# Template FOR INPUT INTO THE

**AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE STRATEGY**

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| Overview  This template should be used to provide comments on the content of the Australian Heritage Strategy. | |
| Contact Details | |
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| **Date:** | **4 June 2014** |
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| Questions  Please add your comments for some or all of the questions provided with the Strategy’s three high level themes below. If you have other information you wish to provide, please add this in the “Other comments” field. | |
| 1. **Improve National Leadership**   What are the most important things the Australian Government should be doing to offer leadership in heritage?  How can the Australian Government provide guidance and support for our national heritage—while still empowering other government, industry and community members to take responsibility and get involved?  What priority areas are important to you, your organisation or group?  What practical actions would you suggest to improve national heritage leadership? | |
| **Submission on “A Strategy for Australia’s Heritage”**  **Proposal for National Heritage Research Facility**  **Ralf Buckley, Griffith University**  *[This submission is lodged in my professional capacity as a member of the academic staff of Griffith University with expertise in relevant areas of research].*  Heritage is a valuable asset, worth managing well.   Cultural heritage provides social continuity and a stable anchor or reference point.  Natural heritage provides the genomes which underpin our farm and pharmaceutical industries, and the ecosystem services which provide us with drinkable water, breathable air, climate control, and pollination of farm and orchard crops.  Both natural and cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, also provide products and settings for much of our tourism industry.  As with any valuable asset, good management requires that we know: firstly, what our assets are and what condition they are in; secondly, what threats they face; thirdly, what management measures we can take to protect them from such threats; fourthly, how such measures can be funded; and fifthly, how successful such management measures prove to be, in maintaining asset value.  These are research questions.  They are key to effective management of national heritage so as to maintain its asset value, but they are not yet incorporated in the draft National Heritage Strategy.  The National Heritage Strategy as currently written contains a number of major initiatives, notably the Green Army, intended to help manage our national heritage, which of course includes World Heritage.  But it does not yet contain any components to determine where the Green Army can be deployed most effectively, or to measure the outcomes.  Nor does it yet contain any initiative to determine which components of our national heritage require public funding support, and which could contribute significantly to their own support, e.g. through ecotourism.  These are market questions, determined by the interests, behaviour and expenditure of tourists and the operation of the commercial tourism industry, as well as the characteristics of heritage assets themselves.  Similarly, the NHS does not yet distinguish between the different roles, mechanisms and outcomes of conservation in national parks and other public protected areas, other public lands, private landholdings, and Aboriginal reserves. There are many case studies examining exactly these questions for heritage properties worldwide, but they have not been incorporated into Australian heritage policy in any systematic way.  For example, the main economic analysis of the brand or icon value of World Heritage for tourism, measured by increases in visitor numbers, was carried out for Australian WHAs.   The largest study of visitor and environmental management tools for protected areas was carried out recently for 1100 parks in China.   The most effective examples of management of public, private and communally owned lands for wildlife tourism and conservation are in Africa.  Patterns in private investment to establish visitor infrastructure in public protected areas differ greatly between continents.  The same applies to the proportion of parks funding derived from ecotourism, and the economic contribution of ecotourism to conservation of rare species and other components of natural heritage.  All this information is available, but it has not yet found its way into management, or even into international materials such as the IUCN Best Practice Guides to be launched at the forthcoming World Parks Congress in Sydney later this year.  Therefore, I suggest that one valuable component of the NHS would be to establish a National Heritage Research Facility, including World Heritage, to compile and provide the information outlined above to the Australian Department of Environment and its State and Territory Government partners, on an ongoing basis.  I suggest that the NHRF could be established under the new NESP. | |
| 1. **Pursue Innovative Partnerships**   What partnerships are most needed within the heritage sector?  What heritage roles and responsibilities should be led by governments, peak heritage organisations or community groups in the 21st century?  How should resources be shared through heritage partnerships to ensure the greatest return on agreed priorities?  Can you provide examples of successful innovative partnerships you or your organisation have established? | |
| Please see previous section | |
| 1. **Enable encourage communities to understand and care for their heritage**   What should the Australian heritage sector be doing to help the Australian community better engage in heritage activities?  How can a shared understanding of our national heritage be developed and best celebrated together?  Do you have any examples of activities that have been successful in promoting local heritage to a broader audience?  What is the role of technology and new media in providing greater community access to heritage? | |
| Please see previous section | |
| **Other comments** | |
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