Australia
State of the Environment | 2011

HCOANZ State of the environment 2011 workshop – summary notes

DECEMBER 2011

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Cover image

Kantju Gorge, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, NT

Photo by Director of National Parks

Preface

This report was developed for the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities to help inform the Australia State of the Environment (SoE) 2011 report.

The Minister for Environment is required, under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, to table a report in Parliament every five years on the State of the Environment.

The Australia State of the Environment (SoE) 2011 report is a substantive, hardcopy report compiled by an independent committee appointed by the Minister for Environment. The report is an assessment of the current condition of the Australian environment, the pressures on it and the drivers of those pressures. It details management initiatives in place to address environmental concerns and the effectiveness of those initiatives.

The main purpose of SoE 2011 is to provide relevant and useful information on environmental issues to the public and decision-makers, in order to raise awareness and support more informed environmental management decisions that lead to more sustainable use and effective conservation of environmental assets.

The 2011 SoE report, commissioned technical reports and other supplementary products are available online at www.environment.gov.au/soe.

HCOANZ - State of the Environment 2011 Workshop - Summary Notes

Workshop held Thursday 5 August 2010, 2pm to 5pm

Eastern Dome, Lands Building; NSW Planning: 23-30 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW

PARTICIPANT	ORGANISATION	STATE
Ms Fiona Gardiner	A/Director, Heritage Branch, Department of the Environment and Resource Management	QLD
Mr Gerhard Zatschler	Manager, Heritage Unit, Department of the Territory and Municipal Services	ACT
Mr Jim Gard'ner	Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, Department of Planning and Community Development	VIC
Dr Leah McKenzie	Director, Maritime and Movable Heritage Section, Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts	Cth
Ms Leanne Handreck	Assistant Director, Heritage Strategies Section, Heritage Division, Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts	Cth
Mr Michael Wells	Director, Heritage Conservation Branch, Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport	NT
Ms Petula Samios	Director, NSW Heritage Branch, Department of Planning	NSW
Ms Raina Nechvoglod	Manager, Heritage Branch, Department of Environment and Heritage	SA
Mr Theo Hooy	Assistant Secretary, Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts	Cth
Mr Tim Smith	Deputy Director, NSW Heritage Branch, Department of Planning	NSW
Prof Richard Mackay, AM	Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd / State of the Environment 2011 Committee	NSW
Ms Lynette Sebo	State of the Environment 2011 Team, Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts	Cth
Mr Julian Siu	Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd	NSW

Workshop Overview:

The Australian 'Heritage Officials' participated in a workshop as part of the preparation of the Australian State of the Environment 2011 Report (SOE Report) to the Commonwealth Parliament. The workshop was facilitated by Richard Mackay, in his role as a member of the State of Environment 2011 Committee. For the purposes of the SOE 2011 report and the workshop, 'heritage' encompasses both natural and cultural heritage – whether formally listed or not – and both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous heritage.

This workshop had three purposes:

- to share the current version of an evolving draft Table of Contents for the 'heritage' section of the SOE Report and to invite comment;

- to seek advice on potential information sources; and

- to gather high level opinion on major threats, responses and outlooks for Australia's heritage.

Topic 1: DRAFT TABLE OF CONTENTS

RM tabled the draft Table of Contents for the heritage section of the SOE Report and explained the intended format of the heritage component. RM explained that the Commonwealth Minister was impressed by the presentation of the 'Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Outlook Report' and that a similar approach would be taken in preparing this report; in particular, the graphical representation of information.

RM also advised that it was his intention to use the 'Indicators' from the 2006 SOE Report as they provided both a consistency in trend data and a high level strategic assessment criteria.

RM invited participants to comment, mark up and return the draft Table of Contents with information which should be included/omitted/changed.

Topic 2: SOE REPORT QUERIES

Queries were raised in regards to how information was intended to be collected for the SOE Report. RM noted there is good information on listings, limited data on management and negligible amounts on monitoring. The need to conduct a condition survey similar to the Pearson and Marshall survey for previous SOE Reports was deemed important, however, a more holistic view of heritage was needed including built, natural and indigenous heritage places.

Topic 3: SCOPE OF THE REPORT

Clarification was sought in regards to the scope of the heritage component of the SOE Report and how different jurisdictions (Commonwealth, State, Local, Maritime), with their different assessment criteria and processes, informed/contributed to the SOE Report. RM outlined that the heritage component of the SOE Report would address both listed and significant unlisted historic, natural and indigenous heritage places.

Topic 4: CURRENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION

While it had been agreed there is limited and/or low quality information on the condition of heritage items after listing, members of this workshop discussed suitable approaches for mapping and resources currently available. These included histograms and plotting relative weightings of listed items in each local government area. It was noted that Victoria is already compiling such information which could be supplied immediately. Information sources include 'Heritage at Risk' (an Australian Council of National Trusts initiative intended to raise awareness of heritage issues in Australia by identifying those places and objects we value which are at risk). It was mentioned that greater effort has to be used to gather information on heritage places of lower level sensitivity.

RM mentioned that while great work has been done in the National Data Collection Standards project, much of the data is now out of date and requires continual updating so the information remains relevant.

Topic 5: RESILIENCE AND RISK

RM discussed the proposed SOE heritage chapter outline; the condition, pressure, management, risk, resilience and outlook approach. RM noted the approach for addressing condition, pressure and management was clear, but there was a lack of clarity in how relevant the risk matrix was for heritage. The concept of resilience and its relevance to heritage was discussed. While resilience is measurable in an environmental context, heritage resilience may be difficult to define and measure, owing to its lack of capacity to recover which often results in permanent damage. Historic heritage is often non-renewable; once destroyed, it is gone forever.

Examples of resilience in heritage were briefly discussed:

- Tharwa Bridge, Murrumbidgee River, is the oldest surviving bridge in the ACT opening on 27 March 1895. The Tharwa Bridge and its site are historically and technically significant and are highly valued by the local community as an integral part of the village of Tharwa. On 13 October 2006 the ACT Government announced its decision to construct a single lane concrete bridge with a pedestrian walkway adjacent to the existing bridge. Construction was intended to begin in 2007; however conservation of the Tharwa Bridge was further investigated, leading to a new decision to restore the old bridge, with construction commencing in April, 2008.

- St Kilda Pier Kiosk, Victoria

- Barwon River Bridge, Victoria

Neighbourhoods may demonstrate towards development/urban intensification – what threshold is there before heritage values (listed or unlisted) are eroded. This led to discussion about population and resultant development pressures on heritage values.

Topic 6: GREATER CONSIDERATION OF HERITAGE IN PLANNING CONTROLS

There is a need for greater heritage consideration in planning and development controls, in particular at local and state levels.

Topic 7: LANGUAGE

Language is an important aspect of the SOE Report and should incorporate terminology currently being used in the media/by the Government that emphasise "liveability" and "impacts on liveability". An example is that population and development impacts on liveability which affects the condition of both the environment and heritage values of a precinct.

Topic 8: THE IDEA OF HISTORIC HERITAGE AS A RUIN

The idea that heritage has a natural life cycle that needs to be acknowledged and allowed to happen in certain cases. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to record and then abandon items of heritage significance. This allows the prioritisation of effort and finances into heritage places that are deemed as having greater heritage significance rather than 'propping up' every old building.

There is a potential 'systematic' problem in the disparity between the quantum of built heritage in Australia and the resources available for physical conservation, given the limited population base, population shifts and vast continent. Perhaps there need to be an acceptance that 'ruins' are part of the historic process, and not every heritage item can be conserved.

An example that was mentioned was the *'City of Adelaide'* in Scotland, UK. (A clipper ship, the only surviving sailing ship built to give regular passenger and cargo service between Europe and Australia, she represents a whole foundation era of Australian social and economic history). The tourist attraction has been asked to vacate the slipway on which this ship currently resides. The UK Government is looking for options to relocate the heritage item. Some people in South Australia want to salvage the City of Adelaide and make it a tourist attraction in Port Adelaide, SA. Others think it should be recorded and then allowed to be destroyed/ruined.

Topic 9: POPULATION

Population shift has been identified as having a direct relationship on historic heritage outcomes. Whether it be rural de-population where heritage items are left underutilised/ill maintained because communities are moving from rural townships to larger cities, or urban and coastal development pressures with adverse affects on heritage places caused by population increases and subsequent demand for infill development/changed land uses.

HCOANZ - State of the Environment 2011 Workshop - Issues

RM facilitated a workshop exercise where the Officials identified issues/driving forces that exert a major influence on historic heritage. The main issues identified were:

1.	Government and Jurisdictional Issues	• Gaps and overlaps between Local/ State/ Commonwealth legislation/listings/assessment processes etc
		• Controversial decision making at all tiers of Government
		• Council amalgamations have led to the disuse of historically significant council chambers
		• Developers get permits from Heritage Victoria, so they can bypass local council and proceed directly to Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.
2.	Climate Change / Sustainability	• Impacts on coastal regions and of salinity on heritage places
		• Impacts of depopulation in regional centres and subsequent impacts on local/rural heritage places
3.	Political Will	• Cultural heritage conservation may be overridden by other considerations
4.	Tourism	• Cultural tourism is both an opportunity and a threat
5.	Lack of Data	• Lack of robust, up to date and maintained data systems and data capture methods
		• Non compatibility and duplication of information across tiers of Government and data systems
6.	Land use and development	• Changes in land uses in rural and metropolitan areas and their impacts on heritage
		• Inner city population pressure for development at the detriment of heritage
		• Drivers – economic pressures to develop/redevelop vs. retention /adaptive reuse
		• Government pressures to increase population centres across metropolitan cities
		• Architects' desire to design and construct landmark/iconic buildings – 'Starchitects'

7. Economic Pressures	• Local governments embrace development and sometimes heritage is sacrificed in favour of economic opportunities
	• There are local government targets for population increase
	• Focus is on privately owned properties due to high cost of bringing heritage places up to standard for adaptive reuse. Makes vacant institutional buildings less appealing and rendered underutilised. These buildings fail as commercial investments
	• There are limited resources available to manage/assist in conservation
	• Better tax breaks are needed for developments which strive for conservation
	• Being able to better identify economic/sustainability value of heritage/adaptive reuse could lead to greater feasibility in conservation
8. Requirements for Conservation	• Desire to use heritage items requires them to be brought up to Building Code of Australia standards. This can be a costly exercise and makes it unappealing for developers
	• The aging of building stock requires repair/replacement of major elements which can be a costly endeavour
	• Affects Governments too with their public buildings/heritage places under Government ownership
9. Community Perception of Heritage Value	• An engaged and enthusiastic public (generally) in 'history' and 'heritage'
	• Heritage is seen as: a celebration/ acknowledgement of the past, identity, embodying community values/associations and a tourism opportunity
	• Heritage gives community a sense of identity/social glue.
	• Communities are passionate for a sense of place
	• The community can sometimes be the drivers for conservation; there is community pressure to conserve/restore heritage and they can affect outcomes with their lobbying/votes
	• Some communities do not want change. They fear gentrification of their neighbourhoods and have a desire to restore rather than build anew
	• Inability of Australian community to accept places as historic ruins
10. Population-increase/decrease	• Depopulation of regional/rural Australia – reduces maintenance of heritage places
	• Larger regional towns and mining communities are absorbing population from smaller outlying communities, leaving heritage in those outlying communities at risk. E.g. is Horsham which has consumed the surrounding population
	• Metropolitan population and density pressures on heritage places
	• Heritage at risk especially in rural locations

HCOANZ - State of the Environment 2011 Workshop - Workshop exercise

RM invited workshop participants to populate a matrix listing the categories of drivers (identified in the previous workshop exercise) by data and responses.

	DATA	RESPONSE
POPULATION SHIFT - **Increase/decrease** - **Impact of abandoned heritage** - **Impact of intensification on metropolitan centres**	(NSW Department of Planning (DoP) population modelling done as part of the Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney to 2031, entitled *City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney's Future*. Council of Australian Governments (COAG) could have information Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is a source for information Overlay listed places / population numbers etc across LGAs Connect with heritage impacts Case study possibility is Dalby, QLD	Listing cannot guarantee conservation/ listing does not lead to conservation Better integrated masterplanning and strategies at Local, State and Federal Government levels Longer term vision/ forward planning (30 year plans) rather than short term plans (4 year of one Government term) Ruins – record and abandon/let nature takes its course (eg Kakadu, NT and City of Adelaide in Scotland) Cultural mapping incorporating heritage into design. E.g. Adelaide transport corridors Population increase and impacts on heritage only just emerging as an issue.

	DATA	RESPONSE
LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT	Impacts of different land uses on heritage places: - Mining, E.g. Burra, SA, lifting of heritage listing to permit mining is a risky precedent - Road and rail infrastructure - Pine plantation on farmland 'Melbourne 2030'– is a 30 year plan to manage growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne and the surrounding region.	Adaptive reuse should be encouraged Cultural landscape evolving Burra, SA – mining in a heritage landscape Tarcoola, SA – railway line development Broken Hill, NSW – allowing mining as a continuation of heritage activity Bendigo, VIC Masons Hall/Building on North Terrace, SA; preserving façade with internal refurbishment to allow continued use while developing the rear of the site for economic feasibility/viability. Qld – community objection to removal of Multiplex to restore heritage values

	DATA	RESPONSE
LACK OF DATA	Is there analysis on the benefits for the Government from money spent on heritage grants? Where is the evidence? NSW has data/analysis on this topic; planning data now in GIS system though data on the condition sourced from physical survey is lacking/needed (costs of undertaking this task are considerable) Lack resources/funding to conduct site visits (not desktop work) to deduce condition of heritage places Inconsistent data sets across jurisdictions VIC – collects data on investment on heritage places as a proportion of money spent in the building industry in both public and private sectors. There is also data on age of building stock in metro Melbourne by decade.	Evaluate grant outcomes. NSW has data on this on the internet; 'NSW Heritage Grants program 2008-2009 – Program evaluation' on the Heritage Branch website. No systematic monitoring; different judgements made by different assessors across different jurisdictions. VIC – Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) was commissioned by Heritage Victoria to undertake a review of the five Victorian heritage grant schemes in operation since 1994. This report was released in June 2007

	DATA	RESPONSE
ECONOMIC PRESSURES ON OWNER	Information may be sourced from the <u>Australian Government's Productivity Commission</u>; the independent research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians. In Braidwood, the NSW Heritage Office initiated a study as part of the listing of the town on the State Heritage Register. The study seeks to determine how the economy of the town is responding to the listing by measuring trends in employment and the profits of local businesses over a five year period. The work is being carried out by Charles Sturt University. '<u>Cost Benefit Analysis as a tool for Local Government Heritage Management</u>' is a report prepared by the NSW DOP '<u>The Economics of Heritage: integrating costs and benefits of heritage into government decision making</u>' a report prepared by Jim Gard'ner Job stimulus funding – there was ¼ billion in unmet demand Case study option: Wellington, NSW – delisting of heritage site NSW - $2M to repair $2M property	Better tax incentives/relief are needed to encourage developments which incorporate and conserve heritage Section 170 of the Heritage Act 1977 (NSW) requires government agencies to identify, conserve and manage heritage assets owned, occupied or managed by that agency. The Victorian Government Asset Management Strategy was modelled on the NSW Section 170 register and has 21 government agencies signed up There is no overall asset management strategies or plans for the Federal Government A review of Government assets and their conditions could help prioritise conservation works

	DATA	RESPONSE
REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSERVATION - **Building Code of Australia (BCA)** - **Public/ Private** - **Ageing building stock** - **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 requirements (DDA)** - **Fire Access Services Advisory Panel (FASAP)**	The ageing asset base leads to requirements for heritage places to be brought up to BCA standards, which can be a costly/extensive exercise Cost of keeping embodied energy in existing buildings (ie sustainability design practice) vs. erecting a new 6 star energy rated building Knowledge gap in building industry regarding options for energy solutions for heritage sites Heritage awards data can be used to get information on adaptive reuse Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) has data on each jurisdiction DDA requirements mandate that adaptively reused heritage places need to be accessible for all The high cost of insurance can make heritage places financially unfeasible/uneconomical when compared with the rental return There can be financial hardship to owners of heritage places	The NSW State Government has legislative power to enforce repairs on heritage places, but there is no equivalent legislative power for local governments Need to accept that more heritage sites are destined to be ruins. Don't prop everything up. Ensure proper assessment and recording before letting it return to dust Shipwrecks are a prime example where ruins are accepted as the natural course for a historic item Retaining the embodied energy in existing buildings through adaptive reuse makes for sustainable cities/developments More comprehensive education/ better knowledge is required in the public and private sector about heritage, value and conservation. FASAP - helps government agencies, local councils and property owners to achieve acceptable compliance with modern building standards while retaining the heritage significance of places. DDA requirements can be met via alternative solutions which are BCA compliant

	DATA	RESPONSE
GOVERNMENT / JURISDICTIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - **Duplications** - **Inconsistencies**	Duplication of listings: National Heritage List (NHL), Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL), State Heritage Register (SHR), Local listing (LEP) and lack of consistency in approach across scales Duplication of approval process is time inefficient and confusing Delegation and bilateral arrangements between government authorities would make the process more streamlined and efficient Gaps in information between agencies – Commonwealth, State/Territory, Local government – ACT three types of land management agencies Confusion about tiers of heritage with the public Work by Michael Pearson from the then NPWS in NSW may offer useful information; 'Challenges in the Landscape: Memories of conserving historic heritage in the NSW park system 1967–2000' is a report prepared by Caroline Ford in 2009 Case study options include: • Eg. Gungahlin Homestead, Canberra • CSIRO building, Yarralumla • COAG Principles – value of heritage investment	Implementing a system of one delegated approval body/process which reduces duplication and is more efficient. This will be of value for the public and for Government/ approval authorities Sites often need to appear on State/Territory lists before they can appear on the NHL

	DATA	RESPONSE
SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE	<u>'CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS ON AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE: A paper for the Australia ICOMOS *Extreme Heritage* Conference 2007</u> prepared by Michael Pearson <u>'The impact of global climate change and cultural heritage: grasping the issues and defining the problem'</u> a report prepared by Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy for the 2007 Australia ICOMOS conference in Cairns SA has current study on the effects of climate change on heritage sites and policy responses Case study of climate change impacts and resilience include: • Macassan sites on NT coast • 2003 fires – Vic Kosciuszko Huts • Blue Mountain fires • Has a few case studies regarding the impact the 2003 Victorian bushfires had on huts. But no reference to impact of fire on towns with heritage values. • St Kilda & bayside inundation • Loss of rock art at Tidbinbilla due to bushfires	Murray Darling Basin salination Add climate change to indicators; "what is the impact of climate change on properties listed on the register?" DECC: impact of sea level change on heritage items. E.g. Fort Denison. There are maps/information on St Kilda and Bayside inundation Port Phillip Bay Impact of fire reduction techniques (ie retardants, bulldozers) damage natural heritage led to discovery of Indigenous Heritage Current management is focused on protection of life and property, not heritage or fragile ecosystems

	DATA	RESPONSE
COMMUNITY PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE	'Valuing the Priceless: The Value of Historic Heritage in Australia November 2005' is a report prepared by the Allens Consulting Group Australia commissioned by the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand to inform debate about the value of heritage conservation in Australia. Web hits: national data standard Study conducted by Deakin University tracks changes in community attitudes to heritage (also has good graphics)	Community appetite Listing does not always lead to protection. Action/interest to protect ends with the listing due to lack of management or monitoring. Number of grant applications show community desire to fix/preserve heritage. Bids outnumber grants; out of 1000 applicants, only 23 projects can be funded. Media can be a tool to identify public interest, promote and monitor heritage. Caring for Our Country successfully attracts funding because they are supported by tax deductible lobby groups. In the heritage arena, they are supported by NGOs that have inadequate funding and are not eligible for tax deductions. There is no effective lobby group that can source subsidies. No market failure in private sector for heritage community willing to pay for it. Why? Economic benefit. There are a range of properties from privately funded private good, to publicly funded public good. See Productivity Commission Report.

	DATA	RESPONSE
		There is value in maintaining the old, regardless of cost, over development.
		Property values increase where all properties in an area are kept in the vernacular.
		There is a common belief in the community that heritage listing reduces the value of a property.
		Need to engage with children and youth to promote heritage. Need to ensure they 'do' not just 'see'.
		People connect with stories of place that talks about liveability not just physicality.