

Australia

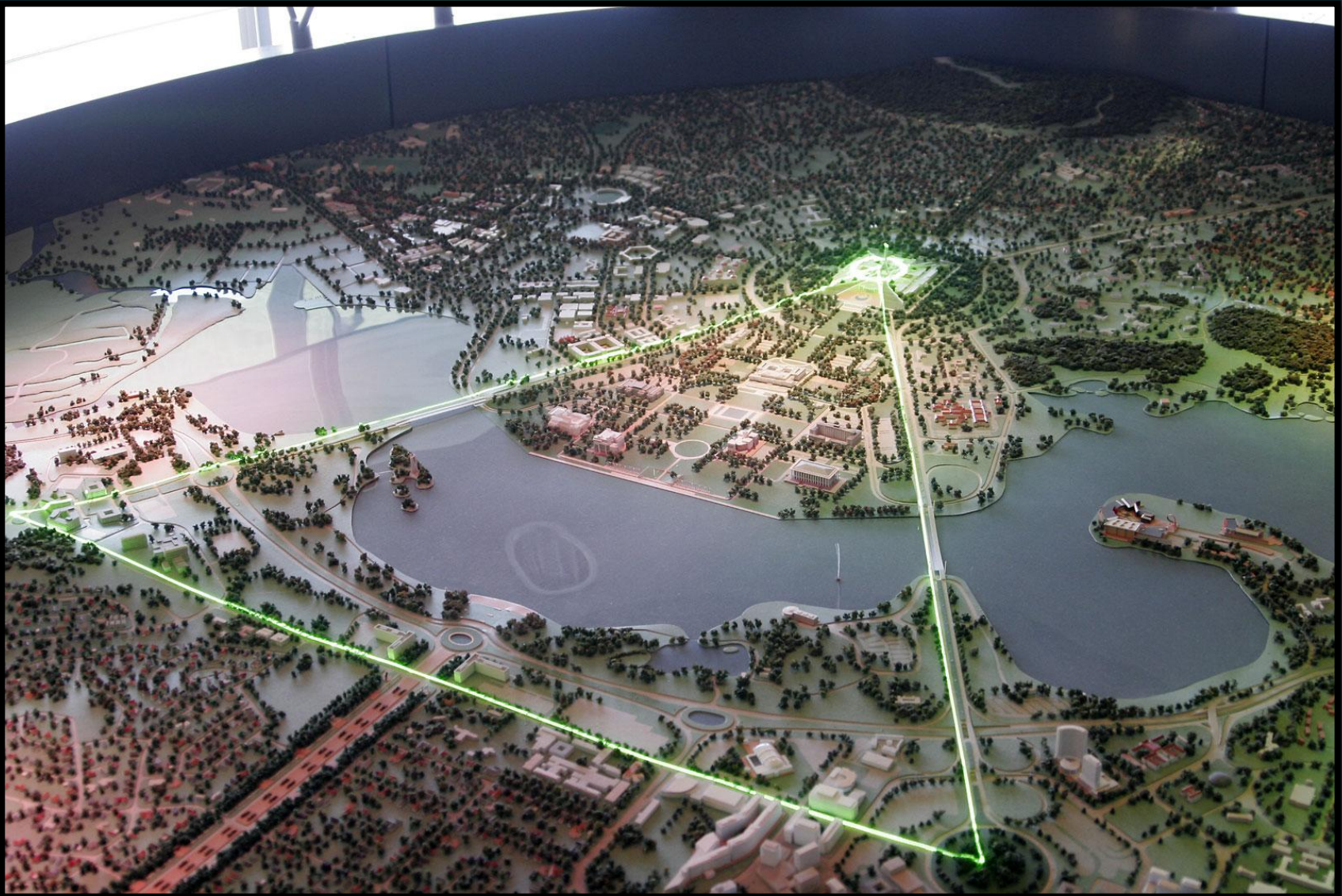


Australia, or the Commonwealth of Australia, as it is officially called, is situated on the island continent. It also occupies the Island of Tasmania and some minor islands round the coast of the continent.

It is a highly developed industrial-agrarian country. Its area is about 8 million km². It is the only state in the world that occupies the territory of a whole continent.



The capital of Australia is Canberra, which became the capital only in 1927.



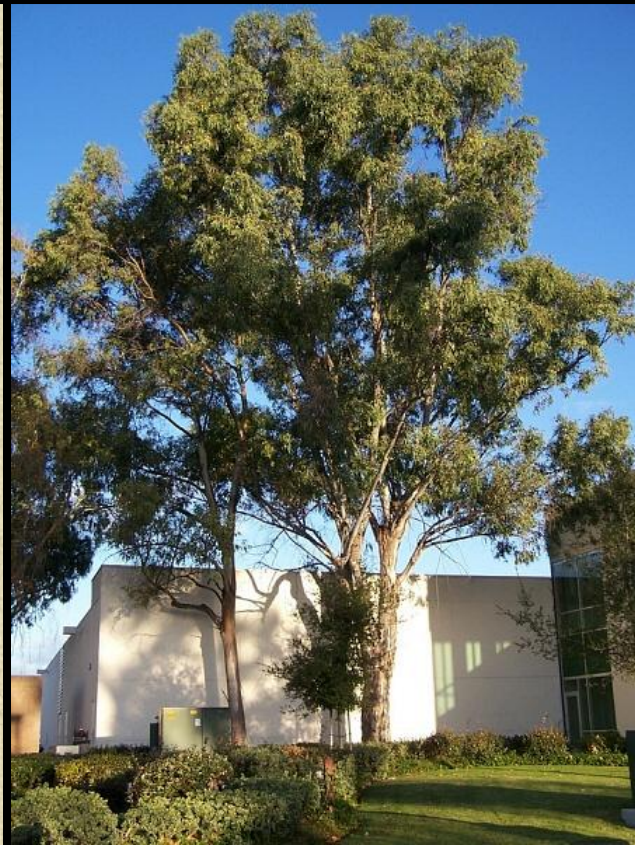
From 1787 to 1867 Australia was a place where criminals were sent from Britain. That is why the official language of Australia is English. The population is 23.549.759, most of whom live in cities on the east coast



Almost one half of Australian territory is occupied by deserts and semideserts. It is rich in coal, iron ore, bauxites, uranium, lead and many other mineral resources.



Now the most important industries are oil, chemical, ore mining, radioelectronics, and food industry. The country exports agricultural products and raw materials. As for the nature, the commonest trees of Australia are the eucalyptus and the Australian acacia or mimosa, the national emblem of the country. Such unusual animals as a kangaroo or a koala-bear originate from Australia.



Australia is one of the most unusual and exotic countries of the world. A significant feature of modern Australian society is the representation of a lot of cultures drawn from many lands by its people.

Historically part of the British Empire and now a member of a Commonwealth of Nations, it is a relatively prosperous and independent nation.



The Australian continent is located within the three main warm climatic zones of the southern hemisphere: subequatorial, tropical, subtropical.



Subequatorial climate characteristic for Northern and the North-Eastern part of the Australian continent .It differs by stream of temperatures and high precipitation . Wet North-West monsoon brings rainfall here and rainfall is usually in summer. In winter, in the dry period of the year, it rains occasionally.



Tropical belt of the Australian continent is formed by two main types of climate:tropical wet, tropical dry.



The zone of subtropical continental climate covers the South part of the continent. The main features of the climate are small quantity of precipitation and relatively large annual variation in temperature.



Australia is the driest continent of the Earth, and one of the most characteristic features of the nature of it is a wide spread of desert.

