



“Delivering a National Geotourism Strategy for Australia”

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Today's Agenda

- Ecotourism and Geotourism
- National Geotourism Strategy
- Establishing a framework for creating **high quality, sustainable geotrails**
- Developing and enhancing **geoscience interpretation and communication skills** for geoscientists and other natural heritage professionals engaged in geotourism
- Take-Aways

Ecotourism & Geotourism Concepts

- Ecotourism is practised predominantly in protected areas such as national parks whereas geotourism is undertaken also in all areas where primary industry activities are being carried out.
- Geotourism is increasingly seen globally as an instrument of regional economic development.

Geotourism

- comprises the following features of **both natural and cultural heritage**:
- **Abiotic** - non-living aspects such as the sky, climate & geology, landscape and landforms: celebrating **GEODIVERSITY**.
- **Biotic** - the living parts eg. fauna (animals) and flora (plants): celebrating **BIODIVERSITY**.
- **Cultural** - past & present, indigenous and post European settlement, non-living and built: celebrating **HUMAN DIVERSITY**.
- **Holistic in scope**, geotourism is booming globally and a key driver for tourism, particularly in Europe and Asia.

AGC National Geotourism Strategy Principles

- United national voice for geotourism development.
- Working with a large specialist reference group.
- Working closely with government agencies at all levels to gain their support and endorsement.
- Reaching out to other natural and cultural heritage specialists.
- Engaging with local communities.



National Geotourism Strategic Goals

1. Consideration of new digital technologies e.g. 3D visualisation, AR & VR etc.
2. To define an approval pathway for major geotourism projects.
3. To establish a framework for creating high quality, sustainable geotrails.
4. To establish a national listing for geoheritage sites suitable for geotourism.
5. To develop geotourism as a key driver for celebrating mining heritage and sustaining mining communities.
6. To strengthen Australia's international geoscience standing through geotourism excellence.
7. To develop and enhance geoscience interpretation and communication skills for natural and cultural heritage professionals engaged in geotourism.

National Geotourism Strategic Goal #3

To establish a framework for creating high quality sustainable geotrails

- Individual geological surveys from the States and Territories be invited to engage, on an 'as needs' basis, and in collaboration with natural/cultural interest groups as well as with state/territory divisions and branches of the interested professional societies.
- And to review the suitability of existing roads, bushwalks, biking and rail trails as potential geotrails.

National Geotourism Strategic Goal #3

To establish a framework for creating high quality sustainable geotrails

- **OUTCOME:** Exemplars of national, regional and local geotrails installed across Australia.
- **MEASURE:** Number of new projects initiated each year.
- **TARGET:** To be completed within 10 years.

Developing a Geotrail

Gundawa Conservation Region, East of Geraldton

- At the GlobalEco Conference in 2016, then PhD Candidate **Alan Briggs** undertook an assessment of this Yilgarn Georegion of Western Australia to show how a **regional geotrail can be constructed using the 'A', 'B' and 'C' principles of geotourism.**
- In 2017, as President, Alan established GeoparksWA, a community based association to promote the concept of geoparks.
- Last year, Alan was awarded his PhD on a geoparks themed thesis which has assisted him in **understanding the progression from geotrails to geopark development** where that objective can be achieved and approved by governments.

Geological Perspective

Dr Alan Briggs

- Yilgarn Craton
- Ancient (3-4 B/yr)
- Permian-Carboniferous glacial action (320-280 mil yrs)
- Flat, weathered
- Gundruwa Region

- NB: Yellow dots – Beaker explorations



Flora and Fauna

- Colonisation of landscape by flora
- Evolution over time
- Characteristic small fauna
- Marsupials, invertebrates, reptiles, nomadic birds
- Uniqueness



Dr Alan Briggs

Aboriginal Culture and Heritage

- 40-60,000 years of caring for the land
- Cultural significance of landscape and sites
- Wide use of geological product, flora and fauna
- Interviews to determine acceptable, accessible dreamtime and current stories of individuals, families and the past



Dr Alan Briggs

Early European Heritage

- Surveyors and explorers (Gregory (1846), Forrest (1869) and Woodward (1915))
 - Aboriginal assistance
 - Pioneers and Graziers (Clinch, ~1870)
 - Land use
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- To be interpreted and integrated into stories and landscape experiences



Gregory

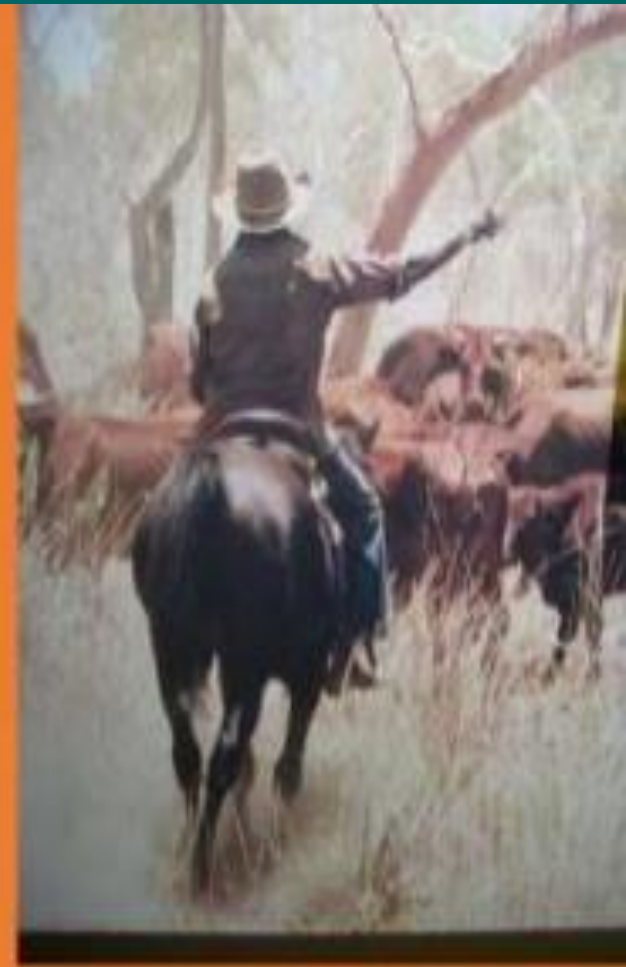


John Forrest Hill
And cairn

Dr Alan Briggs

Modern European History (1950s ...)

- Agriculture:
 - Grazing
 - Pastoral
- Mining:
 - Exploration
 - Development
 - Consolidation
- Engagement with Aboriginal people
 - Develop for interpretation from stakeholder view points of active sites for an International perspective and landscape experience



Granite & Woodlands Self-Drive Discovery Trail, WA



"Take in the expansive views of **sandy heathland & spring wildflowers (B)** as you pass along the Holland Track, which gives way to **nickel & gold mining land (C)** around Forrestania Plots. Keep a look out for **bush turkeys, dingos or more elusive native animals such as honey and pigmy possums (B)**, which are sometimes seen around Grevillea Hill. From here the landscape changes **(A)** to **mallee woodland & eucalypts**. Explore the **rocky outcrops & cliffs of The Breakaways(A)** before rolling out your swag at for a **night under an amazing star-filled sky (A).**"

Exemplar: Port Macquarie Coastal Geotrail, NSW



"The collaborative geotrail project has been led by the **University of Newcastle (A)** & supported by **Port Macquarie-Hastings Council**, the **Geological Survey of NSW (A)**, **NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (B)** & **Birpai Local Aboriginal Land Council (C)**. Supported by a **brochure, website & smartphone app**, the Port Macquarie Coastal Geotrail is a four kilometre walk from Shelly Beach to Rocky Beach that **tells the story** of plate tectonics & how the Earth's crust was formed along the stretch of coastline over the past 460 million years".

Best Practice Geotrails

- Should be constructed around **routes currently used by tourists**; geotrails should form logical journeys linking accommodation destinations.
- Should meld the geological heritage features of a region with a **cohesive STORY**.
- Should **incorporate and package in the biodiversity and cultural components** (including mining heritage) of the region through which the geotrail traverses.

Geotrail Developments in Western Australia

- Murchison Geotrail.
- The Geological Survey of WA (GSWA) has recently established a working group to map out a **state-wide strategy of geotrail development**.
- Western Australia Minister for Environment, Disability Services and Electoral Affairs relating to the **\$150M being devoted by the Government to promote initiatives in nature-based tourism**.
- His department has expressed interest in looking at **geotourism project proposals**.

National Geotourism Strategic Goal #7

To develop and enhance the geoscience interpretation and communication skills of everyone actively involved in the presentation of geosites, enabling the provision of accurate information in an accessible manner.

National Geotourism Strategic Goal #7 Objectives

Establish a working group comprising representatives of experienced tour guides (e.g. Savannah Guides) and content interpretation specialists to:

- Improve the interpretation skills of geoscientists working at the frontline of geotourism.
- Improve the geoscientific accuracy of information prepared by interpretation specialists who may not have any geoscience background.


National Geotourism Strategic Goal #7

Establish a working group comprising representatives of experienced tour guides and content interpretation specialists to:

- **OUTCOME:** geotourism products included in national certification scheme and training in place for professionals engaged in geotourism activities.
- **MEASURE:** Extent of engagement with designated training organisations, measured and reported annually.
- **TARGET:** To have implemented a national program within five years.

Key Issues

National Geotourism Strategic Goal #7

- **Geoheritage conservation** and protection of sensitive geosites from visitors.
 - Accurate '**scientific**' interpretation of geosites particularly by park rangers and tour guides.
 - Parallel '**cultural**' interpretation to complete the story. Examples – Mungo, Flinders Ranges.
 - Enhancement of **communication skills** for geoscientists.
 - **Geo-certification** – a new module for implementation by Ecotourism Australia?
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- A stylized, layered mountain range graphic in shades of teal and blue, located at the bottom right of the slide.

Take-Aways

- The National Geotourism Strategic Goals have **clear outcomes, targets** which are **measured** annually.
 - It is hoped that the Strategy will emerge as the **default policy position** for Australian governments for national geotourism development.
 - The emergence nationally of **geotrails** is a clear priority which will create opportunity for a wide range of people currently engaged in ecotourism.
 - Ecotourism Australia has a role to play in the development of **training modules and geo-certification**.
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- A stylized, layered mountain range graphic in shades of teal and blue, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.



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<http://www.leisuresolutions.com.au/index.php/geotourism-industry-groups/>
Information about Australian Geotourism and Geopark Development Activities

<http://www.agc.org.au/geoscience-in-australia/geotourism/>
Australian Geoscience Council