

BEPP Newsletter

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Alison Sheridan

Head of School

Head of School Report

Congratulations to Professor Mahinda Siriwardana for the overwhelming success of his Inaugural lecture in which he outlined his approach to modeling the impact of a carbon tax. Mahinda's lecture attracted a large audience made up of both townspeople and colleagues from the University. The positive feedback I have received from colleagues both within the School and across the University, reinforces how informative and accessible the audience found Mahinda's presentation about such an important public policy issue.

Continuing in this vein, Brian Dollery and Bligh Grant's ongoing research on place shaping was the basis of their recent commentary on the O'Farrell government's announcement to scrap Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 as featured in the Sydney Morning Herald on 24 May 2011 (read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/communities-able-to-shape-themselves-20110523-1f0jo.html#ixzz1NGZFSTRv>).

It is great to see colleagues' research work contributing to important public policy debates and being a valuable source of information for our own community.

I have just returned from a week in China where Judy McDonald and I met with representatives from Henan Agricultural University in Zhengzhou to progress the existing pathway arrangements between their Bachelor of Agricultural, Resource and Environmental Economics and our Bachelor of Agricultural and Resource Economics. Rene Villano was also there, presenting revision classes in statistical methods to their students. The potential for students to progress from this highly regarded university to our own degrees is very promising, as is their interest in collaborative research and co-supervision of PhD students, especially around 'green policy' for the coming decades. Rene then went on to Harbin Engineering University to deliver some introductory statistical classes to their students and to liaise with their staff about our teaching methods, as Judy and I headed to Wuxi, to work with WSOC on their revised submission to the Chinese government in light of the renewal of the UNE/WSOC contract earlier this year. While we were there, we also worked with them on how to extend the advanced standing pathway model to other colleges Chiway partners with. We drafted a Joint Procedures Manual, and outlined the quality assurance expectations we have. We then travelled to the first of these colleges, Ganzhou Environmental and Technical College, to review how their Diploma in Business could be delivered using the WSOC model, to articulate with our Bachelors of Business, Commerce (Accounting) and/or Financial Services. George Chen was also at WSOC, delivering lectures to the students who will be coming to Armidale in 2012. Prior to joining us in Wuxi, George had delivered classes to students at Qingtao College on this trip. Thanks to Rene and George for their contributions to these partners, and for their good humour in what was a grueling schedule for them both.

Finally, Martin Hovey received confirmation this week from the Financial Planning Association (FPA) that our courses are now registered with them. The B.FS is accepted as a CFP pathway and the M.FS is both a pathway and has been granted advanced standing for CFP units. Thanks to Martin, Peter Shanahan and Valerie Dalton for the sustained effort in achieving this registration. This is an important achievement and will be the basis for us building our programs into the future.

Research Outcomes

Journal Articles

Grant, B. (2011). 'From grape grower and winemaker to wine tourism operator: An interview with Shaun Cassidy of Merilba Estate Wines, Kingstown', *Australasian Agribusiness Perspectives*, 19: paper # 91.

Wright, S. with Grant, B. (2011). 'Niche-marketing organic wines: Ethical dilemmas and the importance of stewardship as the foundation of sustainable business', *Australasian Agribusiness Perspectives*, 19: paper # 92.

Grant, B., Gow, J. and Dollery, B.E. (2011). 'The proposed "Wine Restructuring Action Agenda" and alternative policy options for the Australian wine industry', *Australasian Agribusiness Perspectives*, 19: paper # 93.

Mounter, S. and Sneikers, P. (2011) "State Government assistance to the local wine industry: New England Australia 2000 to 2010" *Australasian Agribusiness Perspectives*, 19, Paper 91.

Mounter, S. (2011) "Charting a course for the Australian wine industry: Insights from New England Australia" *Australasian Agribusiness Perspectives*, 19, Paper 88.

Sheridan, A. McKenzie, F.H. and Still L. Complex and Contradictory: The Doing of Gender on Regional development Boards, *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18(3) pp. 282 – 297.

Conference Papers

Cacho, O. "Economic and policy aspects of carbon markets: opportunities for the rural sector", Rural Climate Change Solutions symposium held on 3-4 May.

Moss, J. "Land-use change options in the Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment", Rural Climate Change Solutions symposium held on 3-4 May.

BEPP/AARES Wine Symposium Bears Fruit

Research papers from the joint BEPP/AARES Wine Research Symposium held 13 August 2010 were published last week in *Australasian Agribusiness Perspectives*. Taken together, the papers form a valuable 'snapshot' of the regional industry's development, and include discussions by Stuart Mounter and Peter Snickers (I&I NSW) on state government assistance to the industry, an interview of Shaun Cassidy by Bligh Grant focusing on the development of Merilba Estate Wines' cellar door facility at Kingstown, and a discussion of organic production and sustainability by Scott Wright of Wright Robertson at Glencoe. The organizers of the Symposium would like to thank all participants from UNE and from the industry for their support for this innovative research project.

What we've been doing

- **Oscar Cacho** presented a seminar to the Ecosystems Management Group at UNE on 19 May. The topic was "Allocating resources in time and space to manage invasive species; an interdisciplinary approach".
- The launch of the Lucy Mentoring program for 2011, organised by Dr Theresa Smith-Ruig.

Up & Coming Dates

June

- 6 BEPP Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting
- 8 School Forum for School Review
- 10 Lectures end for Semester 1
- 13 Queen's Birthday
- 15 Examinations start for Semester 1
- 20 School Meeting
- 29 Examinations end for Semester 1
Semester 1 ends
- 30 BEPP R & R T Committee Meeting

July

- 4 BEPP Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting
- 11 Intensive schools start
- 18 School Meeting
- 21 Semester 2 starts



Mahinda Siriwardana

Professor

Carbon Tax Inaugural Lecture

"Carbon Tax, the Economy and CO2 Emissions: Measuring the Effects" was the title of the inaugural lecture delivered by Professor Mahinda Siriwardana from the Economics Discipline of BEPP on 18th May at the Armidale Town Hall. The lecture was based on a CGE model that he has developed recently with the funding from the Australian Research Council Discovery Grant. Mahinda discussed, through the use of his modelling, the expected effects of the proposed carbon tax on the Australian economy and on households. During his lecture, Mahinda proposed three different ways of compensating households to ease the pressure on households due to rising costs of living after the tax.

The event organiser Susan Delpratt from Marketing and Public Affairs at UNE said "The lecture attracted what must be almost record numbers with 220 people packing out the Town Hall. Guests enjoyed an illuminating lecture designed to help members of the community understand this nationally significant issue, which was also the topic of lively discussion during supper". Professor Jim Barber proposed the vote of thanks at the conclusion of the lecture.

Mahinda is pictured below with (L to R) Professor Victor Minichiello (PVC/Dean, Faculty of the Professions) and Professor Jim Barber (UNE Vice-Chancellor).



CLG 'Place –Shaping' Work Focus for Policy Debate

The UNE's Centre for Local Government long-standing research into local government as 'place-shapers' was the focus of attention in a recent article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The newly elected NSW O'Farrell State Government has announced plans to scrap Part 3A of the NSW Planning Act, effectively abolishing ministerial control of development proposals and returning authority to local governments. In the recent *SMH* article '[Communities able to shape themselves](#)', Brian Dollery and Bligh Grant argue that this devolution of planning authority conforms to the 'place-shaping' approach to local government developed in England, which sees a range of powers devolved to local authorities and significantly increases local governments' revenue-raising powers.

Open Day - Life at Altitude

The UNE Open Day was held on 6 May as part of the Life at Altitude event. Thank you to all Academic, General Staff and Economics Society students who contributed their time and expertise in preparing for the event and representing our School in the various activities (Lazenby Hall career advising, Information Sessions, and Campus/Building tours). Your involvement was greatly appreciated.

Visiting Academic – Professor Dodo Thampapillai

Professor Dodo Thampapillai visited BEPP on 6th May, hosted by the New England Branch of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (AARES).

Dodo was a student at UNE from 1974 to 1980 during which time he completed his MEd and PhD. He was supervised by Jack Sinden (for MEd and PhD) and Warren Musgrave (for PhD). During this period Dodo was also a teaching fellow and a temporary lecturer.

Dodo is presently an economist with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. He also holds a Personal Chair in Environmental Economics at the Graduate School of the Environment at Macquarie University in Sydney. Previously he held an Adjunct Professorship in Environmental Economics at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences at Uppsala until 2009. In 2005, he was included in a list of Eminent Environmental Economists by UNESCAP and was previously a member of the UNEP Expert Group in Environmental Economics. He has over 100 publications including seven books and nine refereed monographs. He was also awarded the DFG Professorship (University of Kiel, Germany 1999/2000) and SLU Visiting Professorship (Sweden 1999/2000). He has also consulted with the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, and the Australian Government. Dodo's current research focus is on Macroeconomics and the Environment.

Dodo gave a presentation in the 2011 series of joint AARES/Agricultural and Resource Economics UNE Seminars, entitled "Macroeconomics vs. Environmental Macroeconomics". According to Dodo, when environmental macroeconomic frameworks replace standard macroeconomic frameworks differences in policy outcomes ensue. The non-recognition of real environmental capacity constraints could explain the inability of standard frameworks to deliver on certain macroeconomic goals. In Dodo's analyses, environmental capital depreciation is internalized into analytic frameworks of factor-utilization, aggregate demand and aggregate supply. His analyses reveal that restricted income and wage domains alongside limited environmental capacity constrain economic performance. Hence, environmental capacity expansion and initiatives towards sustainability warrant specific attention. Dodo presented illustrations with reference to the Australian economy and its response to the 2008-10 global financial crisis.



Dr Peter Shanahan
Academic Manager