

Published: 2009

## Whales 'worth more alive than dead'

**More than 13 million people joined whale-watching tours in 119 countries last year, generating tourism revenue of more than US\$2.1 billion (AU\$2.5 billion), according to a report by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW).**



Credit: Jaap Barendrecht

The report, 'Whale watching worldwide', shows that the growth of the whale-watching industry in Asia, the Pacific, South America, the Caribbean and Europe has significantly outpaced global tourism growth rates over the past decade.

Around 3000 whale-watching operations globally now employ an estimated 13 200 people, prompting the Minister for the Environment, Peter Garrett, to comment that 'whales are worth much more alive than dead'.

In Australia, more than 1.6 million people went whale-watching last year, generating almost AU\$264 million in ecotourism revenue. Tasmania had the fastest average annual growth rate since 1998, with 37.6 per cent annual growth, followed by New South Wales with 14.7 per cent.

From ECOS online <http://www.ecosmagazine.com/?paper=EC150p7c>