SE 5.1

POST IMPACT STUDIES ANALYSIS

FINAL REPORT

QUEENSLAND CRA/RFA STEERING COMMITTEE

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POST IMPACT STUDIES ANALYSIS

QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: CRA UNIT

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND ENERGY: SOCIAL ASSESSMENT UNIT

QUEENSLAND CRA/RFA STEERING COMMITTEE

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SUMMARY

This report has been prepared for the joint Commonwealth/State Steering Committee which oversees the Comprehensive Regional Assessment (CRA) of forests in the South-East Queensland CRA region.

The Comprehensive Regional Assessment provides the scientific basis on which the State and Commonwealth Governments will sign a Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) for the forests of the South-East Queensland CRA region. This agreement will determine the future of the region's forests, providing a balance between conservation and ecologically sustainable use of forest resources.

The Post Impact Studies Analysis report was undertaken:

- to review relevant social impact studies and social research which assesses the positive and negative impacts of changes in the use of native forests and comparable resources on individuals and communities
- to document and discuss issues arising from past social impacts
- to explore and clarify the main theories relating to social impact assessment, change management, and impact mitigation to inform the current impact context
- to analyse three case studies of the social impacts of the cessation of logging in native forests to inform the current impact context
- to highlight the fundamental principles and accepted 'good practices' of social impact assessment, mitigation and monitoring to inform the current impact context
- to present a range of issues that will form a conceptual framework for the development of an effective and appropriate mitigation and monitoring program for the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement (SEQ RFA) process.

This project achieved its aims through the presentation of secondary research on:

- key social impact assessment, including mitigation and monitoring theory and principles
- case studies of decisions regarding the cessation of logging
- change management, including implementation theory and practice.

KEY FINDINGS

Social Impact Assessment

An analysis of SIA identified the following broad functions:
- identifying social issues and potential social impacts relevant to particular proposals for particular communities and circumstances
- assessing those impacts, in terms of their magnitude, duration, and the probability of their occurrence
- achieving better planning outcomes by influencing decision making and leading to monitoring, mitigation and management strategies which reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

The essence of social impact assessment is to understand the distribution of social costs and benefits of imposed change and seek to mitigate or minimise the negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

Mitigation, Monitoring and Change Management.
Mitigation is the management of both the positive and negative impacts of an imposed change on a community and individuals involved in that community. Monitoring is the on-going process that reviews the accuracy of the original predictions made in the social impact assessment, and the validity and effectiveness of mitigation strategies that have been implemented. Participation of government and the community is essential if mitigation and monitoring are going to be successful. Change management is examined as a series of steps that aims to deal with change as smoothly as possible. The steps are planning, diagnosis and strategy development.

Case Studies
The case study areas for the cessation of logging and post impact analysis were Fraser Island, the Wet Tropics World Heritage area in north Queensland, and the Northwest Forest in Oregon, North America. Key findings from these case studies concerning the social impact assessment and mitigation programs are:

- collaboration between government, stakeholders and the local people is essential
- structural adjustment packages need to be locally specific and long term if they are going to be sustainable
- professional social scientists need to be engaged for the development, implementation and evaluation of plans for the management of imposed structural change
- the timber workers, particularly those with no other vocational experience, felt the highest costs of logging cessation
- local employment is vital
- implementation of change management strategies is crucial if the structural adjustment packages are going to be successful
- change management and economic development relies on collaboration between Federal, State and local government, and the local people
- willingness of local people to accept and manage change is a factor that will influence success of implemented programs.

In relation to World Heritage Listing of the Wet Tropics some key findings are:

- cessation of logging would have negative social and economic impacts in areas of the region most dependent on the timber industry
- areas in the region with a small number of workers in the timber industry and mixed economies experienced the least impacts
- while impacts on individuals and their families could be quantified it was more problematic to assess the impacts of a single policy decision on towns and communities already experiencing a range of negative impacts e.g high interest rates, rural decline etc.
- at the community level the impacts differed for areas within the region with some towns especially in the Tableland regions least able to maximise positive and minimise the negative impacts
- at the individual level irrespective of location, affected individuals reported similar impacts such as fear and stress regarding financial security, self esteem, family life and future employment prospects
- those people most affected by the changes were often removed from major regional employment centres and therefore had least chances for local re-employment
- key factors affecting re-employment:
  - age – with older workers (>50) less prospects for re-employment and are reluctant to relocate;

- life stage – workers with family responsibilities and high financial obligations (typically ages 25 – 50) did not view relocation favourably; and
- experience in the industry – workers with mixed employment history are more likely to find employment compared to those who had only timber industry experience.

In relation to the cessation of logging on Fraser Island some of the key findings are:

- social impact assessment was undertaken after the decision to cease logging had occurred
- main centres impacted apart from Fraser Island , included Maryborough and to a lesser extent Hervey Bay
- there was significant levels of local community anger and frustration at outside involvement and imposed government decisions and a feeling that the region would become another 'Ravenshoe' (town highly impacted by the World Heritage Listing of the Wet Tropics)
- there was a degree of cynicism regarding effectiveness of compensation program which was influenced by the perceived failure of the compensation package for Ravenshoe
- main impacts on timber workers including the threat of unemployment and future uncertainty combined to create an immense amount of stress. The amount of stress was related to five variables:
  - the worker's age
  - whether worker had dependent children
  - years working in the timber industry
  - other employment or industry experience
  - the mill which employed the worker.

Issues Arising from SE 5.1

The Post Impact Studies Analysis project generated a list of issues regarding the SEQ RFA. These issues, listed below, provide a conceptional framework for development and implementation of effective mitigation, monitoring and change management strategies in the SEQ RFA.

1. Mitigation strategies should be developed to enhance opportunities and address disadvantages caused by the RFA decision/s in a manner that is responsive and appropriate to the local environment and local community.

2. Governments should engage and resource local community members and groups in the development, implementation and monitoring of all mitigation strategies.

3. On-going, locally appropriate and managed monitoring strategies should be developed, resourced and implemented as an integral part of the RFA mitigation program. This provides for the evaluation of the accuracy of the initial impact assessment predictions and allows for further recommendations regarding appropriate strategies required to address any issues or gaps in the initial mitigation measures.

4. Mitigation strategies should be part of a broad-based and integrated programs that focus on the capacity-building of individuals and particular communities, which includes, but is not restricted to, the provision of financial compensation.

5. Capacity-building programs should be developed for each local area in full collaboration with the local council and community members and groups affected by the RFA decision/s.

6. Existing community, regional and local economic development programs should be investigated

by the governments, and where appropriate applied to support the capacity-building mitigation program for local areas.

7. Any structural adjustment program should be developed by a Committee of Commonwealth and State government officers, social and economic technical professionals, and community and industry representatives, outlining criteria for development and implementation of the package.

8. Any structural adjustment program should be applied locally with full participation by local government and community members and organisations affected by the RFA decisions.

9. The criteria for involvement in any structural adjustment program should attempt to ensure that the non-organised or non-represented groups and individuals affected by the RFA decisions are considered and involved in an appropriate and equitable way.

10. Local implementation teams should be developed to work with and within local communities, particularly with local individuals affected by the RFA decisions, in order to implement and monitor the mitigation program.

11. The local implementation teams should, where possible, incorporate a cross-section of technical and professional skills, and include local representatives and community members. A suggested group would involve people with a background in local government, forestry, conservation, counselling and support, and local economic development. Where possible, existing local workers should be resourced and involved.

PREAMBLE: RURAL COMMUNITIES IN AUSTRALIA

Any social impact assessment must take into account the context within which it is to assess any change. A central context for this Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process is that of the historical performance of the timber industry, and the economic and social context of rural communities in Australia. The timber industry is largely centred in small rural and regional communities across South-East Queensland, with a number of the smaller rural communities having a distinct reliance on the timber industry for the sustenance of their local economies.

Much has been written about the current state of rural communities, including those whose economies are heavily reliant on or traditionally involved with timber. A number of national and global trends are currently leading to a contraction in many rural communities in Queensland and Australia. These broader challenges and pressures face all rural communities, including those communities traditionally dependent on the timber industry. These national and global pressures on rural communities have included:

- static or falling commodity prices, and rising costs, eroding farmers' cash flows and terms of trade
- advances in technology and improvements in communications which, while providing some benefits to rural communities, have seen the migration of services away from smaller communities to larger regional or metropolitan centres
- advances in technology have also seen the increase in the scale of agricultural operations and the substitution of capital for labour in rural communities.

These and other associated pressures have resulted in:

- Employment contraction in primary industries and forestry
- Shrinking business activity in small towns
- Out-migration of the brightest young people seeking broader educational choices
- Low returns on investment are discouraging young people from entering the agricultural industries, resulting in a rural population that is rapidly ageing (Office of Rural Communities 1997, and Perkins 1997).

As a result, rural communities are shrinking, which has directly affected the social and cultural costs of living in the country.

1. CHAPTER ONE OVERVIEW

The objective of this project, as directed by project specification SE5.1 Post-Impact Studies Analysis, is to:

Provide a review of relevant social impact studies and social research which assesses the positive and negative impacts of changes in the use of native forests and comparable resources on individuals and communities.

The project's methodology also provides that *issues arising from past social impacts will be documented and discussed in relation to the current impact context.*

In August 1997, a three day workshop was held to review the implementation and outcomes of social assessment projects (including SE5.1 Post Impacts Studies Analysis) and allow stakeholders and experts the opportunity to review methodologies in detail.

The stakeholders and experts acknowledged that a review of social impact studies (social impact assessments), social research and past impacts of changes in the use of native forests should result in:

- an analysis of past social impact studies and issues for the current impact context
- consideration of the mitigation strategies associated with managing these social impacts; and importantly
- an analysis of the structures and processes for the implementation of mitigation strategies.

In order to achieve the stated objective and incorporating these recommendations from the stakeholder and expert panel workshop, the aims of this report include:

- to explore and clarify the main theories relating to social impact assessment, change management, and impact mitigation to inform the current impact context
- to analyse three case studies of the social impacts of the cessation of logging in native forests to inform the current impact context
- to highlight the fundamental principles and accepted 'good practices' of social impact assessment, mitigation and monitoring to inform the current impact context; and this will result in
- the presentation of a range of issues that will form a conceptual framework for the development of an effective and appropriate mitigation and monitoring program for the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement (SEQ RFA) process.

This paper achieves these aims primarily through the presentation of secondary research of key social impact assessment, mitigation and monitoring principles, strategies and programs discussed in social impact assessment and change management theories, and those implemented in current practice.

Section 1 provides an overview of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in Australia, providing an insight into the common principles of SIA that underpin mitigation and monitoring. This section also provides details of the SEQ RFA's Social Impact Assessment process.

Section 2 focuses on providing an explanation of mitigation, monitoring and change management theories, which provides a framework for the development of effective future mitigation practices.

Section 3 provides three case studies of recent and relevant impact mitigation practice, including the World Heritage Listing (WHL) of the Wet Tropics rainforests in north Queensland, the Fitzgerald Inquiry's decision to cease logging on Fraser Island, and the United States Government's decision to cease logging in the Northwest Forests of Oregon. These case studies provide information about the experience, including some of the key social impacts of the decisions, the mitigation strategies developed and implemented, and recommendations from the experiences.

In order to support some of the broader community development and empowerment models alluded to in the 'change management' and 'community adaptability' literature, outlined in Section 2, a brief investigation of community, regional, and local economic development initiatives in rural communities in Queensland has also been undertaken in Section 4.

Sections 5 and 6 attempt to synthesise the key consistent 'themes' to come out of each of the sections, and develop them into broad issues for the SEQ RFA social impact assessment and associated impact mitigation and monitoring framework for the SEQ RFA.

1.1 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is a policy tool used to predict the future effects of policy decisions upon people (communities and groups) and to develop strategies to assist people in dealing with socio-economic changes at the local level. SIA is commonly defined as the systematic effort to identify, analyse and evaluate social impacts, in advance of a decision making process in order that the information can influence the process (Burge, R. & Robertson, R., *Social Impact Assessment and Public Involvement process* Environmental Impact Assessment Review, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1990). The essence of social impact assessment is to understand the distribution of costs and benefits of imposed changes and seek to resolve the social costs of impacts.

Any SIA process must achieve a number of fundamental objectives including:

- to describe the existing social environment affected by the decision
- to predict the types and level of social change that may result from any decision, including the positive and negative impacts
- to work with communities to develop and negotiate change management strategies
- to be informed by public involvement.

The social assessment phase, that this Post-Impact Studies Analysis report forms a part of, provides the underlying framework of information from which the impacts of change can begin to be understood and predicted. A framework for the impact assessment and mitigation phase needs to be

investigated and developed in the initial social assessment phase in order to inform the methods used throughout the assessment, and to brief the change agents (Commonwealth and State governments) regarding resource requirements.

1.2   SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SIA) IN QUEENSLAND

According to literature relating to social assessment and impact assessment, an overall trend suggests that resource-dependent communities have become a primary focus of SIA. Changes in local environments are increasingly occurring due to resource development or conservation initiatives (as is the case with the SEQ RFA), and is generally being controlled by people who do not live within the local community. This means that the most dramatic effects, in terms of the social costs of development, are focused on local people who generally live in rural or regional areas, but are not necessarily active agents involved in the decision making.

Resource-dependent communities are generally characterised by being located in rural or regional areas and having a smaller population base than urban areas. The development of the natural resource base for primary production and economic gain is central to the socio-economic viability of resource–dependent communities.

As Australia's natural resource base comes under increasing pressure, it attracts greater attention from two divergent interest groups – those who wish to conserve and protect the remaining resources, and those who wish to continue to use the resources for primary production and economic gain. Forest Management is fundamentally a social problem, which involves conflicting values, institutions, policy commitments and power relations. Forest management is characterised by two key themes timber dependent communities and forest ecology (Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team 1993). These key themes define the political issues and the values involved in the RFA process.

Of particular significance to this process is the trend for decision making regarding the development and implementation of conservation goals and policies to occur at the national level, while impacting most significantly at the local community level.   This trend is explained by the increasing political strength of the environmental movement, and the increasing environmental 'vote', which is generally based in the major cities. These targeted, local 'costs of change' (Rickson et al; 1996) further marginalise smaller towns and communities, and inculcates an 'us' and 'them' situation which SIA practitioners need to address and resolve in their assessment and mitigation programs.

1.2.1 The role of the community

The fundamental assumption regarding the central role of 'community' in any SIA is explained by Rickson et al (1996) in their paper *'Community, Environment and Development: Social Impact Assessment in Resource-Dependent Communities'*. The paper argues that the capacity of any local area's or peoples' to adapt to, resist, or promote any development, whether it be for profit or conservation, is based on sets of social relations that we call 'community'. These sets of social relations are based on shared values, a sense of mutual destiny, common bonds and obligations, and primary group ties to the local area, including the [biophysical] environment (Etzioni, 1993; in Rickson et al 1996).

Consequently, programs or policy initiatives, which involve addressing resource development and/or conservation imperatives, which have the potential to impact on resource-dependent communities, must also contend with community relations. Participation is a functional way of engaging the community, as it allows people to offer both their experiences and their knowledge for the benefit of assessment and decision making. Importantly, the participation of local people and interest groups contributes to the development of mitigation and monitoring actions or strategies that are relevant and appropriate to the local situation and community needs.

1.3 PRINCIPLES OF SIA UNDERPINNING MITIGATION AND MONITORING

The following principles have been identified as the core principles for social impact assessment (Interorganisational Committee on Guidelines and Principles for Social Impact Assessment; 1994)

- Involve the diverse public – identify and involve all potentially affected groups and individuals.
- Analyse impact equity – clearly identify who will win and who will lose and emphasise the vulnerability of under-represented and less powerful groups.
- Focus the assessment – deal with issues and public concerns that are of highest consequence, not those that are 'easy to count'.
- Identify methods and assumptions and define significance in advance – define how the SIA will be conducted, what assumptions are to be applied, and how significance will be selected.
- Provide feedback on social impacts to project planners – identify problems that could be solved with changes to the proposed action or alternatives.
- Use SIA practitioners – trained social scientists employing social science methods will provide the best results.
- Establish monitoring and mitigation programs – manage uncertainty and change by monitoring and mitigating adverse and positive impacts.
- Identify data sources – use published scientific literature, secondary data and primary data from the affected area.
- Plan for gaps in the data – and develop a program that will fill or at least acknowledge the gaps.

The guidelines and principles highlight that the development and implementation of appropriate monitoring and mitigation programs are central to any professional and scientific social impact assessment process, such as the SEQ RFA process. Section 2 of this paper explains what mitigation and monitoring are, and elucidates the change management theory behind mitigation.

1.4 THE ADMINISTRATION OF SIA IN QUEENSLAND

The Queensland Fitzgerald Inquiry into the Conservation, Management and Use of Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region 1991 (*The Fitzgerald Inquiry*) recommended that a lead agency be established within Queensland to help resolve the many conflicts arising from development issues and to better integrate social assessment with land use planning and impact assessment processes in Queensland. As a result, the Social Impact Assessment Unit (SIAU) was established within the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs in 1993. The establishment of this unit is indicative of the concern for the social impacts associated with the cessation of logging on Fraser Island and broader development assessment and policy changes in Queensland.

The SIAU has produced many documents relating to social impact assessment including *Social Issues in Development Assessment: A Resource Book for Social Planners in Queensland*. In that resource book, social impact assessment is described as encompassing three (3) broad functions:

1. identifying social issues and potential social impacts relevant to particular proposals for particular communities and circumstances
2. assessing those impacts, in terms of their magnitude, duration, and the probability of their occurrence
3. achieving better planning outcomes by influencing decision making and leading to monitoring, mitigation and management strategies which reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

Social impacts are described as including both positive impacts (benefits) and negative impacts (disadvantages) and include the social and cultural consequences of any public or private actions that alter the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organise to meet their needs, and generally cope as members of society. It is commonly agreed that social impacts are changes that occur in:

- people's way of life
- their culture (shared beliefs, customs and values); and /or
- their community (its cohesion, stability, character, services and facilities).

In Queensland, social impact assessment is a part of an *Environmental Impact Assessment* (EIA). Three major State Acts trigger an EIA, two of these are the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*, the *Integrated Planning Act 1998*. The specific triggers within these Acts differ, however the definition of the 'environment' in all of these Acts includes the social and cultural in addition to physical and natural environments. While this means that EIAs in Queensland should make reference to the impacts of a development proposal on the social environment, it is generally considered that EIAs in Queensland have not adequately assessed the social impacts of development to date (SIAU, pers. comm. 1996).

Activities in forests such as logging do not trigger an EIA in Queensland, so the social impact assessments identified for this literature review tend to be politically motivated, one-off studies of impacts resulting from the cessation of logging in areas attracting a degree of community interest such as the Wet Tropics and Fraser Island and Great Sandy region areas.

1.5 SIA IN THE SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

In the case of the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement (SEQ RFA), the Social Impact Assessment process fits within a comprehensive and integrated framework of assessment of social, economic, cultural heritage, and environmental values. The Scoping Agreement for Queensland Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) states in Clause 16 that:

In Queensland, the application of the criteria to achieve a dedicated and secure Comprehensive Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system will be based upon scientific assessment not upon arbitrary application of benchmarks. Both parties acknowledge that social and economic factors may preclude the achievement of all national CAR criteria within the reserve system.

It is acknowledged by both the Commonwealth and the Queensland governments that the social and economic impacts of conservation objectives be taken into consideration when designing a CAR reserve system.

2. CHAPTER TWO: MITIGATION, MONITORING & CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Mitigation is the management of both the positive and negative impacts of an imposed change on a local community and individuals involved in that community. Monitoring is the on-going process that reviews the accuracy of the original predictions made in the social impact assessment, and the validity and effectiveness of mitigation strategies that have been implemented. Monitoring occurs in order to enhance or improve the strategies, so that they most effectively meet the requirements of the actual situation (post-impact) (Taylor, Bryan and Goodrich, 1992).

A critical step in the development of responsive and effective mitigation and monitoring strategies/programs is the consideration of the distribution, and then the integration, of all of the adverse and beneficial social, economic, and natural environmental impacts. The consideration of all of these impacts as a whole will provide a more balanced and relevant approach to dealing with change at the individual *and* community level over the long term.

This holistic approach is based on a three-tiered framework that suggests:

- Impacts should be grouped to allow a trade-off analysis to occur
- Impacts should be broken down by incidence (individual vs. community; community vs. community)
- Impact reporting should be issue-oriented.

Perhaps the most important principle that underlies both mitigation and monitoring, as well as the rest of the social impact assessment process, is **participation**. As Rickson et al (1996) stated: 'The necessity of local participation extends also to mitigation or management of negative and positive impacts. Modern impact models stress that programs to compensate locals for loss should be developed with their participation.'

Mitigation and monitoring should be a joint agency and community responsibility with participation by the local community encouraged and resourced by governments or the change agents involved. Participation is a critical element of successful mitigation programs and strategies. It allows not only the most relevant possible solutions, but utilises local community resources and knowledge, and integrates a level of community ownership of change management programs or strategies. It is

in the implementation phase that mitigation programs have failed in the past[1,] and much of this has been linked to the fact that local communities are not involved or resourced in developing or implementing the mitigation strategies and programs that affect them.

Other core principles in relation to mitigation interventions include:

- communication – how well do people interact, how much opportunity is provided for individuals to be heard, and how does this affect the development of mitigation programs?
- Flexibility of choice – how much opportunity for local or individual flexibility is there within the mitigation program?
- Contingency plans – what will work for one situation may not work for another? Thus there must be a Plan 'B'
- Competence of leadership – the success of the mitigation program depends on the skills and qualities of the people involved, and these people must be able to empathise as well as have technical/professional/local knowledge and networks
- Shared meanings and goals – is there a common goal in terms of the mitigation program that is shared by the change agent and by the individuals and groups affected?
- Intentionality and purposiveness – to what extent does the change agent go about sustaining present practices and introducing new ones with very clear ends in mind, with perseverance and courage in the face of resistance, and with flexibility to make small changes as required (Dalmau & Dick;1985).

Other core issues relating to monitoring include:

- communication – do the people responsible for monitoring have the networks, credibility and skills necessary to communicate with the wide range of interest groups and individuals; and are there on-going, local organised groups available to communicate with, in order to measure the success of the mitigation process and the accuracy of the original impact assessment?
- flexibility – is the monitoring system flexible enough to deal with the changes that government may be faced with; can the people responsible for implementing the program be flexible enough to change their approaches to suit the situation?
- resourcing – are the change agents (government) in a position to resource the monitoring process, including resourcing the local community to share the responsibility of monitoring?

2.1 CHANGE MANAGEMENT THEORY

Successful change management processes are characterised by good planning and the creation of the need for change amongst the people affected or involved. Problems arise when there is a lack of commitment or support to the change process, or indeed to the change decision. This can result in the isolation of group members, conflict within communities and between the local community and the change agents, role ambiguity of different stakeholders and actors involved, and different goals for interest groups and indeed individuals.

To successfully apply change, intervention by a change agent is required, and the development of a locally appropriate and sensitive change process should occur, in consultation with those affected by

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[1] See Section 3 – case studies for more information on the failings of the implementation phase of mitigation programmes in the Wet Tropics and on Fraser Island.

the change. The change process should ideally be divided into three key stages (Management of Change 734:July 1997):

- planning
- diagnosis
- strategy development.

Central to the successful implementation of any change process is a clear, well-managed communication process, and the exposition and addressing of issues created by the change decision for all interest groups. In order to resolve issues, people need to feel personally powerful so that they don't feel the need to work against the change process or decision as a resistant force. This empowerment can occur through the on-going involvement of affected individuals and groups in the planning and decision-making process.

It is perceived that in rural areas, many development or conservation changes have the ability to affect the entire region that the change is proposed in. Large-scale planned change can effect the entire fabric of a community including its economic base, the social interaction patterns of its members, and its land use practices. This may mean that a community's entire structure of beliefs, values, attitudes, norms and practices is affected.

This pattern shows the 'ripple on' effect that change has, in that a single change can create many others. Social impact assessment must consider and predict these changes in order to recommend appropriate mitigation and monitoring strategies to manage their impacts. This is achieved by working with individual communities to assess the local community's demographic, social and economic profile, the community's history of dealing with major changes, the resources within the community, the community's reliance on the timber industry, and the range of likely impacts which any change will cause. The past history of a community is considered to provide an insight into the community's capacity to adapt to change, and will greatly affect the development and implementation of any mitigation measures.

3. CHAPTER THREE: MITIGATION AND CHANGE MONITORING STRATEGIES IN THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY: CASE STUDIES

The following section outlines three case studies of areas that have been affected by a change in forest use or management, brought about by conservation objectives, and which have had considerable impact on local communities and individuals. The case studies focus on providing an overview of the situation, including change decisions, the social impacts and mitigation and monitoring strategies adopted and implemented, and basic recommendations to come from the experiences.

The three areas considered in the case studies include:

- The Wet Tropics World Heritage Listed area in north Queensland
- Fraser Island
- The Northwest Forest in Oregon, North America.

Each case study is relevant in terms of its recency and regional context, as well as its relation to regional forest planning and management. Similar key issues exist for each case study, with conservation and logging industry interests being the central stakeholders in the debate, and conservation issues being the key catalyst.

3.1 EXPERIENCE FROM THE WORLD HERITAGE LISTING (WHL) OF THE WET TROPICS AREA OF NORTH QUEENSLAND

The World Heritage Listing (WHL) of the Wet Tropics area of North Queensland in 1987 was the subject of major debate and conflict for years before and after the listing, particularly in North Queensland, but also between the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments. The WHL

resulted in the cessation of logging in crown rainforests in the region. A number of reports were commissioned before the WHL was finalised, and these clearly indicated that the cessation of logging in crown rainforest would have negative social and economic impacts, particularly in the areas of the region most dependent on the timber industry (Gibson et al, 1987).

After the WHL decision was implemented between 1987 and 1991, Lynch-Blosse et.al. (1991) undertook a study which identified the impacts of the WHL and evaluated the design and implementation of the Commonwealth's Structural Adjustment Package (SAP), a package of assistance devised to address the predicted negative impacts of the WHL decision. Their research found that while the impacts of WHL on individuals and their families were able to be quantified, it was more problematic to assess the impacts of this single policy decision on towns and communities that were already experiencing a range of negative impacts from rising interest rates, fluctuating agricultural prices and the pilots dispute (Lynch-Blosse et.al 1991:62). While it was difficult to relate impacts directly to the WHL, it was shown that impacts of WHL differed for areas within the region, with the Tablelands (excluding Mareeba) being least able to maximise any positive and minimise negative impacts. Irrespective of their location within the region, affected individuals reported similar impacts. Primarily these impacts related to fears and stress in terms of financial security, self esteem, family life and future employment prospects (Lynch-Blosse et.al 1991: 63).

3.1.1 Impacts on Timber Workers Displaced by WHL

Lynch-Blosse et.al. (1991) reported that between 1987 and 1991 (after WHL was introduced), 10 of the 12 timber mills licensed and operating in the crown rainforests in the Atherton and Ingham Forestry Districts had closed. This represented the direct loss of approximately 427 timber-related jobs*. There was also a reduction in the number of independent logging contractors and special purpose sawmillers operating in the area.

Gibson et.al. (1987) found that three (3) factors affected the re-employment and relocation prospects of timber industry workers displaced by the WHL decision at this time. These included:

- age – older workers (those over 50 years of age) were less able to consider future job prospects and reluctant to relocate
- life stage – those workers with family responsibilities and high financial obligations such as mortgages (typically 25–50 years of age) did not view relocation favourably
- experience in the industry – those workers with a mixed employment history were more likely to find employment in other industries, compared to those who had only timber industry experience.

In addition to these factors a culture of 'we are timber men' was evident and this made many workers (particularly young male mill workers) reluctant to change industries (Cameron McNamara 1988: vol 2,5–7). A related issue was the independence of some sectors of the timber industry, in particular mill owners, logging contractors and sleeper cutters. These groups were used to a high level of autonomy in their work, which made the prospect of working for someone else relatively unattractive. These workers were also identified as not benefiting from mitigation and compensation strategies to the same degree as the larger, organised, and higher profile mill owners and workers, as they were 'out of the loop', politically speaking.

Family and social ties to their towns also made workers reluctant or unable to relocate to find alternative employment. Many people's families had long histories in the area, and the towns most

significantly affected by changes were largely removed from major employment centres, making it impossible to travel to and from alternative employment.

3.1.2 Community Impacts

The impacts experienced in different communities across the region varied according to the number of workers in the industry in the area and the economic relationship of the area to the forest industry. Areas within the region that had a small number of workers in the timber industry and a mixed economy experienced minimal negative impacts.

The town of Ravenshoe is credited with having the most significant impact of any of the communities affected by the WHL, as timber production was the primary base of the local economy. Many small businesses were reliant on trade with the mills and mill workers, and when the government funded the re-tooling of the mill as a part of the mitigation program, significant amounts of credit were given to it by local businesses. This occurred as the mill was seen to be 'government-sponsored', and therefore a relatively 'safe bet'. However, the mill quickly went into receivership, and many small businesses lost their money, and in some cases their businesses. At the same time, services were removed from the town, as many families left town in search of employment.

3.1.3 Mitigation and Monitoring program for the Wet Tropics WHL

The WHL of the Wet Tropics was a unique experience in Queensland's SIA history as it provided funding for a follow-up monitoring exercise that focused on evaluating the accuracy of the initial social impact assessment's predictions. This evaluation made recommendations regarding the improvement of the mitigation strategies implemented at that pre-impact stage, including compensation packages.

At the time of the initial SIA, the $75.3 million mitigation program developed and implemented by State and Commonwealth governments included a:

- Business Compensation Program – $24.4million budget
- Labour Adjustment Assistance Program
- Alternative Employment Creation Strategies – combined budget of $50.9 million.

The *Labour Adjustment Assistance* program included four elements including:

- Dislocation Allowance (427 claims approved)
- Early Retirement Benefits (114 people received)
- Retraining Subsidy (unknown number of people involved)
- Relocation Allowance (unknown number of people involved).

The *Alternative Employment Creation Strategies* program included four initiatives including:

- Local Community Initiatives (two projects received funding)
- Private Sector Initiatives
- Tree Planting Projects (30 workers employed in short-term projects)
- Public Works Projects (six councils employed workers in short-term projects).

Although many of the actual strategies were potentially successful, and achieved limited, short term benefit for certain individuals, the overall mitigation program was not considered to be outstandingly effective for a number of reasons including:

- most of the mitigation strategies were based on short-term economic responses
- the implementation of the strategies was not adequately resourced
- mitigation strategies did not address the occupational characteristics of timber workers who are occupationally inflexible, with a dependency on timbering that increases with age, as does their difficulty in adjusting to any change – for example, timber workers were not easily placed in tourism employment alternatives
- some of the timber communities themselves were displaced, which was not adequately addressed by the strategies
- 77 per cent of the workers were opposed to re-location, which increased the need for local employment initiatives related to the timber industry. These were not a part of the mitigation program.

Lynch-Blosse et al (1991), who were employed to carry out the post-impact evaluation/monitoring exercise, argue that the impacts on and within communities would not have been as severe if strategies had been implemented that established intermediary bodies, staffed by local people, so that communications between local people and the implementing (change) agencies could have been improved. As it was, there was little support for involving or engaging local people by either State or Commonwealth government. Towards the end of the WHL decision-making process, people began to lose hope and subsequently became disorganised and alienated, making it difficult for the implementation or evaluation agents to contact individuals or groups.

3.1.4 Recommendations

Lynch-Blosse et al (1991) made a number of recommendations regarding future mitigation programs. These recommendations focused on both the development of and implementation of mitigation programs, and included:

- government intervention in minimising negative impacts for displaced timber workers is important, but how strategies are operationalised is equally important
- Structural Adjustment Package (SAP) rationale should link economic, social, and psychological factors
- flexible administrative guidelines need to be developed in order to respond effectively to changing needs
- sufficient resourcing of the implementation units of the SAP needs to occur
- commitment to locally appropriate implementation procedures needs to be made
- a model of an integrated SAP has been put forward for consideration.

3.2   EXPERIENCE FROM THE FITZGERALD INQUIRY'S DECISION TO CEASE LOGGING ON FRASER ISLAND

This Social Impact Assessment experience is also an unusual one as it occurred after the decision to cease logging on Fraser Island had been made. The decision was one of many to affect the Great Sandy Region, as a result of the Fitzgerald Inquiry's recommendations regarding the future use of the natural resources of the region. The Inquiry occurred largely in response to the on-going

conflict between logging and conservation interests, which had resulted in a call for the World Heritage Listing of the entire region by conservation proponents.

3.2.1 Impacts on the Community

The cessation of logging on Fraser Island impacted directly and indirectly on a range of people and communities in what is called the Great Sandy Region. The main centres apart from Fraser Island itself to be impacted were Maryborough and to a lesser extent Hervey Bay. At the time that the decision to stop logging occurred, the region was undergoing a period of recession and high unemployment, which left the general public with relatively low expectations and confidence in the future. These regional economic factors contributed considerably to the social impacts on the area associated with the cessation of logging on Fraser Island.

Anger and frustration at outside involvement and imposed government decision making were felt by the local community at the time of the decision regarding Fraser Island, as it was felt that the decision would make the area even more disadvantaged in terms of high unemployment and future employment opportunities. The Social Research Consultancy Unit (SRCU) employed to carry out the social impact assessment (SIA) after the decision was made found that the loss of autonomy, the sense of powerlessness, and the anxiety regarding the fragility of the local economy, all contributed to having a profound impact on the community of Maryborough in particular (SRCU 1993).

An on-going conflict erupted between logging and conservation groups and interests, which according to the SRCU's report (1993) led to an 'us' and 'them' situation gathering momentum, divided along the lines of intellectual (conservationists) vs working class (timber workers), city vs regional/rural, and theoretical vs practical. This conflict was exacerbated by the fact that the decision came soon after the Wet Tropics World Heritage Listing, and Maryborough was seen as becoming 'another Ravenshoe'.

There was an increased level of stress recorded throughout the community, with many more people accessing social services, cutting spending, facing the loss of not only their jobs, but their home, the family car, and their social networks.

3.2.2 Impacts on Timber Workers

The main impacts on timber workers themselves included the threat of unemployment and future uncertainty that combined to create an immense amount of stress. The amount of stress was considered to relate to five variables (SRCU 1993) including:

- the worker's age
- whether the worker had dependent child/ren
- years working in the timber industry
- other industry experience
- the mill which employed the worker.

There was an intense period of government lobbying by associates and members of the timber industry who feared they would be impacted by the decision, with a great deal of cynicism displayed regarding the Queensland government's promise of compensation for displaced workers. This cynicism was based on the perceived failure of the compensation program for Ravenshoe following the WHL of the Wet Tropics rainforests in north Queensland.

The government response to these issues and concerns was to formulate the Fraser Coast Co-ordinating Committee (FCCC) to provide a link between the affected communities and the Queensland Government. The FCCC had representatives from a number of government and community sectors, as well as from the fishing and forestry industries. The FCCC made recommendations to the Queensland Government regarding the development of the compensation package for the region and for the timber workers. Two of its key recommendations were that a social impact assessment be undertaken by the SRCU, and secondly that there should be a counselling and social support component within the Worker's Special Adjustment Package (WSAP).

A total of 78 individuals and businesses were deemed to be directly affected by the Fraser Island decision. Two privately owned, large scale timber mills were identified as being primarily impacted, and Department of Primary Industries – Forestry workers were also affected. Workers were only eligible for assistance however if they were private sector employees in the timber industry, or in closely related businesses located in the affected region when the Government announced that logging on Fraser Island would cease (SRCU 1993).

A part of the Inquiry's recommendations to cease logging on Fraser Island included that negative impacts be minimised to those people involved in logging, and appropriate mitigation strategies be developed to achieve this. A package was developed by a joint Queensland government taskforce – the Fraser Implementation Unit – which involved the Department of Environment and the Department of Employment, Vocational Education, Training, and Industrial Relations as the State's lead agencies. The Growth and Development Package (GDP) for the Great Sandy Region was developed and allocated a $38 million budget, in recognition of the likely impacts that the cessation of logging would have on a region with what was described at the time as a 'fragile economy with high levels of unemployment' (SRCU; 1993).

3.2.3 Mitigation program for Fraser Island

The Growth and Development Package (GDP) incorporated a number of initiatives including:

- Worker's Special Adjustment Package (WSAP)
- a Heritage City Program, which provided funding for Heritage planning and development in a number of towns, including Maryborough
- road up-grading Fraser Island
- Thinning to Waste Projects (DPI)
- Park Employment Projects
- Employment Creation & Regional Business Promotion
- compensation for Mining, Business and Orchid Beach (SRCU 1993).

The WSAP was considered to be the key initiative by workers and government as it provided direct compensation to workers and businesses affected by the cessation of logging on Fraser Island. It also provided counselling and support services and was implemented by the Fraser Implementation Centre, based in Maryborough, that consisted of a diverse occupational mix of workers, including local people. A social welfare officer was an integral part of the team, and was employed to identify people who were deemed to be 'at risk' in terms of financial and psychological stress.

Dislocation payments were made to sixty-seven workers at the two mills, even though employment breakdowns of the timber workers shows a total of seventy workers involved. Of the 70 workers who received employment assistance:

- twenty-eight were employed in Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service
- six were employed in a short term 'Thinning to Waste' project with the Department of Primary Industries
- three undertook re-training
- five established their own businesses
- seven were employed by local government authorities
- one was employed in a special project with the National Trust of Queensland
- six found their own employment
- five were assisted into private sector employment
- ten retired from the workforce.

This number does not include the eight contractors and timber cutters and displaced workers from 'downstream' businesses who are not included because they were not eligible for assistance into employment (SRCU 1993).

3.2.4 Monitoring

An evaluation, based largely on a survey of timber workers involved in the WSAP, and interviews with government officers involved in the Fraser Implementation Team, was carried out by the Social Research Centre Unit as the second phase of their 'post-decision' SIA. This evaluation found that the mitigation program was a success overall, due particularly to the implementation team which was based in Maryborough.

This success has been questioned by some timber workers who were directly involved, as it is considered that the WSAP only assisted the larger mills and mill owners, while there are claims that there were smaller operations affected by the decision, and these were not assisted or compensated at all. Another criticism is the fact that none of the Department of Primary Industries – Forestry workers who lost their jobs as a result of the cessation of logging were given the same level of support or compensation as the non-government people affected.

A wider community issue reported at the time of the development and implementation of the WSAP, involved a perceived 'backlash' against timber workers who were receiving government compensation. Other members of the wider community in the area were also losing their jobs at this time, so economic stress was widely felt, and it was considered unfair that only certain people should receive these government 'political pay-offs'. This issue gradually subsided over time as the local and regional economies began to develop, and employment opportunities were created for the wider community.

In terms of positive impacts, tourism was identified as a growth industry in the area, and was considered to have the potential to be boosted by the conservation focus of Fraser Island. The development of a tourist resort on the island has also provided positive flow-on effects to the local economy and, combined with the in-migration of many people from the Sunshine Coast and the business development and heritage projects sponsored by the Fraser Island Growth Development Package (GDP), Maryborough and Hervey Bay have the potential to generate a much healthier economy in the future.

3.2.5 Recommendations

Recommendations made by the SRCU (1993) regarding future Structural Adjustment Packages (such as the WSAP) include:

- the location of alternative employment has to be local, as most people are not interested or able to move or travel very far from their homes and families
- there should be equity of treatment for all affected workers, including government employees
- the assessment of business compensation claims process should involve someone with a social or behavioural sciences background so that people under stress can be identified and appropriately supported
- mitigation has to address the common issues of at-risk groups, including: people with low education or skill levels; older people who have only had one job, with specific skills; people with physical impairments caused by industrial experiences which limit their future employment opportunities; and people with few networks outside of their local area
- mitigation has to address the common issues relating to the re-employment and re-training of timber workers, in that alternative employment and training opportunities are desired by and appropriate to the needs of the individual concerned
- future mitigation programs should consider the strengths and weaknesses of Structural Adjustment Packages in that they are reliant on available funding from governments, they are largely short-term solutions, and also relatively 'hit-and-miss' in terms of who is compensated
- the 'independent, autonomous timber workers' are often left out of the mitigation and compensation equation, and this needs to be addressed.

3.3 EXPERIENCE FROM THE CHANGE IN USE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST FOREST IN OREGON

Communications with the University of Washington, the Oregon Forestry Department, and various internet articles indicate that social impact assessment (SIA) was an integral component of the Pacific Northwest Forest federal policy debate and change that began in 1993. The catalyst for change in this federal United States forest management exercise was the Forest Conference in 1993 that called for the development of a forest management plan to break the long-term 'gridlock' over federal forest management by devising a balanced and comprehensive policy that recognised a range of different forest and timber values.

Three inter-agency assessment teams were established to identify the management alternatives that would achieve the greatest economic and social contribution from forests of the Pacific Northwest region, while at the same time meet the requirements of the range of applicable environmental laws and regulations. A multi-phased approach to ecosystem management was consequently devised, focusing on the achievement of economic and social conservation goals, as well as on the maintenance and restoration of biological diversity, particularly concerning a number of identified endangered species, including the northern spotted owl, and old-growth forests across the region.

Specific instructions or terms of reference were given to the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team who were responsible for providing a social assessment in order to provide an understanding of how the policy options might affect individuals and communities involved in the Northwest region. The team was required to consider the following factors in their social impact assessment:

- public uses and values of the forests in the region
- social effects of policy on local communities
- social policies associated with the protection and use of forest resources that might assist in the transitions of the industries and communities of the region
- social benefits from the ecological services provided by the alternatives developed
- consideration of the benefits to the whole array of forest values, as well as the potential cost to rural communities, when locating reserves or developing management guidelines
- application of this information to develop reserve and guideline options, when possible without impairing the conservation plan
- identification and assessment of the benefits and costs of possible additional reserves that are sensitive to scientific, recreational, or cultural values (Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team July 1993:VII-4).

The logging industry and forest management situation is similar in the United States of America as it is in Australia, in that the timber industry has been undergoing many wide-ranging changes over the past 10 years due to mechanisation, variations in the international trade markets and international agreements, and increasing local, national, and international environmental pressures. In Oregon, over the past ten years there has been a recorded 38 per cent increase in forest tree cutting, while at the same time there are 3.7 per cent fewer jobs (Sleeth; 1995). The timber industry has consequently made a lot more product with fewer workers and fewer plants. Plant closures have occurred as the smaller operators are not able to compete with the larger-scale, highly mechanised, and much more efficient and profitable plants.

According to the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team Report (July 1993; VII), these changes have caused a wide range of impacts on forest-dependent communities, including the collapse and disintegration of families and communities, loss of morale, homelessness, stranded elderly people, and people whose lives are in disarray because of such things as substance abuse. Small communities that are isolated, lack economic diversity, have a dependency on public harvests, and have low leadership capacity are considered to be most at risk of suffering severe consequences when changes occur.

Another similarity between the countries is that the State owns many of the forests that logging occurs in, and the Northwest Forest is one such State-owned forest. A broad "no-cut" decision was eventually made that ceased logging in the Northwest Forest in order to protect environmental values. This was, and has continued to be, a much criticised decision, as it was largely political, rather than a scientific one. Since the decision, trade-offs have occurred between environmental groups and government, with some ancient forests being given over to logging in order to deal with political backlash (Gieson; 1992).

3.3.1 Social assessment program

The Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team developed four (4) key objectives based on their clear terms of reference, that guided the development and implementation of their social assessment program. These objectives were:

- to describe the nature and distribution of the social values and uses found in the range of the northern spotted owl (the forests under assessment)
- to describe how these values and uses would be affected by the management options
- to identify how different constituents are affected by the changes stemming from the options

- to identify opportunities or strategies for dealing with the consequences for people.

There were also two critical presumptions to the assessment work, that included the assessment program being undertaken to facilitate policy analysis, rather than to be merely a research project; and secondly that the team had to achieve what they could do, rather than what they should have done (due to a limited 60 day timeframe).

The social assessment process focused on gathering secondary data regarding the key values and activities at stake, and identifying the baseline data about the individuals and communities involved; as well as gathering primary data regarding community capacity and the likely consequences of changes. Prediction exercises which were based on a community capacity and consequence rating system[2] were undertaken in a workshop format that focused on collaboration with sections of the actual communities likely to be affected by change.

The social assessment process also identified:

- opportunities for rural citizens to participate in self-assessments leading to effective new strategies for sustaining rural forest communities
- strategies for dealing with expected consequences as well as unanticipated ones
- consequences of changes in federal forest policy across the options, economic and social consequences, costs and benefits
- strategies for collaboration in natural resource management (1993:VII-4).

The assessment team focused on community capacity (that is, the ability to adapt to internal and external forces) as they believed that the interaction of capacity and consequences is critical to understanding communities and their ability to adapt to forest management options, particularly relating to harvest reductions.

One of the outcomes of the capacity and consequence rating process was the identification of six (6) distinct community typologies within the affected Pacific Northwest region. These typologies highlighted likely sensitivity to change, and assisted the integration of different assessment streams, as well as affecting the consequent development of options and decisions regarding forest management. The sensitivity indicator for each community type provided a risk prediction level that incorporated the types of likely impacts as well as recommended mitigation requirements.

The assessment program developed a number of broad findings, including:

- a multi-dimensional approach is required when considering [different] communities
- in addition to the impacts relating to federal forest policy changes, rural forest-based communities are faced with a range of national and global changes
- variation in the allowable sale quantities among the options will not differ very much in their effects on communities
- most negative community effects will be concentrated in rural areas, and those with substantial forest products employment. Communities dependent upon recreation, amenity or other environmental quality resources may be positively affected by the proposed changes
- communities that are small, isolated, lack economic diversity, are dependent on public harvests, and do not have active leadership capacity are more likely to be affected by changes

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[2] see Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team; 1993 : VII, 'Forest Ecosystem Management: An Ecological, Economic , and Social Assessment'.

- the pattern and severity of consequences differ by and within states
- groups within communities are affected differently by the options
- although rural communities are suffering increasing levels of poverty, the current and lengthy 'gridlock' affecting the Pacific Northwest Forest is adding to the poverty levels
- vapacity is an important factor in how communities respond to shifts in federal forest policy or changing state or local funding
- the desire for stability, predictability, and certainty are key community concerns; and attempts to cope with change are constrained by high levels of uncertainty
- the impacts on the cultural and religious values of Native Americans require special attention by decision makers
- many native Americans have become dependent on public lands and resources for employment, subsistence, and cultural identity
- there are many recreation, scenic and amenity values associated with public lands, however not enough information is known about these values to make an accurate assessment.

3.3.2 Impacts on Timber Workers and Communities

Although specific local level impacts were not made in the official social assessment process (as it was based on facilitating policy analysis, not providing detailed research), predictions were made by various agencies and interest groups regarding specific social impacts relating to job loss in the timber industry. A post-analysis of impacts in 1995 indicated, that only one-quarter of the predicted jobs had been lost in the direct wood products area, but that these losses had been concentrated in particular areas, which had resulted in 'pockets of misery and social upheaval' (Sleeth; 1995).

Impacts on timber workers and on particular communities included such things as:

- increased unemployment
- impacts hardest on the 55 year + age group, who were not able to adjust to changes
- increased pressure on social services
- broken families
- forced migration for work
- city funding shortages
- increased ageing of population in towns as young people leave to look for other work.

The impacts are very reliant on the age, ability to adapt to change, and location of the individual, and on the geographical and regional context of the town. Towns closer to regional arterial routes have not been as badly impacted because of their locational advantage in terms of access and attraction to alternative industries. Towns with a more diverse local economy have also been able to adjust to the changes much more readily, and with government support have been able to begin to flourish.

3.3.3 Mitigation program

Following on from the implementation of the preferred management option, the mitigation strategies developed and adopted by the U.S.A. federal government included:

- re-training program
- job creation program (focusing on secondary products manufacturing)
- counselling program

- diversification of local economies through local government community development grants (that focus on local economic development).

The success of these programs has been restrained by a number of variables already mentioned. These restraints include:

- the location of the town
- its existing economic base
- the age and 'risk' profile of the timber worker
- the nature and planning approach taken by the local authority.
- Much of the success of towns involved in the Pacific Northwest Forest experience relied on:
- whether the community was able and willing to accept and manage changes that occurred (and this is reflected in their histories)
- whether or not individuals were supported and offered alternatives which suited their age, education, skill, support, and mobility requirements.

3.3.4 Recommendations

A range of formal and informal recommendations arose from the experience in the Pacific Northwest Forest in Oregon.

The formal recommendations developed by the official social assessment process were largely broad based and policy-directed. Four key recommendations were developed in response to the findings of the social assessment program, and they included:

1. Systematic and comprehensive collaboration among all stakeholders is necessary to achieve ecosystem management
2. Fundamental changes are needed in the federal land management planning processes that will provide leadership for effective inter-jurisdictional collaboration and problem solving
3. A comprehensive, region-wide assessment is needed to analyse the effects of any selected option for federal forest management on communities, tribal rights and values, recreational opportunities, and amenity values (social impact assessment)
4. Because of the immediate impacts on communities resulting from changes in federal forest policy, there is a need to formulate short term policies and strategies (mitigation and monitoring).

Informal recommendations suggest that the implementation of future social assessment and impact assessment programs needs to be localised, as do the mitigation and monitoring programs which will follow. The mitigation programs should focus not only on compensation, but also on capacity-building of the local communities and individuals within them. As detailed in the official social assessment report, capacity building is a much more proactive and positive approach for dealing with change in the long-term. Compensation is a short term 'fix' which will never capture all of the people affected by the change. It is high in resource requirements, and has been very divisive in the Pacific Northwest Forest experience, with vilification of timber workers receiving benefits from the government occurring, as the general community are experiencing times of general economic hardship.

4.CHAPTER FOUR: REVIEW OF STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS THE OVERALL DECLINE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

Due to the overall gradual decline in rural communities throughout Australia, there has been much government attention paid to the impacts that have and are occurring within them. These communities are of significant relevance to the RFA, as many of the towns affected by the RFA are in fact small rural communities.

In Queensland, many different joint government-community initiatives attempt to address the various issues facing rural communities. The landcare program is perhaps the most well known of the initiatives, as it is a national program, that focuses on addressing natural resource management and nature conservation issues within Australia. Evaluations of the program indicate that it has achieved considerable success across the country due to the fact that it has used education, in the form of community development, rather than legislation to achieve its objectives (Morrisey, 1997).

Landcare has a number of major learnings to offer in terms of developing and implementing change management strategies. These include that any commitment to a change in land use practice (such as the RFA proposes) has to be:

- coupled with appropriate resources
- have bipartisan political support
- be a part of a major public funding initiative
- be transferable to different rural communities.

Other significant government-community initiatives involving rural communities involve the Queensland Office of Rural Communities (ORC). ORC has been established in order to address some of the issues faced by small rural communities, and in order to develop and implement effective and responsive programs in rural areas to promote sustainable social and economic growth.

A range of initiatives have been undertaken under the 'Priority Country Area Program', which is a Commonwealth funded rural education support program whose objective is to improve the educational opportunities, participation, learning outcomes and personal development of rural and isolated primary and secondary students in both government and non-government schools. The program is a community based one that strongly encourages the involvement of a wide range of community groups in the development and implementation of educational activities.

Some of the activities that have been implemented as a result of the 'Priority Country Area Program' include the 'Positive Rural Futures Conference', along with a number of 'Future Search' workshops in various locations. These forums have led to the development of a range of local community and economic development initiatives, involving mainly adults from the wider communities who are interested in promoting the positive image of rural life, and enhancing the social and economic opportunities available in their local areas.

Examples of initiatives in rural communities are presented in a case study document published by ORC (1997) as integral components of any broad strategies for managing the wide range of changes that are generally occurring in small rural communities across Australia. The initiatives are based on the premise that change needs to be accepted by and managed from within, so that the future direction of people's lives and their local communities are not left up to the whims and energies of people who do not have any association with them. The consistent messages from the many community initiatives involve diversification, value-adding, regional and local economic development, joint initiatives, local and state government sponsorship and support, co-operatives, and multi-level land use[3].

'Future Search' workshops have produced a number of the initiatives in local communities that are outlined in ORC's case study document, including:

- the employment of a local economic development officer, supported by State and local government to be the catalyst for encouraging self-help initiatives and diversified local businesses to develop in the local area
- the local government sponsorship of a community enterprise, supported by a State government business plan grant, involving many members of the community in a niche market business
- joint venture agreements between local businesses wanting to increase their efficiency and productivity in order to diversify, and TAFE colleges and schools wanting to provide training, work experience, and a future job market for their students.

Other states, including Victoria and Western Australia also support rural economic and social development and sustainability through government programs such as:

- 'Partnerships for Growth', 'Rural Victoria 2001', and 'Investing in Country Victoria', all of which focus on encouraging private investment in rural Victoria by providing government incentives and joint investment proposals
- In Western Australia, sub regional employment development groups, regional economic development groups, local environment plans, and the 'Rural Leadership'/'Community Building Program', which focus on up-skilling people in rural areas with relevant and transferrable skills, as well as attracting investors and residents to particular rural areas by providing incentives as

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[3] Ian Perkins (1997) discusses multi-level land use as a sustainable land management option to the current long-term, monocultural land use practices that currently dominate Australia's rural industries.

well as a secure long-term planning framework within which people and organisations make decisions and operate businesses.

This range of government supported local community initiatives are based on a proactive, collaborative approach to dealing with the issues currently facing rural communities across the country. This type of local economic and community development process is reliant on a forward-thinking local government as well as an interested community, who are willing to accept and manage change. This kind of local community environment will be encouraged and enhanced by an empowering and communicative impact assessment process, that focuses its change management or mitigation program on involving the local communities, and resourcing local economic and community development strategies to suit the particular needs of the local community and its people.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: LESSONS FOR THE SEQ RFA

Emerging from the analysis of the case studies and associated literature are a number of lessons for governments in addressing social impacts of change in forest use including the development and implementation of effective mitigation and monitoring programs and strategies. Many of these are apparent in the form of recommendations made in each situation, and others occur through the presence of consistent 'themes' throughout this report. The application of these lessons must be interpreted within the resources and financial constraints that face governments. Guidance to the development of mitigation strategies and their implementation outlined in the table below, is based on the best practice principles and the issues which emerged from the previous analysis of the three case studies.

It is useful to break the lessons into two categories, one which highlights the key issues relating to the **development** of mitigation and monitoring strategies and programs, and the other which highlights the key issues relating to the **implementation** of strategies and programs. This distinction has resulted from experiences that highlight how the way in which government mitigation programs are implemented and operationalised can be critical to the success of the programs.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES UNDER WORLD BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

Development of strategies	Implementation of strategies
Mitigation strategies and programs should highlight and enhance the positive impacts of decisions, as well as attempting to alleviate the negative effects as much as possible. • The protection of conservation values and growth of tourism are considered to have been positive impacts in other situations where logging of native forests has been stopped.	Financial compensation by itself is generally a short term strategy which is unlikely to capture all of the people affected by the change, can be expensive, and experience suggests it can be divisive in communities already suffering economic hardship. • Education, in the form of community development has proven to be more effective at bringing about positive long-term changes in land use practice than legislation.
Any commitment to a change in land use practice should if possible be: • coupled with appropriate resources • have bipartisan political support • be a part of a major public funding initiative • be transferrable to different rural communities.	Implementation teams for each area are necessary, and they should be made up of multi-disciplinary workers, with as many locals involved as possible. • resource existing local structures to achieve the implementation teams. • teams responsible for the implementation of strategies as well as on-going monitoring, which involves local people. • leadership must be competent in terms of technical, professional and local knowledge and understanding.
Mitigation programs should address the common issues of 'at-risk' groups, including: • people with low education or skill levels • older people who have only had one job, with specific skills • people with physical impairments caused by industrial experiences which limit their future employment opportunities • people with work injuries that affect their future employment prospects • people with family responsibilities or few networks outside of their local area.	Impact equity should be carefully considered during the implementation of mitigation programs.
Mitigation strategies and programs should be locally responsive to suit the needs of the local environment and people. • strategies should include an on-going locally appropriate monitoring program that involves local community responsibility, and which is adequately resourced by governments. • flexible administrative guidelines need to be developed overall in order to respond effectively to changing local situations and needs.	Local councils should be an integral part of the implementation of the mitigation and monitoring program. • governments should adequately and appropriately resource local councils and existing community networks to assist the implementation team with monitoring the mitigation program.

- commitment to locally appropriate implementation procedures needs to be made by State and Commonwealth government, in consultation with local councils and local community members.

Mitigation strategies and programs should strive to achieve local involvement, through participation by those people and groups most affected by the change decision.
- local government has a key role at the local level.
- a clear, well managed communication process should be developed by government which empowers local individuals and groups by encouraging and resourcing them to participate.
- shared goals should be developed that are satisfactory to both government and the local community stakeholders.

The approach to mitigation and monitoring should focus on achieving an integrated long-term capacity-building program that focuses on community empowerment, and regional and local economic development programs.
- involves creation of local training and employment, suited to the needs of the particular individuals and community.
- strategies and programs need to tap into existing rural development, community, regional and local economic development, and other business programs.

Any mitigation strategy or program should be broader than just a Structural Adjustment Package (SAP) that provides compensation to a limited number of workers and businesses.
- future mitigation programs should consider the strengths and weaknesses of SAPs as they are reliant on available funding from governments, they are largely short term solutions, and also relatively 'hit and miss' in terms of who is compensated.
- there should be equity of treatment for all workers affected by the change decision, and the SIA process should emphasise the vulnerability of the under-represented and less powerful groups to assure their inclusion in the mitigation program.

The implementation team should work at the local level, with the aim of engaging the support of all people affected by the change decision.
- the joint monitoring process ensures that all mitigation strategies are working effectively, and provides the opportunity to highlight to governments shortcomings or deficiencies in the process where these are identified.

Governments should work with local councils and local communities to assist them with strategic planning, and to resource them to encourage capacity-building, and local economic development.
- government programs should be accessed and applied to provide seeding grants for local and regional economic development where appropriate, and to resource value-adding businesses relevant to the timber industry.

Any mitigation program will consist of a number of strategies that work towards compensating direct individual, organisational, and community losses through compensation and capacity building.

The framework of any structural adjustment package should be integrated and consider economic, social and psychological factors.	A holistic structural adjustment package (SAP) should be developed in consultation with local communities and groups most affected by the change.
- there needs to be sufficient resourcing of the implementation units of the SAP. 'impact equity' must be achieved, and SAPs need to reflect this by including all people, not just the largest or most represented: the independent, autonomous timber workers are often left out of the mitigation and compensation equation, and this needs to be addressed. - Any SAP needs to engage local people to develop an appropriate package for the appropriate target group. - counselling and support services should be integrated into any SAP. - assessment of business compensation claims process will occur as a part of any SAP, and this should involve someone with a social or behavioural sciences background to identify and support people under stress. - SAPs should be one part of a broader program that focuses on long term capacity building, rather than a short term compensation 'fix'.	- local implementation team responsible for monitoring, and engaging local community and groups as much as possible. - SAP should be flexible in order to re-adjust to address gaps or issues created by its implementation. - provision of support mechanism and service that is appropriate to the needs of the individuals involved. - SAP should aim to incorporate all people affected by impacts, not just the most organised or well-represented. - re-training needs to be appropriate to the individual's needs and the local community's economic base. - job creation and alternative employment opportunities need to be based locally and suited to the skills and needs of the individuals involved.

6.CHAPTER SIX: SEQ RFA MITIGATION AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Based on the foregoing analysis detailed below are some of the major issues which need to be borne in mind by governments, in the context of the resources available, in addressing the potential changes emerging from the SEQ Regional Forest Agreement. The suggested framework is based on consistent themes and successful examples of other mitigation and monitoring experiences discussed throughout this paper.

<u>Issues:</u>

Mitigation strategies should be developed to enhance opportunities and address disadvantages caused by the RFA decision/s in a manner that is responsive and appropriate to the local environment and local community.

Governments should engage and resource local community members and groups in the development, implementation and monitoring of all mitigation strategies.

Any mitigation program should give full consideration to recommendations made by the Commonwealth and State Social Assessment team regarding:

- details of the 'at-risk' individuals and groups in the SEQ RFA process
- appropriate methods to effectively incorporate their needs in the mitigation program.

On-going, locally appropriate and managed monitoring strategies should be developed, resourced and implemented as an integral part of the RFA mitigation program in order to:

- evaluate the accuracy of the initial impact assessment predictions
- make recommendations regarding appropriate strategies required to address any issues or gaps in the initial mitigation measures.

Mitigation strategies should be part of a broad-based and integrated programs that focus on the capacity-building of individuals and particular communities, which includes, but is not restricted to, the provision of financial compensation.

Capacity-building programs should be developed for each local area in full collaboration with the local Council and community members and groups affected by the RFA decision/s.

Existing community, regional, and local economic development programs should be investigated by the governments, and where appropriate applied to support the capacity-building mitigation program for local areas.

Any structural adjustment program should be developed by a Committee of Commonwealth and State government officers, social and economic technical professionals, and community and industry representatives, outlining criteria for development and implementation of the package.

Any structural adjustment program should be applied locally with full participation by local government and community members and organisations affected by the RFA decisions.

The criteria for involvement in any structural adjustment program should attempt to ensure that the non-organised or non-represented groups and individuals affected by the RFA decisions are considered and involved in an appropriate and equitable way.

Local implementation teams should be developed to work with and within local communities, particularly with local individuals affected by the RFA decisions, in order to implement and monitor the mitigation program.

The local implementation teams should, where possible, incorporate a cross-section of technical and professional skills, and include local representatives and community members. A suggested group would involve people with a background in: local government, forestry, conservation, counselling and support, and local economic development. Where possible, existing local workers should be resourced and involved.

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ABBRIEVIATIONS

CAR:	Comprehensive Adequate and Representative
CRA:	Comprehensive Regional Assessment
DPI:	Department of Primary Industries
EIA:	Environmental Impact Assessment
FCCC:	Fraser Coast Coordinating Committee
GDP:	Growth and Development Package
ORC:	Office of Rural Communities
RFA:	Regional Forest Agreement
SAP:	Structural Adjustment Package
SEQ:	South-East Queensland
SIA:	Social Impact Assessment
SIAU:	Social Impact Assessment Unit
SRCU:	Social Research Consultancy Unit
WHL:	World Heritage Listing
WSAP:	Worker's Special Adjustment Package