



CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

Capricorn Tourism

Take a real holiday

19th September 2007

MEDIA RELEASE

**\$1+ million GEO-TOURISM PROJECT ANNOUNCED
FOR THE CAPRICORN & OUTBACK REGIONS**

“DIG THE TROPIC – OUTBACK TO THE REEF”

Capricorn Tourism today announced details of a new **Geo-tourism trail** across the Tropic of Capricorn.

Alan Chamberlain, General Manager of Capricorn Tourism said “The Dig the Tropic – Outback to the Reef themed trail is an innovative tourism development that plans to develop Australia as a world leader in geo-tourism experiences.

“This trail will promote greater awareness of the touring route along the Capricorn Highway from the Capricorn Coast, through the Central Highlands and west into the Outback”.

“By highlighting the many unique geological, heritage and natural elements that our two regions offer, we can enhance the visitor experience with new interpretation signage at key stopping points, 3D modeling of the geology and formation of the Great Barrier Reef, Bowen Basin, Sapphire Gemfields, Blackdown Tableland and at numerous paleontology sites along the trail such as the Capricorn Caves, Muttaborra, Mount Morgan and Winton” he said.

“Capricorn & Outback communities will directly benefit from the project through increased visitor numbers, tourist expenditure and jobs growth” he said.

Forecasts for the project include generating an **additional \$62m in tourism expenditure, an additional 600,000 visitor nights and an additional 1,000 jobs** during the first 2 years of the trails implementation.

Grant Cassidy, Chairman of Capricorn Tourism welcomed the announcement, commenting on the positive impacts this will bring into the two regions.

“With the rapid growth and high standard of airline services into Rockhampton’s airport from Brisbane, Sydney & Melbourne, and with excellent links to QLD’s Traveltrain from Brisbane, through Rockhampton and west to Longreach, this trail will also have appeal

to wider domestic and international tourism markets including the extensive educational sector that have interests in geology, fossicking, paleontology and the National Parks across our two regions” he said.

The drive market is the lifeblood of tourism in our regions. In Queensland alone, approximately 70% of all trips by domestic travelers are undertaken by car. This themed trail will entice a greater number of these travelers to explore the east-west Capricorn Highway and disperse more tourism into our regional centres along the route.

The project has been made possible with a \$490,000 funding grant to Capricorn Tourism announced today through the Federal Government’s AUSIndustry – Australian Tourism Development Program, along with the extensive support of a large number of dedicated tourism industry members, Capricorn Highway Touring Route Committee, local governments and Tourism Queensland.

Geo Tourism Attractions

- 1 Great Keppel Island, near Yeppoon
- 2 Byfield National Park
- 3 Mt Etna Caves National Park, near Rockhampton
- 4 Capricorn Caves, near Rockhampton
- 5 Dreamtime Cultural Centre, Rockhampton
- 6 Mount Morgan Mine Site
- 7 Mt Hay Thundereggs
- 8 Blackdown Tableland National Park, near Blackwater
- 9 Carnarvon Gorge National Park, via Emerald
- 10 Blair Athol Gold Mine, via Emerald
- 11 Sapphire Gemfields, Anakie & Rubyvale
- 12 Muttaborra - Home to Muttaborrasaurus replica
- 13 Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum, Winton
- 14 Opal Mining, Opalton, via Winton
- 15 Lark Quarry, via Winton
- 16 Stonehouse Museum, Boulia

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Contact:
Alan Chamberlain
 General Manager
 Capricorn Tourism
W: (07) 4927 2055
M: 0403 241 609
E: gm@capricorntourism.com.au

Stacey Hixon
 Communications Coordinator
 Capricorn Tourism
W: (07) 4927 2055
M: 0418 878 781
E: emarketing@capricorntourism.com.au