



**National Science Week, 16-24 August 2008**

**Geological Society of Australia media release  
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## **Revise high school curriculums to show students that geoscience “is more than just digging up dirt with a shovel”**

**High school science curriculums across Australia should be revised so they better highlight geoscience as a compelling field of scientific study, and make secondary students aware that a career in geoscience “is much more than just digging up dirt with a shovel”, the new President of the Geological Society of Australia (GSA) has said during National Science Week.**

“No pun intended, but a career as a geoscientist offers a universe of possibilities and a real chance to make a difference” Professor Peter Cawood said.

“Yet this exciting branch of science continues to receive very little profile in our classrooms, where the majority of class time is allocated to the ‘big three’ sciences of chemistry, physics and biology.

“Geoscience can involve anything from studying the Moon, Mars and the formation of the Solar System, to analysing fossils which are millions of years old, asteroid impact craters, marine eco-systems and past climatic variability.

“Studies in geoscience can lead to a career where you can make a huge contribution to how we combat salinity, ensure water quality and availability, and better utilise clean energy sources.

“It can mean working for a big mining company as a resource geoscientist, contributing to food and water safety, studying the history of Earth over millions of years, or helping to predict earthquake, tsunami and landslide risk.

“In short, the field of geoscience is exciting and extremely wide-ranging, and graduates in the field find they are keenly sought by many sectors. You don’t see many geoscientists who are bored with their work...or out of work!

“While we would be the first to agree that chemistry, physics and biology have an important place in high school classrooms, it is critical that more focus also is given to raising the profile of geoscience with students and informing them of the incredibly interesting and wide-ranging fields of study and work that geoscience offers.

“At the end of the day, geoscience is ‘big impact science’ – you don’t get science that is much more relevant to the major challenges confronting life on Earth than that which tackles environmental degradation, food and water security, and geo-hazards, while also looking at how Earth and the rest of the Solar System evolved and what is in store for our universe in the future.

“Geoscience is also the point in the road where the ‘big three’ sciences meet – geoscientists use their knowledge of physics, chemistry and biology daily to understand the Earth, its evolution, its climate and the major environmental issues facing humankind.

“Given its critical importance to our future well-being, it is time to take geoscience out of the classroom cupboard and put it firmly on the blackboard in front of our high school students, particularly during the years when they are seriously assessing what their future career paths might be.”

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