

Queensland Communities in transition

Driftwood Cafe – Waste Champions, Cooktown

Driftwood Café owners, Kris Davidson and Jo Reuben, are dedicated to reducing their environmental footprint through minimising waste that is generated by the café and its customers.

The importance of minimising waste has been instilled in both Kris and Jo at an early age. Kris studied Environmental Protection in Estonia and has worked in the waste management industry for over a decade, including 6 years with Cook Shire Council.

Jo is a daughter of two worlds – Papua New Guinea and Australia whose close association with saltwater was instilled through her mother. Jo has brought to the café the 'shop local' attitude to reduce the carbon footprint of food itself as well as attempting to minimise any food wastage.

Jo and Kris support and back each other in all environmental protection endeavours.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 78% of café waste is recycled
- 13% of café waste is composted
- Remaining 9% generates about ½ wheelie bin of general waste per week
- Nominated for a Cook Shire Council Australia Day Award for efforts in waste management
- CCIQ ecoBiz Waste Star Partner*

*“We are very conscious of the impact of waste on the environment and also our wonderful reef, so we have made a concerted effort to reduce our waste and also educate our customers as much as possible” –
Driftwood Owners, Kris and Jo.*



Driftwood Café follow the concept of the waste hierarchy which is to eliminate, reduce, reuse, recover, treat and lastly dispose of waste. All waste inherently contains embodied resources i.e. not only are materials wasted, but all of the energy, water and other resources that are used to produce the item in the first place. Waste prevention is an inherent feature of a low carbon economy.

Driftwood Café have put in place the following initiatives which have earned them an ecoBiz Best Practise Star Rating for Waste Management:

Eliminate

- Residents are encouraged to use coffee keep-cups and there is a discount their use.
- Coffee beans and other foods are bought in bulk which minimises packaging waste.
- Receipts are emailed or texted which eliminates paper use.
- There are no individual serve sugar sachets (apart from Steria sweetener) and each table has its own sugar jar.
- Plastic straws have been replaced with paper straws for takeaway drinks and metal straws are used in-house.

Reuse

- Old pillowcases are upcycled and used as napkins.
- Fresh juices are sold in re-used 480-520 mL glass jars. The takeaway jars are then replaced by local residents.
- Soft drinks or bottled water are not sold. Instead, a 'soda stream' is used to make soda or flavoured water so there are no waste plastic bottles.
- Suppliers, Cooktown Condiments, re-use glass wine bottles for fresh cordials.

Recycle

- Glass, PET bottles and other recyclable waste is separated for collection by Containers for Change.

Recover

- Food scraps and coffee grounds have become a valuable resource for local farmers in creating compost.
- The café uses single wall compostable cups and compostable lids.
- Takeaway food containers are made from compostable sugarcane.
- The café sells 'Ocean bracelets' which are made from recycled materials with proceeds used for beach clean up.
- Bees wax wraps are sold to customers which minimises the need for plastic wrap.



Responsible Café

Driftwood Café is a registered 'Responsible Café' (www.responsiblecafes.org) which encourages the use of re-usable coffee cups



This case study is part of a series of case studies that have been developed as part of the Queensland Communities in Transition Program. It was prepared by The Ecoefficiency Group as part of the Clean Growth Choices Consortium with funding from Queensland Department of Environment and Science, 2019 For further information, visit www.cleangrowthchoices.org.

* See ecobiz.cciq.com.au/

