Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as tool for Intensive Agriculture Strategies

IA Symposium – Reimagining Approvals – Strategic Approaches to support Impact Assessment

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The presentation will cover 4 key points:

Research and strategic justification for government intervention

Defining sustainable intensification for Victoria

Using a co-design, participatory approach

Implementation of model in an animal industries/planning context and measuring outcomes (ESIA) and monitoring risks
In 2014-15, agriculture accounted for 60% of Australia's water use.
Extensive literature review including international frameworks and strategies to determine and their scope for rationale for intervention

- Building the evidence base
- Leveraging the leaders
- Measuring what matters
Sustainable Intensive Production
– GROWTH IN BALANCE

Danish Agriculture & Food Council
‘Explores 3 future food system scenarios, from climate conscience ‘flexitarian diets’, vegan, insects as protein and artificial meat - an exploration of ideological positions

Gut feelings and possible tomorrows: (where) does animal farming fit?

Tara Garnett
The Royal Society

- Reaping the benefits: Science and the sustainable justification of global agriculture (2009)

‘The global community faces an important choice: expand the area of agricultural land to increase gross production, or increase yields on existing agricultural land’
WHO IS THE GLOBAL, SOCIALLY-CONSCIOUS CONSUMER?

YOUNGER 63% under the age of 40

GREEN 66% think companies should support the environment

Willing to pay more for socially-responsible products/services

SOW STALL FREE FOR BETTER WELFARE
Social Licence to Operate implies that operations are accepted/not opposed by the community. A workable social licence implies that there is not sufficient opposition to cause substantive problems such as additional regulation, planning disapprovals, loss of markets or direct disruption of operations. Social licence may be more or less fragile, depending on how ad hoc it is cultivated and other factors.

Source: Parbery, P (unpublished), adapted from Thomson and Boutilier 2012 as cited in Barr (2012 unpublished)
Sustainable Food Systems spectrum – looking for balance

Global Food Security

Local Sustainable Growth of Agribusiness

- ecosystem services
- thresholds
- flexibility and adaptability
- investment
- natural resources
- opportunities
- social licence
- risk management
- choice and seasonality
- scale
- regulation
- pressure
- environment
- emerging economies
- innovation and technology
- balancing community needs
- local/regional
- global challenge
- empowerment
- market access
- climate change
- transformation
- trade
VISION STATEMENTS
– Should be short, simple and clear!

Nike: “To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete* in the world” (“If you have a body, you are an athlete)

Amazon: “Be the earth’s most customer centric company; to build a place where people can come to find and discover anything they might want to buy online.”

Henry Ford (1909): “I’m going to democratize the automobile.”

Microsoft: “A computer on every desk and in every home.”

World Vision: “For every child, life in all its fullness; Our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so.”

Charity: water: “We can end the water crisis in our lifetime by ensuring that every person on the planet has access to life’s most basic need — clean drinking water.”

Creative Commons: “Our vision is nothing less than realizing the full potential of the Internet — universal access to research and education, full participation in culture — to drive a new era of development, growth, and productivity.”
Sustainable intensification of agriculture is increasing productivity from the same area of land…

while reducing environmental impacts, maintaining social licence to operate and maximising value of key agricultural assets…

including land, soil, water, energy and infrastructure, across agriculture industries for Victoria.

Source: Definition developed from a range of sources including Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, CSIRO, Primary Industries Climate Challenges Centre (PICCC)
Principles

- Good governance and a culture of improvement and promoting best practice
- Environmental responsibility
- Access to knowledge skills, innovation and technology
- Creating economic viability (including value from waste)
- Promoting and regulating the humane treatment of animals
- Engaged and thriving communities
- Support research to enable a sound evidence base for decisions
- Support the creation of linkages between water, soil, energy, waste, climate, biodiversity and agriculture strategies
Sustainable intensification – key elements
Code Reform Framework

Risk Management Framework

General Principles Code for Intensive Animal Industries

Guideline: beef cattle feedlots
Guideline: piggeries
Guideline: sheep (feedlot and dairy)
Guideline: goats (feedlot and dairy)
Guideline: eggs/hatcheries
Guideline: Free range chicken

Education and Training
Impact Assessment

The following matters must be considered in assessing impacts and mitigating factors affecting the environment and community amenity:
- The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impacts;
- The cumulative nature of the impacts;
- The transboundary nature of the impacts;
- The risks to human and animal health or the environment namely, due to accidents; (signpost to Food Regs, OH&S, etc)
- The magnitude and spatial extent of the impacts, in terms of geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected;
- The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be impacted due to:
  - Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
  - Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
  - Intensive land-use
- The impacts on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status
Types of Effects

- Physical and socio-economic
- Direct and indirect
- Short-term and long-term
- Local and strategic (including regional, national and international)
- Adverse and beneficial
- Reversible and irreversible
- Quantitative and qualitative
- Distribution by group and or/area
- Actual or perceived
- Relative to other developments
Factors affecting amenity & environment
- Location & size
- Design & construction
- Traffic infrastructure
- Organic waste – effluent, manure, litter, compost, etc
- Topography & landscape

Natural resources affected
- Surface water
- Ground water
- Soil quality
- Air quality

Unacceptable effects of not addressing factors
- Dust
- Noise
- Odour
- Unacceptable nutrient loads
- Light pollution
- Undesirable visual amenity impacts

The Code Framework
Acts to prevent unacceptable effects on the environment and community amenity

Mandatory Code
Identifies factors
Approaches
Objectives

Technical guides

Risk Management Framework

Approved measures
Alternative measures

Assessment Pathway
Mitigation strategy
Implementation
Review

Standards
THANK YOU.

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