



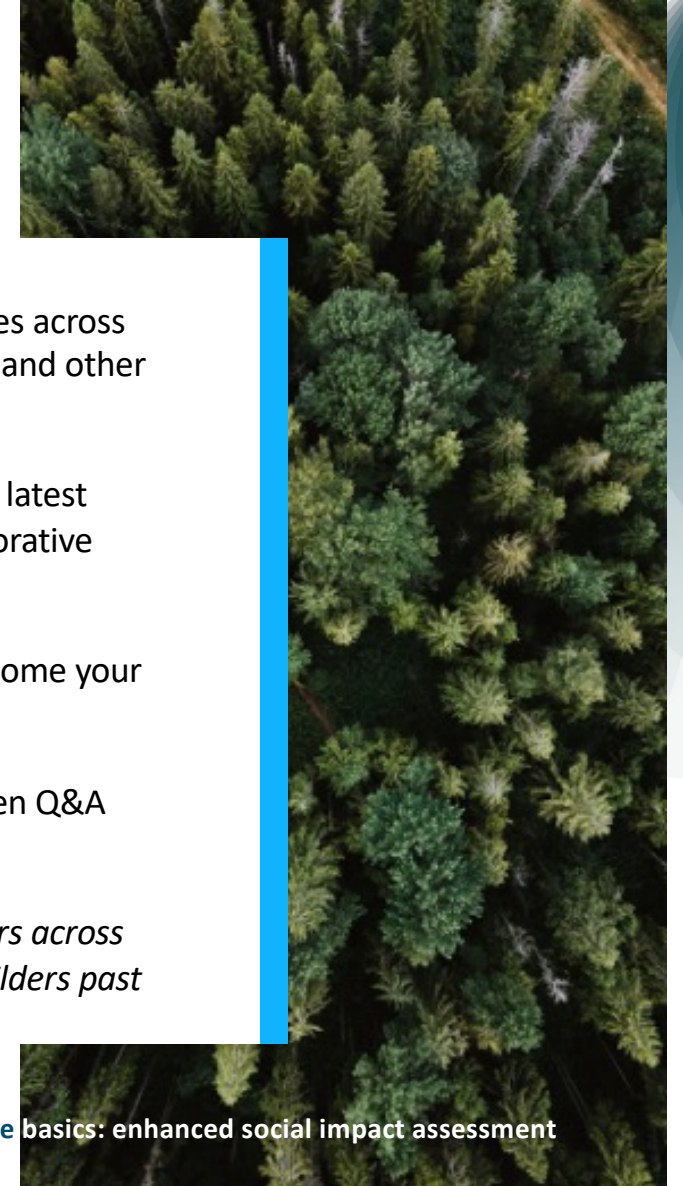
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MARSDEN JACOB ASSOCIATES

Talks Live

**Beyond the basics
Enhanced social impact assessment
12 September 2023**

Talks Live



The **Marsden Jacob Talks Live** webinar series brings people together to discuss pressing issues across environment, energy, water, circular economy and recycling, agriculture and earth resources and other sectors in Australia and internationally.

These free webinars are open to everyone. We aim to share best practices and bring you the latest research and thinking. Our focus in these events is on encouraging open, positive and collaborative discussion.

We encourage you to share your questions, opinions, experience and interests. We also welcome your thoughts on future topics for our webinar series.

Each live event includes a presentation hosted by Marsden Jacob experts, followed by an open Q&A session.

Marsden Jacob Associates acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia where we conduct our business. We also pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders past and present, and leaders emerging.

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Talks Live - Beyond the basics: enhanced social impact assessment

Initial questions

1. What is your level of social impact assessment understanding?

- ☐ Completely new
- ☐ Some knowledge
- ☐ Expert

2. Based on your understanding, what are the key elements that are useful for decision makers?

- ☐ Accurate and reliable information
- ☐ Alignment with goals and objectives
- ☐ Stakeholder mapping and engagement
- ☐ Compelling messages
- ☐ Opportunities and outcomes
- ☐ Long-term vision
- ☐ Risk management



Who are we?



Dr Kate Riddell

Principal

PhD (PoliSci & IntRel), BA (Hons.) (UWA)

- More than 20 years' experience in social research and policy development, with a focus on achieving social justice and equity.
- Developed and delivered whole-of-government strategies and programs to guide whole-of-community action toward achieving inclusion and equity for diverse and/or marginalised communities.
- An acute understanding of government social, diversity, equity and inclusion agendas stemming from 12 years in senior policy roles.



Dr Joel Byrnes

Associate Director

PhD (Economics), BEc (Hons) (UNE)

- Advises senior executives responsible for making essential services infrastructure investment and policy decisions.
- Specialises in the Australian rural and urban water sectors, helps develop robust, comprehensive and compelling business cases for high-value and high-risk projects
- A strong track record of receiving private sector and state/commonwealth government approval and funding.

What we'll discuss

1. Why this topic? And why now?
2. What is social impact?
3. Social impact: theory vs practice.
4. Beyond the basics: enhanced social impact assessment.
5. Maximising relevance: 6 steps to aligning benefit enhancement with stakeholder goals.

Hypothetical case study:

Desalination plant for the Ocean-Forest Region (OFR)



Why this topic? And why now?



Including social impact assessment/evaluation (SIA/SIE) in business cases has become so commonplace that, in the words of experts, it's often done badly. But going beyond the basics and applying a 'big-picture' lens to a standard SIA/SIE approach enables you to align, connect and embed your project in the whole-of-government strategic framework.

This is important because it can:

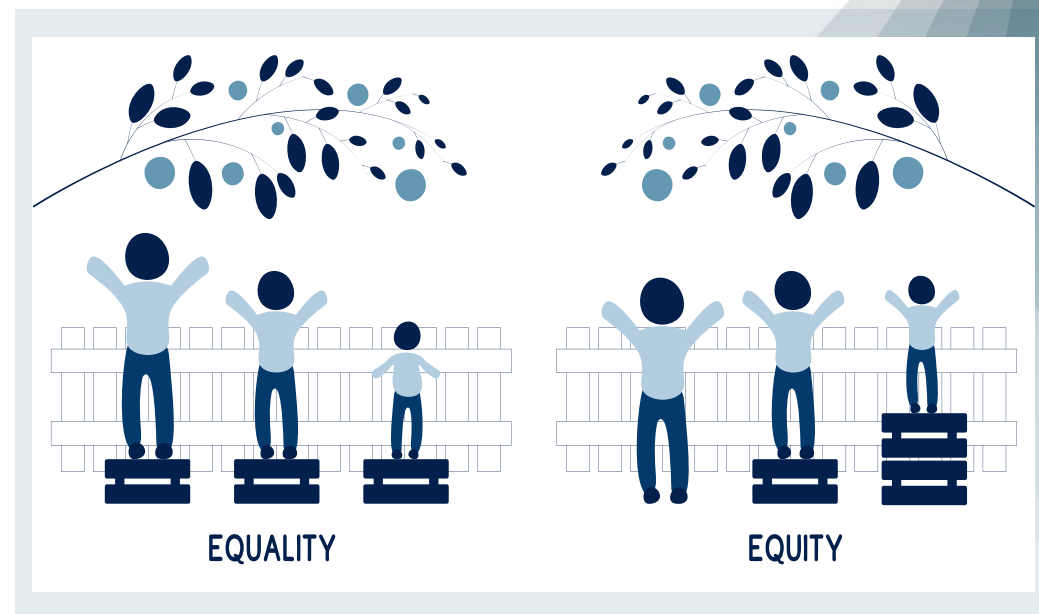
- boost the likelihood of stakeholder support
- help you articulate opportunities to achieve better outcomes
- assist with crafting a compelling narrative for broader stakeholder buy-in.

What is social impact?

"The objective of SIA and the project should be to contribute to the empowerment of marginalised groups in the community".¹

- Considers how groups experience impacts/access benefits differently.
- Deliberate actions/enhancements to distribute benefits equitably.
- Relates to other 'socials': sustainability, procurement, corporate responsibility, ESG.
- Marginalised groups are:
 - more likely to experience poorer outcomes
 - less likely to have access to opportunities
 - less likely to benefit equitably.

¹ International Association for Impact Assessment



Social impact: theory vs practice

SIA/SIE should focus on:

- Changes that solve/address social injustice and challenges through conscious and deliberate efforts or activities.
- Creating opportunities otherwise unavailable to people who are minorities or underprivileged.
- Contributing to the empowerment of vulnerable groups in the community.
- Maximising:
 - targeted benefit enhancement
 - equitable distribution of benefits.

However, it often homes in on negatives:

- Consequences people experience when a new project brings change.
- Issues that affect people and communities because of a project.
- Negative impacts:
 - risk identification, mitigation and management
 - ex-ante prediction of adverse impacts and winners and losers
 - protecting individual property rights.

Beyond the basics: enhanced social impact assessment

*"The effectiveness of SIA in terms of achieving better outcomes... will be **maximised by being relevant** to the proponents (commercial and public sector) who initiate and implement projects". (IAIA, 2015)*

Applying a big picture lens...

- Big picture = proponent's goals/objectives.
- Proponent's goals often include delivering better outcomes for all community members.
- Proponents often implement targeted approaches to achieve equitable outcomes for marginalised groups.

... aligns your project with proponent outcomes

- Develop benefit enhancements that:
 - contribute to proponent's goals
 - combine with proponent's goals to produce cumulative and sustained positive outcomes
 - can deliver equitable outcomes for marginalised groups.

Maximising relevance: aligning benefit enhancement with stakeholder goals

Applying a big picture lens

1. What are the anticipated impacts?
2. What does the social context look like?
3. Who are your high-influence stakeholders?
4. What are these stakeholders' priorities?
5. Map project benefits to stakeholder priorities.
6. Document opportunities for enhancements that align with stakeholder priorities.



Step 1: Identify anticipated impacts

Desalination plant for the Ocean-Forest Region (OFR)

Driver: OFR is experiencing rapid population, business and industry growth and diversification, and decreasing rainfall.

Proposal: construct a 200GL/year capacity desalination plant.

Objective: a reliable, sustainable water supply to support unprecedented growth and development.

Outcome: **water security** for the OFR region.

The project is in its early scoping phase.

Marsden Jacob Associates is undertaking a social impact evaluation that includes an assessment of the project against the government goals and objectives and strategies.

Anticipated impacts

Negative

- Physical disturbance to natural environments and habitats.
- Increased dust and noise.
- Physical obstructions and traffic increases.
- First Nations cultural spaces and place.

Positive

- Employment and business opportunities.
- Water security.
- Clean, green community spaces.
- Climate change resilience.
- Economic diversification.

Step 2. The social context: OFR locality profile

	Ocean-Forest Region	Auswestia
Total population 2021	87, 642	2,354,799
Total population 2046	327,855	3,129, 582
Median age	32	40
% First Nations	9.8%	4.2%
% Born in a non-main English-speaking country	15.7%	16.2%
% Aged 12-24 years	23.6%	14.1%
% People living with disability	6.4%	7.1%
Unemployment rate	7.6%	4.7%
Main employing industries	Agriculture Mining Forestry	Public administration Education Health and community care
Median weekly household income	\$1,475	\$2,160
Median weekly rent	\$300	\$300

Step 3. Identify stakeholders: the authorising environment

Large projects:

- occur in multi-governance settings
- operate in a broader strategic landscape
- need backing from multiple stakeholders (proponents).
- Authorising environment as a framework for:
 1. Identifying high-influence/interest stakeholders (proponents).
 2. Mapping your project to the (proponents') bigger picture.

Act/State Agreement	Minister for	Agency
<i>Water and Irrigation Rights in Water Act 1936</i>	Water	Environmental Protection and Water Conservation
<i>Water for Country Areas Act 1951</i>		
<i>Provision of Water Act 2018</i>		
<i>Powers for Water Agencies Act 1984</i>		
<i>Environment Protection Act 1986</i>	Environment	
<i>Environmental Protection Regulations 1987</i>		
<i>Sites for Decontamination Act 2003</i>		
<i>Managing Land Act 1983</i>	Lands	Land Use, Development and Planning
<i>First Nations Culture and History Act 1969</i>	First Nations Peoples	History and Heritage

Step 4. Identify stakeholder priorities – WA example

Level	Source	Example / source
Local	Community Strategic Plans	Town of Victoria Park Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032
	Corporate Business Plan	Town of Victoria Park 2022-2027 Corporate Business Plan
	Informing strategies and programs	Homelessness Policy Implementation Plan
Regional	Regional Development Commission Strategic Plans	South West Development Commission Strategic Plan 2021-2023
State	WA Government Goals	WA Budget Papers Volume 2
	Agency Outcomes and Services	
	Whole-of-Government Strategies	Future State: Accelerating Diversify WA
	Agency Strategic Plans	Water and Environmental Regulation Strategic Plan 2022-2026
	Informing/portfolio strategies and plans	WA Climate Change Policy
Australian	Whole-of-Government Strategies	National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2021-2025
	Informing strategies and programs	Great Artesian Basin Strategic Management Plan

Step 5. Map project impacts to ministerial priorities

Minister for Water; First Nations People; Young People; Economic Development

High influence	Level of influence and interest derive from legislative powers under the:
High interest	<i>Water and Irrigation Rights Act 1914</i>
Actively engage	<i>Environment Protection Act 1986</i>

The construction and operation of the OFR Desalination Plant can create opportunities that align with, and directly contribute to, Government priorities and initiatives, including:

Water	First Nations People	Young People	Economic Development
OFR Regional Water Plan 2020-2030	First Nations Empowerment and Recognition Strategy 2022-2032	Our Future, Our Way – What young Auswestians Want	Many Industries, One Economy Strategy 2021-2031
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Security of supply for the current and future needs of all water users – Water use is balanced to meet environmental, social, cultural and economic values. – Recognise and protect Aboriginal and other heritage values associated with water. – Support high-value use by industry and agriculture with the least adverse impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Greater employment and education opportunities for First Nations peoples. – Opportunities and pathways for strong economic participation, development and independence. – Government procurement supports sustainable economic independence and intergenerational wealth. – Protecting and sustaining culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training opportunities matched to local jobs. – Secure jobs that make use of our skills. – Action to address climate change. – A voice in decisions that affect us. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clean energy transition. – Support nature based, regional and First Nations tourism. – Sustain growth in mining and green minerals. – Enable the growth of high value food and agriculture.
Compelling narrative / key messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reliable and sustainable water supply for clean energy industry / exports / transition and agricultural innovation / value add. – Position Auswestia as a global leader in agricultural innovation / green energy exports / nature-based experiences – Sustainable long term water supply for all users and water reliant sectors – Training and meaningful employment opportunities locally – Training, employment and economic opportunities for First Nations people and young people 		

Step 5(b). Map project impacts to agency priorities

Department of Environmental Protection, Water Conservation, Climate Change and Economic Development (DEWCCE)

High influence	Level of influence and interest derive from legislative powers under the:
High interest	<i>Water and Irrigation Rights Act 1914</i>
Actively engage	<i>Environment Protection Act 1986</i>

Construction and operation of the OFR Desalination Plant creates opportunities that align with, and directly contribute to, a range of State Government priorities and initiatives, including:

Government goal(s) and agency outcome(s)	DEWCCE Strategic Plan 2022-2026	State Water Management Plan 2019-2029
<i>Investing in the State's Future</i> – Growth and development are supported by the sustainable water resource management.	– A low-carbon State with a healthy environment and secure water resources for future generations. – Water resources and the environment are healthy and can support a strong economy and thriving communities.	– Water resources meet community, ecosystem and economic development needs. – Mitigate climate change, build environmental and community resilience.
<i>Safe, Strong and Fair Communities</i> – Providing safe and secure water to meet or exceed UN Sustainable Development Goal #6		– Environmental values are protected, and development is sustainable.
Compelling narrative / key messages	– Responsible, sustainable and efficient use of existing water source. – Reliable and sustainable water supply for economic growth and environmental needs. – Water security for the OFR.	

Step 5 (cont.). Centering your project in the big picture

Combined, government goals, agency outcomes and strategic objectives create a whole-of-government strategic framework.



Source: Marsden Jacob Associates

Step 6. Targeted enhancements aligned with stakeholder priorities

Impact (with project)	Marginalised group	Enhancement	Aligns with/ contributes to	Stakeholder
<p>Construction will create 700 jobs.</p> <p>Ongoing operation will create 900 jobs.</p> <p>85% of workers and goods will be sourced locally.</p>	First Nations people	<p>15% jobs across all areas of construction and operation</p> <p>20% procurement from Aboriginal businesses</p> <p>Co-chair environment and heritage working groups</p> <p>Development and leadership pathways</p>	First Nations Empowerment and Recognition Strategy	Minister Agency
	Young people	<p>10% jobs across all areas of construction and operation</p> <p>Apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships</p> <p>2 youth reps on environment working group</p> <p>Development and progression pathways</p>	Our Future, Our Way Strategy	Minister Agency
	People from CaLD backgrounds	<p>10% jobs across all areas of construction and operation</p> <p>10% procurement from CaLD-owned businesses</p> <p>Co-chair project inclusion reference group</p> <p>Development and leadership pathways</p>	New Home, My Future Strategy	Minister Agency
	Women	<p>50% of jobs across all areas of construction and operation</p> <p>Pay equity and superannuation during maternity leave</p> <p>Development and leadership pathways</p>	Empowered and Independent Strategy	Minister Agency
	People living with disability	<p>10% of jobs across all areas of construction and operation</p> <p>Facilities will comply with universal design principles</p> <p>Development and leadership pathways</p>	A Place for All Strategy	Minister Agency

Key messages

- **Equity-focused**
Actively design enhancements that distribute benefits equitably and have a lasting positive impact on the whole community.
- **Relevant**
Maximising the relevance of your project to key proponents can increase the likelihood of securing their backing.
- **Customisable**
The tools and tips can be applied to different types of projects (infrastructure, strategy, program development) across most sectors and industries.
- **Enduring**
Build a 'database' of proponent priorities and enhancement opportunities that can inform future projects.



The team

We have a highly experienced team located across Australia.

www.marsdenjacob.com.au/people



Dr Kate Riddell
Principal



Dr Joel Byrnes
Associate Director



Alex Marsden
Associate Director



Stuart Maclachlan
Principal



Rod Carr
Director

Thank you



Dr Kate Riddell

Principal

PhD (PoliSci & IntRel), BA (Hons.) (UWA)

+61 478 222 356

kriddell@marsdenjacob.com.au

<http://linkedin.com/in/kateriddell>



Dr Joel Byrnes

Associate Director

PhD (Economics), BEc (Hons) (UNE)

+61 409 842 496

jbyrnes@marsdenjacob.com.au

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/joel-byrnes-03957718/>



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