

# INAUGURAL PROFESSORIAL ADDRESS

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 2017

# AUT



PROFESSOR  
LEN  
GILLMAN

## Biodiversity: where, why, and how do we save it?

Biodiversity is the variety of life. It includes variation within and among species, and diversity among ecosystems. Between half and three quarters of plant and animal diversity on Earth resides within only 6% of its land area – tropical rainforest. Diversity decreases sharply with distance away from the tropics and with decreasing water availability. However, despite many thousands of publications on the subject, the cause of this pattern remains uncertain. In his inaugural professorial address, Professor Len Gillman explores one potential explanation – The Integrated Evolutionary Speed Hypothesis.

What we do know for certain is, that biodiversity that has taken millions of years to accumulate, is currently being extinguished by humans over decades. If we are to halt this decline or even slow the decline, we need to do something very

different – business as usual is not an option.

Prior to joining AUT, Professor Gillman has been a self-employed landscape designer, a graphic designer and a campaign manager for a conservation organisation. He has been Head of Science for the last seven years. He is Associate Editor of *Journal of Biogeography* and his research includes forest ecology, global patterns in primary productivity, rates of genetic evolution, and polar ecology. He has published in high-impact journals including; *PNAS*, *Global Ecology and Biogeography*, *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, *Ecology, Evolution*, *Frontiers in Plant Science* and *Journal of Biogeography*. Professor Gillman has used drones for ecological and conservation research in Antarctica, Namibia, Western Australia and NZ, and has field experience in environments from the Arctic to Antarctic and from tropical rainforests to tropical deserts.

TUESDAY  
10 OCTOBER

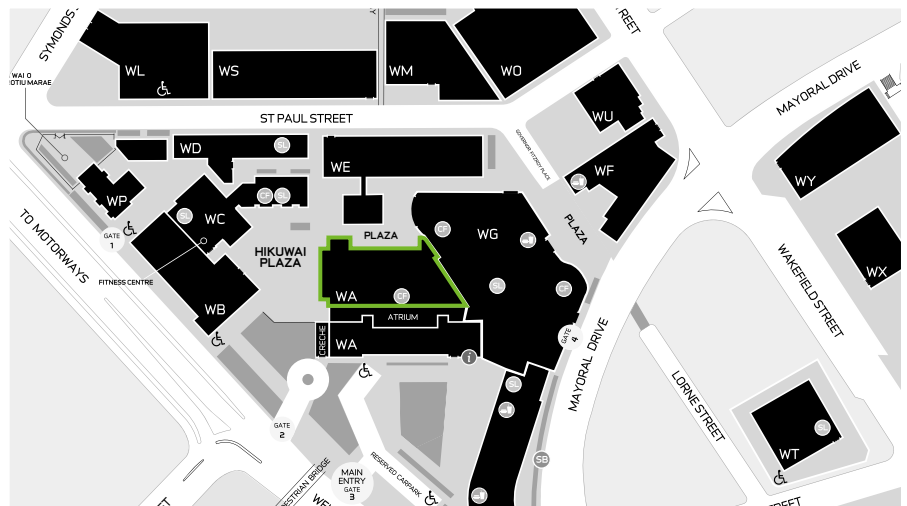
4.30–5.30pm

WA Conference Centre

AUT City Campus  
Level 2, WA Building  
55 Wellesley Street East  
Auckland 1010

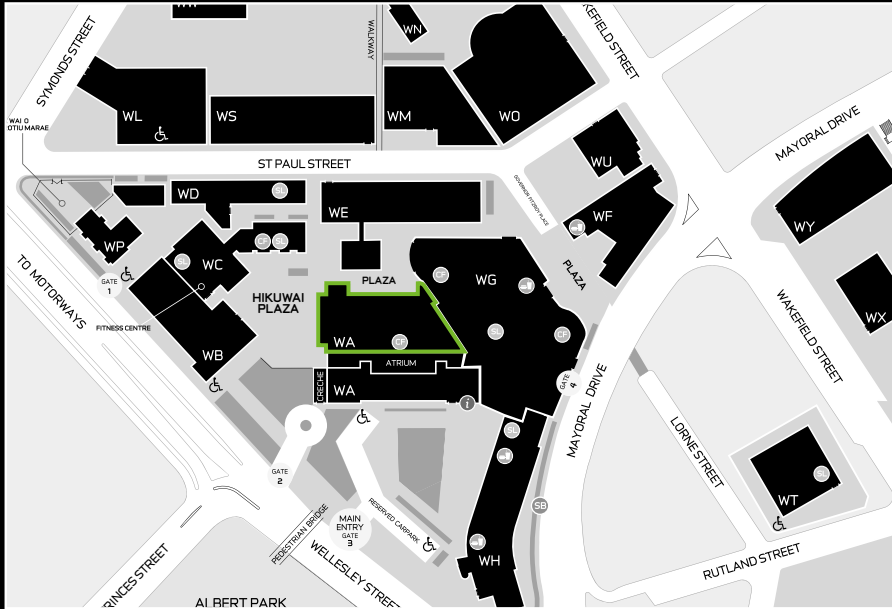
To register for this event,  
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Refreshments will be served  
after the address.



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RSVP: [sue.chapman@aut.ac.nz](mailto:sue.chapman@aut.ac.nz)

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Biodiversity: where, why, and how  
do we save it?

Professor Len Gillman  
Professor of Biogeography  
School of Sciences  
Faculty of Health & Environmental Sciences

Tuesday, 10 October 2017  
4.30–5.30pm  
AUT City Campus



## A message from the Vice-Chancellor

Every year new professors join the AUT professoriate. The AUT Public Lecture Series, featuring professorial addresses, serves as a public platform for introducing new professors to university colleagues and to the wider community interested in their field. In each one-hour lecture, professors take their audience on a journey related to their research interests, their career to date, and the future as they see it. The AUT Public Lecture Series is accessible to a wide audience and well attended by AUT staff and visitors to the campus.

The diversity of topics is vast and each professor brings their distinctive personality and style to their presentation – but every lecture is connected by one theme: a deep and personal knowledge of the subject matter, often developed over a lifetime of research. Whether it's about corporate communications, marine ecology or human rights – each address represents a dedicated pursuit of knowledge, and a desire to share it.

Derek McCormack  
Vice-Chancellor



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