



## media release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Fraser Island Celebrates 25 Years of Protected Paradise**

The month of December marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fraser Island's UNESCO World Heritage listing, with celebrations at Kingfisher Bay Resort on the island's western bay taking place over the coming months.

Stretching 123 kilometres, Fraser Island is the largest sand island in the world and achieved UNESCO World Heritage status in 1992, becoming Queensland's fourth listed World Heritage environmental area at the time.

The island's recognition was based on the three factors of 1) ongoing geological processes of the ancient dune systems, 2) the significant biological adaptation on a sand medium, and 3) the exceptional natural beauty and superlative natural phenomena of the island's landmarks.

Now a world-class tourist attraction, Fraser Island is characterised by sand blows, transitional rainforests growing in the sand, freshwater lakes surrounded by pure white silica beaches, and a bona fide beach highway on the eastern surfside, known as 75 Mile Beach.

However, the island's history wasn't always so illustrious. Once the site of timber logging and mineral sand mining, the campaign for the protection of Fraser Island didn't begin until the late 1960's; gaining momentum when conservationist Dr John Sinclair founded the Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO) in 1971. After 128 years, all logging finally ceased in 1991 and the island's World Heritage listing was inscribed shortly thereafter.

Due to its history, protecting the pristine environment of Fraser Island for all to enjoy is the number one priority. After all, its name does mean paradise – the literal translation of the name 'K'Gari' given by the local Butchulla people.

Ranger Ann Bauer from Kingfisher Bay Resort said that visitors to the island were encouraged to take only photographs, and leave only footprints.

"K'gari lives up to its name, which means paradise," she said. "With Fraser Island becoming World Heritage-listed 25 years ago, it will remain as a paradise forever."

Mrs Bauer, who has been working on the island for some 20 years, is now the Senior Ranger at Kingfisher Bay Resort. Conceived as one of first Eco Tourism developments in Australia, the resort's award-winning design blends seamlessly into the island's surrounds, giving guests an immersive nature experience.

The Ranger team at the resort lead walking tours, interactive bush tucker experiences, and guided 4WD tours across the island. According to Mrs Bauer, "There's nothing better than taking someone on a tour and watching their expression as they see the sights of the island for the first time. I never take the island for granted because it's moving and changing all the time."

"I'm forever drawn to K'gari. This place is special, and you can't see it all in one day. You need to spend a few days and let the island soak into your soul. Then when you leave you'll always be thinking about your next trip back!"



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Fraser Island is also home to award-winning photographer and ranger at Kingfisher Bay Resort Peter Meyer, who has been capturing this piece of paradise through the lens since 1995. He explains how the intricate nature of the island is reflected in his photographic work:

“The ripples in the sand that you see in some of my well-known photographic pieces exist in nature because of the laws of physics that are currently creating and shaping the entire island.”

“Fraser Island is the only environment in the world where ancient rainforests grow in sand at elevation. Over hundreds of thousands of years, a symbiotic relationship has formed between fungi in the sand and the forests that allow the plant life to derive their nutrients. It takes a long time for an eco-system like that to develop, and I hope that my photos express this consideration.”

Fraser Island’s natural beauty attracts over 250,000 visitors to the island each year, with the latest statistics released by Tourism & Events Queensland showing international visitation to the Fraser Coast region increasing grown by 12.4% on the previous period. Despite this, the vastness of Fraser Island’s 184,000 hectares of untamed wilderness are perfect for adventurers seeking to escape the crowds.

According to Mr Meyer, there’s no secret as to why Fraser Island’s so special – it is World Heritage listed after all! However, it is something else that truly sets the island apart...

“There are so many secret spots on the island where you won’t find a soul – you could walk for days and not see anyone. What makes this place special is how many people have yet to discover how truly remarkable it is.”

Watch the World Heritage listing video about Fraser Island here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQBq1nkeiZM>

For facts and information about Fraser Island and to start planning your trip, visit:

[www.kingfisherbay.com](http://www.kingfisherbay.com)

**ENDS**

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