

Baillie Lodges Sustainable Management Policy

Baillie Lodges is an intimate collection of globally celebrated luxury lodges in significant remote wilderness regions of Australia. A proactive approach to best managing the health of each property's environmental setting is key to guests' experience, to the ongoing appeal of the destination and to the sustainability of business in experiential tourism.

Baillie Lodges' management boasts an impressive track record of operating lodges in remote locations, often included in World Heritage-listed areas or bordering national and marine parks. Owner James Baillie's past role in the establishment and/or operation of resorts in such standout locations as Lizard, Heron and Bedarra Islands, the Daintree's Silky Oaks Lodge and Tasmania's Cradle Mountain Lodge brings to Baillie Lodges a wealth of knowledge and experience in high end nature-based tourism.

Baillie Lodges was created in 2003 with the debut of the spectacularly located Capella Lodge on World Heritage-listed Lord Howe Island, followed in 2008 by the internationally celebrated Southern Ocean Lodge on the untouched wilderness of Kangaroo Island's south-west coast. It was expanded further in 2013 with the addition of acclaimed luxury desert camp Longitude 131° overlooking Uluru (Ayers Rock) in Australia's desert heart.

Baillie Lodges has fast established its regard as a pre-eminent Australian tourism operator. Integral to this is the setting of new benchmarks for sustainable tourism development and the result is exciting new standards of luxury travel in Australia.

The Baillie Lodges environmental commitment is best expressed by the lodge's interaction with its local natural and cultural surroundings.

A dynamic environmental management plan featuring cutting edge and continually evolving technologies steers lodge operations and ultimately enhances each guest's experience.

Biodiversity Protection & Conservation

Southern Ocean Lodge was approved under the Commonwealth Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act and on a state level the South Australian Development Act, National Parks & Wildlife Act, Native Vegetation Act and Natural Resources Management Act.

One hectare of land was cleared in the construction of Southern Ocean Lodge, or approximately 1% of the total 102 hectares purchased by Baillie Lodges as private land. The remaining 99% is protected to guarantee its pristine state for future generations. Native vegetation clearing at Southern Ocean Lodge was minimised by using existing fire-trails or tracks.

The site ultimately chosen included the least native vegetation.

Prior to the construction of Southern Ocean Lodge, management undertook extensive flora and fauna surveys in 2005 and 2006, which identified that the rare and magnificent Osprey and vulnerable Hooded Plover bird species were found near the site and called for management plans that were subsequently put in place, including:

- Buffer zones and strict access controls;
- Guest awareness programs;
- Signage; and
- Ongoing monitoring of sites.

Southern Ocean Lodge is situated on an important wildlife corridor between two National Parks – Kelly Hill Caves and Flinders Chase National Parks. Encumbrances are now secured on adjoining land limiting future development and protecting the wildlife corridor.

Boardwalks and signed walking tracks have been established around Southern Ocean Lodge to minimise potential “edge effect” of guest movements.

Capella Lodge management collaborate closely with the Lord Howe Island Board to implement management policies in keeping with the destination’s World Heritage listing. In particular, the Board carefully controls visitation and accommodation of no more than 400 guests is allowed at any one time on the island.

Revegetation of two acres of land surrounding Capella Lodge is ongoing, where endemic species are planted to prevent erosion. Species include Kentia Palms, Hopwood, Sallywood, Melaluca, Juniper, Bulli Bush, Tee Tree, Berry Wood and Goat Wood.

Longitude 131° was also approved under the Commonwealth Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act, involving extensive consultations with the Central Land Council and Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, including cultural mapping studies to confirm there were no sacred sites in the immediate area.

Situated adjacent to the World Heritage-listed Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, the lodge was designed and constructed using techniques that minimise its impact on the site and surrounds. If required, it could be completely disassembled and removed, and the site restored to its pre-development state with minimal remediation.

Tents were prefabricated and assembled without the need for concrete trucks or other heavy vehicles. A special screw pile construction technique involved pile applicators at the end of a telescopic arm, and the largest construction vehicle used was a utility.

The tents themselves were designed to float above the sand, and any sand removed from beneath the building footprints was removed by hand.

Even the swimming pool was prefabricated in sections and bolted together on site, supported by the same screw-pile foundations as the tents.

Particular attention is paid to small native animals in the area, including a monitoring program to protect the local population of Mulgara. Twelve square kilometres of land has been set aside as a conservation reserve for this small carnivorous marsupial.

Another species, the Great Desert Skink, was found to have a warren near the lodge site during construction, resulting in the relocation of an access road and creation of an exclusion zone.

An Environmental Management Plan governs all strategies relating to the conservation of the desert eco-system and ongoing oversight is provided by a qualified Environment Manager.

All properties engage local naturalist guides to provide expert interpretive experiences for guests, building awareness of the natural environment and encouraging a greater sensitivity for broader ecological issues.

Energy Management

A commitment to best manage energy is on-going at Capella Lodge, Southern Ocean Lodge and Longitude 131°.

The aspect and architectural design of the properties has been planned to maximise benefits of each destination's natural weather patterns, encouraging flow-through ventilation and the use of glazing to capture sunlight and store natural heat.

Capella Lodge, in particular, takes advantage of its sub-tropical climate and does not require air conditioning.

Southern Ocean Lodge features an intricate Building Management System (BMS) whereby power usage in certain areas can be shut down during off-peak periods.

Longitude 131° tents are made of three layers of fabric to enhance thermal and acoustic insulation. Floors are insulated and covered in natural stone to enhance cooling in summer and retain warmth in winter, while the tents are positioned to minimise heat load on the glazing.

Renewable Energy

In cooperation with Federal and South Australian governments, a set of 225 solar panels has been installed by South Australian company Solaris Technology both on the Southern Ocean Lodge roof and on sun-tracking frames adjacent to breezeway which links lodge to suites. This constantly moving renewable energy source can generate 130kw.h per day on average, saving around 42000kg of carbon dioxide per year in reduced diesel fuel consumption.

The Lodge also employs the latest heat pump technology for an energy efficient hot water system, equivalent to a solar powered hot water supply.

Capella Lodge also employs a solar power system that minimises the property's draw on the island energy supply and feeds back into the island grid during periods of low energy use. Its 40 solar panels are discretely positioned across the roof of Capella Lodge and have been installed as part of Lord Howe Island's ambition to generate 80 per cent of its energy from renewable sources by 2018. The SMA Sunny Tripower system generates 14100kwh each year.

Capella Lodge also uses green energy ethanol to fuel contemporary EcoSmart fires which heat both public areas and in-room fire places. Capella uses electric vehicles to transfer guests around the island, complemented by a fleet of mountain bikes which are the primary source of transport on Lord Howe.

Longitude 131° is fitted with solar panels on the roofs of the Dune House and tents, providing hot water for the kitchen and guest tents. Its swimming pool is warmed using energy efficient heat-pump technology.

All properties use low wattage, energy saver light globes and use LPG for laundry and kitchen facilities.

Waste Management

Waste management at remote Southern Ocean Lodge is a key issue as management aims to treat as much waste as possible on-site to avoid the impact of sending large amounts of recyclable material the long distance to the tip as landfill.

The multi-award winning Australian-owned and invented 'Biolytix Filter System' treats wastewater at Southern Ocean Lodge. Using a chemical-free process that is also odour absorbing, the system converts organic waste, wastewater and sewage to clean irrigation water which is utilised on plantings in the staff village area via a subsurface system that also ensures wildlife are not attracted by food wastes.

At Capella Lodge, an environmentally sensitive on-site sewage treatment plant manages wastewater in line with the Lord Howe Island's strict regulations. Waste water is captured and treated to a standard that prevents negative impact on the island's ground water and sensitive marine environment. This will be upgraded in 2015 with a new generation Kubotato system provided by TrueWater Australia, providing an even higher standard of tertiary treatment.

Organic waste is sent the short distance to Lord Howe Island's leading edge Vertical Compost Unit for recycling and compost used for island regeneration and environmental projects.

At Longitude 131° waste-water is pumped 2km to the main sewerage plant at Voyages Ayers Rock Resort, to avoid the development of non-native green spots in the pristine desert environment.

Extensive recycling is undertaken at all properties, separating compost materials, cardboard and paper, glass, plastic, aluminium and rubbish. Biodegradable chemicals are used for cleaning.

Water Management

Water is harvested from all roof surfaces at Southern Ocean Lodge and stored in tanks with a total capacity in excess of 1.5 million litres. A key aim is to have the property rainwater self-sufficient nine out of ten years.

Capella Lodge captures up to 50% of all its water needs in rainwater tanks, with a total storage of 250,000 litres supplied by more regular rainfall patterns.

At Longitude 131° each tent features a generous shower instead of a bath, in order to preserve precious water in the desert environment.

In accordance with the Commonwealth Government's Water Efficiency & Labelling Standards Act, all properties have accredited bathroom and shower fittings to ensure efficient systems for guests to minimise their water usage.

Guests are encouraged to opt for towel and linen changes every third day of their stay, potentially saving 250,000 litres a year as well as minimising detergent use for all properties.