

The August 2008 meeting of the Advisory Committee for the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA) was held at Picton, near [Thirlmere Lakes](#) and [Nattai](#) National Parks with a focus on community engagement and participation.



Advisory Committee members and observers at Gibber Gonyah, Stonequarry Lodge, Picton

Professor Stuart Hill from the University of Western Sydney hosted an engaging workshop on community participation and how the Advisory Committee might work more closely with the local communities of the areas they visit for their quarterly meetings.

The Committee learned that the Greater Blue Mountains is now on the [Priority Assessment List](#) for the [National Heritage List](#), bringing possible re-nomination to the World Heritage List for additional cultural, scenic and geomorphic values, one step closer.

The Committee resolved, in response to recent media regarding the push for increased tourism in NPWS, *“that World Heritage has a significant and important role as a tourist destination. We believe that increased sensitive nature-based ecotourism is indeed possible in the GBMWA, **provided** the key underlying rationale is one of respecting and protecting the natural, scientific, aesthetic and cultural values of the area.”*



At the meeting, the Committee nominated the Chair, Joan Domicelj, as a member of the forthcoming Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (February 2009) to be hosted by the Commonwealth government.

The Committee and observers participated in a tour of Thirlmere Lakes led by Paul Downie and Nathan Cattell from the Nattai Area. Glenda Chalker provided an historical overview.

The November 2008 meeting will be held at Lithgow assessing implementation of the Strategic Plan and assessing a number of issues around Newnes Plateau.

The GBMWA Advisory Committee is made up of scientific, technical, Aboriginal and community members appointed by the State and Commonwealth Environment Ministers. The Strategic Plan for the Area is used by the Committee to guide its operations and in providing advice to those Ministers regarding issues relevant to the Area.

The Advisory Committee meets quarterly in different locations around the million hectares of spectacular national parks and reserves that comprise the GBMWA, recognised and protected for its outstanding universal values.

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