

SIAN

Convenor's Report

Greetings and Happy New Year to ASA members and SIAN readers.

The first half of 1998 will be very busy for ASA, particularly with our involvement in the International Association for Impact Assessment conference being held in Christchurch in April. Plans for the conference are well advanced and it looks like there is going to be a very interesting programme of papers on social assessment and related topics. The last issue of SIAN (Number 44, December 1997) outlined the programme and future issues will report on the conference and the key social assessment happenings.

Under the leadership of Nick Taylor, the Canterbury group (assisted by friends, family and volunteers) has been very busy doing the organisation on the ground in Christchurch. This has involved a lot of work, ranging from organising catering and menus through to liaison with Immigration officials at embassies and high commissions to ensure that the delegates arrive in New Zealand without too many hassles. The Association is grateful for the efforts being made by this team to put on an outstanding conference for the many international and local delegates expected.

The conference is also providing an opportunity for the Association to build its relationships with other NZ organisations, including the Resource Management Law Association, the NZ Planning Association and the Institute of Engineers. To this end there will be a joint display in the exhibitions area, and a forum on the "Future of Impact Assessment in New Zealand".

As far as the rest of the year's programme is concerned, the new Core Group has re-affirmed the key objectives of improving liaison with

other groups and organisations in New Zealand and Australia, and promoting and supporting regional social assessment groups and their activities.

Specifically, ASA is promoting the joint forum at the IAIA conference, targeting recruitment of members in universities, and checking out our previously active members to encourage them to participate once again. ASA is still very keen to get regional activities up and running, and wants to hear from any SIAN readers out there who would like to get together occasionally in their local area. You let us know, and we will make it happen.

As you will see, this issue of SIAN is accompanied by a very full report, prepared by Karen Threadwell, on last year's ASA conference (which was held jointly with community development workers in Christchurch). Because of commitments to the IAIA conference, it was decided not to organise a full ASA conference in 1988, but rather to hold a relaxed one-day seminar in the Wellington area, complete with socialising, feasting and bonfire sing-along — SIAN will keep you posted about this.

Maybe we'll see you at the IAIA conference in Christchurch!
Gerard Fitzgerald.

| Contents..... | Page |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| New IAIA Journal | 2 |
| Generational Accounts in SIA | 2 |
| Population Conference 1997 | 3 |
| Dan Quayle's Quotes | 3 |
| What We Measure Counts | 4 |
| Heritage Tourism | 5 |
| Newspaper Headlines | 6 |
| Blackboard | 7 |
| Publications | 8 |
| Improving Environmental Decisions | 10 |

IAIA News — A New Journal

IAIA has agreed to merge the *Impact Assessment* journal with *Project Appraisal*, the journal produced by Beech Tree (a small publishing company based in Guildford, England). The new journal, to be owned by IAIA and published by Beech Tree, will be called *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*. In format it will be similar to the old *Project Appraisal*, but it will use the sequence established by *Impact Assessment*. Thus, the first issue will be distributed in March 1998, and will be Volume 16, Number 1. The merger should be of great benefit to IAIA because it immediately increases IAIA's exposure by attracting new members and increasing library subscriptions by at least 100 libraries.

This is the third exciting phase in IAIA's journal. The first phase was the *Impact Assessment Bulletin*; the second phase was *Impact Assessment* as we have known it over the last five years or so.

In the short term, not much will change, except that abstracts will now be required for papers submitted to the journal. The Publications Committee will prepare a standard policy and issues of the new journal will carry the new submission requirements. New Zealand practitioners are encouraged to publish in the new journal.

In This Issue....

Issues Co-ordinators: Nick Taylor & Gerard Fitzgerald
Editing, layout, production: Chris Cosslett
Reviews, research, publications: Wayne McClintock

Generational Accounts in Social Impact Assessment

In the latest IAIA Newsletter, Henk Becker writes:

A research method called generational accounting has been developed and applied by economists. This will enhance social impact assessment, particularly demographic impact assessment.

Generational accounts consider taxes paid compared with transfer payments received, and indicate what typical members of each generation can expect to pay in net taxes. The method enables assessment not only of what existing generations will pay (in present values), but also what future generations will be expected to pay, given current government policies and budget constraints. In other words, it assumes that government bills not paid by current generations must ultimately be paid by future generations.

Generational accounting can be used in social impact assessment to assess the consequences of current and future policies such as social security policy and wage and labour market policy, taking gender differences into consideration.

See: Auerbach, A.J., Gokhale, J. and Kilikoff, L.J.: *Generational Accounting: A Meaningful Way to Evaluate Fiscal Policy*. Journal of Economic Perspectives, Volume 8, Number 1, p. 73-74.

One Day ASA SEMINAR

Due to the time involved in hosting the IAIA Conference, there will be no ASA conference this year. Instead a One Day Seminar will be held, probably in late Oct. or early Nov. Details are yet to be decided but the topic will be interesting, the location great (somewhere around Wellington), and there will be a social element. Details in future SIANS.

Population Conference 1997

Excerpts from an article by Pip Desmond, Dialogue (Newsletter of the NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations), no. 97, December 1997.

The Population Conference was held in Wellington in mid-November, 1997. More than 40 speakers covered a wide range of issues, including population change, education and skill development, immigration, Maori concerns, social services and race relations. The following are summaries of selected presentations.

Produce and Reproduce

Ian Pool, Director of Demography, Waikato University

In the future, every young New Zealand adult, male and female, will be needed both as a worker and as a parent, to maintain a wealth-generating society. Policies will have to take both roles into account and look at the family/workplace interface. We must encourage around 2.1 births per woman, so we will have to look after families and ensure their access to social capital.

Migration has less effect than many people believe, though it can impact on certain age groups, areas, etc. We must stop seeing it as a panacea for ageing or economic woes, and see it as a positive force which enriches our society, our culture and perhaps even our economic life.

Government intervention in immigration is relatively limited — the profile of approvals is completely different from the profile of arrivals, which is the important thing. Policies must not only cover recruitment of immigrants, but their reception and settlement.

We must urgently attend to the needs of Maori aged 25-44 years, who will be the

kaumatua of the 2020s. They are the major victims of the restructuring of the 1980s. Because of forces totally beyond their control, many have ended up with little equity, not owning a house and little continuous employment.

Absorption Stress Will Continue

Alexander Sundakov, Institute of Economic Research

It seems surprising that immigration has created so much social stress in recent years. Most new arrivals have settled in Auckland, where they should have been relatively easily absorbed because of its ethnic diversity and urban culture. Most immigrants who come in under the points system are also relatively highly-skilled, and we have a shortage of skilled labour.

It is the inflow of new faces that our society finds most difficult to deal with.

However, in future we will need an increasing number of immigrants to deal with our declining labour force and economic growth. Tension will continue to exist as increasingly older native-born New Zealanders struggle to cope with the influx and associated pressure on schools, social services and the economy.

The key issue is how to reduce this 'absorption stress'. More can be done to educate people about the benefits of immigration and ethnic diversity. Reducing stress is not just about being more tolerant of migrants' cultures. Newcomers need to preserve essential aspects of Kiwi culture and our values of democracy, freedom and tolerance.

Dan Quayle's Quotable Quotes Corner

"We don't want to go back to tomorrow, we want to go forward."

"I have made good judgements in the past. I have made good judgements in the future."

“We’re going to have the best-educated American people in the world.” “People that are really very weird can get into sensitive positions and have a tremendous impact on history.”

What We Measure Counts

Garth Nowland-Foreman

(Source: *Dialogue* — Newsletter of the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations, No. 92, December 1996)

There has been a very interesting debate recently on the internet about measuring outcomes in voluntary organisations. Who can argue we should not be concerned with our impact on clients and communities? With trepidation at first, a few lone voices started to question the prevailing orthodoxy. But once the taboo was broken, it soon turned into a flood of scepticism.

“Measuring ‘outcomes’ or ‘impacts’ are only the latest buzzwords in a field attempting to make itself sound scientific when it is really an art.”

“Seasoned social service volunteers and workers know the measurement of success will come only in seeing their clients grow to become better citizens, better family members and better human beings.”

“Yes, social service priorities can be set. Community needs can be measured and assessed. Outcomes of feeding, shelter and health can be measured. Meanwhile, if we focus on those results which are absolutely measurable, we may forget about the young men or women who may have avoided drugs or a life of crime except for a lack of funding for programmes in which their inherent self-worth was nurtured by a caring adult.”

There is particular concern about the impact of the measurement fetish on preventative and community-building programmes. It can favour the easily measurable over the more important. It can favour the ‘easy’ clients and communities over dealing with more intractable problems. It can shift the focus onto individual organisation ‘performance’ when the real problem is poor social policy — usually never evaluated!

“Develop your tools for assessment and measurement, but please don’t forget that some desired outcomes are to keep bad things from

happening — ten, twenty, thirty years from now. Don’t strip away the delicate infrastructure of society by focusing only on the immediately measurable.”

Too many funders seem to have confused counting with accountability. They seem less interested in actual outcomes, especially if they are messy, idiosyncratic or long term. But life doesn’t always fit neatly into boxes on a data sheet. Some government funders in particular seem more concerned with ‘add-ability’ — getting standardised figures they can add together from the different organisations they fund.

Yet some of the distinctive qualities of voluntary organisations are our diversity and flexibility — not our standardised responses. I always encourage organisations to include case stories along with any statistical returns — whether in their annual report, newsletters or funding returns.

Does this mean that we are trapped in our own hunches and sense of organisational self-righteousness? Not necessarily, but it does mean that what we measure, counts.

On a recent trip to the UK, I was able to talk first-hand with some people at the New Economics Foundation who have been developing a practical tool that can help organisations assess their impact on people’s lives in a more holistic way.

Called social auditing, it recognises that voluntary and community organisations are value-based organisations. It offers a systematic (and verifiable) way of bringing the organisation’s aims and values together with the viewpoints of its major stake-holders.

And it is immensely practical. They suggest that after the start-up costs in the first two or three years, your social audit is costing you too much if it costs more than your financial audit.

We need to seize the initiative or we will end up being driven by our ‘measures’.

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Heritage Tourism

Julie Warren

There has recently been a renewal of interest in the marketability of heritage tourism — a form of tourism where the history, culture and the land on which the host people live forms the core of the product and is the primary focus of visitors (Swarbrooke, 1994). This renewed interest stems partly from an increasing number of tourists wanting to know more about the places they visit and to interact with their hosts (Warren & McKay, 1997). The range of heritage products commonly marketed overseas includes historic buildings and monuments; indigenous cultures and artefacts; sites of battles and other important events; abandoned mines and other industrial sites; language, literature, music, art and theatre; and traditional lifestyles.

Interest in heritage tourism is strong within New Zealand, although marketing still tends to focus on the country's natural beauty, adventure activities and often outdated images of Maori culture.

Heritage tourism has the potential to provide economic and social benefits. It can create jobs and income, and contribute to the sustainability of the industry as a whole (by extending the range of tourism products). Heritage tourism can also enhance cultural and community identity and pride, provide the impetus and revenue to conserve local and national treasures or taonga, encourage urban renewal, and extend tourist stays, seasons and routes.

There are also potential costs associated with heritage tourism. For instance, there are already concerns about heritage tourism based on Maori images where Maori are not in control. Apart from issues around who benefits from this tourism, the images used do not represent contemporary Maori. The pressure on Maori to 'perform' to match these images may have real impacts on Maori views and interpretations of their own culture as well as on others' valuing of the culture (Hall, Springett & Springett, 1993, Aotearoa Maori Tourism Federation, 1996). Some of these problems can be overcome or minimised through the involvement of communities and other stakeholders in the

selection, interpretation, development and management of resources for heritage tourism. New initiatives based on Maori culture and heritage are increasingly Maori owned and operated (Aotearoa Maori Tourism Federation, 1996, Hall et al. 1993 and NZTB, 1996).

The interest in heritage tourism is, to some extent, reflected in results of a recent national New Zealand rural tourism survey. This survey is part of a larger research programme funded by FRST and carried out by the Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment (CRESA) in association with Taylor, Baines and Associates. Out of almost 500 rural tourism survey respondents, about 10% provide one or more heritage tourism products. A high proportion of these (40%) provide tourism products which enable visitors to actively participate in displays and activities.

The heritage tourism market in rural New Zealand is dominated by products with an historical focus. More than 1 in 4 heritage enterprises involve historical tours and another 20% are history museums. The next largest group of businesses (20% of the total) are primary industry related, being equally divided between agricultural and mining displays. The remaining products include (in order of frequency) art exhibitions, marae visits, cultural displays, technical museums, and other museums.

Survey results highlight frequent relationships between heritage and other tourism products. Eighty-three percent of heritage businesses provide a secondary product, most often accommodation. Other secondary products, listed in order of frequency, are activities, retail, garden visits, food and events. Although the proportion of heritage products linked to events is small (because the number of event products overall is small) the link between events and heritage products is strong: thirty-three percent of events also provide heritage tourism products.

Visitors to heritage tourism operations tend to be older and more of them are female in comparison with rural tourism enterprises as a whole. Those in the 60+ age group are more attracted to heritage tourism and are more likely to visit in groups than as couples. Most visitors

to heritage tourism enterprises are New Zealanders and most of these are from the North visitors come mainly from European countries, the United States and Australia.

Heritage tourism enterprises tend to generate higher turnover than other rural tourism businesses. According to the survey, the median gross turnover for heritage tourism enterprises in the 1995/96 financial year was \$38,000, compared with \$24,000 for rural tourism businesses as a whole.

As with all rural tourism enterprises, the greatest life changes for the people running heritage tourism enterprises include increased social contact and meeting people from other cultures. A significant proportion of heritage tourism operators (9%) also report increased stress.

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References

Aotearoa Maori Tourism Federation (1996): Report on the Current Market Position of Maori Tourism Product.

Hall C.M. (1996): Impacts Planning & Development, Introduction to Tourism in Australia, 2nd Edition. Addison Wesley Longman Australia PTY Ltd.

Hall, M., Springett D.V. and Springett, B.P. (1993): The development of an environmental education tourist product: a case study of NZ Natural Heritage Foundation's Nature of NZ Programme. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Volume 2: 130-6.

New Zealand Tourism Board (1996): Tourism in New Zealand: Strategy and Progress. NZTB, Wellington.

Swarbrooke, J. (1995): The future of the past: heritage tourism into the 21st century. Seaton, A.V (ed.) Tourism The State of the Art. John Wiley and Sons Chichester.

Warren, J. and McKay, P. (1997): Demographic Trends and Tourism Development. Tourism Policy Group, Ministry of Commerce.

And Now for Something Completely Different...

This is a list of actual US newspaper headlines.

- Include Your Children when Baking Cookies
- Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says
- Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers
- Safety Experts Say School Bus Passengers Should Be Belted
- Drunk Gets Nine Months in Violin Case
- Survivor of Siamese Twins Joins Parents
- Iraqi Head Seeks Arms
- Prostitutes Appeal to Pope
- Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over
- British Left Waffles on Falkland Islands
- Lung Cancer in Women Mushrooms
- Eye Drops Off Shelf
- Teachers Strike Idle Kids
- Clinton Wins on Budget, But More Lies Ahead
- Enraged Cow Injures Farmer With Axe
- Plane Too Close to Ground, Crash Probe Told
- Miners Refuse to Work after Death
- Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant

Blackboard

Local events:

Ageing in New Zealand

April 20-21, Wellington. Congress to plan strategies for accountable and sustainable delivery of social services for older people. Organised by Institute for International Research. Includes address by P.M. **Contact:** IIR, PO Box 3181, Auckland, Tel: (09) 379 5892.

9th REAAA Conference

May 3-8, Wellington. Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australia conference on traffic and traffic safety, pavements and surfacing. **Contact:** Conference Secretariat, Wellington Festival and Convention Centre, PO Box 11890, Wellington. Tel: (04) 801 4290, Fax: 801 4270.

- Stolen Painting Found by Tree
- Two Sisters Reunited After 18 Years in Checkout Counter
- Killer Sentenced to Die for Second Time in 10 Years
- Never Withhold Herpes Infection from Loved One
- War Dims Hope for Peace
- If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last a While
- Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures
- Deer Kill 17,000
- Enfields Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide
- Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges
- Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead
- Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge
- New Study of Obesity Looks for Larger Test Group
- Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft
- Kids Make Nutritious Snacks
- Chef Throws His Heart into Helping Feed Needy
- Arson Suspect Held in Massachusetts Fire
- Ban On Soliciting Dead in Trotwood
- Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half
- New Vaccine May Contain Rabies
- Hospitals are Sued by 7 Foot Doctors

1998 Scicon Conference, New Zealand Association of Science Educators

July 5-9, Nelson. **Contact:** Conferences and Events, PO Box 1254, Nelson. Tel: (03) 546 6022, Fax: (03) 546 6020. E-mail: conferences@confer.co.nz

Events abroad:

The City as a Catalyst for Growth

May 24-29, Taipei and Kaohsiung, Taiwan. **Contact:** International Urban Development Association 22nd Annual Congress, 12F-1, 60, Chung-Hsiao E. Rd., Sec. 4, Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C. Tel: (00886) 2752 4612, Fax: (00886) 2740 2397. E-mail: k7752207@tpts1.seed.net.tw

7th International Symposium on Society and Natural Resource Management

May 27-31, University of Missouri. Will focus on better integration of social and natural resource sciences in addressing resource and environmental issues. For presentation of paper, poster or organising of round-table discussion, present abstract by 15 Nov 1997. **Contact:** Sandy Rikoon (srsjsr@muccmail.missouri.edu)

or Charlie Nilon
(charles_nilon@muccmail.missouri.edu) or Bill
Kurtz (bill_kurtz@muccmail.missouri.edu), or go
to: <http://silva.snr.missouri.edu/issrm>

Community, Citizenship and Enterprise Culture

June 17-19, Deakin University, Victoria,
Australia. Australian and NZ Third Sector
Research 4th International Conference.
Indigenous issues, labour rights, management,
state and third sector relationships, philanthropy
and volunteering. **Contact:** ANTSR conference
organiser, Faculty of Arts, Geelong, Victoria
3217. Tel: (03) 5227 2113, Fax: (03) 5227
2018, e-mail: cchr@deakin.edu.au

World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists

June 25-27, Venice, Italy. **Contact:** e-mail:
susan.venice@popmail.iol.it

Promoting Human Well-being: Addressing the Forces Shaping Society

July 5-9, Israel. 28th ICSW International
Conference on Social Welfare. **Contact:**
NZFVWO or Congress Secretariat, 8th ICSW
conference, PO Box 50006, Tel Aviv, Israel.
Tel: +972 3 514 0014, Fax: +972 3 514 0077,
E-mail: 28icsw@kenes.com

Winds of Change International

Conference: *Women and the Culture of Universities*

13-17 July, Sydney. **Contact:** Dinah Cohen,
Equal Opportunities Unit, UTS. Tel: 02-9514-
2148; fax 02-9514-1883; e-mail:
dinah.cohen@uts.edu.au

Beyond Politics: Rethinking the Future of Democracy

August 6-9, Portland, Oregon, USA. Rural
Sociological Society. **Contact:** Jo-Ann Jaffe,
1998 RSS Program Chair, Dept. of
Sociology/Social Studies, University of Regina,
Regina, SK S4S 0A2 Canada, Tel: +1 306 585
4198, Fax: +1 306 585 4815, e-mail:
JoAnn.Jaffe@uregina.ca

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) 1998

October 3 - 7, Tempe Mission Palms Hotel,
Tempe, Arizona. International
Conference/Workshops on Public Participation.

*SPICE — Synergy, Participation, Involvement,
Community, Enrichment.* **Contact:** PO Box
10146, Alexandria, VA 22310 USA. Fax: (703)
971-0006. Phone: (703)971-0090. E-mail:
iap2hq@pin.org

Evaluation — Investing in Our Future

October 7-9, Melbourne. Australasian
Evaluation Society international conference.
Pre-conference workshops on 5-6 Oct. Call for
abstracts/papers by 20 April. **Contact:** The
Meeting Planners, 108 Church Street, Hawthorn,
Vic 3122 Australia. Tel: (0061) 3 9819 3700,
Fax: (0061) 3 9819 5978, E-mail:
mpinfo@meetingplanners.com.au

Impact Assessment in the Development Process: Advances in Integrating Environmental Assessment with Economic and Social Appraisal

October 23-24, The University of Manchester.
Contact: Debra Whitehead, Impact Assessment
Conference Secretary, Institute for Development
Policy and Management, The University of
Manchester, Crawford House, Precinct Centre,
Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9GH. Tel: +44
0 161 275 2800, Fax: +44 0 161 273 8829, e-
mail: debra.whitehead@man.ac.uk, web page:
http://www.art.man.ac.uk/eia/Env_conf.htm

The 10th World Congress of Rural Sociology

Will be held in Brazil in the year 2,000.
Contact: Joe Molnar (President of International
Rural Sociology Association) at
jmolnar@acesag.auburn.edu

Publications Needed FOR REVIEW

**If anyone has or knows of any material they
think may be of
interest to other SIAN readers, please contact
Wayne McClintock, Social Researcher, Taylor
Baines & Associates, 37 Stour Drive,
Burwood, Christchurch, Tel: (03) 3833-784,
e-mail: w.mcclintock@chch.planet.org.nz**

Publications

Review by Wayne McClintock

Social Capital and Policy Development

EDITED BY DAVID ROBINSON.
INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES, VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON,
WELLINGTON. ISBN 0-908935-22-6,
PAPERBACK, 170PP., 1997. \$25.00

This book contains a number of papers that were presented at a workshop in July 1997. The workshop discussed the overlapping usage of the terms 'social capital' and 'social cohesion' and their relationships to policy making. Interest in the concept of social capital had been stimulated by a visit to New Zealand by Professor Robert Putnam, whose study of regional governments in Italy had concluded that community networks are a key factor in making government effective.

The authors examine social capital and policy development from a broad range of perspectives. Most of the contributors are employed by central government agencies, but several are associated with NGOs. There are articles focusing on specific policy areas such as lottery grants, crime, health, conservation and export growth, as well as a number which examine the overall processes of policy making. Due to limitations of space it was only possible to cover a selection of the articles in this review. Those covered were selected with a view to providing an indication of the diversity of views expressed in the book.

Contributors from NGOs remind policy makers that the concept of social capital not only has cultural dimensions, but that it can also be used to evaluate and to complement economic policy. Ted Douglas of the Maori Congress, for instance, points out that the development goals of Maori and Pakeha are different. He comments that for Maori, development "is group-oriented and contains a very large measure of manu motuhake (autonomy and authority), together with whanaungatanga (kinship), manakitanga (caring and sharing) and kotahitanga (unity)"

(p.7). From another perspective, Mike Riddell of the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services proposes that all government policy should be subject to a process of social capital impact evaluation. He suggests two measures be adopted for evaluating policy — social impact reports for prospective legislation (similar to the way in which environmental impact reports are required by the RMA) and a Social Responsibility Act that would monitor the goals, strategies and outcomes of policy.

Contributors from central government agencies primarily focus on how the concept of social capital may be used in policy making by their agencies. Roger Blakely and Diana Suggate of the Department of Internal Affairs, for example, examine the relationship between social cohesion and economic development and explain how social capital can benefit both of these. In a masterly piece of understatement they comment that, "Much of our recent economic growth has occurred because of the renewed emphasis we have placed on competitiveness and individuality but, taken to extremes, these may be inhibitors of social capital and a sense of a cohesive society" (p.85). They then discuss the ways in which government actions can encourage or hinder the development of social capital.

Margaret O'Brien of the Department of Conservation, on the other hand, adopts a more critical approach by rigorously examining the relationships between social capital and conservation issues. After noting that there is a connection between the degradation of social capital and ecological capital, she predicts that a powerful alliance will be formed between the social welfare lobby and the environmental movement under the banner of generational justice. She also observes that government policies of recent years have fragmented rural communities, with the consequence that their coping mechanisms are under severe pressure. In her view social capital would be strengthened by "a more deliberative form of government" (p.130) in which the policy making process not only incorporates issues raised by citizens, but also facilitates public debate.

Anne Spellerberg of Statistics New Zealand takes an empirical approach to the concept of social capital by describing a statistical framework for measuring it. Her framework consists of three elements: the structural

composition of the population and the processes by which they are changed over time; the values and attitudes of people belonging to society; and the participation of various groups in different aspects of society. While Spellerberg identifies the social indicators that need to be collected for each of these three elements, she also notes that there are major gaps in the availability of data for attitudes, values and participation.

A local government perspective on social capital is provided by Mike Reid. He highlights the role of district and city councils and the local nature of social capital by listing some of the outputs provided by councils that directly or indirectly contribute to social capital. He also describes four different approaches to governance taken by local authorities in New Zealand — the paternalistic, scientific inquiry, stakeholder and participatory models.

Social Capital and Policy Development is necessary background reading for anyone wishing to understand the emergence of the concepts of social capital and social cohesion in the policy making process. Some of the authors merely endorse the official view by emphasising the role of these concepts in promoting economic growth. Others, however, point out that these concepts may also be used to promote

participatory democracy and to ensure greater accountability by central government.

Copies of this book may be obtained from the Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington (Phone: (04) 4715-307, Fax: (04) 4731-261).

NOW AVAILABLE

The Impact of Environmental Assessment: The World Bank's Experience — Second Environmental Assessment Review.

By Olav Kjørven, World Bank Technical Paper No. 363, August 1997, 176 pages. Stock no. 13923 (ISBN 0-8213-3923-0). Price code \$20/\$20.00. Reference No.: IBRD PA 2387.

Contact: The World Bank, Office of the Publisher, 1818 H Street NW., Washington, DC 20433 USA, web page: <http://www.worldbank.org> E-mail orders: books@worldbank.org

Improving Environmental Decisions by Understanding People's Perceptions and Actions

Wendy Boyce, Social Scientist,
Environmental Analysis and Reporting

Tony Petch, Group Manager, Resource
Information

Waikato Regional Council

Gaining information about people's views and practices regarding the environment is considered an important next step in the development of more effective and relevant environmental management practices by Waikato Regional Council.

Environmental perceptions surveys, although rarely conducted, are an excellent way of balancing decisions based on biophysical data (the traditional focus of Environment Waikato) with information on public and interest group opinion (which is often the arena in which councillors need to make decisions). The benefits of integrating social and environmental information has been a focus of recent policy development at Environment Waikato.

Environmental perceptions surveys provide information on:

- people's views, opinions and priorities about environmental issues;
- the resources which people are using the most, where and why.

Gathering perception information provides the context for environmental decisions by informing us of likely levels of public acceptance (and effectiveness) of council policy and programmes. It brings a regional perspective to Environment Waikato's day-to-day decisions about local issues.

Information about people's perceptions can be used in resource management to:

- develop policy (e.g. defining priorities and focus, balancing the assessment of environmental costs with human costs in Section 32 analyses);
- implement and review policy (e.g. exploring public acceptance of the suitability and effectiveness of certain policies and methods, surveying the emergency preparedness of hazard prone communities); and
- allocate resources (e.g. forecasting of resource use, establishing appropriate environmental standards, balancing submissions from small groups with those of the broader regional community, identifying issues that need a more proactive approach because of high levels of

public concern, conflict or resistance, identifying gaps in people's knowledge, understanding and awareness of environmental issues requiring more effective communication strategies).

A number of organisations in New Zealand and Australia have conducted surveys that are useful to consider in developing similar studies. These have been summarised in a report entitled *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices: A Review and Critique of Environmental Perceptions Surveys*. The report was for Environment Waikato by Nemec Montague Associates Ltd in 1997. The review was undertaken in order to:

- demonstrate the type of information which perceptions surveys can provide;
- consider the lessons that can be learnt from other surveys; and
- make best use of external research.

Extracts of the report follow.

How Important is the Environment?

Most surveys asked people how much weight they gave to environmental issues:

- most believe that economic growth should be balanced with environmental protection (63% Bay of Plenty residents and 70% of Australians surveyed). Development is necessary for social and economic well-being, but it must be controlled and environmental problems minimised;
- most consider the environment to be one of the most important emerging issues (results ranged from 69 – 95%);
- concern for the environment is higher in economically buoyant times. During a recession, health, education and employment issues carry more weight.

The Most Important Environmental Issues

The three issues of most importance to the general public are:

- water quality (including pollution, discharge from industrial sites, quality of drinking water, quality of water in lakes, rivers and the sea);

- general pollution, hazardous and industrial waste;
- air pollution.

In 1996, Waikato River pollution was considered the biggest environmental threat in the Waikato region, followed by general pollution and waste disposal. However the majority of people did not perceive any environmental threats.

Other more detailed surveys focused on key groups in order to clarify concerns and assess policy acceptance, such as a survey of the top environmental concerns of farmers and other business people in the Wellington Region, 1993 (undertaken by Bev James):

Farmers' Top Concerns

- Possum control — bovine tuberculosis (69%)
- Water supply quality (57%)
- Weed control (49%)

Business' Top Concerns

- Water supply quality (57%)
- Pollution effects of inadequate waste management - concerns about waste disposal and recycling (51%)
- Sewage disposal (50%)

Are Things Getting Better?

In 1994, Australians were asked whether they believed the state of the environment was improving or deteriorating. Forty-eight percent believed that the situation had improved over the last 5 years, and 22% thought things had become worse.

Factors thought to be getting better

- dealing with household rubbish (71%)
- protection of endangered plants and animals (52%)
- cleanliness of beaches / ocean (42%)
- responses to international issues, e.g. the greenhouse effect, loss of forests (50%)

Factors thought to be getting worse

- water quality in rivers, lakes and creeks (54%)
- air quality (32%)

What People Say and What They Do — The Difference Between Perceptions and Behaviour

One of the dilemmas facing resource managers is that people will say one thing and do another. Heightened environmental awareness and concern does not necessarily lead to widespread changes in behaviour. Identifying

barriers to change will assist regional and local authorities to develop more effective methods and strategies to manage resources sustainably.

Motivations for making changes are listed below. Most people do not see central or local government as the main motivator for change.

Motivations for farmers:

- a desire to maintain and improve land productivity
- a desire to improve the appearance of property
- increased market opportunities
- compliance with international regulations
- minimising expenditure on chemicals and fertilisers
- increased personal awareness and knowledge of environmental issues

Motivations for businesses

- customer pressure
- development of environmental standards within the industry

Motivations for the general public

- direct impacts on their or their family's health, property, or recreation
- issues that are visible/tangible (smog) compared with those that are less visible (CO² emissions)

Barriers to Change

Farmers:

- financial constraints
- time constraints
- technological constraints

Businesses

- difficulty sourcing alternative materials
- financial constraints

General public

- lack of awareness about issues and how to address them
- time constraints
- financial constraints
- uncertainty about appropriate channels
- feelings of powerlessness ('no one listens')

Where to Next?

Environment Waikato is undertaking a perceptions survey in a month to find out about levels of awareness of environmental issues and attitudes to specific issues. Questions will also be asked about what environmental actions people are taking (e.g. making submissions to plans, joining Beachcare and Landcare groups and recycling). The survey results will contribute to Environment Waikato's State of the Environment report, due in February 1999. The research aims to contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources by better understanding the influence of people's attitudes and actions on the environment.

For further information, contact: Wendy Boyce, Waikato Regional Council. Email: wendyb@wairc.govt.nz

IAIA '98: THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER

Please refer to the last issue of SIAN (Issue 44, December 1997) for full information about the conference, registration, accommodation etc.

This conference will be of great value to social assessment practitioners and other impact assessment professionals. It will be a major international conference, the likes of which are not often seen in this country. The programme includes an excellent range of technical sessions, pre-conference technical visits and training courses.

Note that there is a good reduction for students. For non IAIA members, it will pay to join and get the benefits of membership for a year, at least! There is still time to register before the conference begins, or you can register on-site.

To register or make enquiries, please contact the IAIA Exec Office, North Dakota State University, Tel: +1 701 231 1006, Fax: +1 701 231 1007.

For a copy of the last issue of SIAN, please contact Chris Cosslett, Corydon Consultants, Tel: (04) 389 9979, Fax: (04) 389 4646, e-mail: office@corydon.co.nz

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Its aim is to **encourage contact** and **sharing** of information between all those interested in social assessment in New Zealand.

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their various employers or the Association.