The first step to a more resilient business? Making a commitment, working with your team and key stakeholders to build knowledge, awareness, and skills that will help you manage your business's long-term future. Talk to the EarthCheck team to take your first step.



PEOPLE MAKE GLASGOW GREENER

Glasgow is an international destination for business, events, investment and tourism. We recognise the importance of taking action to safeguard and care for the health and wellbeing of our citizens and our visitors.

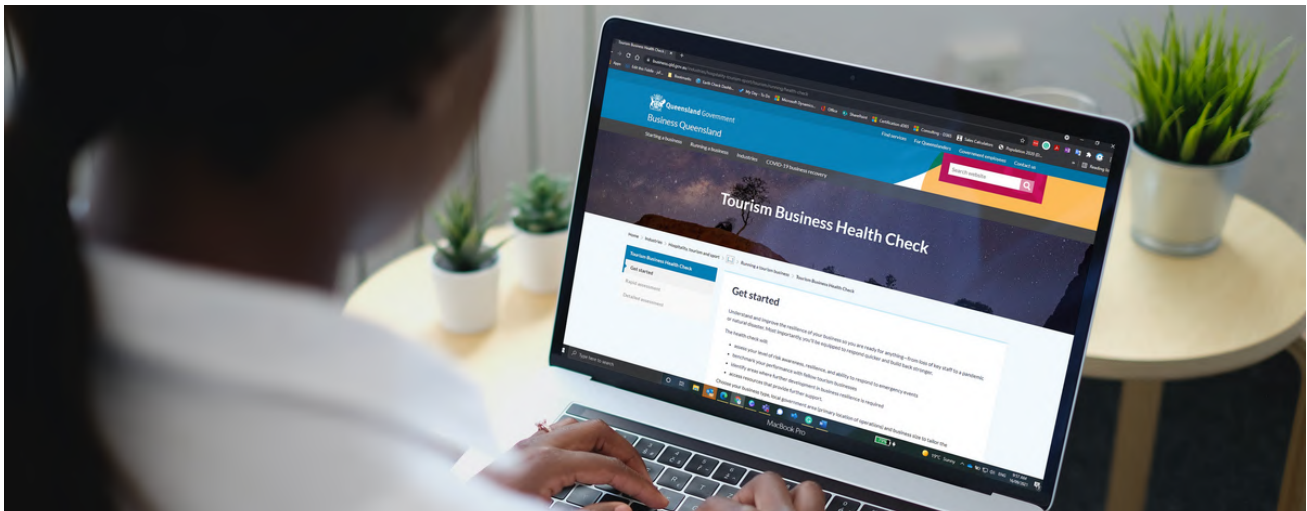
Our city is proud to be working towards becoming the **UK's first EarthCheck destination.**

PEOPLEMAKEGLASGOW.COM

Glasgowlife™

TOURISM BUSINESS HEALTH CHECK

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT - DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, INNOVATION & SPORT



**"RESILIENCE IS ABOUT BEING
ABLE TO OVERCOME THE
UNEXPECTED. THE GOAL OF
RESILIENCE IS TO THRIVE"**

Jamais Cascio, Futurist

What does it take for a business to withstand the disruption and risks that it faces? Strong business planning, clear policies, procedures and strategies and an understanding of continuity planning are strong starting points. But knowing what you don't know is a bigger challenge for small businesses across not just tourism but all sectors.

The tourism business health check is an interactive tool designed to support business resilience and continuity. The tool steps business owners, or managers, through a comprehensive assessment of business practices from managing change and finance to business operations and understanding your customer.

Key strengths and areas for improvement are identified by completing the tool with sign-posting to additional resources to build skills and knowledge.

The tourism health check is designed for businesses to identify changes they can make to help your business survive and thrive.

Answer questions to assess:

- business strengths
- areas for improvement.

Businesses will receive a personalised report with:

- next steps and recommendations
- links to support and resources.

On completion of the rapid diagnostic, utilising intuitive technology, users are then guided to a secondary set of questions based on responses that require additional support. This deep dive into the business drills down into aspects of business that require the additional support, rather than the overarching content assessed in the rapid appraisal.

A pool of over 200 questions were developed to support businesses where they need it the most.

AUSTRALIA'S BEST SKI RESORT

WE ALL LOVE IT, SO LET'S PROTECT IT



Thredbo Resort is committed to preserving, protecting, and prioritising our unique alpine environment. We take pride in our long list of environmental initiatives and embrace the opportunity to lead our industry and our community through our shared passion of the mountains towards a more sustainable future, today.



BAIÃO DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN

MUNICIPALITY OF BAIÃO, PORTUGAL



The Municipality of Baião is one of Portugal's key tourism destinations. Pre-COVID-19, tourism was the largest export economy for Portugal, contributing to 51.5% of services and 18.6% of total exports (2018).

Tourism plays a vital role in the regional and the national economy, contributing an estimated 8.2% of GDP and employing approximately 328,500 people.

Recognising the region is a nature and wildlife haven, has a strong focus on enogastronomy, boasts spectacular ranges and is underpinned by a heritage story focused around the Monastery of Ancede, a Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP) is now needed to help deliver sustainable tourism outcomes. The plan will enable the region to protect its rich natural environment whilst balancing heritage, social and economic benefits.

The DSP can help provide a recovery response to the pressures arising from COVID-19 and position the region for responsible growth.

The Municipality of Baião was seeking a suitably qualified international consultant to develop and deliver their Destination Stewardship Plan. It was agreed that EarthCheck could not only deliver the Destination Stewardship Plan but ensure that the Municipality was equipped with the tools to develop sustainable and competitive tourism experiences in the region. The plan will seek to balance heritage, community, environmental, visitor and industry expectations.





BAIÃO
vida natural



visitbaião.pt

GREEN
IS THE NEW
DESTINATION



Key objectives of the DSP include:

Reset

Understanding the competitive strengths of the region to determine its market position and point of difference. Providing a recovery response to the new economic and social challenges and opportunities brought about by Covid 19.

Reimagine

The way we consume tourism will change as the travel market emerges from the global pandemic. This provides an opportunity to reimagine the role that tourism and leisure can play in the region. A chance to start with a blank page and revisit the delivery of the region's unique products ,services and experiences.

Community

Building community awareness and understanding of the value and importance of tourism, highlighting opportunities, benefits and a pathway to successful implementation.

Municipality

Providing detailed strategic direction for tourism in the Municipality of Baião, exploring opportunities, pre-empting challenges and identifying areas for growth and development.

Throughout the preparation process, to help maximise success, EarthCheck is working with the Municipality of Baião team to explore:

- market opportunities,
- community engagement and involvement
- tourism's impact on people, planet and profit
- potential partnerships between regional, local, state and national bodies and tourism stakeholders.

The role of community empowerment is a strategic focus for the Municipality of Baião . EarthCheck understands this need, highlighting the importance of extensive community engagement throughout the project.



IN CRISIS SITUATIONS, TIMING IS EVERYTHING!

Knowing how and when to act can be critical in saving time, money and even your business. Are you ready for the next crisis?

learn more at
earthcheck.org





**What's NEXT? We
want to hear from
you. We work
globally from
offices in
Brisbane, Toronto,
Shanghai and
Barcelona.**

Follow the QR link to help us better
understand how we can help.
Alternatively, please feel free to contact
us directly via info@earthcheck.org



EARTHCHECK

**"PLACES THAT PEOPLE
WANT TO VISIT AND
LIVE - AND THAT ARE
SUSTAINABLE - DO NOT
HAPPEN BY CHANCE.
THEY ARE A PRODUCT
OF VISIONARY THINKING
AND COMMITMENT BY
CORPORATE INVESTORS,
DEVELOPERS AND CIVIC
LEADERS."**

- THE EGAN REVIEW (UK 2004)



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