# australian GOVERNMENT

# Australian heritage strategy

# 16 june 2014

## About The AusIMM

The Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (The AusIMM) was formed in 1893 and is the leading organisation representing over 13,500 minerals sector professional members in the Australasian region, across industry, government and academia.

Our members include professionals from traditional disciplines such as mining engineers, geoscientists and metallurgists, as well as from emerging disciplines such as business management, health and safety, social and environmental science.

## Submission

This submission is in response to the invitation from the Australian Government seeking feedback on the draft Australian Heritage Strategy.

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| **SUMMARY**  The AusIMM commends the Australian Government for developing an Australian Heritage Strategy.  The AusIMM agrees that heritage underpins our sense of place and national identity, contributing significantly to our national story and sense of who we are. It is a legacy from our past, a living, integral part of life today, and the stories and places we pass on to future generations.  Minerals professionals work in a sector that has enabled Australia to develop as a modern nation. Minerals professionals have therefore played, continue to play, and will play into the future, an important role in helping to create, protect and enhance Australia’s heritage.  Indeed, the AusIMM has a Heritage Committee whose role it is to foster knowledge about the heritage of the minerals industry among members and the public and to identify and encourage conservation of significant sites, documents and objects.  **KEY MESSAGES ABOUT THE DRAFT STRATEGY**   * Australia’s resources, and how we have developed them, are a key part of our heritage. At its highest level, this is reflected in a key symbol of heritage, The Australian National Anthem, which references ‘golden soil’ and ‘our land abounds in nature’s gifts’. * Developing our resources (e.g. coal from the 1800s, the gold rush from the 1850s) has significantly influenced immigration, powered the economy and given Australia a voice on the international stage. It has helped us develop as a modern nation. * Our mining, mineral and geological heritage is inextricably linked to Australia's overall heritage and cannot be disregarded - it embraces industrial, economic, social and natural heritage aspects. * The current strategy lacks any meaningful acknowledgement or recognition of our industrial heritage, and in particular our minerals resources and mining heritage. * The impact of omission of our minerals resources and mining heritage will negatively impact the capability and capacity of communities working together to effectively manage and protect our mining heritage. * The AusIMM proposes that industrial or mining heritage be included as explicit language within Australia’s heritage strategy, including as part of the vision. * The following comments under the four sections below represent an amalgamation of comments from our members. While they do not necessarily represent the views of The AusIMM, they contain detailed feedback and ideas that may be particularly valuable. Many members have offered to provide additional feedback if required. |

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| 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? |
| Australian government can offer leadership in heritage by;   * Including mining heritage and geoheritage relating to mining activity (e.g. gossans, type economic geology ore zones) within the AHS either by case study or direct funding /action i.e. for nationally heritage listed (or pending) listed mine and communities * Providing guidance via toolkits and resources, at a national level on what comprises global leading practice heritage management with case studies of relevance to Australia (with links to ICOMOS’ and other resources) * Demonstrating via a pilot project or ‘wow’ site[[1]](#footnote-1) in collaboration with state or NT government and/or local governments, industry and civil society to show how beneficial post-mining land uses can be created or enhanced where mines have significant cultural and/or mining heritage values[[2]](#footnote-2) (see also case studies in China for geoheritage integrated with tourism and Korea for post-mining development). * Resourcing programs with seed funding for innovative and beneficial projects in regional Australia which conserve heritage and make them available for ongoing use in the future in a sustainable manner in a way which also builds capacity and encourages socio-economic development (e.g. geotourism, heritage tourism). * Lead a national mining heritage trail initiative (learning from other heritage trail networks (such as QHTN and the ‘Dig the Tropic: Outback to the Reef geotrail in Queensland, the proposed Cradle Coast GeoTrail in Tasmania, the ‘Modern Mining Trail’ in Central West New South Wales, and the Kanawinka Geopark in Victoria/South Australia, as well as in Germany - Vulkaneifel[[3]](#footnote-3)) which links key mining heritage sites across Australia (say one site/region in each jurisdiction) and in the case of the latter to geological features (geosites)/heritage to attract tourism and other business revenue to regions * Establishing a national geological heritage network to encourage state/NT and local govt to seek out collaborators for interpreting and exhibiting unique elements of landscape (through national park networks and other/new frameworks such as the Australian National Landscapes Program) * Place on the agenda of the Council of Australian Governments’ (COAG) Standing Council on Energy and Resources (SCER) and former Standing Council on Environment and Water (SCEW) the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Managing abandoned mines in the minerals industry (MCMPR/MCA 2010) which would encourage support for heritage conservation effort to address with potential to stimulate local economies as they demonstrate ‘Valuing abandoned mines’ [[4]](#footnote-4) * Support a leading practice mining heritage booklet within the Department of industry series of booklets on leading practice Sustainable Development in mining series (currently being updated[[5]](#footnote-5)) * Nurture the development of digital-based applications (e.g. GeoTreat) which enable ready public access to identified mining heritage sites.   By including mining heritage and mining geoheritage in the Australian Heritage Strategy, Australia may embrace more fully than is currently the case, the socio-economic benefits of tourism (and other adaptive re-uses for mining heritage) after mining for those sites and regions where long mining histories and significant values exist. Other nations provide useful benchmarks on leadership in this space such as the United Kingdom, USA and Germany and increasingly China and Korea. The educational value as well as connection of communities to mining are potentially undervalued in a nation which relies heavily upon and will continue to do so, the mining sector and access to new areas for mining in Australia. The Multiple Land Use Framework (MLUF, under SCER) should also be integrated into this strategy to pursue opportunities for collaboration with industry and communities.  Potential priority areas for AusIMM – work with federal, state and territory governments to promote greater utilisation of the capability and capacity of minerals professionals to support the realisation of successful post-mining land uses in specific areas where communities value mining heritage conservation and adaptive re-use. These professionals can also contribute knowledge and skills in geotourism activities which incorporate visits to heritage mining sites particularly within protected areas (e.g. Hill End and Yerranderie in NSW)  Collaborations which support communities after mine closure, to have sustainable socio-economic activities linked to historic land uses. All activities which soften the changes which can occur when mines close whether planned or unplanned. Ensuring abandoned mines with significant heritage values are supported by governments and communities into the future. |
| 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? |
| There is a need for transitional planning instruments, and case studies of success, which facilitate closing mines to transfer ownership of their significant mining heritage infrastructure and landscapes to new land owners and new uses.  Leadership and collaboration frameworks are needed to provide the multi-disciplinary skills and planning tools to realise beneficial post-mining land uses. Not all jurisdictions have these. There are obstacles and hurdles and often a need to find a new path one mine at a time. Perhaps there are generic models, processes and pathways which need to be developed by governments in collaboration with industry. (there may be a need for a discussion paper exploring case studies here, Kalgoorlie WA, Burra, South Australia and overseas e.g. Geevor Tin Mine)  Partnerships with the mining sector could be explored to bring the collective knowledge to key sites for the benefit of the broader Australian community and mining sector in Australia. In this context, there may be opportunities for the development of further mining-related geotrails, or even geoparks which serve to foster regional development priorities of government.  Successful innovative partnerships can be found in existing programs and perhaps research could be funded to elicit those particularly supportive of developing mining heritage tourism (such as QHTN- Queensland Heritage Trail Network – Mount Morgan mine project – included state government environment and mines departments, and local community group to realise two projects – one on the mine and one in the town around 2000-2003). |
| 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? |
| Showcasing successful projects and stories e.g. Geevor Tin Mine in Cornwall as an example of multi-group involvement – regional council, local historical society, national trust and mining sector (retired professionals) to develop a vibrant tourism entity which sustains a community, provides employment and builds capacity.[[6]](#footnote-6)  Through research make available these useful case studies and make them available on a government hosted webpage – use technology to develop an interactive spatial data base to locate the sites within Australia and take the community on a virtual tour through a range of mining heritage sites linked to tourism, education and businesses to regions.  Geosciences Australia may have databases which can be used in conjunction with mining heritage databases from each state to identify significant mining sites/regions with potential for development or linkages through a national heritage trail network.  The South Australian Government (PIRSA) has a good heritage trail network map with supporting data – few jurisdictions have this in Australia.  Burra heritage trail , SA another useful model for reference at a local level  Learn from Eden Project in Cornwall England – how a ‘wow’ site in one region attracts other businesses and innovation i.e. Imerys Eco-towns project in former clay mined areas. This is such an under-developed element of Australian society to date.  National heritage trail could Link Kalgoorlie goldfields in WA with Burra and other sites on the SA mining heritage trail (e.g. Kapunda, oldest mine in SA) and this could be linked to Victorian goldfields and townships (Ballarat/Bendigo) and then to Tasmania’s west coast Queenstown and heritage rail to Strahan (i.e. the Cradle Coast GeoTrail) linked to NSW, Broken Hill then up to Mount Morgan, and Charters Towers, across to the NT where there is significant Chinese mining history.  Both the GeoTreat and Mining Modern Trail applications are developed and readily available on smartphone platforms and enable ready access to packaged information ‘bites’ about geoheritage and mining sites. Emerging GPS technology platforms (e.g. Geepers.com) provide an innovative means of ‘tagging’ sites. Australia has well developed GIS systems which service the mining and exploration industries and these platforms could be harnessed to capture key heritage locations. |
| **4. Other comments** |
| 1. This strategy provides a significant opportunity for research on the socio-economic value of mining heritage tourism and other uses as part of regional development in Australia. This provides an economic focus on post-mining land use to embrace the opportunities which exist now and are likely to arise as older mines close over the next decade. Regional communities need sustainable projects after mines close due to resource exhaustion and this is one potentially important aspect of sustainable regional communities. There is also a link through education and greater understanding of the value of mining to the Australian community to social license for future mining. There are synergistic opportunities for industry and governments and communities in historic mining communities if sufficient vision exists and leadership can provide the seeding and lead by example.  2. With its establishment dating back to 1893 and extensive historical archives of personal records and publications, The AusIMM can contribute significantly to expanding the knowledge base of the large number of professional people who have contributed significantly to the development of Australia’s mining heritage.  3. There is a role for the Australian Government to encourage a higher level of collaboration within and amongst government agencies at all levels to provide ‘open access’ to information retained by mining departments and geological surveys, and to work more closely with public museums and historical societies with an interest in mining-related heritage.  4. Geotourism is emerging as a new global phenomenon which fosters sustainable tourism based upon landscapes. Its definition has recently been refined as a form of tourism that specifically focuses on the geology and landscapes which shape the character of a region. This advances an earlier concept of geotourism as strictly ‘geological tourism’. Geotourism promotes tourism to “geo-sites” and the conservation of geodiversity and an understanding of earth sciences through appreciation and learning. This is achieved through visits to geological features, use of geo-trails and view points, guided tours, geo-activities and patronage of geosite visitor centres.  Geotourists can comprise both independent travellers and group tourists, and they may visit natural areas **(including mining areas**) or urban/built areas wherever there is a geological attraction. Urban examples are the sandstones of ‘The Rocks’ in Sydney (i.e. linking the geology to the early construction of Sydney’s built heritage) or the city of Mount Gambier with its volcanic Blue Lake. This is a key distinction between geotourism and other forms of natural area tourism, as by definition natural area tourism takes place only in natural areas.  Thus geotourism is ‘sustainable tourism which focuses on an area's geology and landscape as the basis for providing visitor engagement, learning and enjoyment'. It has links with adventure tourism, cultural tourism and ecotourism, but is not synonymous with any of these forms of tourism. It is about creating a geotourism product that protects geoheritage, helps build communities, communicates and promotes geological heritage (and mining heritage where present), and works with a wide range of different people.  5. Geotourism attractions are now being developed around the world primarily as a sustainable development tool for the development of local and regional communities. A major vehicle for such development is through the concept of ‘**geoparks**’. A geopark is a unified area with geological heritage of international significance and where that heritage is being used to promote the sustainable development of the local communities who live there). Geoparks can choose to evolve through a series of levels from ‘aspiring’, ‘national’, ‘regional’ (e.g. European or Asia-Pacific Regions) to ‘global’. There are now hundreds of geoparks around the world.. Support to individual geoparks are offered through the Global Geoparks Network Bureau which is currently representing 102 members from 29 countries. The original target of the Global Geoparks Network is establishing 500 geoparks around the world. The number is growing at a pace of about 10 new global geoparks per year.  In China, there are three levels of geoparks: provincial, national and global geoparks. They are all managed by local county or municipal governments under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Land and Resources. Currently, there are over 320 provincial geoparks in China, among which 200 have already gained national status. With 29 of these national geoparks (including Hong Kong Geopark) having acquired global status, China manages by far the largest number of global geoparks in the world.  The Global Geopark brands is a voluntary, quality label and while it is not a legislative designation, the key heritage sites within a geopark should be protected under local, regional or national legislation as appropriate. UNESCO offers support to Global Geoparks on an ad-hoc basis via requests from Member States. Geopark status at any level, including ‘global’ does not imply restrictions on any economic activity inside a geopark where that activity complies with local, regional or national legislation. The focus of geoparks is on promotion and appreciation of geological heritage, geology and landscapes. These earth heritage sites are part of an integrated concept of protection, education and sustainable development http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/global-geoparks  As an example of the application of the geopark concept to mining heritage, the Tuscan Mining Geopark in Italy highlights the geological history of the site Colline Metallifere which is one the most important mining district in Europe. Visitors can discover the world of mining, the geological heritage, the historical landscape, the history of mining activities and, above all, the identity of the area of the Colline Metallifere.  Latest reports from UNESCO suggest that geotourism and geoheritage are now ‘on the radar’ in UNESCO and are supported, through the geoparks concept, by an increasing number of national governments worldwide. If this trend continues according to the wishes of apparently the majority of UNESCO’s member states then, in coming months, it is understood that the Global Geoparks Program may join the World Heritage List and the ‘Man and Biosphere’ Program as one of UNESCO’s big three official global heritage lists. That would mark a significant step forward for the future development of geoheritage and geotourism.  In summary, a geopark achieves its goals through conservation, education and tourism. It seeks to conserve significant geological features, and explore and demonstrate methods for excellence in conservation and geoscientific knowledge. This is accomplished through protected and interpreted geosites, museums, information centres, trails, mine sites, guided tours, school class excursions, popular literature, maps, educational materials and displays, and seminars. Geoparks are capable of being community-driven. Geoparks stimulate economic activity and sustainable development through geotourism. By attracting increasing numbers of visitors, a geopark fosters local socio- economic development through the promotion of a quality label linked with the local natural heritage. It encourages the creation of local enterprises and cottage industries involved in geotourism and geoproducts. |

1. Eden Project post-mining alliance ‘101 things to do with a hole in the ground’, Pearman 2009 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.ausimm.com.au/content/docs/societies/heritage_databases_09102013.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.vulkaneifel.de/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.innovation.gov.au/resource/Mining/Pages/AbandonedMines.aspx>

   Chapter 1 in <http://www.innovation.gov.au/resource/Mining/Documents/StrategicFrameworkforManagingAbandonedMines.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.innovation.gov.au/resource/Programs/LPSD/Pages/LPSDhandbooks.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Churchill Fellowship Report on leading practices abandoned mine management and post-mining land use <http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/media/fellows/UNGER_Corinne_2009.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)