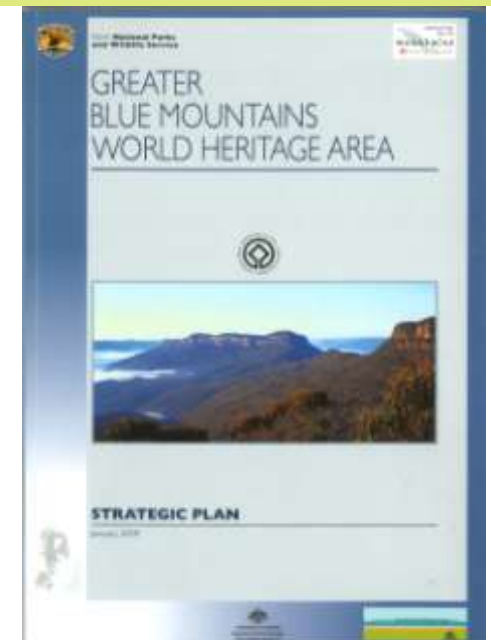


# Urban planning's contribution to conservation of natural protected areas:

The views of communities living in the interface between urban settlements and a natural world heritage area

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- › Presentation of findings of a research project:
  - Planning for the interface between natural world heritage areas and cities
  - Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, Australia
- › World heritage areas are unique designation of protected areas
- › Application to protected areas, whatever designation, near cities. Cities as restorers.
- › Exploring the connections that residents may have to unique areas
- › Successful management of the interface and conservation of protected areas.

- › Increasing urbanisation  
(United Nations, 2008)
- › Increasing pressure on natural places (Beatley, 2000)
  - increased usage
  - development along interface
    - stormwater
    - feral species
    - increased risk of bushfire
    - fragmentation of ecological corridors
    - loss of natural buffers



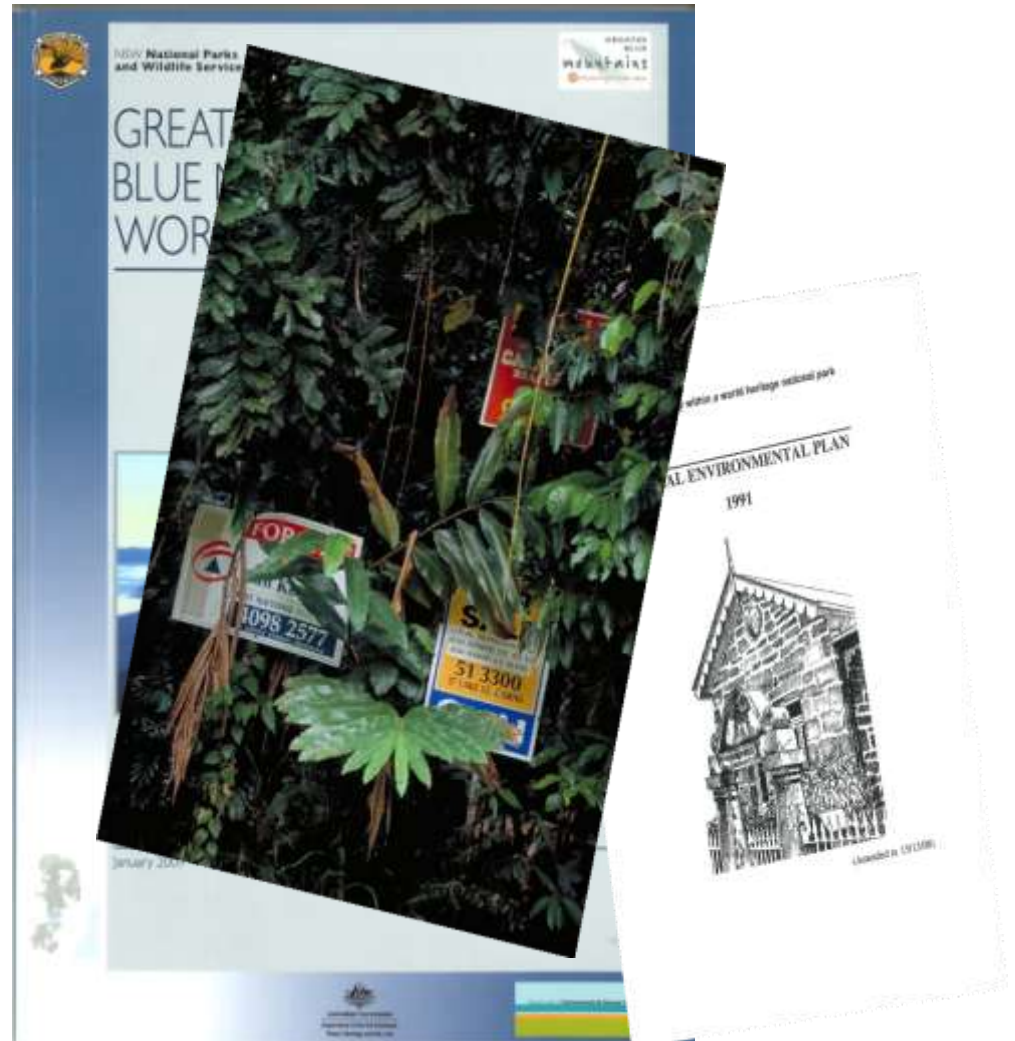
- Reliance on nature = an interrelatedness between nature and cities
  - water catchment
  - resources
  - social, cultural, spiritual benefits
- Ecological sustainable development (Raberg, 1997)
- Cities' role in conservation (Beatley 2000; Tryzna, 2003)



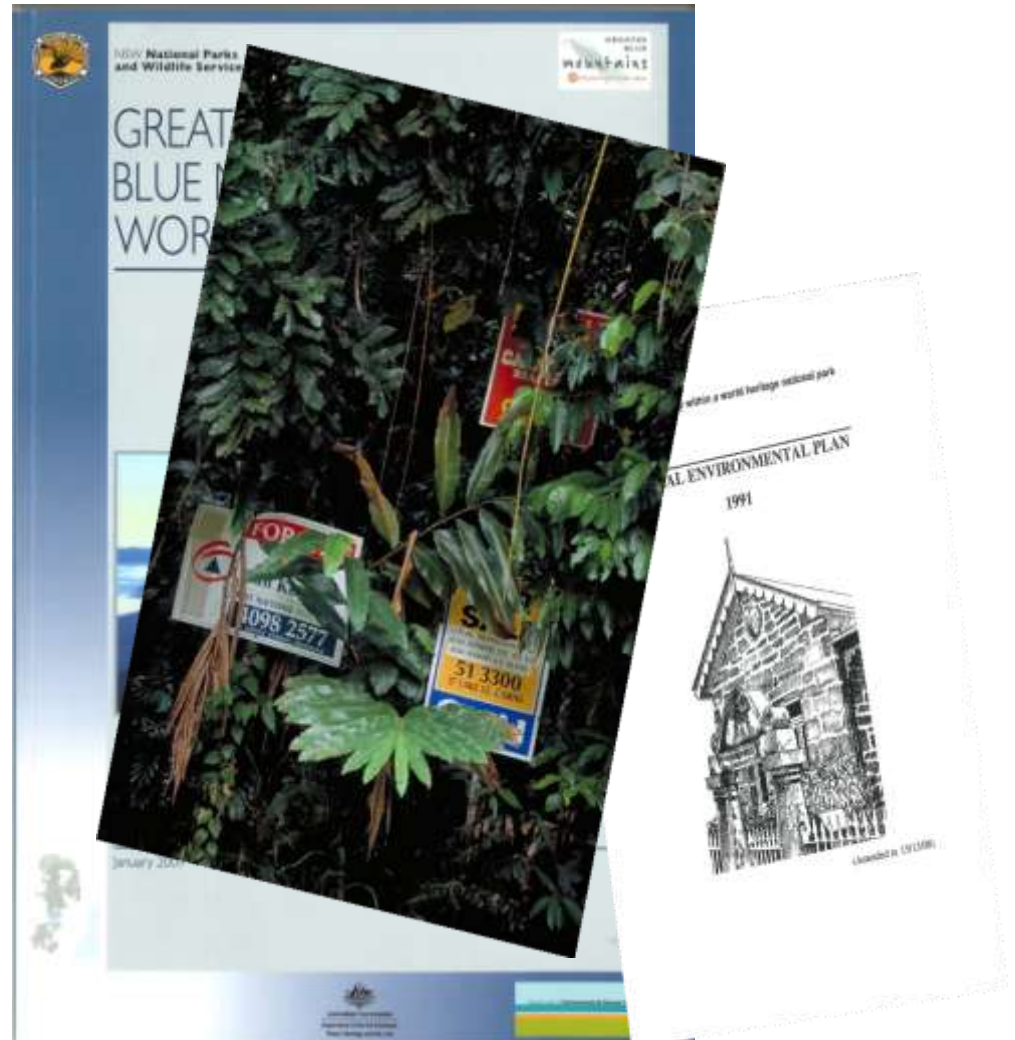
- Protected area management and urban planning frameworks
- Protected area management
  - Designation
    - World Heritage
    - Dedicated authorities, plans of management
    - Beyond the boundary approach needed (Brody, Carrasco, & Highfield, 2003)



- Urban Planning
  - Local land use authority
  - Higher level of government setting policy and legislation
  - Technical land use plans
  - International treaties - *Convention Concerning The Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*



- Urban Planning
  - buffer/transitional zones eg biospheres (Kozlowski & Peterson, 2005, Watson & Sanders 1997)
  - ecosystem frameworks/biodiversity corridors
  - cultural landscapes, local heritage listing (Hamin, 2002)
  - rural – agricultural – protected area applications
  - other land use controls such as lot size, density, permissible uses – significant controls for urban development



- Local community and conservation
  - ecological sustainable development: social component
    - connection to places, sense of value
  - effective community participation important for protected areas (Beresford & Phillips, 2000; Gurrán, 2005)
  - improving relationship between parks and people starts with understanding the community's perceptions



Wongalara, Northern Territory  
Photo: EcoPix

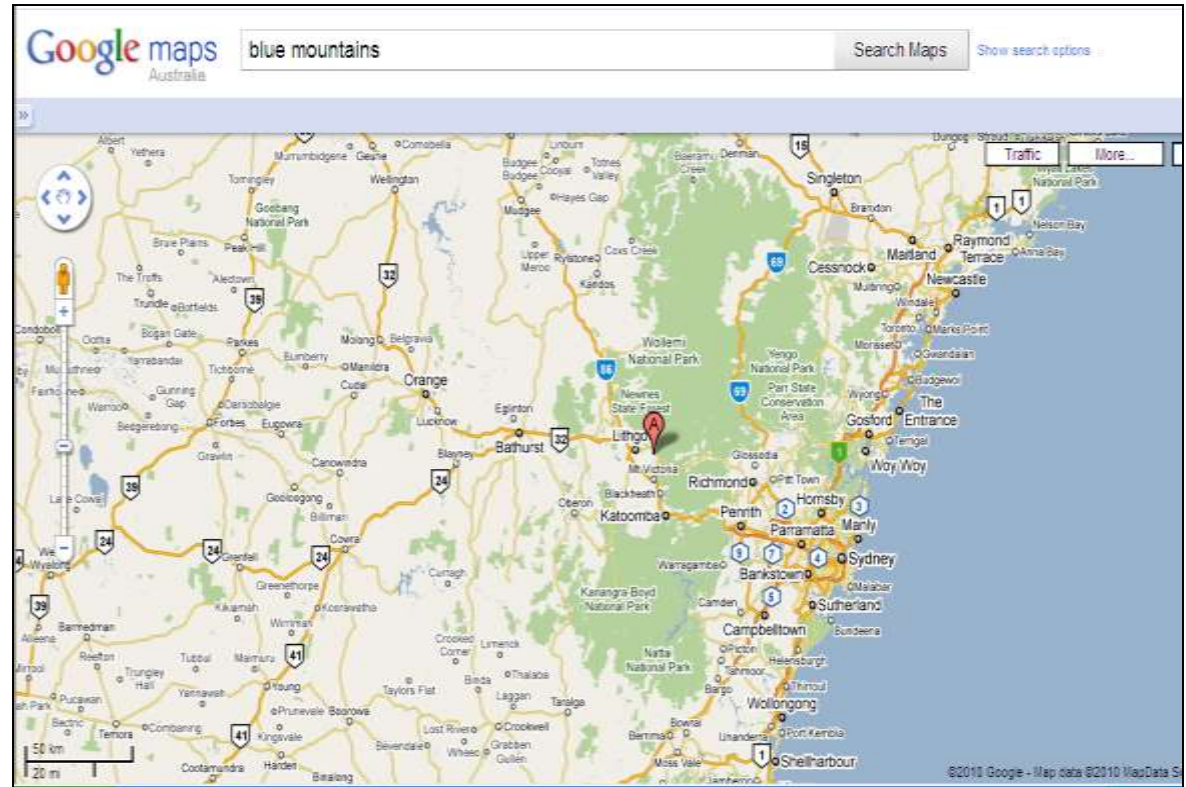
<http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/getting-involved/community.html> 6 08 10



- In the context of urban living and natural world heritage:
- What does world heritage mean for communities living near or in natural WHAs?
- What is the community's view of planning for conservation for natural WHAs adjacent to cities?

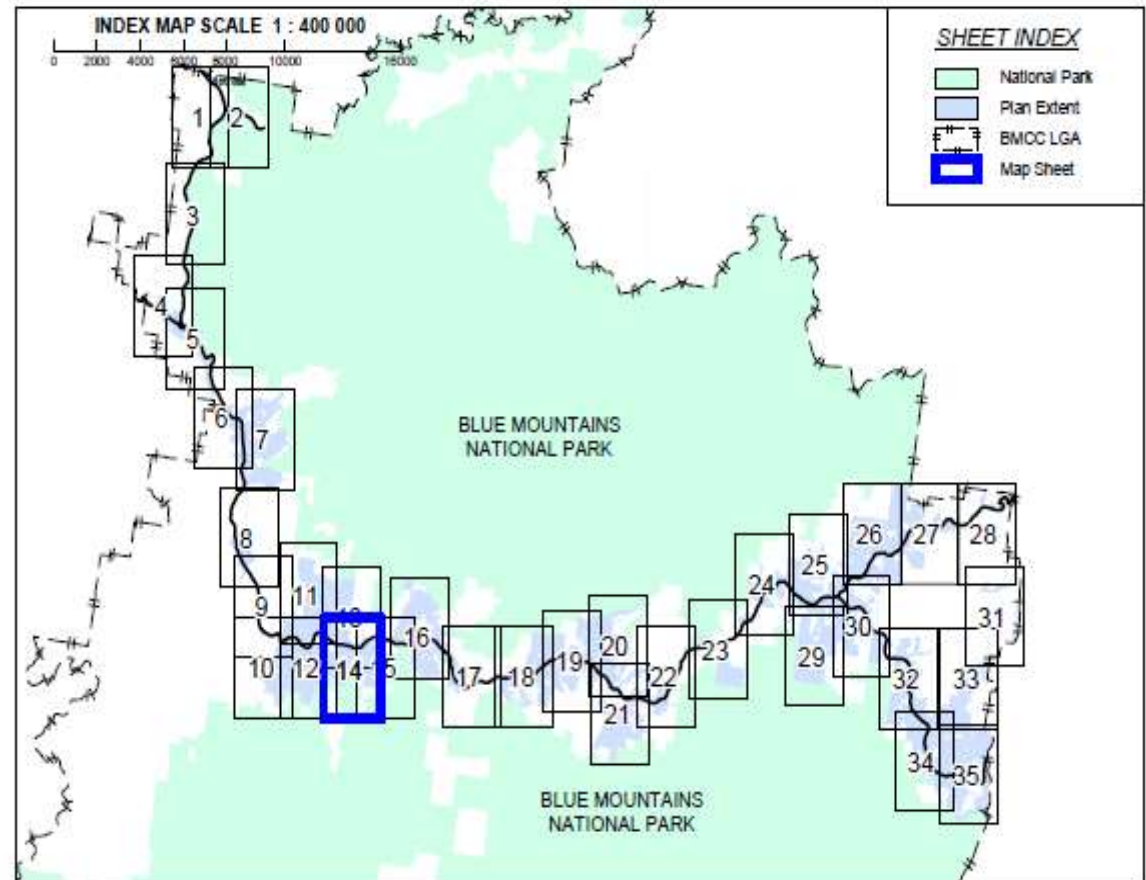
## › Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area

- 100 km west of Sydney city centre
- >4 million people conurbation of Sydney
- comprises 8 protected areas managed by the state government
- bounded by 13 local government areas

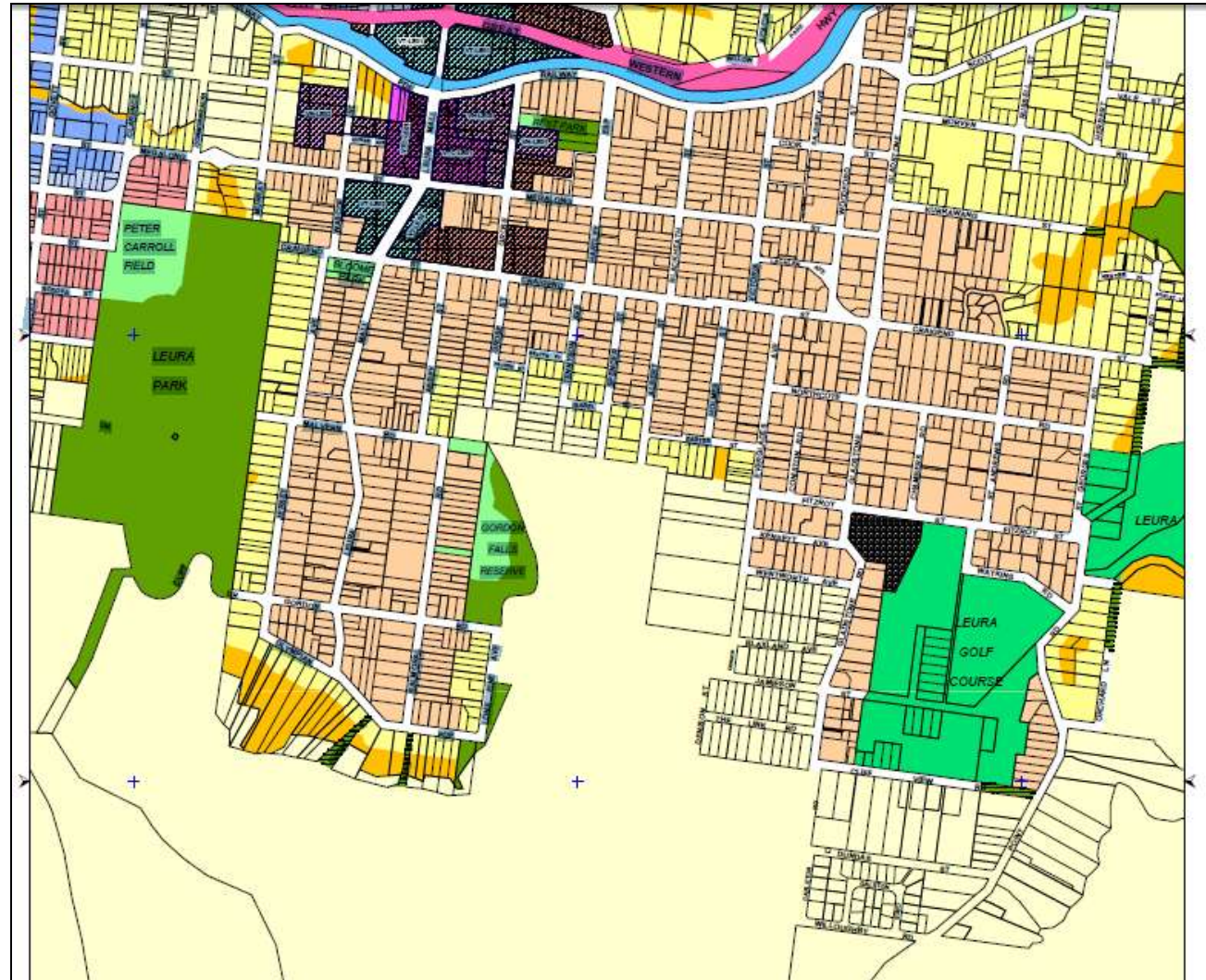


<http://maps.google.com.au/> accessed 6.08.10

- Blue Mountains Local Government Area
- 27 towns/villages along east-west ridge
- approx 73000 residents
- part of the Sydney metropolitan area



- narrow along ridge
- escarpments, steep drop-off into valleys



- Towns and villages relatively close together
- ‘the bush’ provides natural buffer between towns – adding to scenic quality



## › Purpose:

- identify the attitudes and opinions of the residents towards the Blue Mountains National Park, its listing as a natural world heritage area and their views of what conservation issues face the area.

## › The questionnaire:

- frequency of visits to the park and types of activities undertaken;
- awareness of world heritage listing;
- impact of the listing, if any, upon the residents' attitudes to the park;
- the most important issues facing the park, whether greater protection was required and, if so, what?

# Household questionnaire

- › random household questionnaire – survey method
- › communities in ‘iconic’ areas in the “Upper Blue Mountains”.
- › pilot + 1000 distributed = n:171 (n=163, return by post)

Research Questionnaire – Thankyou for participating

Do you live in this house permanently or live in this house as a regular ‘weekender’ or holiday house? If yes, please complete this questionnaire.

Your opinion is valuable.

Instructions to complete: Please use a pen (black or blue ink). Read each question and either tick the appropriate box or write down your opinion in the space provided.

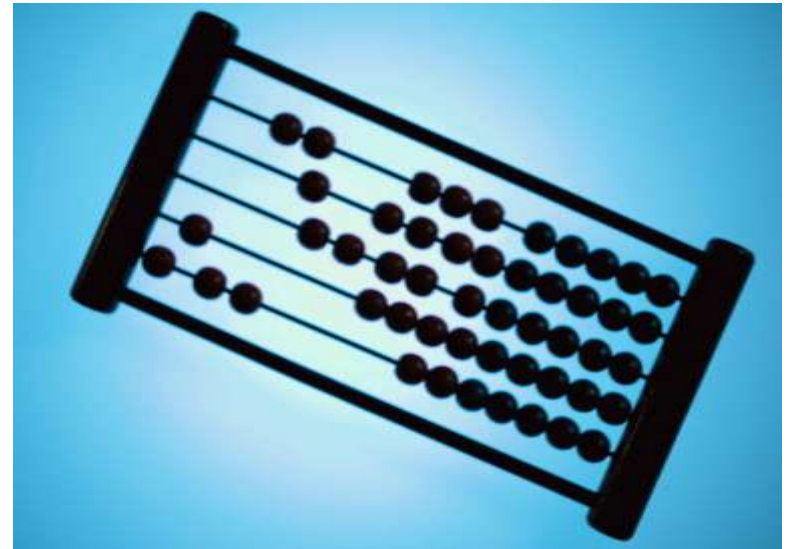
Fold and place the completed form in the reply paid envelope provided and put it in the post. No stamp is required. Thank you!

The questionnaire starts here:

Part A	
<b>Question 1:</b> On average, how often do you go to Blue Mountains National Park? Please tick one box	
I. at least once a day	<input type="checkbox"/>
II. a few times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
III. a few times per month	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV. a few times per year	<input type="checkbox"/>
V. less than once a year	<input type="checkbox"/>
VI. never	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Question 2:</b> What are the main activities that you take part in when you visit the Blue Mountains National Park? Please tick. You can tick more than one box	
I. enjoy the view	<input type="checkbox"/>
II. picnicking/BBQ	<input type="checkbox"/>
III. partying	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV. walking	<input type="checkbox"/>
V. fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>
VI. camping	<input type="checkbox"/>
VII. sitting/relaxing	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIII. cultural activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
IX. employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
X. volunteer activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
XI. other: Please write here:	
<b>Question 3:</b> Did you know that the Blue Mountains National Park was a world heritage area? Please tick	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Question 4	No <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Part B

## › Analysis:

- SPSS software
- Frequencies
- Cross tabulations
- Content analysis of open-ended questions





## › Park visitation and uses

- all but one visit the park
- all for social, cultural or recreational activities
- 12% did work in the park
- 7% did volunteer work eg weeding, planting, rubbish removal



Person on rock:

<http://www.google.com.au/images?q=tbn:mQdMpHrAEwm9aM::www.theodora.com/wfb/> accessed 10.08.10

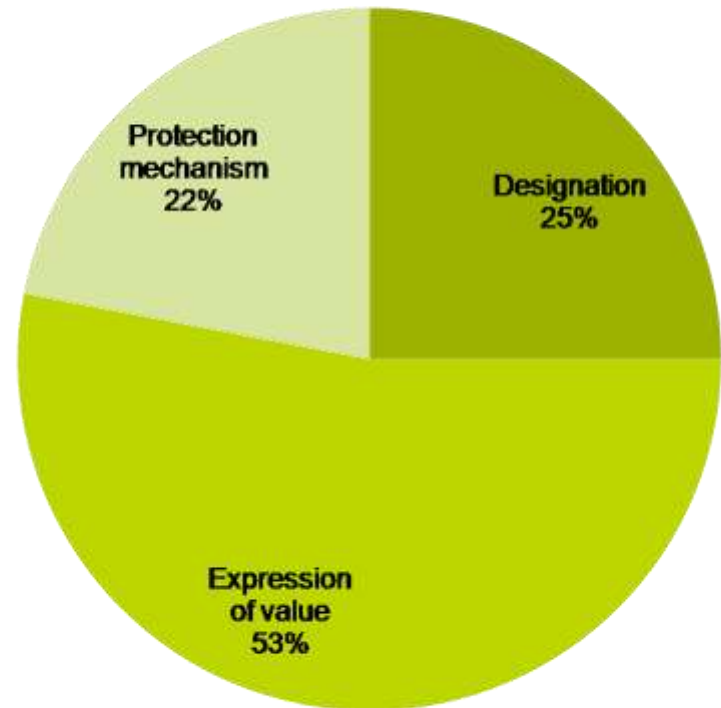
Canyoning: <http://www.visitbluemountains.com.au/world-heritage.php> accessed 10.08.10

Volunteers: <http://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/sustainableliving/environmentalinformation/bushcare/> accessed 10.08.10

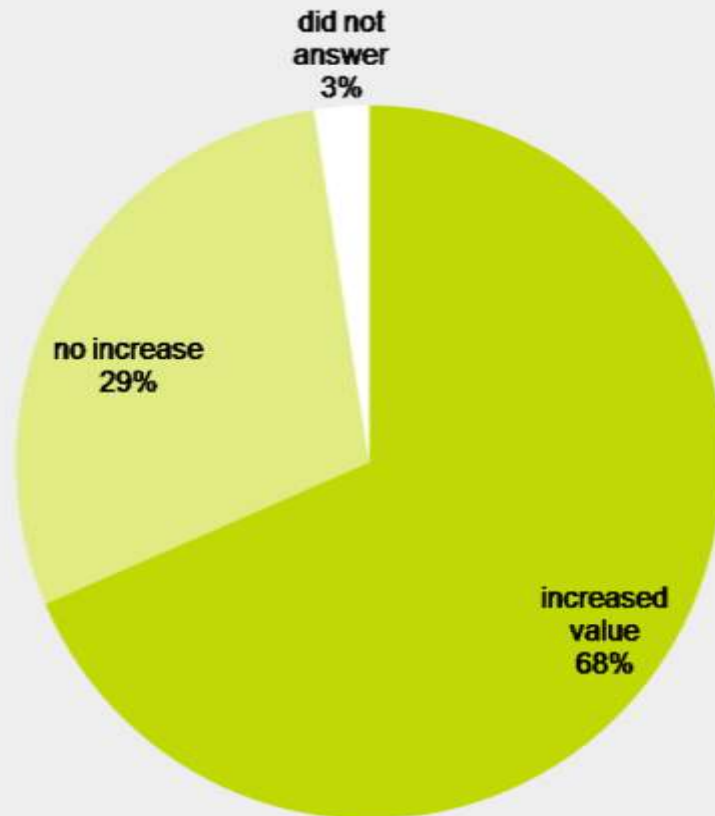
## › Awareness of world heritage

- 100% knew of world heritage listing
- meanings of 'world heritage' were wide and varied. World heritage as:
  - a designation: official recognition of international significance (25%)
  - an expression of value eg unique or sensitive (53%)
  - a mechanism for protection (22%)
- reasons for listing the Blue Mountains
  - value: to people, natural and cultural values (74%)
  - mechanism for protection (24%)
  - other : political motivations (2%)

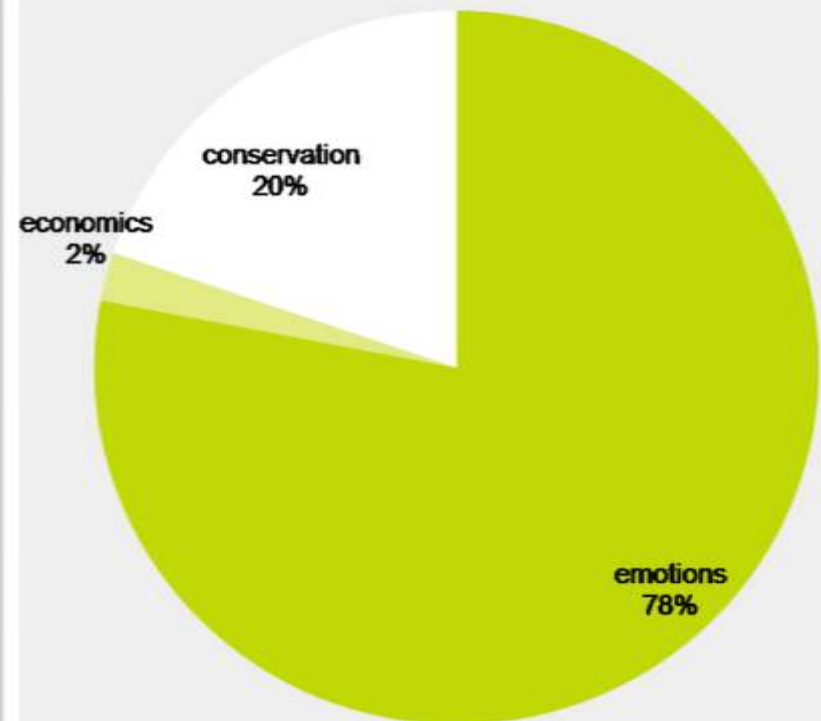
## World Heritage is...



## Impact on value to residents



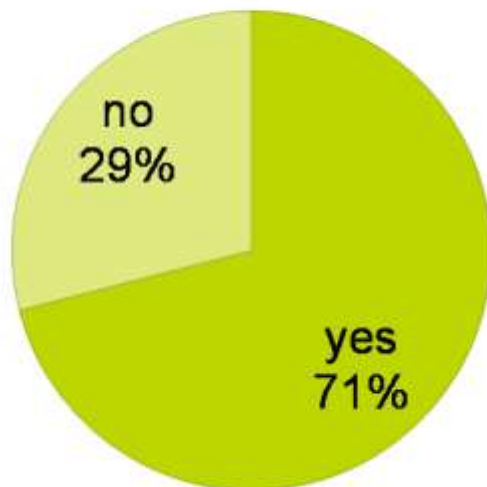
## Reasons for increased value



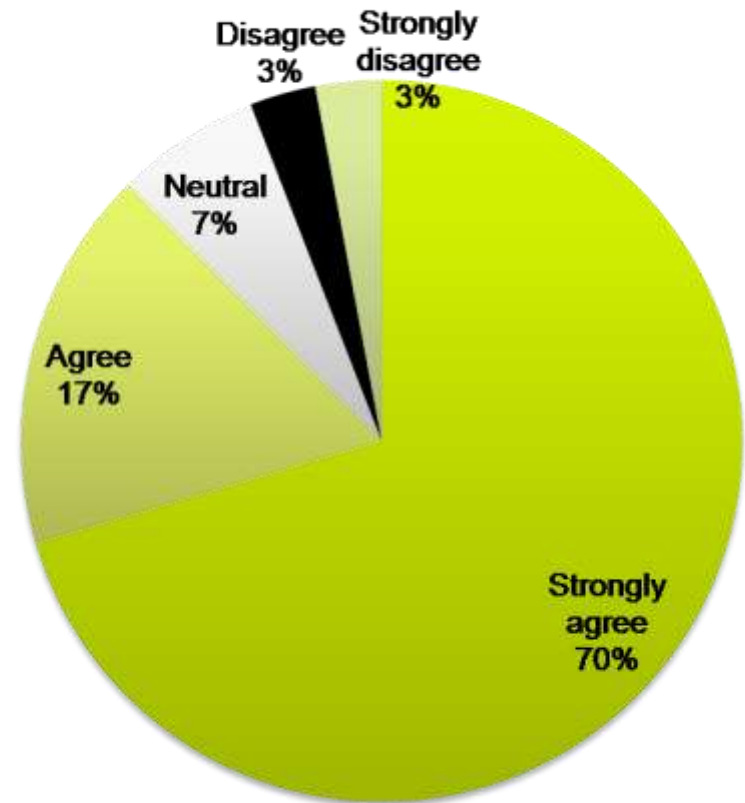
› Does the Blue Mountains require greater protection?

- Yes: 71%

### More protection?



### Tougher laws



- › Relatively small group of respondents – response rate considered reasonable. All valid responses
- › Respondent bias. Benign neutrality from non-respondents assumed
- › Single case

- › Significance of community's views
- › Cities – from primary threat to contributing to conservation
- › Greater Blue Mountains – a rich case
- › World heritage listing:
  - is important
  - matters deeply to residents
  - support stronger planning and park management framework

## › References:

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- › Tryzna (2003). *The Urban Imperative*. Paper presented at the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa.
- › United Nations. (2008), *World Urbanization Prospects. The 2007 Revision Highlights*, New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.
- › Watson, J., & Sanders, A. (1997). Fitzgerald River National Park Biosphere Reserve 1978-1997: the evolution of integrated protected area management. *Parks: The International Journal for Protected Area Management*, 7(1), 9-19.

## Future Conference opportunities

- › 10<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the International Urban Planning and Environment Association (UPE10)
  - › July 2010
  - › Sydney Australia