

Sustainable Regions Program



Fishes at the Point, North Stradbroke Island

The Fishes Café is located right on the doorstep of the famous North Gorge Walk, at Point Lookout, North Stradbroke Island. It provides an all day café and takeaway menu, with a wide range of breakfast and lunch options, as well as alfresco evening dining.

Over the past few years, Fishes at the Point has incorporated several environmentally friendly projects that have saved them electricity as well as other costs. Their main projects relate to the recycling of kitchen oil, use of recyclable packaging for takeaway food and new refrigeration equipment.



1. Getting started

In July 2009, Fishes at the Point was invited by Tourism Queensland to become involved with the Sustainable Regions program. The Restaurant's owners, Dan & Colin Battersby immediately liked the idea as it was as a good chance to benchmark their company against others in order to see their position in the current market. In addition to a personal interest in preserving the natural environment of North Stradbroke Island, the owners could also see the financial benefits of managing a more sustainable operation.

2. Major initiatives

The first strategy Fishes at the Point has implemented along their journey towards a more sustainable business is the recycling of the fryer oil used by the cafe in cooking. The kitchen uses approximately 200 litres of oil each week and this was once collected by external contractors monthly and taken off the Island to be recycled. Recognising this oil could serve a different purpose; the oil is now given to a local fisherman and supplier of the restaurant and used to power his boat engine. This simple act is now not only saving both Fishes and the supplier money, but has also reduced the carbon footprint of each of the businesses too.

More recently, Fishes at the Point replaced their obsolete fridges with energy efficient models by Skope. Upon realising the old fridges needed to be replaced, they spent time investigating the different models available and the impacts these would have on the business' energy use and operating costs. In the end, it was decided to invest in the more expensive and more efficient fridges, knowing they would make the money back in the energy savings over time.

Other measures employed at Fishes at the Point include using fully recycled packaging for takeaway meals and providing bicycles for staff to ride to and from work on.

3. Key outcomes

One of the great benefits Fishes at the Point has achieved through sustainability is the financial saving from no longer having to store and dispose of oil. The slight smell from the oil storage is now also gone and visitors are able to enjoy their dining experience even more so than before.

Fishes at the Point is proud of being able to not only save itself money and reduce its carbon footprint, but also that of its supply chain.

"The oil we use for frying the fish is recycled into bio-diesel by the fisherman who then uses it on his boats to catch the fish, which I then turn into meals."

Colin Battersby, Owner

Further cost savings have been experienced from the new refrigeration system. Despite a 25% increase in the price of electricity on the Island, the installation of a more energy efficient system has meant Fishes at the Point is still paying the same amount for their electricity bills as they were a year ago.

4. Major challenges

Similar to many other small businesses, the financial investment that is required is the major challenge faced by Fishes at the Point in becoming more sustainable. Like most other businesses of its size, Fishes at the Point is not in a position to invest the "big bucks" in new technology.

5. Advice to operators

Colin thinks that everyone should make sustainability a priority and follow their projects through. He says, *"The pay off in the medium to long term will be well worth the initial investment"*.

Colin also stresses the importance of being educated enough to make smart decisions when it comes to replacing and repairing equipment. It is not about replacing perfectly good equipment with more sustainable versions, but rather being educated enough so that when the time comes for upgrades, more efficient models can be put in place.

6. Next steps

Fishes at the Point is looking to purchase a heat exchanger in the near future which will use the heat generated from the cold room motors to heat water. The system makes use of the energy already being used by the cold room motors and will save energy and reduce power bills.

Fishes at the Point will also look to reduce their waste sent to landfill by taking up the opportunity to recycle their food waste at a recently established community garden on North Stradbroke Island. In this project the community is working with businesses and the Stradbroke Island Bushcare Group to improve the soil with compost so gardens can be established to provide fresh produce for local residents to share. The garden will not only reduce the greenhouse gas emissions emitted to transport food over to the Island but also the amount of food waste sent to landfill. For Fishes at the Point this means 128 cubic metres of food waste diverted from landfill and a reduction of 45.5 tonnes in their CO₂-e emissions!

For further information contact:

Mrs. Colin Battersby
Phone: 07 3415 3949
Email: colbattersby@gmail.com