

## Forum to give voice to Gympie Cooloola Tourism industry

Gympie Cooloola businesses and tourism operators will be identifying issues, ideas and opportunities for the local tourism industry at next month's Tourism Futures Forum in Gympie.

The Forum, hosted by Gympie Cooloola Tourism, brings three prominent identities to Gympie to address businesses and tourism operators. Daniel Gschwind, CEO of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council will join Rod Hillman CEO of Eco Tourism Australia and Professor Mike Hefferan, Pro Vice Chancellor (Engagement) of USC to speak on the tourism partnership with the State Government, Eco Tourism and economic futures.

GCT's Chairman Jan Watt said the organisation's proactive involvement in Queensland Tourism Industry networks had allowed them to bring valuable industry representatives to the Gympie Cooloola region..

Ms Watt said that business would also participate in interactive sessions at the Forum to collectively raise matters for attention or development. She said the local tourism industry needed to be given a voice and the opportunity to come together and work together for the future of tourism in the region.

Issues identified at the forum will guide GCT in its future role and will also allow the organisation to effectively advocate on matters of importance. A Tourism Futures Report identifying outcomes of the forum will be developed by GCT and provided to industry stakeholders.

Ms Watt said that operators and businesses needed to join together and work collaboratively to give strength to the local tourism industry. "We want to empower our tourism operators and therefore our tourism industry" she said.

Keynote speaker Daniel Gschwind is the Chief Executive Officer of QTIC which is Queensland's peak tourism industry body and will be discussing QTIC's role and the opportunities for development and innovation resulting from the partnership agreement signed between QTIC the State Government at the recent DestinationQ Conference.

Professor Mike Hefferan's address will provide a realistic assessment of the economy at a wider and regional sector, and what we might reasonably expect over the next few years. Professor Hefferan is Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) and Professor of Property and Development of the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC).

Rod Hillman is a pioneer of the adventure and ecotourism industry in this country and will be talking about the significance of Eco Tourism to the industry and the Gympie Cooloola region, opportunities for growth and why industry operators should become Eco-accredited.

Operators and businesses are encouraged to attend and take part in the forum to begin a collaborative approach to identify the future of tourism for the region.

The Forum will be held on Friday October 18<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 4pm at The Pavilion Conference Centre, Gympie Showgrounds. Cost is lunch only at \$15 and bookings are required. Contact [secretary@cooloola.org.au](mailto:secretary@cooloola.org.au) or phone 54825444 for details.

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Contact Jan Watt 0488969408 - Media - Gympie Cooloola Tourism

**ATTACHED PHOTOS** - Daniel Gschwind CEO QTIC / Rod Hillman, CEO Eco Tourism Australia / Professor Mike Hefferan Pro Vice Chancellor (Engagement) USC

**ATTACHED INFORMATION** – PROGRAM FOR TOURISM FUTURES FORUM

## Daniel Gschwind



Daniel Gschwind is the Chief Executive Officer of QTIC which is Queensland's peak tourism industry body with members across all regions and tourism sectors. He is also a board member of the National Tourism

Alliance (NTA) and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC). He represents QTIC on various tourism committees including the Tourism Forecasting Council. Daniel will be discussing QTIC's role and the opportunities for development and innovation resulting from the partnership agreement with the State Government.

## Professor Mike Hefferan



Professor Mike Hefferan is Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) and Professor of Property and Development of the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC). He is also an Adjunct Professor at the

Queensland University of Technology. Post GFC it might seem that everything is different – and a lot is, but some things stay the same. Professor Hefferan's address provides a realistic assessment of the economy at a wider and regional sector, and what we might reasonably expect over the next few years.

## Rod Hillman



Rod Hillman is a pioneer of the adventure and ecotourism industry in this country. He has seen the industry from all sides and played an important part in the development of ecotourism, from its formative years through

to the substantial industry it is today. Rod will be talking about the relevance and significance of Eco Tourism to the industry and this region, opportunities for growth and why industry operators should become Eco-accredited through Eco Tourism Australia programs.