

ANZRSAI Newsletter

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

An interdisciplinary international organisation focusing on understanding the growth and development of urban, regional and international systems

September 2006

From the President

For those involved in regional activities this year has had plenty on offer already however I need to draw your attention to two more events. First, the ANZRSAI Annual conference being held in Beechworth between September 27th and 29th and second, the BTRE Regional Workshop preceding the conference on September 26th at the same venue. Further details of both events can be found on our web-site.

For the ANZRSAI conference in Beechworth, Professor John Martin has been working hard as convenor to get the usual great range of papers in a well-balanced program and all the key papers refereed. Well done John and all those who have worked behind the scenes.

On administrative issues, we have been conducting a membership audit over the past few months so please excuse us if we make contact with you about things we should already know. We need to reconstruct some databases that are incomplete so please be patient with us on this one. The universal RSAI membership for all ANZRSAI members will be in place after the 2006 conference with all paid up members having access to the RSAI site.

An update on our two publications, *Australian Journal of Regional Studies* (AJRS) and *Sustaining Regions*: the editor of AJRS, Christine Smith, has indicated she is just about ready to upload the latest issue. We have been working to put in place a new editorial team for *Sustaining Regions* and hope soon to be able to announce details. As part of this arrangement we are looking at being able to get sponsorship for the production of *Sustaining Regions* in hard copy once again so it continues to fill that important role as a 'coffee table' publication on regional issues. We'll keep you posted on this.

For those of you not coming to the conference you need to be aware that Jane Wardlaw who has been the vibrant Western Australia representative on ANZRSAI Council for the last three years has recently moved from Western Australia to Tasmania and as a result has had to resign from Council. We thank Jane for her contributions during her time on Council and look forward to hearing more from her soon.

David Fuller

In this Issue ...

	<i>page</i>
President's message	1
What Region is This?	1
Regional Roundup - Western Australia	2
Policy Review - New South Wales	3
Publication Review - NZ Social Report	4
Conferences	5
Conference Calendar	6



What region is this?

Torquay is famous for its surfing industry. Rip Curl started wet suit production there in 1971 in an old house with a pre-World War II sewing machine. The company is now the centre of a business cluster of related enterprises in the town. The houses above are more recent additions to the Torquay landscape and you are most likely to find young families living in them. Located within commuting distance of Melbourne and the regional centre of Geelong many take advantage of the seaside lifestyle combined with urban employment. Torquay, located in the western coastal region of Victoria is a growth area for the region as it lacks the environmental/topographical constraints of other smaller coastal towns. Although housing vacancy rates are still relatively high, they have been decreasing over the last twenty years as holiday homes are converted to permanent dwellings.

*Dee Johnson, Research Officer
Victorian State Government, Geelong*

Do you have a photo of a favorite location that you could share with readers? If so, send it to the editor:

fiona.mckenzie@dse.vic.gov.au

Regional Roundup - Western Australia

Where can regional development go in the Wild Wide Mid West of Western Australia?

It is time to say goodbye to my 'practice' role with the Mid West Development Commission as I pursue an academic career in Regional Development. Whilst sitting in the seat of the Regional Development Commission, I have been reflecting on my seven years of policy and practice contemplating what still hasn't reached the policy agenda; observing the economic bust and boom cycle; and wondering about the reality of our vulnerability to global economic forces and hence the role of regional development.

The Mid West region spans 500,000 square kilometres of the most diverse land types. From the ocean to the outback, this region's economy is a hot topic of conversation. For example, the mineral boom of the arid zone environment has benefited the coastal areas of the greater Geraldton region through infrastructure development and promises of major iron ore projects for the future. Yet twenty kilometres inland the agricultural region is suffering one of its driest spells on record. The Australian Wheat Board scandal is fresh in people's minds, while the recent demise of world trade talks in Doha has placed agriculture's future in the region under a dark cloud. The question of creating sustainable communities for future generations is cast into doubt.

Considerations for regional development should be based on the notion of sustainability for future generations. The Mid West regional economy relies heavily on natural resources as does much of rural and remote Australia. Current global demand for these resources is delivering a boom period for regions like the Mid West; however, history tells us that such booms are rarely sustained over the long term.

While booms are in progress politicians and policy makers are often unable or unwilling to see the need for investment into alternative industries. Or, if they do, they don't follow through with the essential steps to make these alternatives happen. Without a longer term view and sustained investment in such alternatives, the question arises: how will this region sustain itself once those natural resources are depleted? How can those remote communities adapt to change?

Research, analysis and innovation are required but, to date, investment in these areas at the regional level has been minimal. A research node could be established in the region to analyse current and future policy implications and opportunities for sustainable development. An excellent model for such an approach is the Desert Knowledge Australia group who have developed a combined approach of practice and research to determine sustainable futures across arid zone environments in Australia (approximately 80% of the land mass area of this country).

How can sustainability shape regional development for the Mid West in the future? I believe the answer lies in the marriage of academia and practice. What we need is more people working on the ground with theoretical understandings of regional development; the knowledge and experience of such people should, in turn, be listened too and consulted with,

in the shaping of policy. Irrespective of the rhetoric of city-based bureaucrats, it simply does not happen.

Instead, policy-making is reactive, responding to media triggers rather than considered investigation and a desire to maximise community wellbeing and sustainability. Let's take for example the very remote township of Wiluna where the school is situated beside the local sewage ponds. Despite many years of lobbying State Government of this dispicable situation raised by local government and the Mid West Development Commission, it took a very recent visit by the Governor General Michael Jefferies to his birthplace in Wiluna to bring the matter to the attention of the national media. Following the visit the State Government has responded by making firm plans to relocate the school to a more environmentally friendly and conducive site.

In my opinion, regional development organisations should facilitate dialogue and engagement across communities, industry and government, providing information and advice and developing networks to manage change and embrace sustainable futures. Regional development organisations should play a 'watch-dog' status too, ensuring that policy development involves consultation and engagement with a wide range of regional stakeholders. They should also advocate the development for improved analytical tools that measure citizen engagement, participation, health and well-being, as well as gauging the implications of policies for the future of the communities in which we are to serve.

ANZRS AI is a valuable tool in networking, policy, practice and theory. Its core business – to support and encourage discussion and debate – is essential to maintain and build effective regional policy. From a personal perspective, this group has provided me with the professional support, both academic and in practice, to bring new and innovative projects to this region and to better understand the transition that remote rural communities are facing. ANZRS AI must be supported strongly to ensure that regional development is debated, measured, analysed and value-added for the future.

Jane Wardlaw

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this writing belong solely to the author.

For more information on Desert Knowledge visit their website at: www.desertknowledge.com.au

Copy me!

Feel free to make copies of the ANZRS AI Newsletter for your office colleagues or others who may be interested in learning more about regional issues or about the ANZRS AI.

Policy Review – New South Wales



Draft New South Wales State Plan

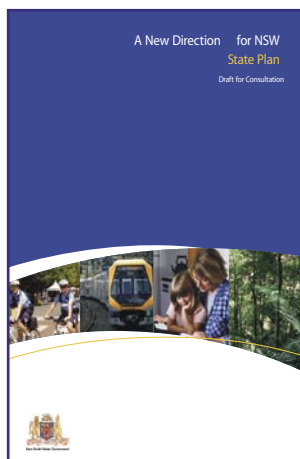
Website & Consultation Process

www.nsw.gov.au/stateplan

The travelling Government consultation team came to visit Nowra last week as part of their whirlwind wish-listing process for stakeholders and community members across New South Wales.

When I asked a member of the team what he thought I could review for ANZRSI's newsletter he suggested the plan on the basis that "this is change of direction for a state government". Minister David Campbell, who was present as were the Aboriginal Affairs Minister and two local sitting members, said that this was a "new direction for governing New South Wales" echoing the plan speak of Premier Iemma. There was agreement that this kind of whole-of-government consultation and strategic planning process had never been undertaken in the past – I can't comment on other states but the process of government is much more interesting to the government than most communities and this seemed to be a genuine attempt to reach the community rather than just tell them what the government might do or be.

The night and the planning process on the website stress the Iemma focus on service delivery and performance measures to be developed from the final Plan which is to be complete by October.



Coming up easily from a perfunctory google search, the draft plan website is succinct, clear and easily downloadable. Hallelujah that the web designers have considered regional Australia with its slow internet access: just to be sure I downloaded it on a slow connection. Like the community consultation I attended, the aim to be about community and aspiration not just about government, is the communicated desire. The structure, simplicity and sentences of the website invite comment. Each webpage is short of words and direct in simple understandable language.

It does really seem to be about getting people's ideas and a responsive government.

The draft plan as it stands contains 29 priorities across 4 areas: respect and responsibility; improving services; growing prosperity across New South Wales; and environment for living. At the consultation sessions and on the feedback pages of the website there are questions asked like:

- What is the government doing well?
- What could it do better?
- What are your priorities amongst the 29 on the list?

The group I was with in our community consultation found it easy to develop their notions of improvements to the plan and the staff facilitating the process keen to try to reflect what was being expressed around the table.

Personally, I find the city-country divide evident in the priorities as they stand and cite the example of the transport priorities which take no account of the needs of regional Australia to get people to work and to services. I also believe that while technology and the knowledge economy underpins some of the thinking in the draft, there is no acknowledgment that regional Australia is lacking in the infrastructure to develop into significance in this area.

Our feedback session in Nowra noted the lack of identified priorities for Aboriginal people and I observe with pleasure that every page of feedback from Stakeholder groups posted on the web on the date I accessed it (8/9/06) highlighted the need for specific identification of Indigenous issues in the plan.

On my own obsession with the importance of education in helping the regions meet the future, the draft plan gets my thumbs up although I am not sure I would have expressed the priorities as they are written.

Overall I hope the promise of the plan and attendant process go beyond the political niceties of winning hearts and minds in the electorate. It certainly seems to be doing the process of consultation with a positive spirit.

Robbie Collins

Some interesting web links and commentary:

www.ncoss.org.au/hot/hot.html

www.ausglass.org.au/forum/viewtopic.php?p=51&sid=3cb074bd5c3aac6fb7274abf34db8032

www.sydneyferries.info/presscentre/articles.php?newsId=195

www.chinatown.com.au/eng/news.asp?id=268

www.velosydney.wordpress.com/2006/08/09/nsw-state-plan-weak-on-bike-use

www.carersnsw.asn.au/policy/cnsw_policy.htm

www.smh.com.au/news/national/iemmas-uturn-on-motorways/2006/08/07/1154802822305.html

Publication Review: NZ Social Report

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT *Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora*

The Social Report 2006: Regional Indicators

Prepared by the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development

Since 2001 the Ministry of Social Development in New Zealand has published an annual Social Report containing statistical indicators to provide a picture of the country's quality of life. The 2005 Report introduced some regional analysis for the first time, and this has been followed up in 2006 with a full companion report on Regional Indicators.

The statistical data are categorised into 10 domains: health, knowledge and skills, paid work, economic standard of living, civil and political rights, cultural identity, leisure and recreation, physical environment, safety, and social connectedness. Each domain presents between one and four indicators, with each indicator represented in a map to show regional rankings, accompanied by a table of time-series data.

There is plenty of food for thought in the data. The suicide rate in Hawkes Bay, for example, is twice that of neighbouring Taranaki. A third of the adult population in Gisborne smoke cigarettes, compared to one-fifth in Otago. Indicators for drinking water quality record 94.9 per cent for the Nelson region, but only 3.5 per cent for the Marlborough region next door. It is perhaps not surprising that the turn-out in the most recent local body elections was 48% in the former region, but 62% in the latter.

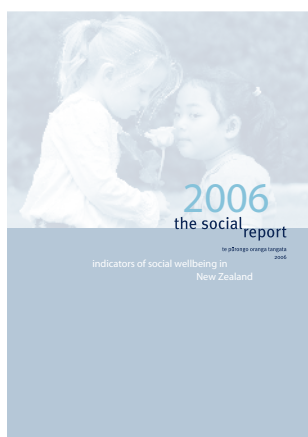
The novelty of analysing regional data in New Zealand is reflected in the short periods of the data series (often going back no further than 2001) and the simplicity of the indicators. Cultural identity, for example, has just two indicators – the proportion of the Māori population who can hold a conversation about everyday things in Māori and the proportion of people who can speak a “first language” (excluding English) of their ethnic group. Australians may have always thought that English-speaking Europeans kiwis have no culture – this now appears to be the official view also!

The importance of this publication is that it represents another step in recent efforts to focus national and local government policy on issues at the regional level. The reform of New Zealand's Local Government Act in 2002, for example, resulted in local governments being made responsible for promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities, in the present and for the future. That requirement exposed the paucity of regional data available under each of the four well-being objectives, and this initiative of the Ministry of Social Development is one of

The most important of these projects are being conducted by Statistics New Zealand, as reported on its website at www.stats.govt.nz/statistics-by-area/regional-statistics/default.htm. These projects include exploring the feasibility of producing regional gross domestic product data, and the department has also recently held a series of workshops to introduce a new regional labour market and income series (the Linked Employer-Employee Data project, LEED) based on tax returns and its own business database. For a fee, the Department also provides a quarterly report on any territorial authority in the country, bringing together a range of data from itself and other sources such as the Ministry of Education.

These resources are opening up new opportunities for regional development practitioners and for regional science academics to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of local economies and to research the well-being of local communities. The Social Report itself has raised the profile of regional issues, since it allows quick and easy comparisons among regions and over time. We can all hope that the indicators and the analysis will become more sophisticated in future reports, but the importance of the step taken in the 2006 Report should not be overlooked.

Paul Dalziel
Professor of Economics
Lincoln University, NZ



The Social Report can be downloaded from:

www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz/

ANZRSAI membership

If you know of people who would like to join ANZRSAI, please download a membership form from the website:

www.anzrsai.org

Membership fees 2005-06 (GST Inclusive)

Standard	AUD \$ 160.00
Student	AUD \$ 87.50
Emeritus	AUD \$ 108.50
Institution	AUD \$ 337.50

Conferences

The Beechworth conference is upon us!

Between September 27th and 29th ANZRS-
SAI members and others will be descend-
ing upon the historical Victorian township
of Beechworth to experience first hand the
conference theme of “Heritage and Regional
Development”.

An added bonus will be the BTRE “Region-
al Perspectives” session which will precede
the ANZRS-
SAI conference on Tuesday 26th
September.

Those of you unable to come to Beechworth
will be able to catch up on conference papers,
reports, AGM and Council elections by tuning
in to the website (www.anzrsai.org/). We will
also be providing a special conference edition
in our December Newsletter.



RSAI World Congress

São Paulo, Brazil March 17-19 2008

School of Economics, Administration and Accounting - University of São Paulo



ABER Brazilian Regional Science Association
Associação Brasileira de Estudos Regionais

World Integration
Emerging Countries
Lagging Regions
Sustainability

All subjects are welcome

www.aber.fea.usp.br/rsai2008

The School of Economics, Administration and Accounting at the University of São Paulo



With almost 5,000 faculty and 70,000 students, the University of São Paulo is the best university in Latin America. USP is a research university, offering 237 PhD. Programs in various disciplines. One third of its students are enrolled in graduate programs. The Faculty of Economics, Administration and Accounting, with over 180 faculty, offers Ph. D. Programs in Economics, Administration and Accounting. Total enrollment at FEA exceeds 3,500 students, 600 in graduate programs.

São Paulo City

São Paulo is one of the largest cities in the world, with over 18 million people in its metropolitan area. It hosts around 15% of Brazilian GDP and is the heart of the Brazilian economy.

It is metropolitan in nature, with a diversified population, composed of Italians, Germans, Japanese (the largest community outside Japan), Lebanese, Chinese, Koreans, Spaniards and, of course, Portuguese.



Ibirapuera Park

Opportunities for tourism

Besides experiencing São Paulo and its attractions, you can easily visit other interesting tourist attractions, such as the Amazon Region (with the famous Opera House in the jungle), Rio de Janeiro (45 min flight), Iguaçu Falls, the Brazilian Pantanal (swamp) with its rich and diversified wildlife, etc.

There are many flights from the two São Paulo airports to all tourist spots, at reasonable prices. Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay are less than 3 hours away!



Guanabara Bay - Rio de Janeiro



Iguaçu Falls



Marius Opera House



Brazilian Pantanal

Conference Calendar

Forthcoming Conferences

September 2006

Centre for Public Policy Melbourne University
*Governments and Communities in Partnership:
From Theory to Practice*
September 25-27, Melbourne
www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/

ANZRS AI Annual Conference
Heritage and Regional Development
September 26-29 Beechworth Victoria
www.anzrsai.org

October 2006

International Landcare Conference
Landscapes, Lifestyles and Livelihoods
October 8-11 Melbourne

Meeting of the Brazilian RSA
Learning Regions and Regional Development
October 15-17, Foz do Iguaçu City, Brazil
www.aberfea.usp.br or <http://www.iguassu.com.br/>

Spatial Econometrics
October 27-28, University of Zaragoza, Spain
<http://dae.unizar.es/seminario2j/>

November 2006

Annual North American Meetings of the RSAI
November 16-18, Toronto, Canada
www.narsc.org

Retrofitting of Social Housing: Financing & Policy Options
November 7-8, Thessaloniki, Greece
Enquiries to: Kiki Papadopoulou (email: kpapad@cres.gr)

February 2007

Annual Meeting of the Western RSA
February 21-24, Newport Beach, California, USA
<http://geog.arizona.edu/wrsa>

Annual Meeting - Sthn Agric Economics Association (SAEA)
February 4-7, Mobile, Alabama, USA
www.saasinc.org/

March 2007

Annual Meetings of the Southern RSA
March 29-31, Charleston, South Carolina, USA
www.regionalscience.org/srsa/

International Conference on Strategic Management (ICSM)

Entrepreneurial Strategy Innovation and Sustainable Development

Sichuan University, Chengdu, China
April 19-20, 2007

The 2007 international conference on strategic management is focused on strategic innovation and sustainable development of both large-sized and small and medium sized enterprises in an era of globalization.

Paper topics include but are not limited to:

- Business Strategy on Self-innovation and its Sustainable Development
- The Globalization and the Strategy of Business Sustainable Development
- IT and the Strategy of Business Sustainable Development
- The Design of Developing Region Strategy and its Sustainable Development
- The Strategy of State Power Management and Economic Development
- The Strategy of Western Enterprises Innovation and Development in the Transformation Period of China

All accepted papers will be published by Press of Sichuan University and will be sent to be indexed by ISTP by ISI web knowledge in USA.

For further information visit:

www.icsm2007.com

ANZRS AI contact details

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