



Geography Teachers  
Association NSW & ACT

# GEOGRAPHY BULLETIN

Volume 56 No4 2024

**Geography  
Explained  
Online –  
Turning  
chaos into  
collaboration**

**Global  
Sustainability  
and Critical  
Analysis**

**2024 Regional  
Conference in  
Orange NSW**



## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- **Feature article: From the classroom to the field:**  
Exploring fieldwork possibilities in the new Year 11 syllabus
- **Out-of-field teaching: Recognising the reality & exploring possible responses**

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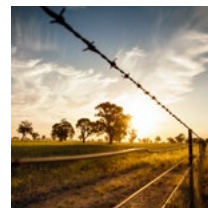
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The Geography Bulletin is a quarterly journal of The Geography Teachers' Association of NSW & ACT Inc. The 'Bulletin' embraces those natural and human phenomena which fashion the character of the Earth's surface. In addition to this it sees Geography as incorporating 'issues' which confront the discipline and its students. The Geography Bulletin is designed to serve teachers and students of Geography. The journal has a specific role in providing material to help meet the requirements of the Geography syllabuses. As an evolving journal the Geography Bulletin attempts to satisfy the requirements of a broad readership and in so doing improve its service to teachers. Those individuals wishing to contribute to the publication are directed to the 'Advice to contributors' at the back of this issue.

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# Executive Report

## Dear GTA NSW & ACT Community,

The overwhelming feeling I have as the school term and year draws to a close, is excitement about the future of our wonderful community.

Change and innovation is in the air!

I am constantly blown away by the enthusiasm and engagement of not only my immediate colleagues, the GTA NSW & ACT Councillors, but all our members out there. Everyone has the same goal - to champion Geography as the important, relevant and awe-inspiring discipline that it is and to also ensure the education and welfare of students and teachers is promoted and protected.

There has been lots of important changes in 2024 as we restructured the Geography Teachers Association NSW & ACT to meet the challenges of the future.

You will all appreciate the refreshing new face and improvements in membership functionality when we relaunch the website in early 2025. Can't wait!

Another highlight of 2024 has been the publication of the stunning Powerful Geography series. Worth the wait!

With the release of the new Geography 11–12 syllabuses and the imminent implementation

of the new Geography curriculum for years 7–10, we will be endeavouring to provide the best-possible professional learning experiences in 2025 – both practical and inspirational. Stay tuned!

Please keep communicating and engaging with your Association to continue to make it a wonderful platform for collaboration and innovation and support for your teaching and learning journey. We love contributions and constructive criticism!

Finally, with the final Geography Bulletin for 2024, I would like to thank you all for making my role as the Executive Officer for the GTA NSW & ACT both challenging and thrilling. I have certainly been kept on my toes!

Please take some time over the break to stop and smell the roses and enjoy some time away from the coalface to relax, recharge and then reboot for 2025.

**Diana Gearside** Executive Officer, GTA NSW & ACT



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# Editorial



## Welcome to Edition 4 of the *Geography Bulletin* of the GTA NSW & ACT.

This edition, and term, sees teachers delivering the new HSC Geography syllabus for the first time.

This is a time of both excitement and renewed interest, with opportunities to explore new case studies and different approaches to teaching the HSC.

There's also some nervousness with lots of questions about syllabus interpretations, the depth and breadth of studies, where to access resources, and what to expect in the first exam under the new HSC syllabus.

The *Bulletin* will endeavour to support teachers through this experience by publishing a variety of resources and articles from teachers.

GTA aims to promote a range of voices, perspectives and experiences to ensure teachers have access to materials which reflect the needs of teachers, students and schools around the state.

If you have never written an article before, please consider doing so!

### **Louise Swanson**

Councillor, GTA NSW & ACT  
*Geography Bulletin* Editor



## We'd love to publish your success stories!

Do you have an effective teaching activity, resource, or classroom practice that you'd love to share?

The GTANSW & ACT welcomes contributions and encourages educators to submit articles to *The Geography Bulletin*.

We prefer to receive articles in Microsoft Word, with any images attached as separate files. Placing images in Word to indicate where they should appear can be helpful, however images embedded into Word become compressed and lose data, so please ALSO supply the original images as separate files.

If you have questions, or to send articles for consideration, email [editor@gtanswact.org.au](mailto:editor@gtanswact.org.au).



# From the classroom to the field: Exploring fieldwork possibilities in the new Year 11 syllabus



By **Kate Sampson (Northern Beaches Christian School, Terrey Hills)**

It feels like a daunting task. 12 hours of mandatory fieldwork, excluding the hours spent on the Geographical Investigation. With some creative planning it is possible.

2024 marked the year when Geography teachers across the state were quickly reading through new content, creating new syllabus resources, and planning for the implementation of more fieldwork activities and excursions. I was particularly excited by the possibility of developing my own fieldwork activities, embedded within new case studies and focus areas.

**GE-11-07 applies geographical inquiry skills and tools, including spatial technologies, fieldwork, and ethical practices, to investigate places and environments.**

Twelve (12) hours of fieldwork are mandatory for the Year 11 course. Fieldwork may be integrated within one or more of the following focus areas, as appropriate: (NESA 2022)

- Earth's natural systems
- People, patterns, and processes
- Human–environment interactions

My intention in writing this article is to highlight the importance of fieldwork, as not only a key geographical inquiry skill that students are required to develop, but also as a critical opportunity to deepen engagement with, and knowledge of, the course content. I hope that teachers might gain some inspiration for possibilities beyond their own classroom, developing the confidence to try something new.

## 1. Why we do fieldwork

Fieldwork is the mechanism through which students develop a lifelong interest in studying geography, and through which they are prepared to be informed, responsible and active citizens in the contemporary world (NESA 2022).

Geography fieldwork is essential for providing practical understanding through hands-on experiences in places and environments. Developing a range of fieldwork skills, such as collecting data, observing, photographing, interviewing, field

sketching and analysing historical records, was fundamental in the process. This ensured that students developed a broad range of skills, equipping them for vocational opportunities beyond school. All fieldwork was undertaken within a 10 kilometre radius of the school, allowing for students to engage deeply with the unique environmental, cultural, and social aspects of the Upper North Shore and Northern Beaches local government areas. Weaving in our integral SPICESS concepts was possible, as developing a sense of place within the student's local context was a priority of mine.

## 2. Aims and ethics to consider

When planning and making fieldwork decisions it is important that you, as the teacher, are clear on your focus areas, inquiry questions and aims. There can be value in teaching students the skills to develop these on their own. However, in this instance, I clearly directed students to a collective focus that we established as a class. Opportunities for inquiry and individually-directed research were explored in the Geographical Investigation (a whole other conversation).

Fieldwork provides the opportunity to teach students about ethical responsibilities when conducting research. Ensuring a combination of both environmental and socio-cultural fieldwork is important, as it allows students to engage with their responsibility of protecting the natural world, as well as respecting humanity. Discussions about not trampling the native vegetation, responsibly disposing of chemical waste from water and soil testing, being aware of when and how we took photos, and asking for permission when conducting interviews were all modelled and adhered to.

### 3. A variety of fieldwork days

Finding the balance of meeting required hours, costs to families, risks and the level of disruptions that already exist in school life, is no easy task. My approach was to implement fieldwork across three different days, one for each topic in the course. Not only did the diversity keep students engaged, but it also allowed them to build capacity and confidence in multiple areas.

One fieldwork day was paid for and facilitated by an excursion provider, AUSECO, taking the students off site for a full day of environmental testing and inquiry. Whilst the other two experiences were half days out in the field that incurred no costs to students. It was fortuitous that I was able to make use of double lessons within the timetable and the school minibus to take students to the St Ives Shopping Village and Terrey Hills Rural Fire Brigade.

#### DAY 1: Using an education provider, AUSECO (6 hours): Earth's Natural Systems

Syllabus area: The natural processes, cycles and circulations that have shaped the land and/or water cover of ONE place.

Activities included: viewing topographic maps; determining sandstone particle shape and size; collecting data on soil infiltration, pH, texture and colour; interpreting ternary and climate graphs; discussing indigenous seasonal knowledge; measuring soil moisture, depth and tree height using a range finder; comparing the health of two creeks using pH, turbidity and exotic species counts.



Ingleside Hawkesbury Sandstone Bushland.

Left: Turbidity testing. Right: Collecting soil samples for a centrifuge.

Student feedback: "Finding the Sydney crayfish was my highlight of the day."  
"I enjoyed the soil composition activities."

Thank you AUSECO for your valuable expertise and equipment.

#### DAY 2: Self-directed 'St Ives place-based' fieldwork (4 hours): People, Patterns and Processes

Syllabus area: Study 3: Place and cultural change: ONE place at a local or national scale

Activities included: viewing maps of the local area; discussing prior knowledge of cultural change and ethical considerations; completing an observational walk; taking photographs; drawing a precis map; completing a shop analysis and interviews; drawing a field sketch; completing an environmental impact assessment survey; and visiting the local library/community notice board.

A revised version of the fieldwork booklet is provided in Appendix A.



St Ives Local Shopping Village

Left: St Ives Coles Kosher section.  
Right: Local South African store.

Student feedback: "I enjoyed trying rusks and Biltong for the first time."

## ... From the classroom to the field

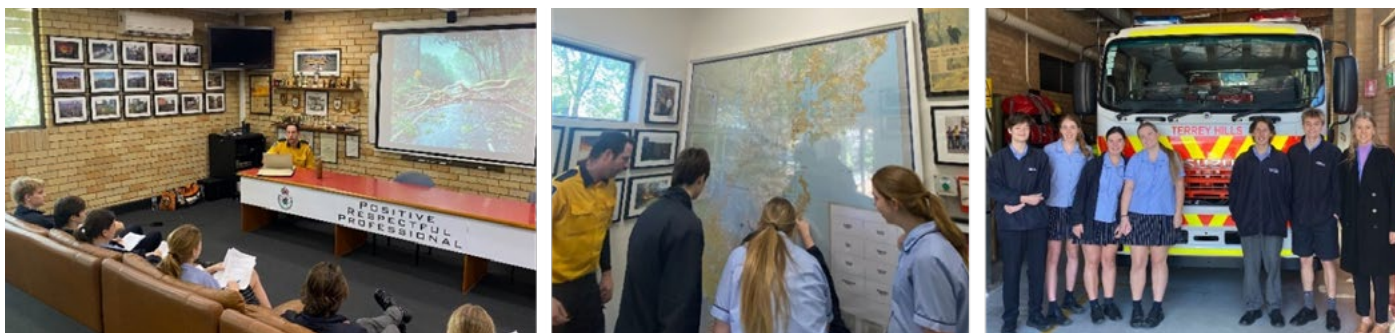
### DAY 3: A local community partnership, Terrey Hill Rural Fire Brigade (2 hours): Human-environment interactions

Syllabus area: Study 2: A contemporary hazard: The effectiveness of people and organisations in managing ONE contemporary hazard event at a selected place.

Activities included: discussions and informal interviews about the history of the station; an observational walk through of the station and trucks; viewing photographs and videos of historic and recent fire events and rescues; interpreting topographic maps; and the most fun was learning how to bowl a hose.

Thank you to the volunteers at the brigade for your time and expertise.

Terrey Hills Rural Fire Brigade  
Left: Viewing videos of historic fires/rescues. Middle: Examining a topographic map of the LAC. Right: A class photo! "I enjoyed asking all my questions about the impacts of fire and how to manage it."



## 4. Application to assessment tasks

Learning through experience and assessment through experience are synonymous with geographical fieldwork. In keeping with the new structure of the HSC examination, I assessed students on the following areas: multiple choice questions; short responses; a structured extended response; and an unstructured extended response. The results were clear. Topic areas that involved fieldwork yielded the best results. The assessment breakdown involved:

Assessment Task 1: 30%: Fieldwork and in-class response. Students used their fieldwork booklet from DAY 1 to assist in answering a range of unseen short answer questions on Earth's Natural Systems.

Assessment Task 2: 30%: Geographical Investigation

Assessment Task 3: 40%: Yearly Examination. Students complete multiple choice questions; short answers; ONE unstructured response on cultural change – drawing closely from experiences on fieldwork DAY 2, and ONE structured extended response on a contemporary hazard – drawing closely from experiences on fieldwork DAY 3.

## 5. My key takeaways

Don't shy away from fieldwork, embrace it. Look around your local area and find the syllabus connections. Include a balance of environmental and human geography opportunities. Ask for help – in my experience members of the local community, such as shop owners, community leaders and volunteers, are more than willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

I hope that you have gained some insight into the various possibilities for conducting fieldwork in the new syllabus. Enjoy your time in the field!

## References:

NSW Education Standards Authority. (2022). Geography 11-12 syllabus.

<https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/hsie/geography-11-12-2022/content/n11/faaa837903>



## St Ives

### A LOCAL CASE STUDY: CULTURE OF PLACE, PEOPLE, PATTERNS, PROCESSES

Year 11 Geography -  
Northern Beaches Christian School

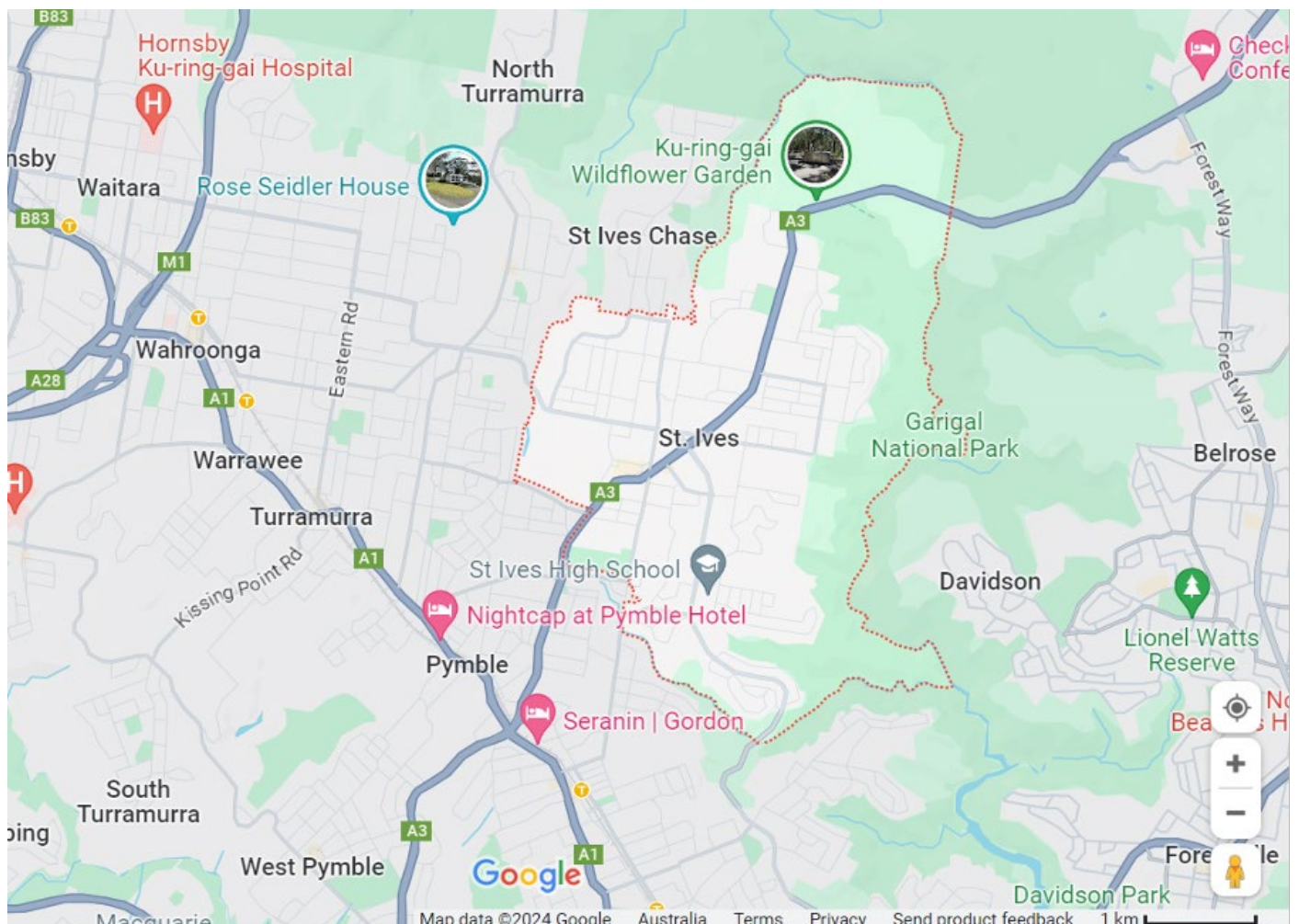
### St Ives: A case study on “culture of place”



### Syllabus dot point: • ONE place at a local or national scale

Including:

- the spatial and cultural characteristics of the place
- influences on the cultural identity of the place
- perceptions of, and responses to, cultural continuity and/or change
- opportunities to enhance environmental sustainability and/or human wellbeing.



Map of St Ives (Google Maps 2024)

## ... From the classroom to the field

### WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?

What things do you already know about the history, geography, and culture of St Ives?

### ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

What things should we consider when going out into the field?

## THE SPATIAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ST IVES

### Activity 1: Observational walk (30 minutes)

- We are going to take a walk through the streets of St Ives.
- Take observational notes based on what you see.

KEY LANDMARK/LOCATION	OBSERVATION NOTES	LINKS TO CULTURE OF PLACE



## THE SPATIAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ST IVES

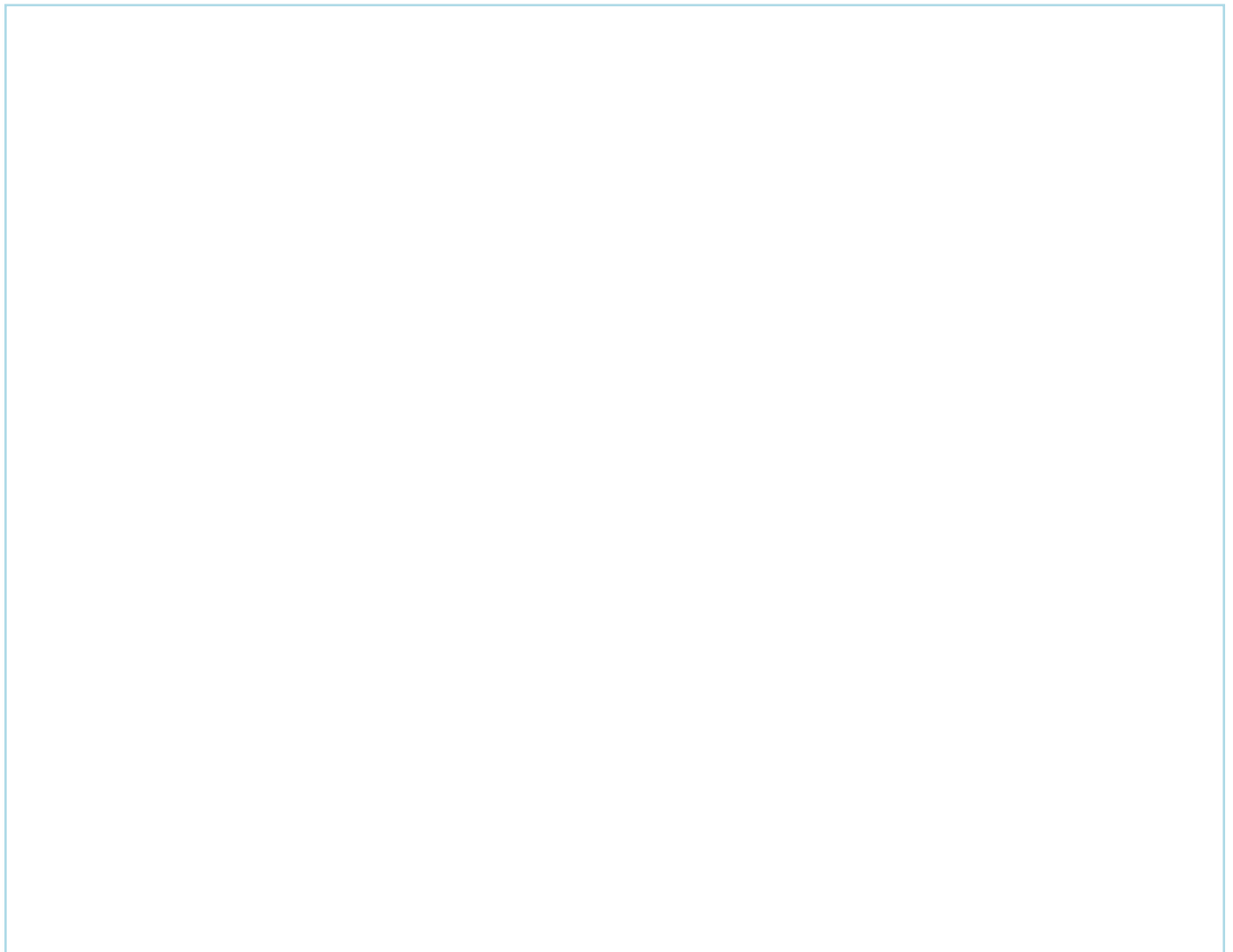
### Activity 2: Photographs

- Take photos as you go. These could include landmarks, key locations, evidence of different cultures, recreational and commercial facilities, community events, and advertising.

### Activity 3: Precis map (15 minutes)

Drawing a Fieldwork Sketch Map (Precis Map) of St Ives.

- When walking around our route in St Ives, note the layout of streets, types of buildings (residential, commercial, public), green spaces, and any notable landmarks.
- Pay special attention to the density of commercial areas, diversity of shops, and the presence of public spaces.
- Label your sketch with street names, types of businesses, and observations on the vibrancy of street life.
- Reconvene to compare sketches, discussing differences in urban design, cultural markers, and community spaces.



## INFLUENCES ON CULTURAL IDENTITY

### Activity 4: Shop analysis (45 minutes)

- Complete the following questionnaire based on 2 shops you visit.

#### SHOP ONE

1. Name of shop

2. What type of shop is it?  Restaurant/Cafe  Shopping (Retail)  Groceries  Entertainment.

3. Observe the shop front. Are there any signs in another language?  Yes  No  
If yes, what language? Find out what it says.

4. Does the architecture of the shop reflect a culture of place?  Yes  No  
If yes, how?

5. What types of products can be purchased from this shop?  
Do these products connect to a culture? If so, how?

6. Do you have any other notes/observations?

## INFLUENCES ON CULTURAL IDENTITY

### Activity 4: Shop analysis (45 minutes)

- Complete the following questionnaire based on 2 shops you visit.

#### SHOP TWO

1. Name of shop

2. What type of shop is it?  Restaurant/Cafe  Shopping (Retail)  Groceries  Entertainment.

3. Observe the shop front. Are there any signs in another language?  Yes  No  
If yes, what language? Find out what it says.

4. Does the architecture of the shop reflect a culture of place?  Yes  No  
If yes, how?

5. What types of products can be purchased from this shop?  
Do these products connect to a culture? If so, how?

6. Do you have any other notes/observations?



**PERCEPTIONS OF, AND RESPONSES TO CULTURAL CHANGE**

**Activity 5: Informal interviews (15 minutes)**

- If you have the opportunity, start a conversation with a shop owner about the influence of different cultures within the area.
- Think through your questions before you ask.
- Write down your questions and answers below

QUESTION	ANSWER

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

### Activity 6: Field sketch (15 minutes)

- Complete a field sketch of an area in St Ives.
- Include images in the foreground, midground and background.
- Consider what aspects of the environment you can see.  
Does it appear healthy, polluted, well maintained, or in a state of decay?

Time of day:

BACK-  
GROUND

MID-  
GROUND

FORE-  
GROUND

## THE COMMUNITY'S HUMAN WELLBEING

### Activity 7: Local library investigation (30 minutes)

- Visit the local library to investigate the events taking place in the St Ives area.
- What activities or programs or groups or initiatives are on offer to promote positive community interactions and improved wellbeing?
- Outline your findings below.

## CONCLUSIONS

### Using your fieldwork data:

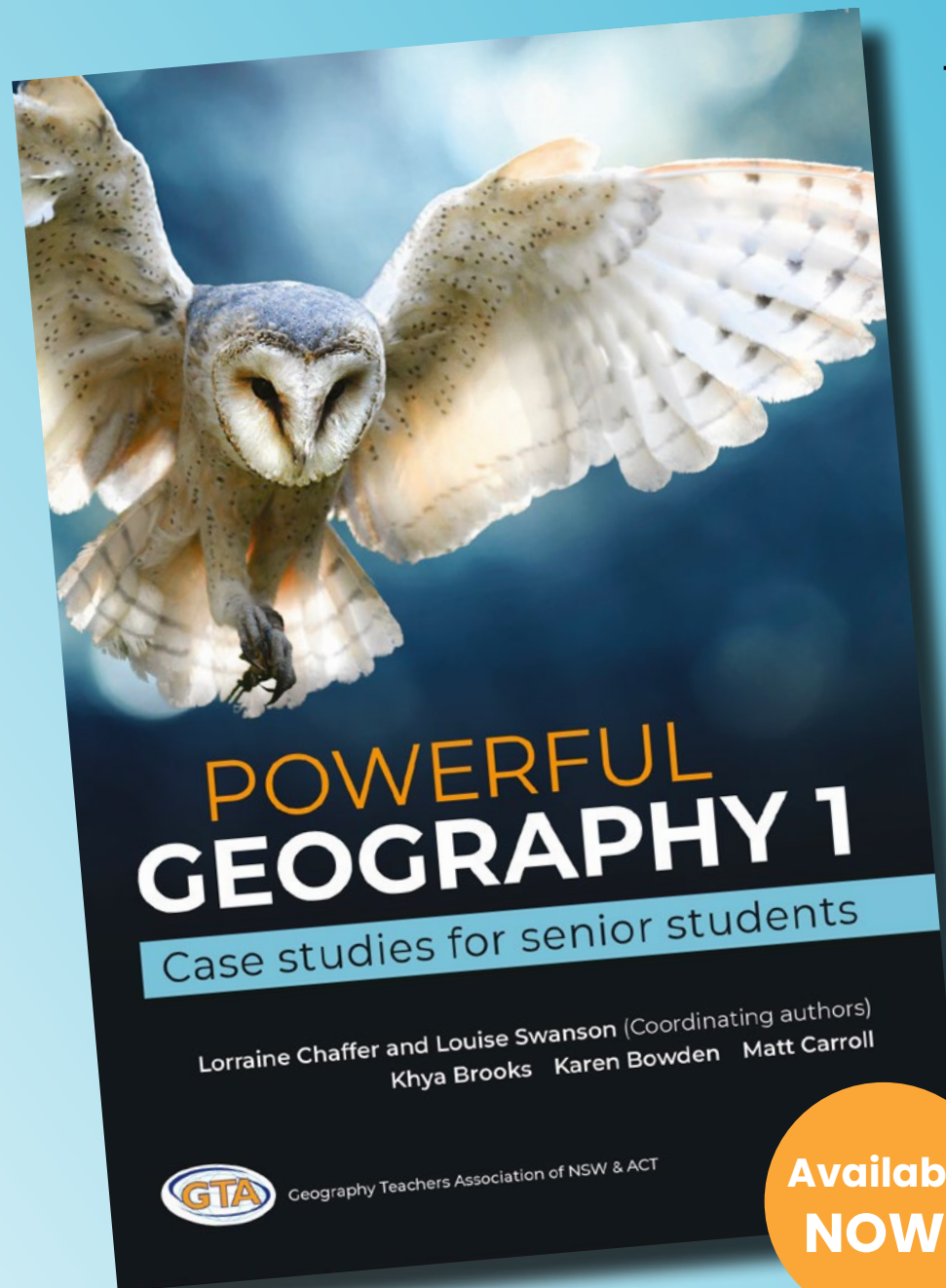
Explain how St Ives displays a unique culture of place. Use your fieldwork data. (6 marks)

### Suggestions to Council:

Outline THREE suggestions for the Ku-ring-gai Council to enhance environmental sustainability and/or human wellbeing. (6 marks)



# POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY 1



**The team of authors for Powerful Geography 1 are excited about the case studies they have created, the beautiful illustrations, many never seen before, and the inclusion of Visualise This, concept explainers.**

This book offers teachers and students a range of case studies to support teaching the NESA Stage Geography Syllabus (2022). The use of GEO stories (micro studies), large case studies and a visual dictionary (Visualise This) for each Content Focus Area covers essential content knowledge, concepts, tools, and skills.

#### **Featuring:**

- Contemporary case studies for each Content Focus Area
- GEO stories – micro case studies to simulate discussion and differentiate learning.
- Visualise This – key concepts explained using illustrations
- Student Activities – Core knowledge, Application, Extension, Fieldwork & Skills.

**Available NOW!**

To place an order, complete the form at <https://forms.gle/EAYnf8E2c7RpQyE27>

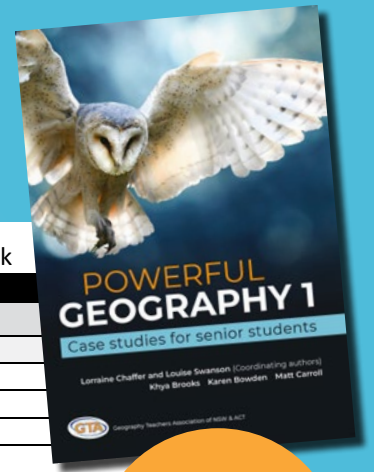
Books will be sent once payment has been finalised. To make processing quicker, please provide a purchase order number and when payment is finalised, please email a remittance to [admin@gtanswact.org.au](mailto:admin@gtanswact.org.au)

For more information, email [admin@gtanswact.org.au](mailto:admin@gtanswact.org.au) or phone (02) 9052 6451

Teacher support, video links and general comments about teaching the course <https://powerfulgeography.weebly.com/>

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# POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY 1: A Guide to Case Studies



## POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY 1: YEAR 11 \*Potential Differentiation \*\*Potential Fieldwork

CASE STUDY	Page	Where you can use this content
<b>EARTH'S NATURAL SYSTEMS</b>		
Small case studies / GEOstories		
Wildlife migrations	6	Wonder of nature, ecological systems
Forest elephants	11	Ecological systems *
Whales	15	Ecological systems *
Dust cycle	17	Geomorphic systems *
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<b>Supporting concepts / Visualise This</b>		
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Global atmospheric circulation	109	Congo rainforest / Lake Eyre Basin Option
Global ocean circulation	112	Antarctic and Patagonia / Arctic region Year 12- Coral Triangle & Great Southern Reef
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Permafrost *	123	Cryosphere /Arctic region option study
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Antarctica's doomsday glacier	444	Land cover change
<b>THE GEOGRAPHICAL INVESTIGATION</b>		
A modelled approach to undertaking the Geographical Investigation – using examples from a student SGP		

**Available  
NOW!**



# POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY 2

**Powerful Geography 2's authors are excited about the new and extensively researched case studies they have created, and the supporting illustrative materials.**

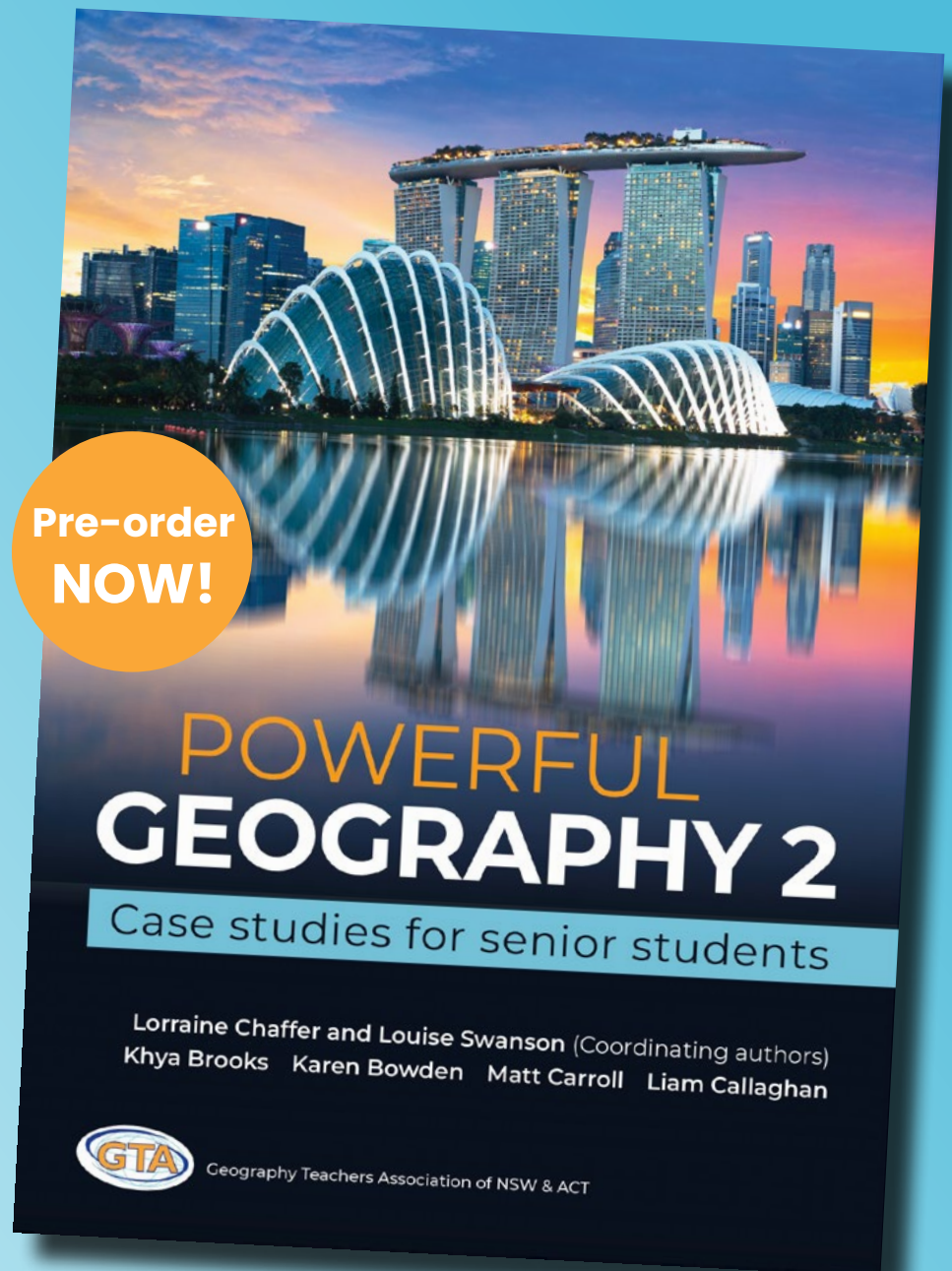
Contemporary case studies for each Year 12 Content Focus Area, GEOstories and Visualise This covers essential content knowledge, concepts, tools, and skills to support teaching the NES A Stage 6 (11-12) Geography Syllabus (2022).

The books are scheduled for printing in mid-January (approximate date).

While you await your print copies of Powerful Geography 2 you will receive support materials in the form of selected pdfs and other materials for the case study currently being studied.

After printing, the full Powerful Geography Year 12 Google Drive link for all topics will be available through the GTANSW & ACT SharePoint, and regularly updated. Teachers will continue to be supported via the [Powerful Geography Year 12 Authors Blog](#) where Teaching programs and relevant commentary and advice are being provided.

**Pre-order  
NOW!**



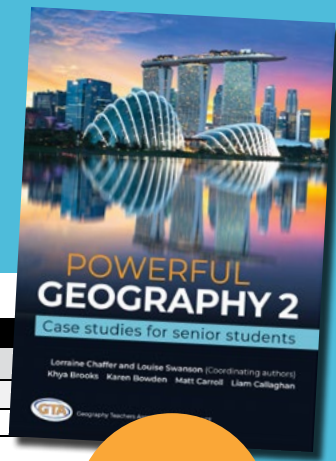
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# POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY 2: A Guide to Case Studies



**Pre-order  
NOW!**

## POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY 2: YEAR 12 \*Potential Differentiation \*\*Potential Fieldwork

CASE STUDY		Where you can use this content
<b>GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY (GS)</b>		
<b>Small case studies / GEOstories</b>		
Avocado production in Mexico		Influences on economic activities
Benefit sharing Agreement: The San peoples		Marlinja, Salmon, Bananas
<b>Major case studies</b>		
Banana Industry **		Global economic activity
Salmon Aquaculture **		Global economic activity
Fashion **		Global economic activity
<b>Supporting concepts / Visualise This</b>		
Criteria for evaluating industry sustainability		Banana, Salmon, Fashion & Avocado studies
Pillars of sustainability		Banana / Salmon / Fashion & Avocado studies
A Circular economy		Salmon / Fashion studies
Sustainable Development Goals		Salmon / Benefit sharing.
Benefit sharing		The San peoples, Banana Industry, Marlinja (RUP)
<b>ECOSYSTEMS and GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY (EGB)</b>		
<b>Small case studies / GEOstories</b>		
The Okavango Delta *		Nature and complexity of biodiversity / ecological and human stresses / strategies for management Comparative management study for Florida Everglades
Two communities: Traditional Ecological knowledge *		Role of Indigenous peoples in ecosystem management / Coral Triangle
<b>Major case studies. * Option for Fieldwork</b>		
Great Southern Reef: Kelp Forest Ecosystem (GSR) **		Ecosystem case study in Australia *
Comparative management - South Korea		Comparative management – South Korea
Coral Triangle: Coral Reef Ecosystem (CT)		Ecosystem case study overseas
Comparative management study – GBR**		Comparative management – Australia *
Florida Everglades: Wetland Ecosystem (FEW)		Ecosystem case study overseas
Comparative management - Okavango Delta		Comparative management – Africa **Features of freshwater wetlands
Kosciusko National Park: Alpine ecosystem. (KNP) **		Ecosystem case study in Australia *
Comparative management - Greater Himalaya NP		Comparative management - India
<b>Supporting concepts / Visualise This</b>		
Traditional ecological Knowledge		Role of Indigenous peoples in ecosystem management / CT, GSR
Feedback loops		GSR, CT, KNP
Tipping points		GSR, CT, FEW, KNP.
Shifting baselines		GSR, CT, FEW, KNP
Rewilding		Global biodiversity / Lake Eyre Basin (Year 11)
<b>RURAL and URBAN PLACES (RUP)</b>		
<b>Small case studies / GEOstories</b>		
Ljubljana, Slovenia. - European Green Capital - The Bee Path project		Strategies for the sustainable management urban places One successful initiative or project.
Malinga, Northern Territory - Solar farm and battery project		Strategies for the sustainable management of rural Places (remote). One successful initiative or project.
Wagga * - Managing urban salinity in Lloyd.		Strategies for the sustainable management urban places. One successful initiative / project.
<b>Major case studies</b>		
Bellingen **		One place in a rural setting
Green Square **		One place within a larger urban settlement.
Singapore		One large city over 5 million people
<b>Supporting concepts / Visualise This</b>		
Urban settlement patterns		Marlinja / Bellingen **
Urban hierarchies and spheres of influence		Bellingen ** / Singapore



**SAVE  
THE DATE!**

# Navigating Change

**GEOGRAPHY FOR  
A RESILIENT FUTURE**



Geography Teachers  
Association NSW & ACT



## **Annual Conference**

Fri 16 & Sat 17 May 2025,  
Amora Hotel, 11 Jamison St, Sydney



# Out-of-field teaching: Recognising the reality and exploring possible responses

**Dr Susan Caldis, Vice President GTA NSW & ACT,  
Lecturer, Macquarie School of Education**

Out-of-field teaching, or teaching beyond specialisation, is a phenomenon with multiple causes and far-reaching effects. It is a daily reality for one in six secondary school teachers across New South Wales. Definitions for out-of-field teaching vary. In this paper a definition draws on the work of Hobbs (2013), Du Plessis (2015), and Nixon et al. (2017) to include three-dimensions: subject, stage of schooling, and identity (Hobbs, 2013; Du Plessis, 2015; Nixon et al., 2017).

This paper will focus on the teacher rather than the student. The paper also draws on the definitional dimensions of subject and identity to recognise the reality of out-of-field teaching occurring in Geography, and to explore two possible responses designed to assist teachers in how they manage and respond to this phenomenon in the future.



## Understanding the out-of-field teaching phenomenon

Through the lens of a subject, out of field teaching is a requirement to teach a subject where subject specialisation has not occurred. Through the lens of identity, it is when a teacher self-identifies as being or feeling out-of-field in terms of their specialisation and/or experience. Concerns about out-of-field teaching in Geography relate to not only a high percentage of incidence, but also to there being a limited range of formal support structures available and some uncertainty about who has responsibility for mentoring and professional development of geography teachers (Caldis, 2022; Kriewaldt & Lee, 2022).

A requirement to teach out-of-field can be caused by a range of factors, in isolation or in tandem. These factors include: precarious employment; location; a teacher shortage; entrenched school department and timetabling structures; entrenched policy and funding models in school education and initial teacher training; a blurred identity about Geography as a subject together with a lack of specialist geography teachers (Caldis, 2022; Kriewaldt & Lee, 2022; National Committee for Geographical Sciences, 2018; Shah et al., 2020).

## ... Out-of-field teaching: Recognising the reality and exploring possible responses

Noting that teaching out-of-field can contribute to an increased workload for teachers, particularly those in their pre-service and early-career years, we also know the requirement to teach out-of-field also contributes to a lack of teacher agency, compromises teacher wellbeing, an increased need for classroom management strategies, a potential increase in teacher attrition, a decline in subject-integrity – in this instance for Geography – leading to a reduced pipeline of students embarking upon university study and employment pathways in geo-related careers (Caldis, 2022; Du Plessis, 2019; Hobbs, et al., 2022; Wheeley et al., 2023).

### A local response to supporting those who teach Geography beyond their subject specialisation

During 2023, I was delighted to be awarded funding through the Macquarie Incubator Research IMPACT Program to develop a program of support for out-of-field teachers in Geography. This program is currently under development and once developed will form a pilot study for further research and refinement prior to public release.

The program is focused on mentoring and advising, its conceptualisation and shaping borne from findings arising from my doctoral thesis (Caldis, 2021) and subsequent small-scale qualitative research funded through the Macquarie University Early-Career-Researchers Enabling Scheme which focused on pre-service teachers who were required to teach Geography out-of-field during their professional experience. In addition to the research-voice from out-of-field pre-service teachers, development of this program will also include the voices of representatives from industry and the Geography Teachers Association of NSW & ACT.

Broadly, the program will comprise a 10-week series of social labs where those who join will iteratively and reflexively engage with an activity focused on distilling the distinctive core of Geography and self-assessing its evidence in their practice (Caldis, 2021). In the first instance for the pilot, the program will centre on early-career out-of-field teachers in Geography. They will join with expert others from university, industry and the professional association, to share and collectively examine their teaching contexts, develop plans to teach Geography and navigate the broader complexities associated with teaching beyond subject specialisation.

Further information will be available as the research progresses and the program develops.

### An upcoming national response to support teachers in accessing professional learning as they teach out-of-field

At the end of 2023, the Australian Research Council (ARC) awarded funding for a 'Discovery Project' of national scope. The research team is from Macquarie University New South Wales, Deakin University and Monash University, Victoria; University of Queensland and University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland; and University of Tasmania, Tasmania. Our research will examine how out-of-field teachers across subjects, states and sectors can or cannot access professional learning opportunities, and what changes need to occur to enable such support. The subjects under examination are Geography, English, Mathematics and Science. The research is entitled: Shifting the Culture of Out-Of-Field Teaching Professional Education (DP240101175).

Within and from the research, we hope to model an education system that values opportunities to upskill in core subjects and will lead to the strengthening of teacher expertise as they teach subjects out-of-field. Towards the end of 2024 and throughout 2025, the research team will be inviting participants from schools, governments and professional associations to expose current practices, cultural norms, and policies. Please look out for these opportunities to become involved in this important research.

We hope the research findings will enable us to propose an "ideal" ecosystem to inform and hopefully lead to change where appropriate in policy and practice.

Further information will be available as the research progresses. Please also see our [website https://www.scope-t.org/](https://www.scope-t.org/)

### Resources which may be helpful

#### Out-Of-Field Teaching Toolkit Podcast

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/margaret-paton>

A collection of interviews between Margaret Paton and teachers, researchers, and/or policymakers from rural, metropolitan, Australian and overseas contexts who focus on generating solutions for those teaching out-of-field in Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, and English.

#### The Out-Of-Field Teaching Across Subjects (OOFTAS) Collective

<https://oofas-collective.org/events-and-projects-1>

Navigate through the site, for example, to the online symposium links and view the presentations, from researchers within and beyond Australia, who focus attention on impacts arising from the out-of-field teaching phenomenon

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# Geography Explained Online – Turning chaos into collaboration

By Sam Coburn

As teachers, I am sure we all remember the struggles of teaching through COVID-19.

For me personally, trying to ensure my students had been given enriching lessons focused on geographical skills felt impossible. Until one day, I set up my iPhone ready to make a short video explaining vertical exaggeration as my year 11 class had struggled to grasp the concept through online learning.

As I was about to start, a colleague walked past (Alan Cizzio) and offered to be involved – mostly with the goal of creating chaos. The video that we shot would be the first one uploaded to our YouTube channel **Geography Explained Online**. I had planned to upload it privately and only share it with our students, but Cizzio was insistent that we should just post it publicly – why not, right?

Almost 100 000 views later and it seems there was a real need for these kinds of videos. We feel so grateful every time a teacher reaches out to let us know that they have used our videos or that the videos have helped them in some way.

If you haven't seen our videos before, please search for **Geography Explained Online** to find our content, and we hope it can help you too. I am very adamant that I will not show Geography Explained Online videos in MY classroom because it's so hard to watch myself on the smartboard.

In saying that, I still use the videos most days. When students miss a lesson, feel they need more instruction, or just want to revise, I point them towards the videos. Students have told me that the videos help them in ways that I can't in a classroom setting. Mostly because they can rewind at any time – wouldn't that be nice in class? Using videos allows students to fast forward, rewatch, pause and control their learning.



Episode 9 - Using shadows to  
calculate time of day

Geography Explained Online · 18K views · 5  
years ago



## ... Geography Explained Online – Turning chaos into collaboration

I would love to take this opportunity to introduce another project that we launched this year. Quite often I find myself teaching a geographical skill and saying to my students “I remember there’s a great HSC question about this – it’s 2018 or 2019 let me find it” and so ensues wasted time as I search through past HSC papers. I had always wanted to create a database of all the past papers categorised by skill, and so I did.

It was beautiful but not really user friendly, which goes to show why working with colleagues is so important. Alan Cizzio and Jay Coburn worked with me to create the **Geography Revised Online Workspace (GROW)**.

On this website, you will find each geographical skill that has appeared in a past HSC Geography paper since 2001. Once you click on the skill you will find every time that skill has appeared with a link to the question, stimulus and answer.

While this was originally created to help teachers, we now see incredible potential for students to use this as a study tool, choosing skills and being directed to every example of that skill in a past HSC paper. If they get stuck, there are also videos embedded into each page from our YouTube channel.

Here are the links you need to get started:

YouTube – <https://www.youtube.com/@geographyexplainedonline5731>

Geography Revised Online Workspace – <https://sites.google.com/education.nsw.gov.au/grow/home>





# Practice questions for Preliminary Geography (2024 Syllabus)

Author – Sam Coburn Maitland Grossman High School

## Earth's Natural Systems

1. Using an example, outline how nature can be a source of wonder for humans. (4 marks)
2. Describe how people's worldviews affect their connection to the natural world. (4 marks)
3. Using an example, outline the universal value of Earth's environments. (4 marks)
4. Choose one atmospheric process and outline how it operates. Use a diagram where possible. (6 marks)
5. Choose one hydrological process and outline how it operates. Use a diagram where possible. (6 marks)
6. Choose one geomorphic process and outline how it operates. Use a diagram where possible. (6 marks)
7. Choose one ecological process and outline how it operates. use a diagram where possible. (6 marks)
8. Contrast two of Earth's major biomes (land cover). (4 marks)
9. Explain one climate cycle operating at a regional scale. (6 marks)
10. Explain how glacial cycles are linked to climate cycles. (6 marks)
11. Describe how vegetation communities experience ecological succession. (4 marks)
12. Differentiate between primary and secondary succession. (6 marks)
13. Explain how natural processes have shaped one place (explain how volcanic activity has shaped the Newcastle coastline.) (20 marks)

## Human-Environment Interactions

1. List human changes that impact the natural environment. (3 marks)
2. List natural changes that impact the natural environment. (3 marks)
3. Compare the rate of human change and natural environmental change. (6 marks)
4. Explain how one human activity has changed global land cover. (6 marks)
5. Provide evidence for anthropogenic climate change. (5 marks)

## Study 3: Climate Change

1. Describe the spatial characteristics of climate change. (4 marks)
2. Compare and contrast natural and human-induced climate change. (6 marks)
3. Outline how climate change impacts one environment. (4 marks)
4. Outline how climate change impacts on people or communities. (4 marks)
5. Identify one strategy that could mitigate human-induced climate change. (2 marks)
6. Compare two perspectives on human-induced climate change. (4 marks)
7. Explain the causes, impacts and responses to human-induced climate change. (20 marks)

## People, Patterns and Processes

1. Describe the spatial patterns of modern human settlement. (4 marks)
2. Explain how industrial production has shifted with economic restructuring. (8 marks)
3. Provide characteristics of the modern global economy. (6 marks)
4. Describe how tourism has changed with improved technology. (4 marks)



### People, patterns and processes: Population and resource consumption

1. Account for the exponential population growth of the twentieth century. (6 marks)
2. Describe the spatial distribution of the world's population. (6 marks)
3. Describe the spatial distribution of projected population growth. (6 marks)
4. Account for falling fertility rates over the past century. (6 marks)
5. Outline factors that affect fertility rates. (4 marks)
6. Describe the population structure of LEDN and HEDN. (6 marks)
7. Compare the demography of two nations. (6 marks)
8. Explain the environmental impacts of population change. (8 marks)
9. Explain the economic impacts of population change. (8 marks)
10. Explain the social impacts of population change. (8 marks)
11. Compare the distribution of population and natural resources. (4 marks)
12. Compare population demographics and resource consumption. (6 marks)
13. Explain the impacts of resource exploitation. (6 marks)

### People, patterns and processes: Political power and contested spaces

1. Describe the features of modern nation states. (4 marks)
2. Identify three major ideologies of the modern geopolitical world. (3 marks)
3. Compare two ideologies of modern nation states. (6 marks)
4. Outline how power blocs hold power in the modern geopolitical world. (4 marks)
5. Using examples, explain the causes of political tension and conflict. (8 marks)
6. Identify one impact of political conflict. (2 marks)
7. Outline the impacts of political conflict. (4 marks)
8. Assess the effectiveness of one response to political conflict. (6 marks)
9. Assess the impact of one political conflict on people and the environment. (20 marks)

# Global Sustainability Evaluation and Critical Analysis

**Khya Brooks, Head Teacher Social Science, Elizabeth Macarthur High School.**

At the recent Stage 6 Geography conference, I presented on the unit titled Global Sustainability in the revised Stage 6 syllabus, for which I contributed a case study in the textbook *Powerful Geography*. This unit focuses on developing students' understanding of sustainability through its four pillars—social, economic, environmental, and cultural—and equips them to evaluate the sustainability of an economic activity using clear criteria such as the pillars, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and industry standards. My case study centred on salmon farming (aquaculture), which served as a practical example throughout the presentation.

To help teachers guide students in mastering the concept of evaluation, I introduced a strategy that simplifies the process. I started with a relatable story to demonstrate how criteria shape judgements. The story goes like this:

**One morning, I wake up to find I've slept through my alarm. Rushing to the bathroom, I trip, and my phone lands in the toilet. I fish it out, scramble downstairs to put it in rice, and lose even more time. Then, I stub my toe on a doorway, and, limping in pain, grab my things and leave for work. Because I'm late, traffic is heavy, and eventually, another car rear-ends me on the motorway.**

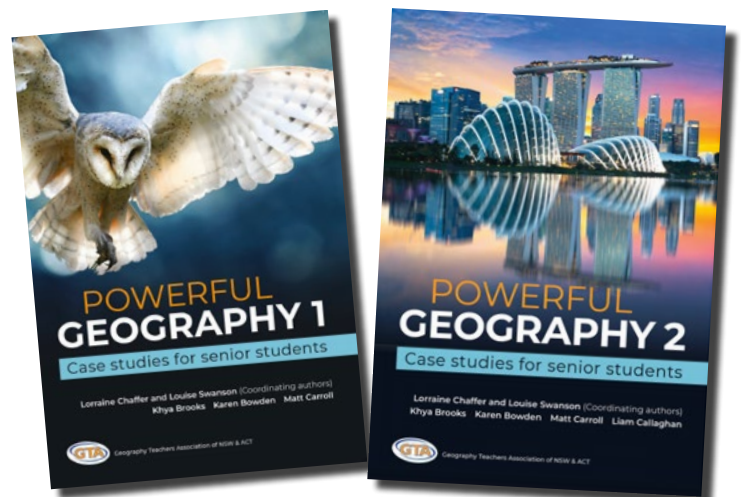
The judgement? Clearly, I've had a terrible morning. But was every event equally bad? That depends on the criteria. If pain is the measure, stubbing my toe ranks highest. But if cost is the criterion, the damage to my car and phone would top the list. The details matter: was the car accident insured? Is the phone salvageable?

This story helps students see how criteria influence judgement, which is vital when evaluating sustainability. I introduced the "judgement meter," a tool I adapted from a GTANSW presentation by David Proctor a few years ago. Using this tool, students apply 2 to 4 criteria, such as the economic impact or environmental effect of something, and place arrows indicating positive or negative outcomes on the meter. For every negative, an arrow is placed to the left toward the "unsustainable/ineffective" side, and for every positive outcome or criteria, an arrow is moved to the right. For instance:

- All arrows to the left: Fails all criteria, highly unsustainable.
- Split evenly: Moderately sustainable.
- Mostly to the right: Highly sustainable.

This visual framework guides students to structure their evaluations and ensure their judgements are evidence-based. The process was illustrated using salmon farming, where students assessed its sustainability against selected criteria.

The presentation provided actionable strategies and tools to help teachers implement this evaluation process in their classrooms, offering an engaging and practical way to tackle this crucial component of the new syllabus.





# Global Sustainability: *Evaluation and Critical Analysis*

*Khya Brooks and Lorraine Chaffer*

## Syllabus links

As part of the “Investigation of an Economic Activity”:

### Evaluating Sustainability

- The reasons for evaluating and monitoring global sustainability
- A range of criteria for evaluating the sustainability of economic activities

***For the global economic activity studied, students:***

- Evaluate the sustainability of the activity, using one or more criteria
- Examine a range of strategies for sustainability
- Critically analyse ONE strategy

### Evaluating Sustainability

- The reasons for evaluating and monitoring global sustainability
- A range of criteria for evaluating the sustainability of economic activities

***For the global economic activity studied, students:***

- Evaluate the sustainability of the activity, using one or more criteria
- Examine a range of strategies for sustainability
- Critically analyse ONE strategy

# 01

## EVALUATION

### What is an evaluation?

#### Evaluate

- Make a judgement based on criteria
- Determine the value of

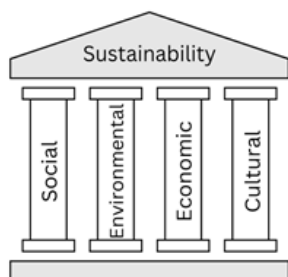
A simple explanation for students ...

### Evaluation in Global Sustainability

The criteria to evaluate the sustainability of economic activities can be drawn from:

- Sustainable Development Goals
- Industry certification standards
- Circular Economy
- Other (p 29)

*These should be underpinned by the pillars of sustainability.*



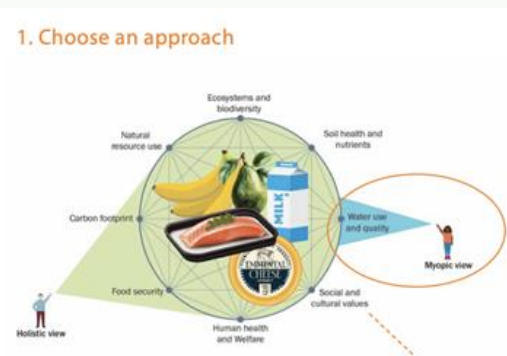
# Evaluating the sustainability of the Salmon Aquaculture industry

“The ‘battery-hen’ farming of the sea”



## 1. Choose an approach *(following p. 30)*

Starting with a Myopic view to assess environmental sustainability



## 2. Select Criteria

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) is the largest certification company for salmon, and they use over 154 criteria in their evaluation of salmon farms. Choosing from these, I may focus on:

- **Local Biodiversity** *(SDG14 Life Below Water)*
- **Carbon Footprint** *(SDG12 Responsible Consumption and Production)*

### 2. Select criteria

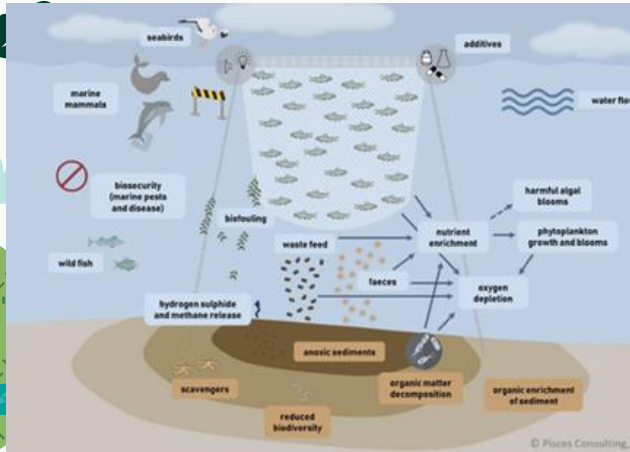
A graphic titled "Environmental - Ways to measure:" with a circular inset image of a river. It lists four criteria:

- **Water Efficiency:** use of alternative water sources like rainwater harvesting, greywater reuse, and innovative water waste technologies
- **Energy and Atmosphere:** use of on-site renewable energy, supply of green/low-carbon energy sources, reduction of energy consumption
- **Waste Management:** recycling, source reduction, reuse, and converting waste to energy
- **Air Quality:** indoor and outdoor air pollutants, efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote natural air purification processes

• **Biodiversity:** species diversification, wildlife protection, population numbers, keystone species protection, conservation to maintain ecosystem health.

### 3. Collect evidence

#### Local Biodiversity



#### Positives

- Reduces pressure on wild fish populations

#### Negatives

- Escaped fish (over 3.3 million since 2010). They:
  - interbreed with wild fish (mutations, genetics)
  - Spread disease
  - Spread parasites and pests (e.g., sea lice)
- **Research: wild population survival rates drop up to 50% when near farmed salmon regions**
- Excessive fecal matter can accumulate, increasing organic matter decomposition and reducing oxygen in the water. This creates Dead Zones and possible algal blooms. e.g. *Tasmania's Macquarie Harbour*

### 3. Collect evidence

#### Carbon Footprint



#### POSITIVES

- Salmon disturbs 9x less area (103,500 km<sup>2</sup>) whilst yielding 55 times greater production
- New technologies are reducing the refrigeration and transport (supercooling red 17% of ghg emitted)
- Conversion of fish meal into proteins is 5x more effective and efficient than beef.

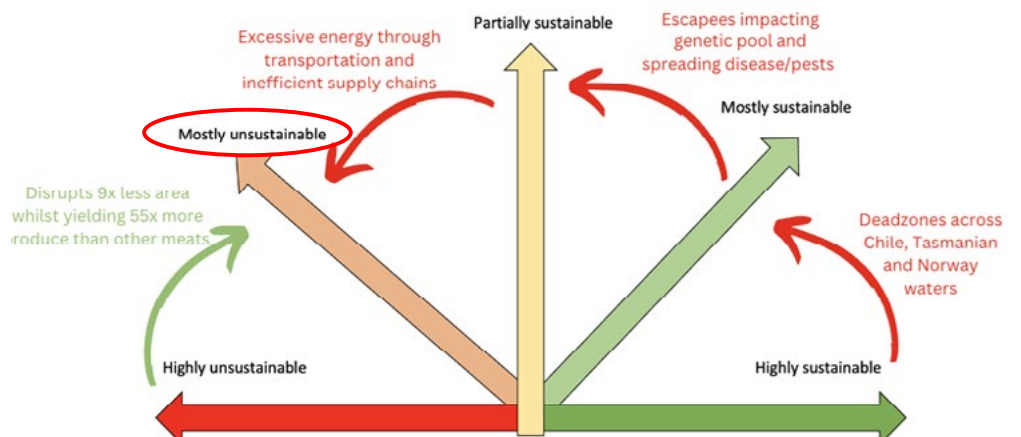
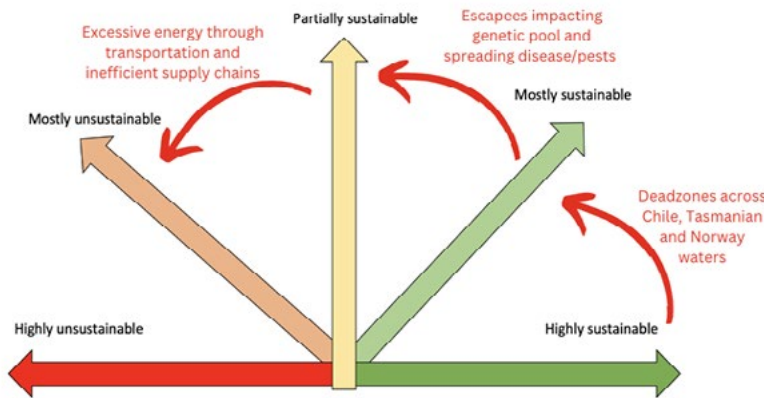
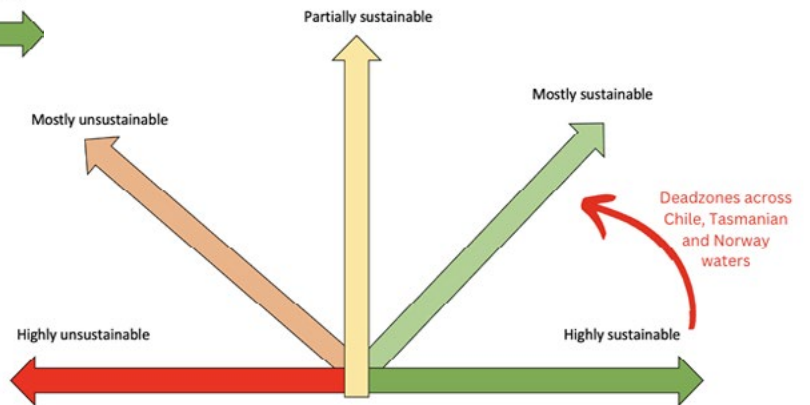
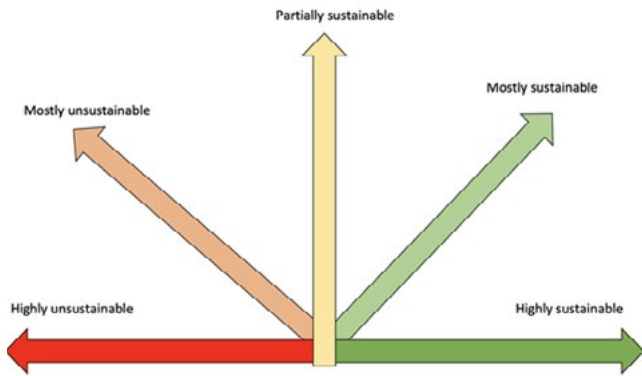
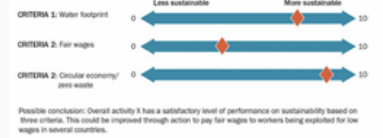
#### NEGATIVES

- Traditional transportation emits excessive ghg from cargo ships, planes and refrigeration.
- Supply chain inefficiencies: Alaskan fish is sent to China for processing before being delivered globally
- Land-based salmon farms require extensive electricity to run the filters

# 4. Make judgement

## Environmental Sustainability in Salmon

### 4. Make a judgement





## Holistic evaluation: other criteria

### SOCIAL: Food security

Farmed salmon helps to meet the growing national and global demand for seafood. It:

- Increases access to protein
- Can be canned and smoked
- 90 million metric tonnes produced in 2023

However, does have higher fats  
...

### ECONOMIC: Supporting local employment

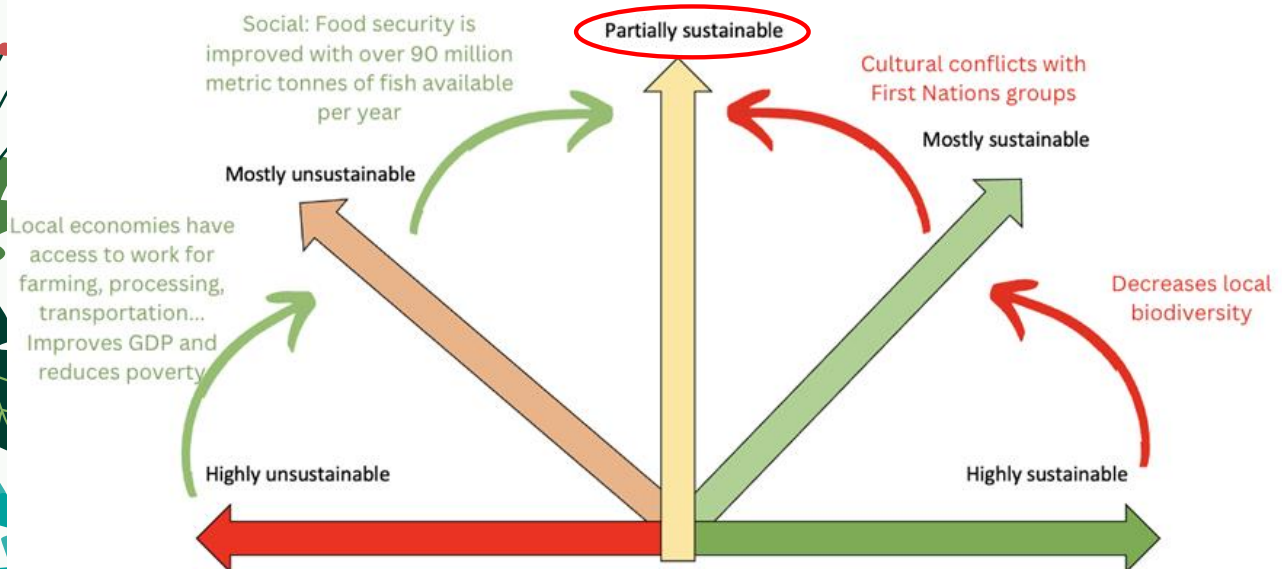
It provides over 21 million employment opportunities globally. New farms can improve infrastructure technologies, resources and additional employment in rural communities (research shows this has reduced poverty)

### CULTURAL: Cultural Heritage

In *Kawésqar National Reserve* in southern Chile, salmon farmers claim to only occupy 0.06% of the Indigenous reserve, but First Nation Kawesqar communities accuse the farms of violating their land rights and using and polluting their sacred sites.

British Columbia are implementing agreements with First Nations groups (who now approve 75% of fish farmed)

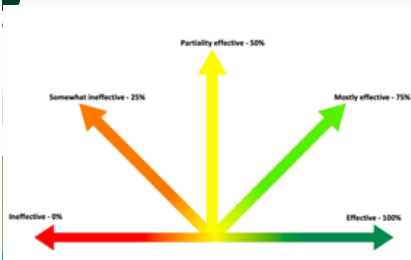
## Holistic Evaluation



# Ways of visualising an evaluation



## Judgement Meter



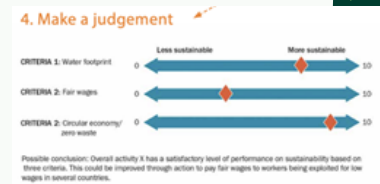
## Spider Diagram



## Checklist



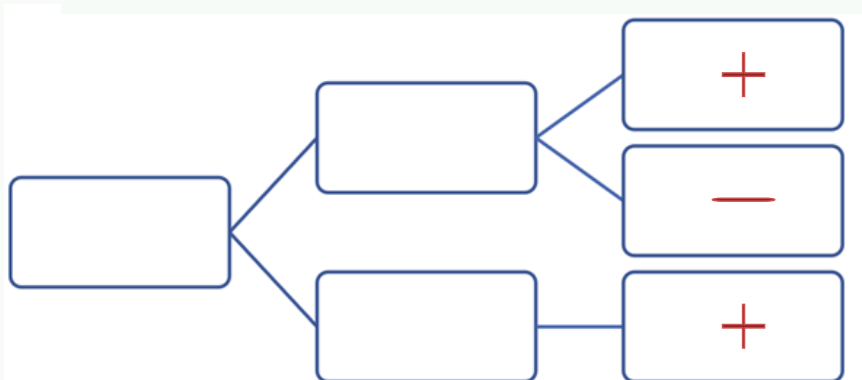
## Continuums



# 02

## Critical Analysis

## Critical Analysis



# Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS)

Close-containment tanks that enable salmon to be farmed entirely on land.

They are increasing rapidly as farmers can manage environmental constraints and impacts (e.g., climate, pests, disease, escapees ...) Approximately 500 000 tonnes of salmon will be farmed in RAS by 2050.



## Environmentally...

	Benefits	Disadvantages
<b>SDG 14: Life Below Water</b>	Reduces possibility of cross-breeding, disease and pest spreading	

## Environmentally...

	Benefits	Disadvantages
<b>SDG 14: Life Below Water</b>	Reduces possibility of cross-breeding, disease and pest spreading	
<b>SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production</b>	Residual waste can be used for energy generation or fertiliser  Transportation costs and emissions reduce: closer to retailers and markets  Continually treating, filtering and reusing of water: reducing ecological footprint	

## Environmentally...

	Benefits	Disadvantages
<b>SDG 14: Life Below Water</b>	Reduces possibility of cross-breeding, disease and pest spreading	
<b>SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production</b>	<p>Residual waste can be used for energy generation or fertiliser</p> <p>Transportation costs and emissions reduce: closer to retailers and markets</p> <p>Continually treating, filtering and reusing of water: reducing ecological footprint</p>	<p>Requires extensive electricity, infrastructure, land and materials to develop and maintain RAS. <i>E.g., pumps filters, biofilters, UV and ozone injectors</i> ...</p> <p>Waste disposal challenges with diseased water, salt water discharge and excess sludge</p>

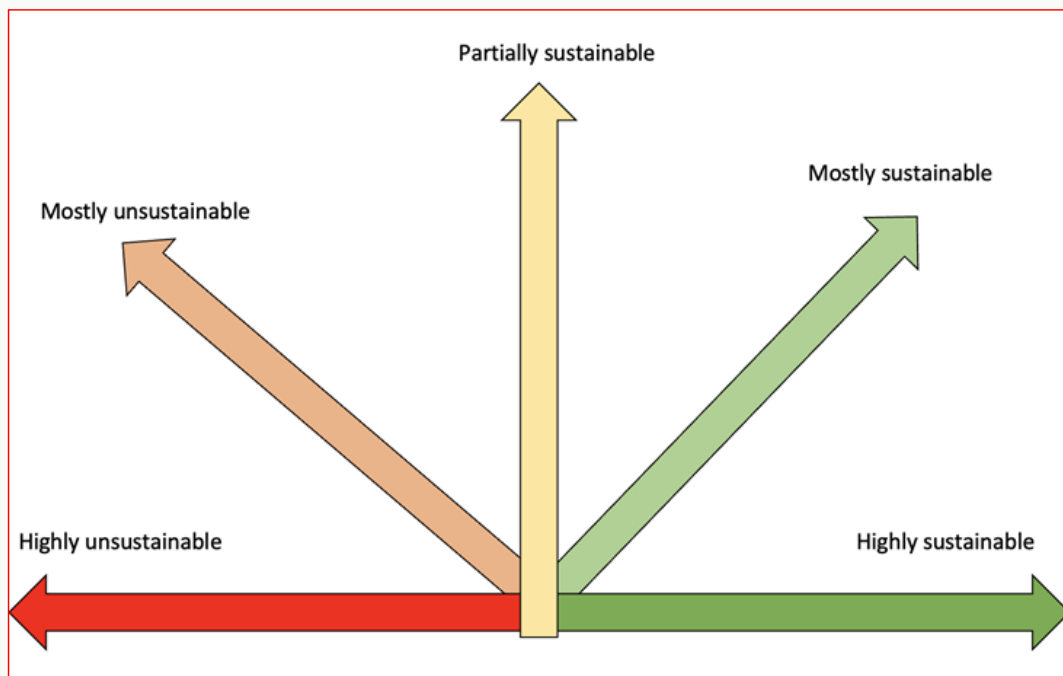
## Economically..

	Benefits	Disadvantages
<b>SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth</b>	Increases employment opportunities through new rural farms and the nuanced roles. New farms also promote infrastructure development in rural communities.	<p>New roles require highly trained individuals, reducing employment for smaller or untrained farmers (particularly Chile)</p> <p>High costs = less small salmon farmers (threat of oligopoly)</p>



## Culturally...

	Benefits	Disadvantages
SDG 5: Gender Equality	More technical jobs = increase women (was traditionally seen as a “hard-labour”, male-dominated industry). In Norway, women in RAS farms increased from 9% to 34% since 2015.	
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities		First Nations salmon farmers in British Columbia are feeling disadvantaged as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack capital</li><li>• Reduces cultural connections</li><li>• Threatens native land</li></ul>



# Evaluation in writing

Name & Define	Describe	Explain Significance	Analyse	Critically Analyse	Evaluate
Each area of content	Features/Characteristics	Purpose/Function	Impact/Relationship How does it work?	Explain how each area/feature is +/-	Explain to what extent each area/feature is +/-

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE			
<b>I</b>	<b>Identify:</b> main argument	<b>P</b>	<b>Point</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Describe:</b> characteristics/features	<b>E</b>	<b>Explain</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>Explain:</b> its purpose/function- its <u>why</u>	<b>E</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Analyse/Critically analyse:</b> its <u>how and pros/cons</u>	<b>I</b>	<b>Impact</b> (including criteria reference) (or H for However)
<b>E/L</b>	<b>Evaluate:</b> against criteria	<b>L</b>	<b>Link</b>

# Critical Analysis

Name & Define	Describe	Explain Significance	Analyse	Critically Analyse	Evaluate
Each area of content	Features/Characteristics	Purpose/Function	Impact/Relationship How does it work?	Explain how each area/feature is +/-	Explain to what extent each area/feature is +/-

NOTE Teaching advice does say:

*“In this context, the critical analysis of one strategy would include evaluation.”*

## Scaffold for critically analyse (Sample Template)

**Critically analyse** – add a degree or level of accuracy, depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to analyse.

**Analyse** – identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications.

Topic to be analysed:

Component  
Elaboration and support:

Component  
Elaboration and support:

**Relationship**

Point:

Elaboration and support:

Component  
Elaboration and support:

Component  
Elaboration and support:

**Relationship**

Point:

Elaboration and support:

Implications of the relationship between each of these components:  
Can include and evaluation.

### Points to note:

Statement of topic which reflects how deeply you have thought about the question.

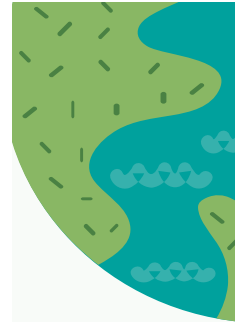
Preview of components and the relationships.

Topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph followed by explanations and examples to illustrate each component.

Identifying and explaining the relationship between the various components is essential in answering these questions.

Use linking words between each point such as therefore, thus, as a result, leading to, in order to illustrate the relationship between each of the components.

The implications of the relationship (what happens, what effect it has) can be dealt with in each of the paragraphs or as a concluding paragraph.



# Ocean Lovers Festival



OCEAN  
LOVERS  
FESTIVAL

## FishTank Competition – Now Open for Seniors and Juniors!

The FishTank Competition is a dynamic, student-driven challenge where participants pitch innovative solutions for ocean sustainability to a panel of experts.

### Seniors Category (Years 7–12)

Students will research real-world marine issues, propose actionable solutions, and present their ideas to industry experts. This category offers a great opportunity for students to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and presentation skills, with the added motivation of competing for \$10,000 in prize money to support their projects.

### New Juniors Category (K–6)

This year, we are expanding the competition to include younger students, encouraging early engagement with marine science through fun, creative problem-solving. The Juniors competition also includes prize money, making it a rewarding experience for students and their schools.

This competition not only enhances students' knowledge but also empowers them to become advocates for ocean sustainability.

### Ocean Smart Schools – Launching in 2025 (incursion program)

We're also thrilled to announce the launch of Ocean Smart Schools in 2025. This program will offer hands-on, curriculum-aligned learning experiences focused on ocean literacy, sustainability, and real-world marine issues. Guided by expert educators, students will be empowered to become ocean champions, applying their knowledge in their schools, homes, and communities.

Both programs aim to inspire the next generation of ocean advocates providing practical learning opportunities and a chance to make a real impact.

### Save the Dates – Upcoming School Programs

- **School Excursion Program** (March 21, Bondi): A hands-on, immersive experience designed to engage primary and secondary students with real-world marine science in a fun and interactive way.
- **Sea Science Student Expo** (March 14, Australian National Maritime Museum): A showcase of cutting-edge marine science and innovation, providing secondary students with a unique opportunity to engage with leading scientists and ocean experts.

Both programs aim to inspire the next generation of ocean advocates across NSW, providing practical learning opportunities and a chance to make a real impact.





**WIN A CASH POOL OF \$500**



# FISHTANK COMpetition

FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS



## GOT A GOOD IDEA FOR THE OCEAN?

REDUCE OCEAN POLLUTION • CLEAN UP OUR OCEAN  
MARINE WILDLIFE PROTECTION • SUSTAINABLE OCEAN USE

**SUBMISSIONS CLOSE 28 FEB 2025**

WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT THE OCEAN LOVERS FESTIVAL  
BONDI – 23 MARCH 2025



**INFO/REGISTER** ➤  
[OCEANLOVERSFESTIVAL.COM/FISHTANK](https://oceanloversfestival.com/fishtank)



*Win* **\$10K**  
**IN CASH + PRIZES!**

# FISHTANK **PITCH** **COMPETITION**

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

## GOT A GOOD IDEA FOR THE OCEAN?

SCIENCE / TECHNOLOGY • INNOVATION • BUSINESS • ACTIVISM • SCHOOL INITIATIVE • CREATIVE

 **SUBMISSIONS CLOSE 28 FEB 2025**

WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT THE OCEAN LOVERS FESTIVAL  
BONDI – 23 MARCH 2025







## Student Climate Leadership Forum

As part of Climate Action Week Sydney 2025, the Australian Museum invites students in Years 7–10 to the Student Climate Leadership Forum – a FREE full-day program of talks and hands-on workshops to kick-start student-led climate initiatives.

**Date:** Thursday, 13 March 2025

**Time:** 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

**Location:** Australian Museum, Sydney

**Cost:** Free



### Your students will:

- Hear from experts on practical, realistic steps to build climate resilience.
- Be inspired by real-world examples of local climate action.
- Participate in interactive workshops to develop school sustainability initiatives.
- Receive guidance from Museum educators to create a tailored, actionable climate plan for your school.

Gather a team of up to eight students and one teacher and join us in shaping a sustainable future. Students will leave with a structured climate action plan to implement back at school.

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to empower young leaders and drive meaningful change.

Register now to secure your free spot – places are limited:

<https://australian.museum/event/climate-action-week-student-leaders/>

Brought to you by the Sydney Science Trail and the Australian Museum's Climate Solutions Centre, with the support of Climate Action Week Sydney.



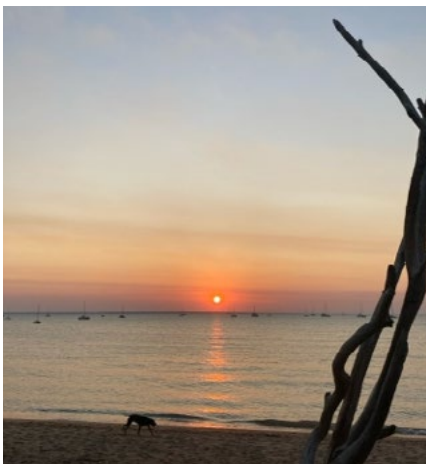
# AGTA Conference – Scholarship Report

By Savannah Bowman



Attending the Australian Geography Teachers Association conference in Darwin, NT, was an enriching and transformative experience, both personally and professionally. The workshop on Australia's Great Southern Reef (GSR) was particularly eye-opening. Learning about the GSR, a part of the world so close to where my students live, made me feel more connected to the content I teach. It was a reminder of how important it is to create local connections in the classroom, something I am now even more passionate about. Introducing my students to kelp as a carbon store and its uses in food consumption excites me because it ties into sustainability topics that are increasingly relevant today. I left this session inspired, knowing I could foster a deeper sense of environmental responsibility among my students.

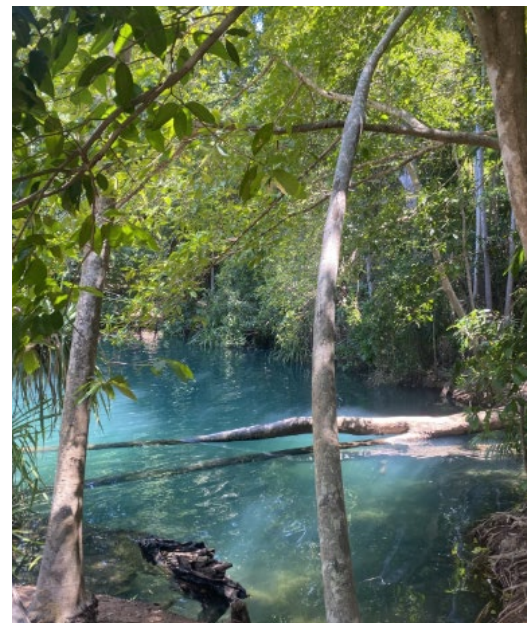
The fieldwork skills sessions were equally impactful. Getting my hands dirty and refreshing skills I hadn't used in a while reminded me why I became a Geography teacher in the first place – the thrill of discovery and practical application. Learning new technologies to enhance fieldwork gave me fresh ideas to engage my students in more dynamic ways. This experience renewed my enthusiasm for incorporating more hands-on learning into my teaching. It feels like a new chapter in my career, where I'm not just revisiting old skills but expanding on them with a modern twist.



Perhaps one of the most exciting developments was exploring interdisciplinary learning. Engaging in conversations with colleagues across different faculties about trialling an interdisciplinary unit for 2025 felt like the start of something innovative and meaningful. Collaborating across English, Humanities, and Technologies will help students see the bigger picture and understand the interconnectedness of their learning. This has expanded my vision for what teaching can look like, making me feel more confident in pushing boundaries and trying new approaches.

The conference also allowed me to meet and learn from educators across the country. The conversations I had with both seasoned and early-career teachers filled me with fresh perspectives. Their experiences and advice made me feel part of a larger teaching community, and it was motivating to see how others tackle similar challenges and bring creativity into their classrooms.

The opportunity to explore the incredible diversity of the Northern Territory's environments – whether swimming at Litchfield National Park, exploring the mangroves, or immersing myself in the cultural richness of Kakadu National Park – reminded me of the power of place-based learning. These experiences deepened my understanding of Indigenous culture and country, and they will undoubtedly influence how I teach topics related to the environment and cultural geography.



In all, this conference has left me feeling more inspired and equipped to take my teaching to the next level. It was not just about gaining new content knowledge or skills but about reigniting a passion for Geography and teaching as a whole. I'm deeply grateful to the GHTANT for organising such a rewarding and memorable event – it was truly a pivotal moment in my early teaching career.



### By Anne Maree Rice, Red Bend Catholic College

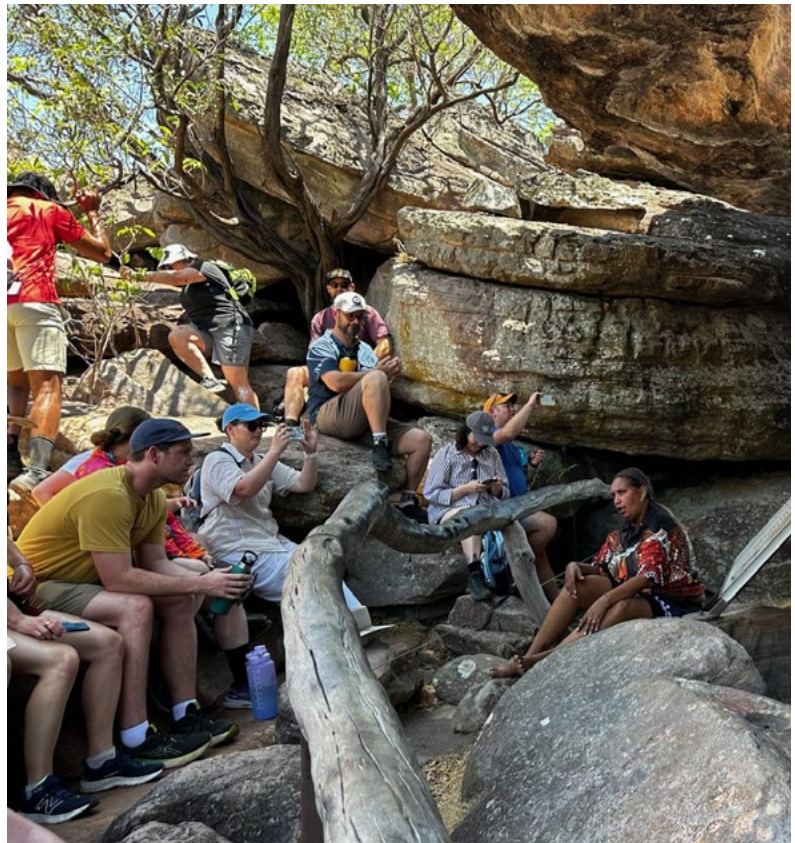
I was lucky enough to receive a scholarship from the Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) to attend the National Conference held in Darwin in the school holidays. Being an out-of-field Geography teacher, this experience has been incredibly valuable and provided many interesting sessions on a variety of topics and skills-based fieldwork.

The welcome dinner at the outdoor cinema was a great way to start the conference and the choice of film, *Wildling*, was excellent. The dinner at Crocosaurus also allowed me to touch my first crocodile (a very small one) and enjoy dinner surrounded by swimming crocodiles.

My first session was one on Geographical fieldwork with Fieldwork Connections and looking at practical ways to implement this into our programs. Using two tools, a temperature gun and a light meter app, we were shown how to use these tools to consider the liveability of our environment, be that at school or at specific locations in the community. This session provided me with a number of ideas on how to add this to our unit on Liveability and allow the students to practically engage in fieldwork and investigate and evaluate how these factors affect the liveability of a certain location.

The session on Urban Heat Islands by Susan Martin provided an interesting observation of city living and considering the impact of our urban landscape on the environment and rise in temperatures. With practical examples of radar imagery, drone footage and other tools, this topic is one that is incredibly relevant with the majority of the population living in large urban areas. The session considered the value of green spaces and planting more trees in order to limit the impact of this urbanisation.

The highlight of the conference for me was the trip to Kakadu National Park. Having never travelled to the Northern Territory, I was amazed at the vast wildlife that exists in this region.



Particularly interesting was the tour we received from Natasha Neidjie, a local Indigenous member who is the storyteller of their clan. As we ventured to all the different rock paintings, Natasha was able to tell the story of each painting, demonstrating the importance of these creation stories to their culture. We finished at the top of a rocky outcrop where the view stretched for miles. We were also lucky to have the very informed Ian Harris provide his expertise and knowledge on this trip.

There were many more interesting sessions that provided some excellent knowledge and resources. A very big thank you to the AGTA for supporting teachers and their professional development.





# GTA NSW & ACT Regional Conference

28 & 29 November 2024

The GTA NSW & ACT Regional Conference was recently held in Orange.

A range of sessions were held to support regional and remote teachers to develop skills and knowledge in delivering Geography, particularly fieldwork. The conference was organised by Vice President Keiran Bonin, who is a local teacher based at Orange High School. The Conference began with Welcome Drinks and Dinner the night before the conference. On first night, the Conference dinner was held at a nearby restaurant and attended by most of the attendees. Both of these social events provided an opportunity for professional networking and discussions in an informal setting, and also a great opportunity for teachers to get to know each other.

“Geography is not a subject, it is a life choice” was presented by Liam Callaghan from Kinross Wolaroi. He explained a multi-year project that he has been running at his school involving Geography and mountain-biking. At the inception of the project, the Mt Canobolas Mountain Bike Trail Project was being proposed in the local community. Students conducted research about the location of the proposed trail, sensitivity of the environment and varying perspectives on the project. As the project progressed, a parcel of land on school grounds was used to design and install their own mountain-bike trail. This included an examination of topography of slopes, examination of soils, and examining multiple uses of the land. And the project linked with summative assessments, Geography skills, active citizenship and gamification.



Liam Callaghan from Kinross Wolaroi

Kieran Bonin, delivered a few different presentations related to integrating fieldwork. In “The boring side of fieldwork” he discussed the reality of trying to do fieldwork within school settings and some of the barriers teachers face in integrating fieldwork effectively. This included discussions around risk assessment,

excursion approvals, managing challenging behaviour during less structured outdoor activities, and having reasonable expectations of what can be achieved on a set fieldwork excursion. In “Undertaking a Geographical Investigation” he led teachers through the Preliminary project that is part of the new senior syllabus, and provided hints and tips about engaging students and leading them through independent research. He provided teaching ideas, discussed how to integrate the project in teaching and learning programs, and relevant content links.



Kieran Bonin delivered a few different presentations





**“Implementing fieldwork in a water-based setting”** was a practical session at Ploughman’s Swamp. Ploughman’s Swamp is a stormwater harvesting system, and teachers were led through a number of simple fieldwork activities and shown how to create and use fieldwork tools using everyday items, including how to conduct a range of water tests.

Kathy Jones also provided a number of sessions: **“Using basic fieldwork tools in a land-based setting”** (practical session), **“Fieldwork inside the school”** (practical session) and **“Linking fieldwork to Geography skills.”** For the first session, teachers travelled to Pinnacle Lookout where they undertook a comparative quadrat exercise and were led through the use of a range of fieldwork tools. Kathy’s second session explore fieldwork opportunities that can be used within school grounds to explore the urban heat island effect. The session provided teachers with guidance on using different types of equipment and phone apps to gather data, e.g. light metre, decibel metre, traffic counts, and quadrats. In the theory session, links were made between 7–10 fieldwork skills and students’ learning of geographic tools in Stages 4 and 5, particularly use and interpretation of topographic maps.

Kathy Jones providing instruction to teachers about fieldwork techniques at Pinnacle Lookout

Lorraine Chaffer presented **“Fieldwork for the Human Geographer.”** She explored techniques for collecting quantitative and qualitative data for human geography-based topics as liveability and urban places. She provided an exemplar assessment task which embedded fieldwork, spatial technologies, geographical skills and tools.

Louise Swanson provided two short sessions: **“Using cross-curriculum projects to drive fieldwork”** and **“Integrating fieldwork into use of Powerful Geography.”** The first session led teachers through the idea of combining with other faculties, such as Science, to link subject content and effectively deliver fieldwork and drive large projects. The second session addressed fieldwork ideas that could be used alongside case studies in the Powerful Geography book.



Lorraine Chaffer presented “Fieldwork for the Human Geographer.”





Geography Teachers  
Association NSW & ACT

# Geography Teachers Association NSW & ACT Annual Report 2024





## President's Report – Katerina Stojanovski

The 2024 Geography Teachers Association NSW & ACT (GTANSW & ACT) Annual Report outlines several significant initiatives and developments that are currently underway within the association. These initiatives reflect our commitment to enhancing member engagement, promoting professional learning activities for geography teachers, and developing and distributing teaching resources and student materials. To allow us to operate independently, the association has invested in the construction of a new website; advancements in our IT network; the relocation of our office to Annandale, a new phone number and email address.

Key events included, the Annual Conference, Open Learning courses, the webinar program with a focus on the Stage 6 Geography course, publication of the Geography Bulletin journal, and the release of Powerful Geography 1 Case Studies for Senior Students. The K-6 and 7-10 Geography syllabuses were released this year and planning is underway for their implementation in 2027. Student participation is encouraged through the submission of projects to the Young Geographer Awards and participation in the Australian Geography Competition. The Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) held their biannual conference in Darwin which was a huge success and we hosted the Geography Big Week Out (GBWO) in the ACT.

### Membership Summary

As of October 23, our organisation has a total of 463 members. Our membership is comprised of:

- 16 Concessional Members
- 86 Personal Members
- 49 Primary Members
- 246 Schools
- 66 Preservice Teachers.

This membership base reflects our commitment to supporting a wide range of geography educators and educational institutions, fostering collaboration and professional development within our community.

### Employment of Executive Officer

A significant milestone for our organisation has been the recent appointment of a new Executive Officer – Diana Gearside. Diana brings a wealth of experience and expertise in events management. She has taken the time to get to know our members and has played a crucial role in driving our initiatives forward, enhancing operational efficiency, and serving as a primary liaison between our members and the Board. We believe that Diana's leadership will elevate GTANSW & ACT to new levels and strengthen our communications with our members.

### New Website Under Construction

One of the most exciting developments is the construction of our new website, designed to enhance user experience and accessibility. The new platform will feature a modern interface, streamlined navigation, and quality resources for our members. Key functionalities will include an integrated member and event portal, online shop, and a resource library to facilitate knowledge sharing. The aim is to launch the new site early in the new year, significantly improving our online presence.

### Moving premises

To optimise our storage capabilities and streamline operations, we recently moved to new premises in Annandale. This move provided us with an organised and secure environment for our archives and resources. The new facility offers improved accessibility and scalability, allowing us to better manage our physical assets as we grow.

### Governance

In our ongoing efforts to enhance the governance of GTANSW &ACT, we have implemented several key initiatives. First, we introduced a comprehensive councillor handbook to provide clear guidelines and resources for our councillors, promoting effective decision-making and accountability.

Additionally, we have focused on becoming more self-reliant by managing our own events and selling resources directly to our members. Direct communication with our members has been prioritised to ensure transparency and gather valuable feedback, reinforcing our commitment to a collaborative governance model. These measures collectively aim to strengthen our organisational framework and enhance member involvement.

### Professional Teachers Council NSW Awards

GTANSW & ACT would like to acknowledge the work and dedication of all teachers in educating our students. Many teachers choose to be a part of the Association's network of teachers volunteering their time to support their colleagues through initiating and developing professional learning opportunities and the creation of much needed resources. Congratulations to all who have been recognised for their outstanding service to the profession by PTC NSW.

Congratulations to Drew Collins and Dr Alex Pentz, the GTANSW &ACT recipients of the Outstanding Professional Service Award (OPSA). Your expertise and ongoing contribution to geography education over the years has been instrumental in enhancing Geography Education. We look forward to celebrating with you at the PTC NSW awards dinner in February 2025.

### Concluding Statements

The recent initiatives and events organised by the GTANSW & ACT highlight our dedication to enhancing geography education and supporting our members. The Annual Conference, AGTA conference, Geography Big Week Out, and successful GeoGatherings webinars have not only provided valuable resources and networking opportunities but have also fostered a sense of community among geography educators. As we move forward, we remain committed to building on these successes and exploring new opportunities for professional development and collaboration within our field. We look forward to another year of impactful initiatives and events that will benefit our members and the wider educational community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Diana Gearside and GTANSW &ACT Council for their many contributions in the last 12 months. Most Councillors have written a report to reflect a snapshot of their commitment this year. In reality, their work is much greater and more diverse than stated. We farewell James Harte and Ben Terrell. James has worked extensively with the e-learning team to develop the HSC Course for teachers and this year was involved in the planning for GBWO. Ben periodically monitored and updated our Scoop.it resource. We look forward to another exciting year supporting you in 2025.

### 2023–2024 GTA NSW & ACT Council

President – Katerina Stojanovski

Vice President (Immediate Past President) –  
Dr Susan Caldis

Vice President – Kieran Bonin

Vice President – Lorraine Chaffer

Vice President – Rebecca Sutcliffe

Honorary Treasurer – Dr Grant Kleeman

Councillors – Michael da Roza (ACT Representative)

Councillor – Stephanie Boden

Councillor – Drew Collins

Councillor – Dr Alex Pentz

Councillor – Martin Pluss

Coopted Councillor – James Harte

Coopted Councillor – Ben Terrell

## Activity Report – Executive Officer GTA NSW & ACT

I was delighted to join the team of hardworking Councillors in April of this year with my appointment as the Executive Officer of the GTA NSW & ACT.

My initial period of orientation and familiarisation with the role was super-charged with the staging of the Annual Conference in May. This was a wonderful opportunity to see not only the dedication, organisational skills and professionalism of the GTA Council but to speak to many GTA members and get important insights into the primary concerns and types of support our members require.

My role aims to alleviate some administrative pressure from the volunteers and to streamline and further develop the support, resources and provide advocacy for our members, increasing the efficiency and quality of the services offered.

The GTA is currently undergoing a transformation designed to increase our autonomy so that we can better understand and respond to our members' needs and expectations. This transformation has impacted all aspects of the organisation and includes:

- a change of contact details and location of the GTA office,
- a brand new website, membership and event registration and e-commerce processes – this is a work in progress!
- a refresh of our iconic logo,
- improvements in governance, finance and management processes through consultation with experts on associations matters, to boost performance.

These are very exciting and innovative times at the GTA NSW & ACT, and I am thrilled to be a part of this wonderful organisation and enthusiastic team.

## Stephanie Boden (Councillor)

As a GTA councillor I attended the planning day during the January holidays at the PTC and subsequently started the nomination process for Teacher Awards, I organised member emails and the collection of nominations during Term 1 2024. I formed a GTA panel to vote for the awards and worked with the GTA President and Vice President to choose trophies for each recipient. I presented the awards at the Annual Conference. A number of awards were presented this year, including some backdated ones that we were unable to present due to Covid restrictions in previous years. The Brock Rowe Award for Excellence in Geographical Education was awarded to Sammy Coburn for 2020, Simone Babic for 2023 and Khya Brooks for 2024. The Geoff Connelly Memorial Award, for contributions to the Geography Bulletin was awarded to Christina Kalinic. Finally, the Fellowship of the GTANSW & ACT was awarded to Dr Susan Caldis.

My Bulletin contribution included connecting with The Economist's Education Foundation (EEF) to link their resources to NSW Syllabuses. I wrote an article explaining how teachers could use these resources and how they can be applied or adapted to our topics. As a result of the connection I forged with the EEF, their website now has a 'Geographical Landing Page' which promotes geographical education globally and has been accessed by over 5000 teachers worldwide.

During the Annual Conference I met each presenter upon arrival and checked their presentations were compatible with the technology available. I introduced several presenters and gave thanks after the presentations.

I worked with a small team to recruit an Executive Officer for the GTANSW & ACT. I created a summary table so we could rank candidates and made suggestions on which applicants should proceed to interview. I formed part of the interview panel and contributed to the decision making for this position.

## Kieran Bonin – Vice President

### Young Geographer Award

The 2023 Young Geographer Award (YGA) was a success, with high-quality entries from across NSW and the ACT. However, the STEM and the Teacher Award categories had lower participation. This has been a consistent trend in the past several years. The YGA team brought this to the Council and came up with recommendations and changes. For the STEM Award, the reduced numbers are likely due to widespread confusion about Geography's role within STEM, an issue that was reflected in many submissions. This is an area we have identified and aim to address with our members moving forward by providing more clarity to where Geography fits in STEM.

Regarding the Teacher Award, the criteria were revised to focus on how teachers support "Young Geographers" in the classroom. As a result, we have already seen a 500% increase in nominations for the 2024 awards. With entries now submitted, we are in the process of evaluating the awards, and the winners will be announced in Bulletin 1 next year.

### Regional Conference

This year we have decided to support our regional teachers by hosting a Regional Conference in Orange NSW. The Conference will focus on a common area of need which is fieldwork. We were able to lock in some high-quality speakers from local Orange teachers all the way to international scholars.

One of the main changes for this Conference was to trial hosting the Conference in-house. This decision was made to lower conference costs and streamline some processes. This meant tickets, advertising, graphic design and emailing were done by the Regional Conference team and with the help of our Executive Officer. The Conference will take place in November in which we can reflect on the effectiveness of these changes.

## Dr Susan Caldis – Vice President (Immediate Past President)

### Report from the Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA)

Throughout 2024, the AGTA Board have met in person on lands of the Gadigal People on 18 - 19 May 2024 also on Larakia Country on 2 and 5 October 2024. Throughout 2024 we have also met on multiple occasions via email. We acknowledge the many Countries from which we come together, and from those upon which we reside, work, enjoy our leisure activities, and notice the interconnected, changing features of place and environment across scale and over time.

As a Board we are cognisant of challenging facing various affiliates – it is not one size fits all but there are commonalities of experience across our contexts. During 2023 – 2024 solutions focused discussion revolves around how best to support out-of-field teachers of geography, how to increase viability of professional learning offered by each affiliate, and how to envision resource development opportunities suitable for the national scope of work in the first instance, and then be adapted for affiliate uptake.

Several affiliates raised concerns about the viability of offering professional learning (online and/or in person) due to declining member retention, registration for the event but non-attendance, reduced timing options (schools reluctant to release teachers during the school day due to teacher shortage; weekends and after school hours are not always achievable from affiliate capacity), out-of-field teachers who may not 'see themselves' in the professional learning offering. Early actions include:

1. National circulation and promotion of individual affiliate events; opening affiliate events to interstate attendees (explicitly, has mostly been implicit);
2. Offering member-prices to interstate attendees if they are members of their state/territory affiliate;



3. A request for affiliate websites to be reviewed for explicit inclusion in the front-text / landing page, and professional learning events for visibility of out-of-field teachers / those teaching beyond specialisation / those new to teaching geography

In addition to our usual activities, the AGTA Board engaged with the following key initiatives during 2024: GeoNight, AGTA response to ACARA Senior Secondary: Geography, New resource development; Geography's Big Week Out,

### 1. GeoNight

'Around the world in 60 minutes' was the first ever GeoNight event to be hosted by AGTA. The event was held on 12 April 2024 via zoom between 7.30pm – 8.30pm AEDT. The event comprised of three lightning talks which included opportunities for audience interaction through questions posed in the chat facility and in verbal discussion. The speakers were Associate Professor Alaric Maude (Australia), Dr Emma Rawling Smith (England) and Dr Susan Pike (Ireland). The lightning talks focused on two recently published books: *Thinking Geographically: A guide to the core concepts for teachers* (Maude) and *Encountering ideas of place in education* (Rawling Smith & Pike) which showcased how to use and apply the concepts to think geographically, and how to engage with and implement place-based education.

The event had three objectives to: (i) To foster international connections between geography educators in school-based and initial teacher education settings; (ii) To demonstrate the relevance and importance of geography's distinctiveness; (iii) To promote recent publications in geography education.

There were 30 attendees who joined GeoNight from Australia, United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany, New Zealand. Attendees were all connected to geography education in secondary school settings or initial teacher education from across career stages from pre-service through to experienced and retired. The AGTA Board would like to thank members of the GeoNight organising team for joining our event.

### 2. AGTA response to the ACARA review of Senior Secondary: Geography:

ACARA invited two AGTA representatives to be part of the ACARA Senior Secondary forum for revisions to the Australian Curriculum Senior Secondary: Geography. Julie Davis (GTAQ) and A/Prof Jeana Kriewaldt (editor for *Geographical Education*, journal of AGTA) are the AGTA representatives, noting that Dr Susan Caldis and A/Prof Alaric Maude are the representatives for the Institute of Australian Geographers at their request. Currently, feedback has been invited only around the front-matter documents related to curriculum structure and the rationale. Feedback provided from AGTA to ACARA includes strong support for the retention of 'curiosity and wonder' in the Rationale as something that resonates strongly with teachers; early identification of the underpinning concepts and identification of such throughout the front-matter and upcoming curriculum content; explicit inclusion of concepts, inquiry and fieldwork, geographical tools or skills in the Aims of the curriculum as being representative of the distinctive core of geography's content and practice; emphasis on environmental, economic and social aspects of geography

### 3. Initiatives for resource development

The AGTA Board are pursuing two initiatives for resource development. Both Nick Hutchinson (a Past AGTA Chair and Don Biddle Award recipient), and Associate Professor Alaric Maude (a long-term friend of the AGTA Board and Don Biddle Award recipient), approached the AGTA Board and joined us at our May meeting about developing teacher-ready professional learning resources, and classroom-ready units of work for students to support implementation of the Australian Curriculum v9.

For the resources under development by A/Prof Alaric Maude, he is crafting as lead author and seeking input and refinement through a co-design process with members of the AGTA Board. Working titles for the package include 'Curriculum Insights' or 'Unpacking the Australian Curriculum: Geography'. Currently, the AGTA Board are reviewing and providing input into *Water in the World*. We are anticipating a late 2025, early 2026 publication.

Nick Hutchinson provided a professional learning session to the Board about research, theory and practice around decolonising classroom practice in geography. Ideas were discussed about (i) developing a resource around Human Wellbeing suitable for national uptake and state/territory adaptation where appropriate, to highlight inclusive and decolonised content delivery and pedagogical practice (ii) decolonising practice as a future direction to be led by AGTA, drawing on key research from and learnings gained from the work of GAUK, AAG and IAG. Nick has written a paper for the 2024 edition of Geographical Education based on the professional learning session he presented to the AGTA Board.

### 4. Geography's Big Week Out

Geography's Big Week Out is being hosted by GTANSW&ACT in Canberra and the Snowy Mountains region between 29 September – 4 October 2024. Michael da Roza (ACT representative on the AGTA Board) designed and lead the 2024 program.

## Lorraine Chaffer – Vice President

### Powerful Geography 1 and 2 Update

Powerful Geography 1 was finalised and published in Term 3, a few months later than anticipated due to delays across the production process. The resource has been very well received and the first print run of 600 copies has almost been sold with a second print run of 400 copies ordered. Some schools have ordered class sets and are using the book as their main teaching resource. Powerful Geography 2 will be published during Term 4. Again, delays at different stages of the production process and other demands on the writing and production team have meant the book was unable to be ready to start term 4. The author team are providing support for teachers through an Authors' Blog through which teaching ideas and resources are shared. For the Year 12 course this includes teaching and learning programs for each case study in Powerful Geography 2. Purchasers of the book will have access to other resources through a Google Drive. The author team of Lorraine Chaffer, Louise Swanson, Khya Brooks, Karen Bowden, Matt Carroll and Liam Callaghan (Book 2) has produced detailed and well-resourced case studies that provide teachers with new options when selecting case studies for senior geography. The production team of Mary-Jo O'Rourke (Editor), Guy Holt (illustrator) and Kerry Cooke (Designer) are to be commended on the high quality of the final publications.

### Annual Conference

The two-day Annual Conference was held in May at Rydges Hotel, World Square. This event was exceptionally well attended with almost 200 participants each day and most attending the full two days, illustrating the importance and value of face-to-face professional learning.

The Thursday program catered for teachers of Geography 7–10 with every workshop proving popular and packed out. The Keynote speaker was Kurt Iveson from Sydney University. Literacy, AI, innovative school programs and teaching ideas, spatial technologies, water and fieldwork were among the topic areas covered by presentations and workshops.

The Friday program focused on the new senior geography syllabus that began implementation in 2023. The day concentrated on the content areas for year 12 and included guest presenters Luke Foster and Michelle Leishman who spoke on Ecosystems and Global Biodiversity and Ricardo Paulini on Urban Heat Islands. Participants were able to record their notes using the Conference Bulletin journal provided and went away with classroom posters specifically designed and printed for the event. A small number of exhibitors provided teachers with additional resources. The Annual Conference is one of Council's main sources of revenue used to fund other programs during the year.

## Drew Collins – Councillor

This year I have been involved in as many GTA initiatives as possible. Attending meetings, with active involvement, was part of the interview panel for Executive Officer Role, and I presented a skills session at Annual Conference, which also included helping to set up and pack down for the two days and associated support of GTA President and Vice-President and conference convenor, and support of delegates including excursion. Editing the Powerful Geography series 1 and 2 has also been part of my 2023/24 undertaking in a non-paid capacity. I have coordinated Bulletin articles from my school staff this year. I also organised a webinar which unfortunately didn't get the numbers to make it worthwhile for the University of Newcastle presenter. I hope to continue my commitment to GTA given the time constraints and capacity I currently manage within my school context.

## Michael da Roza – Councillor and ACT Representative

This past year has seen the GBWO come to Canberra with students completing their fieldwork in both Kosciuszko National Park and in Canberra in September/October 2024. In my role as the ACT representative to the GTANSW&ACT, I have continued engaging with and supporting ACT teachers of Geography through the organisation and promotion of teacher professional learning at Geoscience Australia and through the distribution of a survey that will provide ACT teachers with an opportunity to tell us what they need and want from their Association. Assisting at the GTANSW & ACT two-day Conference, taking part in planning days, contributing to our monthly Teams meetings, as well as attendance at AGTA Board meetings is both rewarding and important work that keeps the ACT teachers connected and represented. In addition, as a Professional Teacher's Council Board member, I am also in a position to promote and represent the outstanding work carried out by the GTANSW & ACT for its members.

## Dr Alex Pentz – Councillor

### GeoGatherings Webinars

During Term 3, I conceived and hosted a series of networking webinars whose primary target was teachers of the new Stage 6 syllabus. The aim was to collectively unpack the components of the syllabus and discuss ideas and questions in relation to the syllabus. I presented a framework of suggested programs and fieldwork options for the three topics in the syllabus, Ecosystems, Rural and Urban Places, and Global Sustainability as a starting point for the very lively discussion that ensued. Teachers were allocated breakout rooms where they were able to ask their colleagues for their specific interpretations of the structure and content of the syllabus and provide reassurance that they were all "on the same page". A PowerPoint presentation I created, and resources generated "live" during the webinars, were distributed to attendees. It was a well-attended and well received professional learning event as exemplified in the positive feedback received from the evaluation survey.

## Martin Pluss – Councillor

I have contributed to the extent I have given family and profession teaching commitments.

Geography Bulletin: two articles were provided for the Bulletin.

Meeting Attendance: I believe I have attended all but one meeting. I hope I have been able to provide institutional knowledge.

Conference: I enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to provide support for the Conference over two days.

Administration: I was pleased to assist in the interview process for the employment of the Executive Officer.

## Rebecca Sutcliffe – Vice President

In 2024, I actively contributed to the Geography Teachers Association NSW & ACT through a variety of key initiatives. I co-coordinated the 2-day Annual Conference in May, which hosted over 200 teachers from across NSW and ACT. This involved managing venue logistics, coordinating presenters specifically for Years 7–10, providing delegate support, and handling the associated administrative tasks. I am also part of the planning process for the 2025 Annual Conference.

Additionally, I managed the Association's social media platforms, including Instagram and Facebook, ensuring they were regularly updated and that member queries were responded to in a timely manner. I represented the NSW Geography Teachers Association at the Australian Geography Teachers Association meeting in Sydney in May, where I participated actively in discussions shaping the national landscape of geography education. I co-hosted and actively engaged with participants in webinars, such as the GeoGatherings, providing professional development and networking opportunities for geography educators.

Moreover, I was involved in the marking process for the 2023 Young Geographer Awards, supporting the recognition of emerging talent in geography. My contributions further extended to participating in focus groups that provided feedback on the new NESA 7-10 Geography Draft Syllabus and the K-6 HSIE Draft Syllabus, ensuring that the voices of geography educators were represented in curriculum development.

## The E-Learning Team

### Open Learning Report

The GTANSW & ACT's online learning using the Open Learning platform continued to bubble along in 2023/2024.

As the table below shows, across some busier and quieter times, \$7,562.72 of gross income payments were received from the 10 or so courses running, including Place and Liveability, Landscapes and Landforms, Intro to Mapping, and the Analysing the HSC Exam series.

### 2023/2024 Online Learning

#### Income Summary

Item	Income Payments
July 2023	\$258.00
August 2023	\$493.77
September 2023	\$555.00
October 2023	\$1,488.00
November 2023	\$858.98
December 2023	\$1,032.00
January 2024	\$0.00
February 2024	\$774.00
March 2024	\$903.00
April 2024	\$455.98
May 2024	\$645.00
June 2024	\$98.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,562.72</b>

This is likely to drop given the changes to NESA accreditation requirements for teachers, with teacher identified hours now able to be used for all PD hours needed.

This was also the first year in the recent phase where the HSC Review PD was run external to Open Learning. Given one more year of the old syllabus examination, it is suggested that the similar non-OL approach happens again this year. But ahead of March 2026, following the first new-syllabus HSC examination, the GTANSW&ACT leadership and Council could again consider the Open Learning platform for a post-HSC review.



## GTA NSW & ACT Treasurer's Report 2024

### GTA NSW & ACT Financial Report October 2024

**Operating surplus** for 2023-24: \$11,089.00

Total income: \$248,009.00

Total expenses: \$236,920.00

Current balance (25 October 2024): \$241,929.47

#### Main sources of income:

Conference \$111,288.00

Copyright \$11,617.00

Events \$28,381.00

Grant \$500.00

Membership \$81,817.00

Sales \$13,012.00

#### Main expenses:

Cost of Goods \$16,294.00

Admin. \$5,089.00

Auditor \$2,000.00

Bookkeeper \$20,658.00

Capitation \$9,252.00

Conference \$66,665.00

Insurance \$1,914.00

Graphic design \$8,309.00

Rent \$17,347.00

Secretariat \$22,982.00

Subscriptions \$10,952.00

Travel \$5,015.00

Wages and salaries \$10,385.00

Website \$5,015.00

Workshops and events \$27,943.00

Total members' funds: \$438,122.00

(Dr) Grant Kleeman  
Treasurer

## 2023 ACT State of the Environment Report

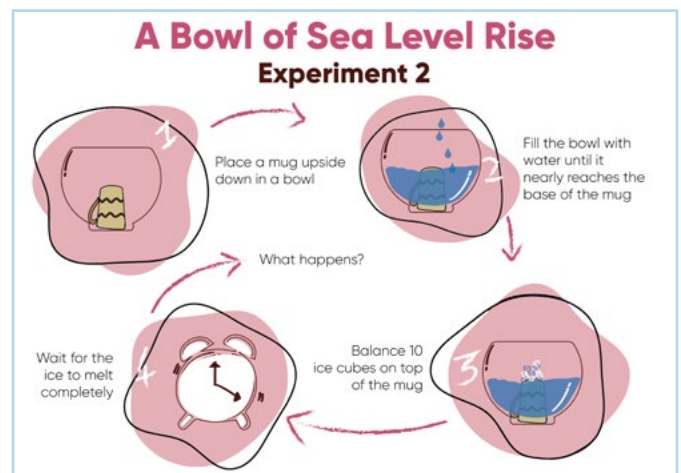
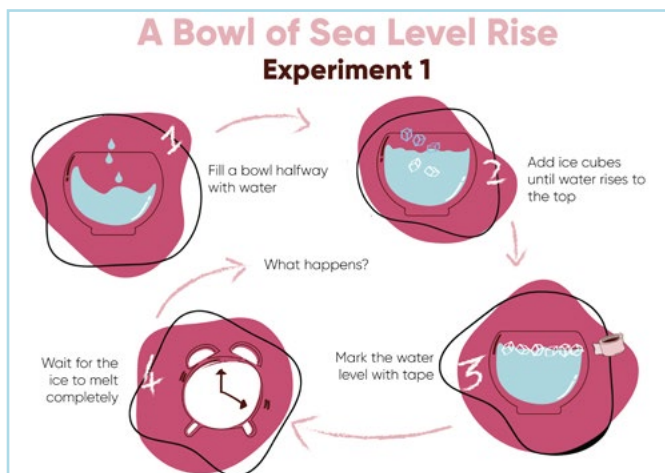
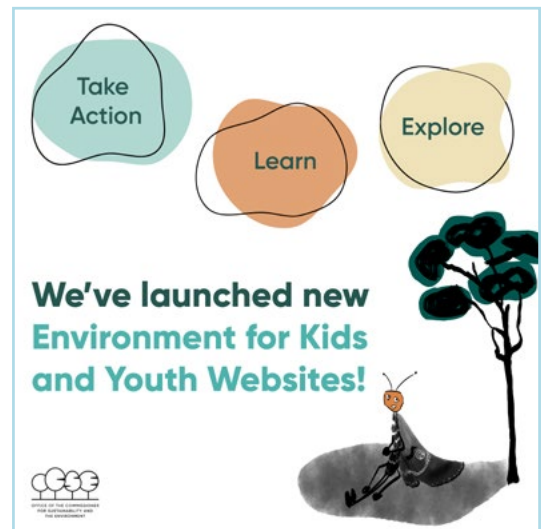
by Sean Grimes

The Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment believes that everyone has the right to local environmental information.

That's why we've developed two special online versions of our [2023 ACT State of the Environment Report](#) — one for primary school students, and one for high school students. They contain experiments, games, stories, teacher resources and much more.

- The [Environment for Kids](#) website is for students in Years 4-6 and contains content on five themes – climate change, urban trees, biodiversity, waterways, and a brand new section on waste.
- The [Environment for Youth](#) website is for students in Years 7-10. It presents more comprehensive information across 10 themes, including two brand new sections on circular economy and Canberra's growing urban area. It also features a range of environmental stories showcasing inspiring young people and schools in the ACT.

It is hoped that these educational resources will equip young people with knowledge and tools to help our environment thrive in the ACT. If you have any feedback or suggestions we'd love to hear from you at [envcomm@act.gov.au](mailto:envcomm@act.gov.au).



### Interactive Learning

Features a wide range of activities



### Celebrates Youth Initiatives

Promotes stories of inspiring young Canberrans, schools and community groups in the ACT



### Hands-On

Focuses on what young people can do to protect their local environment





## GTA Nominations for Council 2024 – 2025

### Elections to the GTA NSW & ACT Council took place at the recent AGM.

Those elected into these position assist in the organising of events, programs, projects and publications for the association or play a role in the management of the association. A list of Councillors is below:

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>
<b>PRESIDENT</b>	Katerina Stojanovski
<b>VICE PRESIDENT (IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT)</b>	Dr Susan Caldis
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	Kieran Bonin
<b>VICE PRESIDENT (&amp; ACT REPRESENTATIVE)</b>	Michael Da Roza
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	Rebecca Sutcliffe
<b>HONORARY TREASURER</b>	Dr Grant Kleeman
<b>MINUTES SECRETARY</b>	Vacant
<b>EDITOR</b>	Louise Swanson
<b>PUBLIC OFFICER</b>	Dr Grant Kleeman
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Stephanie Boden
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Lorraine Chaffer
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Alan Cizzio
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Sam Coburn
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Drew Collins
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Bianca Mangioni
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Sidse Farrimond
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Dr Alexandra Pentz
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Martin Pluss
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Anna Roberts
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Nicole Ryan
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	Ella Williamson

*NOTE: 15 COUNCILLORS FROM WHICH HONORARY TREASURER, MINUTES SECRETARY AND EDITOR ARE DRAWN*

<b>CO-OPTED COUNCILLORS (UP TO 10 POSITIONS)</b>	Vacant
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*NOTE: CAN CO-OPT UP TO 10; CO-OPTED STATUS HAS A 2 YEAR MAXIMUM TIMEFRAME*





AUSTRALIAN  
GEOGRAPHY  
COMPETITION

**Save the date!**

**Australian Geography Competition**  
**7 – 21 May 2025**



# Advice To Contributors

## Geography Bulletin guidelines

**1. Objective:** The *Geography Bulletin* is the quarterly journal of The Geography Teachers' Association of NSW & ACT Inc. The role of the *Geography Bulletin* is to disseminate up-to-date geographical information and to widen access to new geographic teaching ideas, methods and content. Articles of interest to teachers and students of geography in both secondary and tertiary institutions are invited, and contributions of factually correct, informed analyses, and case studies suitable for use in secondary schools are particularly welcomed.

**2. Content:** Articles, not normally exceeding 5,000 words, should be submitted to the GTA NSW & ACT Office by email [editor@gtanswact.org.au](mailto:editor@gtanswact.org.au). Submissions can also be sent directly to the editor: Louise Swanson ([editor@gtanswact.org.au](mailto:editor@gtanswact.org.au)). Articles are welcomed from tertiary and secondary teachers, students, business and government representatives. Articles may also be solicited from time to time. Articles submitted will be evaluated according to their ability to meet the objectives outlined above.

**3. Format:** Digital submission in Word format.

- Tables should be on separate pages, one per page, and figures should be clearly drawn, one per page, in black on opaque coloured background, suitable for reproduction.
- Photographs should be in high resolution digital format. An indication should be given in the text of approximate location of tables, figures and photographs.
- Every illustration needs a caption.
- Photographs, tables and illustrations sourced from the internet must acknowledge the source and have a URL link to the original context.

Note: Please try to limit the number of images per page to facilitate ease of reproduction by teachers.

Diagrams created using templates should be saved as an image for ease of incorporation into the Bulletin.

All assessment or skills tasks should have an introduction explaining links to syllabus content and outcomes. A Marking Guideline for this type of article is encouraged.

**4. Title:** The title should be short, yet clear and descriptive. The author's name should appear in full, together with a full title of position held and location of employment.

**5. Covering Letter:** As email with submitted articles. If the manuscript has been submitted to another journal, this should be stated clearly.

**6. Photo of Contributor:** Contributors may enclose a passport-type photograph and a brief biographical statement as part of their article.

**7. References** should follow the conventional author-date format:

Abbott, B. K. (1980) *The historical and geographical development of Muswellbrook* Newcastle: Hunter Valley Press.

Harrison, T. L. (1973a) *Railway to Jugiong* Adelaide: The Rosebud Press. (2nd Ed.)

**8. Spelling** should follow the Macquarie Dictionary, and Australian place names should follow the Geographical Place Names Board for the appropriate state.

## Refereeing

All suitable manuscripts submitted to the *Geography Bulletin* are subject to the process of review. The authors and contributors alone are responsible for the opinions expressed in their articles and while reasonable checks are made to ensure the accuracy of all statements, neither the editor nor the Geography Teachers' Association of NSW & ACT Inc accepts responsibility for statements or opinions expressed herein.

## Books for review should be sent to:

The GTA NSW & ACT Council  
PO Box 315, Annandale NSW 2038.

## Editions

There are four bulletins each year – two published each semester. Special Editions are created on need.

## Notice to Advertisers

'Geography Bulletin' welcomes advertisements concerning publications, resources, workshops, etc. relevant to geography education.

- FULL PAGE (26 x 18cm) – \$368.50  
Special issues \$649.00
- HALF PAGE (18 x 13cm or 26 x 8.5cm) – \$214.50  
Special Issues \$382.80
- QUARTER PAGE (13 x 8.5cm or 18 x 6.5cm) – \$132.00  
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- All prices include GST

## Advertising bookings should be directed to:

GTA NSW & ACT Office  
Telephone: (02) 9052 6451  
Email: [admin@gtanswact.org.au](mailto:admin@gtanswact.org.au)



Geography Teachers  
Association NSW & ACT

# GEOGRAPHY BULLETIN