



Media Release  
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## **AUSTRALIAN FIRST FOR GEOMORPHOLOGY 2009**

The 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Geomorphology titled *Ancient Landscapes – Modern Perspectives*, will be held in Melbourne 6-11<sup>th</sup> July 2009, attracting over 650 eminent Geomorphologists from around the world who will discuss a wide variety of hot topics ranging from the extreme geomorphologic hazards associated with floods and droughts in Australia, to the evolution over geological timescales of the ancient landscapes that characterise our continent.

This will be first time the International Conference on Geomorphology has been held in the southern hemisphere since the series began nearly 30 years ago and it is appropriate that for an event of this significance it will also be the first conference in the new Melbourne Convention Centre.

Geomorphology is the study of landforms and the processes that shape them, both short term and long term. Organised by the Australian and New Zealand Geomorphology Group Inc. (ANZGG), the program encompasses scientific papers and presentations from leading experts over a range of 37 theme sessions. Themes include river management, bushfire impacts and global environmental change as well as tsunami and Volcanic Geomorphology.

Brian Finlayson, Chair of the Organising Committee for the ANZGG said that Melbourne is the ideal host city considering Australia is the world's oldest continent.

"This is the only international conference that brings together Geomorphologists from across the whole discipline and from all parts of the globe. There will be specialists in the geomorphology of floods, drought and tsunamis, tropical landscapes, mountain environments, the coastal zone, rivers and deserts. There will also be those who specialise in the dating and interpretation of pre-historical evidence found in soils, sediments and rocks and the prediction of the effects of climate change on key landforms (eg. coastlines, rivers, glacier retreat etc.

"Topics covered at the conference will include the geomorphic effects of bushfires; the impacts of war on the landscape; the nature of caves and karst landscapes; and the protection of significant aspects of the landscape," he said.

The ANZGG hopes that the conference will stimulate discussion on how well we know our environment and how do we live with or manage what we have.

The next generation are also being looked after with a special program for Young Geomorphologists to encourage the growth of the discipline in Australia and bolster numbers of specialists working in universities, Government agencies and engineering, environmental planning and management and mining companies around Australia.

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July there will be a number of field trips for the delegates to be able to experience the diversity of Australian landforms including *“Urban Geology and Geomorphology of the City and Suburbs of Melbourne”*, which will help participants better understand the landscape that our city and suburbs have been built on, including old lava flows from dormant volcanoes.

Another field trip will be to the *“Great Ocean Road, Otway Coast and Twelve Apostles”*, where sites of interest include a variety of shore platforms and the stacks and arches of the Port Campbell coast, visually spectacular examples of rock coast morphology.

A *“Yarra Valley”* field trip will examine the flow of the Yarra River through the centre of Melbourne and will discuss critical issues such as modern management of water supply and the river system. The *“Western Port Rivers: Managing the Legacy of Draining the Great Swamp”* field trip to the Koo-Wee-Rup district is of interest for rural management of erosion problems resulting from past drainage works and will also look at impacts from the February 2009 bushfires.

**Geomorphology 2009** is being held in the new Melbourne Convention Centre, which has been seamlessly linked to the existing Melbourne Exhibition Centre to create the

award-winning Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) – the largest and most versatile convention and exhibition centre in Australia.

The Opening Ceremony will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July between 8.30am and 9.00am in the Plenary Hall, followed by the Presidential Address from 9.00am – 10.00am.

Media are welcome to attend and are invited to apply for media accreditation for Geomorphology 2009 and also if they would like to attend any of the field trips.

The full program is available at: [www.geomorphology2009.com](http://www.geomorphology2009.com)

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