

Engaging Rural and Remote Communities: A Practice Framework

Moffatt J^{1,2*}

¹ School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

² Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre, Australia

Abstract

The demise of rural and remote communities in Australia as a structural adjustment to globalisation and the negative impacts of neo-liberalism is well chronicled. The marginalisation of some of these communities and the consequent alienation experienced by many residents has presented a challenge to a government increasingly concerned with engaging their constituents in the process of governance.

The comparatively recent Australian focus on ecologically sustainable development has identified the prevention of further degradation of natural resources as a national priority. In Queensland more than 80 per cent of the land is used for agricultural purposes yet fewer than 20 per cent of people live in rural and remote areas where the majority of agricultural enterprises exist. The comparatively small population of graziers therefore becomes an important one when engagement is considered in the context of natural resource management. The risks associated with neglecting to engage a small sector of the community is demonstrated by civil disobedience in Queensland with up to 60,000 hectares of vegetation suspected of being illegally cleared during a recent three year period.

A study using unstructured interviews and participant observation was conducted in rural and remote Queensland over a period of five months. Results from this study of graziers and the communities they live in are used as a basis to develop a practice framework for engagement. A rural-centric approach using a social justice foundation is proposed. Principles, strategies and methods to engage this population will be reported on.

Keywords

Rural, graziers, participation, sustainability, engagement

Introduction

The demise of rural and remote communities in Australia as a structural adjustment to globalisation and the negative impacts of neo-liberalism is well chronicled (Bell and Pandey 1997; Bourke 2001; Gerritsen 2000; 2001; McMichael and Lawrence 2001; Tonts 2000). Macro level changes, broadly described as globalisation have changed the economic basis of society and created a range of social impacts for rural communities (Bourke 2001). Globalisation is a multi-dimensional phenomena involving the "economic, political, technological, military, legal, cultural [and] environmental" dimensions (Held 1996, p. 340). The defining characteristics are a global mentality where the world is conceived of as a single unit, new forms of "political,

economic and social organisations that ... invest power in entities ... increasingly abstracted from national ... centres" and the use of advanced technologies for transactions, global connections, knowledge creation and transfers (Woods 2004, p. 2). In the economic domain transnational corporations are considered to be the most powerful actors because of their ability to move capital around the world to compete in what is now a global marketplace, by for example, minimising their labour costs (Gray and Lawrence 2001). Concurrently the closer connectedness created by the economic and technological changes, has reduced the importance of space and time and increased the flow of people globally (Gray and Lawrence 2001). To some degree this has forced countries like Australia to focus on global rather than national economic relations (McMichael and Lawrence 2001).

In Australia family farms were established from the mid-nineteenth century to realise State agricultural policies and to promote closer settlement (Lees 1997; Lloyd and Malcolm 1997). An assumption that underlaid many of these policies is that the expansion of agriculture and closer settlement would produce prosperity for the country (Reeve 2001). The State was therefore responsive to farmers' problems (Bell and Pandey 1997).

Policies were created to provide assistance to farmers during difficult periods. However due to cycles of wealth and poverty for farmers caused by a combination of the characteristics of agriculture in developed economies (Lloyd and Malcolm 1997), markets, seasons and policy, by the 1970s subsidies were found to be supporting some small and otherwise unviable family farms. This led to the phasing out of such policies. In their place, structural adjustment policies were developed to provide assistance to farmers to pursue economies of scale or move out of agriculture. This was consistent with globalisation on the international front, a decline in the national financial importance of agriculture and a decline in the political power of farmers. These policies are underpinned by neo-classical economic theory which emphasises "growth, economies of size, rationalisation, technology, efficiency, comparative advantage, deregulation and the free market" (Bell and Pandey 1997).

These structural changes and the associated deregulation of the Australian economy impacted unevenly. There has been a significant effect on the agricultural sector, contributing to the declining terms of trade in the agriculture sector which commenced in the 1950s (Lawrence 1987). At the regional level the impact of restructuring on rural communities has contributed to significant changes in Australia's farm population. The significant observable characteristics of what has been described as a rural crisis, are a continuing decline in the rural population, decline in services to rural communities (e.g. hospital, bank and school), decreased volunteerism and participation in the community (Alston 1999; Bourke 2001; Cheers and Luloff 2001; Gerritsen 2000; Pritchard 2000; Tonts 2000; Vanclay 1994).

The direction that neo-liberal policy has taken in Australia has determined that those with greater competitive power will be supported over those who are disadvantaged by globalisation (Gray and Lawrence 2001). This in turn has led to feelings of alienation in rural communities (Alston 2000) and predictably, a legitimisation

crisis (Vanclay 1994). The initial success of Pauline Hanson's One Nation party in 1996 is a powerful example of this. Despite her unconventional approach she captured the imaginations of many disaffected rural constituents (McManus and Pritchard 2000).

In Queensland more than 80 per cent of the land is used for agricultural purposes (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001b, p. 1) yet fewer than 20 per cent of people live in rural and remote areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001a, p. 1). The majority of agricultural enterprises exist in these areas and are comprised of small family farms and pastoral companies. Despite experiencing the same pressures, pastoral companies are more competitive than the smaller family farms. This is due largely to their greater size, the ownership of properties in diverse geographical areas and the specialisation that their size allows. However small family farms are greater in number than pastoral companies and the land is often handed down over generations which makes them a comparatively stable population.

The typical situation for cattle graziers today, is each family competing directly on the world market, known to be volatile and influenced by a range of factors unrelated to livestock production (Penm and Fisher 2004). In addition they rely on poorly maintained infrastructure such as roads for transporting stock to market and out of date technology to stay in touch with market related information (Black et al. 2000; Commonwealth of Australia 2000). These families are working a larger area of land because of the need to amalgamate properties to achieve economies of scale towards managing the cost price squeeze, a consequence of the declining terms of trade and increasing costs of production. Usually these amalgamated properties are run without more staff or perhaps without any staff beyond the immediate family, all. Another significant variable for primary producers are the seasons, which are 'inherently variable' and 'characterised by marked fluctuations' (Lindesay 2003, p. 21). Recent and current droughts have highlighted the dependency of primary producers on the seasons, to make their living. Although productivity has increased during this period (Lawrence 2005), evidence has emerged of environmental degradation that is a result of policy that has dictated farming and grazing practices since settlement (Commonwealth of Australia 2002).

So there is a comparatively small section of the population, operating in an increasingly efficient manner, but continuing to be reliant on volatile world markets and a variable climate. These are mainly small family operated grazing enterprises, many striving to make a living, without the support nets that operated in the past, when agriculture was a higher government priority.

Along side these changes, emerging in the 1960s, has been the development of a participatory approach to government which is the result of a combination of influences (Sanoff 2000). The changing social, political and economic climate has influenced the need for participatory processes (Dovers 2000; Sarkissian et al. 1997). The speed of social change, increased diversity, scepticism towards professionals, a better educated and more informed public, anxiety and hostility as a consequence of interest rates, unemployment, inflation and uncertainty about the future, changes in public attitudes, an increased number of interest groups and information technology impacts are components of this change (Sarkissian et al. 1997). Sarkissian (1978, p.

12) writes that the "Over-centralisation of government, the indifference and unresponsiveness of public authorities, [and the] perceptions of the state as an arm of business interests ..." has led to a level of distrust. Rising levels of distrust have occurred internationally, across institutions and the private sector (Dovers 2000). Public participation in the processes and outcomes of decision-making was believed to be able to address this, by "engendering a sense of citizenship in society ... and a sense of trust in decision-making institutions" (Hill and Zammit 2001, p. 5). The Queensland government's creation of the Division of Community Engagement in the Department of Premier and Cabinet, in response to "the community seeking better Government leadership through increased public participation in decision-making" (Department of the Premier and Cabinet Queensland 2001, p. 3) indicates the current interest by government in engaging its constituents.

Participation is the cornerstone of democracy (Arnstein 1969) which is about fairness, distributive justice and equality of social opportunity (Gray and Lawrence 2001). Public participation is necessary to ensure political equality, to know the public will, to ensure all citizens have equal opportunity to influence outcomes, for citizens to protect their interest and enhance personal and social development (James and Blamey 2001). What underlies the notion of citizen participation is power, or more specifically the desirability of its redistribution (Arnstein 1969); however it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the concept of power. Participation is a broad term used to describe a range of activities involving the general public's involvement with the processes of governance. Arnstein (1969), in a classic paper, defines various approaches to participation based around the amount of power citizens have over influencing the end product. At one end of the spectrum is manipulation, the objective of which is to prevent people from participating and the other, citizen control, where the participants have the majority of decision making power, if not full power.

The focus of earlier participation literature and practice was on empowering the poor and marginalised to take part in decision-making that affected their futures. In the 21st century the use of participatory approaches has become institutionalised to the point where it is an everyday practice (Berner and Phillips 2005). Many governments use it to complement representative democracy. Why a participatory approach should occur is readily accepted and the focus is now on refining ways of carrying it out with target groups, the subject of this paper. Consequently there is an abundance of literature on how to conduct participatory processes, for examples of workbooks see Aslin and Brown (2004) and the Victorian Government (2004).

Dovers (2000) claims that the participation process must be 'genuine'. This includes adequate resources being allocated, a clear recognition of the roles and responsibilities of the parties to the participation, participants being made aware of the degree of influence they could have over the process and an acknowledgement of the cost to participants. In evaluating community consultation Webber and Fowke (2000) found that there was a need for clarity of the purpose of the event, it needed to be in regional locations at appropriate times, offer different options for participation, be transparent and use skilled facilitators. Kelly (2001) drew similar conclusions from her study of participation in rural communities, Illsey

(2003) from her review of participatory processes in Canada and Cox (1996) from his work with rural communities in Queensland.

The criticisms of a participatory approach include the following: it is used to exclude people as much as involve them by marginalising opposition and grassroots views; can be dominated by interest groups; the process is expensive and time consuming; diminishes the power of the group conducting the exercise; favours the middle class; is used as a public relations exercise to rubber stamp decisions that have already been made; there is a lack of skill amongst those conducting the exercise; and it creates uncertainty about the outcome (Cox 1996; Dovers 2000; Illsley 2003; Plein, Green and Williams 1998; Sarkissian et al. 1997). Barriers to participation include the time and financial costs for participants, a lack of skill or interest, professional elitism and uncertainty about the results (Cox 1996; Jaffray 1981; Plein et al. 1998). A number of writers have identified that a targeted approach is required such as specific strategies for specific purposes (Cox 1996; Kelly 2001; Ross et al. 2002; Sarkissian 1994; Webber and Fowke 2000). For example a public meeting would be appropriate to provide information but not for an interactive discussion of detailed plans or policy. Others have noted that special skills are required to conduct participatory approaches (Kelly 2001; Sarkissian 1994). For example Kelly (2001) found that many staff engaged in participation practices with rural landholders lacked the high level of communication skills required. Those familiar with rural populations claim that government staff who engage in participatory processes fail to understand the rural culture and context they work in (Cox 1996; Kelly 2001).

Clearly, engaging with the general public is a process fraught with difficulty. However it occurs for a range of purposes and in a range of places because there is recognition that involving the public in decision making can improve and expand the information that decisions are based on and it can enhance accountability (Plein et al. 1998). The public of interest for this paper are graziers in rural and remote Queensland.

The rationale is that graziers control (not own) most of the agricultural land in Queensland and despite increased regulation it is they who make the day-to-day decisions about land management. So it is important to engage these constituents, in a climate of increased knowledge, of the fundamental importance of adequate natural resource management to Australia's future. The size of properties particularly in more remote areas precludes any form of compliance checking, except for practices that aerial or satellite techniques would reveal.

Although conservative in nature, and traditional in approach, farmers and graziers have a long history of protest and resistance. An example is the People's Party in the United States which grew from fragmented politics, finance and resources after the Civil War and emerged from the rural south as a third political party based around agrarian radicalism (Taggart 2000). In Queensland, in recent years, protest and resistance has focused on tree clearing. There has been a lot of anger and frustration expressed at meetings and bitter interchanges in the press, with landholders desperate to retain the right to clear trees. This would allow them to plant pasture and in turn increase their herd size towards remaining competitive. The purpose of almost 95

per cent of tree clearing in 2000–2001 in Queensland was to create pasture for grazing (Queensland Government 2003, p. 22).

Public meetings and public interchange through the press are typical processes that marginal groups engage in to have their voice heard. More recently however, some landholders have taken the law into their own hands and cleared land without a permit do so. Between 1999 and 2001 it is suspected that up to 60,000 hectares of trees were cleared without a permit which represents .05 per cent of trees cleared during this three year period (Robertson 2003, pp. 1-3). Illegal tree clearing represents quite a different approach to protest or resistance for landholders, but is representative of an approach not unknown to marginalised groups. In reviewing everyday forms of peasant protest and resistance Scott (1985) describes various overt and covert approaches used by the weak to defend their interests. Illegal tree clearing could be considered 'routine' resistance because it is no threat to the basic social structure; it could also be considered an appropriation of earlier rights (the right to clear vegetation) and clandestine resistance because there was an outward display of compliance but through the use of satellite imagery the suspected illegal clearing was revealed (Scott 1985, p. 255).

Although graziers comprise only a proportion of the 20 per cent of people who live in rural and remote areas they have become important to government. This is in the light of comparatively new scientific evidence about the harm caused by largely European agricultural practices, that it is necessary to change enterprise management practices. There is now a body of scientific evidence that indicates that broadscale tree clearing has negative impacts on biodiversity (Queensland Government 1999) and raises the risk of salinity occurring (Commonwealth of Australia 2001). As a consequence of broader social pressures and this evidence, Australian now has a focus on ecologically sustainable development and the prevention of further degradation. The protection of natural resources is a national priority.

The data in this paper is taken from a study conducted for my PhD, investigating graziers' perceptions of sustainable development and what that means for policy. One study finding is that participants perceive they are not being 'heard' by government which threatens their future on the land, and that of their children. They perceive, quite accurately, that as a group they no longer have the same level of importance for government as they did in the past. Understandably they have a strong desire, like every marginal group, to be heard. The introduction to this paper provides an explanation at the broader level as to why graziers are marginalised and therefore not heard by government. The remainder of the paper details how the participatory approach to governance contributes to silencing the voices of graziers and disengaging them. Finally an approach to how this can be remedied is offered.

Methods

Fifty-seven graziers, both company managers and owner managers, were interviewed in the two case study areas, the Central West of Queensland and the Gulf of Carpentaria in Queensland. A constructivist paradigm was used to accommodate the diversity and complexity of views anticipated in this exploratory research.

Within this, an interpretive approach and Grounded Theory methodology were used. In-depth unstructured interviews (audio-taped and transcribed) and participant observation were the methods used for data collection. Snowball, key informant and theoretical sampling were used to recruit participants to this study and when theoretical saturation occurred recruitment ceased. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the University of Queensland's Behavioural and Social Sciences Ethics Review committee.

Of the 57 people interviewed 57 per cent were men and 43 per cent women. Participants ranged in age from 21 years to 70 years with the largest group of participants being between 50 and 59 years (36 per cent) with similar numbers between 40 and 49 years (22 per cent) and between 60 and 69 years (21 per cent). Of the 44 interviewees that level of education is available for, the largest group had completed primary school (36 per cent) and there were similar numbers who had completed Grade 12 (27 per cent) and who had completed some form of tertiary education (27 per cent), which ranged from TAFE courses to a university degree. Properties ranged in size from 10,000 to 500,000 hectares with the size of properties in the Central West case study tending to being smaller than the Gulf. The majority of tenures were leasehold.

Grounded Theory methodology was used to guide sampling, data generation and analysis. The procedures that distinguish the Grounded Theory approach from other qualitative approaches are the constant comparative method, the systematic asking of concept-relating questions, theoretical sampling, systematic coding procedures, guidelines for attaining conceptual density, variation and conceptual integration and the conditional matrix (Strauss and Corbin 1994). Its hallmark is that the guiding theory emerges from the data (Strauss and Corbin 1990).

The majority of participants were interviewed on their property which enabled me to observe them in their natural setting. The purpose of the observation is to give a context to each participant, a fuller picture of this person, to gather more information about each grazing family. Additionally, observation allowed me to gather information on non-verbal behaviours, which compensates for one of the disadvantages of tape-recorded interviews, the absence of information on non-verbal behaviour (Minichiello et al. 1995). Living in the community, attending community events and staying with graziers allowed me the opportunity to get an in-depth view of the people and places through purposeful observations.

Characteristics of qualitative interviews are that they appear more like conversations than formal questions and answers, have a topic or theme rather than a structured list of questions and it is assumed that the data is generated by the interaction between the researcher and interviewee (Mason 1996). This approach to interviewing has been described as purposeful conversation (Burgess 1984).

During the data analysis, when no new concepts are emerging for the larger categories in the analysis, these larger categories are robust and when the relationships between the categories are "established and validated" (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p.188) theoretical saturation has occurred. As the initial analysis rather than the complete analysis was conducted during field work, recruitment ceased when no new concepts were

emerging and tentative and incomplete relationships between the categories were apparent. A limit of the case study approach is the inability to generalise beyond the sample, so further research is needed.

Results

Analysis of the interviews and observations revealed that attempting to engage graziers using the current approach to participation is unlikely to succeed. Table 1 lists the constraints, disincentives and underlying issues related to public participation that emerged from this study. A series of quotes demonstrates how and why these occur.

Table 1. Constraints and disincentives to public participation

Constraints	Disincentives	Underlying issues
Time	Outnumbered	Lack of trust
Distance	Lack of return	Lack of skills
	Senior bureaucratic control	
	Typical style of interaction	

Constraints are those variables that limit graziers' ability to attend participation events; disincentives are specific issues that discourage attendance and the underlying issues affect a range of behaviours, one of which is participation in these events. The general term 'events' is used here to describe a range of activities that involve participation in meetings, consultations or other styles of public involvement associated with government decision-making. The rationale for the choice of a generic term is two-fold. Firstly study participants rarely discriminated between events in terms of their purpose or the amount of decision-making power that was devolved to the public. Secondly, observations revealed that event organisers often did not discriminate either.

Time and distance constraints

The cost-price squeeze for graziers that has existed for several decades has created time constraints for some graziers, as stated by Gary from the Gulf, 'You can't look after your own property and try to look after everybody else's business. That is very difficult'. He was referring to his earlier local government involvement. He indicated that because the role of councillor had the potential to use a large amount of his time he created boundaries for his involvement in order to continue this and operate his grazing enterprise as well. Gary and his brother were in partnership so Gary was in the fortunate position of being able to be involved in the community because his brother carried on work in the business in his absence. However when Gary's brother became ill, he withdrew from participation in any form because he could no longer afford the time.

Two study participants ceased their local government involvement because their own businesses were suffering from their absences. Graham, a company manager from the Gulf, spoke of a similar situation:

“... most of the successful graziers aren't on committees. I like to think of myself as a successful grazier and I'm on one committee because there was just no representation at all. ... we're at home really ... we haven't got time to go away, even though it affects us, our viability.”

People have to weigh up what the best use of their time is, and sometimes it means attending to the short term issues such as making a living in the current financial year, rather than the longer term issues.

A constraint that is peculiar to some rural and all remote communities is distance. The size of the wide open spaces in inland Australia means distances are greater than in coastal areas. In the Gulf case study, most towns are about a 3-hour's drive apart which is approximately 300 kilometres. The properties in the case study ranged from between 1 and 2 hour's drive from the nearest town, with the nearest town being for example Georgetown where the shire population is 1474 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002c) or Burketown with a shire population of 2143 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002a).

The Central West by comparison is more closely settled, with towns typically 1 hour's drive apart, with many but not all of the properties in the case study approximately 1 hour's drive from the nearest town. The nearest town for some was Winton with a shire population of 1956 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002b).

An event that provides context for the concept of distance, is a ram sale that was conducted in a small town called Muttaborra, about one hour's drive from Longreach (Central West). The stud that conducted the sale transported the rams from Mitchell, a five-hour drive north to Muttaborra and some of the buyers travelled five hours south to attend the sale, giving a ten-hour drive diameter.

A grazier active in the Isolated Children and Parents Association which lobbies government about education for rural and remote children felt the constraints of distance. She recognised that her level of influence was constrained by distance because of the costs of travel and the time it takes. Stephanie from the Gulf said:

“... the extent to which women get involved at that level ... requires being financial enough to do it and also not as remote as me, ... I know for women in my area that's a big sticking point. ... government agencies are interested in listening to your viewpoint because you are so remote ... but we haven't got the time or the financial sort of to be able to travel those long distances ... so we can only influence to a certain level, ...can only participate in that to a certain level.”

There are real constraints, and not just for men but for women too. Participation in public forums can easily be prevented or curtailed not by the distance alone, but by the travel time and the associated costs. Added to this is the higher workload now carried by many graziers which further limits their ability to leave the property.

Disincentives

Outnumbered

Some participants spoke about being outnumbered at the meetings they attended and the impact that had on their voice being heard. Outnumbered in this context refers to there being a greater number of non-graziers at the meeting than graziers. Paul from the Gulf spoke of his experiences:

“I went to a meeting, ... in Richmond ... and they were discussing the future use of the Flinders River ... I was talking to one of the organisers afterwards and they had a list of stakeholders in this river, and we had Fisheries, Aboriginal groups, we had Greening Australia, Natural Resources Management Department, we had Main Roads, we had dozens of them, different groups that claim stakeholder status in the Flinders River. And I could be wrong but there might have been 2 landholders on the river that were classed as stakeholders. ... Well there was no landholder group classed as a stakeholder and there was no other landholders classed as a stakeholder.”

The situation Paul talks about is consistent with fieldwork observations in the Gulf and the Central West. The consequences of time constraints and other influences result in only a few graziers attending meetings and because they are few in numbers their voice is less likely to be heard. In this example graziers were not considered stakeholders despite being local residents, and some of them managing riverfront land. Being outnumbered and in this case not even considered a stakeholder in land they managed, makes graziers angry and frustrated. These feelings centre on what is a very strong and equally recent interest in land management by a broad range of groups and government departments; examples given by Paul. Graziers are discouraged from attending if they believe their voice will not be heard because they are outnumbered.

Lack of return

If people attend meetings and similar participatory events they want to feel that they have achieved something either for themselves or as Laurence from the Gulf says, for the industry.

“I look at how much its going to do for us, or the industry, ... 70 per cent of the time I don't go, because I know it's going to be a waste of time. I would have flown all the way to Cloncurry, gone to the meeting and I just come home and said to my wife, 'the biggest waste of time!' ... they can write a report saying we had ... graziers ... at the meeting, but they took no notice of us whatsoever.”

So if they are not going to be heard, they think perhaps it is not worth their while to attend. A number of participants spoke about having to prioritise between attending a government decision-making event or staying home and working on the property. If they judged as Laurence did, that attendance was not going to be of any benefit then they chose not to attend; a rational decision.

In the past Bruce from the Central West had significant involvement in a series of natural resource management planning meetings. He was disillusioned when the government, which had initiated the process, ignored the recommendations that came out of the process. Bruce no longer participates when similar

opportunities present, and he knows of others who behave the same way. The following quote gives his perspective; one that is shared by others.

“... most of them, 80 to 90 per cent, that high ...a lot of people thought, oh well go along with the process, ... spend a lot of time and effort, have your input and what’s the bloody point, an exercise in futility, unfortunately; there’s a lot of people, if something constructive was coming out it, would gladly give their time and I’m one.”

No return for time spent in this way is a financial loss because it takes time away from running the grazing enterprise. This is in addition to a lack of return from making the effort to participate.

Senior bureaucratic control

Jill and Bruce from the Central West raised concerns about how government processes were run. Jill spoke about who she thinks has the power and how those people operate in public participation forums.

“... they say its senior bureaucracy ... that really run their own race, ... and we all know that the Minister’s just their lapdog. So they’re running the show, and they’re the ones that come and consult with us. They know the picture! But, by gee, it’s very difficult once they walk out the door; it’s been turned around so many times it’s not funny.”

This quote describes repeated experiences of consultation where the government staff appeared to take on board issues raised by graziers expressed at the consultation event, but then disregarded those issues in the decisions that were subsequently made. Despite the fact that a consultation is just that, asking for information or opinions, when participants are consistently left with the idea that their views will be taken into consideration and then the opposite occurs, this can only lead to disenchantment. Bruce expressed similar sentiments, but in more general language.

“...couldn’t be bothered, they’re only talk fests and the bureaucrats do as they like anyway, they don’t take any notice. And there are some good blokes but basically they do not take any notice.”

There is a sense of powerless pervading these quotes. These participants have repeatedly been involved in participation events but all to no apparent avail. Neither of them expressed optimism that the situation would change and both (and others) were understandably cynical about any invitations by government to engage in participatory processes.

Typical style of interaction: how, when, where, why and by whom.

Although few graziers described a ‘typical style of interaction’, they were aware of how the style impacted negatively on them. What is ‘typical’ is developed from observations and interview material. In terms of *how* the public participation process is conducted, almost invariably some form of group process was used as the primary if not only method; for example a public meeting or workshop. A range of other styles such as one-to-one interaction are available, but severe staff cuts have made this highly valued process almost a thing of the past. Group processes which largely replaced one-to-one gained popularity quickly in natural resource

management and continue to be the favoured method. This is despite the research finding that people who live in semi-remote communities are more likely to favour one-to-one interactions over group processes (Shrapnel 2002). The narrow range of the styles of interaction may reflect the skill of those running the events.

Paul from the Gulf spoke about *when* these events occur, or their timing:

“You know I get to as many as I can but they don’t always ring you up and say ‘what’s a suitable day for you?’, they say ‘this is when we’re having it’, and they bring all the people from Brisbane and Sydney and Melbourne and Townsville and so forth, so ‘this is the day we’re having it’. If you turn up that’s fine; and if you don’t turn up they say there’s no interest and we won’t come down sort of. You get a fair bit of that.”

This quote has elements of ‘senior bureaucratic control’ with the organisers choosing a time that suits them rather than their target audience. It also shows anger and cynicism from the grazier perspective.

A number of factors need to be taken into account when deciding on when to hold a meeting or similar event. Travel in rural and remote Queensland takes time because of the distances, and even if the event is a 2 hour meeting it may require most of the day for participants to travel to and from the venue as well as attending the event. As previously outlined, due to the cost-price squeeze, graziers are busy, and need some notice to arrange their schedule. Some of the tasks they are involved in just cannot wait or cannot be interrupted. For example shearing crews are booked in advance so their schedule is not negotiable; mustering cattle is similar if contractors are hired. It takes from several days to several weeks to complete mustering a paddock or section of the property. Seasons are relevant, for example at a January meeting in the Gulf, only one grazier was present in a group of more than 20 people and he said that most people were usually either away or flooded-in at that time of year, because it was the wet season. The date for this meeting was confirmed only the week previously because of the threat of heavy rain in northern Australia. Typically events are organised with short notice, often 1 or 2 weeks, which is simply an inadequate time for many graziers.

Most events take place in regional centres, for example Longreach in the Central West. It has commercial airline access which makes it attractive for people from Brisbane and other coastal centres. The opposite would be true for the majority of the target audience. So it is the people who live reasonably close to regional centres that have good access, and those who have sufficient resources to take the time off, suffer the loss of income and carry the travel costs. Change is apparent with some meetings being held in smaller centres, which allows more equitable access to participation.

The purpose of the event is often unclear until it commences. For example there was an event advertised as a consultation but it was actually an information session and the people who attended thought they could influence the process. Participants were left feeling angry that their voice wasn’t heard. Mismatched expectations because of this lack of clarity prior to the meeting was also found by Kelly (2001) and Cox

(1996). The unmet expectations engender feelings about a lack of genuineness on the part of the organisers and of suspected deceptiveness. When participants needed to choose carefully between various events because of their time constraints, this was made difficult because their decisions were based on what was often limited information.

Participatory events often appear to be facilitated by whoever is available rather than those with the specialist skills required. In the natural resource management area this may be an extension officer; sometimes it is a biophysical scientist. Typically it is by people who are trained to do something else, and do not have a knowledge-base in the facilitation area. Specialist skills are required to conduct such processes successfully (Kelly 2001; Sarkissian 1994). A lack of knowledge and skill can prevent the facilitator from, among other things, managing the group dynamics effectively, which can lead to poor outcomes.

The 'typical style' of interaction provides examples of some of the standard criticisms of participatory processes. Graziers could be further alienated and disengaged from these processes, at a time when it is of fundamental importance to our ecological future to engage them.

Underlying issues

Lack of trust

Alienation felt by rural residents is expressed in a number of ways. Increasingly the government's ability and desire to adequately govern rural and remote communities is questioned by residents, representing a legitimisation crisis. The community is increasingly better informed and more prepared to challenge decisions made by government. A lack of trust in government underlies some of the sentiments expressed in the earlier quotes. This decreases the willingness of people to engage with government through participatory processes.

Lack of skills

This refers to skills not gained by graziers or skills lost due to social isolation. Nick from the Gulf spoke about younger people not having the opportunity to develop group interaction skills:

"We don't have ... the service clubs in the Gulf, we don't have sporting clubs ... you know... the old rural youth ... junior farmers! You know all the old traditional training grounds which ... might exist to some extent still in the more classically settled areas, they're not here."

The distances, particularly in the Gulf and the low population density make it difficult to find sufficient numbers to create a sporting team or club. For the young people who return to the property after Year 10 or 12 there are limited opportunities for group interaction. Consequently they neither develop the skills to stand up at meetings and voice their ideas nor do they develop the confidence to do so. The more articulate, typically, are heard above the minority (Fung 2004).

Margaret from the Central West spoke about the loss of her social skills:

“I think the more isolated you are the more bush happy you get, as in you get to the stage where you probably don't want to go anywhere, because it's too much like hard work? You have to, well, just to have to talk to other people or new people or ... I get quite nervous to go to social things, and it's from living out here for too long. You learn social interaction, it's a skill, ... you don't realise it when you do it all the time but it is definitely ... a skill, and if you don't do it, you do lose it a bit. You've got to sort of kick yourself to get back into it.”

Margaret's experience of skill loss from living in a remote area compliments Nick's comment that people who grow up in isolated areas do not have opportunities to develop the full range of social skills. This has the potential to prevent them having a voice at group gatherings or even having the confidence to attend at all.

Discussion

How participatory processes are operationalised currently has produced a range of constraints and disincentives that operate as barriers to engagement for the grazing community, in these case study areas. It has created anger and frustration amongst a group government needs to engage. If participation is a cornerstone of democracy and if democracy is about fairness, distributive justice and equality of social opportunity, then democracy is not being realised, at least for participants in this study. This demands attention, particularly when it is members of this group who have a history of protest and resistance. They demonstrated this in the recent past through illegal tree clearing in a country where biodiversity loss is significant and salinity is emerging as a threat to primary production and rural infrastructure alike.

Public participation may be perceived as having failed in this area as it has in others (Dovers 2000; Hill and Zammit 2001; Plein et al. 1998). The results of this study demonstrate that the basic requirements of a participatory approach outlined by Dovers (2000) have not been met, the various purposes of public participation (James and Blamey 2001) have not been achieved well, and few of the elements considered desirable for consultation, outlined by Webber and Fowke (2000), are evident. People have lost faith in the processes and after many years of rural communities bearing the brunt of globalisation and structural change there is an underlying lack of trust.

There is evidence to mount an argument that insufficient resources are allocated to participatory process in the case study communities in this research, an element of Dover's (2000) definition of 'genuineness'. Often events are held in locations distance from the target audience, at busy times of the year, with little notice, all of which relate to resource issues for the government, the usual instigator of participatory events. For graziers, ultimately this results in low attendance, leaving them outnumbered, resulting in a lack of return for the effort made by those who do attend, both in the short and longer term. This approach clearly excludes some people and although there is a lack of evidence of this being the purpose of the approach it is certainly a recipe for disengagement. Study participants indicated that they believe the purpose of some participation

events is just to rubber stamp a decision that has already been made, so some of these events are seen by prospective participants merely as public relations exercises.

Both Webber and Fowke (2000) and Dovers (2000) mention the need for the parties to the participatory event to have a clear understanding of the purpose of the event and the level of influence they can expect to exert. Consistent with earlier research, this study found a lack of clarity in these areas. For any prospective participants this is important information, but for graziers, with increased workloads brought about by the cost-price squeeze, it is of fundamental importance, because their time is precious and for many, their profit margins narrow. Therefore any potential loss of income and extra expense needs to be given careful consideration. Poor communication also has the potential to contribute to misunderstandings, which Kelly (2001) found contributed to suspicion and mistrust of government. In this study it also contributed to anger and frustration towards government. Cox (1996) found that poor communication by government staff was an issue for rural people around consultations.

Facilitators without the requisite skills and knowledge base to run these events can contribute to poor communication and ultimately poor outcomes. Although many of the people who take the facilitator role are very skilled and well respected in their area, equally many of them have limited facilitation skills. This can lead to methods being used inappropriately (Kelly 2001) and not providing an equitable opportunity for all participants to raise issues, recognised by Webber and Fowke (2000) and found in this study. The lack of skill in organising and running participation events evident in this study, is not so much a criticism of the staff who do the work but the organisation that does not see fit to employ staff appropriate for the job. It may also reflect high workloads. It does reflect funding priorities which in turn reflects policy.

A related point is elitism, where Cox (1996) found that formal qualifications are used as a defence to an argument. A skilled facilitator would have a broader repertoire of skills to deal with conflict. Where graziers are outnumbered at participatory events, facilitated by individuals without the required skills, the opportunity for interest groups to dominate the proceedings is present and some events are dominated by interest groups, typically those with environmental concerns. This demonstrates the mainstreaming of the environment movement which manifests as ecological concerns being given preference over social and economic issues. An alternate description is that participatory events are an interface for productivist and post-productivist discourses.

Dovers (2000) claims that the cost for participants should be acknowledged and Kelly (2001) recommended that some financial compensation should be made to reimburse people for their costs. In this study there was no offer from the organisers of events I attended or evidence from study participants of even a symbolic offer of compensation, with one exception. The organisers did offer to pay the cost of the evening meal for grazier attendees, following a day meeting. However only two took up the offer and one of those lived about 10 minutes from the meeting venue.

Following is a practice framework for engaging rural and remote communities, which addresses the issues that have emerged from this study and previous work. More fundamentally, it has the potential to contribute to rural and remote graziers realising more of the benefits of public participation, a cornerstone of democracy. The framework is designed to engage this particular target group. It extends the body of knowledge on tailoring approaches to participation, in this case to rural and remote graziers. A ruralcentric approach using a social justice foundation is proposed. Principles, strategies and methods to engage this population are discussed.

A practice framework

This framework is based on the principles named in Figure 1. Strategies are how these principles can be operationalised, with examples for the rural context. Methods are the ways of conducting the participation process at the interface.

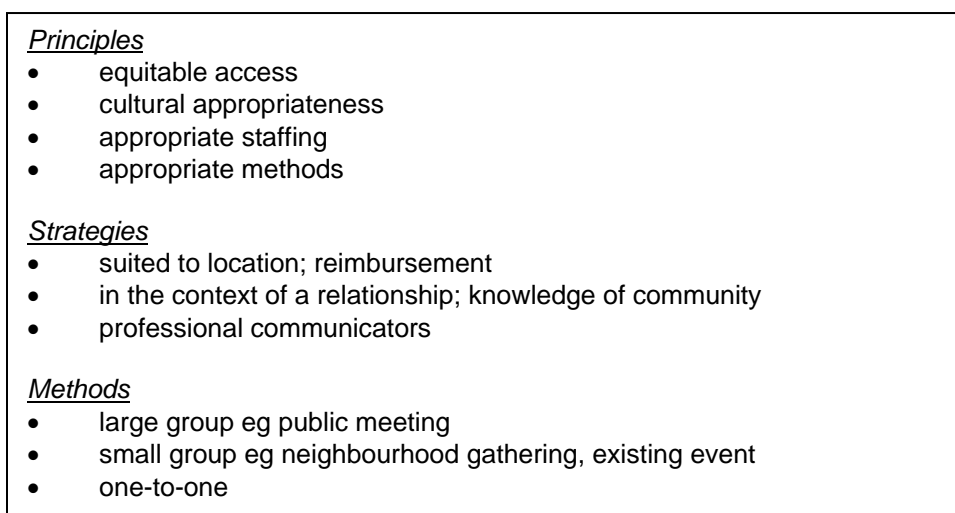


Figure 1. Principles, strategies and methods of engagement

Equitable access

Equitable access is about allowing, not excluding people from participating. A criticism of participatory processes is that they favour the middle class and exclude less powerful groups (Sarkissian et al. 1997). Considering the structural changes that have contributed to the marginalisation of many rural and remote Queenslanders, this group and particularly graziers are less powerful at least politically, than their urban counterparts. So strategies that allow access for rural and remote residents are required, and these are different from strategies that are used in urban settings.

The strategies suggested in Figure 1 are based on the findings from this study. 'Suited to location' refers to the need to take into account the large areas and long distances that are characteristic of much of rural Queensland. A barrier to participation that emerged in this study is the distance people often need to travel to participatory events. This has a negative impact on people already leading busy lives and creates costs in

terms of travel and lost production. Therefore instead of the current approach, where typically, large meetings are conducted in regional centres, a series of smaller meetings in small towns or districts would lessen this constraint and potentially make it a more attractive option for residents.

Reimbursement of costs or a nominal fee paid to attendees is a controversial strategy but one that is being used in some sectors, for example in the mining industry. This strategy may allow people to attend who otherwise could not afford the costs of food, travel and accommodation. At the least it is a symbolic gesture which acknowledges that out-of-pocket expenses have occurred. A study participant in the Central West said that in the 1990s drought her family purchased their groceries from the proceeds of the sale of wild goats which they caught on their property and another family survived on the Centrelink Family Benefit payment. At the other end of the spectrum there are people successfully running half a dozen grazing enterprises. A targeting strategy would be necessary. It does cost every non salaried person, personally, to attend these events.

Cultural appropriateness

Adoption of the principle of cultural appropriateness requires one to become aware of and sensitive to any differences in culture from the mainstream. Although the general population is aware of the romance associated with the bush and colonial Australia, it is important to develop an understanding of the customs of this way of life. A powerful custom that emerged in this study is that business is conducted through relationships. This refers not to business as in the commercial transaction but more broadly in terms of how people conduct their everyday lives. It is woven into the everyday lives of graziers and others in rural and remote communities. It is part of the fabric of rural society.

The essence of conducting business through relationships is that people need to take the time to talk with strangers to get to know them sufficiently well to make a decision about whether or not they will 'conduct business' with them. The conversations are typically innocuous but allow some assessment of the person's worth or credibility. By comparison people in the city usually do not even need to know even the names of the people they speak to in order to 'do business' with them. Frequently it will be just a voice at the end of the telephone or an automated system.

In a rural or remote area, a strategy to behave in a culturally appropriate way would be to engage with participants in the context of a relationship; allow participants to know the person, not just the professional, the scientist or the public servant. This implies a longer relationship than many participatory events such as consultations for example, would currently require. The essence of a relationship is a connection or association between two people, which can be achieved quickly. This strategy may contribute to decreasing the scepticism about the genuineness of government officials who conduct participatory processes and consequently engender some feelings of trust.

A component of culturally appropriate behaviour comes from developing a comprehensive knowledge of the community. This includes the economic base of the area, geography, climate and most importantly the social dimension as it is people who are central to participatory processes. A knowledge of the case study areas for example revealed that graziers are busy due to the cost-price squeeze, so they need considerable notice of events in order to schedule them. In the Central West for those with sheep the most intense period of the working year is shearing time. As previously mentioned crews are booked in advance and shearing the flock usually takes weeks. In the Gulf where cattle grazing is the predominant industry, most activity occurs during the dry season, a period of approximately nine months. Mustering occurs constantly during this period. If contract musterers are employed which often occurs, there is less flexibility because of their schedule. These activities cannot be delayed and the nature of the work dictates that it cannot be interrupted. Therefore participatory events need to work around local and seasonal activities.

Appropriate staffing

Professional communicators may be able to clearly communicate the purpose of the event well in advance of it, which would allow potential participants to make an informed decision about whether they attended. If for example the event was a consultation, some potential participants would not attend if their agenda was to influence decision-making, whereas if there was an event where some decision-making power was devolved to that event it may be given priority in their schedule. Clear communication may also reduce the incidence of unmet expectations, an issue for participants in this study and others (Cox 1996; Kelly 2001).

During the event, if group processes are used, a person with a knowledge of group dynamics and behaviours, with group work skills, would have the potential to allow each member of the group to have their voice heard without letting any one person or section dominate the proceedings. This facilitator would also be able to deal effectively with conflicts or strong emotions that often erupt in group settings. People may walk away feeling at least that they 'had their say'. However this strategy would not ensure for example that the issues raised in a consultation were taken on board and integrated into the government decision making the following the consultation, so voices ultimately may not be heard.

Appropriate methods

The use of large or medium sized groups at regional locations is the current approach and has its place, but this approach needs to be complemented by other styles such as small groups or one-to-one interaction. There are several options using small groups. Multiple small groups could be run in neighbourhood settings for example at a property that neighbours are used to visiting. This approach has been used successfully in the Gulf for weed management. In 2004 the Queensland Rural Women's Network ran a computer training course in remote Queensland using a similar strategy. A local grazier organised the schedule of visits to properties in her neighbourhood where several neighbours gathered at each property, then the trainer chartered a plane and travelled between properties to conduct the training. It is possible to run a small group at an existing event. A Central West Landcare group conducts meetings and events in conjunction with other community events because of the long distances required for travel in that area. This strategy has met with

moderate success. A series of smaller meetings may provide participants with a social setting they are more comfortable with, as Shrapnel (2002) found that large groups are an unlikely preferred choice for many rural and remote residents.

One-to-one communication is a method currently used. For example people are often invited to telephone or make written comments, but this is often a peripheral rather than central method. Shrapnel (2002) reported that not all personality types were found in her semi-remote sample, and those types represented were those more likely to favour one-to-one interaction over group settings.

The essence of these principles is that participatory process need to be context specific (Ross et al. 2002); the place, the people and the purpose of the participatory event need to be taken into account and the process built around the needs of the situation.

Conclusions

The literature shows without doubt that much of rural and regional Australia is suffering from the structural changes brought about by globalisation and how governments in Australia have responded. For graziers the cost-price squeeze which began several decades ago has dictated that to continue they must work harder, with poor infrastructure, less government support than in the past and increased risk and uncertainty. Predictably this has led to feelings of alienation and an increasing lack of trust in government. The past and present use of predominantly European styled land management practices has led to significant degradation and consequently a government priority is to prevent further degradation. One dimension of this policy is to have land managers adopt more ecologically sustainable practices which is creating some challenges.

Concurrently governments are under increasing pressure, if not to share decision-making power with the general public, then to at least engage with them in the development of policies and practices, despite the many pitfalls associated with a participatory approach. This study has revealed a level of discontent with how participatory processes are currently operationalised in two case study areas in Queensland. This is with a population group, graziers, which government needs to engage, because they control most of rural Queensland and because regulation is not a viable option due to the large areas. More importantly they have demonstrated their preparedness to refuse to comply with regulations.

If this discontent is not effectively dealt with there is the potential for further negative environmental impacts through illegal tree clearing or similar clandestine resistance. Will we be satisfied to continue developing technology at great cost, such as satellite imagery that shows where illegal tree clearing has occurred and so allow offenders to be caught and fined, yet does nothing to prevent it? Or do we need an approach that will engage potential resisters to the point where they not only desist from such activities but work with government towards a more sustainable future for all? Where do the priorities of the voting public lay, in short

term fixes or longer term more complex approaches? Changed times call for different approaches; it is for government not just landholders to adopt sustainable approaches.

The practice framework to engage rural and remote communities outlined in this paper is a model that is an alternative to the current approach to participatory practice and one that has the potential to engage graziers in the process of government once more. The results of such a process which would allow the voices of rural and remote communities to be heard once again is uncertain, and therefore likely to create some anxiety for government. This practice framework would engage more people in participatory processes and reveal the great diversity that exists in rural and remote Queensland. A more engaged community is a government goal and this is a possible path towards it.

References

- Alston M 1999, 'Surviving in rural communities: A blueprint for the new millennium', *Country Matters Conference*, Canberra, 20-21 May.
- Alston M 2000, 'Rural poverty', *Australian Social Work*, vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 29-34.
- Arnstein, S R 1969, 'A ladder of citizen participation', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 216-24.
- Aslin H & Brown V 2004, *Towards whole of community engagement: A practical toolkit*, Murray-Darling Basin Commission, Canberra.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001a, *Year book Australia. Population. Article: 'how many people live in Australia's remote areas?'*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, viewed 29 October 2004, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats>>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001b, *Agricultural census 2001. Area of holding by ASGC and summation options for total area of holding*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002a, *355051950 Burke (S) (statistical local area)*, 355051950, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002b, *335057400 Winton (S) (statistical local area)*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002c, *350103100 Etheridge (S) (statistical local area)*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
- Bell J & Pandey U 1997, 'The persistence of family labour farm ownership in advanced capitalist economies', in ed. J Lees, *A legacy under threat? Family farming in Australia*, University of New England Press, Armidale, pp. 213-44.
- Berner E & Phillips B 2005, 'Left to their own devices? Community self-help between alternative development and neo-liberalism', *Community Development Journal*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 17-29.

- Black A, Duff J, Siggers S, Baines P, Jennings A & Bowen P 2000, *Rural communities and rural social issues: Priorities for research*, RIRDC Publication No 00/130. RIRDC Project No ECU-4A, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Canberra.
- Bourke L 2001, 'Rural communities', in eds S Lockie & L Bourke, *Rurality bites: The social and environmental transformation of rural Australia*, Pluto Press, Annandale, pp. 118-28.
- Burgess R 1984, *In the field: An introduction to field research*, Allen & Unwin, London.
- Cheers B & Luloff A 2001, 'Rural community development', in eds S Lockie & L Bourke, *Rurality bites: The social and environmental transformation of rural Australia*, Pluto Press, Annandale, pp. 129-42.
- Commonwealth of Australia 2000, *Time running out: Shaping regional Australia's future*, Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Regional Services, Parliament of Australia, Canberra.
- Commonwealth of Australia 2001, *National action plan for salinity*, Canberra.
- Commonwealth of Australia 2002, *Australians and natural resource management 2002*, Land and Water Australia, Turner.
- Cox, K 1996, *Consultation with rural people and their communities*, Rural Community Extension Education Service, Atherton.
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet Queensland 2001, *Community engagement division. Directions statement*, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Queensland, viewed 31 March 2005, <http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au.library/pdf/ced_directions_small.pdf>.
- Dovers S 2000, 'Beyond EverythingCare and EverythingWatch: Public participation, public policy and participating publics', *International Landcare Conference*, Melbourne.
- Fung A 2004, *Empowered participation*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Gerritsen R 2000, 'The management of government and its consequences for service delivery in regional Australia', in eds B Pritchard & P McManus, *Land of discontent: The dynamics of change in rural and regional Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, pp. 123-39.
- Gray I & Lawrence G 2001, *A future for regional Australia: Escaping global misfortune*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Held D 1996, *Models of democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Hill S & Zammit C 2001, 'Assessing public participation in water allocation management planning: Issues, background and methodology for evaluation', *Landscape Futures: Social and Institutional Dimensions, Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Landscape Futures*, Armidale, 4-6 December.
- Illsley B M 2003, 'Fair participation – a Canadian perspective', *Land Use Policy*, vol. 20, pp. 265-73.
- Jaffray B 1981, *Public involvement in environmental decision-making: An annotated bibliography*, Council of Planning Librarians Bibliographies, Chicago.

- James R F & Blamey R K 2001, 'Public participation in environmental decision-making — rhetoric to reality?', *1999 International Symposium on Society and Resource Management*, Brisbane.
- Kelly D 2001, *Community participation*, RIRDC, Canberra.
- Lawrence G 1987, *Capitalism and the countryside*, Pluto Press, Sydney.
- Lawrence G 2005 'Globalisation, agricultural production systems and rural restructuring', in eds C Cocklin & J Dibden, *Sustainability and change in rural Australia*, University of New England Press, Sydney, pp. 104-20.
- Lees J 1997, 'The origins of the legacy', in J Lees (ed.), *A legacy under threat?*, University of New England Press, Armidale.
- Lindesay J A 2003, 'Climate and drought in Australia', in eds L Botterill & M Fisher, *Beyond drought. People, policy and perspectives*, CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, pp. 21-48.
- Lloyd A & Malcolm B 1997, 'Agriculture and the family farm in the economy', in ed. J Lees, *A legacy under threat? Family farming in Australia*, University of New England Press, Armidale, pp. 59-80.
- Mason J 1996, *Qualitative researching*, Sage Publications Ltd, London.
- McManus P & Pritchard B 2000, 'Introduction', in eds B Pritchard & P McManus, *Land of discontent: The dynamics of change in rural and regional Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, pp. 1-13.
- McMichael P & Lawrence G 2001, 'Globalising agriculture: Structures of constraint for Australian farming', in eds S Lockie & L Bourke, *Rurality bites: The social and environmental transformation of rural Australia*, Pluto Press, Annandale, pp. 153-64.
- Minichiello V, Aroni R, Timewell E & Alexander L 1995, *In-depth interviewing*, 2 edn, Longman, Melbourne.
- Penm J & Fisher B 2004, 'Economic overview', *Australian Commodities*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 5-20.
- Plein C, Green K E & Williams, D G 1998, 'Organic planning: A new approach to public participation in local governance', *The Social Science Journal*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 509-19.
- Pritchard B 2000, 'Negotiating the two-edged sword of agricultural trade liberalisation: Trade policy and its protectionist discontents', in eds B Pritchard & P McManus, *Land of discontent: The dynamics of change in rural and regional Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, pp. 90-104.
- Queensland Government 1999, *State of the environment – Queensland*, Environment Protection Agency, Brisbane.
- Queensland Government 2003, *Land cover change in Queensland*, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, viewed 19 December 2004, <<http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au/slats>>.
- Reeve I 2001, 'Utopias of transformation and integration: A history of future landscapes in rural Australia', *Landscape Futures: Social and Institutional Dimensions, Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Landscape Futures*, Armidale, 4-6 December.

- Robertson S 2003, *Beattie flags tough new measures to stop illegal clearing*, Department of Natural Resources and mines, Brisbane, 22 January 2003, press release.
- Ross H, Buchy M & Proctor W 2002, 'Laying down the ladder: A typology of public participation in Australian natural resource management', *Australian Journal of Environmental Management*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 205-17.
- Sanoff H 2000, *Community participation methods in design and planning*, John Wiley & Sons Inc, New York.
- Sarkissian W 1978, 'Citizen participation: The new conservatism', in ed. P Troy, *Federal power in Australia's cities*, Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, pp. 7-15.
- Sarkissian W 1994, 'Community participation in theory and practice', in eds W Sarkissian & K Walsh, *Casebook. Community participation in practice*, Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Perth, pp. 1-32.
- Sarkissian W, Cook A & Walsh K 1997, *Community participation in practice. A practical guide*, Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Perth.
- Scott J C 1985, *Weapons of the weak. Everyday forms of peasant resistance*, Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Shrapnel M 2002, *Bushies and cockies – beyond the myths: The personalities of our outback land managers*, Masters thesis, University of Qld.
- Strauss A & Corbin J 1990, *The basics of qualitative research*, Sage Publications, California.
- Strauss A & Corbin J 1994, 'Grounded theory methodology: An overview', in eds N Denzin & Y Lincoln, *Handbook of qualitative research*, Sage Publications, London.
- Taggart P 2000, *Populism*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Tonts M 2000, 'The restructuring of Australia's rural communities', in eds B Pritchard & P McManus, *Land of discontent: The dynamics of change in rural and regional Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, pp. 52-72.
- Vanclay F 1994, 'A crisis in agricultural extension?', *Rural Society*, vol. 4, no. 1, p. 6.
- Victorian Government 2004, *Effective community engagement version 2. Workbook and tools*, Department of Sustainability and Environment, viewed 28 November 2004, <<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au>>.
- Webber L & Fowke R 2000, 'Community consultation and the New South Wales biodiversity strategy: Embarking on a journal of action', in eds J Craig, N Mitchell & D A Saunders, *Nature conservation 5: Conservation in production environments: Managing the matrix*, Beatty & Sons, Surrey, pp. 612-22.
- Woods M 2004, 'Globalisation, hybridisation and rural resistance: Contesting the global countryside', *School of Social Science Seminar Series*, Brisbane, 11 October.