

Big Rivers region Destination Management Plan

ANNUAL REPORT CARD 2022

The Big Rivers region Destination Management Plan (DMP) focuses on development priorities for the sustainable growth of tourism in the region over 10 years.

There are six DMPs that identify key strengths and assets across Northern Territory regions, and provide a comprehensive overview of comparative advantages, current product offerings and visitor profiles.

The six destinations are:

- Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region
- Lasseter region
- Barkly region
- Big Rivers region
- East Arnhem Land region
- Greater Darwin region



The Annual Report Card measures the progress of outcomes and includes key performance metrics for the region such as visitor numbers, expenditure, satisfaction rating, online feedback/ reviews and digital data.

The DMPs are reviewed every two years to ensure action plans and the prioritisation of product development opportunities align within the context of the current environment, including demand.

DMPs for the Big Rivers and three Central Australia regions (Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges, Barkly and Lasseter) were completed in late 2020, with the East Arnhem Land DMP completed in November 2021 and the Greater Darwin region DMP completed in May 2022.

Big Rivers region

The Big Rivers region offers many tourism opportunities, including activities and attractions available through iconic National Parks as well as experiences built around unique natural environments, sporting and recreational activities, Aboriginal culture and pioneering history.

The tourism industry in the region is focusing its efforts on leveraging its natural, cultural and historical assets to maximise the benefits from current travel trends. Investment in festivals and relevant events also presents an opportunity to build value in the tourism market.



Top Didj Cultural Experience and Art Gallery



Gorge cruise, Nitmiluk National Park

Visitation and expenditure

Year ending June 2022*

Visitors ↓4.2%

284,000

Holiday: 189,000

Visiting friends/family:
10,000

Expenditure ↑16%

\$177M

Business: 74,000

Other (i.e. work/study):
16,000

* With percentage changes compared to 2019 data

Year ending June 2019

Visitors

296,000

Data to the year ending 2022 reflects visitation and expenditure during months when COVID restrictions were still heavily impacting the Northern Territory.

Expenditure

\$152M

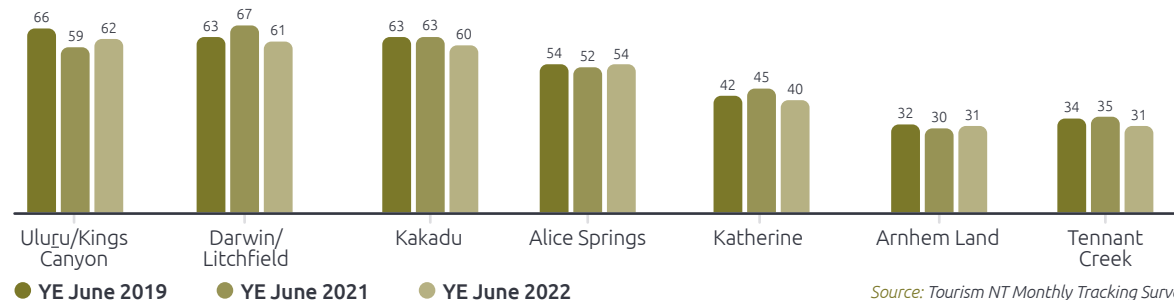
Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey

Big Rivers region key data



Places in the NT you would visit

Annual shifts by NT considerers (%)

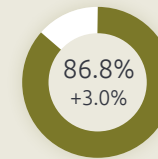


Visitor satisfaction

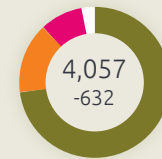
Year ending June 2022 with percentage changes compared to previous 12 months*

*Based on establishments – attractions, hotels, caravan parks and wayside inns (not food and hospitality providers) – ReviewPro data.

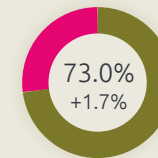
Global review index



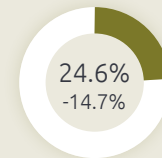
Reviews



Semantic analysis



Management response



● positive (80%+) ● neutral (79-60%) ● negative (59-0%)

Positive reviews:

Food and drink ↑3.2%
Experience ↑0.8%
Room ↑5.3%
Cleanliness ↑3.9%

Negative reviews:

Staff ↓1.3%
Camping ↓6.0%
Service ↓5.7%
Reception ↓6.5%
Value ↓0.3%

Global Review Index (GRI) and semantic analysis has seen an increase of 3.0% and 1.7% respectively in the Big Rivers region. The semantic analysis indicates a decrease in service delivery and staff which can be attributed to the workforce challenges and staff accommodation availability across the region in 2022. Room and cleanliness have seen an increase in semantic scores which will be based on upgrades and cleaning that were carried out during the quieter times of COVID. Food and drink has also seen an increase which may be attributed to the opening of several new cafés and menu upgrades.

Collective stakeholder progress on regional priorities

Locality and opportunity

Progress and regional achievements

Big Rivers region: provide marketing imagery and assets reflective of the region.

Tourism NT undertook a Big Rivers marketing and imagery content and asset audit.

Big Rivers region: showcasing the diverse pastoral and agricultural tourism product offered across the Territory.

- Developed a number of pastoral case studies across the NT including Bullo River Station.
- A new Big Rivers website showcases the region, and features Bullo River Station highlighting how they combine conservation with pastoral heritage.

Big Rivers region: align regional priorities.

The Big Rivers Regional Economic Growth Plan was released articulating a clear vision for the region's growth and adopting elements of the region's DMP.

Gulf region: interactive guided Aboriginal cultural tours incorporating bush foods/medicines and stories of the land.

Provided Aboriginal tourism round 4 grant funding support to Luwungunji for additional accommodation at Seven Emu Station for the self-drive market allowing for further product development leveraging the natural, cultural and historical assets.

Katherine: develop quality night time experiences.

- 'Activate Katherine' website developed. The 2022 Program included new night time experiences such as the Food Van Collective, 'Live in the Dry' live pop up entertainment series, and Pimms at Sunset on the Old Katherine Railway Bridge.
- Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre upgrades in progress, including a 500 seat outdoor amphitheatre.
- Tourism Evening Experiences grant funding awarded to Gorge View Bush Resort for Sunset Yoga experience.

Limmen National Park: develop additional infrastructure, campgrounds, and Aboriginal cultural experiences.

Included as a focus in NT Parks Masterplan 2023 - 2053.

Nitmiluk National Park: night time experiences in Nitmiluk National Park.

New Biddlecombe Cascades Glamping Experience has been redeveloped in preparation for its launch in mid-2023.

Pine Creek: establish bird watching infrastructure and increase bird watching tours.

Provided grant funding to support bird hides in Pine Creek township with interpretive signage.

Future focus

- Work with regional councils to prioritise maintenance of main thoroughfares and central public facilities to create welcoming public spaces across the region.
- Support industry to increase destination awareness and promote the region's identity.
- Build on opportunities to increase tourism investment in the region.
- Align industry support and grant funding program outcomes with DMP priorities including the enhancement of accessibility of tourism experiences in the region.
- Continue to enhance the skill and capacity of tourism operators to build the region's tourism industry.
- Delivery of Big Rivers Regional Economic Growth Plan will continue to build on the region's tourism economic growth.
- Support tourism operators to develop new sustainable and accessible visitor experiences and encourage improved sustainability practices.
- Support Nitmiluk Tours to increase their engagement with international trade and distribution channels.

For further information please contact Tourism NT:
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Read more about Destination Management Plans here: tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/destination-management-plans.



Limmen National Park

