



THE GAP SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE INC.



NEXT MEETING: 24th May, 7.30pm

At The Gap State Primary School Resource centre, Crn. Waterworks and Settlement Roads

First working group meeting: planning ahead and setting the project targets

There was almost no chair left in the room, when on the 26th of April [Queensland Chief Scientist Hugh Possingham](#) presented on sustainability issues at The Gap State School. Besides The Gap Sustainability Initiative (TGSi) committee, principals and student leaders of local schools, members of other environmental groups, community members, as well as Councillor Steve Toomey attended.

The Queensland Chief Scientist Prof Hugh Possingham's speech provided an overview of his distinguished career and wide-ranging work experiences. He received his formal training in mathematics and economic modelling and applied these to the fields of ecology, conservation and decision science. He worked as an academic, advisor to governments, [The Nature Conservancy](#), one of the largest environmental charities in the world, and now advises the Queensland government and its residents to encourage everyone in the community to take sustainability and conservation seriously.

Prof Possingham provided a useful summary of the climate change challenges on a global scale and then shared his view of the major issues of importance including indigenous cultural engagement, global warming, and biodiversity loss. Prof Possingham then reflected on the three projects TGSi has proposed for wider community support:

- 1) *Elevate use of existing sustainability capabilities in the community*
- 2) *The Platypus Project*
- 3) *Electricity Independence.*

He suggested we conduct a decision assessment exercise across all projects in order to prioritise and communicate the rationale for community groups allocating time and financial investment where there are competing demands. Examples of assessment criteria include the likelihood of the project's success, financial costs, as well as the environmental benefits like carbon emission reduction and biodiversity protection.

For example, he explained that saving a threatened species such as the Platypus can have much greater and wider effects than just on this single species alone. This multiplier or umbrella effect is a result of preserving an ecosystem which not only supports the Platypus but will also many other species such as freshwater crustaceans and fish. Prof Possingham stated that conserving freshwater environments is among of the most beneficial conservation activities that can be undertaken.

He encouraged everyone to follow his example by identifying and [doing something good for nature every week](#), whether it is planting a tree, using public transport, or picking up rubbish and recycling. You can follow him on twitter @HugePossum and learn about commitments you can adopt which are tagged each week as #good4nature. If you want to study the ecosystem of your backyard, he recommended using an app such as iNaturalist, and suggested you may be surprised to find more than 500 species sharing this space with you.

We thank The Gap State School leadership team for their participation of this event and for supporting the student leaders who provided a great contribution to the evening with their own questions.

NEXT EVENT: We are now very excited to announce that on the 24th May we are holding our first working group meeting. Many community members have already expressed interest to become actively engaged in one or more of the three project listed above, for which we need all hands on deck. Please come along and support our pathway to greater sustainability at The Gap. If you have not yet done so, **please RSVP to thegapsustainability@gmail.com** Our 21 June our next education event will be devoted to the platypus.





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Membership: Thank you to all those who have already initiated their membership, we continue our invitation to join. The membership fee is \$5 per annum to cover costs such as insurance, website hosting fee, room hire and facilitated meetings. Please use our Bank Account Name: **The Gap Sustainability BSB124001 Account No: 23277186** and send us your name, DOB, and address to thegapsustainability@gmail.com for the membership registry.

Please stay updated about our activities by visiting our website www.thegapsustainability.org. We now also have an active presence on [Facebook](#).

Yours sincerely The Gap Sustainability Initiative team

