



## Newsletters Environmental Statistics Newsletter December 2000

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### ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY STATISTICS SECTION

The Environment and Energy Statistics Section (EESS) of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is a multi-disciplinary team involved in the research and analysis of environmental and energy issues based on ABS and non-ABS data.

Since its inception in June 1991, EESS's scope has progressively expanded and advances made into new areas of environment statistics. Notable achievements include:

- The publication of the popular time series on household data which covers people's concerns, attitudes and behaviour on water, energy, transport and waste.
- Work accomplished in the area of environment protection expenditure (EPE) and environmental resource accounting.
- The publications of a number of well received compendiums presenting current environmental data.
- Advice to statistical agencies in other countries (e.g. Malaysia, the Philippines) on the establishment of various environmental statistics collections, including EPE, Household surveys and Environmental Accounts.
- Participation on national and international committees.

Staff at EESS have experience at researching and collating data from various sources for publication. Various products and services, such as consultancy and

user funded data gathering, will be considered against other priorities. Data can be customised to suit specific requirements.

## **ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER**

The ABS Environment Statistics Newsletter is produced on a half yearly basis. It features news and developments in relation to work done by EESS. If you would like to be placed on our electronic mailing list, please contact Boon Lim and leave your address details.

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## **ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY STATISTICS SECTION WEBPAGES**

EESS has a collection of environment statistics on the ABS environment statistics website. The information is extracted mainly from ABS publications and other external publications. Information is presented in the form of tables, maps, graphs and dot key points where appropriate. A range of topics are covered and these are listed on the website in batches and rotated periodically as statistical data are updated.

Students, teachers and other interested readers are welcome to use the statistics and can refer back to the original ABS publications for further information and/or clarification if desired.

Comments, queries and/or feedback can be forwarded to Boon Lim at the following email address: [boon.lim@abs.gov.au](mailto:boon.lim@abs.gov.au)

## **WATER ACCOUNT FOR AUSTRALIA**

In May this year the environment and Energy Statistics Section of the ABS released **Water Account for Australia 1993-94 to 1996-97** (Cat. No. 4610.0). This was the first attempt at producing an environmental account for water in Australia and one of only a few examples of a water account in the world. This report presents quantitative water resource data on a State and national level, and details on the supply of water from, and the use of water by, various sectors. Water reuse and discharge of water back to the environment are also presented. An analysis of water use, water consumption and economic data are also presented, providing some economic water efficiency measures.

It is planned to undertake the next Water Account for 2000-01 and the ABS is seeking feedback about the future directions of the Water Account and how it can better link into data collection activities of other organisations. The focus of the Water Account for 2000-01 is likely to include:

- resource information (what is available from the National Land and Water Resources Audit);
- water supply and usage across the whole economy with greater focus on rural water usage and perhaps less on other parts of the economy; and
- if possible, more detailed information on water reuse across the economy especially in the manufacturing and mining sectors as well as by the water and sewerage industry.

Consideration is being given to include some of the following issues in the next edition of the Water Account:

- water quality
- water trading (inter and intrastate)
- water pricing
- providing supply and usage data at a more regional level.

A summary of the main findings on the first water account is available via Main Features/46. Environment of the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)).

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## **ENERGY DIRECTORY**

Production and subsequent use of energy affects all Australians, all sectors of the economy and the environment. Currently the supply of energy products relies heavily on fossil fuels namely coal, oil and gas. International and domestic pressure, however is placing emphasis on the importance of the development of renewable and sustainable energy sources for the national market. For example, a program that is making an impact is the Greenpower choice for electricity where energy consumers are using electricity from alternative power sources such as wind power, hydro-electricity and solar power.

A number of changes in the energy market such as the national energy market and the deregulation of the electricity supply in most States is increasing the interest in energy statistics. Australia's international commitments to the Kyoto protocol and organisations such as the International Energy Agency and the Organisation for Economic and Country Development also require access to energy statistics from a number of sources.

The Australian and New Zealand Minerals and Energy Council (ANZMEC) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) are attempting to satisfy the need for energy statistics by presenting a website for the Directory of Energy Statistics. In 1992 the first edition of the energy directory highlighted sources of data for the energy sector. This website contains updated information on Australian sources of energy and related data from both the public and private sectors. The detail includes contacts, a brief description of the purpose, the level of coverage, the collection type and much more.

The ABS Energy Directory is located on the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)) via Site Map/ABS Directories/Directory of Energy Statistics.

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## ENERGY ACCOUNT

**Energy Accounts, Australia: 1992-93 - 1997-98** (Cat. 4604.0), is now due for release in February 2001. The revised release date allows the inclusion of the most recent greenhouse gas emissions data, based on energy use data for 1997-98. This is the second Energy Account to be released by EESS, describing the stock of primary energy resources in Australia, and the flow of these resources through the Australian economy. The publication will present tables on the supply and use of both primary and secondary energy products such as black and brown coal, crude oil, natural gas, electricity and petroleum products, as well as renewable energy resources such as solar, bagasse and hydroelectricity.

In addition, the supply of greenhouse gas emissions by industry for each of the financial years will be presented. More extensive analysis will present direct and total energy requirements derived from the integration of physical and monetary input-output tables, including indicators of energy and greenhouse gas intensities. The consumption of indirect and embodied energy by final users such as households and exports will also be examined.

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## HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

Since 1992, ABS household survey program has included an environmental component, which is published as **Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices**, ABS Cat. No. 4602.0. The latest (sixth) edition was released on 29.11.00.

The 3 main topics surveyed were:

1. Household waste management: Data included types of household waste recycled, recycling method, recycling frequency, reasons for not recycling, awareness of hazardous waste disposal facilities, and household hazardous waste disposal methods.
2. Habits of motor vehicle owners: Data included number of registered vehicles, air-conditioning in motor vehicles, vehicle fuel type, frequency of vehicle servicing, purchase of motor vehicles, and factors considered in vehicle purchase.

3. Use of transport: Data included forms of transport to work/study, reasons for using public transport, reasons for not using public transport to work/study, availability of public transport, reasons for walking/cycling to work/study, reasons for not walking/cycling, reasons for taking passengers, and reasons for not taking passengers.

A summary of the main findings and other related information on the publication are available via Main Features/46. Environment of the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)).

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## **ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION EXPENDITURE**

Between March and May 2000, the Environment and Energy Statistics Section undertook a comprehensive user review of the publication **Environment Protection Expenditure, Australia** (4603.0).

In light of comments provided, it has been decided to modify the collection of information about environmental protection expenditures in the following ways:

- to extend the focus of environmental protection to encompass other aspects of environmental management
- to adapt the UN Classification of Environmental Protection Activities used to guide previous collections to create an Australian classification that will better reflect priority environmental management issues in Australia, (e.g. to possibly include discrete categories on such issues as salinity and soil erosion)
- to investigate ways of extending the information collected from businesses to cover physical measures of eco-efficiency, waste management and minesite rehabilitation, to complement the financial data already collected.

In order to develop and test new questions to meet these user needs, it has been necessary to postpone dispatch of the next survey until August 2001, covering the 2000-2001 financial year. Data from the collection will be published in mid 2002. This work is being conducted jointly by the Environment and Energy Section and the Melbourne Office.

Key points of the previous publication available via Main Features/46. Environment of the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)).

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL EXPENDITURE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AUSTRALIA 1998-99**

The second publication presenting estimates of expenditures and revenues related to environment protection and natural resource management by local government authorities of Australia was released in July 2000. The statistics are based on a survey of local governments across Australia that measures expenditure on services

and activities to protect the environment and to manage the natural resources within each municipality, as well as councils' revenue related to provision of these services. Details of financial transfers relating to the environment between Commonwealth, State and local governments are included. The data is also linked to the information presented in **Environmental Protection Expenditure, Australia** (Cat. No. 4603.0).

The expenditures and related revenues are divided into 2 accounts, 'Environmental Protection' and 'Natural Resource Management'.

Environment Protection groups together all actions and activities whose primary purpose is the prevention, reduction or elimination of waste, pollution or other degradation of the environment. The Environment Protection account is divided into 7 different categories: waste water management; solid waste management; biodiversity and landscape; soil and groundwater; ambient air and climate; cultural heritage; and other environment protection.

Natural Resource Management covers all activities relating to making more efficient use of natural resources. The 3 categories are: inland water management; land management and development; and other natural resource management.

A summary and other related information on the publication are available via Main Features/46. Environment of the ABS website ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)).

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## **AUSTRALIA'S ENVIRONMENT: ISSUES AND TRENDS**

The first edition of **Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends** (Cat. No. 4613.0) will be released in February 2001 by the Environment and Energy Statistics Section of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This annual publication presents environmental issues in a holistic manner by linking the relationship between the three spheres of the environment, the economy and society. Environmental statistics and information on selected issues which affect the future of Australia and its people are examined. Data and information are derived from ABS collections and from a wide range of other sources.

Some of the relevant important issues covered in the first edition include land-use and land tenure in Australia, with a detailed look at agriculture and the impacts that farming have on the environment and the economy; the distribution of weeds; forestry and the growth of plantations; the conservation status of selected marine and freshwater fisheries; a profile of aquaculture; changes to Australia's inland rivers; the impacts of shipping and ballast water on the marine environment; global warming; and the influence of age, education and income on the environmental attitudes and behaviour of Australians.

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## **INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC**

## ACCOUNTING

The ABS played a leading role in the International Workshop on Environmental and Economic Accounting which was held in Manila, Philippines, from 18 to 22 September 2000. It was organised jointly by the National Statistical Coordination Board of the Philippines, the United Nations Statistical Division and the United Nations Development Program.

The Workshop was attended by fifty-one participants from fourteen countries and special administrative region in the Asia-Pacific region namely: Australia, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The Workshop aimed to serve as a venue to review, compare, and discuss the work-in-progress in the development of environmental accounting in the ASEAN region, in particular, and in the Asia-Pacific region, in general. Specifically, it aimed to:

- train the participants in the implementation of the System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting
- provide a forum for sharing experiences in environmental accounting among countries in the Asia-Pacific region
- provide a venue for discussing the first draft of the SEEA 2000
- assess the stage of implementation of environmental accounting in various countries in the region
- formally create the Manila Group.

Country representatives presented their current and future activities on environmental accounting. It was noted that most of the participating countries were still on the initial stages of developing environmental accounts. Some, however, had initiated the compilation of environmental statistics. The following are the significant findings from the country presentations:

- All countries were interested in doing work in the field of environmental accounting;
- Different countries in the region were at different stages of development in the area of environmental accounting;
- The availability of data was an important issue to be addressed in implementing environmental accounting. The presence of a coordinating mechanism to facilitate better and stronger linkage among concerned entities is deemed important;
- There was definitely a need for capacity building among countries. Many countries would benefit from both the technical and financial assistance from different institutions as well as from countries with experiences in the field.

It was agreed that a formal Network (Forum) be created to facilitate the communication among the countries in order to advance environmental accounting in the Asia Pacific region. It will focus on sharing experiences in the area of environmental accounting, with all countries working toward achieving the same goals. Improved environment statistics will be an indirect result of the implementation of the environmental accounts. Membership of the group will be open, especially to countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

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## **AUSSTATS**

The ABS has recently released its new AusStats service which is available via the ABS web site and gives subscribers access to a variety of ABS information, such as publications, spreadsheets and datasets. Please log on to the ABS web site and see for yourself what AusStats is about. The URL is:  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/ausstatshome?openview>

AusStats is updated daily at 11:30 am, providing full access to the latest facts and figures about the nation.

AusStats allows access to a wide range of information, including:

- All ABS publications from 1998 onwards in Adobe Acrobat format (.pdf)
- Over 2,000 spreadsheets
- Multidimensional datasets in SuperTABLE format
- Census Basic Community Profiles to the Statistical Local Area (SLA) level in Excel spreadsheet format
- Free summary information including Main Features, Release Advice's and Australia Now and extensive linking between related information

Finding information with AusStats is easy as AusStats contains extensive linking between related information, full text search and bookmarking facility and lots more.

AusStats is only available by subscription with subscription options starting at \$1,080. To organise a subscription or to find out more about AusStats, contact the ABS on 13000 135 070, email [client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au) or get in touch with the person below.

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## **MORE ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION ON THE STATISTICAL CLEARING HOUSE WEBSITE**

The Statistical Clearing House (SCH) is the central clearance point for all Commonwealth Government surveys involving 50 or more businesses. As a by-product of the clearance process, the SCH maintains the Commonwealth Business Surveys Register (located at <http://www.sch.abs.gov.au>). The Register lists information about business surveys conducted by Commonwealth Government covering diverse topics such as Environment Industry, Agriculture, Research and Development, Energy, and much much more.

Ever wondered how to conduct a survey? The SCH website also contains reference material on basic survey design methods, information about standards and classifications, international practices and other useful reference information.



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