

IMPACT ASSESSMENT NEW ZEALAND

IANZ Issue 48

The newsletter of the NZ Association for
Impact Assessment (Incorporating SIAN)

Convenor's Report

Well NZAIA is underway - and already there is a new spirit of enthusiasm in the ranks. The core group is focussing this year on building an association which can realise the vision of a more broadly based organisation for impact assessment in New Zealand. One which will improve the profile and need for integrated social and environmental assessment, and enhance communication and collaboration amongst those working in the field in our part of the world.

You may have noted from the last few SIANs that we have our web site up and running and that we are planning the first of our broader impact assessment conferences for later in the year in Auckland. Also, Richard Morgan has established our e-mail list server, which is designed to promote a free exchange of ideas, opinions and information among people interested in IA. We also have a new administrator as described by our secretary Jamie Newell in his separate report on administrative changes. Also, IANZ is born.

I note that some of our members have been active in recent conferences and gatherings on impact assessment. However, it seems ironic that one of our first tasks has been to try and mount a defence for the retention of the "social" in the Resource Management Act, and the need for social effects to be considered as an integral part of environmental assessments. This involved the rapid preparation of a submission on the proposed changes to the Act. (See the article later in the newsletter, and also the essays by Richard Morgan and Hobson Bryan)..

I strongly urge existing members to get the word out to work colleagues and other associations and organisations about our new association, and encourage them to visit the web site and participate in the list-discussions.

Remember, it is our intention to supplement, not replace, other professional associations with an interest in impact assessment and environmental management.

Right now we are looking for a new coordinating editor for the newsletter - Chris is taking a well-deserved break and we appreciate his efforts in recent years. If you are interested in the job (or helping out) please contact me. This issue has been put together by Nick Taylor and myself.

In the "pat ourselves on the back" department I noted the following from the IAIA's latest newsletter:

Hats off to the IAIA'98 Programme and Planning Committee. IAIA'98 brought impact assessment professionals from over 60 nations to Christchurch, New Zealand, where the Kiwi hospitality and efficiency were simply overwhelming. IAIA was especially honoured to have a number of Pacific Rim islands represented and involvement from indigenous people from several nations. "IAIA'98 was as close to perfect as a professional association's annual meeting can get" according to IAIA Executive Director Rita Hamm. Thanks from all of us in the EO and on behalf of the entire organisation as well."

Gerard Fitzgerald

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A COMMENT ON THE PASSING OF SIAN

Having been involved in the production of the first issue of SIAN, I guess there is some symmetry in editing the first issue of Impact Assessment New Zealand as well. There have been many issues in between, in fact 47. My only disappointment is that we didn't quite make 50 issues of an SIA newsletter. That's quite an achievement since the first issue in November 1983, with three or sometimes four being produced per year. One wonders how many other impact assessment newsletters have been going so long and consistently around the world?

SIAN has had many editors, producers and sponsoring organisations over the years. I'll try and name them. No doubt I will hear about anyone missed out! Bill Buxton and the Department of Internal Affairs; Nick Taylor and the Centre for Resource Management; Charles Crothers, Peter Melser, Mary-Janes Rivers, Di Buchan, Karen Cronin and Margy-Jean Malcolm, variously of the Town and Country Planning Directorate of Ministry of Works, Commission for the Environment, and the Ministry of Women's Affairs; Paul Lister and the Social Impact Unit; Tom

Fookes and the Ministry for the Environment (back in the heady days when we never doubted people were part of the environment); Roberta Hill, Gerard Fitzgerald and Julie Warren of the DSIR Social Science Unit and later the Institute for Social Research and Development; Jo Lynch and Rivers Buchan; Taylor Baines and Associates; Jamie Newell and MERA; and most recently Chris Cosslet and Corydon Consultants.

But there is no disappointment looking ahead with excitement to our new era. I have no concern that social assessment will be swamped in the future. Indeed, if we look at our umbrella international organisation, the IAIA, it also was started by people predominantly working in social assessment, and they have remained strong in the organisation over the years. As Hobson Bryan points out in his lead article in this issue, social assessment should provide the driving force in an integrated approach to environmental assessment in the years ahead. We can look forward to the role that IANZ will play in the necessary.

For the purpose of continuity, IANZ will continue with the SIAN numbering system, this being issue 48.

Nick Taylor

Thoughts on Integrating Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

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I appreciate the invitation to share a few ideas with my New Zealand friends and colleagues on the topic of integrating environmental impact assessment (EIA) and social impact assessment (SIA). I read with great interest Chris Cosslett's announcement of the final issue of SIAN, that a change was being made from Association for Social Assessment to NZ Association for Impact Assessment (NZAIA). It appears that New Zealand, as usual, is taking the lead in what I hope will be an inevitable trend to merge SIA and EIA.

In the formative years of environmental assessment, the tendency was to ignore social assessment altogether, or to substitute public involvement (really public relations in those first few years) or some kind of economic analysis for a more encompassing social analysis. It was fitting that those who recognised the seriousness of this omission or substitution proclaim and establish SIA as a vital and integral part of the assessment process. It was also fitting that social science practitioners networked among themselves to establish the "power of their presence" and to focus on the conceptual and methodological issues endemic to the social realm. I would hope and expect that these initiatives continue, so we can be sure that decisions are based on the projection of social outcomes - guided by solid social science.

Nick Taylor, Colin Goodrich, and I have long debated the merits of the division

between these enterprises and concluded that while the early distinction served an important purpose, the time has come for taking a more holistic approach. The beauty of the assessment model, of course, is that the logic and process are really one and the same for both EIA and SIA. Thus, on the face of it, blending what we do should not be difficult. Those who do consulting in the field are likely, as a matter of practicality, to have been integrating the respective areas for quite some time in their provision of a full range of services.

Looking ahead to improve the effectiveness of what we do, however, it has become apparent to a number of us in the environmental field, whether EIA or SIA practitioners, that the separation between biophysical and social science concerns has caused conceptual and methodological problems, and, in fact, may sometimes have hindered the development and acceptance of effective policy. The point is that we need to change our way of thinking to escape the legacy of segmentation. The typical scenario of EIA has been: "Humans are going to do something that will alter the environment. Therefore, we will examine various alternatives, so that decisions can be made to cause least harm/most benefits to that environment. Oh yeah, we need to fulfill that SIA requirement...Who can we get to do that stuff?" The traditional model is, in short, human activity affects the environment (People _ Environment).

Most realise that SIA in New Zealand has tended to be a much better recognised and vital part of the overall assessment process than in some other parts of the world (my country conspicuously included). But past segmentation of EIA and SIA carries an assumption about which I believe we must all be aware and challenge if we are to be effective in our merger. That assumption is that the "environment" and humans are really separate realms. Thus, we have

“environmental effects” and we have “social effects.” It follows that biophysical scientists will work together to ascertain the former and social scientists will work together to ascertain the latter. What frequently happens, of course, is that there is little integration of effort, findings, or understanding in this segmented process. In fact, environmental assessment reports often contain different sections under such titles as “Effects on Soils”, “Effects on Stream Sediment”, “Socio-Economics.”

An integrated approach to EIA implies that all the environmental effects we care about, almost by definition, have social outcomes and, in fact, any environmental policy is de facto social policy. Thus, the biophysical world of soil, water, plants and other animals and the social world of human animals are all intertwined in chains and webs of cause-and-effect relationships. In simple scenario terms, building a logging road causes soil erosion. Sediment finds its way into a stream. The stream’s insect life and other sustaining qualities are harmed. The trout become fewer and perhaps smaller. Anglers lose opportunities and go elsewhere for their pleasure (if they can). And the local economy suffers. Businesses scale down or close. Employment and income decline. Quality of life suffers.

Under an integrated approach, this traditional model is altered to become: “Humans are going to do something that will alter the environment. Therefore, we will examine various alternatives, so that decisions can be made to cause least harm/most benefits to that environment, and in return, the effects on stakeholders. Oh yeah, we need to get our soil scientist, aquatic biologist, and social scientist together right away to identify and involve stakeholders to address the issues and implications for people in the area.” The integrated model is, in other words, “reflexive” human activity affects the environment, which in turn affects hu-

mans (People _ Environment _ People). An important implication of the integrated approach to EIA, and one embraced and elaborated in the Taylor et al. (1995) approach to social assessment, is that people who do assessments should be members of truly interdisciplinary teams, members who work together to fill in the webs and chains of causality. Stakeholders have full standing and participate as part of this team. Regardless of scientific specialty or stakeholder group, all involved cooperatively develop models of cause-and-effect relationships and move from entrenched positions to more flexible solutions to issues.

Another implication is that if the model shifts to an anthropocentric or human focus, the risk is that the environment will no longer “have standing.” I would argue that most of us who work in the field will always have a deep and abiding commitment to the preservation and enhancement of the environment in its own right. But I would also argue that not linking environmental alteration to social outcomes has been a key factor in opposition to many environmental policies. This is perhaps best illustrated in my own country over the battle to save the Spotted Owl. “Environmentalists” wrung their hands over the threat of a species extinction. But those in the timber industry trivialised one side of the issue to “trying to save a few mangey owls,” while they elevated the other side as “our jobs and our futures.” A better job of linking the welfare of the owl to healthy ecosystems and, subsequently, to long-term human well-being would have made the eventual owl preservation policy more palatable to the public at large.

Thus I applaud efforts to integrate EIA and SIA and look forward as always toward as always to New Zealand’s creativity and leadership in this vital area to serve as a model for others to follow. New Zealand’s creativity and leadership in this vital area to serve as a model for others to follow.

References to "Thoughts on Integrating Environmental and Social Impacts" (page 4)

Taylor, C. Nicholas., Hobson Bryan, and Colin Goodrich (1995). *Social Assessment: Theory, Process & Techniques*. Taylor Baines and Associates, PO Box 8620, Riccarton, Christchurch, New Zealand. 228 pp. Price \$25.00 inc. GST and P & P, for NZAIA mem-

Health Impact Assessment in New Zealand

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Background

In April 1998, a one-day workshop on health impact assessment (HIA) was held as part of the conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) in Christchurch. The meeting provided an opportunity to bring together those people in New Zealand who, while not being part of the specialist impact assessment community, nevertheless shared a strong interest in HIA. Consequently, a major effort was made to involve the wider health sector in this workshop, and indeed the attendance of over 50 local participants from a wide range of backgrounds indicated that the opportunity had been grasped by many.

A further HIA workshop was held during the Public Health Association conference in Christchurch in June 1998. Various other initiatives are underway to promote and improve HIA practices in New Zealand, including research into current guide-

lines and training. Both of the workshops provided the opportunity to reflect on the development and current status of HIA in New Zealand. Clearly it is still at an early stage in its evolution, but the signs are that there is a growing recognition that HIA has an important role to play, particularly in the RMA context.

HIA in New Zealand

With the enactment of the Resource Management Act in 1991, hopes were high that health (and safety) would be treated as a natural, integral part of the revised impact assessment process contained in the Act. Section 5, which sets out the purpose of the Act, makes specific reference to health. In this Act, sustainable management means managing the "use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, that provides for their social, economic, and cultural well being, and for their health and safety".

Section 5(c), which refers to "avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment" is often taken to be the authority for carrying out impact assessment under the RMA. But in fact the whole section is based on the need to understand the likely implication of proposed activities in order to ensure that the needs of future generations are considered, that natural systems are not unduly damaged, and that the ability of local communities to meet their own needs are taken into account. Health is seen as an integral part of the well being of local communities, hence the assessment of health impacts (or "effects", to use the preferred term under the RMA) should be a natural part of any impact assessment should the situation demand it.

However, the experience of the intervening years suggests that the systematic consideration of health impacts has tended to be sidelined. In common with other countries with well developed health legislation and procedures, many local and regional authorities seem to assume that health concerns are adequately covered by the existing provisions and that the RMA procedures do not need to address such matters. Yet this overlooks the fact that impact assessment seeks to provide an integrated treatment of impacts, such that the overall impact of a proposal can be assessed, as opposed to the consideration of issues on a sectoral, discrete basis. Moreover, it also overlooks the fact that existing health legislation and procedures do not cover all the possible impacts that development activities can have on human health. In particular, psycho-social impacts on health are rarely covered under such provisions, and existing provisions tend not to be very responsive to new threats to human health. Impact assessment, in seeking to identify the likely impacts, whatever they are, is much more appropriate for that function.

Health impacts have not been entirely ignored in the resource consent process; where a proposal has obvious and direct implications for health, they are often dealt with in the environmental assessment. However, there is rarely any attempt to carry out a systematic appraisal of the health implications of proposals, which must increase the likelihood of important consequences being missed. Moreover, the range of health issues addressed is usually confined to those for which there is a legislative mandate. This

failing reflects the general lack of awareness and training in impact assessment, and particularly HIA, among applicants, consultants, council staff, and health sector organisations. In an effort to address this problem, the Public Health Commission (PHC), a government advisory body on health issues, prepared a booklet entitled *A Guide to Health Impact Assessment* aimed at public health services and local and regional government. The HIA guide was influenced by an earlier Australian report, as well as relevant work by the WHO. It adopts a rather conservative view of HIA, with the main emphasis being on assessing the risk of exposure to toxic substances. Indeed, it was followed by a second guide, *Risk Assessment: a User Friendly Guide*, which aimed to provide the technical core of the HIA process.

Unfortunately, shortly after these guides were produced, the PHC was abolished for being too aggressive in its promotion of health and in its advice to government. The Public Health Group of the Ministry for Health has not taken up the HIA cause in the same way, and it has effectively been left health sector organisations to promote and develop HIA for themselves. However, the situation might be starting to change. Earlier in 1998, the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability (also known just as the Health Advisory Committee) published a report (*The Social, Cultural and Economic Determinants of Health in New Zealand: Action to Improve Health*) in which it noted the importance of having formal mechanisms for assessing the effect of non-health sector policies on human health, and suggested the use of HIA by government depart-

ments for this purpose. It is interesting, however, that it did not recognise the importance of boosting health scrutiny of proposed developments - hence the document did not cover project-level HIA.

More recently, the Ministry for Health has released a discussion document on the current Public Health Legislation Review. The document draws quite heavily on the philosophy and design of the Resource Management Act in providing an alternative framework for improving, promoting and protecting public health. That framework reflects a strong risk assessment perspective, expressed in the core concept of public health risk management: the assessment and prioritisation of the impacts of hazards on health, and the development of measures to remove or control those effects (Ministry of Health, 1998). However, HIA is not mentioned at all, and the general notion of scrutinising proposed developments for their health impacts is not recognised in the paper. More importantly, there is no clear reference in the document to the RMA consent process and the need to assess potential environmental impacts as part of that process. Instead the emphasis seems to be on existing environmental health hazards. Changes to public health legislation will not occur for some time yet, and it may be that the role of HIA will be identified more clearly in the final proposals. In the meantime, the Ministry of Health has changed in its internal organisational structure, with an apparent emphasis in the public health area on risk assessment. Again, the potential is there for HIA to play a central role if risk assessment is not defined too narrowly.

The discussion so far has focused on HIA within the framework of the Resource Management Act. However, the cause of HIA has been boosted enormously by the arrival on the national scene of a new government agency, the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA). The Authority began its regulatory operations in July 1998, having spent some time developing an institutional structure and appropriate procedures. Established under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act, ERMA's task is to regulate the introduction of potentially hazardous organisms and compounds into the New Zealand environment in order to minimise the risk of undesirable environmental consequences. It is natural then that health impact assessment should form a major part of any application to ERMA.

Implication of proposed changes to the RMA

In November 1998, the Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Simon Upton, released proposed amendments to the Resource Management Act. Many of the proposed changes to the Act are concerned with process: the move to contestable processing of consents; the use of independent commissioners for consent hearings; the option in certain situations of direct referral to the Environment Court, skipping any formal hearing in front of a Commissioner; and so forth. Some proposed amendments do, however, involve substantive aspects of the Act and might therefore have implications for HIA. The major change proposed by the government is to alter the defi-

inition of "environment" used in the Act.

The proposed change removes references to social and economic matters, apparently to provide clarity, to remove the notion that assessments of effects must address an unlimited range of matters, to limit the ability of councils to address social and economic considerations in their plans to the disadvantage of potential resource use, and to limit the types of arguments used by submitters (especially trade competitors) objecting to a consent application. On the face of it, the inclusion of the explicit reference to health and safety values of communities is a very encouraging sign for the practice of HIA, especially as it reinforces the very similar statement in the purpose of the Act, section 5(2). However, removing social matters from the definition may have important consequences. It suggests social impact assessment would (if the changes go ahead) be limited to the matters listed in (c) of the new version: health and safety, amenity and cultural values of people and communities. This would mean that issues traditionally addressed by SIA would not be seen as relevant unless they could be argued to fit somehow into the other pigeonholes. For example, the social impacts of casinos might include greater addiction to gambling among a certain sector of the community, with an attendant rise in physical and mental health problems for other members of the family and the local community. The reference to health and safety in the proposed amendment suggests a narrower, physical definition of health effects, but there may in fact be pressure from other groups in the community to broaden it considerably to compensate for the

loss of direct reference to social matters. Regardless of how the other issues are resolved, direct reference to health and safety matters in the definition of environment should certainly raise the profile of HIA in New Zealand.

Conclusion

The status of HIA is still a problem in New Zealand, reflecting a widespread lack of awareness of the value of the process. However, recent developments from the IAIA and PHA workshops and the organisational changes at the Ministry of Health and the review of public health legislation suggest that we might be witnessing the start of a new and more successful era for health impact assessment in New Zealand. The most promising sign is the enthusiasm and commitment shown by a group of people working within the public health area who were involved in one or both of the two meetings in 1998. If this group can maintain its enthusiasm, attract new adherents, and take advantage of the opportunities now being presented, HIA will have a much brighter future in New Zealand.

Reference

R.K. Morgan (ed.) (1998) *Health Impact Assessment: New Zealand and International Perspectives*. Centre for Impact Assessment Research and Training, Department of Geography, University of Otago, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin. 65 pp. Price: \$16.50 inc Post and packing, and GST

Note that the papers from the April workshop on HIA are now available in a publication from the Centre for Impact Assessment Research and Training (CIART) at the University of Otago. The publication contains four overseas contributions, and six New Zealand contributions.

RMA REVISIONS

The revision of the RMA (as discussed in Issue 47) continues. The Association made a submission on the proposed changes, making the following key points, which we believe are consistent with international practice of impact assessment:

- The current definition of the environment is poorly worded, with an inconsistent hierarchy of terms and definitions. The environment should be defined as ecosystems and their constituent parts, including natural resources, the built environment, people and social systems.
- Changes should not weaken current requirements in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi and recognise the integral link between people and the bio-physical environment.
- Consultation and public participation are fundamental to the preparation of policy and plans, and the assessment of environmental effects.
- The RMA should provide a sound legal basis for integrated approaches to impact in New Zealand.
- The Fourth Schedule is the basic guide to impact assessment. It's key messages should be retained.
- The trade diversion issue is relatively minor and can be dealt with by careful wording and case law.

We expect to be involved in the next phases of legislative change. Please get in touch with Gerard Fitzgerald if you would like to have an input.

1999 NZAIA CONFERENCE and AGM

A first conference as the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment (Inc.) will be held in Oct/Nov this year. The plan is to hold the conference in Auckland - but we are still working on the details.

The conference is an opportunity to widen NZAIA's scope by

- bringing together a cross-section of people and organisations engaged in social and environmental impact assessment in New Zealand
- discussing the links between social and environmental assessment
- looking at impact assessment methods used in featured studies.
- strengthening communication amongst the national network of people and organisations with an interest in social and environmental assessment

The Auckland Region has been a fast beating dynamo in the NZ economy over the 1990's. It has strained to accommodate a high overall population growth rate and phenomenally high growth in selected areas. The Region has struggled to reconcile this rate of growth with maintenance of the natural and physical environment, with improvements to the quality of life, and with accessibility to and quality of infrastructure and services to people, businesses and other organisations. The conference's proposed overall theme is "Improving Practice in Impact Assessment".

A participatory style conference is the normal formula with some keynote speakers and discussion panels, and smaller workshop sessions as a channel for sharing local case study material and special interest issues. If you are interested in contributing or helping with the conference, then please contact Anne Duncan (NZAIA part time administrator, at email : anne@nzaia.org.nz, or fax : (04) 380-6475)

A planning meeting for the conference is being held in Auckland on the 21st of April (starts 5.30 pm). If you are interested in coming along to that meeting, please contact Marilyn Stephens (marilyn.stephens@parliament.govt.nz).

If you want to get the early notice on things to do with the conference, then subscribe to the NZAIA mail list (email to "listproc@stonebow.otago.ac.nz" the message "subscribe NZAIA <your name>", no subject) or watch the web site (www.nzaia.org.nz).

Marilyn Stephens and James Newell for NZAIA

AEE CONFERENCE

A two day conference on the assessment of environmental effects was held at Te Papa on 18-19 March. The conference was organised by the Centre for Advanced Engineering at the University of Canterbury. Keynote address were provided by Barry Sadler, from the Institute of Environmental Assessment in the UK and also Hon. Simon Upton. The Ministry for the Environment used the conference to launch their new guides to preparation and audits of AEEs (see publications section below).

Barry Sadler provided an important international and historical perspective to the discussions. But for many, especially those of us involved in social assessment over the years, there was a sense of de ja vu. Many of the lessons being learnt for EA today seem similar to those we learnt in SA in the 1980s.

- EA should be applied throughout the project cycle, especially in the early design phase.
- There should be focus to the assessment - on key issues and impacts - not the encyclopaedic collection of technical information that often takes place.
- Scoping is an important step for establishing the assessment process and to provide information on key issues.
- EA is a social process that has to recognise differing values and the social significance of potential impacts or effects.
- Public consultation and involvement are an integral part of the assessment process.
- Mitigation options should be identified as part of the assessment.
- Monitoring and management are important follow-up steps.
- EA is a learning process requiring periodic evaluation.
- The link between EA and sustainable practices is weakly developed.

We look forward to discussion and debate towards improved EA practice, in this newsletter and the new e-mail discussion group.

Blackboard

Planning Institute Conference

NZPI End of the Millennium Conference, Hastings, 27-30 April. For information e-mail andream@hdc.govt.nz

Science for Sustainability Workshops

These one-day workshops are FREE and open to anyone interested in maximising the benefits of sustainability. They are being organised by the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology. Information on their web site at www.morst.govt.nz

There will be workshops in Auckland on 26 April, Hamilton on 27 April, Wellington on 29 April and Christchurch on 3 May.

IAIA'99

The annual conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment will be held in Glasgow on 15-19 June. The theme is "Forecasting the future: impact assessment in the next century". Contact Rita Hamm e-mail rhamm@ndsuxt.nodak.edu

World Environment Day

5 June. The theme this year is simple: "Our Earth - Our Future - Just save it".

International Symposium on Society and Resource management

The symposium will be held at Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland 7-10 July. The theme is "The application of social science to resource management in the Pacific rim". For information contact Sally Brown, e-mail sally.brown!@uq.edu.au

Agrifood VII

The conference of the Agri-food Research Network will be held at the University of Sydney, from 15-17 July. The theme is "Political contingencies and the social impacts of change in Australia and

New Zealand agri-food systems". The contact is Bill Pritchard, Division of Geography, The University of Sydney, e-mail b.pritchard@geography.usyd.edu.au

Seminar on Social and Environmental Sustainability

The Association of Asia-Pacific Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC), of which New Zealand is a member through the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, will be holding a one-day seminar on Social and Environmental Sustainability in Wellington during August. FRST has appointed the Federation of New Zealand Social Science Research Organisations (FoNZSSO) to co-ordinate the seminar which will be co-sponsored by The Royal Society of New Zealand, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, UNESCO, and the Social Policy Agency.

The objectives of the seminar are to identify and clarify the contribution of social science research to the real-life issues confronting decision-makers and practitioners in addressing social and environmental sustainability through:

- providing a forum for discussion on social and environmental sustainability issues with reference to the contribution of social science research;
- presentation of case studies to illustrate specific issues, impediments and solutions;
- encouraging and developing understanding and knowledge of social science research to advance social and environmental sustainability.

The Seminar will be held in Wellington on 5 August. Please email your expression of interest to: gilvray.l@rsnz.govt.nz

Resource Management Law Association

The seventh annual conference of the Resource Management Law Association will be held in Christchurch, 30 September to 3 October. Contact karol.helmink@bellgully.co.nz

Environmental Risk Management Authority

The conference of ERMA will be held on 11-12 June in Wellington. Contact Karen Cronin, Phone 04 496 4826.

Environmental Engineering

The Australasian Environmental Engineering Conference, Auckland, 11-13 July. contact aeec99@ipenz.org.nz

Conference on technology assessment

Challenges for Technology Assessment & Technology Forecasting: Equity, Energy and Environment. 3rd International Conference and Bi-Annual Meeting. International Association for Technology Assessment and Forecasting Institutions (IATAFI), November 17-19, 1999. The conference will be conducted in three parallel sessions in which speakers and participants have an opportunity to present their views and share experiences in areas of equity, energy and environment technologies. For more information: Ms. Sunita Wadhwa, Senior Scientific Officer. TIFAC/DST, Technology Bhawan, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi-110 016, India. +91 11 686 8513 Fax: +91 11 686 3866 tifac@alpha.nic.in.

Administrative Changes

The beginning of the year has seen big administrative changes and a lot of work on new systems for NZAIA. to do at the start of the year while making a switch of paid part time administrator. Hattie de Vries who was appointed as paid part time ASA administrator in the second half of 1998 had to resign for health reasons. We are grateful for the work that she did in on the 1998 AGM and the November

Social Indicators workshop. We are pleased to welcome Anne Duncan who started work with NZAIA over the last few weeks as the new part time paid administrator.

In the transition from the end of 1998 and early 1999 there were some real bloopers with mailouts - for which we apologise if we haven't already done so to individuals affected and look forward to fewer problems as Anne Duncan gets up to speed in the job.

All those who are paid up members of NZAIA or were current members as of 1998 should have received a mailout of SIAN 47, the 1998 ASA AGM minutes and also the draft report on the November Workshop on Social Indicators either before xmas or in some cases in February. If you still haven't received this and are a paid up member then email [anne.duncan](mailto:anne.duncan@nzaia.org.nz) (anne@nzaia.org.nz) to sort this out for you. Many people were incorrectly mailed a general notice suggesting that they hadn't paid both their 1998 and 1999 membership subscription. If this affected to you then I apologise and rest assured that the membership database should correctly track your membership status. With the change from NZAIA to ASA we need to tidy up our membership list and mailing list, and redesign the membership database etc. The web site is being managed and extended, and an NZAIA mail list system started - which all members are recommended to subscribe too (refer article later in this newsletter, to join send an email to "listproc@stonebow.otago.ac.nz" the message "subscribe NZAIA <your name>", no subject). This will be our "hot mail" bulletin board for NZAIA activities and news and also a special forum for discussion of issues or interest to members. Join up and participate in the development of this new electronic network linking those engaged in impact assessment in New Zealand!

James Newell, NZAIA Secretary
(james_newell@nzaia.org.nz)

Home Page

In this section of the newsletter we highlight information on impact assessment and related issues on the internet.

Take a look at the NZAIA web page at <http://www.nzaia.org.nz>

The international Association for Impact Assessment home page is at <http://IAIA.ext.nodak.edu/IAIA/>

The Ministry for the Environment web site has recent publications that can be downloaded.
<http://www.mfe.govt.nz>

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity home page is <http://www.biodiv.org>

Canadian Environment Assessment Agency. This site has excellent links to sites in other organisations and countries
http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/index_e.htm

Australian EIA Network. This site contains information on environmental impact assessment (EIA) and its processes within Australia.
<http://www.environment.gov.au>

NZAIA E-Mail Discussion

NZAIA has established an e-mail discussion group. This consists of an email list that has been established to facilitate communication between people with an active interest in impact assessment, whether it be bio-physical, social, strategic, cumulative, health or any other variant of impact

assessment. You do not have to be a member of NZAIA - anyone can subscribe and participate, and its free.

We invite your active participation in open discussion on any aspect of impact assessment in New Zealand, and the wider Australasian/Pacific Region. We are keen to hear about what's going on in different organisations and localities, the issues and problems practitioners face, and the progress being made in developing and utilising methods, tools and theories in impact assessment. In short, anything you wish to raise and discuss with your impact assessment colleagues is welcome.

The NZAIA list is being hosted by the *Centre for Impact Assessment Research and Training*, at the Department of Geography, University of Otago, and is being managed by Dr Richard Morgan:
rkm@geography.otago.ac.nz

The discussion group was created because of the need to develop ways of improving professional communication and discussion, and enhance collaboration between NZAIA members and others involved in impact assessment in New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific, regardless of professional affiliation.

While it is an unmoderated list (that is, it does not have an editor), it is intended that from time to time, various NZAIA practitioners will take initiative to stimulate discussion on key issues.

NZAIA LIST SERVER

Using the NZAIA list

To use the list server and participate in discussions on it, you must first "subscribe". To do this take the following steps:

1. send an email message to: listproc@stonebow.otago.ac.nz
2. as the body of the message (not the subject) give the following command:
subscribe NZAIA <your personal name>

For example: subscribe NZAIA
Leonardo da Vinci

To **unsubscribe** from the list:

1. send an email message to: listproc@stonebow.otago.ac.nz
2. as the body of the message (not the subject) give the command:
unsubscribe NZAIA

To post a message:

<< Only subscribers can post to the list.>>

To post a message to the entire discussion group, send an email to: NZAIA@stonebow.otago.ac.nz. Please be sure to give a concise clear subject.

If you have problems with the list error messages will automatically be sent to the list manager. Should you need to contact the list manager about anything, please email Richard Morgan at:

rkm@geography.otago.ac.nz

Major topics

The focus of this mail list group is what is actually happening in terms of current work or development of theories and methods in IA in New Zealand, Australia, and the South Pacific but we also welcome contributions from our South Asian neighbours or others with an interest in this part of the world. We also want to get local perspectives on issues of wider international or global interest in Impact Assessment. Amongst the things that might be discussed are:

- Current work or projects involving the application, or where there should be application, of IA in New Zealand or this part of the world.
- Descriptions of objectives and methods of IA.
- Critiques of IA theories, methods and approaches.
- Identification of target audiences/perceived uses for different impact assessment tools.
- Encouraging application of appropriate impact assessment methods.
- Presenting and interpreting results of impact assessments.
- Methods for adapting existing IA tools to additional situations and site conditions.
- Data and databases for IA.
- Appropriate social and bio-physical indicators useful in IA.
- Relevant conference and seminar announcements, calls for papers and research/extension proposals, job announcements, abstracts and reviews of articles and reports, and interim research reports are all appropriate and welcome postings.

- Announcement of research plans, to encourage collaboration and/or reduce overlap in effort.

Note that the editors of IANZ may periodically include summaries of discussions in the newsletter, or invite contributors to work up their thoughts into articles.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

New EIA Guidelines for NZ

The Ministry for the Environment has released two new guidelines to improve the assessment of environmental effects under the RMA.

“A Guide to Preparing a Basic AEE”. This is aimed at helping applicants for resource consents to prepare an AEE.

“Auditing Assessments of Environmental Effects - A good practice guide”. This is aimed to help councils to audit AEE’s.

There are also three new brochures on “Assessment of Environmental Effects”, “Appeals on Council Decisions” and “Awarding of Costs by the Environmental Court”.

For information contact Erika Sefton e-mail erica.sefton@mfe.govt.nz

Managing Hazardous wastes

Managing hazardous wastes. A discussion paper by Ministry for the Environment that sets out problems and risks and a management framework. Free. publications@mfe.govt.nz

Hazardous Wastes in Rural America: Impacts, Implications and Options for Rural Communities and Waste-facility Siting in the United States. By Stephen Murdock, Richard Krannich and Larry Leistritz. Rowman and Littlefield. ISBN 0-8476-9100-4 (paperback version)

Social Assessment

A Conceptual Approach to Social Impact Assessment. Rabel J. Burdge. This is a revised edition of the earlier text, 1998. Available from Social Ecology Press, P O Box 620863, Middleton, MI, 53562-8063, USA. \$US19.919.95 paperback

IANZ is compiled and published by members of the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment (Inc.) and distributed **free** to NZAIA members.

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

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