Mining and Community Research Forum 2010

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• **MDU Flagship** represents $114million Federal Government research funding (Est. 2005).

• The *Mineral Futures Collaboration Cluster* is one of two programmes into the sustainability of the sector ($8.2million).

• Contains three technical programmes (2009-2012).
  – P1. Commodity Futures (UTS – Institute for Sustainable Futures)
  – P2. Technology Futures (UQ – Sustainable Minerals Institute)
Based around three case studies –
Two in Western Australian (South Coast and Mid West) led by Curtin University.
One in Queensland (Surat Basin) led by Australian National University and CQUniversity.
Surat Basin is examined – at a regional scale and through four townships: Dalby, Chinchilla, Miles & Roma.
SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES
Development uncertainty (all groups)
Cumulative impacts
Workforce issues
  Skill shortage/Dutch disease
  Housing shortage/cost & work camp locations
Regional development issues (hubs)
Immediate and future service provision
Sustainable growth and liveability issues
Transport and public safety
Environmental concerns (agriculture, water)
Evolution of assessment and planning regimes
“farmers on the Darling Downs... don’t see much upside in having 30,000 oil wells springing up in their paddocks”

“About 30,000 people live in the area around the extraction zone and another 43,000 are expected to move there...”

“taking 280,000 megalitres out of a basin where 40,000 is the sustainable level is obviously not sustainable”

“The Qld Govt talks longingly of how LNG can save the Qld economy ... 18,000 jobs, investment of $40 billion, an increase of $3 billion in gross state product, and $850 million in royalties alone each year”

“We’ve got all this projected growth, but the life of the industry is only about 20 years. What happens after that?”
Resource community cycle

- Localised economic malaise precedes end of mine life-cycle due to partial de-coupling of local economy from mining economy
- Recruitment from regional and national labour pool
- Regulatory and economic changes reduce incentives to invest in social infrastructure
- New technology reduces labour demand & increases skill demand
- New activities
- Wind-down & closure of industry
- Period of maturity
- Period of depression/recession
- Construction ends
- Operations begin
- Reduced social integration within resource communities
- Recruitment & infrastructure establishment
- Rapid growth turnover
- Community development
- Resource & technology decisions
- Labour force decisions
- Economic and demographic impact of workforce displaced to regional and metropolitan cities
- Acceleration of resource community cycle and earlier consideration of need for economic diversification
- Single industry culture resists change
- Economic and demographic impact of workforce displaced to regional and metropolitan cities
- Generic processes in the resource community cycle
- Mediating processes and linkages
Commodity cycle impacts

- Each commodity cycle is different
- Impacts can be on a substantial scale e.g.
  - Ravensthorpe – BHP withdrawal impacted many small businesses
  - Individual impacts – job losses
  - De-normalisation of communities through demographic change – increase in middle aged male workers who don’t wish to commute long distances to country towns
Future Food Qld ‘Striking the balance, mining wealth with food security’ (Macalister)
Coal4Breakfast (Jimbour)
Haystack Road Farmers (Haystack Plains and Warra)
Jimbour Action Group

Western Downs Alliance
Brigalow-Jimbour Floodplains Group (BJFG)
Condamine Alliance
Queensland Murray Darling Committee (Toowoomba)
Friends of Felton (Felton Valley)
Social impact assessment

• The consequences to people of any public or private actions that change the ways in which they ‘live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs, and generally cope as members of society’, as well as

• ‘changes to the norms, values, and beliefs’ that influence peoples’ understanding of themselves and their society

• US Interorganizational Committee on Guidelines and Principles for SIA, 1995: 11
Future commodity cycles

• What will future commodity cycles look like?
• Diversified industry – coal, coal seam gas, coal gasification, energy production, water
• New technologies – robotics etc
• Increased worker mobility – international recruitment
• Politically strengthened sector?
Research questions

- Is the current process for dealing with resource development and competing claims for the use of natural resources fair?
- Is it seen to be fair by stakeholders?
- Legitimacy of decisions
  - The right decision made the right way
  - Meaningful participation and strong planning
- Focus should be on procedural fairness

Thank you & questions?