



Australian Government

Land & Water Australia

Department of the Environment,  
Water, Heritage and the Arts

# Social & Economic Profile

March 2009

## Engagement & Planning Tool

### When to use

Collecting background information helps to inform planning, particularly during early stages

### Other tools for similar situations

Steering Committees  
Community Advisory Groups  
Technical Panels  
Expert Advisory Panels  
Community Meetings  
Consultation with existing groups

### Companion Tools

Supporting Regional NRM Implementation Groups fact sheet  
NRM practice change planning framework

## Description

Profiling provides a summary of the key political, social, demographic, economic and biophysical characteristics of a community's region and its people. Demographic and other available data can be used to build a picture of the relevant community or communities.

Compiling a profile will assist a regional NRM body to identify those characteristics which will influence the way people interact and engage on NRM issues. In addition, updating the profile over time enables the tracking of change and the identification of trends. Profiling is an important activity in understanding the context in which a planning process is occurring, identifying and collating information on relevant stakeholders, and identifying gaps in information.

## Benefits

Profiling enables the identification of characteristics that connect a community and the way community members interact with natural resources. It also provides a baseline and, in updating the profile, will enable the tracking of change over time.

## Limitations

Profiles are limited by the currency of the data and the data collection interval.

## What is required?

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| ✓✓ <b>Skills</b>      | Desktop research skills and the ability to compile and analyse demographic data (eg ABS statistics).              |
| ✓ <b>Resources</b>    | Staff time to compile the profile. Some data may need to be purchased.  |
| ✓✓ <b>Information</b> | Social and economic data is required to compile the profile, eg ABS data sets, local government information sets. |

✓ = LOW LEVEL

✓✓ = MEDIUM LEVEL

✓✓✓ = HIGH LEVEL



CLIENTS|PEOPLE|PERFORMANCE

GHD Hassall

Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

A RESEARCH PROJECT FUNDED BY LAND & WATER AUSTRALIA, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND PARTICIPATING REGIONAL NRM BODIES

# How to Develop a Social & Economic Profile

## Developing a Social & Economic Profile

Information can first be drawn from existing data sources such as: social, community or population profiles; other survey results; research reports; census data; community, business and government directories; records of those previously involved in similar processes; statistical or trend information; observations and informal conversations with users. If required, this may then be supplemented with new information from surveys, workshops, interviews or expert advice.

The following types of information may be included in a profile:

- 1 Demography: Population, population distribution and projection, age distribution, fertility.
- 2 Cultural diversity: Place of birth, language spoken at home, level of proficiency in English (by age and gender).
- 3 Population movement: Mobility, new arrivals, net youth migration.
- 4 Housing and households: Dwelling type, tenure (renting, owned), household size.
- 5 Employment: By gender, age, industry, occupation, unemployment, level of diversification.
- 6 Income: Individual and household.
- 7 Farming financial characteristics: Farm income, off farm income, profits at full equity, equity ratios, debt servicing ratios.
- 8 Regional economic production: By sectors (eg agriculture, mining, manufacturing, service), relative importance of different sectors.
- 9 Indigenous characteristics: Population and age profile, education and employment, income, poverty level, spatial distribution of groups, important indigenous lands.
- 10 Social infrastructure: Major centres, health services, community services, local/state/federal government presence.
- 11 Social capital: Community values and priorities, level of participation in volunteer groups, level of participation in professional groups, existing groups.

## For further information

This fact sheet is one of a series prepared for the Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change project.

For further fact sheets and information visit the NRM Practice Change website:

[www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division)

## REFERENCES & LINKS

Links to a range of existing data sources and guidelines for socio-economic profiling have been compiled on the NRM Practice Change website.

- ▶ Stanley et al (2004) Compiling regional social and economic profiles - a practical guide for regional NRM bodies. <http://www.regionalnrm.qld.gov.au>
- ▶ Independent Advisory Committee on Socioeconomic Analysis (1998) Socio-economic Assessment Guidelines for River, Groundwater and Water Management Committees. Prepared for the NSW Government.
- ▶ Department of Victorian Communities, Office of Community Building (2003) Community statistics: a resource for local communities, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne

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