

Business Environmental Sustainability Recognition Program Report

Bass Coast Roundtable project team – Moragh Mackay, Phil Westwood and David Jobe (coordinator)

Results Summary

- Total number of participating businesses in the 2004/05 program was 25.
- The program launch attracted over 20 people from the local community, as well as generating coverage in the Phillip Island and San Remo Advertiser (see figure 1).



Figure 1 – Launch of the Business Environmental Sustainability Recognition Program

Key Lessons learned

Awareness of the Biosphere Reserve was low	68% of respondents were not previously aware of the Biosphere Reserve
Interest in the Biosphere Reserve was strong	50% of respondents were interested in joining the Biosphere Reserve Foundation
Direct mail does not work	The success rate for the original mail out to over 300 businesses was only 3%.
Canvassing businesses in person was more effective	Most of the 25 participating businesses in the 2004/05 program (60%) were recruited by Lou Harrison going door-to-door to businesses in Cowes. Lou reported a success rate of approximately 40%. Lou visited approximately 40 businesses in 6.5 hours. The success rate may have been even higher if the person canvassing was already known to the business people (i.e. from the local traders association or chamber of commerce).
Resources need to be budgeted for follow up	42% of respondents were interested in being contacted by businesses offering assistance in environmental accreditation, etc; however, there were not resources available to follow this up in a timely fashion.

Recommendations

In rolling out the project across the biosphere, the following recommendations are made:

1. Local media should be used more effectively to increase awareness of the Biosphere prior to rolling out the program
2. Resources should be budgeted to follow up businesses interested in receiving more information, including an appropriate collateral piece for businesses interested in joining the Foundation
3. A door-to-door approach, preferably through the local traders association or chamber of commerce, would seem to be the most appropriate and cost effective distribution method (see below):

	Mail out 2,000 brochures	Door-to-door 500 brochures
Print costs	1,526.80 (2,000 brochures)	982.30 (allow 1,000 brochures)
Envelopes	464.20	-
Postage	500.00	-
Total Cost	2,491.00	982.30
Hours	5 (envelope stuffing / mail out)	80
Expected Results	40 businesses (assume a 5% success rate)	200 businesses (assume a 40% success rate)

Project method

Information kit & application form was distributed to over 300 registered businesses in Cowes, Rhyll, Cape Woolamai, San Remo, The Gurdies, Corinella, Coronet Bay, Grantville & Bass. Aimed at a large number of smaller enterprises (farmers, small retail, B&Bs), the program was designed to be accessible, with simple to achieve criteria in order to maximise participation. The information kit emphasised how even relatively simple changes can have a positive impact on the environment as well as demonstrating how environmentally sustainable practices can also contribute to the business bottom line.

Businesses which have a minimum of six environmentally sustainable practices in 2005 and commit to adopting a further two in 2006 were to be provided with a biosphere decal to display in their premises. Recognition would last 12-months, after which businesses would have to repeat the application process.

The program is designed simply to recognise businesses that are making some environmentally sustainable choices. The booklet clearly states that participation in the program does not imply endorsement or accreditation by the Biosphere Foundation.



Figure 2 – Biosphere Decal

Original project aims

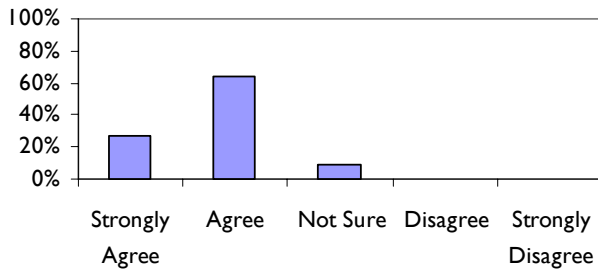
- To encourage businesses to adopt environmentally sustainable practices (particularly businesses that may have not considered these issues before)
- To promote environmental sustainability and the Biosphere Reserve to local businesses and their customers
- To act as an entry-level step to encourage businesses to think further about sustainability and achieve further accreditation
- To gather data on issues such as attitudes towards environmental sustainability and awareness of the Biosphere Reserve across industry sectors, and businesses of different sizes
- To create a model, which if successful, can be applied across the whole Biosphere Reserve in 2006/07

Survey results*

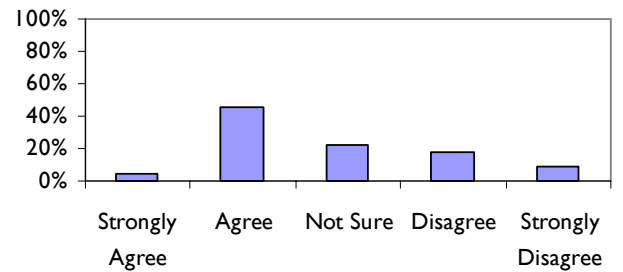
Reported Environmental Initiatives	Current	Planned	Total
turning off lights when not required	92%	4%	96%
separation of waste for recycling / composting	79%	13%	92%
minimising use of air conditioning / heating	79%	8%	88%
turning off appliances at the power point when not required	71%	8%	79%
use of recycled office paper	63%	17%	79%
minimising chemical consumption	75%	4%	79%
eliminating / minimising plastic bag use	58%	17%	75%
sweeping, not hosing, paved areas	71%	0%	71%
sweeping rubbish and litter from the shopfront and into a bin	71%	0%	71%
selecting less environmentally damaging chemicals	67%	4%	71%
selecting energy-efficient equipment	54%	13%	67%
low wattage / compact fluorescent lighting	58%	4%	63%
purchasing "green power"	13%	46%	58%
AAA-rated plumbing fittings & appliances	42%	13%	54%
seal doors and windows against draughts	38%	17%	54%
waterwise landscaping	50%	4%	54%
subscribing to Greenfleet	0%	54%	54%
offering customers more environmentally sensitive choices	38%	17%	54%
staff training in environmental issues	33%	17%	50%
car-pooling, riding a bicycle or walking to work	42%	4%	46%
recycling - other	38%	8%	46%
environmental information in brochures or web site	33%	13%	46%
business plan addressing environmental sustainability	21%	21%	42%
LPG or solar hot water and LPG heating	29%	8%	38%
documenting practices designed to minimise environmental impacts	13%	25%	38%
measurement and reporting on business' environmental impact	17%	17%	33%
energy - other	25%	0%	25%
water - other	25%	0%	25%
other	21%	0%	21%
greenhouse emissions - other	13%	0%	13%
pollution - other	8%	0%	8%
consumer awareness - other	4%	0%	4%
business planning - other	0%	0%	0%

Survey results*

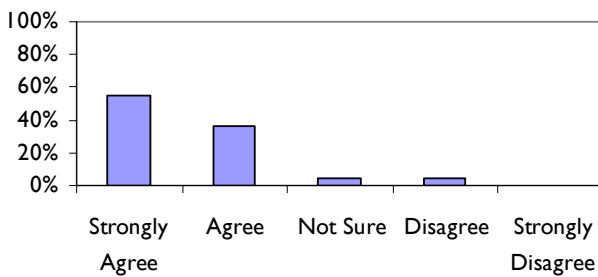
Environmental initiatives are important to your customers



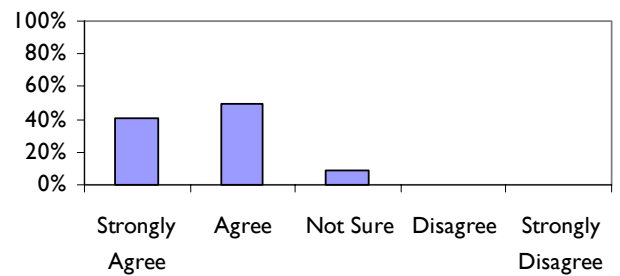
Environmental initiatives have helped reduce business costs



Degradation of the local environment would have a negative impact on your business



Environmental sustainability is a priority for your business



*based on a sample size of 22 businesses