Business planning as part of the conservation process [abstract]

In preparing conservation plans many practitioners become so absorbed in the significance of a place that they overlook the importance of its long-term and practical future. Conservation planning is essential and a crucial and integral part of overall planning, but it serves no useful purpose if the ultimate result is totally impractical for the client. Practitioners must not only address the conservation aspects - the cultural significance - but must specifically point out to the client at the outset that a conservation plan without a proper business plan may not assist that client, but only add to their woes. The necessary aspects of a business plan are not complex. Many heritage authorities do not always understand this need and consequently encourage an unhelpful result by under-funding the initial study or indicating that its cost will be far less than needed. Practitioners must not think that tourism will always solve otherwise insoluble problems and must be selective in suggesting this as a solution.

Peter James

Peter James is a Tasmanian lawyer with a long-standing interest in conservation policy and practice, having been active in the field for over 20 years. He now runs HJM Environmental Strategies, a consulting business based in Hobart, Cairns and Canberra, specialising in conservation law and practice, and the environmental and conservation aspects of tourism planning in Australia and this region of the world.