



**Media release
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Mega-conference to consider everything from tsunami risk and water exploration to climate change

More than 1000 geoscience experts from across the globe are expected to converge on Perth this July for a global Earth Sciences conference, to hear the latest research on major challenges affecting life on Earth.

The 2008 Australian Earth Sciences Convention will be held from 20-24 July 2008 and hosted by the Geological Society of Australia and the Australian Institute of Geoscientists. It will feature more than 135 Australian and international presenters, 450 papers and a wide-ranging program of workshops and field trips.

“This major conference is considered a must-attend event for leading geoscientists from across the world and many others from industry, government, research and academia” said Dr Jon Hronsky, the Convention’s Program Director and Director of the consulting group Western Mining Services.

“Its cutting-edge program will feature everything from Australia’s future energy mix to what parts of Australia (and what infrastructure assets) are most likely to be affected by tsunamis, from groundwater exploration in Australia to groundwater contamination in the Himalayas, from climate change to food traceability.

“The conference will also focus on a diverse range of topics including asteroids and their impact with Earth, the geological history and future of Earth and the solar system, marine eco-systems, major fossil finds and what they can tell us, how recent missions to Mars can help us better understand the Earth, international hydrocarbon prospects, geo-tourism and even the geochemistry of termite mounds!

“In focusing on critical topics such as tsunami and earthquake risks, climate change, carbon sequestration, clean coal technologies, water contamination, water exploration, salinity, uranium deposits and their production in a global context, and alternative energy sources like geothermal energy, this conference really sets the agenda for scientific thinking on some of the biggest issues being faced by Australia and indeed the planet.

“Australia is recognised as a world-leader in geoscientific research, a critical area of research when you consider it covers many of the issues that pose the greatest threat to mankind and quality of life – resource depletion, geohazards like earthquakes and tsunamis, global warming, environmental degradation, risks to food production, and food and water safety.

“In bringing together all the diverse areas of geoscience under one roof, the Australian Earth Sciences Convention is a critical international forum for highlighting the latest research on these and many other issues.”

Effectively several major conferences wrapped into one, the Convention boasts five key themes:

- Geoscience in the service of society
- Resources – foundation for our future
- The evolution of life and the solar system
- Earth’s environments – past, present and future
- The dynamic Earth – from crust to core

With the Convention being held in Perth for the first time since 1994, there is also a strong focus on mineral exploration and potential discoveries in Western Australia itself, at a time when the resources sector in that state is booming. Just some of the many topics focusing on WA include:

- the prospects of frontier exploration areas onshore and offshore WA
- WA’s pre-competitive geoscience program – underpinning exploration
- the re-interpretation of old mining camps leading to surprising new discoveries
- case studies of many minerals discoveries and provinces in WA

The Convention program will also look at the business end of exploration, such as:

- the psychology of decision-making in exploration – improving return on investment
- cutting-edge technologies in resource imaging and exploration
- Australian junior exploration floats and their implications for IPOs
- initiatives to attract exploration investment
- multiple papers on mining company exploration strategies

“For many geoscientists, the 2008 Australian Earth Sciences Convention is one they can’t afford to miss” Dr Hronsky said. “Put simply, it’s a critical conference on the global geoscience calendar, and one highlighting the big issues that could have a huge impact on life on Earth.”

What:	2008 Australian Earth Sciences Convention
Where:	Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre, Perth
When:	Sunday 20 - Thursday 24 July 2008
Program info:	The full program for the 2008 Australian Earth Sciences Convention can be found at www.iceaustralia.com/aesc2008 . Media can also access a program overview at www.gsa.org.au/aesc_media-1.html .
Interested in attending?	Please phone Patrick Daley or Sue Fletcher on the numbers below.
Available for interview:	Dr Jon Hronsky (Convention Program Director), Professor Peter Cawood (Vice President, Geological Society of Australia and Convention Organising Committee member), and Sue Fletcher (Executive Director of the Geological Society of Australia).
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