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## Convenor's Report

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The past four months have been particularly exciting for the ASA and have marked some important developments.

April saw the Association taking a leading role in the International Association for Impact Assessment's annual conference – held this year in Christchurch. The conference was highly successful, thanks to great organisation and a great venue: the Christchurch Convention Centre. ASA, as an affiliate organisation to IAIA, took the initiative in getting this important gathering to New Zealand. Nick Taylor led a team of committed volunteers in Canterbury in formulating and implementing the local arrangements, and looking after the day to day running of the conference. In Wellington, Martin Ward lead the committee which put together a comprehensive programme, consisting of around 270 presented papers, poster papers, and at least a dozen open workshop sessions – all arranged into 34 “workshop” topics or themes. Many of the delegates commented, and I agree, that they hadn't ever seen a programme so well put together and run so smoothly. Congratulations Martin & Co. Approximately 450 delegates from over 70 countries attended, with good contingents from Australia, and also from the Pacific (courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

With 12 of the workshop streams explicitly featuring aspects of social assessment, the Conference had plenty to offer the social assessment practitioner and scholar. A quick glance over the workshop streams revealed, for example, SA theory, international guidelines for SIA practice, public participation, indigenous people's impact assessment, SIA and planning, gender analysis, and SIA case studies.

The Conference also provided opportunities for presenting ASA to the wider world, and to build relationships with related NZ organisations. Chris Cosslett assembled an information booth on ASA, and the NZ Planning Institute (NZPI) and Institute of Professional Engineers (IPENZ) mounted displays at our invitation.

The planned joint lunchtime forum to discuss the Future of Impact Assessment in New Zealand drew 19 participants who canvassed the need for greater communication and coordination among individuals and organisations involved in impact assessment, and the opportunities for expanding the base of IAIA in NZ. Suggestions ranged from setting up an Internet site and list server, to expanding the base of the ASA to include environmental assessment. It was agreed that ASA, NZPI, IPENZ, MLA and MFE representatives should come together to discuss how this communication and coordination might be practically achieved. Each of these organisations has since reported to their executives. It now remains for us to get together. In the meantime, the ASA Core Group has discussed and endorsed the proposal to expand the mandate of the association to include environmental assessment.

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Work is being done on the practical implications, and a formal proposal will be brought to the AGM in early November.

In addition to the NZ forum, New Zealand and Australian social assessment colleagues met to discuss further development of the Trans-Tasman connection. There was a lot of interest in getting an Australasian e-mail list server going as part of the IAIA system to foster communication and sharing of resources, along with another networking meeting – proposed for March 1999 at Byron Bay in north New South Wales.

Because of the heavy commitment to the IAIA conference, ASA is not holding its usual 2-3 day gathering this year – however planning is well advanced for a one-day professional development seminar to be held on [DATE] November in conjunction with the AGM – look for the details inside. Mark it off in your diaries and give some thought to how you would feel about “bringing the environment into the social” and let us know.

Lastly, Karen Threadwell, our administrative officer, is moving on. On behalf of the Association, thanks for your contribution Karen, and for your support. Best wishes in your new work.

*Gerard Fitzgerald.*

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## Social Assessment in NZODA

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*Alistair Wilkinson*

The NZODA Policy Framework requires that all projects take account of community concerns, address the needs of the poor and have particular regard for gender. The recently reviewed Policy Framework identifies key strategies in the areas of: policy and regulatory reform; good governance and management; private sector development; civil society; gender equality; social development; and the environment.

The goal of the NZODA Gender and Development Policy is the participation of women and men as equal partners in contributing to and benefiting from sustainable people-centred development.

A recent Development Assistance Committee (DAC) report of the OECD highlighted the need to ensure that gender issues are explicitly addressed in all policy/strategic planning documents (as well as projects), and to closely monitor the analysis of gender issues in assignment reporting at all stages of the project cycle.

Significant effort has recently been directed into structural reform programmes in small Pacific Island states. NZODA has worked closely with partner governments as well as other donors (particularly the Asian Development Bank or ADB) to ensure the social impacts of reform programmes are addressed both at the design stages of these projects and throughout implementation. A recent review of ADB-assisted reform programmes in the Pacific highlights the lack of consideration of social impacts during implementation.

It is now better accepted by both partner governments and the ADB that social assessment and social impact monitoring should be built in at the early stages of reform implementation. The UNDP (Suva office) is now also actively working in this area. A particular contribution New Zealand has made has been the management of the public service right-sizing process (see Dianne Buchan’s article elsewhere in this newsletter).

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## Managing and Assessing the Social Impacts of Economic Reform Programmes in the Pacific

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*Dianne Buchan, Corydon Consultants Ltd, Wellington*

In 1996 the Cook Islands Government embarked on a programme of economic reforms. Planning and implementation of the reforms were undertaken in a climate of intense urgency as the country struggled to deal with a serious financial crisis brought about by a period of excessive Government spending, erosion of the revenue base, growing indebtedness and a sharp downturn in the country’s main industry, tourism. With broad based community support (in particular from community leaders, the PSA and the private sector) the Government committed itself to a strategy of reforming and restructuring the economy.

A major plank of the reforms was a down-sizing of the public service. Other measures included improving public service management to increase the efficiency and service delivery of government departments, the introduction of measures to stimulate private sector development, user charges for some health services including drugs in Rarotonga (not in the Outer Islands), reductions in electricity subsidies, and the corporatisation and sale of some government-owned assets.

The need to reduce expenditure (particularly the cost of the public service) to a level that could be sustained by the tax base was a matter of urgency. Of all the countries in the Pacific the Cook Islands had the highest percentage of population employed in the public service (18% compared with the next highest country Tuvalu at 8%). About 60% of the total *work-force* was employed by government. In the Outer Islands the proportion was about 75%. The economic situation was such that 50% of these employees had to be laid off. There was little time for preparing the employees and no time for giving notice of redundancy. All 1,440 people were issued with redundancy notices within two months of most becoming aware of the seriousness of the economic situation which their country was facing.

As part of managing the impacts of the reforms, a Transition Unit was established as an NZODA project to assist the public service employees who lost their jobs. Programmes were implemented to provide small business start-up training and financial support, job search assistance, vocational skills training, a private sector apprenticeship scheme which subsidised wages over a limited on-the-job training period, enterprise loans and grants, household budgeting advice and counselling. The implementation and outcomes of all these programmes were continuously monitored and this provided a solid database for the project evaluation.

A social impact assessment of the Cook Islands' economic reforms was carried out nine months after the restructuring of the public service began. The SIA was funded by NZODA and designed and implemented by Corydon Consultants Ltd, in conjunction with the Community Action Coordinator (who was employed as part of the Transition Project) and a team of 10 Cook Islands researchers who undertook the work as part of their public service employment. These local researchers were selected on the basis of their involvement in social policy areas. To assist with questionnaire administration and data processing, a full-time local research assistant was also employed.

To begin the process, Corydon Consultants Ltd put the 10 local researchers and the Coordinators through a 3 day crash course in SIA during which a series of questionnaires were drafted. Assisted by the consultants, the researchers then piloted and amended their own questionnaires. The final questionnaires were administered in the outer islands by the Coordinator and the local researchers

and research assistant took responsibility for questionnaire administration in Rarotonga.

Altogether, 765 individuals, including people from the public service, private sector, women's and youth groups, health and education professionals, police and probation officers, contributed information to the report. The main findings are summarised below.

**Migration:** Since the beginning of the reforms the Cooks had experienced a significant level of out-migration. In the first quarter more than 1,990 left the country. The majority were youth and young families. The out-flux resulted in reductions in school rolls, fewer people to help with community work, difficulty in making up sports teams, fewer people to look after the elderly, deserted homes and land that had to be looked after by those remaining, and reduced prices for rental properties.

**Household Expenditure:** Loss of or reduced wages and reductions in child benefit payments changed the patterns of expenditure, leading to more careful budgeting, more local food being consumed and fewer imported goods purchased.

**Electricity Usage:** Increased electricity charges on the Outer Islands (after the reduction in subsidies) resulted in energy saving activities including reverting to cooking in umus (earth ovens) or open-fires and hand washing clothes. The number of power disconnections rose dramatically as a result of more rigorous enforcement of payments and people vacating their homes, either to emigrate or to share a home with others.

**Crime:** Police records did not enable comparisons to be made with previous years. However the research highlighted a considerable differences between the number of reported cases and the number of cleared cases, and also between the numbers of reported crimes and the community's experience of crime levels. Survey respondents frequently reported increased rates of theft but many of these were not reported to the Police.

**Public Service Employment:** Almost 300 public servants who remained in the public service were randomly selected for interviewing. In spite of increased work pressure and frustrations over inadequate resourcing, the restructuring had a positive impact on job satisfaction among the vast majority of employees. 73% or more had experienced an increased sense of purpose, had clearer objectives and felt encouraged to use more

initiative in their work.

However, among the negative impacts, 95% felt they had not received adequate training for their new responsibilities. Interviews with Heads of Ministries identified the greatest skill shortages as being in policy advice, computing and accounting and finance. These matters are now being addressed as part of the ongoing upgrading of public service performance.

**Private sector:** While some businesses had increased the number of employees since the beginning of the reforms, almost twice as many had reduced their work-force. This had resulted in a net loss of 46 jobs. The Transition Unit had put 670 people through private sector skills training courses and had provided financial assistance to 281 new businesses set up by redundant public servants. At the time of the research, only 17 had failed and 33 had survived 6 months or more. Banks reported an increase in the number of repossessions and loan defaults.

**Health:** In Rarotonga, the response to health charges was mixed. On the one hand charges were encouraging a greater degree of personal responsibility for health and for treatment of minor complaints. On the other, there were indications that charges were discouraging some from seeking help. The reforms were blamed for shortages in medical supplies although shortages had been a common problem in the health system for a number of years. However, it was evident that delays in getting supplies to the Outer Islands had worsened since the restructuring of the health service. This had resulted in a significant increase in the use of Maori (traditional) medicines.

**Education:** Before the reforms, teacher/pupil ratios in the Cooks were generous by Pacific and NZ standards. After the reforms they were more on a par with NZ. But teachers were not used to coping with such class sizes and this, coupled with reductions in salaries for many, had a detrimental effect on teacher morale. Also, the traditional shortage of educational resources had worsened and reductions in school budgets had led to an increased demand on communities to fund-raise. Parents with little or no income and with several children were finding it difficult to meet the demands for payment of (officially non-compulsory) school fees.

**Women:** The reforms had both positive and negative impacts on women. The position of female public service employees relative to males improved substantially with the restructuring. The

proportion of female workers increased (from 27% to 36%) as did the number in senior positions. Of those that left the public service, 55 women received funding in their own right to set up businesses and many more went into partnership with their husbands. Many others took the opportunity to increase their skills by enrolling in vocational training courses.

On the negative side, loss of income and increased charges brought hardship especially to women, and particularly in the Outer Islands. Outer Islands women were affected by the move back to the traditional labour intensive methods of housekeeping to reduce electricity costs. They also bore the brunt of the increasing burden of “voluntary” community work as emigration substantially reduced the number of volunteers.

Those women who had stayed in the public service, especially those who had achieved more senior positions, were finding it increasingly difficult to balance the much greater demands of the workplace with the increasing demands of home and community.

**Youth:** With the down-sizing of the public service, the major source of work and training opportunities for school-leavers all but disappeared. The rate of emigration among this group increased dramatically – to the point where on the Outer Islands, it was becoming a potential major problem. Rates of truancy and theft among the young were also increasing.

The SIA made 14 recommendations to manage and mitigate the negative impacts identified in the report. One of these was for the Cook Islands Department of Statistics to undertake a follow up to the SIA in 1998, using the data collected in 1997 as a baseline. It was recommended that the follow-up focus on clarifying trends and assessing the effectiveness of the mitigation strategies. To date this has not been done.

Since then, similar economic and public sector reforms have begun in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands for the similar reasons. Reductions in public service numbers are also an integral part of these reform programmes although, as shown in the table below, the numbers and the actual percentages of employees to be laid off are much less for both countries. This is because the proportions of the work force employed in the public sector are much lower than was the case in the Cook Islands.

Country Public	Numbers	% of
	Laid Off	Service
Cook Islands	1,440	50%
Vanuatu	500 - 600	11 - 13%
Solomon Islands	500 - 550	6.5 - 7%

Although the actual numbers to be laid off are considerably less for the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the high proportions of families and communities in these countries who rely on remittances from the public servants for their survival means that the impacts are likely to be widespread and disproportionate to the impacts that could be expected for a similar proportion of redundancies in countries with a more individualistic culture.

As part of the impact management strategy in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, Transition Service Units, similar to that set up in the Cook Islands, are currently being established. Mechanisms to distribute information about the reforms and to monitor the impacts (both positive and negative) at a community level are also being developed.

In both countries the UNDP is planning to implement a national programme to monitor the social impacts of the reforms on vulnerable groups. It will be interesting to see what relationship if any there is between the impacts identified in these programmes and those experienced in the first year of the reforms in the Cook Islands. There are significant differences in the cultures and in the degree of reliance on a monetary economy. Another factor which could prove highly significant is that the people of Melanesia do not have right of access to another country as the Cook Islanders had to New Zealand and Australia. The young and the skilled will have little alternative but to stay, and hopefully assist in the rebuilding of their countries' economies and the wellbeing of their communities.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Neiafu Masterplan, Vava'u, Tonga

*Richard K. Morgan and Komeri R. Onorio*

This is a summary of a paper presented at IAIA '98. The paper described an SEA study into the Neiafu Masterplan, conducted on behalf of the Tongan Ministry for Foreign Affairs by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in 1996. The Masterplan was produced in 1993 after several years of investigations and reports, and envisages a number of projects to address current township problems, such as transport management, potable water supply, road drainage, urban sewage disposal, a new power station, a new market site, upgrading of the wharf area, and strategic planning of foreshore amenities.

The SEA study had a number of objectives: one was to assess the degree to which sustainable development had been a consideration during the planning process; another was to provide a model for SEA studies in the South Pacific (at that time there had been no SEA studies carried out in the region); a third objective was to gain an overall impression of the cumulative impacts of the various proposed activities in the plan; and the last objective was to identify those projects that would require closer environmental scrutiny through project-level EIA.

Some of the main findings of the study were:

- The planning process did not provide clear evidence that sustainability considerations had played a prominent part in the development of the plan. There had not, for example, been public involvement in the earlier reports on Vava'u resource development, nor in the design of the Masterplan for Neiafu. Similarly, there does not appear to have been any consideration of issues such as environmental carrying capacity in relation to proposed expansion of tourism activities in the area, or in the development of new water resources on the main island of 'eUta Vava'u. The implicit policy of encouraging tourism in the region, with its likely consequences for the environment, both social as well as biophysical, was not subject to any formal environmental assessment.
- Many of the impacts of the Masterplan activities would be social. Some would be beneficial:

health is a key area, and road construction (less silt, less airborne dust), better water supply (less chance of contamination), better sanitation (again, better groundwater quality) and better drainage (less overflowing of sewage tanks and pits, fewer puddles for insects to breed in, etc.) are all likely to improve aspects of the health of the local community. Daily living activities, including interaction with other local people, would be enhanced by many of the proposals, although adverse effects from construction activities will be felt (disrupted access to buildings or to certain parts of the town; dust and noise nuisance, etc.). Visual amenity in the urban area would benefit in the long term from most of the proposals.

- Other social impacts would be adverse. For example, one proposal was to relocate the market from its current site in the centre of the town to a larger area some distance from the centre and on a hill. The need to improve facilities is not in question, but the choice of site (limited by the predominance of privately owned land in the area) would almost inevitably cause problems for market users: the new site would be further from the wharf, and away from the shops and services of the town centre. But also, the market in the centre acts as a natural social venue, especially on Saturday mornings when school children parade, and prayer meetings are held on the main street. The dangers of losing such social activities had not been recognised in the Masterplan. Hence a social impact assessment might be considered for the general set of proposals that would alter the nature of the town: the change in location of the market, the pedestrianisation of the centre, the rerouting of the main road around the centre, the concentration of government offices on Queen Salote Park, and so forth. The nature and extent of the cumulative effects of these proposals might not be anticipated by the local community and a social impact assessment would be a useful vehicle to address any concerns that might be evident before the proposals go any further.
- Finally, a study of the local waste management system is an urgent requirement. The development proposals, if they have the desired effect, will increase the level of economic activity in the town, and probably result in a steady population increase over the next few

years. Refuse disposal would have to be managed much more effectively than it appears to be at present, if environmental and amenity problems are to be avoided.

There were a number of other issues that came from the study. Perhaps the most important result, though, was that it demonstrated the value of taking a strategic view of development proposals and pointed to ways of improving policy, programme and plan development to avoid similar problems in the future.

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## ASA Annual General Meeting and Conference

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### **30 October or 6 November, Wellington**

The ASA Core Group has decided that this year the annual ASA conference will be for one day only. We decided that organising the usual two or three day, multimedia, star studded extravaganza that many ASA stalwarts have come to know and love was too difficult and time consuming, considering the time and effort spent helping organise and run the IAIA conference in Christchurch.

We have opted for a one day conference combining:

- a theme for discussion and analysis;
- the AGM; and
- social stuff through the late evening and into the (early?) night.

A small organising committee has started work on a venue and topic. Our focus will be on social indicators and related information from the 1996 Census and other key databases. We would like to generate thought and discussion around a few key indicators on the following themes:

- what are the connections between social indicators and social assessment?
- what are the implications, using the indicators covered and the issues covered by two or three speakers/presenters, for ASA and social assessment in the 21st century?
- what can we learn from the latest indicator information about key social issues emerging in the next five to ten years?

The topic, and the AGM, will provide a good opportunity to discuss the future of ASA, as well as our relationship with current social sciences work in the Foresight project examining social futures for New Zealand.

A draft agenda has been prepared, around the theme of:

*How do we improve the assessment of Government policy, using social indicators?*

## **PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME**

### **Morning session (9.30 - 12.30)**

*The Big Picture – Social Indicators and Social Change*

30 to 40 minute keynote presentation by Dr Judith Davey, Victoria University

*Panel session*

Brief comments from four to six panellists to stimulate discussion on:

- health
- Maori development
- education
- work and income support
- environment/conservation/natural resources

*Open discussion (30 minutes)*

### **Morning Tea**

Working group / brainstorm – facilitated session with a recorder and reporter (60 to 90 minutes)

### **Lunch**

### **Afternoon session (2 - 4 pm.)**

*Continue brainstorm*

*Report back – 45 minutes*

*Indaba (60 minutes)*

An open session in which whatever anyone wants to talk about is scheduled and discussed in small groups or by the whole meeting

*Close meeting*

**Afternoon tea**

**AGM 4.30 to 6 pm.**

**Drinks and Dinner**

**Social Time and Music**

Anyone who would like to be involved, or who simply has a thought to offer, please contact Paul Lister, tel (04) 570 6646 (w) or (04) 380 8518 (h).

## **Social Responsibility: Act Speaks Louder than Words**

*Source: Dialogue (NSFVVO Newsletter), Number 98, March 1998: following on from earlier discussion of the proposed Code of Social Responsibility*

A Social Responsibility Act would make politicians pay more attention to the social effects of their policies, public policy professor Jonathan Boston says.

It could be modelled on the 1994 Fiscal Responsibility Act, and would help balance the current fixation with economic objectives.

The act should not be “a panacea for New Zealand’s social woes,” Mr Boston said.

“It would not eliminate poverty. It would not usher in a new dawn of social justice. Nor would it necessarily make governments more socially responsible.”

But it would make government more accountable, forcing it to specify its social policy objectives, monitor the results and report back to the public.

Key elements of a Social Responsibility Act would be:

- statement of principles setting out government’s social policy objectives and ways of determining whether it was meeting them;
- annual social strategy statement to be delivered at the same time as the Budget. Government would have to declare its short- and long-term social policy objectives and priorities.
- annual social outcome statement to be delivered at the same time as the Budget. Government would have to report on its performance in meeting social policy objectives.
- Social impact assessments: government policy proposals with significant social implications would need a public social impact assessment before final policy decisions were made.
- Annual parliamentary review of the statement and outcome statement by social services select committee.

# Families Build Successful Students

*Source: Massey Alumnus magazine, edited by Diane Billing, Massey University*

A Massey College of Education study has reinforced the view that educational success is dictated more by family factors than anything a child is likely to encounter in the education system.

“It comes down to family resources”, Professor Harker says. “And by resources, we mean knowledge, time, income, and the value placed on education within the family.

“They are equally or more important than what goes on in schools, which only have the children for five or six hours a day, 40 weeks a year.”

Associate professors Richard Harker and Roy Nash, both specialists in the sociology of education, have published the findings of a five-year study they undertook on contract to the Ministry of Education.

They say that in the final analysis the difference between schools, strictly in terms of teaching quality, may be as little as plus or minus one mark in a School Certificate exam. Factors such as social class and family expectations, which are reflected in any given school, are what will largely dictate perceived success or failure.

Their research suggests there is more variety in quality within schools than between them.

“The idea that some schools are consistently better or worse than others was not borne out by our data,” they say.

They say their research “nailed down quite clearly” the importance of the family base to future success.

The study itself took place between 1991 and 1995, following the progress of a cohort of 5,383 students at 37 secondary schools as they progressed from the third form to the seventh form.

“It does look as if we can identify kids who can make good progress,” they say.

“We look at their aspirations, self-confidence, the ability to plan, and a level of necessary internal discipline – the kind of kids who go home with good intentions to do their homework; and get those good intentions fulfilled.”

They say it is impossible to generalise as to which groups will provide students who are

destined for success, as successes will be generated in many diverse groups.

“Really, it may be a case of perhaps six out of 10 middle class children having these factors for success, and, say, four out of 10 from various minorities.

“Middle class students are more likely than working class students to express an intention to enter university even when these students fall within the same broad category of sixth-form attainments,” they report.

The difference, they suggest, reflects “a secondary effect of social class”.

The study also made significant findings on the relationship between gender and educational performance, with girls doing better in English, and about as well in mathematics and science, as boys.

Professors Harker and Nash say that, in large measure, this is “just to do with what it is to be a boy – they are just more immature.

“Boys will come to the 7th form just to play for the first fifteen. Girls don’t think like that – they are more focused.”

The research also found that boys suffer from labelling as ‘nerds’ if they work hard or do well academically. Boys were scared of being thought of as ‘sissies’. Though girls recognise the concept of a ‘nerd’ and the labelling may affect their self-identity, the pressures girls impose on each other are much less intense.

## BLACKBOARD

### EVENTS AT HOME

#### Renewing the Social Contract

*14 - 16 September, Turangi.*

NZ Council of Social Services conference.

**Contact:** Barbara Turner, NZCOSS,

PO Box 24 084, Wellington.

Tel / fax (04) 385 3358.

#### Youth Justice in Focus

*27 - 30 October, Wellington*

The conference will cover youth justice in New Zealand and Australia. It aims to identify best practice, and to focus on cultural justice, rights and responsibilities. Delegates will discuss and devise current and future strategies for action in the areas of crime prevention, creative family group

conferencing, and positive programmes. Topics include: education and health for young people at risk; crime prevention roles and responsibilities of various agencies (Police, schools, family services, communities, and courts); coverage of current initiatives including Early Start, Tu Tangata, DARE, other Maori and Aboriginal initiatives; creative conferencing; and findings from recent research.

**Contact:** The Institute of Criminology, Victoria University of Wellington, Box 600, Wellington. Tel (04) 472 1000 ext. 7084, fax (04) 495 5277, e-mail: youth-justice@vuw.ac.nz

### **6th Pacific Islands Political Studies Association Conference (PIPSA): Preparing for the 21st Century**

*7 - 10 December 1998, University of Canterbury*

Reflecting on some key issues which have dominated post-colonial Pacific politics in the last three or so decades with a view to theorising and understanding the trends for the future. The conference will focus attention on a wide range of related issues which will form different sessions and panels.

**Contact:** PIPSA '98 Conference Organiser, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch.

Tel (03) 364 2534, fax (03) 364 2057,

e-mail: pipsa@cont.canterbury.ac.nz

Website: <http://www.conference.canterbury.ac.nz/pipsa/hmpage.html>

## **EVENTS ABROAD**

### **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

### **Bridging Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Ecosystem Science**

*August 13-15, Flagstaff, Arizona, USA*

As indigenous peoples in the Americas struggle for control of their lands and resources, differences between traditional ecological knowledge and ecosystem science can be a barrier. Indigenous

people and their potential allies and associates share a concern for sustainability, for a balance between man and the natural world. How can the differences in world views be bridged? Can western 'management' and indigenous 'caretaking' be the same thing?

**Contact:** Ronald Trosper, Director, Native American Forestry Programme, College Ecosystem Science and Management, PO Box 15 018, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ 86011, USA.

Fax: 520-523-6653.

E-mail: SCICConf@alpine.for.nau.edu

Web page: <http://www.for.nau.edu/TEK-SCICConf/>

### **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, Tel (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.

**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 1998, University of Manchester*

An international conference to review recent advances in the theory, integration and application of environmental, economic and social impact assessment methods for sustainable development in developing, transitional and developed countries. An optional pre-conference programme will include a workshop on Impact Assessment and Sustainability in Developing Countries and a

number of visits to regional examples of impact assessment and environmental management.

**Contact:** Debra Whitehead, University of Manchester, Crawford House, Precinct Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9GH, UK.

Tel: (0440) 161 275 2800,

fax (0440) 161 273 8829,

e-mail [debra.whitehead@man.ac.uk](mailto:debra.whitehead@man.ac.uk)

### **10th World Congress of Rural Sociology**

*Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Building Communities, Protecting Resources, and Fostering Human Development*

30 July – 5 August, 2000, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Diverse and equitable occupational and income possibilities are a central source of improvement in family and community well being. Livelihoods are sustainable when responsive institutions, orderly markets and sensible government policies foster community empowerment and self-determination. Local control of resources is linked to responsible management of forests, fisheries, wildlife, and other common property resources. Family life is supported, civil society is strengthened, and environments are protected in such contexts. Nevertheless, information technologies and the global reach of capital are accelerating the pace of social change in many rural locales.

Rural social scientists face many challenges in documenting the impacts of such changes, and working with rural communities to identify and design new forms of organisation. Farming and other resource dependent communities are quite vulnerable to the power of larger structures of organisation and control. Where possible,

constructive engagement between a broad range of local interests and outside forces can foster a more even distribution of benefits and mitigated costs from market and policy change. Where the pace of such changes is gradual or disruptively rapid or sudden, women, children, the elderly, and ethnic minorities are particularly vulnerable to altered possibilities for livelihood.

#### *How to Participate:*

Before the end of 1998, please suggest topics for thematic sessions. A call for papers will be made during 1998, with abstracts due towards the end of 1999. Papers will be allotted to the nominated themes, but open sessions also will be held. Volunteers willing to offer their services in a range of capacities, especially as session chairs and as discussants, are needed.

#### *Further Information:*

(please contact Frank Vanclay for all participation inquiries)

World Congress Programme Chair, Frank Vanclay, Centre for Rural Social Research, Charles Sturt University, Locked Bag 678, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia.

Tel: +61-2-6933.2680, Fax: +61-2-6933.2792,

e-mail: [fvanclay@csu.edu.au](mailto:fvanclay@csu.edu.au)

World Congress Local Arrangements Chair: Sonia M.P.P. Bergamasco, FEAGRI/UNICAMP, Cx. Postal 6011, CEP 13081-970- Campinas- SP- Brazil.

Tel: +55-19-788.2066 or 788.2004,

Fax +55-19-788.2090 or 788.2066,

e-mail: [sonia@agr.unicamp.br](mailto:sonia@agr.unicamp.br)

IRSA Web Site: <http://www.ag.auburn.edu/irsa/>

## DAN QUAYLE'S QUOTABLE QUOTES CORNER

- “We have a firm commitment to NATO. We are a part of NATO. We have a firm commitment to Europe. We are a part of Europe.”
- “I am not part of the problem. I am a Republican.”
- “A low voter turnout is an indication of fewer people going to the polls.”
- “When I have been asked during these last weeks who caused the riots and the killings in L.A., my answer has been direct and simple: Who is to blame for the riots? The rioters are to blame. Who is to blame for the killings? The killers are to blame.”
- “Illegitimacy is something we should talk about in terms of not having it.”

## **POVERTY AND HARDSHIP IN CHRISTCHURCH: FINDINGS FROM TARGET WEEK SURVEY DATA**

*Kath Jamieson, Christchurch City Council Monitoring Programme, January 1998.*

### **Reviewed by Wayne McClintock**

Over the last two years the Christchurch City Council, through its Leisure and Community Services Unit, has been conducting a monitoring programme to assess the extent of poverty in the city. The monitoring programme has used a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather data about health, food, housing, welfare and income/ employment issues, and has focused on ten “least advantaged” groups.

This is the initial report of the monitoring programme. It summarises the findings from a survey of 1,079 clients from 51 community social service agencies conducted during July and August 1996. The study identified the “least advantaged” groups as women, families with children, single parents, young single people, Maori, Pacific Islanders, refugees, people with serious mental health problems, beneficiaries, and people reliant on “limited income” paid employment. It found families with children were more likely than most other groups to be experiencing poverty and hardship. The study confirms other New Zealand research which has revealed that the high accommodation costs borne by people with limited incomes ensnare them in poverty. It also found that social isolation was a major component of poverty, as many respondents lacked family or other informal support structures to provide help when it was needed.

A multiple hardship index was used to map clusters, or ‘hot spots’ of hardship within the city. This index was based on eight variables including health status, length of time on a welfare benefit, income level, and accommodation costs as a proportion of income.

In addressing the implications of these findings, the report indicates some directions that the Council and the community may take to ameliorate the poverty of these “least advantaged” groups. These include:

1. providing more low cost rental accommodation throughout the city,
2. developing more strategies to help people reliant on “limited income” paid employment to access supplementary assistance, and
3. developing partnerships between the Council and community social service agencies to meet the specific needs of Maori, Pacific Islanders and refugees.

This report is a good example of how a monitoring programme can provide useful data for local government to use in developing social policy that addresses poverty issues. Its findings also illustrate the effects of policy changes by central government agencies, such as rent increases for Housing New Zealand’s dwellings, reforms of the health system, and cuts to welfare benefits, which have made it more difficult for “least advantaged” people to escape from a life of poverty and hardship. Thus it should be required reading for anyone employed by central government who is responsible for developing and implementing economic and social policy.

Copies of this report may be obtained from Kath Jamieson, Leisure and Community Services Unit, Christchurch City Council, PO Box 237, Christchurch.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: A MANUAL**

*Desmond M. Connor. Connor Development Services Ltd, Victoria BC. ISBN 0-920136-18-4, Paperback, 38pp., 1997. \$US 9.75.*

### **Reviewed by Wayne McClintock**

Desmond Connor is a New Zealand born sociologist-anthropologist now based in Victoria, British Columbia. Since 1971 he has planned and managed over 300 public consultation and social assessment programmes in Canada, the United States and Costa Rica, and this manual reflects his wealth of experience.

Public Participation is a collection of short articles and case studies that provide a framework upon which a practitioner can design a programme for consulting with various sections of the community about resource management issues. Throughout the manual Connor emphasises the importance of involving the public at an early stage in the decision making process so they can contribute to the final design of a project.

In the opening article Connor discusses the basic strategy of what he calls “constructive citizen participation”, some core concepts and techniques, and the design and management of the programme. This overview is followed by a case study written by Murray Anderson of the Alberta Forest Service that describes a programme used to consult stakeholders about herbicide treatment on public land near the Tall Cree Indian Reserve. Connor devotes the middle section of the manual to the four basic building blocks of a good consultation programme – the social profile, the responsive publication, the open house and the planning workshop. Each of these articles provides very practical suggestions as to how these techniques can be successfully managed and integrated into the overall programme.

In the final section of Public Participation Connor presents a generic design for public involvement programmes; some basic principles of how to prevent and resolve public controversy; a maze that identifies possible design pitfalls; and case studies of urban redevelopment (the Victoria Eaton’s Centre) and the cooperative management of natural resources (the Nootka Sound Stability Coalition). The generic design outlines several additional techniques that can supplement the four basic building blocks described earlier. These techniques include meetings with organisations, a reference centre, a telephone survey and media relations.

Although some techniques will have to be adapted to the local context, Connor’s manual is a very useful resource for any SA practitioner who has limited experience of designing a programme for public participation. There are also several gems of information contained in the articles and case studies that will help more experienced practitioners refine and develop their techniques of community consultation.

This publication can be obtained from Connor Development Services Ltd, 5096 Catalina Terrace, Victoria BC, V8Y 2A5, Canada.

Phone: 250-658-1323, Fax: 250-658-8110,

E-mail: [connor@connor.bc.ca](mailto:connor@connor.bc.ca)

This book can be ordered from the web site:  
[www.connor.bc.ca/connor](http://www.connor.bc.ca/connor)

## BOOKS RECEIVED

### **TODAY’S SCHOOLS: GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY**

*Simon Smelt. Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington. ISBN 0-908935-27-7, paperback, 84 pp., 1998. \$25.00.*

### **OPEN ROADS: MONOPOLY OR UTILITY?**

*Mark Obrien. Black Top Services Ltd, Auckland. BN 0-473- 05121-4, paperback, 127 pp., 1998. \$39.95.*

Anyone wishing to review either of these two books should contact Wayne McClintock, the Review Editor, 37 Stour Drive, Burwood, Christchurch 9. Phone: (03) 3833-784, e-mail [w.mcclintock@chch.planet.org.nz](mailto:w.mcclintock@chch.planet.org.nz)

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

Convenor: Gerard Fitzgerald Editor: Chris Cosslett Production: Jeremy Rolfe Reviews, research, publications: Wayne McClintock