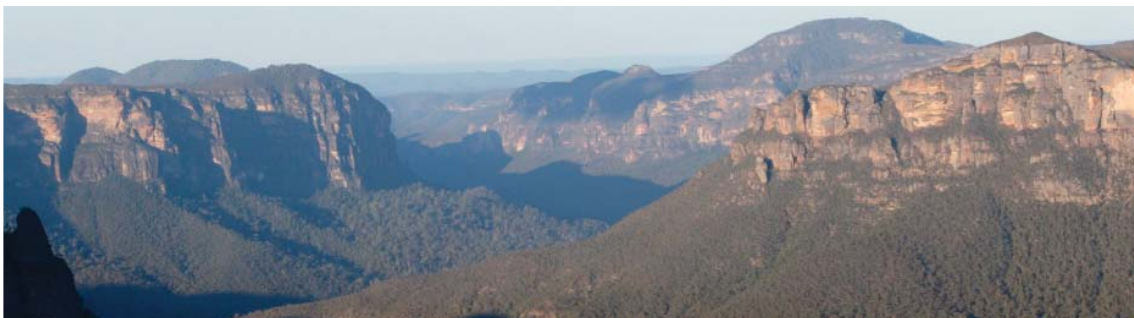
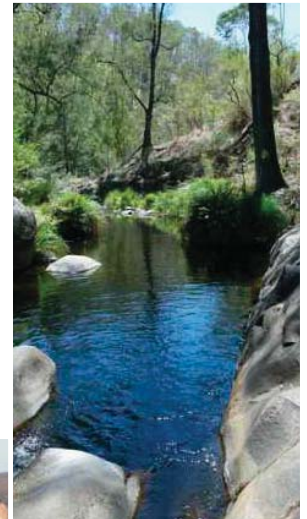


The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute

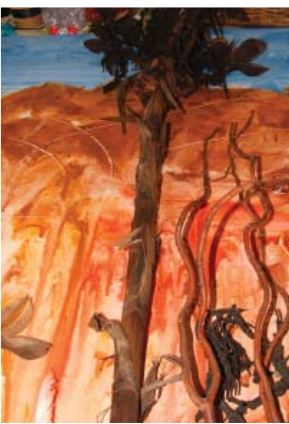
The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000 for its unique eucalypt ecosystem and is internationally recognised for its biodiversity and cultural values. The GBMWA covers over one million hectares, and is the catchment and lungs of the Sydney basin.

This recognition by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) positions the Greater Blue Mountains area alongside the Pyramids of Egypt and the Great Barrier Reef, as being of unique global value and inspiration.

The rare situation of urban, industrial and agricultural development within and surrounding the World Heritage area, highlights the tension between development and conservation imperatives. A major highway and a string of townships supporting a population of 100,000, intersects this region.



The origins of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute (BMWHI)



The need for an organisation to focus on research into the natural and cultural resources and values of the World Heritage area resulted in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute (BMWHI) being formed in 2004. Three universities and five government agencies became BMWHI's founding partners, and scientific research, arts and education programs commenced.

The UNESCO World Heritage Convention guides the Institute's work, which is to facilitate interdisciplinary and policy-oriented research into the region's unique environment. The following three program areas provide the focus for its activities:

- Natural and Cultural Heritage
- Sustainable Development
- Community Engagement



In order to increase awareness of the importance of conservation and of the socio-environmental issues confronting the biodiversity of the GBMWA - such as climate change, increased fire frequency and intensity, severe drought and invasive species - the Institute engages with the wider community through its creative activities and projects.

Projects

Since 2004 the Institute has undertaken and facilitated a broad range of research projects in partnership with local councils, state and federal government agencies, universities, schools and environmental and community groups. The projects include:

Natural and Cultural Heritage

- *Managing Ecosystem Change in the GBMWhA* – focusing on impacts of climate change, fire and introduced species, and developing an adaptive management framework
- *Mapping Country* – mapping the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the GBMWhA
- *Assessment of the Indigenous Heritage Values of the GBMWhA for the Nomination to the National Heritage List*
- *The Landscape of Blue Mountains Rock Art*
- *Grose Valley Fire Forum* – integrating bushfire research and planning processes

Sustainable Development

- *Collaborative Community Government Framework* – Lawson development alternatives
- *Lawson Energy Efficiency Project*
- *Sustainable Small-Scale Agri-Industries Neighbouring the World Heritage Area*
- *Native Agri-Forestry on the Western Edge of the GBMWhA*

Community Engagement

- *Indigenous Blue Mountains World Heritage Education Package*
- *Branching Out* – exhibition of stories from the Blue Mountains
- *Nature Through Fresh Eyes* – workshop and exhibition
- *Rock Art Lives On* – exhibition
- *Bushfire Storytelling*
- *Earth Journeys* – a World Heritage enviro-cultural education program

For further information on these projects, please go to our website:
www.bmwhi.org.au



Funding

BMWHI's funding is derived primarily from research grants from public and private sources, and from the annual contributions of partner organisations. As an independent not-for-profit organisation, the Institute has tax-deductible gift recipient status and welcomes donations from those interested in furthering its work.

BMWHI founding partners:

- The University of New South Wales
- The University of Sydney
- The University of Western Sydney
- Australian Museum
- Blue Mountains City Council
- Botanic Gardens Trust, NSW Department of Environment & Climate Change (DECC)
- National Parks & Wildlife Service (DECC)
- Sydney Catchment Authority

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We acknowledge the Darug, Gundungurra, Wanaruah, Wiradjuri, Darkinjung and Tharawal Nations as the traditional owners of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

