

Sustainability Case Studies



Clandulla Cottages and Farmstay, Scenic Rim

Winner of the "THE BIGGEST CARBONLOSER, Scenic Rim"

a competition that engaged tourism operators in a fun way to bring about long term household carbon reduction.

<http://www.clandullacottages.com.au/>

Clandulla Cottages and Farmstay is a tranquil and private getaway featuring luxurious self contained accommodation situated on 20 acres of farming land. Located in the Gold Coast Hinterland at the foot of Tamborine Mountain, Clandulla Cottages are just a 1 hour drive from Brisbane and an easy 40 minute drive from the Gold Coast.

Every morning guests can join us to feed the animals including 'Jilly' the kangaroo who comes up for her fruit and vegetables. All the animals are then let out to graze for the day.

Every afternoon our guests meet us under the "Talking Tree" for bickies and cheese and to chat and marvel about the treasures of the Scenic Rim. While there we watch the animals come in for the night. We encourage the guests and in particular the children to help with the animals where possible, especially those calves and lambs who need to be bottle fed. The children also help collect the eggs and assist with putting the animals away in their pens for the night.

1. Getting started

We decided to become involved with the Carbon Loser Challenge because we realized that if nothing is done to contain the carbon on the earth right now, then there will be nothing left for future generations. It was a personal wake up call, as we have great grandchildren and we would like to leave a clean and safe 20 acres of earth for our offspring and their offspring to enjoy and run a more cost efficient farm and home based business.

2. Major initiatives

We have now consciously made the effort to reduce the use of our eight cylinder petrol driven car by preferring to use our six cylinder gas driven utility, combining the shopping with our doctor's appointments and trips to the tip. In doing this alone, we have cut the use of our car by 65km to 45km per week, making a saving 20 km per week of overall savings of 1040 km per year.

We have reduced the time spent on the ride-on lawn mower by only cutting the grass when needed, instead of each Friday. We have also started raking up the leaves instead of mowing and using these for mulch.

Each of the accommodation units, including our own home, has scrap buckets. We encourage guests to bring their scrap bucket down at feeding times. The environment deck now has signs directing guests to recycling bins and we have extended our fresh vegetable garden. We now encourage all guests to turn off the power when not in use and when the units are vacant we turn off the power completely.

We have recently installed our new industrial kitchen and have been very energy conscious whilst achieving this. Instead of one huge exhaust canopy over the deep fry stove and oven and grill, we now have installed three single units, so ensure we only use the exhaust fan over the appliances we are using. This has enabled us to cut down on power for these fans.

Our usual walk-in cool room has now been closed down and we now have a purposely designed fridge, built approximately half the size of the cool room, once again cutting down on the power. We have installed a bar fridge for day-to-day needs such as milk, and butter, so we do not need to open the large fridge when, for example, we make a cup of tea or coffee or require a cool drink.

3. Major challenges

We now have developed and distributed a guest information sheet outlining the need to be more conservative in the use of our natural resources. We are solely reliant on our own water supply and when guests arrive, we make it a point of asking them to conserve water, not only when visiting Clandulla, but when they return home, as our planet is starting to consume itself.

We introduce this issue into our conversation whilst sitting under the "Talking Tree" in the afternoons. Most people are very concerned and others aren't very interested. But, after discussion between all the guests has occurred and ideas swapped and the children invited to give their input, many have gone away with a lot to think of.

4. Advice to operators

We hope to make our guests see how much we rely on their effort to start to make a difference on our world. How easy it is to put aside your vegetable and fruit peelings and feed to their chickens or put in their mulch bins. How this saves costs on the carbon emissions by saving them the cost of fertilizers for their gardens in the future.

We have put together a booklet for saving carbon emissions from chemicals by having a little hand-made booklet made by up with common tips and hints on how to use common household products to clean your house and spray your gardens without using harmful chemicals. This also incorporates reminders on how to save water and turn of the lights etc., when not on use, turn off power when away on holidays etc. These are then given to the guests as they leave.

5. Next steps

We have now made the decision to have some solar panels put on the roof before Christmas and hopefully we will be fully self-supported with our electricity by June 2012. We are also looking towards the cost of converting our 8 cylinder petrol car to gas in the very near future. This together with our installation of solar panels as well as the booklets and educational talks whilst during their stay, will hopefully have some impact on making them aware and perhaps getting them started on helping us all save our carbon footprint on this earth.

For more information contact:

Lorna Butler

Phone/Fax: 07 55430990

Email: clandullacottages@bigpond.com