

CHAPTER - 6

AUSTRALIA

Introduction

Latitude : 28°15'N 54°30'S Longitude : 112°09'E 109°12'W

Area: 76,86,850 sq. km Population : 18.7 million

Capital : Canberra

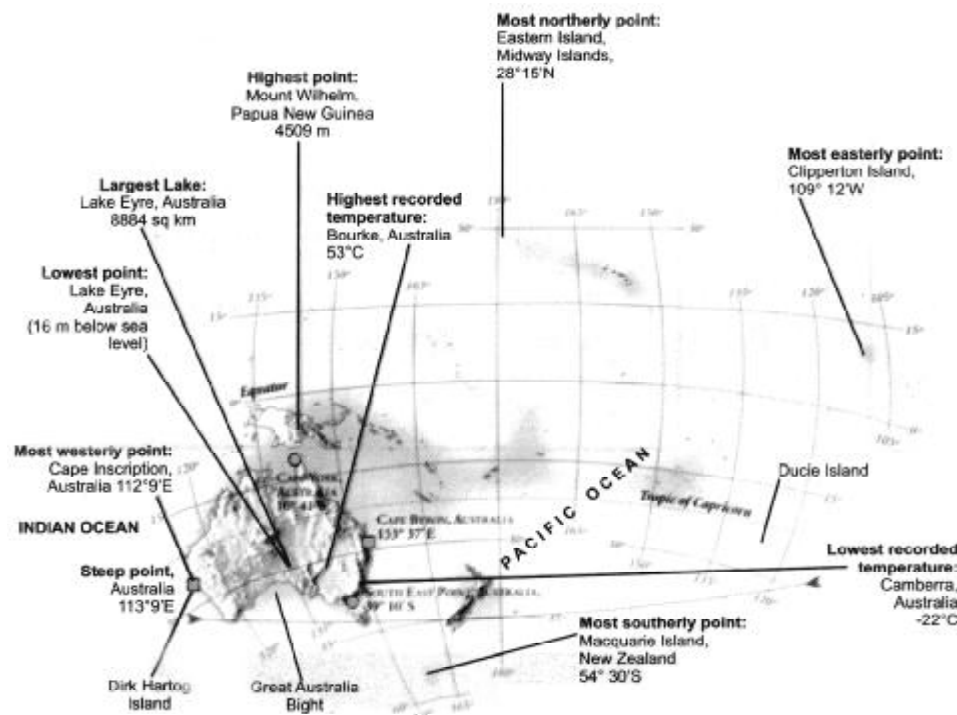
Situation : Australia, the only continent that is also a country. It lies between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. It is surrounded by Timor Sea in the northwest, Arafura Sea and Gulf of Carpentaria in the north, Great Barrier Reef in the northeast and Great Australian Bight in the south. To the south east of mainland lies the mountainous island of Tasmania.

Island Continent, Australia (*Australis*), literally called Southern Continent, is the smallest of all the continents. Comprises Australia, New Zealand and other Islands. One of the most sparsely populated and urbanized nation.

PRINCIPAL STATES AND TERRITORIES

It is divided into six states and two centrally administered territories of which Western Australia is the largest state while New South Wales is the most populous. It also includes the island of Tasmania.

Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania



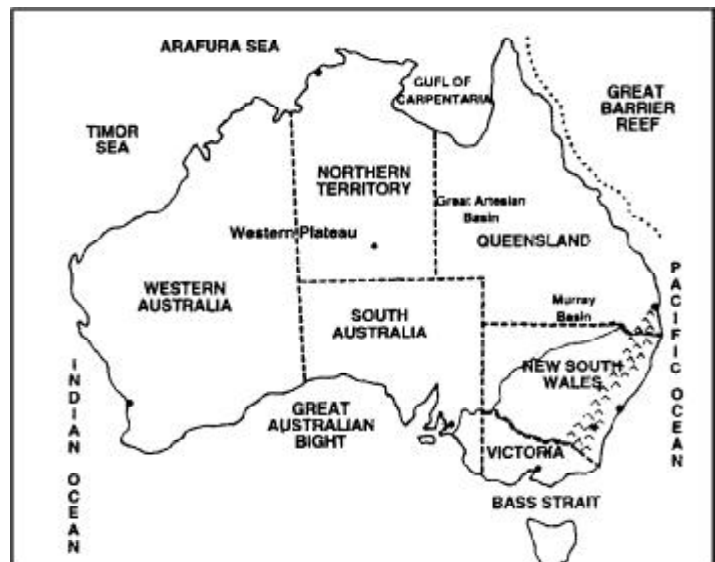
- Greatest extent, North-South : 3200 km
- Greatest extent, East-West : 4000 km

Australia—Physical

- Major Physiographic Regions of Australia is—The Great Dividing Range, Central Lowlands and Western Plateau.

THE GREAT DIVIDING RANGE

- The most elevated part of Australia, also known as Eastern Highlands, extends from Cape York Peninsula (Queensland) to Victoria and continues beyond the Bass Strait into Tasmania.
- Example of block-fault mountains, nowhere wider than 161 km and at places as narrow as 48 km.
- Major source of minerals, timber, water and hydel-power.
- Name was given for its function of dividing watersheds, which determines the direction of flow of many rivers.



CENTRAL LOWLANDS

- Located along the western flanks of the Great Dividing Range from Gulf of Carpentaria in the north of the Great Australian Bight in the South.
- Consists series of basins, low lying land, lakes and old lake beds.
- Surface of Lake Eyre is the lowest in the region at about 12 m below sea level.

The region contains two large basins the Great Artesian Basin and the Murray Darling Basin.

THE WESTERN PLATEAU REGION

- A shield made in Pre Cambrian era rich in mineral resources.
- Australia's largest structural unit—a high tableland.
- Contains the desert regions—Great Sandy, Gibson and Great Victoria deserts.
- Fringe area consists of low lying mountains ranges and vast basins along the coasts.

AUSTRALIA—WEST

Western Australia

Major Physiographic Regions

Desert Landscape : Great Sandy desert in the north west, Gibson desert in the central part lying to the south of Lake Disappointment and Great Victoria desert extending into South Australia.

Highlands and Mountains

Darling Range

- Running in north-south direction in the south west of Western Australia.
- Kimberley Plateau-lies to the north of Great Sandy Desert.
- Mount Gold Worthy, Mount Whaleback and Mount Tom Price : Major region of iron ore reserves in Western Australia.

Cities of Western Australia

PERTH

- Situated on the Swan River, 19 km from the sea.
- Capital of Western Australia.
- Manufacturing centre of iron-steel, vehicles, machinery and textiles.

FREEMANTLE

- Situated on the mouth of Swan River, largest port of Western Australia.

KALGOORLIE, COOLGARDIE

- These two cities are located in the southern region of Western Australia.
- One of the important centre of gold mining in the world.
- Situated to the north-west of western Australia.

PILBARA

- Situated to the north-west of western Australia.
- Known for its iron ore reserves.

South Australia

Major Physiographic Regions

Great Victoria Desert

- Situated in the West of South Australia.

Musgrave Range

- The mountain ranges of northern region.

Flinders Range

- The mountain ranges of south, south-east.
- An example of Block mountain.

Lake Eyre

- Nearly 12 m below sea level.
- Deepest point of Australia.

Important Cities

ADELAIDE

- Situated on the St. Vincent Gulf.
- Capital and the chief port on the southern coast.
- Well-developed agricultural industries, such as fruit canning, flour-milling, dairy industries and woollen textiles.

WHYALLA

- Major centre of iron and steel industry.

Northern Territory

Northern Territory

Major Physiographic Regions

Desert Landscape : Tanani desert in the north, Simpson Desert, in the south east of Alice Springs.

HIGHLANDS AND PLATEAUS

- Macdonnel Ranges and Barkley Tableland.

Ayres Rock

- Situated in the Northern Territory of Australia.
- Zone of the largest monolithic rock, named as Uluru.
- A giant red rock, rises about 348 m.

Important cities

DARWIN

- The capital and the chief port of the north coast which exports timber, grain and meat.
- Also known for its ore reserves.
- City is called 'Australia's front door'.

ALICE SPRING

- Situated in the southern part of Northern Territory and connected by rail with Adelaide.
- Has large reserves of oil and gas.



AUSTRALIA—EAST

Major Physiographic Regions

Great Dividing Range

- Runs parallel from the Cape York Peninsula (Queensland) to Victoria and continues beyond Bass Strait into Tasmania.

Australian Alps

- Lies in the south-east of New South Wales.
- It includes the continent's highest peak, Mount Kosciusko (2,230 m).

Murray Darling Basin

- River basin formed by the Australia's largest river system Murray and its tributary Darling.
- Snowy River Scheme, Tully Falls and Shannon are major hydel power schemes.

Great Barrier Reef

- The world's largest coral reef.
- Extends over a very ridge like feature off the north east coast of Queensland, upto Tropic of Capricorn.

New South Wales

SYDNEY

- Australia's oldest and largest city.
- Built on the low hills of the Pacific coast.
- The capital and the major port of New South Wales.
- Major centre of iron-steel, paper and printing, and chemical industries.
- Known for lead-zinc and silver mines.

NEW CASTLE

- Situated to the south of Sydney on the coast of Pacific.
- It is a sea port and an industrial town.
- Major centre of iron-steel, non-ferrous metals and textile industries.

BROKEN HILL

- Situated in the western part.
- Known for lead-zinc and silver mines.



Major Physiographic Regions

BRISBANE

- Situated near the Ipswich coal fields.
- Capital and chief harbour of Queensland.
- Major industrial city and a manufacturing centre of locomotives, machinery and processed foods.

IPSWICH

- Centre of lignite and sub-bituminous coal mining.

MOUNT ISA

- Major centre of lead and zinc mining.

WEIPA

- Known for its bauxite deposits, one of the largest in the world.

Victoria

This state is situated in the south east of Australia, and the Murray River divides it from New South Wales.

MELBORNE

- The capital of Victoria.
- Country's second largest city and also former capital of Australia.
- Centre of major industries based on Gippsland's lignite coal and hydel power from the Snowy river scheme.
- Chemicals, ship-building, aircraft, engineering, railway equipments and motor vehicles are the major industries.

GIPPSLAND

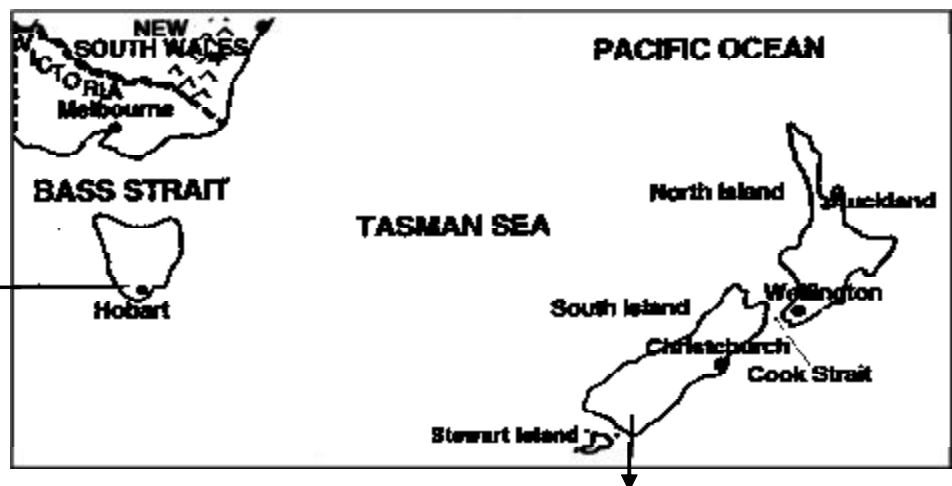
- Centre of lignite and sub-bituminous coal mining.
- Australian Capital Territory.

CANBERRA

- Nation's capital, situated to the south of Sydney.
- It is mainly administrative city.

HOBART

- The most southerly located city of Australia.
- Capital of Tasmania.
- It is a port which is most active during the apple season and food processing is the major industry.



NEWZEALAND

Area: 2,69,057 sq. km (excluding dependencies) Population : 3.8 million Latitude : 34°05'-47°20'S
Capital : Wellington Longitude : 166°10'-178°20'E

Situation : The three main island of New Zealand are situated to the south east of Australia and 10,000 km west of Chile in the South Pacific Ocean. The two larger islands, North and South Islands are long and narrow and the third, Stewart Island, is the smaller one.

Physical features

Southern Alps

The mountains of the South Island, includes the country's highest peak, Mount Cook (3,764 m).

Canterbury Plains

- The most extensive plains, an example of Piedmont Alluvial plain crossed by rivers cover 12,500 km of the South Island's east coast.
- The chief farming region in New Zealand.

MOUNT EGMONT

- An extinct volcano in south-west of North Island.
- Situated to the north of central volcanic plateau of North Island.

WELLINGTON

- Situated on the southern tip of the North Island.
- Country's capital and also the southernmost capital city of the world.
- An important sea port on the Cook Strait.
- Cattle rearing and dairy is the main economic activity around this city.

AUCKLAND

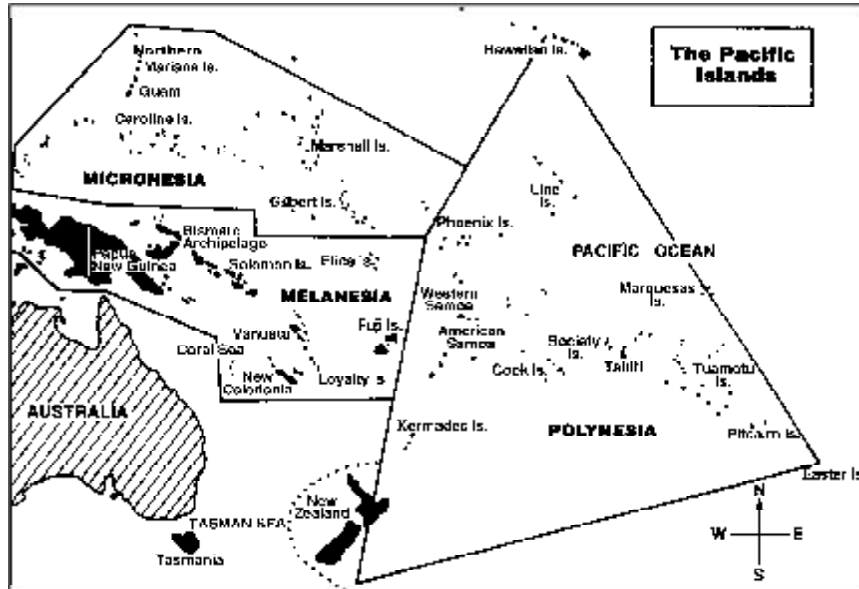
- Biggest city of the country and also the largest port on the coast of North Island.

CHRISTCHURCH

- Major industrial centre of the South Island.

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Scattered across the Pacific Ocean, between 130°W at a distance of 11,265 km are thousands of islands with a total land area of 2,60,000 sq. km excluding New Zealand and New Guinea. They are made up of three main groups: Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.



Important Independent Islands

Micronesia (Tiny Islands)

- Consists of four smaller group of islands, they are Northern Mariana, Caroline, Marshall and Gilbert islands (now Kiribati).
- Guam (Mariana) is the largest island of Micronesia.
- It is an important US military base and tourist destination.

Federal states of Micronesia

Area : 702 sq. km. Population: 1,31,500

Capital : Palikir

- Formerly known as Caroline islands, is an archipelago of western Pacific.

Kiribati (Gilbert and Ocean Island)

Area : 861 sq. km. Population : 85,501

Capital : Tarawa

- These islands are spread over a vast area in South West Pacific.
- Has high grade phosphate deposits.

Agriculture and fishing are the main occupations.

Nauru

Area : 21.1 sq. km. Population : 10,605 Capital: Yaren district

- World's third smallest independent state.
- Lies to the south of equator in the Central Pacific Ocean.
- It is a coral island with huge deposits of phosphate.

Polynesia (Many Islands)

- The group of islands within the "triangle" is known as Polynesia.
- It includes Tuvalu, Samoa, Cook Islands, and Easter islands, French Polynesia, Nive, Pitcairn Islands, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna.

TUVALU

Area : 26 sq. km. Population: 10,588

Capital : Funafuti

- Formerly known as Ellice Islands
- World's fourth smallest independent state.
- It is a scattered group of nine small atolls in the Western Pacific Ocean.

Melanesia (Black Islands)

- It is the most westerly Pacific island group.
- Lies between the equator and the Tropic of Capricorn, it is divided politically into Irian Barat and Papua New Guinea - the Bismarcks, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Fiji Island and Vanuatu.

Important Islands of Melanesia

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Area : 4,62,840 sq. km. Population : 4.8 million

Capital : Port Moresby

- The largest island of Melanesia.
- Consists of eastern part of New Guinea and adjacent islands.

FIJI

Area : 18,270 sq. km. Population : 812,918

Capital : Suva

- Fiji's largest island Viti Levu constituting more than half of the land area of the country.

SUVA

- It is located in the southeast coast of Viti Levu.
- It is the country's capital and the largest city of Melanesia.
- Country's light industrial centre and leading port.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Area : 2,89,000 sq. km. Population : 4,55,429

Capital : Honiara

- Situated to the east of Papua New Guinea in the Southwest Pacific Ocean.

NEW CALEDONIA

Capital : Noumea

- Minerally very rich, having deposits of nickel, chrome, cobalt, iron, gold, silver and copper.

Capital : Port-Vila

- It is a tourist destination offering unspoilt beaches and peaceful environment.