New Eco Domes to attract more tourists to Alice Springs

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Two new specialised ‘Eco Domes’ will be built at the Earth Sanctuary in Alice Springs next year to help attract more tourists to Central Australia.

The nature centre will receive $40,000 from the NT and Federal Governments to support the project, which aims to cash in on the lucrative niche market of education tourism.

“Earth Sanctuary is a 2014 Brolga Award Winner and a leader in its field, particularly in its programs with school groups and this funding will only help it grow even further,” said Minister for Tourism Matt Conlan.

“The Giles Government is committed to growing the range of tourism products on offer to Territory visitors and these upgrades will enhance the variety of experiences on offer in Central Australia.”

The project will see two eco dome education facilities constructed at the site as well as a greenhouse dome for horticulture. A new interpretative nature walk will also be built.

“As part of this new project, the Sanctuary also plans to engage a consultancy to implement its programs into the National Curriculum,” said Mr Conlan.

“This will allow it to capitalise on the education market, which is a growing tourism market, and position the Earth Sanctuary and Alice Springs as a must-visit destination for touring school groups and other education organisations.

“This funding is a major investment in growing the competitiveness of the NT tourism industry and will help us achieve our target of a $2.2 billion visitor economy by 2020.”

Earth Sanctuary is a family-run business situated just south of Alice Springs on 100 acres of desert wilderness overlooking the East MacDonnell Ranges. It is a carbon neutral venue offering day and evening tours focused on ecology, astronomy and culture, including its signature ‘Spirit of the Outback’ dinner and show. It also has tour-based overnight camping facilities.

Earth Sanctuary director, Tom Falzon said that the business had built a reputation for quality in sustainable education tours and programs.
“This funding will only improve what is already a successful business. As sustainable tourism continues to emerge as key feature of today’s tourism market, Earth Sanctuary’s edge as a ‘green’ venue is a point of difference that assists significantly in the business’ marketing plan,” he said.

The Earth Sanctuary project is part of $1.3 million in tourism infrastructure and development funding from the NT and Federal Governments. The new facilities are expected to be completed in April 2015.

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