

Travel to a Thriving Future – Queenstown Lakes Regenerative Tourism Plan Summary

Introduction

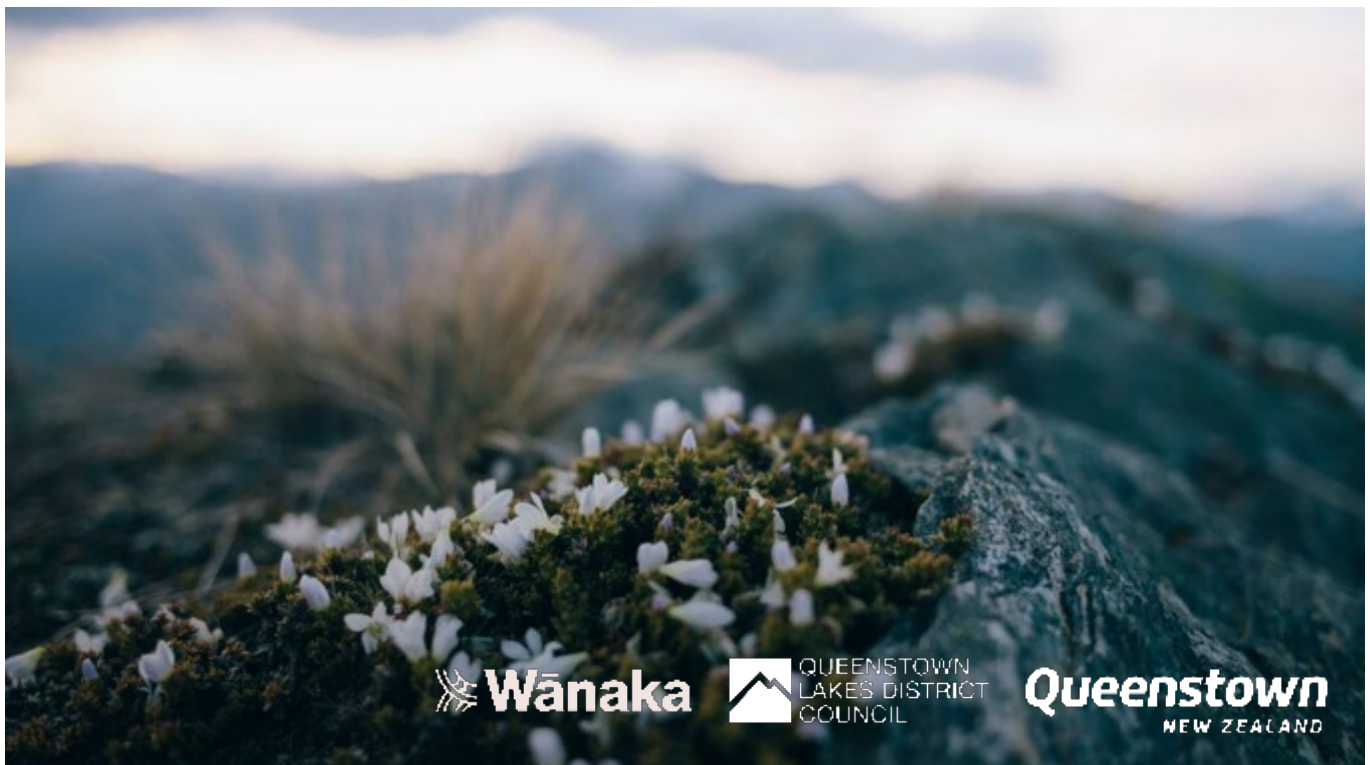
Travel to a thriving future is Queenstown Lakes' roadmap to regenerative tourism by 2030. This is an exciting journey that brings opportunities for everyone in the region and greater wellbeing for people and the planet. Regenerative tourism goes beyond typical sustainability projects that minimise environmental harm. Instead, it contributes holistic value that benefits communities, the environment, and the economy. The plan outlines the vision, principles, and specific actions required to transition from a traditional tourism model to one that actively contributes to the health and wellbeing of the environment, communities, and local economy. Travel to a thriving future flows directly from the Grow Well | Whaiora Spatial Plan, which proposes a vision and framework of how and where this district will grow until 2050

Vision: 'Travel to a Thriving Future'


Residents see tourism's potential to ensure a thriving future for Queenstown Lakes and positively influence the world. This vision recognises that the visitor economy has an important role in achieving value economically, socially, culturally and environmentally. The vision also aligns with Vision Beyond 2050, which is based upon the values that collectively define what is unique about the Queenstown Lakes district.

WHAT IS REGENERATIVE TOURISM?

Regenerative tourism is defined as having a net-positive impact on the environment, society, culture and the economy, aiming to create a more just, vibrant, and sustainable world. While sustainable tourism seeks to reduce travel's potential harms, regenerative tourism takes a wider view, avoiding extractive economic models. It recognises that the visitor economy is part of an interconnected system. Simply put, regenerative tourism gives back more than it takes. It improves wellbeing and is the best path towards a tourism industry the Queenstown Lakes District can be proud of.



 **Wanaka**

 **QUEENSTOWN
LAKES DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Queenstown
NEW ZEALAND

Strategic Actions

- › **Environmental regeneration**
Enhance and restore natural ecosystems impacted by tourism.
- › **Community well-being**
Ensure tourism benefits contribute to the social and economic prosperity of local communities.
- › **Cultural preservation**
Respect and preserve local culture and heritage.
- › **Economic sustainability**
Create a resilient tourism economy that supports long-term prosperity and minimizes reliance on traditional high-impact tourism models.

Approach to Implementation

- › **Holistic approach**
Emphasises integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations in tourism planning and development.
- › **Collaboration**
Encourages active involvement of all stakeholders, including local communities, businesses, and visitors.
- › **Long term thinking**
Focuses on long-term benefits and sustainability rather than short-term gains.
- › **Continuous Improvement**
Commits to ongoing assessment and adaptation of tourism practices.

Core Values

MANAAKITAKA | HOSPITALITY

We give a warm welcome to visitors (manuhiri), building unity through authentic connections and the act of sharing so that those arriving as manuhiri leave as extended family (whānau whānui). We care for the health and wellbeing of everyone in our community because those who are least visible are an important indicator for the health of the whole.

WHANAUKATAKA | FAMILY AND COMMUNITY-FOCUSSED

Reciprocal relationships which are valued, strong and enduring weave us together as whānau. These relationships nourish our community, as well as enabling a productive and thriving visitor economy. We support and celebrate local whenever we can. Knowing what we wish to share with manuhiri, we invite them to share equally in the kinship of our communities through meaningful experiences and connections, rather than through transactions.

TAUTIAKITAKA | GUARDIANSHIP

We experience kinship with the environment, rather than dominance over it, so that nature thrives for the benefit of all species, whilst providing for the wellbeing of our people and our place. Within the tourism industry this is often referred to as the kaupapa of tiaki.



Strategic Actions

› PILLAR 1 ENRICH COMMUNITIES AND ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

This pillar supports regenerative tourism by aligning community wellbeing and values with visitor experiences. Queenstown Lakes communities are key to the visitor experience, and they are an important reason that people travel here. The district will attract visitors who respect local values and are interested in local cultures. Community amenities, facilities, and infrastructure should be developed with residents' needs in mind. A regenerative approach to tourism will bring the cultural history and stories of Queenstown Lakes to life.

Tourism businesses play a valuable role in protecting and enhancing culture and heritage by infusing them into visitor experiences. Opportunities to volunteer can also become sought-after experiences. Providing richer visitor experiences, along with consistent communication, will help visitors to develop a strong sense of connection to local communities, culture and places. The bottom line is that the visitor economy needs to have a positive impact on the lives of all residents.

› PILLAR 2 RESTORE THE ENVIRONMENT AND DECARBONISE THE VISITOR ECONOMY

This pillar contains Queenstown Lakes' keystone project and its critical call to action: to decarbonise the visitor economy by 2030. This ambitious goal requires immediate and sustained action following scientific best practices. Both in-destination emissions and the emissions associated with transportation (including Scope 3) must be accounted for. See the keystone project on page 29 to learn about the strategies toward decarbonising the visitor economy.

The visitor economy will also take action to address all significant aspects of its environmental footprint. Many tourism businesses are already showing leadership in sustainability.

The next step is for the entire destination to go beyond reducing environmental impacts and begin to restore, repair and regenerate natural systems. This exciting aspect of Travel to a thriving future is an essential commitment toward making the visitor economy sustainable and globally competitive over the long term. It begins with decarbonisation.

› PILLAR 3 BUILD ECONOMIC REILIENCE, CAPABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

This pillar focuses on developing a thriving economy for the future. Regenerative businesses are commercially successful and have enormous positive impact on people, environment and society. Success comes from reciprocal relationships that create win-win outcomes for customers, employees, suppliers, the environment, communities and their investors. A prosperous and resilient economy is a system of interrelated businesses working in this way. It delivers wellbeing for all citizens, without overly concentrated wealth. Tourism destinations and businesses following this path are also prepared for a changing environment. Instead of presuming that more visitors will result in increased benefits, there must be careful focus on the overall value that communities and the environment receive.

Yield and the holistic value of tourism will be prioritised over an increase in visitor numbers. Similarly to a business maturing from top line growth to focus on their bottom line, the destination must consider all costs and benefits. The investment in a systems approach to regenerative tourism will be repaid in the creation of a resilient visitor economy that has more positive impacts on communities, the environment, and the economy. It is exciting to see the progress of those businesses leading the way

Implementation and Monitoring

› IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Governance: Establish a dedicated committee or task force responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan. This group will coordinate efforts across different sectors and ensure alignment with the plan's goals.

Partnerships: Build partnerships with local businesses, community groups, and governmental agencies to facilitate and support the plan's initiatives.

Funding: Identify and secure funding sources to support various projects and actions outlined in the plan.

› MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Performance Metrics: Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress towards the plan's goals. These metrics will cover environmental impact, community benefits, cultural preservation, and economic performance.

Regular Reviews: Conduct periodic reviews and assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and make necessary adjustments. This includes gathering feedback from stakeholders and analysing data on tourism impacts.



Conclusion

The Queenstown Lakes Regenerative Tourism Plan represents a forward-thinking approach to tourism that seeks to harmonise economic growth with environmental stewardship and community well-being. By embracing regenerative and sustainable practices, the plan aims to create a sustainable and resilient tourism industry that benefits both the district and its visitors. Through collaborative efforts, innovative projects and strategies, and ongoing evaluation, Queenstown Lakes aspires to set a benchmark for regenerative tourism globally.

INTERESTED TO KNOW MORE?

Read the full [Travel to a Thriving Future - Regenerative Tourism Plan](#).

Check out the [Regenerative Tourism website](#).

For further questions or feedback [reach out](#).