

ecologic

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Geography theme trail (recommended for years 9–12)

This theme trail accompanies the teachers notes for the exhibition *EcoLogic: creating a sustainable future*. The Environmental Education Policy for Schools 2001 cites understanding of the principles of ecologically sustainable development as a key aim for environmental education. *EcoLogic* promotes the understanding of sustainability to all ages.

The theme trail selects a series of ‘sustainable stops’ likely to be of interest and relevance to your students.

Ecologically sustainable development is a key concept for Geography students as it explores both the relationship between people and people and their natural environment (including resource use). This trail uses each of the exhibition’s themes as a springboard for discussion relevant to each section.

Tips for the group leader

(a teacher or student)

1. Know your group.
2. Study the map of the exhibition and the scope of each stop.
3. **To read** is for the group leader to read and familiarise themselves with the topic and scope of each stop.
4. **To say** or do gives the group leader ways to introduce the topic to the group. Explain the focus, activity or discussion point at each
5. stop. Remember theme trails are guides not rules. If the students are restless or no longer interested move to the next stop.
6. At each stop give your group time to look around the exhibition, listen to the audiovisual(s) and/or play the interactive(s) as well as discuss the question.
7. Rest, debrief and allow time for each student to go back to his or her own exhibition highlight.
8. Enjoy! The Powerhouse is a place of inquiry. Be an adventurer with your group.

Sustainable stops for Geography students



Stop 1

■ To read

The introduction gives an overview of the exhibition and its approach to sustainability. Read this panel. It is headed



■ To do

Discuss these questions:

1. How will resource use impact on whether a society is 'viable'?
2. What do you think each individual *needs* in their life?
3. Are your needs different from those of your grandparents? Are your needs different from those of a young adult living in Ethiopia, Sri Lanka or North America?

Discuss the following statement in relation to the exhibition's introduction:

'Activism to protect Nature from the ravages of the economy is different from working to redesign the economy itself.'



Stop 2

■ To read

An ecological footprint is a way of measuring the ecological impact you have on the Earth.

■ To say or do

This interactive is called Bigfoot. It asks you 15 questions about the food you consume, the type of house you live in, appliances and other products you use, and how to get around. The program then does these things:

1. makes a rough estimate of your ecological footprint.
2. shows the number of Earths that would be needed if all people had a footprint similar to yours.
3. compares your footprint with the average

4. calculates the size of a footprint for an equitable share of the Earth's resources.

Play the interactive once using a combination of the group's lifestyles to answer the question. Discuss the program's response.

Play the game again trying to get the smallest footprint you can. Discuss the response. Which areas of our lives do you think people can focus on to lessen our impact on the environment?



Stop 3

■ To read

This section's theme is called

LIFE DEPENDS ON CYCLES
nothing is really new

■ To do

Discuss these questions:

1. Physical and biological systems are not static; they are always changing and the elements in these systems are continually responding. With regard to climate change, do you think it makes any difference that 'this time we will be here to experience it'?
2. There are different views on whether or not people have changed the planet's atmospheric balance. Does this make any difference to our response to climate change?



Stop 4

■ To read

This section's theme is called

CITY LIVING
planning for people

Note: this theme panel is located in two places. They are both marked on your exhibition map.

■ To do

Discuss these questions:

1. Are large cities likely to be more or less sustainable than smaller urban centres?
2. Resource exploitation can be characterised as ‘take-make-waste’. What do you think the sustainable version of resource use might be?
3. Historically, urban settlements tend to be located where the land is flat, the water and soil are good and the climate mild. A similar geography is also good for farmland. How would this impact on the sustainability of our societies?
4. What are the limiting factors on your ‘urban choices’?



Stop 5

■ To read

This section’s theme is called

「NURTURING THE LAND
our own backyard」

■ To do

Discuss these questions:

1. Name two different historical sources we could use to conclude that our soils are unsuitable for European farming techniques?
2. Some people believe that as all Australians have gained from the wealth created by farming, all Australians should contribute to repairing agricultural land and encouraging biodiversity. What do you think?



Stop 6

■ To read

This section’s theme is called

「LIFE ON THE EDGE
making a sea change」

■ To do

Discuss these questions:

1. What are some of the environmental advantages of farming seafood rather than catching wild seafood?

2. Some forms of aquaculture import seafood as fish food from overseas. What would be the social impact of this activity?
3. Society may have to limit fishing to protect fish stocks. Should we restrict recreational anglers or commercial fishers? Discuss.



Stop 7

■ To read

This section’s theme is called

「MEASURING WELLBEING
what do we value?」

■ To do

Consider this statement:

‘Systems resist change and yet change is exactly what is needed to confront major environmental and social issues.’

The following statements are about change. Choose the statement you most agree with in relation to the statement above.

‘The world needs an enormous number of new innovators, change agents, and transformers, all dedicated to turning development in the direction of sustainability. People like you.’

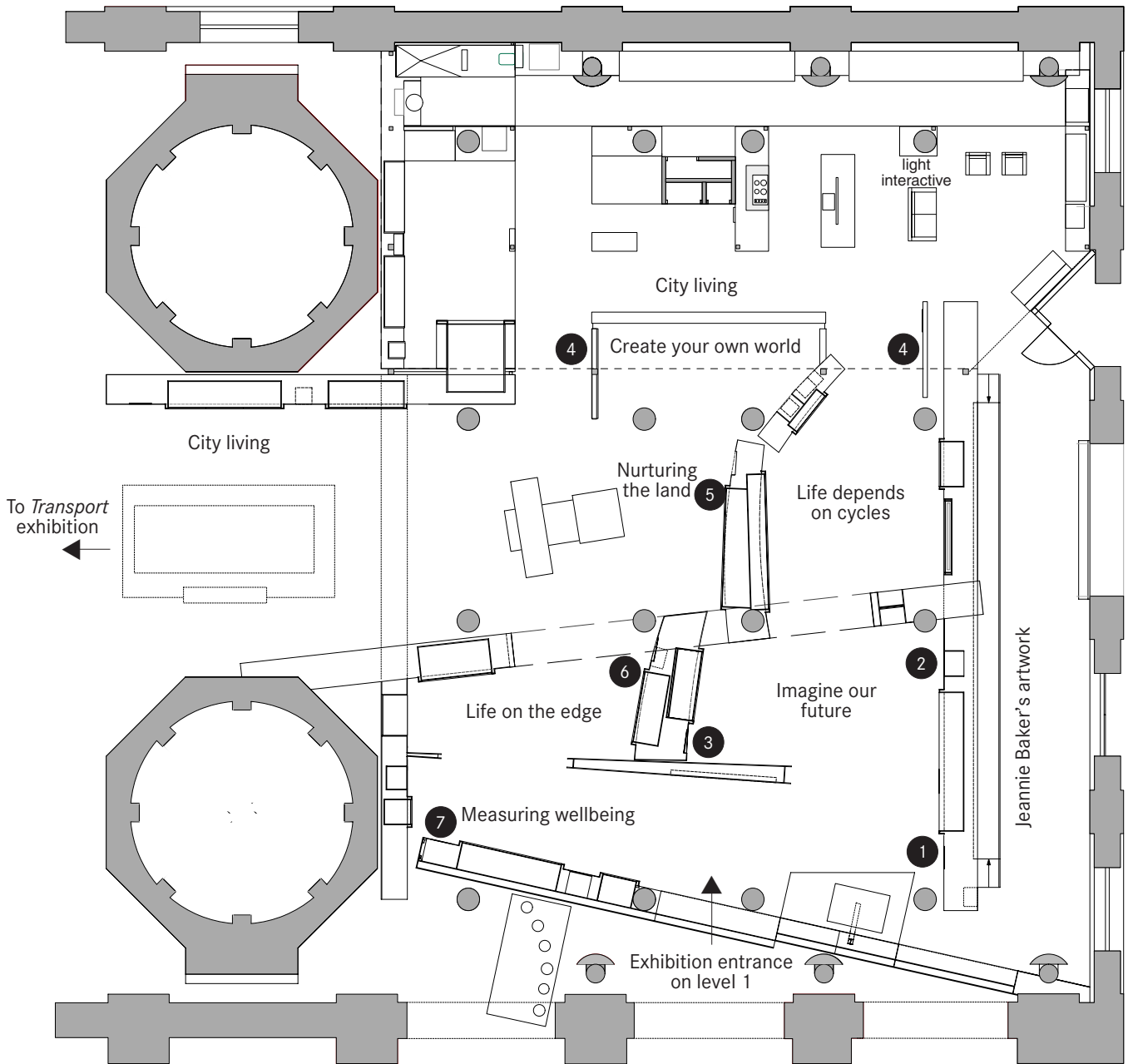
– Alan AtKisson, *Believing Cassandra*, Scribe Publications, 1999.

‘If you want to save the environment or solve any of the major global problems facing us, the most important thing you can do is to join those who are struggling to establish alternative social forms.’

– Ted Trainer, *Saving the environment*, UNSW Press, 1998.

‘The Commonwealth Government must provide leadership for sustainability reform. Through legislation, policies and example it must guide the environmental modernisation, land and water repair and environmental tax reform that will drive the next industrial revolution.’

– www.Acfonline.org.au/blueprint/summary



Sustainable stops for Geography students 1-7.

For more information go to www.powerhousemuseum.com/exhibitions/ecologic.asp

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