

Appendix A - Definition of Key Concepts

Recreation

Recreation activities are those:

- people undertake for enjoyment in their own free time;
- not based on formal competition and/or organised administration; and
- that lack a formal set of rules.

Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor Recreation activities:

- are undertaken outside the confines of buildings (ie in the outdoors); and
- do not involve organised competition or formal rules; and
- can be undertaken without the existence of any built facility or infrastructure; and
- may require large areas of land, water and/or air; and
- may require outdoor areas of predominantly unmodified natural landscape.

Note: Built facilities, site modification or infrastructure may be provided to manage the impacts generated by the activities. However, outdoor recreation activities are not dependent on built facilities, site modification or infrastructure. Activities that involve organised competition based on formal rules are, by definition, sports.

Outdoor recreation activities include (but are not limited to) non-competitive:

- abseiling;
- bicycle riding (road);
- bird watching;
- walking;
- camping;
- canoeing/kayaking;
- climbing;
- scuba diving;
- snorkel diving;
- recreational fishing;
- hang gliding;
- horse trail riding;
- hunting with firearms;
- hunting with bow and arrow;
- mountain bike riding (off-road);
- off-highway or off-road motorcycle, trike and quad riding;
- off-highway or off-road four wheel and two wheel driving;
- jet skiing;
- power boating;
- sailboarding;
- sailing/yachting;
- surfing; and
- water skiing.



Note: Competitive versions of some of the above activities exist. While competitive activities have much in common with non-competitive activities, the policies, planning outcomes, infrastructure and initiatives that support competitive activities do not necessarily support non-competitive activities.

For example, competition often focuses on speed, technical difficulty and increased risk taking - each of which reduces safety margins. Consequently, competition often requires exclusive use of areas that would otherwise be concurrently available for several recreation activities.

Recreation Settings

Recreation settings are a result of the combination of the biophysical, social and managerial attributes of a place in which recreation takes place. Biophysical attributes include the:

- terrain;
- type of access to and within;
- number and type of built structures present;
- plant community;
- animal community;
- smells caused by natural features (eg flowering plants, rain, drying algae after floods);
- sounds caused by natural features (eg water falls, surf, bird song, wind); and
- area of available landscape/seascape.

Social attributes include the:

- total number of people present;
- activities of the people who are present;
- sounds caused by machinery and the activities of people;
- smells caused by machinery and the activities of people; and
- number of people in the social group to which a person belongs and their behaviour.

Managerial attributes include the:

- ownership and management arrangements for a site;
- set of regulations/rules/bylaws operating at a site;
- landscaping and facility design and standards;
- frequency of interaction with onsite enforcement, educational, management and maintenance staff; and
- number and obtrusiveness of signs.

People perceive these attributes as sights, sounds and smells.

Open Space

Open space is any area of land and/or water on which no, or very few, built structures are present, and consequently, which has its surface open to the sky. The surface may be modified from its natural condition but is usually substantially unpaved. Open space could include forests, farming land, beaches, lakes, dams, deserts and urban parks on which no, or few, built structures are present.

Like many other landscape attributes, open space is not an absolute condition. It grades from totally open space (ie no built structures for hundreds of km²) to the edges of built-up urban areas - depending on the proportion of the area which is taken up by built structures. The boundary between open space and built areas may be indistinct.



Be aware that other definitions of open space may be used in local government planning schemes or other land use planning documents.

Open space may have value for one, or more, of the following:

- outdoor recreation;
- sport;
- forestry and agricultural or pastoral production;
- nature conservation;
- maintenance of natural ecosystems and/or agricultural systems and the natural processes that sustain them;
- protection and/or management of significant environmental, cultural heritage and/or natural resource management areas;
- management of water catchments;
- maintenance of cultural practices;
- scenic quality and amenity; and
- tourism.

Recreation Opportunities

Recreation opportunities are particular combinations of recreation activities (eg swimming) in particular settings (eg in an Olympic pool, in a mountain stream, in the surf, on a coral reef). Each combination of recreation activity and setting constitutes a different recreation opportunity.

Recreation opportunities (ie. specific combinations of recreation activities and settings) are the fundamental products of recreation services and the fundamental units of outdoor recreation planning and management. Client/participant choice, marketing strategy, management inputs, equipment requirements, skill requirements and facility designs, among other things, are all based on the attributes of particular combinations of recreation activity and setting.

For example, walking in a suburban park is one type of recreation opportunity while walking for several days across untracked deserts is a different opportunity. Each combination of recreation activity and setting:

- requires different skills and equipment;
- requires a different setting;
- attracts different participants/clients with different expectations;
- provides a different recreation experience; and
- requires different management inputs to maintain quality, safety, sustainability and diversity.

It is important to note that individual people may have radically varying experiences from the same combination of recreation activity and setting. The concept of recreation opportunity does not attempt to predict or direct how particular individuals respond to particular combinations of recreation activity and setting.

The recreation opportunity concept is further explored in the following by comparing the same recreation activity (in this case scuba diving) in three different recreation settings. Diving on a natural coral reef presents an environment with a wide diversity of terrain, depth, current speed and direction, water temperature and coral/coralline algae forms and a diverse marine animal community that is an artefact of ecological processes without human intervention.



Most, if not all, of these attributes are beyond the immediate control of humans and cannot be predicted with precision. Scuba diving in a complex ecological community like a coral reef is one type of recreation opportunity.

Artificial reefs are different in form and character from naturally occurring reefs, especially immediately after placement of the structures (eg sunken ships or old tyres) on which they are based. Consequently, they do not offer exactly the same type of scuba diving opportunity as does a naturally occurring coral reef. However, with time and uninterrupted ecological succession, they would approach the same setting as that offered on a natural coral reef.

It is important to recognise that the recreation settings can change and, as a consequence, so do the recreation opportunities that result.

A concrete swimming pool offers a third type of scuba diving opportunity that is quite different from the previous two. It lacks the diversity of terrain, depth, current, ecology, light conditions, substrate and marine animals that is present in the two settings described above. Scuba divers may use the same equipment (wet suit, fins, face mask, weight belt, scuba tank, etc) in a pool that they would on a coral reef, but the experience they derive is likely to be radically different.

Finally, it should be noted that built facilities may be part of recreation opportunities but the concept has a much broader meaning. It is possible to have a recreation opportunity where there are no built facilities (ie no buildings, no roads, no toilets, no electricity, no signs, etc). In fact, some recreation opportunities demand an absence of built facilities.

Recreation Planning

Daly (2000, p35) defines recreation planning as “a people-oriented process that brings together information about the rational allocation of recreation and sport resources to meet the present and future requirements of people at the state, regional and local level.”

Recreation planning requires a comprehensive understanding of legislation; policy frameworks; resource (ie land/water) characteristics; recreation demand and supply; key stakeholders; service delivery responsibilities; key recreation planning and management frameworks; and theoretical and technical innovations that support land use planning.

Recreation planning includes identifying places/spaces needed to satisfy future recreation demand as well as for the services, programs and facilities that support participation. Satisfying the demand for places in which to undertake recreation activities is dependent on identification, protection, and management of physical places within the landscape.

Recreation planning involves collecting and analysing information on a range of topics including:

- recreation needs;
- existing and proposed recreation settings;
- existing and proposed recreation opportunities;
- existing and proposed recreation facilities;
- existing and proposed recreation programs;
- participation rates in recreation activities;
- the views of interested parties on recreation issues;
- demographic factors affecting any of the above; and
- social, biophysical and managerial impacts of recreation.

This information is used to support decisions on the allocation of funds and other resources (eg staff time, funds and land) to recreation services (including facilities, programs, recreation opportunities and promotional materials) and the development of policy on recreation matters.

Outdoor Recreation Services

Outdoor recreation services provided by state and/or local government agencies and/or other public sector landholders include:

- planning (eg local government recreation plans for specific areas; the recreation components of open space plans, management plans - which incorporate recreation sub-plans - for National Parks, Marine Parks, State Forests and other public land tenures, etc);
- basic custodial management (eg wildfire suppression, weed control, feral animal control and fencing);
- resource/land management (eg erosion control, prescribed burning, management of noise, water or air pollution; landscaping, etc);
- infrastructure design, construction and maintenance (eg road and track construction and maintenance, provision of water, toilets and sewerage, repair of vandalised structures, etc);
- enforcement (eg patrols by enforcement staff, on-the-spot fines, confiscation of equipment, directions to leave an area or to stop doing a particular activity, etc);
- education and interpretation (eg direction and educational signs, guided walks, guided drives, spotlighting, campfire talks, posters, information sheets, brochures, books, videos, maps, etc);
- outdoor recreation activity programs (eg organised outdoor recreational walking, swimming instruction, training for participants and officials, etc);
- provision of supervision, first aid, search and rescue (eg Surf Life Saving, Coast Guard, pool supervision, etc);
- organising external suppliers (eg food and beverage suppliers, cleaners, entertainers, first aid, etc);
- marketing (eg promotional events and advertising signs, brochures, books, videos, maps, etc); and
- financial and other forms of support to non-government outdoor recreation interest groups.

Ecologically Sustainable Outdoor Recreation

Ecologically sustainable outdoor recreation is the use of areas/settings for outdoor recreation purposes both:

- within their capacity to sustain natural processes; and
- so that the benefit of the use to the present generation does not diminish the potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.

Recreation Succession

Throughout Queensland and elsewhere in Australia and overseas, setting diversity has been shown to be reduced by recreation succession. Recreation succession is the process by which the quality or condition of recreation settings deteriorate and/or change as a consequence of the impacts of recreational use and/or the actions of management. This is the main outdoor recreation issue, especially in the high growth areas of the state where the demand for outdoor recreation is highest.

Recreation succession ultimately causes a change in the participants who use a particular site and/or the types of recreation activities, which can be undertaken there. It can occur at a specific site or across large areas.



Recreation succession occurs when the quality or character of a recreation setting changes beyond the tolerance of the existing users. New users who are tolerant of the new condition replace those displaced by the changes. In turn, the new users generate impacts which change the inherent character of the site or management attempts to mitigate or control the impacts by a range of means including access restrictions and site hardening.

The result of recreation succession is that particular recreation activities or particular styles of recreation activities are displaced from where they once occurred. This has less significance while suitable new sites are available. But for some activities in some areas (eg trail bike riding near major urban centres) the supply of new sites is already exhausted. In effect, recreation opportunities (ie the opportunity to undertake a particular recreation activity in a particular recreation setting) are lost through recreation succession.

This is no minor matter. In some communities, people who have chosen particular locations to live because of the recreation opportunities provided from the natural or undeveloped character of those locations, can have their lives (not just their lifestyles) disrupted by recreation succession.

Nature-based Recreation

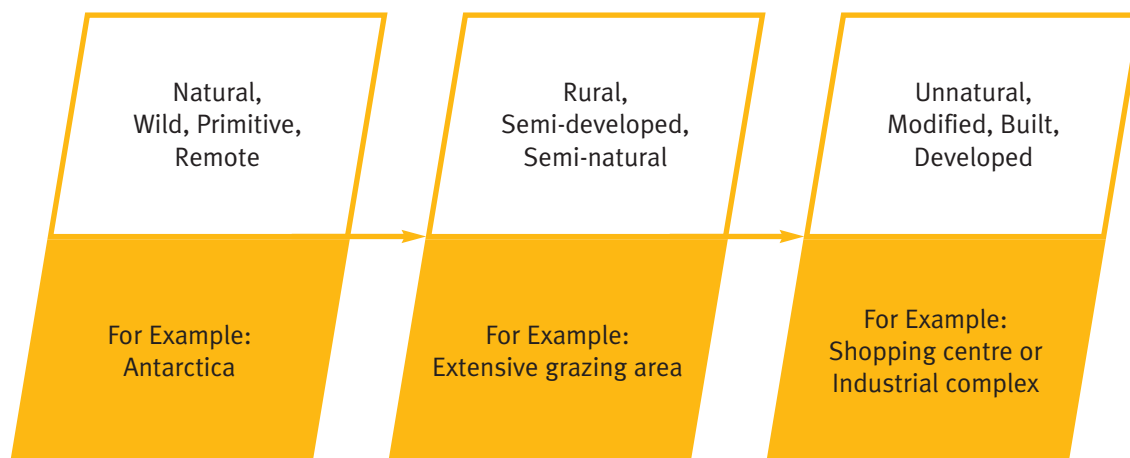
Nature-based recreation activities are those:

- where appreciation of nature is the key motivational factor; and
- substantial modification of the natural environment is not required; and
- where the natural environment is critical to the participation and satisfaction of the participants; and
- that occur in, and are dependent upon settings/locations which are perceived by those pursuing recreation as not being significantly altered by recent/modern human activity; and
- that occur in, and are dependent upon settings/locations which are not under the direct control of participants.

Some components of this definition may require further explanation. “Natural attributes” refers to the suite of characteristics determined by nature (including climate, terrain, substrate, endemic vegetation, soundscape, the endemic animal community, animal behaviour and water quality and hydrology) of settings or locations.

However, naturalness is not an absolute condition. The naturalness of a particular location can vary over time. Naturalness can be expressed on a range from completely wild-natural-remote to completely modified-urban-built-developed, depending on the proportion of natural and human modified elements in the landscape.

Figure A-1 - Range of naturalness of outdoor recreation settings.



As a result, settings can range from very, very natural (eg most of Antarctica) through partly natural (eg a rural landscape with some remnant native vegetation left along creeks and ridges) to completely modified (eg a large modern shopping centre with a closed roof, Muzak, artificial lighting, air conditioning and large crowds).

“Occurs in” means any nature-based recreation activity requires particular types of settings or locations before they can be undertaken. These settings are characterised by a combination of biophysical attributes - most of which are neither significantly altered by recent human activity nor controlled by current human activity.

“Dependent upon” means a particular recreation experience can only be attained in settings or locations which are characterised by a combination of biophysical attributes which are neither significantly altered by recent human activity nor controlled by current human activity. In effect, nature-based recreation is dependent upon the existence and availability of recreation settings that are significantly more natural than modified.

For example, to play golf successfully, a golf course is necessary. To build and maintain a golf course, it is necessary to modify the natural environment. With enough time, money and effort, golf courses can be built and maintained almost anywhere - in deserts, on coastal sand dunes, on high plateaux, on coral atolls, etc.

Well maintained and constructed golf courses do not occur naturally. Most of the hazards of playing golf are designed into the courses and can, with high levels of precision, be predicted in advance. In effect, the recreation situation is “controlled” by course design, the rules of the game and any club rules. Therefore, golf is not nature-based recreation.

However, walking is nature-based recreation if it is undertaken in a setting:

- where the landscape is predominantly natural; and
- where the participant cannot control a wide range of natural elements of the setting (eg weather, terrain, tidal fluctuation, etc); and
- where the focus of the activity, for most of the time, is for the participant to appreciate the uncontrolled natural elements of the environment.

Walking in this type of setting is usually called bushwalking. To bushwalk successfully, a reasonable area of bushland and an operable leg (or leg equivalent) or two is needed. Relatively undisturbed native forests, woodlands, heaths, beach dune systems, deserts and grasslands - which are essentially natural systems and which cannot be manufactured with their natural diversity of terrain, species and community structure - are generally accepted as “bush”.

In addition, there is a degree of unpredictability in bushwalking because many of the components of natural bushland (eg terrain, animal behaviour, presence or absence of various species, weather, climate, etc) cannot be controlled or precisely predicted by humans. Unpredicted events and discoveries to which the bushwalker must react or respond are part of the intrinsic value of the experience of bushwalking.

It is worth noting that particular outdoor recreation activities are not inherently nature-based. For example, white water kayaking is often cited as an example of nature-based recreation. However, kayaking in an artificial white water course in which the obstacles are contrived and movable, the water volume is controlled and the focus is on speed and competition is not nature-based recreation.



On the other hand, travelling on a wild, natural river where kayaking is used as the means of transport and the focus is on experiencing the natural environment can be nature-based recreation.

A combination of three factors - recreation activity, participants intent and recreation setting determines whether or not a given recreation activity is nature-based. The difference between white water kayaking which is nature-based and white water kayaking which is not nature-based exists despite the use of the same equipment and skills.

It is also worth noting that built facilities (eg resorts, huts, shelter sheds, paved tracks, roads, etc.) cannot be inherently nature-based - even if they are painted green.

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