

# MINI-SYMPOSIUM SESSION 1 DESCRIPTIONS

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## MINI SYMPOSIUM SESSION 1

### WATER QUALITY ECONOMICS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE: WHERE IS THE CUTTING EDGE?

Convener: *Stuart Whitten*, CSIRO

Participants: Stuart Whitten and Martijn van Grieken (CSIRO), Suzie Greenhalg (Landcare NZ), Suzi Kerr (Motu Economics), John Tisdell (Session Chair, UTas).

The economics of water quality policy is an enduring issue in natural resource economics with major welfare and environmental consequences. Australia and New Zealand share significant water quality issues but in substantively different environments. In Australia the best known water quality issues are focused in estuarine and marine receiving water environments though there are significant but lesser known freshwater issues across many catchments. In New Zealand the predominant issue is pollution of freshwater ecosystems and in particular major freshwater lakes. In both countries groundwater pollution is an emerging issue. In this session we will provide an overview of the cutting edge of the intersection between economic research and water policy design. Our goal is to provide participants with an overview of the status of water quality policy internationally supported by detailed examples of the cutting edge economic research that is underpinning policy design in Australia and New Zealand. Papers will cover cost effectiveness of regulatory approaches to water quality in Australia's GBR catchments, nutrient trading approaches being implemented in New Zealand, and an assessment of opportunities for future water quality policy development in Australia.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE 'OPENNESS' OF DYNAMIC FARM SYSTEMS FOR FARM MANAGEMENT

Convener: *Bill Malcolm*, DPI Victoria

Farms are open systems-how could they be anything but! In this symposium the focus is on connections and interactions between farms and market, farm and finance, farms and information systems research and farms and benefits from investments in R,D & E.

### HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Convener: *Alistair Watson*

Two speakers have been arranged. Dr Laurel Myers will speak on the international training of early Australian agricultural economics. Dr Charles Fahey will discuss the way that systematic surveys by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and others, from the 1940s and 50s have transformed scholarship in Australian agricultural history. There will be ample opportunities for spontaneous contributions from the floor.

### SOME CURRENT AGRICULTURAL TRADE POLICY ISSUES

Convener: *Donald MacLaren*, University of Melbourne

Participants: Will Martin; Kym Anderson; Greg Cutbush

Of the several current agricultural trade policy issues, three will be analysed and discussed in this session. The three are: the political costs and the efficiency benefits of achieving agricultural trade policy liberalisation (Will Martin); the trade distorting effects of government intervention in response to food price spikes (Kym Anderson); and Australia's quarantine policy in the context of the lost appeal in the DSB on imports of New Zealand apples (Greg Cutbush).

## MINI-SYMPOSIUM SESSION 2 DESCRIPTIONS

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### MINI SYMPOSIUM SESSION 2

#### EVOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL PRIMARY INDUSTRIES RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION SYSTEM IN AUSTRALIA

Convener: *Bruce Kefford*, DPI Victoria

The Primary Industries and Energy Research and Development (PIERD) Act 1989 established the Research and Development Corporations that have since coordinated and funded, along with Governments, research, development and extension (R,D&E) for specific agriculture industries. This model, established by the then Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, John Kerin, was a groundbreaking initiative that has been central to sustaining Australia's competitiveness since. The model, however, has evolved under contemporary funding pressures, a broadening agenda of issues, and the increasing role of the private sector. This symposium will explore the evolution of the primary industries R,D&E system in Australia, its performance and future priorities and resourcing needs, as well as opportunities to further improve the system, through new models for collaboration explored from an industry and Government perspective.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT TRANSFER

Convener: *Jeff Bennett*, ANU

Participants: Jeff Bennett (Chair), Robert Johnston, Geoff Kerr and John Rolfe

The Environmental Valuation Reference Inventory (EVRI) provides an extensive data base of established environmental values that can be 'transferred' to inform cost benefit analyses of current policy issues. Yet its use remains relatively limited and somewhat contentious. This mini-symposium presents three perspectives on the use of 'benefit transfer' in environmental policy determination – one each from three of the major contributors to the EVRI data base: the United States, New Zealand and Australia. The papers will provide a mixture of research findings and technique assessment, all framed in the context of environmental policy formulation.

#### REMEMBER THE WOOL INDUSTRY

Convener: *Alistair Watson*

The mini-symposium will be held almost twenty years to the day since the final demise of the Australian reserve price (buffer stock) scheme; an event that had dramatic consequences for woolgrowers and land use in Australia. Dr Terry Sheales (ABARE) will summarise survey data that reflect the scope of those land use changes before and after the event. Based on his forthcoming book on the RPS and wool policy to be published by the University of Queensland Press, Charlie Massy will discuss the way that professional advice from economists was handled during the RPS fiasco. Finally, Drs Colin brown and John Longworth will discuss developments in the Australia-China wool trade.

#### ISSUES IN TAXING THE MINING INDUSTRY

Convener: *John O'Connor*

The design of the Minerals Resource Rent Tax is currently being considered by the federal government. This follows the abandonment of the Resources Super Profits Tax prior to the last federal election. In the mini symposium our three speakers will consider both the theoretical and policy issues affecting the taxing of mineral rents, and apply them to the specific details of the MRRT and the RSPT. Our speakers are well qualified for the task: John Freebairn was an advisor to the Treasury on mining taxes, Henry Ergas has written extensively on the subject, and Mike Hollitt, a former mining industry executive, is well placed to give an industry view although he is now employed by the Victorian government.

## MINI-SYMPOSIUM SESSION 3 DESCRIPTIONS

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### MINI SYMPOSIUM SESSION 3

#### AIR POLLUTION ECONOMICS

Convener: *David Godden*, NSW DECCW

Participants: Vinita Deodhar (NSW DECCW); Don Gunasekera (CSIRO); Geoff Morgan (Northern Rivers University Department of Rural Health); Laura Hohnen (NSW DECCW); Keith Dear (ANU); David Godden (NSW DECCW, chair)

Air pollution is a major urban environmental issue that has attracted little attention within AARES. Deodhar will outline the policy context for economic analysis of air pollution in Australia. The presentations by Gunasekera and Morgan will outline two approaches to the spatial estimation of the health effects of air pollution, and thus the health benefits of pollution control. Hohnen will discuss determining optimal portfolios of air pollution abatement measures with multiple, interacting pollutants. Dear will examine epidemiological aspects of the relationship between air pollution and health impacts.

#### MURRAY DARLING BASIN - STRIKING THE BALANCE - EMERGING ISSUES

Convener: *Gavan Dwyer*, DPI Victoria

Water reform in the Murray Darling Basin is an issue of national significance. The recent release of the Guide to the Basin Plan has been accompanied by unprecedented political debate and a growing focus understanding the socioeconomic impacts of the Plan. Nevertheless, a range of policy issues will continue to loom with many questions still to be answered. In particular, as environmental water holdings grow, important policy questions arise about the design and operation of environmental water holders, their water portfolios and watering strategies. Consequently beyond direct impacts of reduced water availability emerging issues are also likely to encompass broader institutional changes such as property rights associated with dam storage access and water reliability.

#### IMPROVING COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM FISHERIES RESOURCES

Convener: *Fisheries Victoria*

Participants: Jim Wilen, Jon Sutinen and Seth Macinko

An ongoing challenge in fisheries management is the continual process of pursuing 'community benefit' from the management of common property resources. Objectives are commonly established in terms of optimising 'returns to the community' from the exploitation of aquatic resources but management tends to focus on optimising the returns to the commercial or recreational fishing sectors being managed. The integration of managing the sectors into a broader framework of optimising returns to the community remains a challenge. Developing resource sharing arrangements, harvest strategies and recovering the costs of management are all issues within this broader challenge. Frameworks for evaluating performance of fisheries management in terms of delivering these broader objectives are generally lacking. This session will explore some of the theoretical and practical issues in dealing with this challenge, with reference to international examples