



## **Newsletter of the Australian Geoscience Council Inc**

### **Latest Developments - the National Geotourism Strategy**

**Newsletter 24-02, dated 12 April 2024**

## **CURRENT STATUS**

### **Establishment of Geotourism Australia – Message from Dr Jon Hronsky OAM**

You would be aware that three years have passed since the launch of the National Geotourism Strategy (NGS) on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Over this period, I am sure you will agree that the NGS has made considerable progress in all areas embraced by the seven strategic goals, not only the issue of resolving the geopark impasse.

However, the NGS Steering Committee has recognised that a number of challenges have needed to be addressed and these include the following.

1. To position far more effectively in the minds of the geoscience profession that the outcomes of the NGS are leading to geotourism being accepted as a growing area of geoscience field of expertise, both here in Australia and overseas.
2. To determine a placement for geotourism development within a vehicle that will extend beyond the life of just a strategy such as the NGS.

To address these challenges, the AGC Executive has approved a recommendation of the Steering Committee that it (and all participants currently registered as working group participants) be constituted within a newly branded grouping within AGC to be known as Geotourism Australia using the current structure and relationships with the AGC. In short, all working group members can consider themselves an integral part of the newly branded entity. This decision was announced at the AGM of the AGC on Thursday 4th April 2024.

On this basis, it has been agreed that no changes will be made to responsibilities and roles, although it is recognised that this change provides for an opportunity to create new pillars of activity that have arisen from the NGS outcomes so far. It is also agreed that Geotourism Australia can be accessed on the Internet as [www.geotourismaustralia.org.au](http://www.geotourismaustralia.org.au) For the time being, this URL will redirect traffic to

the AGC website page <https://www.agc.org.au/geoscience-in-australia/geotourism/> until such time as resources are made available to create an individual customised website.

Commensurate with this launch, following consultation with the Steering Committee, the following additional changes will be implemented.

1. The Working Groups, as currently constituted, to be rebranded as 'team's using the nomenclature of
  - **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**, to be led by Mark Williams
  - **GEOREGIONS AND GEOPARKS**, to be led by the Coordinator
  - **GEOTRAILS**, to be led by David Robson
  - **GEOHERITAGE**, to be led by Jason Bradbury
  - **CULTURAL LANDSCAPES**, to be led by Dr Melinda McHenry
  - **INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT**, to be led by Dr Young Ng
  - **GEOCOMMUNICATION**, to be led by Heidi Allen
  
2. To be supported by specialists in three key areas as follows.
  - **ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES**, Haydyn Bromley
  - **MINING HERITAGE**, Dr Sandra Close AM
  - **ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**, Dr Peter Mitchell OAM

I am very confident that this rebranding will strengthen the impact of our collective work not only in Australia but internationally.

The Steering Committee of Geotourism Australia is scheduled to convene in its new format in early June. Should you have any questions or comments to make about this development, please do not hesitate to contact the Coordinator at E: [angus@leisuresolutions.com.au](mailto:angus@leisuresolutions.com.au) or M: 0418 488 340.

Sincerely

Dr Jon Hronsky OAM  
**Chair, Geotourism Australia Steering Committee**

**Note:** This latest development will be reported as a Media Release from the AGC President Dr Sandra Occhpinti, to issue shortly. The AGC Information Bulletin, 'Geotourism, GeoRegions, Geotrails, and Geoparks - A Regional Development Opportunity for Australia' has also been updated to include this development as well as other recent activities. It can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/43UaXZC>

## **GEOFEST 2024 SYDNEY WORKSHOP**

The GeoFestival and International Geotourism Conference is initiated by the Indonesian Geoparks Network (IGN) which is a geopark network in Indonesia comprising 10 UNESCO Global Geoparks and more than 10 national geoparks. GFIC includes a one-day workshop in a partner country, this year in Australia. The GEOFEST 2024 Sydney Workshop represents a direct response to a recent MOU arranged between the Australian Geoscience Council Inc (AGC) and the IGN. It is an international event open to

geoscientists, environmental professionals, educators, students, and tourism /operators. The focus of the workshop is on building a strategy framework for geotourism development.

The GEOFEST 2024 Sydney Workshop is being held at The University of Sydney on Thursday 18 July concluding with a formal dinner. Field trips to the Blue Mountains WHA, the Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion, and to South Coast volcanics at Kiama on the following day, with an optional wildlife tourism session on the Saturday. The Workshop, to be addressed by invited speakers from both Indonesia and Australia, will focus on a range of topics relevant to volcanic geotourism destinations as well as discussing employment opportunities for geoscientists.

This event is being hosted by the AGC, IGN, and The University of Sydney and co-hosted by generous sponsorship from various AGC societies (The Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, the Australian Institute of Geoscientists, and the Geological Society of Australia), their Sydney based groups, and the Sydney Minerals Discussion Group (SMEDG). **With ticket prices set at a highly affordable level to maximise participation, 'early bird' registrations are now available until 17th June at [www.geofest.com.au](http://www.geofest.com.au)**

For inquiries to Convenor, Dr Young Ng at E: [geofest2024sydney@gmail.com](mailto:geofest2024sydney@gmail.com)

**\*PROMOTING THE GEOFEST 2024 WORKSHOP TO SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACTS – WE NEED YOUR HELP!\***

Each week over the next three months, there will be an update in **the GEOFEST 2024 LinkedIn discussion group** <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14427136/> (as well as in the Australian Geotourism Development discussion group and on Facebook) about the Workshop - mainly details about each of the speakers and other information of likely interest to prospective participants. **You are encouraged please to join this group if you are already a LinkedIn member.**

We hope we can attract and encourage people to register for this event and the association activities (i.e., the three field trips and the special Wildlife workshop).

On receipt of a posting in this discussion group, members can repost it (i.e., share it) to their own LinkedIn account, an action which will mean that their own contacts will probably see the posting. On reposting, you can also tag the names of other people who are LinkedIn members but not necessarily 1st level contacts – you may be aware that this can be done by typing '@**person's name**', and if your known contact name appears on the screen, you can click to confirm.

At all times please note that **three URLs can be used in any social media** promotions of the event.

\* Website: [www.geofest.com.au](http://www.geofest.com.au)

\* One page flyer: <https://bit.ly/4aPOBdM>

\* Social media summary: <https://bit.ly/49rNu3b>

All three URLs can be posted on other social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc

Angus M Robinson  
**Coordinator, Geotourism Australia**