



New Government Visitor Economy Strategy Embraces Geotourism and GeoRegions

SYDNEY, 7 April 2022: The President of the Australian Geoscience Council (AGC), Professor David Cohen, has welcomed the release of the Australian Government’s THRIVE 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy. This strategy will assist the tourism industry and governments in planning for sustainable long-term growth of the visitor economy over the next decade.

The vision is the delivery of high quality geotourism experiences for local and overseas visitors and support for sustainable ecotourism businesses that are globally competitive and provide jobs and infrastructure that will benefit regional Australian communities.

Professor Cohen said a key action of this strategy was to “expand high-quality experiences around unique Australian locations and themes, and combine sustainable geotourism with economic opportunities for Traditional Owners.” He was pleased to see that the goals of THRIVE complement the AGC’s National Geotourism Strategy (NGS), particularly in combining natural and cultural heritage-based tourism in geotourism.

Professor Cohen also noted the extensive program of work of the Steering Committee led by Dr Jon Hronsky OAM who was previously Chair of the AGC.

In a submission last year to the 'Reimagining the Visitor Economy' (now THRIVE 2030) inquiry, the AGC strongly supported a staged approach to gaining government and community endorsement at all levels.

“The National Geotourism Strategy will support the orderly development of major geotourism projects such as GeoRegions, in line with overseas trends and domestic regional development” said Professor Cohen and he added, “the inclusion of a geotourism case study on the Glen Innes Highlands in NSW as a designated ‘GeoRegion’ was a major step forward for geotourism concepts.”

Coordinator of the AGC’s National Geotourism Strategy, Mr Angus M Robinson, noted “The Glen Innes Highlands are rich in natural and cultural heritage, boasting unique landscapes, waterways, vegetation, wildlife, and cultural heritage that includes extensive historical mining sites.” and that “the Glen Innes Highlands aims to be a model geotourism destination in line with the Strategy, with local First Nations peoples, state government, local councils, and other interest groups working together to develop exciting geotrails.”

The Glen Innes Highlands joins Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and Northern Beaches coastline of NSW and the outback Murchison region of Western Australia as the three Australian GeoRegions to be nominated as an ‘Aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark’.

Australian Geoscience Council www.agc.org.au The Australian Geoscience Council Inc (AGC) is the peak Council of professional geoscientists in Australia. It represents eight major Australian geoscientific societies with a combined membership of over 8,000 geoscientists.

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