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QYAC and The Star quench thirst for renewable water on Minjerribah

Locals and visitors to Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) will quench their thirst on clean, mineralised water created from the air by stunning new technology.

An array of SOURCE Hydropanels, recently installed at Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation's (QYAC) headquarters, is currently producing over 3,000 litres of drinking water each month for the local community and visitors to enjoy.

The 'SOURCE' technology, installed with the support of The Star Entertainment Group, is a further example of how the island's Traditional Owners – the Quandamooka People – are working towards creating the most eco-tourism friendly island in the world.

Invented by US-based tech firm, Zero Mass Water, the SOURCE Hydropanel technology uses energy from the sun to tap into the inexhaustible supply of fresh water in the atmosphere, eliminating plastic and water waste while providing locals with a clean, resilient, and great-tasting supply of drinking water.

Zero Mass Water Founder and CEO Cody Friesen joined QYAC CEO Cameron Costello and The Star Entertainment Group General Manager Tourism, Food and Beverage, Strategy and Partnerships Michael Hodgson on the island earlier today to unveil the new technology.

"Our SOURCE Hydropanel technology is now deployed in more than 35 countries as a supply of clean, renewable, and resilient drinking water that can be used to sustain people and communities without the use of plastic," Mr Friesen said.

"The Star Entertainment Group has demonstrated outstanding leadership and a strong commitment to sustainable development, which has been evidenced by the partnership with QYAC and the long-term impact this SOURCE Hydropanel project is expected to have on both locals and visitors to Minjerribah."

SOURCE Hydropanel technology is 100% off-grid and infrastructure-free, and the Minjerribah array is expected to see the displacement of more than 1 million single-use plastic bottles over its 15-year lifetime.

QYAC Chief Executive Officer Cameron Costello said the ground-breaking technology was another successful initiative driven by an evolving relationship with The Star Entertainment Group that continues to deepen.

"We began working with The Star two years ago to help build the skills and capacity within our Quandamooka community right here on Minjerribah," Mr Costello said.

"We were delighted when The Star asked if we would be interested in installing this leading-edge technology and we agreed to set the tech up adjacent to our Minjerribah Ganaba cultural knowledge hub.

"Next year, we will begin transforming Minjerribah Ganaba into the epicentre of where all our tourism, hospitality and cultural heritage training will take place.

"In addition to getting upgraded teaching facilities, we are progressing towards establishing a koala interpretive facility that will become a drawcard for tourists, plus a nursery for injured wildlife undergoing rehabilitation.

"The hub will also become a facility where we will store and package our 'sugarbag' native bee honey as we continue to install more hives and build our microfood business on the island.

“All in all, this means that Minjerribah Ganaba will become a central hub of activity with people working here, studying, or visiting – and this puts the SOURCE Hydropanel technology in the perfect position for people to easily fill up their bottles with free and 100% mineralised water.”

However, Mr Costello said the access to the water didn't stop there.

“We plan to bottle the water in our own reusable bottles to give a refreshing reprieve for thirsty visitors enjoying our diverse tours, including our whale watching adventures and cultural tours,” Mr Costello said.

The Star Entertainment Group General Manager Tourism, Food and Beverage, Strategy and Partnerships Michael Hodgson said he was proud to bring the technology to the Quandamooka People on Minjerribah, the first Aboriginal community on an Australian island to use the technology.

“Our relationship with the Quandamooka People is unique – they have been the first Aboriginal community that we have partnered with to create mutually beneficial outcomes due to the scale of our \$4 billion SEQ tourism developments with our consortium partners,” Mr Hodgson said.

“It began with our native bee ‘sugarbag’ honey trial, which has since turned into an ongoing partnership that will see 140 hives installed on the island over the coming years.

“Now it has moved beyond this venture into other opportunities like this innovative water technology, which we felt supported traditional Aboriginal cultural practices around land management, food, and water sustainability.

“We can't wait to see how QYAC continues to embrace this technology and use it to help drive the eco-tourism profile of the island and other initiatives.”

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