A photograph of a person standing in a valley with a large, layered rock formation in the background under a clear blue sky. The person is wearing a light blue t-shirt, grey shorts, and a wide-brimmed hat. The rock formation is dark brown and has distinct horizontal layers. The foreground is filled with green bushes and trees.

Geoparks, Sustainable Tourism and Social Contribution in the South East Asian Region

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Outline

- A bit about me 😊
- A bit about my foci for research
- Social Contribution
- Community and stakeholders
- Current anecdote and research





Background

- 40 years a public servant, Forester by training, land manager by experience
- Lecturing in a range of tourism units
- Managed Yanchep National Park, WA's premier NP, for a number of times, plus others
- Found tourism to be a positive experience
- Now a part time lecturer in Tourism at Murdoch University

?? Research Question ??

- **My focus is on**
- **Geoparks,**
- **their Social Contribution**
- **through Sustainable Tourism**
- **to Rural Communities**

Research

- What is Social Contribution?
- Rarely described in literature and often referred to as employer's/employees contribution to welfare. Well, that is a key.
- Others (few) refer to SC as individual or team effort and fewer describe SC as interacting in the community. That is another key.

Research

- Many writers include SC in the title but don't refer to it again
- Others have SC in their Abstract, but never refer to it again
- Some have SC in the content but as a passing expression
- SC ... an Adjective in front of a noun, but no explanation
- It is left to the reader to interpret what is meant...and I got frustrated with this!

Adjective + Noun

- **Social** – **Adjective**: relating to society, rank and status; **Noun**: a gathering and even “the social” ie welfare
- Social acceptance; social actualisation; social alienation, social benefits; social capacity; social capital; social change; social coherence; social concern; social compact; social contract; social cost; social crisis; social effect; social enterprise; social entity; social identity; social impacts; social inclusion; social integration; social isolation; social justice; social marketing; social mobility; social movement; social needs; social objectives; social outcome; social phenomenon; social policy; social problem; social processes; social representation; social risk; social sustainability; social tourism; social values; social wellbeing
- ..and **Social Contribution!**

Sometimes you can feel the weight!



Research – Going forward

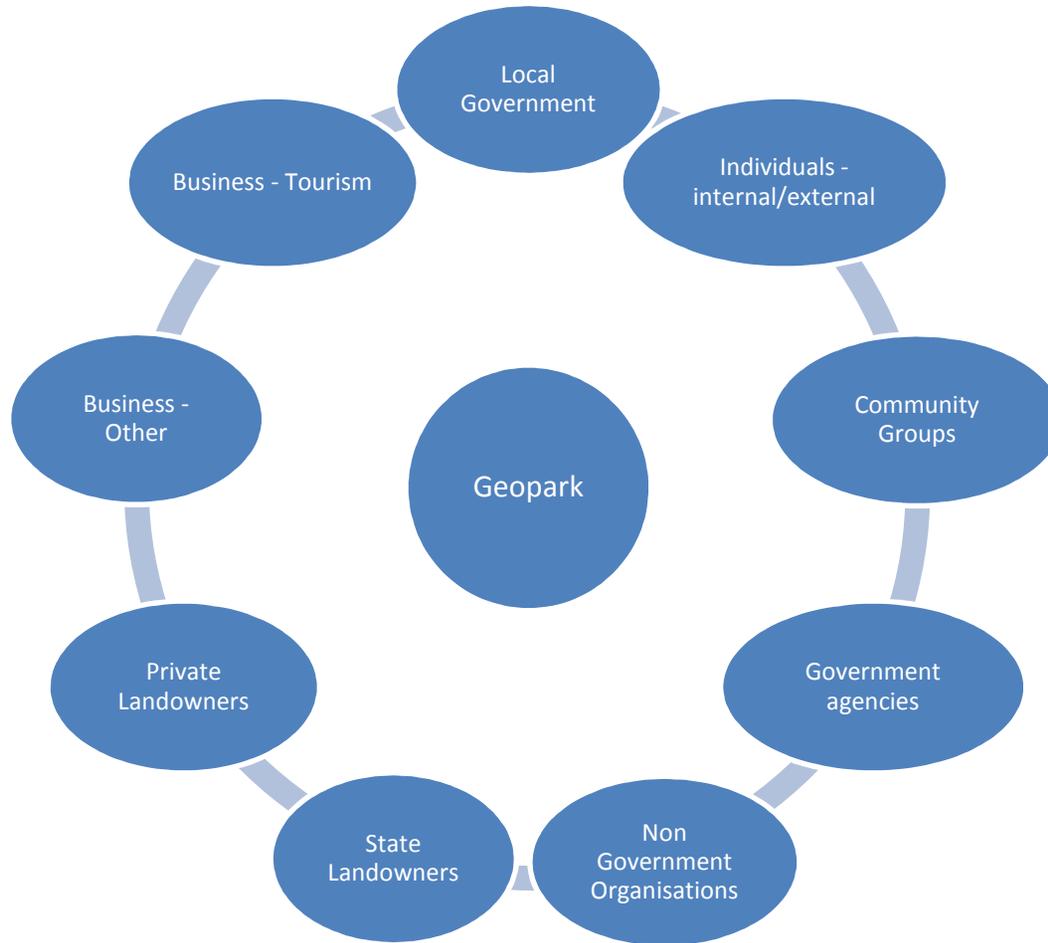
- When looking at SC need to identify who is involved, who is the community, the stakeholder
- One could just assume the community is the immediate group but is it?
- There are many stakeholders in a community



International/National



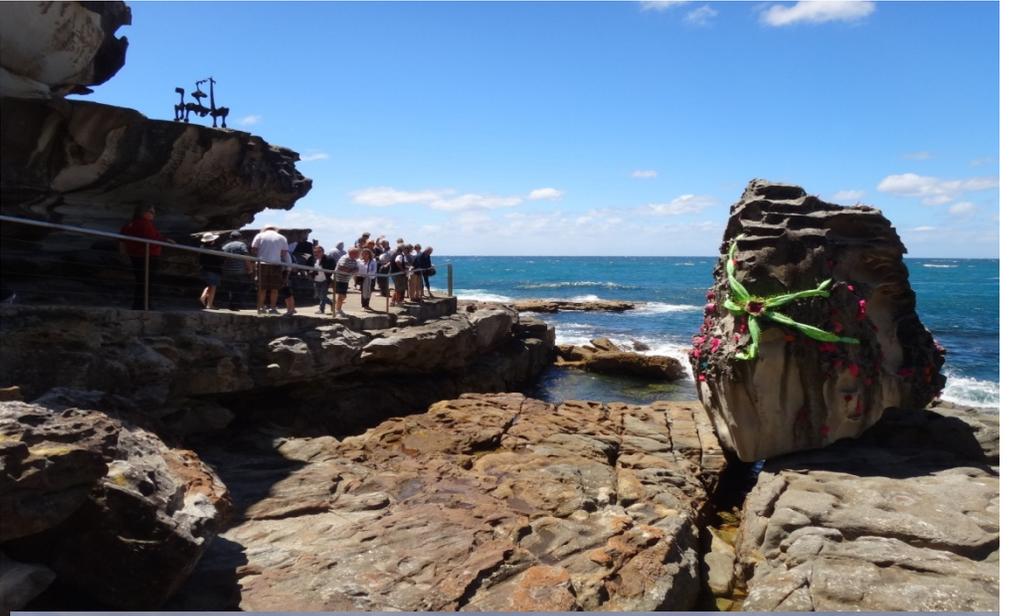
National/Local



Rural vs Urban Communities

- Rural...as a focus for research, but Geoparks are not only rural.
- For example: Sydney...sandstone has a rich history of formation, cultural (Aboriginal and European) and constructive use; is part of interpretation today with Sculptures by the Sea.
- Compared to the Porto, Portugal geo-trail along the coast.





Geoparks

- UNESCO defines a geopark as
- “a dedicated area enclosing features of special geological significance, rarity or beauty.”
- representative of the geological history of a particular area and the events and processes that formed it.
- under the exclusive jurisdiction of the government in the country in which it is situated.

Geoparks – Future Use

- future use of geoparks including providing for scientific research and broad environmental education as well as local sustainable development where generation of employment and new economic activities could develop including links to geotourism and trades in geoproducts such as fossil casting and souvenirs.

Sustainable Tourism

- David Weaver uses the definition of Sustainable Tourism drawing on the Brundtland Report as:
- Tourism that meets *“the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”*
- Tourism that is ongoing, creating experiences and outcomes for both visitors and hosts in a conserved and protected environment

Ecotourism and Geotourism

- Both are built on sustainability principles:
 - Based on nature
 - Conservation minded
 - Experiential
 - Learning
 - Involving the community

Both are the foundation for sustainable
tourism in Geoparks

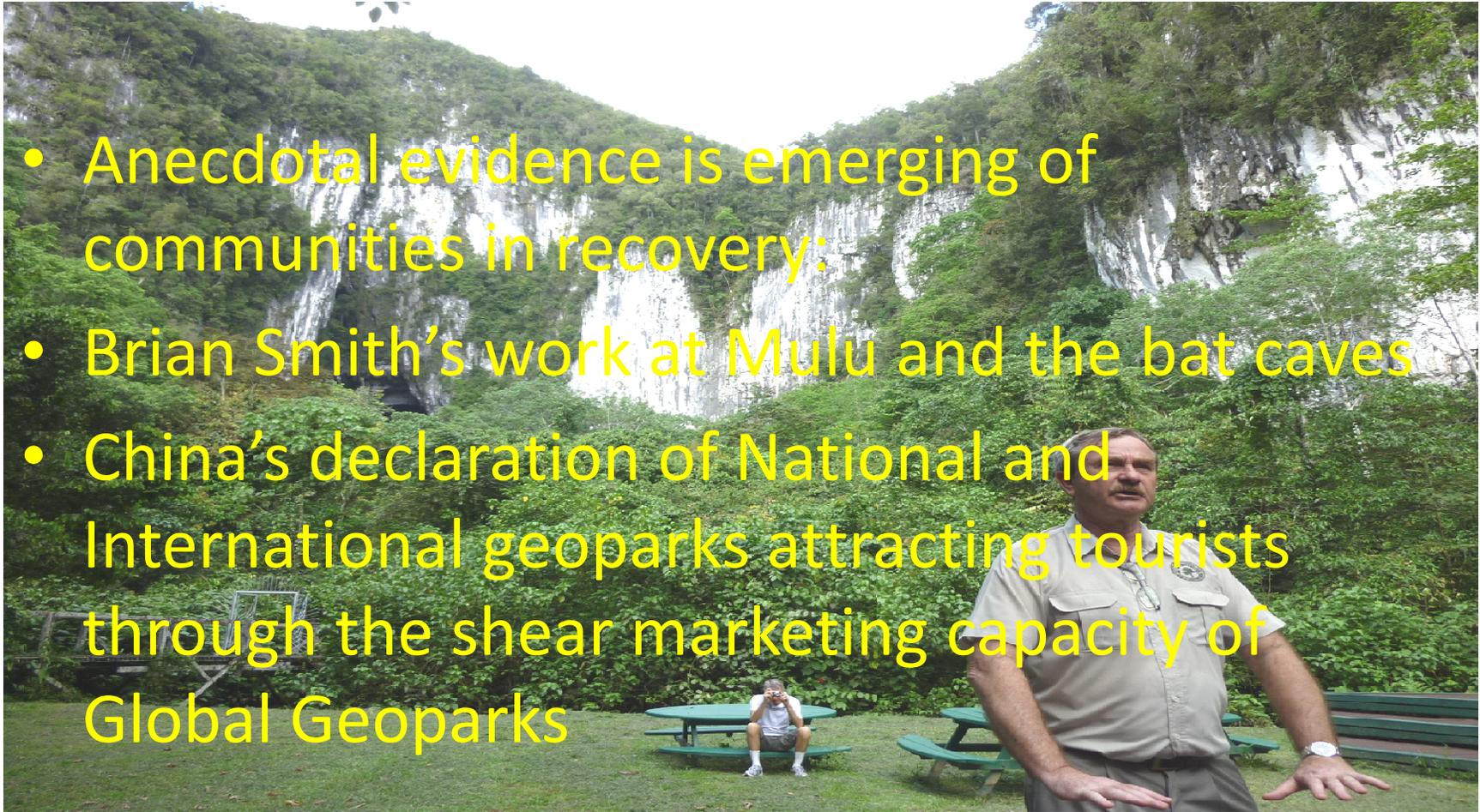
Research supporting South East Asian Geoparks

- Research has commenced in regions and countries of Europe, Portugal, Iran and Turkey
- Moreira (Brazil) and Melendez (Spain) (2012) link geotourism and Geoparks and also found a range of other tourism activities in Geoparks:
- Cultural (94%), Ecotourism (83%) Historical (81%), Rural (75%), Culinary (64%), Adventure (61%) and Others (25%) – Religious, Beach, Fishing, Scientific, Cruise ship, and Thermal among others



Anecdotal Information supporting South East Asian Geoparks

- Anecdotal evidence is emerging of communities in recovery:
- Brian Smith's work at Mulu and the bat caves
- China's declaration of National and International geoparks attracting tourists through the sheer marketing capacity of Global Geoparks



Research supporting South East Asian Geoparks

- In SE Asia Dr. Young Ng has been working in China (Hong Kong) and is producing evidence of economic development through Geoparks.



My Research

- Considering the Social Contribution of Geoparks
- Need to determine what SC is, to whom and why
- What are your views on Social Contribution?

THANK YOU

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