



**Media Release**  
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## **Green light for Qualmark**

An environmental accreditation programme for tourism businesses is to be investigated and then developed by Qualmark New Zealand Ltd.

The Honourable Damien O'Connor, Minister of Tourism, announced funding for the project today.

Qualmark CEO, Geoff Penrose says; "The environment is an important attribute to New Zealand. The sorts of people Tourism New Zealand are targeting are increasingly environmentally-aware, have a high interest in natural environments and all things 'eco', and expect very high quality standards".

The project will support the ongoing efforts of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry for the Environment's Sustainable Tourism Charters project. This project aims to help businesses become more environmentally-sustainable through practical assistance. As a result of this project, demand has been established for recognition of the charter members through a New Zealand accreditation system. Charter businesses have themselves expressed a preference for Qualmark to develop environmental standards and an associated environmental brand.

"Those businesses currently holding a Qualmark license do have to prove some elements of good environmental practice," says Mr Penrose, "but participation in an environmental accreditation programme would help businesses specifically improve their environmentally sustainability in more depth".

"There is a lot of work ahead – we will be consulting with both tourism and environmental organisations to make sure that this project is well thought through".

**- Ends -**

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