

**The Heart of Sustainability:
An encore for the arts and culture**

A Background Discussion Paper Prepared as a Submission to the
State Sustainability Strategy

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OVERVIEW

In response to the consultation paper, *Focus on the Future: Opportunities for Sustainability in Western Australia*, this paper seeks to answer in part the question "What is the role of the arts and culture in making the transition to sustainability?"ⁱⁱ The arts and cultural industries are already recognised by Government for the contribution they make to a vibrant community and that developing West Australian's creative talents in every field will enhance the State's position in the global knowledge economyⁱⁱⁱ. Western Australia's arts and cultural sector contributes significantly to the State's development: enlivening its environments, adding value to urban areas, acting as ambassadors overseas and recording state history through theatre, literature and visual images. However this paper suggests that the arts and culture go beyond utilitarian value. In deed in answer to the question what is to be sustained in the long term, the answer is the natural environment and the cultural environment. Thus it is necessary to develop processes where culture is seen to be a focus of how the fruits of economic development are directed. Synchronously, there is a need to explore how the arts and cultural industries can contribute to Western Australia's long-term sustainable development by enabling and furthering social, economic and environmental benefits through artistic and cultural processes and practice. Five strategies are suggested in response.

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INTRODUCTION

Creating a sustainable future requires innovation, risk taking and the communication of sustainable ideas and practices to individuals, firms, communities and governments. Sustainable development requires forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Such progress involves adapting, appropriate and new long-term cultural values and an integrative and participative approach to the way we live and do business. People and organisations interested in defining sustainability have to look at how to change their cultural assumptions, which have centered Western culture on the proliferation of money and material goods. This is a process that requires the creation of a vision of where people want to go and how they want life to be which will involve consensus and methods that are desired from mutually agreed-upon valuesⁱⁱⁱ.

HOW THE ARTS AND CULTURE ARE LINKED TO SUSTAINABILITY

Culture at the Heart of Sustainability

“...Community Arts practice is the medium for living, working, training, socialising and interacting with the environment.”

Community Arts Network WA (Inc), 2002. What We Do and Where We Are Going. p4.

A sustainable community is one in which its citizens have a voice and a shared vision for the future, equal participation in community and social life, economic capacity to enjoy a reasonable standard of living, and respect for cultural diversity and the environs in which they reside. Sustainable communities have livable neighbourhoods, a protected and celebrated heritage, and an interest in improving economic processes to maintain the natural balance of the environment.

In the backbone of every community and operating as the value system that is integral to everything we do and think about ourselves is culture. The shared values of a community shape its social culture and society, inform government policies and influence how the economy and environment is managed. Culture lies behind chosen relationships, housing preferences, the extent to which we value money or profit, and the geographical locations in which mobile people choose to live.

If we appreciate the import of culture to the individual and shared values of communities then it is possible for us to conceive how culture must lie at the heart of sustainability. This concept then provides us with an important

clue to dealing with the issues of adapting to and participating in the development of social, economic and environmental sustainability within communities and across the regions of Western Australia. This paper thus suggests that Government could engage in, or charge appropriately qualified organisations or institutions with developing cultural frameworks, actions and activities that could assist future communities achieve sustainability.

Culture is also seen to be a critical component of what sustainability seeks to achieve. In the long-term if sustainable development works, then what is sustained will be the natural environment and the cultural environment as buildings and industries will pass. Those that remain will be valued for their cultural heritage and used for whatever new economic processes are seen to be culturally important. Thus culture needs to be a focus of how sustainable development is seen to provide benefit to our future^{iv}.

The Arts and Culture in Every Day Life

It might be obvious, but it is important to distinguish at this point the difference between 'the arts and culture', and to clearly understand the difference between working with individual artists or cultural organisations to achieve sustainable outcomes, or identifying and working with cultural frameworks to achieve the same ends. Culture is a concept not an industry and the majority of us are not in the business of understanding culture and nor do we need to in most everyday situations. Most of us only become aware of this anthropological culture when there are ethnic or religious differences within communities, or we are on holiday or having to work in foreign countries and communities. Culture is not an outcome it is a way of life^v.

Arts and cultural organisations however, provide the visual, literal, theatrical and creative activities in which we can participate or appreciate. Such organisations and individuals are supported by Government to provide a more balanced community. Arts and cultural practitioners create scenarios, objects, and human and physical displays that convey the stories of our past, evaluate the present or envisage our future. They provide us with the creation or recreation of cultural and artistic practice using themes as abstract as emotions, or as personal as local identity and a sense of place, and as fanciful as dreams and aspirations for the future. Historical art works that survive or are still in repertoire convey the same stories and generate similar or new human responses from audiences today as they did when they were originally created. Contemporary artworks feature everyday objects used in new ways to surprise us, or project images and ideas of how society might be in the future that we had not thought of before.

It does not matter to us how a piece of art has emerged, what counts are the messages it was created to convey, how we interpret the work as individuals over time or whether we can participate in a meaningful way. Therefore the outcomes and activities of arts and cultural organisations or the creative skills of those in the business of producing arts and culture, such as our actors, writers, painters, designers and sculptors, could provide links into communities and regions to support a campaign for sustainable development.

Shelter from Globalisation and Economic Advantage

The World Bank has set the standard for global organisations to make culture a fundamental aspect of sustainable development. In the late '90's the bank recognised the assertion of individual identity as a consequence of globalisation, and that cultural identity is an essential part of empowering communities to take charge of their own destinies. For these reasons the World Bank developed a framework for action on culture and people-centred sustainable development which mainstreams culture into lending operations, and sector and country assistance strategies. As a result the bank has experienced an evolution in policy and lending criteria and actions that range from partnerships, networking, brokerage, capacity building and best practice with communities.

Whilst the cultural framework was drawn up by employees of the World Bank, it was informed and evaluated by the particular culture of the communities with whom the bank worked. For example, in the past the bank's support for culture was primarily focussed on restoration or conservation of heritage when providing development aid. Today the bank's lending criteria also address cultural and social dimensions such as developing cultural tourism to enable poor communities gain self-respect, take pride in their culture and create employment^{vi}.

Understanding why the World Bank sees culture and the arts as significant for sustainability will be a necessary challenge for Australia and for Western Australia, if we are to truly respond to the sustainability agenda. What this example illustrates is the import of recognising the values and culture of a community or region since economic investment will not always provide the intended advantage without.

Public Planning and Policy

“Public Planning, at all tiers of government, is the crucible in which the relationship between the state and community is refined and from which the most coherent expression of a society’s aspirations may emerge – if...the planning processes are...imbued with the values of the society those processes serve.”

Hawkes, J. 2001. *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture’s essential role in public planning.*

In Australia, the Victorian based Cultural Development Network (CDN) was established in 1999 to advocate the adoption of cultural frameworks in public planning and policy. CDN commissioned Hawkes’ book to present a case for the concept of culture to be integral to future government attempts to reconfigure ways of planning the future and evaluating the past.

Hawkes (2001, p. 32) argues that:

Once we accept culture to mean the expression and manifestation of what it means to be a human, it becomes obvious why a cultural perspective is the essential basis of all public planning. That is, the first step in a planning process has to be the engagement with the values and aspirations of those who will be affected by the plan; unless we are clear about what the *values* are that inform our vision (plan), then it’s unworthy of the name and probably unworkable in its realisation – or, at the very least, likely to generate results at odds with its original (often unvoiced) intentions.

Hawkes (2002, p. 1) sees the potential benefits of introducing the concept of culture into the frameworks of public affairs as including:

- Formal identification of community and regional values;
- Avoiding rhetoric and hearing and according influence to the voices of communities making it easier to integrate public expression into planning processes;
- Providing the intellectual tools to bring together a range of concepts and issues being developed in parallel: wellbeing, cohesion, capacity, engagement are all being used in current planning debates;
- Giving a name to the processes we use to discuss our futures, evaluate our pasts, and act in the present; and,
- Improved integration of public program management: because the concept of culture encompasses all stages of the public

cycle – policy development, planning, implementation, evaluation.

Whilst Hawkes takes a local government perspective, the argument just as easily applies to State, regional and federal governments and agencies in addressing whole-of-government fundamentals or specific policies.

In a recent interview regarding the preparation of this discussion paper, Hawkes^{vii} was asked what he believed were the next steps for governments desiring sustainable development. The response was a resounding emphasis on challenging governments to develop community understanding, capacity and engagement with sustainability through cultural action.

Cultural Action in the Community

It has now been established that sustainable development in each community, industry, and region will require changes to individual and social behaviour, which is a cultural process of changing values, and the ability of all stakeholders in a community to be heard. If representative consultation is conducted with the right mix of stakeholders, a series of clear signals for cultural action arises out of the identification of sustainability issues. This is because the built environment, community well being and understanding, or even the lack of international investment are all culturally based or have an impact on culture^{viii}.

Stakeholder responses to The City of Perth's recently commissioned study of the sustainability of Perth city, have described Perth as having a centre which is dead and barren and lacking in Aboriginal or obvious cultural presence seeming to have created "a major cultural and spiritual void". Respondents were also of the view that Perth has little to offer local and tourist markets who are looking for cosmopolitan social and cultural experiences, and needs to persuade people to live in the city to assist community development and increase cultural diversity. Community issues faced in Perth city cut across affordable housing for individuals and recreational organisations, caring for the homeless and financially disadvantaged, meeting the needs of youth, Aboriginals and people with mental disabilities, and ensuring that public spaces, venues and facilities can be enjoyed safely by locals and visitors alike^{ix}. Similar and uniquely different social and cultural issues exist in regional Western Australia, which can be further exacerbated by economic or environmental issues such as distance, extremes of weather and limited business investment. These are all issues that can be resolved or reduced in terms of their negative impacts through cultural action to create harmonious communities.

Cultural action is as much about recognising and supporting community cultural diversity and tradition as it is about using the methodologies of arts practice to enable a community to express itself^x. An example of the former type of cultural action is the cultural frameworks built into the World Bank's aid programs. The bank's lending programs now include the provision of finance for culture-based activities (basket weaving, pottery or internet craft marketing) if they can be justifiably proven to reduce poverty, stimulate enterprise development by the poor and achieve sustainable outcomes^{xi}. Whereas the stakeholder responses to the City of Perth study identify areas where cultural action by arts and cultural practitioners and organisations can address community needs and create a better future. Action that could be taken includes the employment of artists in urban design, government support and encouragement for cultural precincts, and the accessible and affordable activities that arts and cultural organisations provide communities.

In the process of developing a new strategic plan for Perth, The West Australian Planning Commission has released a series of Working Papers to identify issues that are relevant to the formulation and assessment of options for the development of the Perth Metropolitan Region^{xii}. Charles Landry, an international authority on the future of cities and the creative use of culture in urban revitalisation explores the potential Perth has to become a more creative city and sets out possible strategies to be considered^{xiii}. Landry's suggestions open many doors for advocating the arts and culture in sustainable development and include:

- **New Competitive Tools**

Image, lifestyle possibilities, cultural depth and subtlety, urban design, the perception of creative 'can-do' and go-ahead are just some of the new competitive tools – referred to as soft infrastructure – that can shape how value added can be generated from the material assets of urban development. This does not deny the importance of physical infrastructure since this supports the soft infrastructure of a city – that is a city's capacity to nurture and mobilise its talents and creative organisations.

- **New Language of Strategic Planning**

A new language and set of priorities has entered the strategic planning debate around the concepts of urban vitality, cultural richness, experience, involvement, fluidity and creativity. People experience cities: visitors participate in an all embracing sensory event, whether shopping, dining out, walking the streets or conducting business to business activities.

- **Benchmarking Beyond the Best**

In addition to applying lessons from elsewhere, Perth should set its own standard to seek a way forward. Linked to this are creative initiatives, which should be part of a conscious, consistent attempt to create an environment that makes creative action and follow-up innovations more likely. If there is a focus on downstream activities such as R&D, IT-enabled techniques and logistical services, the different skill set and personnel required, will, over time attract new kinds of people with different priorities who would demand a multi-layered urban experience and who can recognise and work with local cultures and can intermesh nature and the built infrastructure seamlessly.

- **New Skill Clusters**

Landry's (2002, p. 5) view is that:

The practice of urbanism, urban design and planning requires a cluster of skills bringing together a wide range of disciplines, expertise and experience in order to promote dynamic urban change taking into account how cities work as living entities as well as their physical characteristics. Some skills are to do with physical elements from landscaping to built form and others with an understanding of how people interact with place and culture. It needs to appreciate the way a cities social, cultural, economic and political forces configure in order to create solutions that work for everyone.

The Power of Innovation

"The only hope for sustainability is to change forms of consumption. To do so we must innovate... Innovation can enable companies to create wealth in ways that reflect the changing concerns of our world".

World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2002. The Business Case for Sustainable Development: Making a difference toward the Johannesburg Summit 2002 and beyond.

At the beginning of this century industry and small business is still being driven to making economic efficiency a priority in order to respond to local economies and globalisation. If efficiency involves: cost cutting, outsourcing, endless changes in company management, minimal corporate vision, reduced motivation or increased transience in employees, rigidity and inflexibility of company policies; then invariably it will lead to unforeseen costs and loss of corporate direction and history. These firms who have lost their creative edge, are exactly the firms that

could benefit from the power of innovation. These firms need to invest in creativity, vision, networking, cross industry partnerships and stimulating dialogue with stakeholders.

A firm's innovation strategy with the key objective of encouraging a culture of market-driven innovation can lead to cost competitive delivery of business solutions, creation of industry clusters, increased research and development, and greater cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders and the community. Corporations and firms have the freedom to innovate as long as the development of new processes and products is aligned with public expectations and have no adverse impacts on society, the environment and the economy^{xiv}.

There are those among the corporate sector who have developed an interest in the arts and creativity having recognised the rising importance of knowledge management and the need for innovation if business and industry are to achieve sustainable futures^{xv}. There is growing evidence in Australia of business arts partnerships being explored, informal networks spanning across two of three industry and government sectors, and a growing acceptance that human creativity is one resource essential to the innovation process (see Existing Action section).

In Western Australia early movers Woodside Energy Ltd are already in long term partnerships with creative and cultural organisations for the purpose of encouraging employees' personal development; learning about the environment and communities in which it operates; and, breaking down traditional economic models of business. For example, five years ago Woodside Energy formed a unique partnership with the WA Museum to document the marine biodiversity of the Dampier Archipelago. This multifaceted project enhanced Woodside's scientific knowledge of the area, enabled broad community involvement and took advantage of the creative input of Museum staff^{xvi}. Wesfarmers, a West Australian based corporate, is in a multifaceted partnership with Craftwest, the state centre for contemporary craft and design. One aspect of the partnership is Wesfarmer's financial support for an innovative project to encourage a collaborative West Australian fine wood and furniture industry creating regional opportunities and a new industry cluster. The *Designing Futures* project has been structured by Craftwest staff to involve two traditional industries in the development of a design culture catalysed by the involvement of fine wood artists, design houses and furniture manufacturers from Australia and overseas (see Existing Action section)^{xvii}. These are excellent examples of innovative sustainability being spurred on by the creative involvement of industry in the arts.

BARRIERS

Limited Involvement

Common barriers to industry involvement with the arts and cultural sector to achieve sustainability include rigid corporate or government policies, a reluctance to get involved by senior management, and competition for markets, customers and community sectors. Key decision-makers in public or private organisations might not understand the significance of culture in terms of sustainability, which then calls for education – but by whom? The omission of cultural responses to planning can be caused by governments overestimating the cultural value to society of the activities of arts and cultural organisations, and / or a lack of recognition of the various cultural values of the wider community.

The True Value of the Arts

Historically governments and industry have measured the performance of its communities and companies according to economic indicators and valuing the arts and cultural industries is often measured in terms of its total contribution to the economy when its biggest contribution is social. Economic evaluation of the arts and cultural outputs says nothing of the bridges that were built in communities for the socially excluded, the access given to the economically disadvantaged or regional communities, or how the arts can make us more aware of the importance of our environment. How can you measure the enhancement of a 'sense of place' or the sense of hope given to young people as they complete arts related training and begin to contribute to the community's sense of the future? Without the means to capture and evaluate these social and cultural measures it is not possible to realistically value the sustainable contributions or degrees of success made by arts and cultural industries and activities.

Need for Industry Development and New Policies

Arts and cultural policies throughout Australia have been artform focused with an emphasis on creation of new work, excellence, diversity of practice, geographic location and market development. Success is often measured according to the ticket-paying public. Such criteria do not allow the cultural industries to create sustainable works with a long touring life, can exclude artists and organisations from working with other industry

sectors and actually prevent diversity of practice which would lead to positive social outcomes accompanied by natural market development.

EXISTING ACTION

A handful of West Australian arts and cultural organisations have been aware of the economic, environmental and social benefits their work brings to communities and have already engaged in projects that promote and demonstrate the principles of sustainability. The following examples of cultural action by businesses, governments and communities to ensure present and future sustainable wellbeing are either independent initiatives of arts agencies or driven by government policy.

A Regional Focus

For some time, the Western Australian Museum (WAM) has been involved in the debate on achieving a transition to, and strategically planning for sustainability. The museum has an environmental, historical and knowledge resource; and museums in Albany, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie placing the museum in a strong position to have an ongoing role in the area of education in sustainability. WAM recently established *MuseumLink*, a topical and contemporary exhibition program, designed to respond to issues quickly^{xviii}. Exhibition materials can be mounted in many different sites and are compact and cost effective enough to tour city centre venues or regional sites. In February 2002, The Premier launched *Sustainability WA*, a travelling exhibition that tells the stories of West Australians who are working now to achieve a sustainable future. *Sustainability WA* will visit more than 30 regional centres throughout WA and is part of a wider museum project^{xix}.

Urban Rejuvenation and Public Art

Through the *Percentage for Art Scheme*, initiated by Government to improve urban environments in Western Australia, all public projects must allocate one per cent of the total estimated costs of landscape and architectural projects to commission public art. As a result, the East Perth Redevelopment Authority (EPRA) prescribed a public arts program as part of the mix to revitalise East Perth, which in 1992 was a neglected inner city area that used to be an industrial tip site, slums, and a hangout for fringe dwellers^{xx}. A team of local artists worked alongside EPRA's urban designers to create 25 public arts works expressing the spiritual, historical,

cultural and social elements within the community for permanent installation throughout the streets, parklands and waterways^{xxi}.

Sustainable Partnerships

In partnership with Wesfarmers and key government agencies, Craftwest has developed *Designing Futures*, a project which will take the form of a two-year period of intensive development within the West Australian timber industry. The project will encompass residencies and an industry forum with internationally renowned designers from fine wood to contemporary furniture; establishment of nationally accredited furniture manufacturing training packages; national and international touring exhibitions; and industry market research. In line with international trends in contemporary design theory, Craftswest's *Designing Futures* is targeted toward the development of an integrated design culture that will permeate all aspects of the West Australian fine wood and furniture industry, from the forest floor through to the sale and marketing of internationally competitive fine wood products. *Designing Futures* will effectively redefine the timber industry^{xxii}.

Community Cultural Planning

Community Arts Network WA Inc (CAN WA) is Western Australia's peak industry body for training and development in community culture, community arts and cultural planning and the only arts agency to have sustainability as an integral part of its core business. CAN WA uses community cultural development (CCD) processes which are participative, and draw out a community's inherent knowledge through creative means to acknowledge, preserve or enhance that community's culture. Cultural Planning has been described as a catalyst for social, environmental, and economic development, which can transform ideas and initiatives into real outcomes. It is about building vital, safe and prosperous communities and if used as a strategic planning tool, cultural planning creates partnerships between community, local government and industry^{xxiii}.

In 2002, CAN WA is at the mid-point of a 12 - Year Plan to develop a framework of cultural planning services that has delivered culturally based solutions for community issues. CAN WA's Cultural Planning Program partners local governments and communities to "...provide a process for discovery ...and a dialogue between council and community." CAN WA has been a Quality Endorsed Training Organisation since 1999 and provides networking and development opportunities through research, training and forums. CAN WA has now worked with 27 local governments who have embarked on cultural planning projects which have enabled

broad participation in the planning and implementation of community projects as well as provided skills for development opportunities^{xxiv}.

Cultural Tourism

In 1996, the Western Australian Tourism Commission and ArtsWA jointly initiated a *Cultural Tourism Action Plan* for establishing partnerships in the marketing of the State, and in developing new cultural products and experiences for tourists. The plan points to key recurring themes from the arts and tourism industries such as the common interest in, but relative inaccessibility of Aboriginal art and culture, or the perceived interest of tourists in links between art and the natural environment. The plan provides a starting point for a structured and systematic program to integrate the arts into tourism development, which could also apply to sustainable development^{xxv}.

The Art Gallery of Western Australia manages an aboriginal employment training program in collaboration with mining giant Rio Tinto. In Australia, Rio Tinto has set the goal of 12% of its work force being from indigenous backgrounds. Rio Tinto provides the Art Gallery of WA with the funds to employ an aboriginal trainee for three years with the intention of that person facing 'zero employment barriers' at the end of their apprenticeship. This scheme has been identified by the Department of Culture and the Arts as a providing the potential for accredited training of indigenous people creating career paths that provide a major contribution to how State history and culture is read^{xxvi}.

Indigenous Cultural Sustainability, Tourism and Education

One of Australia's most outstanding examples of cultural sustainability and tourism was established in 1987 by traditional custodian and law keeper Paddy Roe to share the cultural importance of the Western Australian landscape with non-Aboriginal people. The Lurujarri Dreaming Trail is a nine-day journey that follows the coast 80km north of Broome retracing the songcycle from Minyirr (Gantheame Point) to Minarriny (Coulomb Point). Groups of visitors are led by the Goolarbooloo people of Broome along a route that has been walked, foraged, hunted, fished and camped by Aboriginal people for at least 6000 years at the current sea level. Groups travel day and night on foot, stopping at traditional campsites, cooking on fires, fishing at some places and washing in the sea. The Goolarbooloo share Dreamtime stories, and teach visitors how to identify trees that offer food, medicine, fire wood to give heat, light or smoke, shade and protection, or that harbour bees, or tell where

water is. Timber for carving is sought out and visitors are taught how to make boomerang, water bowls and clap sticks^{xxvii}. Ironically, a Melbourne based academic institution (as opposed to a West Australian institution) identified the merits of this independent indigenous project and has regularly sent its students on the Trail since the mid 1990s. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (better known as RMIT) offers The Lurujarri Dreaming Trail as a unit in undergraduate social and applied science specialisations in the environment and planning^{xxviii}.

Building Bridges in Regional Western Australia

Country Arts WA provides a major resource for regional arts and cultural activity through a strong membership base and partnerships with regional councils and community arts groups to create strong and growing networks for arts and cultural activity throughout the state^{xxix}. One of these arts and cultural networks has worked steadily at building cohesion between the divided communities of Newman, Marble Bar, Port Headland and others in the Pilbara region. The Pilbara Regional Arts Consultative Committee (PRACC) came out of a workshop held by Country Arts WA where it was recognised that cultural action could strengthen the ties between these communities. PRACC has now been convened in most towns of the Pilbara and met with community representatives and organisations to seek responses on cultural action and collaboration that can assist the development of each town and / or be shared around the region.

Research and Development

The University of Western Australia has commenced a longitudinal study on interactive ways of mapping creativity in partnership with AWESOME Arts Australia. This research and development project will examine 20 metropolitan and 10 regional communities and their ability to enable young people to create art works which express their local identity. For the organisers of the festival this project will help examine the issue of 'child-friendly cities' and for the young artists and educators the project will help find meaningful ways in which individual and local differences can be authenticated and celebrated within a central festival event. Finished works will be exhibited locally and in Perth as part of the AWESOME festival.^{xxx}

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

The above examples of existing cultural action to achieve sustainable outcomes have either been driven by government policy or strategy (*Percentage for Art Scheme* and *Cultural Tourism Action Plan*) or an independent initiative or partnership project of a particular arts or cultural organisation. The extent to which the activities of this modest group of projects have involved the hearts and minds of individuals has not been measured yet we can guess at how few arts and cultural workers created the projects that numerous community members have come to benefit from.

The small scale of existing action together with the potential for widespread inclusion indicates the need for new government policies and strategies to drive future interest and growth in cultural action for sustainable development. However, certain considerations will be needed to encourage industry development within the arts and cultural sector or the success of cultural action will be limited.

The following suggested strategies are specifically industry wide in approach, limited in reliance on government funding, inclusive of business, community and government and overarching according to the principles of sustainability. In each case, it is assumed that artists and arts and cultural organisations are an integral part of the mix either by invitation from business or government or as a result of their own initiatives.

Strategy One: Creating Industry Clusters

“The facilitation of industry clusters clearly encourages organisations to see themselves as part of a new industry group. The (new) industry cluster has created a new sense of belonging for many organisations as they now see themselves as part of a new, dynamic group to create competitive advantage.”

Department of Industry, Science and Resources Emerging Industries Section, 2001. Environment Industry Cluster Development – the South Australian Experience.

The Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at the Harvard Business School defines clusters as:

...geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are present in a nation or

region. Clusters arise because they increase the productivity with which companies can compete. The development and upgrading of clusters is an important agenda for governments, companies, and other institutions. Cluster development initiatives are an important new direction in economic policy, building on earlier efforts in macroeconomic stabilisation, privatisation, market opening, and reducing the costs of doing business^{xxxii}.

It was Porter (1990, pp. 147 - 151) who identified industry clusters and their role in defining the competitive advantage of nations – one competitive industry helps to create another in an ongoing mutually reinforcing process. Achieving and sustaining advantage in an industry depends in part on how effectively the interactions work. Craftwest's *Designing Futures* project (see above) provides an excellent example of how an arts or cultural organisation can create successful links to other industries (fine wood, furniture) through common or associated buyers/ suppliers/ customers/ technologies or channels.

A strategy to create and encourage the development of industry clusters could be promoted by government to industry in the short-term, which would lead to long-term benefits for industry, the community and the arts in the long term. Collaborative cluster development is a structured process that engages industry leaders and active players to take responsibility for the future of their industry and to develop initiatives to accelerate growth. The industry cluster process increases the possibilities for success in developing sustainable industries through:

- cooperation and collaboration of existing companies to create critical mass of resources, competencies and knowledge to compete more effectively;
- engagement of infrastructure and service providers to add value and support the industry; and
- attraction of new companies with complimentary capabilities to increase product applications and market diversification^{xxxii}.

A strategy for Creating Industry Clusters encourages industry partnerships with arts and cultural organisations to catalyse new ideas and innovation in specific areas such as human resources, research and development or product development.

Government support could take the form of a statewide marketing and education campaign with appropriate government departments being responsible for assisting firms or sectors to conduct focus groups and

workshops in cluster development. There should be showcasing of success stories and recognition for excellence in sustainable development. Short-term quick response grants could be provided for professional development, research, and identification of prospective industry partners, or facilitation of a product development program. The cross industry nature of clusters would need to be matched by a joined up response from government to allow different industry sectors to work with each other.

Strategy Two: Sustainability Networks

“A successful entrepreneurial community depends on a local business culture that embraces and nurtures entrepreneurs. The key institutions in such a culture are broad and informal networks: the lone-wolf business mogul is a thing of the past.”
National Commission on Entrepreneurship, 2000. Building Companies, Building Communities: Entrepreneurs in the New Economy.

There is a widespread desire in the community, industry and government to be more committed in practice to the goals of sustainability. Yet the creative links to make it happen are not often being made. A strategy to implement informal and formal networks stemming from the desire to achieve sustainable development could result in significant success since it would be driven by:

- community needs for information and education
- business needs for new contacts and ideas, access to research and development, and
- government to assist implementation of the State Sustainability Strategy.

The strategy for Creating Industry Clusters above could provide a catalyst for developing task orientated or industry networks of active and interested members or participants who can enjoy the advantages of:

- Ongoing dialogue between business, government and the community;
- New forms of information dissemination (knowledge-based economies);
- Cross industry involvement as well as areas of specialty;
- Access to people (technical, creative, researchers); and,
- Access to seed or venture capital knowledge.

The need for solutions to new problems can also influence the adoption of the network approach, as was the case in rural areas of the US. The South was faced with an exodus of branch plants overseas, an uneducated workforce lacking the skills needed to attract higher technology growth industries and a lack of global competitiveness among its small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Two other factors that spurred an interest in rural networks was the history of agricultural cooperatives and the search for new ways to build sustainable economies in persistently poor areas such as the Mississippi Delta, Appalachia and Native American lands^{xxxiii}.

Rosenfield (2001) also takes the view that community based nonprofits are especially quick to adopt networks regarding them as unique opportunities to add market driven interventions, such as the desire to achieve housing in sustainable communities, to more typical supply driven interventions such as government funding programs.

Arts and cultural organisations have a wide and powerful stakeholder base whose reach often extends throughout the communities, governments and businesses that support them. These links may also have a long history and a culture of trust and mutual understanding, which can be used to initiate and sustain networks.

The arts and cultural industries also have distinctive attributes and qualities, which other industries might seek to be associated with to improve research and development activities or brand and image. Respected arts organisations can help raise awareness in a business partner's customers or clients that the firm is a good corporate citizen as well as provide interesting events at which to network^{xxxiv}.

Networks involving the arts and cultural industries could be established or better supported to:

- Assist regional centres access and share information on community sustainability through collaborative arts and cultural projects (see Country Arts WA above);
- Promote cultural tourism;
- Provide links between the research community and industry by developing innovative and participatory projects (see AWESOME Festival above); or
- Implement cultural planning to solve specific problems (see Community Arts Network WA above).

The government could provide officers from various departments to assist coordinate network activities or preferably fund industry organisations to employ network managers and support network infrastructure.

Strategy Three: Assessment of New Industries

Sustainability assessment is a new practice being adopted by governments that recognise the need to bring social as well as environmental factors into the economic development process. In Western Australia this is happening as part of the State Sustainability Strategy, the WACOSS Social Sustainability Indicators Project^{xxxv}, and voluntarily by corporations who can see the need for the Triple Bottom Line approach.

Any new development in a region should be seen to be contributing to the long-term improvement of community life in that region. This can mean ways of breaking old enmities, overcoming inequities, or building up positive elements of regional culture such as the promotion of aboriginal art and cultural tourism. There is a need for social criteria to be set that can provide guidance for companies in similar ways to the guidance provided on environmental factors.

Arts and cultural organisations should be proactive in these processes, perhaps encouraged by Regional Development Commissions. They could provide creative ideas on:

- How corporate social responsibility can give real support to the creative arts in regions;
- Prioritising community and cultural facilities, programs and policies;
- Pricing policies for community and cultural facilities;
- Developing Feasibility Studies; and,
- Community Evaluation of a Corporate Triple Bottom Line^{xxxvi}.

Strategy Four: Byzantium Under the Hills Hoist

In the process of developing a new sense of what sustainability can mean for the future, there is one certainty, sustainability means we must pursue the idea of bioregionalism, or developing a regional sense of place. The idea of cultural identity providing the basis for community is now clear and increasing awareness of the socio-cultural and ecological interactions that occur in each region will build the capacity of regional communities to create positive change^{xxxvii}.

Thus to facilitate a 'sense of place' requires much greater commitment to Australian arts and culture with that explicit goal – Byzantium is under the hills hoist^{xxxviii}.

It is suggested that a new government – community – industry partnership be established to enable local identity and a sense of belonging to be elaborated creatively. Guidelines for how to do this in regions and in the city need to be developed and a program outlined for potential funding. This program should be linked to the Regional Sustainability Strategies of the State Sustainability Strategy.

Strategy Five: Measuring Progress

Mention has been made of the lack of relevance currently favoured numeric indicators have when it comes to measuring the extent to which culture and artistic activity contribute to innovation, social cohesion, economic comfort and increased appreciation of the environment. The indicators suggested as follows could be measured according to whether one wants to measure the validity of social outcomes versus economic and environmental outcomes:

- Pace and type of innovation (extent of new work practice or product development);
- Employee satisfaction (learning and contributing);
- Extent to which research and development is applied (new products or processes);
- Industry engagement with arts and cultural organisations (innovative projects or extent of involvement); and,
- Community participation in arts practice.

CONCLUSION

Flannery's 2002 Australia Day address succinctly reminds us that the only thing that indigenous and non-indigenous Australians have in common is Australia – the land, its climate and creatures and plants. Our European heritage has left us poorly equipped to survive Australia's harsh environment and arrested our ability to develop a relationship with our indigenous neighbours who had inhabited and looked after this country for 10,000 years before a white man landed on Australian shores^{xxxix}. However, we can overcome these uneducated beginnings through sustainable development at a local, regional and national level.

Ingrained bad habits that have created chaos and confusion in our natural and cultural environments can be positively influenced through careful

management of community access and involvement with arts and cultural practice and cultural planning. The arts and culture are central to sustainability and need to be facilitated or else sustainability will remain in the head and never find its heart.

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