

Communicating the Australian Coast: Communities, Cultures and Coastcare

Author

Foxwell-Norton, Kerrie-Ann

Published

2007

Thesis Type

Thesis (PhD Doctorate)

School

School of Arts

DOI

[10.25904/1912/715](https://doi.org/10.25904/1912/715)

Rights statement

The author owns the copyright in this thesis, unless stated otherwise.

Downloaded from

<http://hdl.handle.net/10072/367816>

Griffith Research Online

<https://research-repository.griffith.edu.au>

**Communicating the Australian Coast:
Communities, Cultures and Coastcare**



Kerrie-Ann Margaret Foxwell - Norton

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)

**The following dissertation is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.**

**Faculty of Arts
Griffith University
Queensland Australia**

October 2006

Abstract

In Australia, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICM) is the policy framework adopted by government to manage the coastal zone. Amongst other principles, ICM contains an explicit mandate to include local communities in the management of the coastal zone. In Australia, the Coastcare program emerged in response to international acceptance of the need to involve local communities in the management of the coastal zone. This dissertation is a critical cultural investigation of the Coastcare program to discover how the program and the coastal zone generally, is understood and negotiated by three volunteer groups in SE Queensland. There is a paucity of data surrounding the actual experiences of Coastcare volunteers. This dissertation begins to fill this gap in our knowledge of local community involvement in coastal management.

My dissertation considers the culture of Coastcare and broadly, community participation initiatives. Coastcare participants, government policymakers, environmental scientists, etc bring to their encounter a specific 'way of seeing' the coast – a cultural framework – which guides their actions, ideas and priorities for the coastal zone. These cultural frameworks are established and maintained in the context of unequal relations of power and knowledge. The discourses of environmental science and economics – as evidenced in the chief ICM policy objective, Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) – are powerful knowledges in the realm of community participation policy. This arrangement has serious consequences for what governments and experts can expect to achieve via community participation programs.

In short, the quest for 'power-sharing' with communities and 'meaningful participation' is impeded by dominant scientific and economic cultures which act to marginalise and discredit the cultures of communities (and volunteers). Ironically enough, the lack of consideration of these deeper relations of power and knowledge means that the very groups (such as policymakers, environmental scientists, etc) who actively seek the participation of local communities, contribute disproportionately to the relative failure of community participation programs. At the very least, as those in a position of power, policymakers and associated experts do little to enhance communication with local communities. To this situation add confusion wrought by changes in the delivery of the Coastcare program and a lack of human and financial resources. From this perspective, the warm and fuzzy sentiment of Coastcare can be understood as the 'Coastcare of neglect'.

However, the emergence of community participation as 'legitimate' in environmental policymaking indicates a fissure in the traditional power relations between communities and experts. Indeed the entry of 'community participation policy' is relatively new territory for the environmental sciences. It is this fissure which I seek to explore and encourage via the application of a cultural studies framework which offers another 'way of seeing' community participation in coastal and marine management and thereby, offers avenues to improve relations between communities and experts.

My fieldwork reveals a fundamental mismatch between the cultural frameworks

which communities bring to the coast and those frameworks embodied and implemented by the Coastcare program. Upon closer examination, it is apparent that the Coastcare program (and community participation programs generally) are designed to introduce local 'lay' communities to environmental science knowledge. Local coastal cultures are relegated to the personal and private realm. An excellent example of this is the scientifically oriented 'eligible areas for funding' of the Coastcare program. The volunteers consulted for this project emphasized their motivation in terms of 'maintaining the natural beauty of the coast' and 'protecting a little bit of coast from the rampant development of the coastal zone'. Their motivations were largely the antithesis of ESD. They understood their actions as thwarting the negative impacts of coastal development – this occurred within a policy framework which accepted development as *fait d'accompli*.

Australia's nation of coastal dwellers may not know a lot about 'coastal ecologies' but they do know the coast in other ways. Community knowledge of the coast can be largely accounted for in the phrase, 'Australian beach culture'. Serious consideration of Australian beach culture in environmental policy is absent. The lack of attention to this central tenet of the Australian way of life is because, as a concept and in practice, beach culture lacks the 'seriousness' and objectivity of environmental science knowledge – it is about play, hedonism, holidays, spirituality, emotion and fun. The stories (including Indigenous cultural heritage) which emerge when Australians are asked about their 'beach cultural knowledge' – historical and contemporary experiences of the Australian coast – await meaningful consideration by those interested in communicating with Australian communities living on the coast. This 'cultural geography' is an avenue for policymakers to better communicate and engage with Australian communities in their quest to increase participation in, or motivate interest in community coastal management programs.

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed:

Date:

Acknowledgements

My work in this research project owes much to many.

My parents, Kevin and Clare Foxwell, instilled a sense of community and humanity deep in my psyche. In what may seem a slur on the duration of my candidature, both my parents died before I could share with them the final product (!). Miss you both every day.

Dr Patrick Hughes introduced me to thought which shook my world. This Phd started with you, PH, about 10 years ago and I am eternally grateful that I wandered into your classroom.

My wonderful network of family and friends have supported me throughout the process. I will never hear again, 'How long till you finish?' unless of course, they are referring to my champagne glass. I have made it this far because of you all. With every inch of me, thank you.

My supervisors Assoc Professor Michael Meadows and Dr Susan Forde have been a source of unwavering faith and confidence in my ability. If you are really lucky, your supervisors become much more than 'colleagues' – mine are my friends and have shouldered me through some very difficult life events. More importantly, they have made me laugh heartily reminding me to not let this aspect of my life get 'too serious'. Cheers to you both.

Finally to my partner, Richard, and my sons, Jak and Max. Thanks for bearing my Phd journey for the last six years. I love you very much and finally, I have no work plans this weekend. Let's go to the beach and have some fun.

Table of Contents

Preface	pg. 8
Chapter 1 Introduction	pg. 12
1.1. Community Participation and Coastcare	pg. 15
1.2 The Research Context	pg. 20
1.3 Research Significance	pg. 24
1.4 Project Outline	pg. 27
Chapter 2 Community Participation – A Theoretical Framework	pg. 30
2.1 The Big Picture – Culture and Coastal and Marine Management Policy	pg. 33
2.2 Big Pictures in Action – The Case of Ecologically Sustainable Development	pg. 35
2.3 Positivism And Interpretism: The Collapse Into Community	pg. 39
2.4 Environmental Discourse Analysis – Relations of Power and Knowledge	pg. 48
2.5 Governmentality and Community Coastal Policy – A Path to Pragmatics	pg. 53
2.6 Back to Big Pictures: A Note on Political Economy	pg. 62
2.7 Chapter Summary	pg. 66
Chapter 3 Methodology	pg. 69
3.1 Methodological Discussion	pg. 72
3.2 Methodology in Practice	pg. 78
3.3 Previous Methods Used To Assess Coastcare	pg. 81
3.4 Research Design	pg. 86
3.4.1 Survey Design	pg. 90
3.4.2 Focus Groups	pg. 92
3.4.3 In-depth interviews	pg. 93
3.4.4 Fieldwork Data Analysis	pg. 94
3.5 Limitations of the study	pg. 94
3.6 Chapter Summary	pg. 95
Chapter 4 Community Participation in Australian Coastal and Marine Management	pg. 97
4.1. Australian Coastal Policy	pg. 101
4.2 Integrated Coastal Management	pg. 105
4.2.1 ICM in Action — Prospects For Community	pg. 107
4.3 Policy Path to the Coastal Community	pg. 111
4.4 Coastcare and Neglect – A Critical Perspective	pg. 118

4.5	Political Economy of Coastal Policy — Consequences for 'Community'	pg. 129
4.6	Chapter Summary	pg. 131
Chapter 5 Coastcarers on Community Participation		pg. 134
5.1	Profile of a Coastcare Volunteer	pg. 137
5.2	The Coastcare Communities	pg. 139
5.3	Paths to Empowerment: Why We Are Involved	pg. 142
5.4	Chapter Summary	pg. 152
Chapter 6 Coastcare, Communities and Experts		pg. 156
6.1	Community Perceptions of Government	pg. 158
6.2	Local Government	pg. 162
6.3	Coastcare Administration	pg. 165
6.4	Community Opinion of Experts	pg. 171
6.5	Experts Opinion of Communities	pg. 178
6.6	Chapter Summary	pg. 184
Chapter 7 Australian Communities and Coastal Cultures		pg. 187
7.1	Culture and Nature – Community Participation in Context	pg. 190
7.2	Human Natures and Coastal Cultures	pg. 200
7.3	Australian Beach Culture	pg. 206
7.4	Coastcarers on Australian Beach Culture	pg. 219
7.5	Communicating the Coast – A Place For Australian Beach Culture	pg. 222
Chapter 8 Conclusions and Recommendations		pg. 226
8.1	Project Summary	pg. 230
8.2	Further Research	pg. 237
List of References		pg. 241
Appendices		
Appendix A – Random Community Telephone Survey from South Regional Marine Plan		pg. 254
Appendix B – Coastcare Survey		pg. 260
Appendix C – Focus Group Agenda		pg. 273
Appendix D – Interview Agenda		pg. 274

Preface

We must not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we began and know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot

My Coast



I am running along the beach between the seaside towns of Hastings Point and Cabarita Beach on the Tweed Coast of Far Northern NSW. To the right of me is the ocean which on a good day recedes far enough to provide a clear path of hardened sand – on a bad day my shoes get wet and I long for the bitumen. Hard sand and a tail wind make for the best runs. To the left of me lie the coastal dunes. I can see spinifex grasses, banksia and casuarinas. Stock standard coastal vegetation. I am sure there are some weeds on the dunes which need removing and I can see paths to the beach which await a community samaritan to thwart dune damage and erosion. Sometimes I pick up the plastic bags and

bait bags which litter the beach. I know there is a man south of here who receives government funding to save and protect injured pelicans that become entangled in discarded fishing line or who swallow plastic bags. I do see the occasional eagle, pelican and of course, seagulls are everpresent. When we have fish and chips at the beach, my sons delight in having the seagulls eat from their hand and we all marvel at the one who pulls off an extraordinary mid-air manouvre to catch a chip. I guess that we are not supposed to feed them but I have for as long as I can remember. The idea of leftover chips and seagulls seems almost natural to me.

In the distance, I can see Norries Headland which has a walkway to the bluff and is a mandatory drill on my morning runs. I have seen whales and dolphins there while I await the return of my oxygen reserves. I also meet and greet a variety of locals on my morning regime. My dog, Khia, is my trusty ice-breaker. She is like a canine introduction service, saying hello to all people and all dogs. It is quite usual for me to know the name of a dog before I know the name of the owner...strange that. My favourite locals are three older women — Val, Pat and Grace. In the last few months, these usually solitary walkers have formed an alliance which sees them tackle the seventy odd steps to the summit of Norries Headland and then descend to the 'cove' for a morning swim. I laughed this morning as I watched Val, a previously hesitant swimmer, trying to body bash some waves. Nearly 200 years of living between them and still so much vitality. Grace wishes for some of my energy while I wish to reach her age and begin my mornings immersed in the ocean. And the surfers? I see sets peeling off the headland and a carpark full of roofracks, 'Mrs Palmers' boardwax and a technicolour of boardshorts. I have surfing aspirations, yet to be fulfilled because

of Phd commitments. I see a lot of surfers running to the water from their cars as though sixty seconds will be the difference between the 'wave of the day'. I want to know why my partner will arise at 6.00am on a winter's morning with a smile on his face, just to check the surf. He is not similarly enthused about the same alarm which wakes him on a work day.

From the top of Norries, I can see the holiday unit complex under construction. There was a pub and a motel there about two years ago. The pub was a meeting place for locals and a tourist attraction. Quite simple really – a bistro meal, cold beer and the beach. Some might have argued that in Cabarita Beach/Bogangar, the pub was worthy of heritage listing. It's not there anymore and despite assurances, the local pub has not been returned by the developers and local businesses have complained about the loss of trade. Creatively named, 'The Beach', the development has been a controversial issue in the community leading to public rallies and also, contributing to the recent sacking of the entire Tweed Shire Council — you know, developer-funded election campaigns and the like. We do have a lot of untouched coastal dunes to the south and north of Norries. I like it this way but wonder about the future. Two coastal developments five minutes from here — 'Casuarina' and 'Salt' (known as 'As-salt' to the locals) — forecast that the uninterrupted view that I share with my fellow beachgoers may soon deteriorate to clichéd beachside architecture....big windows and balconies for people to have this extraordinary view while the rest of us stare back from the beach. All yours for \$2000 a week. I would much rather a caravan/camping ground. Is it not the egalitarian option? The beachside equalizer? I have camped all my life and love the smell, feel and experience of the beach. My parents took us to Bribie Island for well over a decade of my

childhood. Dad would make one trip for the caravan and one for the boat. Bribie Island has changed so much over the last 20 odd years! There was no seawall when my family and I went there – and the fishing was great. Imagine fresh whiting and bream for breakfast? Memories.

I look inland from the headland. On a clear day, I can see the summit of Wollumbin (Mt Warning) which is a sacred site for the traditional owners of this land – the Bundjalung people. I wonder if I am standing on a sacred site? And who is 'Norrie' anyway? I read in the local paper that there was once a midden reaching over 20ft high beside the path I run along to reach the bottom of Norries. Apparently, that is why an alternative name for my coastal community is Bogangar – meaning place of many pippies. A few years ago, some parents organized a petition to have the new local primary school named Cabarita Beach Primary rather than Bogangar Primary. They lost and I felt a small victory amid the shame and frustration that a petition of the like would be contemplated in the first place. A name taken from one of the oldest peoples on the planet is surely worthy of a primary school. I take a deep breath and turn towards the ocean. The sun is low on the horizon now throwing an absolutely awesome blend of yellows, oranges and pinks across the sky. The waves crash into the rocks below and for a moment I find some peace. I kneel down and give my dog a scratch on the head. At this time of the morning, I know the simple things about my coast. I love the sand in my togs and the salt on my skin. I love to play with my children in the waves and hear my partner recount another of his proud surfing moments – be it a little embellished. A beach day is a family day. I love the beach with or without company. It is my place in all time and space. I am happy here.

Chapter 1 Introduction

As the largest island on the planet with about 37,500 kilometres of coastline and the majority of the population living on the eastern seaboard, images and experiences of the coast here are unavoidable. The coast is a natural entity unto itself — from the rocky cliffs or foreshore to golden sands, seaweed and saltwater. That these elements are present on the beach is indisputable. Their presence is visible and tangible. What *is* disputable is how Australians and other coastal dwellers perceive or understand these things. I have described above what the Australian coastline means to me. The preface is intended to present you with some insight into the framework for understanding the coast which I bring to my research. It is a personal account of my Australian coastal experience: a brief confession which acknowledges that research does not exist in a vacuum and that it is always informed by a history and an endless line of subjectivities from which is borne the inspiration, passion and impetus to undertake a specific research project — well before PhD proposals and confirmations occur. Further, the preface removes the ‘artificial model of the research process’ (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium & Silverman, 2004: 9) and situates my research methodology within the context of my everyday life. This is surely appropriate for a qualitative project such as this where understandings, including those of the researcher, are at the methodological forefront. Mine are clearly on the table.

The preface is also intended to highlight the many understandings, experiences, and beliefs which Australians bring to the coast. The beliefs, understandings and ideas which I bring to the coast are shared by many others. They are not unique or ‘individual’ by any measure. These cognitive frameworks are formed by my interaction with others that creates a shared understanding of what the coast means in the context

of my everyday life. The fact that others might find my understandings foreign or even disapprove of them show that our understandings of the coast are a site of contest, or more accurately, contested meanings. In short, there are a multitude of coastal culture/s. 'Culture' itself is a contested term and discussions of its etymology and historical and political currency can be found elsewhere (Hall, 1980 is a good starting point) and more attention is given to the term in Chapter 2. At this early stage, suffice it to say that 'culture' refers to the 'ensemble of social processes by which meanings are produced, circulated and exchanged' (Thwaites, Davis & Mules, 1994: 1). Culture is about shared beliefs, meanings and understandings — often very 'ordinary' (Williams, 1958), everyday frameworks for understanding which inform both our thoughts about, and actions upon, the coast – culture is a framework within which to explore the similar and different understandings of the coastal environment. The application of the term is equally applicable to the meanings which surfers, holidaymakers, coastal residents, governments, policymakers, developers, etc bring to the coast. Culture is then 'threaded through all social practices and is the sum of their interrelationship' (Hall, 1980: 60). And he continues:

The analysis of 'culture' is then, 'the attempt to discover the nature of the organisation which is the complex of these relationships'. It begins with 'the discovery of patterns of a characteristic kind'. One will discover them, not in the art, production, trading, politics, the raising of families, treated as separate activities, but through 'studying a general organisation in a particular example'. Analytically, one must study 'the relationships between these patterns'. The purpose of the analysis is to grasp how the interactions between all these practices and patterns are lived and experienced as a whole, in any particular period. This is its 'structure of feeling' (Hall, 1980: 60)

'Structure of feeling' is a phrase coined by Raymond Williams which he defines as, 'the felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time' (1975: 47). William's structure of feeling 'represents an attempt to integrate the notion of experience into social and cultural analysis' (Harding and Pribram, 2004: 868). Structure of feeling is

used to describe the interrelations between the lived experience of individuals and social formations (Harding and Pribram, 2004: 870). The significance of the concept for cultural analysis is outlined below:

William's work broadens the concept of the sociocultural to include kinds of experience beyond the rational and empirical; it attempts to account for those felt aspects of lived existence that elude records, documents, and most historical and public accounts. His work outlines the possibilities for recapturing intellectually what has been experienced affectively (Harding and Pribram, 2004: 872).

In this study, the lived experience of community participants in coastal management is examined alongside official documents. This project is a cultural analysis which investigates the structure of feeling surrounding community participation in coastal management, interrogating both the officialdom of community participation policy and the lived experience of its volunteers. Like Williams', my analysis incorporates the lived experience of individuals encountering community participation in coastal management. Broadly, the interrelations between cultures and the coast is the central theme of this dissertation. More specifically, this research is about Australian culture/s and the coastal environment.

My central research question is: How do local communities understand their coastal environment, and how is this framework for understanding expressed in policy initiatives and processes, particularly those aimed at encouraging community participation? My research investigates government policy initiatives aimed at encouraging local community participation in coastal and marine management. The overall aim is to assess how community participation is governed in the policy context and to explore the implications (or possibilities) for local communities and policymakers. This central research question has demanded I pay attention to the different cultures which bring their meaning systems to the coast, particularly those manifested through local

community volunteers and policymakers. It is a messy task to begin to unravel and identify these. As is evident from my own coastal ‘admissions’, the ways in which people form meanings about the coast changes from one context to the next — and, of course, the meanings themselves are dynamic. The impact of different cultures on the ‘tangible’ coast is an additional variable. Jagtenberg and McKie (1997) use the terms ‘semiosphere’ and ‘biosphere’ to describe the complex communicative dialectic which exists between ‘culture’ and the ‘environment’.

When we act on the world in a planned way, we operate symbolically: We cut, dig, gouge, hack, build, enclose, and otherwise shape the environment in ways that reflect cultural norms, myths, archetypes and ideologies. Such action is intrinsic to being in the world; it is also communicative. Conversely all communication is biospheric in its action. From the molecular exchanges of sensory organs and the passage of electromagnetic fields to the vast industrially based infrastructures that support communication industries, communication and culture are material forces (Jagtenberg and McKie 1997: 2).

Their reference to ‘cultural norms, myths, archetypes and ideologies’, to communication and culture, and their notion of ‘material force’ are the essential ideas informing my investigation. In this dissertation, I apply these ideas to the arena of community participation in Australian coastal and marine management policy. This research focuses specifically upon the Coastcare program which was a principal Australian initiative to involve coastal communities in the management of the coastal zone.

1.1. Community Participation and Coastcare

Coastcare was a national organisation funded by all levels of government that promoted, organised, administered and advised community groups participating in local coastal management activities. Local community groups could apply to Coastcare for funding to complete projects such as dune revegetation, walkways and access to the beach, etc . Coastcare was a complementary program under the Coasts and Clean Seas Initiative funded by the National Heritage Trust. Coasts and Clean Seas in turn addressed major

coastal and marine management problems identified in the Resource Assessment Commission Coastal Zone Inquiry Final Report (1993) and the State of the Marine Environment Report (1995). My analysis of Coastcare considers the relations between governments and local action groups and how their different perceptions and mandates with regard to the coast interact in the policy (and practical) environment. During the course of this research, the Coastcare program was terminated and replaced by the Envirofund. The new scheme continues to embody the principles of the Coastcare program, particularly by enabling local community groups to apply for funds to participate in local coastal management projects. The change in administering community participation via the Coastcare program or the Envirofund has not impacted unduly upon this project and its conclusions. Primarily, my investigation is concerned with the experience of community volunteers involved in the Coastcare program. For my purposes, the fact that communities are eligible to apply for funding in the same areas (such as dune revegetation, walkways, etc) under both the former Coastcare program and the new Envirofund deems my fieldwork and results relevant. Further, the coastal policy of 'integration' has been continuous throughout the Coastcare and Envirofund programs. Worldwide, integrated coastal zone management (ICM) has been adopted to promote interaction between environmental, social and economic factors affecting the coastal zone in the pursuit of ecologically sustainable development. A key element in ICM is the participation of local communities in the management process. The purpose of community participation in ICM is three fold:

- To integrate community perspectives in policy debate and formulation, via inquiries, inclusive policy processes, deliberative research methods, representative membership in advisory committees, etc.
- To integrate community members into policy implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, via mechanisms such as community-based land management groups, honorary rangers or similar positions, co-management arrangements, etc

- To integrate local or specific cultural knowledge with formal scientific knowledge, such as through community-based monitoring groups, incorporation of indigenous ecological knowledge, etc. This may involve two-way flows of knowledge between community and formal knowledge systems or collaborative (participatory) research (Dovers, 2005: 11).

Both Coastcare and the Envirofund are examples of the Australian government embracing the principles of ICM and seeking the involvement of local communities.

For more than a decade, ‘community participation’ has been the sweetheart of coastal and marine management statements and policy. Internationally and domestically, the need to involve communities in deliberations over coastal management was encapsulated in the catchcry ‘Think Globally, Act Locally’ or the neologism, ‘glocalisation’. The underlying assumption is that if environmental issues hinge on human conflict, then the people directly involved must be included in the environmental management process. This is not intended as a one-way transfer of information from policymakers to the community. It means full cooperative involvement in the actual process of making decisions. Unfortunately, few public participation procedures achieve this type of engagement (Conacher, 2000: 261-262) and Coastcare is no exception. Community management of natural resources is not a new phenomenon. In Australia, there is some historical evidence of community participation in natural resource management prior to the establishment of programs like Coastcare and Landcare. Dovers (2000: 4) points to ‘community’ pasture improvement boards which date from 1912 and river improvement trusts from 1948 as examples. Of course, this does not account for unrecorded community efforts such as indigenous fire management (Dovers, 2000: 4). Critical assessment of environmental policy and in particular, community participation initiatives, has not been a feature of past or present initiatives. Policy-learning via an historical assessment of Australian environmental policy—the

environmental historian’— has not been an integral feature (Dovers, 2000: 4). A critical assessment of Coastcare, particularly from the perspective of its volunteers, has not been forthcoming from government and policymakers. The new Envirofund program has been implemented with very little feedback from either coastal volunteers or a broader evaluation (Clarke, 2004). While it is possible for policymakers to list the tangible outcomes of community participation initiatives via a collation of final reports — how many metres of fencing, number of trees planted, etc — the experience and perspectives of volunteers are absent. It is apparent that while policymakers are keen to involve communities in the management of the coastal zone, they have not been afforded adequate resources nor have they had the inclination to assess, in a qualitative sense, the outcomes of these projects from the perspective of the volunteers. This oversight deems the success or otherwise of community programs, such as Coastcare, largely unknown and historically confluent with past policy efforts. Further, where communities are the target of policy, efforts to engage and address their concerns with past and current policy initiatives would seem integral to the continued success and recruitment of more community volunteers. A meaningful assessment of Coastcare volunteers is a path to improving relations between coastal communities and policymakers. This project begins that process of assessing Coastcare and community participation policies from the perspective of its volunteers.

My approach in this study inverts the typical equation applied to ‘science’ and ‘communities’. Rather than assessing the outcomes of the Coastcare project using scientifically-based measurements (such as metres of fencing, etc.), outcomes of community efforts are assessed using ‘socially based measurements’. Put simply, rather than science being brought to society, ‘society’ is brought to science. To find the

right blend of the social and the scientific has been a key issue for policymakers and other experts in designing and implementing community participation initiatives. Both scientific and policy literature on community participation in coastal or natural resource management is concerned with the critical issue of ‘power sharing’ with communities. There is a recognised urgent need to discuss what this might mean in terms of coastal management theory and practice (Hildebrand, 1997: 9). Typically, ‘power-sharing’ in coastal and marine management literature is presented as a variant of the pyramid or spectrum model which shows community participation ranging from ‘total community control’ to ‘total government control’ (Dovers, 2000: 6). This type of modelling serves to clear the muddied waters of ‘community participation’ and has obvious appeal to both environmental scientists and policymakers. These models give clear choices and representations of the shape of these ‘new relationships between government, scientists and community’ and are thus more amenable to assessment and implementation. However, communities are not so neatly organised/described so that such categories present an inadequate account of the complexity of community relations (Dovers, 2000). The introduction of ‘culture’ provides another framework for understanding and engaging coastal communities which is able to account for the diversity and complexity of relations between policymakers, experts and coastal communities. One of the fundamental goals of this dissertation is to develop opportunities to enhance the local efforts of communities in ensuring the security of their local coastal environment and opening discursive avenues for governments and communities to better communicate and deliberate over coastal issues.

1.2 The Research Context

All science should be scholarly, but not all scholarship can be rigorously scientific...The *terra incognita* of the periphery contain fertile ground awaiting cultivation with the tools and in the spirit of the humanities
John Kirtland Wright (1881—1969)

In part, this thesis builds on my Honours dissertation which analysed telecommunications discourses circulating in the public domain. In this previous work, I investigated the dominance of specialist economic and technological discourses such as ‘digitisation’ and ‘deregulation’ emanating from industry and government. I concluded that the presence of these powerful discourses excluded the general public from participation in debates surrounding proposed telecommunications reforms. The issues and arguments offered by the general public (representative consumer groups, telecommunications unions, etc.) were marginalised or dismissed by decisions which tended to prioritise the economic and technical objectives of industry and government. Broadly, my study considered the relations between governments and the public with regard to telecommunications policy. Similarly, this dissertation considers the relations between local communities and government but with regard to coastal and marine management policies. This dissertation is also similar in that the dominance of expert discourses such as those emanating from environmental science is a key to understanding relations between lay coastal communities and expert policymakers. However, rather than offering another unveiling of the problems with (natural) scientific expertise and an exposition of tragic flaws, I have sought a more productive and potentially integrative approach. Rather than seeking to undermine the authority of science, I have sought connections and possibilities between communities and coastal scientific experts in order to explore ‘the terra incognita’ to which geographer John

Kirtland Wright refers to in this section's opening quote. Foucault (1980a: 1) sought similar possibilities:

I cannot help think of a critique that would not try to judge, but, rather would try to allow a work, a book, a sentence, an idea to exist. It would start fires, watch the grass grow, listen to the wind and seize spray in flight so as to scatter it further. Such a critique would create not a profusion of judgements, but signs of existence, it would call them, raise them from their sleep. And if it sometimes invented these signs? So much the better! Criticism by condemnation sends me to sleep. I would like to see a critique that sparks the imagination. It would not reign supreme, or be robed in red: it would bear the lightning of possible storms

In this thesis, I have wherever possible refrained from 'condemnation', seeing this as unproductive to the task of opening avenues to enable better communication between communities and coastal experts. Wherever possible, I have adopted an 'integrative' approach which supports current trends in coastal and marine management policy (Dovers, 2005). Part of this process has been an acknowledgement, acceptance and respect for the different disciplines and their 'epistemological commitments' (Shoenberger 2001) alongside a critical look at the limitations and promises of my own disciplinary confines in this particular research context.

Dovers (2005: 9) recently noted that interdisciplinary research involves a fairly discouraging list of risks including 'failure, difficulty in publishing, and danger of not prospering in institutions defined by disciplines'. For early career academics and postgraduates, this is especially the case—and especially daunting. The theoretical and methodological approach to community participation in coastal and marine management that I have established here engages with several disciplines. With a background in communication and cultural studies, I began with an interest in the relations between culture and nature and found a temporary anchor in the emerging, interdisciplinary field of ecocultural studies. This expands cultural studies' traditional concern with questions

of class, race, gender, identity and difference to examine relations of culture and power exercised by humans over their 'extra-human' environments. Ecocultural studies adopts an approach to the nature/culture dualism which asserts 'culture as 'the battleground' or terrain within which different ideas about nature and the environment, human-environment relations, and environmental politics and action, are articulated and contested' (Ivakhiv, 2000: 2). Ecocultural studies are highly interdisciplinary, drawing upon the social sciences, the natural sciences and the humanities to critically assess and articulate the relations between culture and environment. In particular, the insights of cultural geography have been integral to my understanding relations between Australian cultures and the coast. Cultural geography investigates the relations between culture and nature attempting to 'articulate spaces that are simultaneously discursive, material and cultural' (Instone, 2004: 132). The popularity and omnipresence of the Australian coast in Australian culture highlights the fundamental premise of cultural geography — that nature and culture are involved in a co-construction of space. Nature in this sense, is not something 'out there' but something we know and understand through the lens of culture. Alongside a broad interest in cultures and nature, I am also committed to a pragmatic project which has at least some currency in the 'real world' of policy and in people's everyday lives.

The need to pursue pragmatics was a hot topic in Australian cultural studies during the late 1980's and early 1990's. During this period, some Australian academics turned to issues of 'policy' and 'pragmatics' arguing that cultural studies had become too 'heady' in its revolutionary quest (Bennett, 1998: 70). The argument was that the most fruitful direction for (Australian) cultural studies research would be found in the links between cultural criticism and cultural policy (Cunningham, 1992). Further, cultural policy studies

reflected a fear that the ‘grandstanding’ cultural criticism characteristic of the cultural studies tradition was becoming increasingly irrelevant to educational, political and social processes in Australia (O’Regan, 1992 197). Predictably, the assertion that cultural studies should anchor itself in policy and reject ‘generalised forms of social critique’ was met with some opposition (see O’Regan 1992, 2001; Bennett 1989, 1998). The literature and research associated with cultural policy studies, especially its insistence on ‘pragmatics’, has performed a key role in the theoretical framework developed here. Central to cultural policy studies is a recognition of the ‘increasing governmentalisation of social relations as a necessary and inescapable horizon of contemporary political life’ (Bennett, 1998: 61) as found in the work of Michel Foucault. In particular, Foucault’s notion of governmentality has provided an avenue to look at the institutional ‘politics of detail’ and ‘techniques’ via which individuals are inducted into programs of self-management and thus voluntarily act in ways that enable the realisation of governmental objectives (Bennett, 1998: 75). These ‘techniques’ focus upon the historical development of governing (in this instance) coastal and marine management. The coast, and certainly community participation in its management, is a relatively recent addition to environmental policy and the overall governmentality of the coastline. Foucault’s idea draws our attention to the ‘political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth’ and thus enables a critical analysis of the emergence and existence of community participation initiatives (Foucault, 1980: 133). Key questions arise when community participation in coastal and marine management is framed by Foucault’s insights: Why is community participation a governmental objective in environmental policy *now*? From where did the idea emerge and why is it popular? What techniques are employed to ensure the participation of communities and how do these communities

respond? Are the techniques employed to govern coastal communities effective in inciting their participation and interest?

In part, my research is similar to the project undertaken by Hawkins (1993) to enlist the insights of cultural policy studies (and associated Foucauldian analysis) to examine the Australian Community Arts Program. Like Hawkins, my research involves constructing a history of the practices, relations and discourses which have constructed Coastcare and the concept of ‘community participation in coastal and marine management’ within the realm of government and importantly, how local communities have responded or interacted with policy initiatives. My research facilitates practical and positive intervention in coastal management policy developing a cultural policy studies tradition of encouraging a more practical and productive relationship with policymakers. In 2001, O’Regan suggested that the future of cultural policy was in engaging with other ‘disciplines’ which took analyses beyond traditional cultural planning sites such as film, art, television and other popular cultural forms. Following O’Regan (2001), my dissertation seeks an engagement between broadly, cultural studies, cultural policy studies and environmental policy. The key question in my research is to determine what insights from critical cultural analysis can be applied to an investigation of community participation in the coastal and marine management policy process. So in a broad sense, I am arguing for a stronger presence of culture in coastal and marine management policy and environmental policy regimes.

1.3 Research Significance

In terms of Australian coastal and marine management, this project makes an important contribution to research on community participation initiatives — of which there is very

little at present. Metres of fencing, number of trees planted, etc are important quantitative markers of the programs' successes and feature prominently in government reporting. However, these statistics fail to grasp how the programs are experienced by volunteers in the context of their everyday lives. Hence, I have adopted a qualitative methodology in my encounter with Coastcare groups in order to include their experiences as integral to the research project. While I am disappointed in my ability to offer anything in return to my participants (in a genuine show of participatory and integrative research), through this investigation, I have afforded these communities and their ideas a powerful position. A qualitative engagement with these communities is the most significant contribution of this research to our knowledge of community participation initiatives. It is an attempt to validate these local knowledges and understandings via a research project which positions everyday Australians as offering something significant and relatively unexplored to the Australian environmental policy process. Australian coastal cultures represent a significant avenue for policymakers to explore, or at least understand, current and future policy decisions in the coastal zone.

Further, Australia has been experiencing a rapid expansion in coastal urban development with this 'sea change' placing increasing pressure on the coastal environment (ABS, 2004). The area in which I live, the Tweed Coast, is a case in point. From 1981 to the present, the population has more than doubled and continues to grow (Tweed Shire Council, 2006) with accompanied increases in housing, infrastructure, etc. Alongside the increase in permanent residents has been the development of tourist facilities. Developers — the Ray Group, Consolidated Properties, Multiplex Living, Resort Corp and APH Properties — have committed nearly \$4 billion to the region which has seen an extra 1200 resort-style rooms for tourists. By 2008, there will be at least

another 1000 rooms for tourists (Casuarina Beach, 2006). The change and stress on the coastal environment is difficult to fathom and is certainly not unique to the Tweed. The State of the Environment Report (2001) notes some progress in the ability of governments to administer and manage the coastal zone but provides an overall unfavourable report on the state of the coastal zone, noting the loss of habitat due to human settlement and pollutants as significant pressures. The report expresses 'uncertainty' about the expansion of the coastal population, subsequent increase in the use of coastal resources, and 'the ability of coastal ecosystems to absorb rising levels of sediment and pollution from land uses in the coastal zone'. In the Australian context, the degradation of the coastal zone indicates that we could be 'loving the coast to death'. At the very least, Australian governments need to raise awareness of coastal zone issues in the public sphere or more specifically within community public spheres (Meadows, Forde & Foxwell, 2002). Community participation initiatives have the potential to raise such an awareness and concern through incorporating local knowledges and experiences of the Australian coast into the policy process. This research offers a way for policymakers to communicate more effectively with local coastal communities and thus make a broader contribution to protecting and preserving the beauty and the idea of the Australian coastline.

From a global perspective, environmental issues, as Beck (1995 in Fischer, 2001: 56-57) concludes, have transformed due to the sheer size of the global technological hazards which science is producing (nuclear power plants, chemical products, etc). There is now the critical situation where these technologies are operational before their long-term risks and consequences are fully understood. In this situation, experiments with new technologies leave the relative safety of the traditional laboratory – with society itself and

the environment becoming the test bed. As the potential social and health impacts are revealed to the public, the public itself becomes increasingly sceptical and suspicious of the science game. Beck's (1995: 109) solution to this is the development of a more participatory or 'ecological' democracy where 'debate and decision making are opened about whether we want a life under the conditions that are being presented to us even by those technologies that are growing steadily safer'. Although he focuses upon 'mega-hazards', the crisis that occurs through science's legitimation processes is as applicable to local or smaller scale environmental risks. Generally, there is an increasing recognition that 'scientists are no more competent than ordinary citizens in judging many issues involving the ethical outcomes of scientific decisions' (Cowley & Walker, 1999: 130). Thus, this project contributes to and supports the increasing involvement of citizens in deliberation over their environment and its future.

1.4 Project Outline

The phrase, 'community participation in coastal and marine management' is a recurring one throughout this dissertation and it will be variously referred to as 'local involvement', 'community participation', 'community involvement', and so on. During the course of this study I have employed a range of methodologies – discourse analysis, interviews, surveys and focus groups. In Chapter 3, I discuss my methodology in more detail from both a philosophical and practical perspective. This chapter explores some of the key methodological issues which have arisen, particularly in examining my own assumptions about the nature of the research process. It is a salutary experience to contrast the frequently polarized methods of quantitative and qualitative research only to conclude that regardless of the method, our knowledge is destined to be incomplete. Chapter 2

details the theoretical framework which I apply to community participation and in particular Foucault's idea of governmentalities. As I have mentioned, in the search for pragmatic responses to the research question, I have developed a theory and practice (ie. a methodology) which canvasses possibilities, rather than criticism which only condemns or worse, incites an unlikely revolution in environmental policy. By far the most useful aspect of Foucault's notion of governmentalities is the way in which it draws attention to the detail — to the cracks or discontinuities in knowledges and practices — which can begin to signal the beginning of change. This is precisely where community participation in coastal management lies – at the forefront of a shift in how governments and scientists engage and pursue the participation of everyday people.

Chapter 4 examines the emergence of community participation initiatives, providing a critical insight into how the Coastcare program was established and its potential to deliver a meaningful engagement with coastal communities. In this chapter, I discuss power relations between communities and policymakers, offering criticisms and suggestions about 'power-sharing' as it exists in current coastal management policy processes. Chapters 5 and 6 deal with the data I collected from government personnel and the Coastcare groups I investigated. In particular, Chapter 5 reveals how community volunteers understand and define their experience of the Coastcare program as well as their motivations for being involved. Their motivations are quite unrelated to scientific objectives being rather more of an emotional response to a beloved space and place. Chapter 6 focuses on the relationship between coastal 'experts' and 'lay' communities. In this, I take a closer look at how community volunteers negotiate their relations with the 'experts' and will be of particular interest to policymakers seeking improved communications with local coastal communities. Finally, Chapter 7 turns to a

deeper cultural analysis of what the coast means in the context of these volunteers' lives, and broadens this with reference to historical and contemporary literature on the Australian coast. There is much in this chapter for policymakers and scientists to consider in terms of their relations with Australians who, after all, are primarily a nation of coastal dwellers and, I suggest, know much more about the coast than existing policy efforts would suggest.

Chapter 2 Community Participation – A Theoretical Framework

From an anthropological and cultural perspective, the ecological crisis is not merely a scientific fact, but it is more importantly a cultural fact: it is conceived, imagined, discussed and acted upon through the diverse cultural expressions of humanity. It is ‘made sense of’ culturally, and our responses to the crisis are enabled as well as constrained by our imagination and interpretation of the crisis (Ivakhiv, 1997: 1).

This chapter provides the theoretical framework which underpins my analysis and critique of community participation in coastal and marine management. I have found the dominant expression of economic and ecological discourses in coastal and marine management has significant implications for the ‘brand’ of community participation sought by successive Australian governments. Further, the overwhelming (and obvious) presence of ecological and economic discourses in coastal and marine management has far-reaching implications for what international organisations such as the United Nations (UN), Australian governments and local communities can expect to achieve from their contemporary enthusiasm for community participation initiatives. It is clear that current initiatives are firmly grounded in a positivist framework which deems ‘communities’ as primarily economic stakeholders. Other ‘stakeholders’ in the local community, such as the surfing community, homeowners/retirees, are marginalised in processes aiming to secure community participation by the repetition of the significance – if not moral superiority – of knowledges premised on notions of ‘economic development’ and ‘scientific sustainability’. The fundamental differences in the legitimacy and power of technical/expert knowledge and local members of the community tends to give shape to an ‘unequal communicative relationship’, or what Habermas (1970) has described as ‘distorted communication’ (Fischer, 2000: 18). This situation leads to a policy arena, despite the rhetoric, starved of meaningful community

participation. In this dissertation, I assert the significance of these local knowledges and urge Australian policymakers to consider ‘Australian beach culture’ (see Chapter 7) as a critical factor in the formation of community participation in coastal and marine management.

Nevertheless, the goal of community participation in coastal and marine management has, to some extent at least, forced a loose union between ecological and economic discourses and the more humanistic social sciences. Consideration of explicitly social theory concepts such as ‘power’ or ‘community’, and value-laden concepts such as ‘meaningful community participation’, ‘co-management’, ‘devolution of responsibilities’ and ‘empowerment’, are not familiar territory for ecological science. These ‘soft’ concepts, which escape the techniques of objectivity, measurability and predictability, are recent additions to the discursive practice of environmental science and environmental economics. These new relations between communities and experts at the coastal coalface have the potential to reconfigure, or even transform, what has previously been accepted practice in environmental science. This process shows some signs of emerging at the margins of the community participation and coastal and marine management process. However, acknowledging the beginnings of a fissure in environmental knowledge should not mean the abandonment of a broader cultural critique of science and its methods as they apply to community participation in this context. While maintaining this broader critique, it is still possible to describe and encourage new collaborations between schools of thought which both individually and better, together, have much to offer community participation initiatives.

As an approach, cultural studies offers community participation involvement in coastal management a deeper cultural critique of the theory, knowledge and practices which procure its existence as a 'normal' phenomenon. Furthermore, a critical analysis of the cultural forms and activities which occur around coastal and marine management is placed '...in the context of the relations of power which condition their production, circulation, deployment and, of course, effects' (Bennett, 1998: 60). The dominance of ecological and economic discourses in the context of coastal and marine management is an instance where cultural studies can '...develop ways of theorising relations of culture and power that will prove capable of being utilised by relevant social agents to bring about changes within the operation of those relations of culture and power' (Bennett, 1998: 52). An indispensable methodological tool to an exposition of the relations of culture and power is the concept of 'discourses'. Discourse is defined as

...culturally or socially produced groups of ideas containing texts (which contain signs and codes) and representations (which describes power in relation to Others). As a way of thinking, a discourse often represents a structure of knowledge and power. A discursive analysis exposes these structures and locates the discourse within wider historical, cultural and social relations (Sardar & Van Loon, 1999: 14).

The discourses surrounding coastal and marine management express the powerful coalition of scientific ecology and economics knowledges. While analysis of these characteristic discourses dominate the broader coastal policy arena, this chapter provides avenues for adoption of a parallel framework for understanding the local instances of culture and power as they exist between 'communities' and 'policy'. These relations of culture and power at the local level can help researchers gain a better understanding of individual and community responses to coastal and marine management initiatives – or in Raymond Williams (1975) terms, an insight into the 'structure of feeling' surrounding community participation.

2.1 The Big Picture – Culture and Coastal and Marine Management Policy

The relevance of ‘culture’ to coastal and marine management policy is not immediately apparent and requires some clarification. Traditionally, culture has been the antithesis of scientific investigations into nature and thus a relatively silent factor in deliberations over coastal management. Andrew Ross (1992: 12) explains the quandary which arises when we perceive science as culture:

Culture, after all, is supposed to be that which is unscientific...Culture is supposed to be about the molten liquidity of experience, whereas science aspires to the solid dimensionality of fact. But the empirical naming and knowing of the physical world is nothing if not a culturally expressive act with fully political meanings. Our current ecological crisis demonstrates that the consequences of such artificial definitions of knowledge about the world have been quite deadly, and this is why the crisis of science today is also a crisis of our culture – guided as it has been, by assumptions about its unlimited access to resources, both rational and natural.

Rumbling beneath my argument is the deeper philosophical debate about the division (if any) between nature and culture (Soper 1995; Eagleton 2000), which I deal with in Chapter 7. For now, the idea that we encounter nature using existing cultural frameworks (such as ecology and economics), is the fundamental idea which underpins my cultural analysis of community participation in coastal and marine management. Expanding on my earlier discussion, I prefer to adopt an anthropological definition of culture as a ‘whole way of life’ (Williams 1975), characteristic of certain people or groups of people. To engage with culture using this definition is to elevate specific ‘ways of seeing’ which express the shared ideas, beliefs, and significantly, practices of individuals, groups or communities. Hall & Jefferson (1976: 10-11) define culture as

...the peculiar and distinctive ‘way of life’ ...the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of belief, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life...A culture includes the ‘maps of meaning’ which make things intelligible to its members....

Thus, culture is ‘thought’ or the ‘maps of meaning’ which make phenomena intelligible and meaningful. Significantly, culture also guides our actions through which we produce tangible cultural expressions of intangible thoughts and meanings. It is not the case that we are ever wholly situated in only one culture – each subject/individual is a member of numerous cultures which give meaning and direction to that particular group and the phenomena they experience. A cultural analysis of coastal and marine management and its approach to community participation draws our attention to the different ways in which various groups and individuals understand or see the coast. These perceptions of the coast are cultural in that they communicate ‘maps of meaning’ surrounding the coastal environment. Consequently, we are able to delineate different cultural approaches to the coast and more specifically, coastal and marine management processes. For example, in the field of coastal and marine management policy, it is evident that communities participating in the Coastcare program have a different (though not mutually exclusive) cultural frameworks than (for instance) a developer submitting an application to local council for a coastal resort. In this case, individuals and groups involved have different agendas and indeed, different perceptions. These different cultures are expressed in the actions taken in the coastal environment. In short, one group is planting casuarinas and banksias, the other is pulling them down.

Looking at coastal and marine management from this perspective demands that relationships between cultures is also considered in terms of which cultures dominate and which cultures are marginalised and with what consequences. This is a key advantage of a cultural studies approach – to analyse the totality of social formations while not neglecting the lived experience of individuals. Such a cultural approach to acknowledges that ‘we can never access the world except via polluted systems of

representation' (Grossberg, 1992: 17). It is the interpretation of these systems of representation which gives my dissertation its critical and analytical edge. It is not sufficient to merely describe cultures involved in the management of our coastal environments without first contextualising the processes that create them within a broader sphere of power relations. The relations of culture and power between governments and local communities, who bring differing 'maps of meaning' to bear on the coastal environment, is the key theme of my argument.

2.2 Big Pictures in Action – The Case of Ecologically Sustainable Development

As a traditional scientific enterprise, it is not surprising that the vast majority of approaches to coastal and marine management stem from ecology. And perhaps not so obvious is the influence of economics in the coastal policy regime. Governments, policy-making bodies and scientists are in a constant search to find a way to measure coastal degradation, or to measure the cost of development, or to simply measure the success of government policy initiatives or management techniques. Multiple regression analysis, quantitative survey research, input-output studies, cost-benefit analysis, mathematical simulation models and systems analyse are quantitative research methods typical of, and dominating the coastal and marine management policy arena (Fischer, 2000: 70). The example par excellence of the dominance of ecology and economics in coastal policy specifically and environmental policy generally, is the rise in global popularity of the concept of ecologically sustainable development (ESD). ESD is intimately linked to community participation initiatives. The internationally-adopted coastal policy of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) is the action policy plan for ESD. Adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, ICM underpins Australian coastal and marine policy and has, as a key principle, the inclusion of traditional, cultural and historical

perspectives and inputs from key stakeholders at the community level (Clarke, 2002a) recognising that much of the innovation taking place in coastal management is happening at the local level (Hildreband, 1997: 1). ESD was an element at the UN-Sponsored Stockholm Earth Summit in 1972 and came closer to a definition with publication of the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN, UNEP, WWF, 1980). It was a central feature of the Brundtland Report *Our Common Future* (WCED 1987) and was enthusiastically embraced at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and in the publication of *Agenda 21* (1992). For many, the Rio Earth Summit marked the long-awaited acceptance of the global dimension of our ecological crisis and a willingness by national governments to confront changes and challenges (Hajer & Fischer, 1995: 1). The Brundtland Report (1987: 54) defines sustainable development as:

...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

The concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and

The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

The definition of ESD clearly links the continued success of 'development' to 'environmental sustainability'. While ESD was offered in a genuine acknowledgement of the precarious state of global environments, the Rio-plus-Five' conference held in New York in 1997 found that none of the important commitments made at Rio five years earlier had been kept (Hajer & Fischer, 1999: 1). Hajer & Fischer (1995: 3) assert that the failure of ESD must be seen as a failure to address and understand 'the deeper cultural critique of modern society itself. Missing is the critique of industrial progress and, in particular, the question about the validity of endless material growth and

consumption' (Hajer & Fischer, 1999: 3). In a similar vein, Dovers (1999: 215) argues that serious pursuit of sustainability would

...involve addressing the deep structural inconsistencies between human and natural systems. The problem attribute of systemic causes is a supremely difficult one: the roots of unsustainability are embedded firmly in our systems of production and consumption and patterns of governance and settlement.

A deeper 'cultural critique' of the reasons why environmental policy initiatives such as ESD have failed to fulfill their stated aims involves an assessment of the differing cultures and the varied discourses involved in producing, reproducing and transforming a particular notion of 'sustainable development'. Discourses of 'development' as necessary and inescapable, and blind (though wavering) faith in the ability of 'ecological science' and technology to handle 'environmental problems', are readily identifiable in statements on ESD and generally, environmental policy and problem solving. The dominance of these approaches in the environmental policy arena are directly related to the current system of global capitalism where

...continued reliance on economic growth and its insatiable desire to create new markets...Behind this we see various key practices of modernity working to further this political-economic dynamic: the dominance of scientific rationality and expert knowledge as the agent of progress, the strong reliance on – and belief in – technological innovation as the agent of progress...and the central tendency to see nature as an exploitable resource or as an externality (Fischer & Hajer, 1995: 5).

Belief in the current system's ability to cope with the global environmental problem enables important questions about the ecological consequences of capitalism to be glossed over (Fischer & Hajer, 1995: 5). In a sense, ESD is a concept which allows the environmental problem (as defined by the discourse of scientific ecology) to become fodder for the re/production of economic discourses:

It should be noted that sustainable development is not a radical environmental or green concept, since it accepts the prime need for economic growth and the dominance of human welfare over the needs of the environment: and it

conceives the relationship between humans and nature in terms of the use of the environment by and for humans (Doyle & McEachern, 1998: 35).

Contemporary coastal and marine management policy is mostly dependant upon the informing discourses of ecology and economics. Consequently, serious attention is given to solutions which use the existing cognitive framework of economics rather than any real critical assessment of the consequences of that framework. Further the confluence of ecological and economic discourses surrounding ESD acts to exclude or marginalise alternatives. The ability of powerful groups such as environmental policymakers, international organisations such as the UNEP, OECD, World Bank, institutionalised environmental sciences, and increasingly, NGOs, to commandeer and set the parameters for debate on environmental issues has serious implications for what one can expect from a non-expert local public or community. In any case, each group brings to the environment policy table a preferred social order – a system of representation which expresses its own cultural understanding of how, why and what can be done to alleviate pressures on the environment. Following Fischer and Hajer (1995), I see a powerful argument to resurrect the cultural dimension of environmental politics. Approaching environmental politics as cultural discourse illuminates the ways in which different systems of representation are maintained or imposed on others. Environmental politics becomes a text to be read in context and with due reference to its ‘conditions of production’ and its reception by various ‘audiences’. As a cultural discourse then, environmental politics becomes an analysis of the ways in which systems of representations secure their powerful status along with the consequences for those both empowered and marginalised by the re/production and circulation of powerful economic and ecological discourses. That is why I consider the discourses surrounding community participation in coastal and marine management policy with the primary aim

of understanding the ‘system of representation’ implicit, and explicit, in policy discourses. Specifically, I will go on to examine how these discourses are received by Coastcare participants and what discourses they use to ‘make sense’ of their own community participation initiatives.

2.3 Positivism And Interpretism: The Collapse Into Community

The structure of knowledge and power which sustains historical and contemporary discourses of coastal and marine management are firmly grounded in a positivist paradigm – essentially based on a belief in ‘neutral’ and ‘objective’ research outcomes. Both market economics and scientific ecology are underpinned by the paradigm of positivism and provide an overarching cultural framework through which experts in various fields understand and interpret their experience. Here, I define a paradigm as

...a set of propositions that explain how the world is perceived; it contains a world view, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world, telling researchers and social scientists in general ‘what is important, what is legitimate, what is reasonable’ (Patton, 1990: 37).

Looking at coastal and marine policy from this perspective highlights the similarity in discursive frameworks used by experts to assess environmental planning and policy initiatives. Discourses and paradigms are interrelated: discourses are ‘relatively well-bounded areas of social knowledge’ while the concept of a ‘paradigm’ describes the epistemological foundations of discourses or ‘social knowledges’. Paradigms can be understood as relatively stable epistemological frameworks while discourses are more fluid and flexible expressing the ‘scent’ of a paradigm in different cultural contexts. Identifying the paradigm from which dominant discourses emanate enables us to critically assess specific approaches to coastal and marine policy. Thus I suggest that scientific discourses simultaneously support and parallel powerful economic discourses

(and vice versa) encapsulated in the concept of ‘ecologically sustainable development’. Rather than reconsidering the frameworks characteristic of post/modern government, science and industry and instigating a revolutionary alternative for a type of environmentally sound development, ESD has given old frameworks a new lease on life. These old frameworks perpetuate typical ‘techno-industrial arrangements’ and do little to address the more fundamental question of humanity’s unsustainable relationship with the natural world (Hajer & Fischer, 1999: 4). By adopting the methodological tool of ‘paradigms’, a deeper critique of modernity, capitalism and its consequences is possible. If, as is the case for positivism, characteristic discourses stipulate knowledge and practices which assume the heights of objectivity and neutrality and further, have established hegemony, then discursive statements are, by definition, beyond both academic and public scrutiny. Of course, there are competing opinions from both scientists and economists in the public realm of coastal and marine planning – the point is that it is a competition between members of the same team as key participants share the philosophical paradigm of positivism, though their characteristic discourses may appear different – as in the case of economics and environmental science. These authoritative discourses are characteristically promoted by identifiable power groups such as industry, government and scientists. As a consequence, it is their perceptions of what is important, legitimate and reasonable in coastal and marine management which circulate in the public domain. The paradigm of positivism (and its accompanying discourses) dominate research and reform agendas with other paradigms and discourses for understanding coastal and marine environments marginalised or excluded.

Positivism is an established and powerful paradigm for understanding the world. It assumes that researchers can discover general laws and that the researcher can be objective, independent of their own social circumstances. Researchers within the positivist paradigm employ methods which seek to quantify and measure social and natural phenomena. Phenomena (such as potential environmental degradation) can be measured and quantified producing 'objective facts' adhering to strict procedures of research design, data collection and analysis. Accordingly, data collection tools are crucial to quantitative measurement as refinement of these instruments will ensure the 'neutrality' of data (as a ruler is a neutral instrument for measuring distance) (May, 1993: 6). Consequently, the positivist researcher is supposedly able to study phenomena independent of their own subjective experience, perceptions and interpretations of the world. For this reason, economic and scientific researchers are unlikely to announce the paradigm or platform from which they speak, presenting and perceiving themselves as neutral and objective. In his historical study of scientific progression, Kuhn (1970: 46) argues:

[S]cientists work from models acquired through education and through subsequent exposure to the literature often without quite knowing or needing to know what characteristics have given these models the status of community paradigms. The coherence displayed by the research tradition in which they participate may not imply even the existence of an underlying body of rules and assumptions that additional historical or philosophical investigation might uncover.

Analysis of the philosophical paradigm of positivism reveals the fundamental assumptions expressed by discourses predominantly circulated for understanding coastal planning. This analysis provides an opportunity to challenge the power of such economic and scientific discourses from their epistemological beginnings. The 'epistemological beginnings' of positivism assume and assert 'neutrality' and

‘objectivity’. However, to claim to speak and act without ‘culture’ or ‘subjectivity’ is a flawed foundation upon which positivism rests, as Bleier (1984: 193) argues:

Science is not the neutral, dispassionate, value-free pursuit of Truth...scientists are not objective, disinterested, or culturally disengaged from the questions they ask of nature or the methods they use to frame their answers. It is, furthermore, impossible for science or scientists to be otherwise, since science is a social activity and a cultural product created by persons who live in the world of science as well as in the societies that bred them

Economic and scientific paradigms are powerful ways to understand the world and in particular, coastal and marine management. Moreover, the shared paradigm of positivism tacit in both economic and scientific discourses, gives ballast to their assertions of ‘environmental truth’.

In contrast to positivism, the interpretist paradigm upon which qualitative methodology and methods rest, perceives ‘reality’ as existing only within the systems of meaning people and groups attach to social phenomena. The interpretist paradigm is also humanistic as it elevates the understandings and interpretations of people as *sine qua non* to the research project. Interpretist theorists believe that reality is not ‘out there’ but in the minds of people; reality is internally experienced, socially constructed through interaction and interpreted through actors, and is based on the definition people attach to it. Reality is not objective but subjective; reality is what people see it to be (Hughes, 1990: 89-114). As opposed to positivist aspirations of objective explanation and prediction, qualitative methods of research are situated in an interpretist paradigm where the understanding of people’s interpretations is the only certainty. Interpretism argues that positivist claims to ‘objectivity’ are impossible as the researcher is always a social subject and cannot operate ‘outside’ of social phenomena. Hence, qualitative methodology embraces the subjectivity of the researcher, encouraging methods (eg

participant observation, focus groups) which enable the interaction of the researcher and the researched in natural surroundings. In other words, in an interpretist paradigm, the positivist criterion of 'objectivity' is replaced by subjective interpretations and understandings as pivotal to the project of social science. Engaging with communities and assessing their perceptions of, and priorities for, the coast has deemed interpretism and the eclectic use of qualitative methods an increasingly central element in the development of environmental policy.

Recent developments, particularly in the social sciences, along with heartening admissions in the natural sciences, seem to suggest that hardcore positivism has entered an era of 'postpositivism'. This shift adopts a multimethodological approach which opens the door to a more subtle and complex form of rigor. Instead of narrowly concentrating on the rules of research design combined with statistical analysis, the postpositivist perspective brings into play a range of methodological skills including both quantitative and qualitative methods. The postpositivist objective is not to reject the scientific project altogether but rather to recognise the need to understand properly what we are doing when we conduct one – ie. recognition of the circumstantial context and discursive processes that shape our construction of reality. The goal is to capture and incorporate the multiplicity of theoretical perspectives and explanations that bear on a particular event or phenomenon and to bring to bear 'the range and scope of interpretive standpoints that have won a place' (Toulmin 1983: 113). Alongside empirical inquiry, postpositivist theory includes historical, comparative, philosophical and phenomenological perspectives. In the process, empiricism loses its privileged claim among modes of inquiry (Fischer, 2000: 74-76). The increase in community consultation and participation initiatives and the pursuit of their opinions using a combination of

qualitative and quantitative methods can be seen as a signal that neopositivism and its empirical methods are beginning to concede the value of qualitative approaches (and an interpretist paradigm) in coastal and marine planning. There have been numerous catalysts for the emergence of postpositivism. Firstly, the advent of quantum mechanics and chaos theory in physics and evolutionary theory in the biological sciences have challenged the central theses of traditional science, especially its penchant for linearity and predictability (Fischer, 2000: 71). Increasing academic scrutiny of the sociology of science has also drawn attention to the fragility of positivism's exalted position in academia and society generally. Finally (though not exclusively), the public profile of traditional science in the media and the transparency of disagreements within the discipline (particularly over issues such as greenhouse gas emissions and the future of the planet) have dwindled public perceptions of the certainty of science (Fischer, 2000). The recent rise in the popularity of New Age spirituality can also be seen as a inferred rejection of the status of objective science though this is not without problems and contradictions (Ross, 1992). In the field of environmental policy, the near international adoption of the 'Precautionary Principle' is an explicit acknowledgement that environmental sciences are descending from the heights of scholarly rectitude. The precautionary principle proposes that 'where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental damage'. The sentiment of the precautionary principle that 'we are not sure', is some indication of a willingness to concede or at least, is an unavoidable concession that the environmental threats we now face cannot be contained, confirmed or countered solely within the existing positivist knowledge framework.

The traditional polarity between positivism and interpretism is being challenged by the threat of global environmental problems and specifically, the recognition that everyone (especially local communities) will need to be involved to ensure the success of initiatives which aim to thwart the feared trajectory of environmental degradation and destruction. Two leading ICM advocates, Billiana Cicin-Sain & Knecht (1998: 278) describe the role of communities as an

...accepted part of international declarations. One result of the recognition of cultural differences is an appreciation of the need to incorporate local, regional and national perspectives in the development of management policies and plans. The Rio Declaration has the clear aim of broadening participation by all stakeholders in determining how coastal resources are used.

The familiarity of the phrase, 'Think globally, Act locally' is further proof of the historical and contemporary desire for community involvement. For environmental scientists, this has meant experiences with the public and the use of qualitative methods such as surveys, focus groups and interviews to gain insight into community values and perceptions of the coast. However, the expectation that those trained in environmental science and planning will have the repertoire of research methodologies (or more accurately, discourses) to undertake community consultation procedures and to engage communities in participation, is fraught with difficulty. Community consultation exercises in Australia consistently refer to 'stakeholders' in the community – largely a euphemism for *economic* stakeholders such as fishers, retailers, tourism operators, resorts, property developers, etc. Of local government planners, Conacher (2000: 405) explains that they 'may do a good job in controlling storm water drainage but have little or no understanding of environmental and community dynamics, or the methods needed to resolve conflicts'. A quick perusal of government vacancies confirms that the environmental planning sector is still clinging to the expertise of the environmental sciences and this has serious implications for the type of community participation

initiatives taking place and their propensity for success. The imposition of knowledge grounded in a positivist framework deems that community participation initiatives are premised on the priorities of science as seen in the plethora of activities which pursue scientific goals of measurement and observation. In addition, such approaches rely upon an economic framework to define 'community stakeholders' in formal policy deliberations. Dovers (2000a) argues that 'quite a few people are suspecting that science's game with participation is at times a self-serving one about free labour and very large field experiments'. While this conspiracy theory can be entertained, and it is indeed the case that community participation exercises exist on the margins of environmental policy, there still exists the prospect for a new relationship between scientists, governments and communities.

It is too easy to criticise all efforts as the hopeless case of the polarity between the social and pure sciences which is, of course, familiar terrain for many social sciences. However, growth in interdisciplinarity in academia and the general decline in the overarching authority of the pure sciences can be perceived as opening a host of new opportunities for research. Jagtenberg & McKie argue that social science disciplines continue to be dominated by a modernist, scientific and rationalistic dualism resulting in an inability to engage with the 'pure' sciences. As they (1997: 87) argue, the pure sciences 'can be contested, subverted, transgressed and transformed but not ignored'. The willingness of environmental science to recognise the centrality of 'community' to their initiatives is fertile ground for a meaningful engagement and compromise between two seemingly disparate paradigms for understanding the experience of the coast. This is an increasingly understood and promoted opportunity for a productive relationship between the natural sciences and the social sciences.

In some ways then, the current enthusiasm for community initiatives in coastal and marine management sits at the threshold of new knowledge about the very practices that produce it. It is the transformation in discursive practices which allows the pursuit of community participation initiatives (regardless of success) to count as a 'regime of truth' within the field of the environmental sciences and more specifically, coastal and marine policy. Proceeding cautiously, community participation and consultation procedures may represent simultaneously the birth of new discourses surrounding the coast and the (gradual) disappearance of discourses which prioritise economic and scientific solutions (McHoul & Grace, 1993: 51). This is particularly the case for the international adoption of Integrated Coastal Management which demands community involvement. I will deal with this in a later chapter. The danger is, of course, that the proposed softening of neopositivism suggested here does not produce the fundamental changes nor even the paradigmatic shift required to give communities a meaningful and powerful presence in participation and consultation. Certainly as others have argued, in Australia (and elsewhere) current arrangements do not empower communities so much as they set the (economic and scientific) parameters for coastal planning. Coastal action groups have been labelled bureamunities or commeaucracies (Doyle, 2000). In her study of the South Australian Coastcare program, Beverley Clarke (2002) asserts that:

Opportunities for local stakeholders to meaningfully participate within the program are constrained by government prerequisites: Commonwealth and state governments determine where funds will be directed, by favouring action-oriented projects that have measurable tangible outcomes and the community provides labour for projects. Little opportunity for members of Coastcare groups to directly contribute to modification of the program (such as amending eligibility criteria) and there is no formal mechanism for community feedback for amendment to operational processes.

Even within the environmental sciences, there is some debate over ‘power sharing’ with communities and top-down or bottom up approaches to community initiatives in ICM (Hildebrand, 1997). While this work is encouraging, more recent statements on ICM have fallen into the familiar terrain of measurement and objectivity. Acknowledging the failure of ICM in many efforts worldwide (Belfiore, 2003: 227), scientists gathered at an ICM conference sought to measure the ‘interactions between social systems and environmental variability’ (Belfiore, 2003: 229). There has been little, if any, deeper cultural analysis of the role of science, government and industry in these failures nor any suggestion that those who plan such community initiatives contribute disproportionately to their failure. It is classic Kuhn where failure is not a reason for deeper critical assessment but rather another reason to re-invent the measurement wheel so that it can fix that which it had already broken.

2.4 Environmental Discourse Analysis – Relations of Power and Knowledge

It is apparent from the discussion above that my research indicates a clear and continuing tension between the too stark dichotomies of positivism and interpretism; social sciences and pure sciences; objectivity and subjectivity. As a result of this confrontation, there is a potential fissure in the blanket operation of power in coastal and marine management traditionally upheld by positivism and associated knowledges of economics and ecology. It is at this moment where there is at least the propensity for discontinuity in knowledge practices, that the works of Foucault provide some useful methodological tools. This is especially the case for his theories surrounding the operation of knowledge and power which are immediately relevant to this critical analysis

of coastal and marine management cultures. For Foucault, there is a correlation between power and knowledge:

We should admit...that power produces knowledge ... that power and knowledge imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault, 1977: 27).

The production of truth through scientific and economic discourses is always exercised through power relations. Certainly, scientists have for many centuries successfully argued the 'Truth' of their explanations for examining the natural and social world. Admittedly, situating 'power' in broad categories of knowledge such as science and economics is anathema to the Foucauldian project where power is shifting and unstable. Poststructuralists like Foucault find problematic the assertion that power can be located in distinct groups such as economic and scientific groups, preferring an engagement with the micro-physics of power in everyday practices. For Foucault (1980: 98), 'power' is something which circulates, 'it is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth...individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application'. Foucault (1977: 194) insists:

[W]e must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth.

Certainly, the power of scientific and economic knowledge is evident in their capacity to produce the 'objects and rituals' which define coastal and marine management policy. However, there are other knowledges (which produce their own 'objects and rituals') which do not enjoy comparable impact or presence in deliberations over coastal and marine policy. The point is that not all subjects have equal access to the power to produce 'rituals of truth'. In the domain of community participation initiatives, weight and

significance is given to those representations of the coast which resonate with the existing framework of economics and scientific ecology. In a Foucauldian analysis, it is not a priority to locate power or to suggest a dominant discourse associated with a specific social group, as is the contention here. This is problematic, as the material and symbolic reality of contemporary culture affirms that certain groups (such as scientists and economists) enjoy a persistent and powerful presence in society. A deeper cultural critique of community participation in coastal and marine management cannot overlook the 'macro-operation' of power and, in the case of coastal and marine management, the shared knowledge paradigm of positivism.

Nevertheless, there is a certain degree of 'power' in 'knowledges' which exist on the margins of coastal and marine policy which, though they do not hold comparable status, still exist. Thus Foucault's insistence that power is 'everybody's everywhere' can provide some way to account for the complexity of relations which occur around contemporary and local coastal and marine management. These complex relations of community, government, industry and science, etc are not adequately described by simple binarisms between (say) positivism and interpretism or 'dominant cultures and marginalised cultures'. While Foucault's work does attempt to abandon any general social critique of power relations, his insistence that we look to the local everyday operation of power, knowledge and practices does illuminate much that can be overlooked in the wide brush strokes of paradigmatic analyses. Foucault's re/conceptualisation of power as a 'network' rather than the 'wielding sword of the powerful' can show how changes in knowledge and power relations begin to occur. Fischer (2000: 27) understands Foucault's conceptualisation of power as

... multiple and ubiquitous – the struggle against it must be localised resistance designed to combat interventions into specific sites of civil society. Because such power is organised as a network rather than a collection of isolated points, each localised struggle induces effects on the entire network. Struggles cannot be totalised; there can be no single centralised hierarchical organisation capable of seizing a centralised power (Fischer, 2000: 27).

The case of community participation in coastal and marine management shows how a ‘localised struggle’ can begin to produce effects on the entire network of power relations which constitute knowledge in the coastal policy arena. In this approach to coastal and marine management, it is not a general critique of the sciences themselves (though this is not abandoned here) which is of interest, but the renewed discursive formations which enable the pursuit of community participation to be accepted as a legitimate enterprise in coastal and marine management practice. This is Foucault’s alternative approach to science which is

...not concerned with scientificity as a norm. In so far as it is concerned with the history of sciences its object is not the sciences themselves but the discursive formations which are their conditions of appearance, the particular knowledges from which they spring. It is not concerned with what is not yet known or with what is in error; it is concerned with what can be known in a particular practice of knowledge (Cousins & Hussain, 1984: 96-97).

Foucault is concerned to show how discourses, knowledge and power can produce a ‘truth’ which had not previously existed – how the ‘dominant overall organisation of discourse...makes certain forms of existence of objects and ways of speaking about them possible’ (Hirst, 1985: 175). Foucault (1980: 193) observes wryly that he has

...never written anything but fictions...It seems to me that the possibility exists for fiction in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effects of truth, and for bringing about that true discourse engenders or ‘manufactures’ something that does not as yet exist..

Following Foucault, the short history of community participation in coastal and marine management has created a definitive relationship between scientists and communities in

particular which stands to engender discourses about Australian coasts which have previously existed on the margins as 'fiction'. As a consequence of these new relations, fissures in what has been accepted wisdom in ecological practice are beginning to create new possibilities for ecological discourse governing what can and can't be said or what can and can't count as a 'regime of truth' about ecology (Darier, 1999). Central to a Foucauldian notion of discourse is the idea that the circulation of discourse(s) produces 'regimes of truth'. Foucault (1980: 93) argues:

[T]here can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.

The dominance of scientific ecology and economic discourses around the coast represents an instance of this production of a regime of truth embodied in a distinct area of social knowledge.

Admittedly, there is no revolution here and certainly, contemporary arrangements in knowledge/power relations are not cause for beach parties. However, there is a window of opportunity to bring 'community', itself a critical concept, to the fore of the coastal and marine policymaking process. Seizing this window of opportunity requires a pragmatic engagement with community participation and an intricate analysis of the 'everyday social practices' which have enabled its appearance as an institutionalised directive for coastal and marine policy. Through this analysis, it is possible to question the 'brand' of community participation that exists and importantly, to suggest some local practices which may serve policymakers in maximising local communities interest and participation in community-based initiatives.

2.5 Governmentality and Community Coastal Policy – A Path to Pragmatics

The type of ‘grandstanding cultural critique’ (Bennett, 1989: 11) which enables a social scientist (such as myself) to critique the historical and contemporary arrangements of community participation in coastal and marine management does little to provide environmental scientists with pragmatic opportunities to better engage with communities. Work in Cultural Policy Studies has aimed to bridge such a gap between critique and policy pragmatics (see Cunningham 1992; O’Regan 2001; O’Regan 1992; Bennett 1989, 1998). While I have reservations about cultural policy studies, certain methodological insights gained from their elevation of policy pragmatics are useful to a cultural analysis of coastal and marine management policy. A chief advocate of cultural policy studies, Tony Bennett (1998) embraced Foucault’s methodological approach, captured in the neologism ‘governmentality’ as a tool for pragmatism. Governmentalities carries with it an acknowledgement of the ‘increasing governmentalisation of social relations as a necessary and inescapable horizon of contemporary political life’ (Bennett, 1998: 61). Foucault (1988: 18-19) defines governmentality as the ‘contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self’ where technologies of domination ‘determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination; and technologies of the self as the ways in which ‘individuals to effect their own means or with the help of others [permit] a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and a way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality’.

Governmentality provides an avenue to look at the institutional ‘politics of detail’ and ‘techniques’ through which individuals are inducted into programs of self-management

and thus voluntarily act in ways that enable the realisation of governmental objectives (Bennett, 1998: 75). The significance of governmentality here is to firmly locate the emergence of discourses surrounding community participation in the administration of the environment and further, to show in local detail how these discourses have secured a 'regime of truth'. Governmentality is unashamedly local in orientation and in some respects, is complicit with the broader system of power relations and 'tends to assume a rightness of current politics and agenda setting' via its non-engagement with systems of structural inequality (O'Regan, 1992: 203). Again, governmentality is not about what is known in the practice of ecological governance as the exposition of knowledge and power relations illuminated here. Rather, it is concerned with how ecological governance came (and continues) to be 'known' as a 'regime of truth' in coastal and marine management. Accordingly, the notion of governmentality requires a detailed local assessment of the practical ways in which the coast and its communities are administered and to what governmental objectives and ends. This framework draws our attention away from issues of 'consciousness' to the 'political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth' (Foucault, 1980: 133). Focusing on the microphysics of power results in an analysis of the routine ways in which individuals are both the subject and object of power relations. Simply, conceptualising the relations between culture and power becomes a process of uncovering practices which govern the action and behaviour of individuals in the context of certain cultural technologies.

In their pursuit of pragmatics, cultural policy studies advocates offer a revised definition of 'culture' which situates the circulation, production and deployment of culture in governmental policy bodies:

Culture in the institutes' understanding, 'refers to the institutions, symbol systems, and forms of regulation and training responsible for forming, maintaining and/or changing the mental and behavioural attributes of populations (Bennett, 1989: 10)

In this context, the definition of culture is referenced to behavioural management of the population via institutions and symbolic systems. This is certainly a step removed from an anthropological conception of culture as a 'way of seeing' to a focus on institutional locale and the relations of regulation and training there. This revised definition of 'culture' and the emphasis on the technologies of government (with a small 'g' and thus including private associations and organisations) implies another revised interpretation of the relations between culture and power. This theoretical approach to the relations between culture and power asserts the 'multiplicity of ends' and the 'diversity of instruments' used to govern populations (Bennett, 1998: 69). Foucault sought to narrow his attention to the 'the connection between the operation of power at the micro-level of the individual within particular institutional situations and the problem of the regulation at a global level of entire populations by the state' (Rutherford, 1999: 38). What is in question is not the distributive consequences of capitalism, or a generalised critique of institutions, ideologies, etc and arguably, a general theory of social relations was never Foucault's project (Cousins & Hussain, 1984: 2). Rather, Foucault is asking that the social sciences examine in detail the local conditions under which an object becomes a legitimate site for government administration claiming 'that since these things have been made, they can be unmade, as long as we know how it was that they were made' (Foucault, 1990: 37). Indeed, the coast has not always been a policy concern for governments (and a plethora of government departments), industry, etc and the relations of knowledge and power which are the conditions for its appearance can tell us much about how the current 'brand of community participation' emerged.

Bennett (1998: 61) asserts that Foucault's theory of governmentalities provides a useful methodological tool for analysing the microphysics of power relations which occur in and through policy initiatives. In the case of community participation in coastal and marine management, governmentality points us in the direction of the seemingly everyday techniques by which community participation is established and administered in the policymaking circle. Specifically, the conditions which establish the policy site as a 'regime of truth' and a legitimate object for administration is the focus of governmentalities. These 'conditions' of policy are exposed through a discursive analysis which reveals the relations of knowledge and power implicit/explicit which re/produce, maintain and at times, transform policy initiatives and objects. What is significant is the shift away from a central power (of say, the State) to a more fluid and shifting basis for the relations between culture/s and power. In part, this shift was a reaction to the popularity of Antonio Gramsci's (1971: 261) neo-Marxist theory in which the state is understood as the 'apparatus of government' but also 'the private apparatus of hegemony or civil society'. Hegemony is defined as 'permission to rule' and refers principally to

the ability in certain historical periods of the dominant class to exercise social and cultural leadership, and by these means - rather than by direct coercion of social classes - to maintain their power over the economic, political and cultural direction over the nation (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery & Fiske, 1983: 133).

Unlike classical Marxist theory, hegemony is not solely reflected in class struggles but cuts across class factions such that similar 'world-views' will be found amongst politicians, feminists, bus drivers, teachers, doctors, welfare recipients, etc. Gramsci's conceptualisation of the separate realms of the state and civil society emphasised the

fluidity and simultaneously, connectedness of power relations between authoritative institutions and the populus. Chantal Mouffe (1979: 180) explains that Gramsci:

...[began] to understand that the bourgeoisie had also needed to ensure itself popular support and that the political struggle was far more complex than had ever been thought of by reductionist tendencies, since it did not consist of a simple confrontation between antagonistic classes but always involved complex relation of forces.

Similarly, Foucauldian theory recognises the complexity of power relations but does not attempt to accord any single anchorage as found in the state/civil society framework (Bennett, 1998). The argument here is not that the broader operation of institutions ('civil society') and the state are ignored. Rather, Foucault's governmental theory

...directs our attention to the ways in which the relations between persons and cultural resources are organised within the context of particular cultural technologies, and to the variable forms of work on the self, or practices of subjectification, which such relations support. In their turn, such practices have as their product not the subject of consciousness so much as the operations of particular forms of life which constitute particular zones of a person's existence (Bennett, 1998: 71).

In a Foucauldian 'policy' analysis, the question is not how certain cultures understand or interpret their experience and in turn, produce certain practices and symbols that express their culture. Rather, the focus is on the repertoire of power relations between people, governments, private and public institutions, community organisations and so on which produce cultures and cultural technologies such that their presence is permissible and 'normal'. These power relations expressed in discourse draw attention to the ways in which we can speak, write or even think about a social object or practice only in specific ways and not others (McHoul & Grace, 1993: 31). In short, Foucault is interested in the institutional conditions which allow certain knowledges or utterances to count as the Truth and the ways in which these knowledges change over time. Governmentality's emphasis on the 'everyday politics of detail' and 'structures of

administration' deem it a particularly useful concept in policy analysis. Policy bodies are teeming with 'institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections' which tend to escape detailed critical analysis. Analysis of policy using the Foucauldian framework provides insight into specific governing techniques and facilitates avenues to assess and criticise, in this case, the 'local' development of community coastal and marine management.

Foucault earmarked the beginning of the 16th century as the epoch in which the governing of social relations – the administration of the population – became the key role for the state and spawned a plethora of new knowledges and practices geared towards this new form of administration. This is particularly evident in the knowledges of life processes such as birth, death, sexual relations, sickness, disease, bodily hygiene, etc which can be traced to the late 18th and 19th centuries. It was during this period that Foucault identified the management and administration of life ('the entry of life into history') as the emerging cornerstone of contemporary society - power in social relations is enabled by mastery of those discourses concerned with the administration of life (McHoul & Grace, 1993: 61). Foucault termed this 'biopower'. While Foucault reserved his intellectual scrutiny for the human sciences, there is some inquiry into the challenges Foucault's method provides for the natural sciences (Darier 1999, Rutherford 1994, 1999, Peace, 1997). In line with Foucault's administration of human populations, researchers interested in the field of environmental policy (or the administration of the environment) have shown how his method is also useful for studies of the environment. Following Foucault's concern with the administration of life/biopower, Rutherford earmarks the same period as the era in which the environment also became an amenable to, and an object for, administration.

Population emerges as an economic and political problem in which the central concern is the proper balance between population growth and resources (Foucault, 1976: 25)...*in this process, not only does the idea of a measurable and manageable population come into existence, but so also does the notion of the environment as the sum of the physical resources on which the population depends* (1999: 39 italics in original).

Rutherford (1999: 53) identifies 'sustainable development' as the contemporary manifestation of discourses which seek to manage and measure 'populations and resources in relation to their natural environments'. Here, scientific ecology is both the 'creator' of the environmental problem through its capacity to define the object of administration (ie. 'the environmental problem') and simultaneously, provides the 'intellectual machinery' essential for the practice of such administration (Rutherford, 1999: 37). In short, scientific ecology became the 'science of natural economics' (Worster, 1987 in Rutherford, 1999: 53) – a political economy of ecology (Rutherford, 1999: 53-54). Ecology became the subject and object which legitimated the finance, organisation and administration of the environment.

Rutherford (1999: 55) identifies the growth in regulatory science since the 1970s which resulted in 'widespread reliance by the state on extensive systems of scientific advisory structures which have become an integral feature of environmental (and health) policy making in industrialised societies' (Beck 1992, Jasanoff 1990). Further, Rutherford asserts (1999: 38) that this knowledge/power relation created by the administration of environments has spawned new techniques for governing environment and population which he terms, 'ecological governmentality'. State and industrial interests (especially transnational corporations) play a central role in the manufacture, negotiation and certification of ecological knowledge and thus establish the normative constitution of ecological knowledge/s (Rutherford, 1999: 56). Rutherford (1994, 1999) applies a

Foucauldian framework to environmental governance with a view to examining the role of scientific ecology and expertise in establishing and legitimating the administration of the environment. Expertise and command over the discourses of ecology thus becomes the *a priori* condition for the participation in environmental administration. The operation of these discourses marginalises and disempowers (though not entirely) other knowledges which may contribute to a framework of ‘environmental administration’ inclusive and representative of communities bestowed with its care. For (1994, 1999), ‘traditional state-centric notions of politics and power’ underestimate the role of scientific expertise in defining and managing environmental problems. Similarly, Fischer (2000) argues that there are ‘hidden hierarchies’ of policy experts, entrepreneurs, administrators, researchers and writers who play an underestimated governing role in environmental policy. These technocrats are empowered by expert knowledges which support and legitimate the decisions of political party elites. This theory of technocracy emphasises the important role of knowledge and expert disciplines in an information society which

produce truth, in the sense that they supply systemic procedures for the generation, regulation and circulation of statements. The knowledge produced is a part of the discursive practices by which rules are constructed, objects and subjects are defined, and events for study are identified and constituted (Fischer, 2000: 25).

There is some parallel here with German Sociologist Ulrich Beck’s seminal ‘Risk Society’ thesis (1992, 1994, 1998). Beck (1992) proposes that modern society is increasingly confronting the ‘environmental risks’ (both technical and social) created by industrial society and that the quest for safety from these risks now overlays the more traditional political concerns about class and distribution of resources and wealth. As these risks are brought to the fore of social and political debate, our reliance on scientific expertise is also magnified. These ‘megahazards’ (such as global warming) cannot be

identified or judged except by scientific experts upon which we rely for both identification and solution (consider radiation). Beck (1992) concludes these ecological hazards are:

based on causal interpretation and thus initially only exist in terms of the scientific knowledge about them. They can thus be changed, magnified, dramatised or minimised within knowledge, and to that extent are particularly open to social definition and construction –these types of ecological risks only come into existence through the objectifying medium of expert judgement, that is, these sorts of hazards are not things of simple experience but require the interpretation of scientific theories and intervention of measuring instruments ‘in order to become visible or interpretable hazards at all.

Like Foucault, Beck shows the historical contingency of meaning surrounding definitions of environmental issues and problems. Ecology is unveiled as a cultural discourse, imbued with politics and subjectivity and thus open to challenge and debate over definitions. Foucault’s insistence that the social sciences take a closer look at the detailed operation of power at the local level and the application of such a methodology in his work on ‘governmentalities’ is particularly useful in ensuring that academic criticism has a path of practical engagement with those aspects of the social with which we seek to foster debate. This is not to suggest that the broader interpretation of power structures should be abandoned but rather to argue for a parallel critical analysis of the macro and micro operation of power and knowledge. In this configuration, social scientists are responsible for stimulating debate via their specific analysis of the emergence and administrative arrangement for community participation arrangements.

2.6 Back to Big Pictures: A Note on Political Economy

Thus far, I have established a theoretical framework which investigates the local instance of community participation in coastal and marine management, specifically focusing on the ‘institutional politics of detail’ outlined in Foucault’s governmentalities. The danger with Foucault’s work is that attention to the specificity and diversity of ‘practices’ and ‘techniques’ at the extreme leads to the conclusion that there is no need to examine structures or material relations of power, as the individual is sovereign. This is clearly problematic as the material reality of contemporary culture – including for example, the growth of powerful transnational corporations, the presence of national governments, and the disappearing chasm between the two – present stable points for the examination of differentials in power. Certainly, these corporations, governments, institutions, etc. serve a ‘multiplicity’ of ends and employ a ‘diversity’ of instruments to pursue objectives - but this must be tempered by an acknowledgement that these ‘techniques’ occur within a system of industrial capitalism which, though complex and contradictory, retains some salient characteristics. Biltrey (1995: 264) argues that communication and cultural studies researchers need a theoretical approach which is able to conceptualise the ‘macro-analytical aspects of the structural mechanisms behind the supply and the consumption of [cultural products], followed by a detailed analysis dealing with the meaning structures on a micro-level’. Post-structuralist analyses must be tempered by the realisation that the micro-power relations of ‘governance’ always occur within macro-structures. And these macro-structures such as the institutions of science, act to limit the range and ‘brand’ of governance options available for public consideration.

After all, community participation occurs in a cultural context of global 'free' market capitalism whose philosophies both mirror and support government objectives of economic rationalism, market efficiency, competition, deregulation and so on. The impact of 'wealth accumulation' on the coastal and marine management policy environment cannot be underestimated – consider tourism development and government taxes and revenues from coastal development; consider the tourist dollar and the associated economic opportunities for local businesses or other coastal industries such as fishing and trawling; consider the price of real estate close to the coast; of banks and repayments and interest rates; and the power of transnational corporations to make their 'system of representations' the prevailing 'reality'. It is a serious oversight to simply identify the 'political economy of ecology' without registering its disproportionate impact on the range of (governing) discourses admissible in the coastal and marine management policy arena. It is not the task (or objective) of theories like governmentality to incite this critique but by the same token, governmentality's presence as a methodological tool does not preclude consideration of the impacts of political economy. Murdock (1989: 46) concludes:

[Political economy aims to] show how different ways of financing and organising cultural production (and production in general) have traceable consequences for the range of discourses and representations in the public domain and accessibility to audiences.

In the tradition of political economy, dominant coastal and marine management discourses can be associated with groups who are predominantly responsible for the 'ways' of financing and organising policy production. The danger with a political economy approach would be the misconception that industry therefore totally determines which discourses are circulated or that human consciousness merely mirrors industrial interests (Goodwin, 1992: 157). Of course, members of the public are not merely

passive consumers of the dominant discourses surrounding coastal and marine management. On the contrary, the argument is that the 'sources for discourses' (Hughes, 1996) are limited when the finance and production of coastal and marine management policy is commandeered by existing scientific and/or government policy actors. The dominance of these groups acts in various ways:

[To] exclude and marginalize those voices lacking in economic power or resources...the underlying logic of cost operates systematically, consolidating the position of groups who lack the capital for successful entry. Thus the voices which survive will largely belong to those least likely to criticise the prevailing distribution of wealth and power. Conversely, those most likely to challenge these arrangements are unable to publicise their dissent or opposition because they cannot command the resources needed for communication to a broad audience (Murdock & Golding cited in Mc Quail, 1994: 82).

Building on Hughes' (1996) conception of a political economy of subjectivities and discourses, one can begin to describe the battle which awaits a proposed catharsis in the culture and power relations of coastal and marine management. The central argument of a political economy of subjectivities is clear:

Audiences [subjects/individuals] 'actively' produce meanings around cultural products ...but they do so within discursive repertoires which are increasingly liable to be determined by the dominant players in the [industry] (Hughes, 1996: 95).

In this analysis of political economy, it is possible to acknowledge the complexity of discourses surrounding coastal and marine management without excluding the impact of 'industry' (which includes the impact of expert disciplines in government, industry, research bodies, etc) that overwhelming organises, finances and profits from current representations and implementation of coastal and marine management policy. This political economy of ecology admits the role of powerful bodies which offer individuals and communities a 'repertoire of meanings' (Murdock 1989) with which to understand the coastal and marine management process. This accepted knowledge acts to

subjugate other knowledges in the public domain as irrelevant to the policy domain.

Communities thus act in accordance with the parameters that have been set by initiatives like Coastcare and, in my fieldwork experience, tend to relegate their own cultural understandings of the coast to the private realm. In the process, such communities reaffirm the legitimacy of dominant discourses surrounding coastal and marine management and their participation in this sense ensures governmental objectives are met.

The political economy of ecology looks ‘through’ discourses and techniques of administration practices to consider the material effects and consequences of capitalism.

Garnham (1990: 72) argues:

[P]olitical economists find it hard to understand how, within a capitalist social formation, one can study cultural practices and their political effectivity – the ways in which people make sense of their lives and then act in the light of that understanding – without focussing attention on how the resources for cultural practice, both material and symbolic, are made available in structurally determined ways through the institutions and circuits of commodified cultural production, distribution and consumption.

The argument here is that these discourses have a material consequence and deeper cultural analysis requires some consideration of material structures which are much broader than local and individual impacts of patterns of thought and behaviour. Indeed, the potential for new knowledge practices in ecological discourses is somewhat dampened by the global pursuit of wealth and the practices which accompany its relentless presence as the unavoidable material (and symbolic) reality of our current and historical cultural condition. This does not infer that community participation in coastal and marine management is not significant in its challenge to accepted ecological practices but it does temper our enthusiasm for the prospects of ‘community empowerment’ and ‘power sharing’ in this regime. Certainly, the greatest assumption in

describing the fissure in ecological practice occurring at the interface between communities and coastal and marine experts is that those in power will be prepared to relinquish the material and moral wealth which accompanies their position as ‘expert and commander’. A political economy of ecology, as Garnham (1990: 71) asserts, serves as a useful reminder that ‘the capitalist mode of production’ provides the structural backdrop which ‘constitutes people’s necessary and unavoidable conditions of existence’. He concludes (1990: 71):

These conditions shape in determinate ways the terrain upon which cultural practices take place – the physical environment, the available material and symbolic resources, the time rhythms and spatial relations. They also pose the questions to which people’s cultural practices are a response: they set the cultural agenda.

Management of the coast is firmly grounded in the system of capitalist production ranging from the profits of international tourism developers through to government revenue and taxes, to the time which is available for members of the community to pursue volunteer coastal initiatives ‘outside of work hours’. A political economy of ecological discourse shows how this prevailing cultural condition impacts upon the nature of community participation that we can expect from contemporary material and symbolic structures underpinning coastal and marine management, governance and administration..

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter began by positioning coastal and marine management as a cultural text. Coastal and marine management is thus open to critical analysis of the relations between different cultures that bring a ‘way of seeing’ the coast to the policy arena. In a broader, systemic analysis, it is possible to identify ecology and economics as the

dominant discourses of coastal and marine management. These powerful knowledges share the philosophical paradigm of positivism which sustains a historical and continuing powerful presence in coastal and marine management specifically, and society generally. The ability of these discourses and characteristic ‘professionals and experts’ to set the parameters seriously limits the content of the debate to what these groups consider ‘legitimate and reasonable’. This is the deeper cultural analysis of community participation which examines the operation of power and knowledge in the policymaking process.

Alongside this recognition of the broader relations of culture and power, this chapter has offered a framework through which to understand the appearance of community participation in coastal and marine management initiatives. The conditions which allow ‘community opinions’ to count are at once a construct of the existing ecological and scientific discourses but also are a hopeful sign that the practice of ecological science is at the threshold of some change. This change has the propensity to create a meaningful and powerful position for communities in coastal and marine management which is showing signs of beginning at the local level. Analysis at the local level necessitates a closer look at the ‘everyday techniques’ by which the coast is governed and through which communities in turn, are engendered to participate. Foucault’s governmentalities is an avenue to explore the local instance of community participation in Australia. In particular, its emphasis on ‘detail’ rather than broader structural analyses, enables a closer look at how specific policy is legitimated and with what effects, in context. In this way, the local instances of ‘culture and power’ are not overlooked in the haste to consider bigger pictures of dominance.

Finally, this chapter asserted that these different conceptions of the relations between culture and power – be they the relations between macro-institutions such as science and ecology or conversely, the relations between community members and their local council – all occur within the system of capitalism which has implications for the range of discourses available to understand and potentially transform, community participation in the coastal and marine management process.

Chapter 3 Methodology

I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area... I would like the little volume that I want to write on disciplinary systems to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers. (Foucault, 1974)

During the course of my investigations, I have come across many different ideas about methodology and how one should approach a research topic. The first draft of this chapter appeared halfway through the writing-up stage of this dissertation. It was my intention to complete the method chapter, as though it would not present the challenge of writing the 'theoretical framework' for the thesis. Much to my distaste, the ideas I had so fervently believed six months prior were no longer an adequate representation of what I thought methodology or more specifically my methodology was about. This would count as what Horsfall, Byrne-Armstrong and Higgs (2001: 3-4) refer to as a 'critical moment' in my research. They suggest that most researchers reach points at which their method either does not work, their subjects fail to cooperate or the synthesis of data and previous research just does not occur as easily as it should. While published articles and books give the impression that research is a simple, seamless process, in fact, most researchers confront these critical moments in their research projects. The realization that my ways of thinking had been altered or at least challenged by different approaches – particularly the Foucaultian approach to research – was such a critical moment.

Horsfall, Byrne-Armstrong and Higgs (2001: 12) argue against authors 'removing research from the context of the relationships in which it is embedded, 'suggesting that

this leads to a certain ‘ivory tower’ or mystification of the research process. In turn, this disguises the fact that ‘research is a part of everyday life’ and maintains a boundary between it and everyday living. Similarly, Seale, Gobo, Gubruim and Silverman (2004: 2) assert the value of reflecting on our own methodologies (though not in a purely confessional manner) as a way of learning. On reflection, my research project arises from my own university experience of ‘science’s legitimation crisis’ and alternately my own history, especially my love for the Australian coastline. Add to this my interest in Foucault’s challenge to the social sciences and various theories of the post (post-structuralism, postmodernism, postcolonialism, etc.) and associated questions surrounding the validity of the research practice itself. My research also stems from the comments of a fellow student during my undergraduate studies that a longitudinal study of beach erosion – watching a beach slip away over the course of ten years – was an appealing project. My parents were ‘community minded’ and I can recall an endless stream of counselling (including my own) over tea and scones at the kitchen table. These (*inter alia*) private and public experiences have given rise to my interest in this study and have impacted upon the ‘rationale’ for my methodology.

I have argued earlier that coastal and marine management policy has been guided by positivist research agendas and that this has resulted in the dominance of a certain type of community participation regime. This has meant a predisposition for quantitative methods to gauge the success or otherwise of the Coastcare program. This is not to say that qualitative methods have not featured in coastal and marine management policy analysis (or environmental policy generally) but positivist methodologies based on the rigours of objectivity and neutrality are the overwhelming choice. From a methodological perspective, quantitative methodologies provide valuable numerical data on the program

and may provide an ‘overall’ view. However, these approaches do not gather any meaningful information on how community volunteers are either responding to the program or understanding local environmental issues. There is a general lack of data on community participation in coastal and marine management from the perspective of those communities who volunteer. This can be partly attributed to a focus on ‘environmental science objectives’ rather than a ‘social’ evaluation of volunteers and/or communities who participate in the Coastcare program. As a policy directive, community participation challenges much that has been taken for granted in environmental policy and science research. The challenge is to understand communities with diverse and complex components and in the case of policy, how to use this understanding so that communities support policy objectives or participate in local coastal management processes.

In this chapter, I unravel my approach and assumptions in terms of methodology via analysis of my own engagement with the literature with some personal and public reflection on my own methodological journey. This chapter considers the methodology which I have used to understand three local Coastcare groups and their interaction with coastal and marine management processes. Firstly, I reflect on some of the broader methodological discussions which I have encountered. These ideas have influenced my own methodological decisions and will undoubtedly continue to factor prominently in research projects I undertake in the future. The chapter then presents the methodology and approach I have adopted in this study.

3.1 Methodological Discussion

There has been, it would seem, a passage from relative certainty to radical skepticism, from relatively stable categories to highly volatile ones, and from an emerging orthodoxy to a state of permanent revolution (Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont, 2003: 10).

While Paul Atkinson and colleagues (2003) refer to uncertainty in the realm of social research, their observations are equally descriptive of the entire field of scientific research. This study emerges at a time when ‘stable categories’ of research, or clear boundaries, are extraordinarily difficult to find and then to sustain. While scientific research has moved from quantum mechanics to chaos theory, social research has leapt from structuralisms to rhizomes and poststructuralisms. My adopted methodology is an expression of this ‘permanent revolution’ and an account of how I have navigated the terrain in order to ask the questions and to acquire some knowledge about communities and their relationships with coastal environments.

Sarantakos provides a clear definition of methodology as the ‘science of methods ‘which contains the standards and principles employed to guide choice, structure, process and use of methods, as directed by the underlying paradigm’ (1993: 33). Ontological and epistemological assumptions are integral to and inform methodology – our assumptions about the nature of the knowable (ontology) and what it is possible to know (epistemology) (Stanley and Wise, 1990, 1993; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Gough (2002: 5) highlights the ‘theoretical’ component of methodology and its importance in producing knowledge through research.

[A methodology] provides a rationale for the way a researcher proceeds. Methodology refers to more than particular techniques, such as ‘doing a survey’ or ‘interviewing students’. Rather it provides reasons for using such techniques in relation to the kind of knowledge or understanding the researcher is seeking (Gough, 2002: 5).

Traditionally, two distinct paradigms for research methodology have guided the research process, positivism and interpretism, generating (respectively) quantitative and qualitative methods. As discussed in Chapter 2, positivism assumes researchers can discover general laws (including laws of human behaviour) and that the researcher can be objective and independent of their own social circumstances. In contrast, interpretism acknowledges the social production of meaning and challenges the ability to observe and measure social phenomenon objectively. Within this epistemological stance, the researcher is always a part of the social phenomenon they research. The interpretist paradigm is greatly influenced by Weber (1864-1920) and the concept of *verstehen* – the empathetic understanding of human behaviour (Sarantakos, 1993: 34). While positivism is a particularly powerful research paradigm underpinning discursive giants such as economics, over the past few decades, its claims to ‘Truth’ and ‘objectivity’ have been under sustained attack (see for example, Merchant, 1980, Beck, 1992, 1994, 1998, Ross, 1992). Science’s legitimation crisis can be largely grounded in a fundamental debate surrounding our capacity to ‘know’ phenomena outside our own subjectivities. The key argument is that reality is not ‘out there’ waiting to be discovered by disinterested objective researchers. Typical of these criticisms of positivism is Rorty’s (1989) claim that:

‘..social reality does not exist objectively but is created in interaction and through interpretation, of which the researcher is an integral part. The researcher experiences reality through interaction and interpretation. Our world is something we make, not something we discover (in Sarantakos, 1993: 20).

The recognition that reality is a social construction shifts the focus ‘to the circumstantial context and discursive processes that shape the construction’ (Fischer, 2000: 74-75) which is largely the antithesis of positivist, objective enquiry. Asserting the relative value

of qualitative methods and challenging the omnipresence of quantitative methods (alongside a broader critique of positivism and an elevation of interpretism) was largely the focus of the original draft for this chapter. However, an engagement with a variety of literature, particularly various theorists of the post has, to some extent, dismantled the opposition between quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Alongside the challenge to positivist epistemologies has been a challenge to all social research including interpretist approaches. This is particularly evident in the work of Michel Foucault and his challenge to the social sciences. Foucault directs his challenges to the systems of knowledge of the human and social sciences (particularly medicine and economics). His conception of knowledge as not 'technical know-how' or 'how to' but rather knowledge as a 'matter of social, historical and political conditions, under which, for example, statements come to count as true or false' (McHoul & Grace, 1993: 29) affects the traditional polarity between quantitative and qualitative methods by revealing how the experts of his chosen histories were duly implicated in the political and social relations of power which they sought to explain, change or denounce. These ideas offer an alternative approach to methodology, developing new debates within (and without) traditional research boundaries:

Advocates of postmodernism have called into question the conventional criteria for research that were the benchmarks of earlier generations of researchers and methodologists. Rather than searching for universalistic criteria for the validity or adequacy of research... question the notions of validity are themselves culturally and socially specific: that validity is always constructed within specific interpretive traditions, ideological positions, and in accordance with section interests. They question the possibility of universally valid and disinterested knowledge (Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont, 2003: 12).

Generally, Foucault's challenge to these sciences was to show the conditional and contingent nature of these knowledges which are 'most quick to pronounce truths about

human nature, human potential, human endeavour, and the future of the human condition in general' (McHoul & Grace, 1993: 58). Foucault put under the microscope the frameworks established to conduct human and social research and thus questioned some fundamental assumptions about the role and function of research within their chosen disciplines, encouraging self-reflexivity. While these discussions cannot be covered adequately here, it is worth noting that Foucault (and others) placed all intellectual research practice firmly within the 'institutional conditions of its existence...supplied by the tertiary education sectors of advanced capitalist societies' (Bennett, 1998: 2). These arguments provided a space to reflect on the implications of the researchers' own position in relation to the research object and subject.

For my own purposes, the appeal of Foucault is to pose different questions relating to 'how' a specific historical event or period came to exist rather than asking 'why' questions about (say) oppression or emancipation of populations or classes etc (Kendall and Wickham, 2004: 144). These 'how' questions at the local level of the administration of the coastal zone provide another way of seeing the relations between science and individuals, communities or cultures. Nicholas Rose (1998: 86) agrees:

The role of intellectual work in my point of view is to open up issues, to be critical enough to open up new possibilities without, in the Marxist way...identifying what the correct solutions are and then leading everybody marching off to those solutions. Very few of us in the cultures we live in know what the correct answers are, but we might be able to expand the scope of the questions that are posed by intellectual work

To explore the hopeful 'new possibilities' enabled by Foucault's methods, I have adopted quantitative and qualitative methods and carried out cultural analyses which may well have Foucault 'spinning in his grave' (Kendall & Wickham, 1999: 119). But to

Foucault's spin, we might add a long list of many others, who like me, have developed a mixed methodology which is appropriate to the pragmatic task of a research project.

The idea of work on the 'self' encouraged by Foucault resonates with recent writing in qualitative research methods which encourages researchers to write reflectively on their own research experience. Heather D'Cruz (2001: 26) reflects on her methodology as a 'fractured lens' which shows 'why and how multiple ways of seeing were and are necessary'. A fractured lens allows for ways of seeing a reality which is always (in part) fractured and which can be known in different ways. Such ways of seeing reality can be connected, if somewhat tenuously at times. Likewise, Seale, Gobo, Gubrium and Silverman (2004: 7) assert that the best research frameworks are permissive rather than restrictive, opting for a 'situated methodology' where forcibly applying abstract methodological rules to contingent situations' is replaced by the research situation in dialogue with methodological rules. In the final instance, they argue that research is a practical exercise with principles:

[It] involves an engagement with a variety of things and people; research materials..., social theories, philosophical debates, values, methods texts and traditions, reports of other research studies, research participants, research audiences, funders and commissioners, publishers, conference organization, teachers and examiners, the researcher's own past experience and present hopes. Out of this mix arises particular research enquiries (Seale et al, 2004: 2).

Research is ultimately a practice which involves the everyday lives of both the researcher and researched. Placing the research in this context, politically, socially or culturally, and choosing methodologies appropriate to the task of gathering knowledges (always situated) in conversation with your own subjectivities (those of your discipline, methodologies, etc) is the challenge. The danger with this approach is the potential to move towards a position of absolute relativism where the capacity of research to effect

social change is thwarted by disbelief in the validity of the research process itself. It is not to reject research or evidence but to recognize, in a philosophical sense, the contingency and provisional nature of that evidence. A methodological approach which acknowledges the position of the researcher, subjectivities, their institutional condition, etc. need not stall the quest for knowledge. Even the assertion that the criteria for valid research is suspect involves similarly suspect criteria. 'Serious problems arise if we move from some philosophical doubts about the nature of evidence to a wholesale rejection, especially if this involves importing some alternative set of value-driven foundations that are similarly suspect' (Seale et al, 2004: 6). There are no research certainties regardless of which framework is applied to the research project but this should not lead to a complete rejection of 'evidence' *per se*.

I have not developed any steadfast epistemology or ontological position. My explorations of methodology have produced only another series of questions which lead me down different paths of uncertainty. Seale, Gobo, Gubrium and Silverman (2004: 2) assert :

...the world of research practice is multi-sited and multi-dimensional in its substance and that principles that are not directly tied to at least a sense of that are vacuous. Although we may attend to philosophical debates, our practice does not in the end depend on the outcome of these debates because we are researchers, not philosophers.

In the philosophical quagmire, the above quote was like a beacon, reminding me that there are any number of different approaches to a research project and even more critical methodological discussions which direct the research along particular paths. Each epistemology, ontology, axiology or methodology – every science – involves what Latour (1987) terms 'black boxing':

...[when] something is too complex to be fully explained or represented, a black box is drawn to replace the complex arrangement; arrows indicate what goes into the black box, and what goes out, but the actual contents and workings of the box are not examined (Kendall & Wickham, 1999: 73).

My project has a 'black box' and like every other researcher, there remains a question mark over what I can know at all without even beginning to explore appropriate methods to gather that knowledge. My critical moment in this methodological journey was the realization that the righteousness of my decade of criticism of positivism and the natural sciences ~ particularly their claims to objectivity – sits on just as shaky ground as my own insistence that the way to 'do research' is to employ qualitative methods. The methodological highground of 'understanding' and getting 'closer' has lost a little warmth, or at least been tempered by an inward acknowledgement of social construction. As Alasuutari (2004: 604) contends, qualitative research itself is a social construct. The impact of these ideas upon my methodology has been to dissolve a traditional binarism between positivism and interpretism and to force a critical consideration of my own preferred methods for gathering knowledge – in this case, about communities and their participation in coastal zone management.

3.2 Methodology in Practice

My methodology prefers interpretism over positivism and thus qualitative methods over quantitative methods. The survey includes quantitative data collection but overall this is a qualitative research project. The quantitative data, in this case, provided some direction for the qualitative methods – the survey was used as an early but useful gleaning of community attitudes. Fundamentally, the method choice is guided by the type of understanding of communities, their coastal environments and the policy environment targeted by the research project. The representations and interpretations

of the coast which various communities, governments and environmental scientists bring to the community participation table are socially constructed and it is the relations between these different constructions of reality which are the guiding criteria for my method selection process. On the one hand, this qualitative approach challenges traditional research in coastal and marine management seeking a meaningful engagement between policy makers, scientists and communities. In the broader sphere of power and knowledge relations, this research challenges some accepted traditions about the nature of environmental science and policy research. As others have argued, the natural sciences need to adopt a human dimension in both their theory and practice. Conventional wisdom in the management of the coastal zone is that decisions to be taken regarding policy design, problem identification and research are questions left to environmental scientists. My study joins a host of others in asserting that the questions of environmental management are increasingly socially-based rather than scientifically-oriented (Beck 1992, Fischer 2001, Cowley & Walker 1999, Wynne 1996, Ross 1994). The selection of coastal and marine management as my research topic asserts the primacy of the 'social' in assessing potential directions and solutions for the 'natural'. It is, in short 'the need to resist and challenge the growing reliance upon the authority of "nature" to deal with problems that are primarily social both in their origin and in their solution' (Ross, 1994: 238) which motivates my research. Social research into environmental management is an emerging research area. I regularly receive emails from 'environmental science organisations' either requesting information on my research or invitations to participate in seminars and the like. The most recent was from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy that is establishing a register of research activity being undertaken in the general area of 'Social Research in Natural Resource Management'. My topic selection and the methodology I have adopted for my

research sets out some foundations for these emerging partnerships between the social sciences and the natural sciences.

A preference for qualitative methods need not be elevated at the expense of quantitative methods – what is needed is a multifaceted ‘way of seeing’. Indeed, the qualitative approach adopted here rests on assumptions of the social construction of reality, which is itself another social construction – it is almost tautological to draw attention to the ‘social construction of social constructionism’. In practice, while research methodologies claim a singular orientation, most adopt a number of epistemological and ontological positions. This is particularly evident in studies of ‘science and society’. By way of illustration, the degradation and care of the Australian coastline is a motivating factor in this project. These ideas and evidence of a coastline in potential danger have emerged from scientific literature which has furnished me with scientific facts about coastal issues. Hannigan (1995: 188) cites another example:

The assertion that global warming should not necessarily be taken at face value as an established scientific fact but rather seen as something which is open to the social construction of scientific and popular knowledge does not constitute a denial that greenhouse gas emissions exist or that they might possibly have global impacts

The challenge for researchers is ‘how to allow for multiple ways of seeing, whether through a single or fractured lense, instead of debates about false dichotomies and hierarchies of knowledge and knowing’ (De Cruz, 2001: 27). This research project, then, is a way of looking at community participation or a viewpoint that has sought knowledge and asked questions which I regard as neglected. For example, I have questioned how local communities understand (or administer) their relations with the coast at the level of individuals, communities and cultures which is largely (and critically) absent from existing literature on coastal and marine management. This research is not

another critique of the natural sciences and the consequences of their methodological flaws or ‘partial truths’ (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium and Silverman, 2004: 6). While this is a rich and worthwhile intellectual effort (though at times akin to intellectual torture), I do not anticipate that this critique of the sciences will aid in the everyday experience of coastal communities and this is a principal goal of my research. In an attempt to help people who are trying to help – community volunteers and the ‘experts’ – I have explored possibilities and opportunities at the local level of a few coastal communities. Much of the social science literature, especially the popular ones (see for example Merchant 1980, Haraway 1991, Ross 1992, Beck 1992) present a relevant yet bleak picture of the relations between science and society, but do not provide much in terms of local level pragmatic responses. I tend to leave these articles feeling quite disenchanting and disenfranchised – like a ripple facing the wave of something much bigger than me. The methodology that I have adopted here attempts an engagement with the natural sciences, not in order to denigrate or conversely, to elevate their claims to truth or to demand the big things like ‘ecological democracy’ (Beck 1992) – even though I concur. It is a project which seeks an engagement with the everyday. It is an attempt to illuminate some of the techniques of sciences’ interaction with local coastal communities (and vice versa) which are not immediately apparent from one ‘black box’ framework but which are elucidated by my own.

3.3 Previous Methods Used To Assess Coastcare

In the Australian context, environmental policymakers and scientists have made efforts to gauge community responses to coastal management issues. These efforts are mostly an exercise in quantifying responses to established ‘stakeholder issues’ such as fisheries, mineral exploration, indigenous issues, etc. and consequently are limited to particular frameworks established by environmental scientists and policy makers. The

South East Regional Marine Plan's Community and Cultural Values Assessment (2002) posted 250 surveys to community groups and conducted a random telephone survey (see Appendix A). In both community group and telephone surveys, structured responses to pre-existing policy issues did not give an adequate (or comfortable) space for respondents to present their own ideas. Further, data analysis of the open-ended questions lacked the methodological rigour which one might expect from such a large and committed assessment of community values. When I inquired as to the method for analysis of open ended questions, the reply I received indicated that staff simply read the responses and made 'general observations':

With the open-ended questions in the mailout, the fact that there were only 250 surveys distributed and many of those did not send a response it was possible for a few staff to read and analyse all of the responses. The responses to those open ended questions were able to be grouped into broad categories of similar responses, and based on that grouping it is possible to make general observations about peoples responses. For example you might be able to say something like 'X number of respondents were generally concerned about issue Y' (National Oceans Office, 2004, pers. comm., 12 March)

Recent work by researchers associated with the Cooperative Research Centre for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (CRC Reef) is more promising in its approach to management. As part of an overview of cultural heritage values and issues relevant to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, this project was designed to 'explore social attachments to the reef in regional coastal communities' (McIntyre-Tamwoy, 2004: 19). To explore social attachments to the reef, researchers emphasise the benefits of a 'cultural landscape approach to the management of values and practices' in an effort to 'understand the connection between people and places' (McIntyre-Tamwoy, 2004: 19). In one case study at Bowen, in Queensland, these researchers adopted a methodology which involved qualitative methods of data collection including an exhibition of historic photographs to generate interest in the project, along with community workshops. This

project includes community attachments to the coast and thus resonates with my own. This approach encourages a meaningful engagement with the human dimension of natural resource management although the implications for the practice of Great Barrier Reef management – and natural resource management generally – are unclear. This type of ‘community first research’, rather than consultation on predetermined coastal issues or priorities shows a clear commitment to ‘power sharing’ with communities living every day on the Australian coast.

Clarke’s (2002) study on the role and effectiveness of Coastcare as a mechanism for integrated coastal management attempted to establish how well the Coastcare program is linking three tiers of government and community in working towards coastal management goals. She used interviews, questionnaires, policy assessment and observation to evaluate Coastcare’s performance. Clarke (2004) approached 173 individuals from 7 key ‘stakeholder’ groups involved with Coastcare including the national Coastcare team, Commonwealth Coastcare managers, state Coastcare coordinators, regional Coastcare facilitators; managers of state coastal programs, local hosts of the Coastcare facilitators, state assessment panel members and a selection of coastal land managers. In contrast to Clarke’s approach (or perhaps complementing it), my methodology focuses primarily on the experience of Coastcare volunteers and those groups completing the project. Like Clarke (2002), I consulted with some key ‘stakeholders’ although the focus in my project was on the community experience of Coastcare (and the coast). Clarke (2002) notes the lack of information collected nationally about the ‘demographics and dynamics of volunteers working on Coastcare’ . Her Coastcare research is an examination of the overall efficacy of the program from the perspective of the key actors implementing the program. This project thus complements

her study by beginning to provide some data on how the project has been received and embodied by communities.

Overall, there has been limited critical evaluation of the Coastcare program from government bodies. The Mid-Term Evaluation of Coasts and Clean Seas 1997-1999 reported on at least eight other programs operating under the initiative. In the case of Coastcare, eight case studies of successful projects are presented out of a potential 700 estimated groups nationally (Environment Australia, 1999: 13). These case studies are descriptive, detailing project aims, organisation and results and notably exclude any meaningful research into project participants or groups. The Mid-Term Evaluation also indicates the success of Coastcare in establishing productive relationships between local land managers and communities, procuring indigenous participation and a general increasing awareness in communities about coastal management issues. The report cited some problems with Coastcare, including the late receipt of funding, seasonal delays in work due to weather, problems with communities pursuing non-urgent environmental projects, and general issues associated with volunteerism like maintaining membership and unexpected costs to volunteers (Environment Australia, 1999: 20). Coastcare's performance after the completion of the National Heritage Trust 1 (NHT1) has provided some quantitative data on the project's outcomes. The evaluation of 842 Coastcare projects (40 percent of the total projects completed during NHT1) cited the kilometers of fencing completed, the number of trees planted, metres of path constructed and square metres of weeding undertaken by these projects. As Clarke (2004) points out, even from an environmental perspective, this evaluation of the program is not 'particularly adequate' as it does not detail the 'quality and longevity of the completed works'. In terms of evaluating the success of the program by seeking out

the views of its participants, or collating basic demographics on participants, or some qualitative analysis of the community members' experience of participation, there is a clear gap in data collection and analysis. My research begins to fill that gap.

In Australia, environmental policy is notorious for its lack of evaluation and where evaluation has occurred, the bureaucracy has tended 'subvert evaluation or to fit it into their own frame of reference, thus distorting its original purpose' (Walker, 1992: 251). This is certainly the case with the Mid-Term Evaluation where Coastcare staff are the key source of information on the success of the program. It is an oversight to assess a community program on the experience of its staff without undertaking simultaneously at least, a thorough examination of the experience of its communities. The methodology adopted in my project is distinct in prioritising community - participant interpretations of their engagement and of the coast generally. The key factor which differentiates this research from previous work is the insights I offer into how communities understand their environment and their participation. Figures which indicate the number of Coastcare projects and successful completions fail to identify the people who policy seeks to address; what their interpretations of the coast are and their issues, hopes and fears for the coastal environment. The quantitative and qualitative data I collected from the selected Coastcare groups at North Stradbroke Island, South Peregian and Mudjimba provides some valuable insights, specifically into community participation in the management process and generally, community interpretations of the coastal zone. The results direct environmental scientists grappling with ideas of 'power-sharing' and 'community' to some contentious issues of 'knowledge and power' which await meaningful debate in environmental science circles. Environmental policymakers will be

interested in general demographics and the responses of these active community members to policy initiatives.

3.4 Research Design

My fieldwork involved several stages:

- Quantitative survey of Coastcare volunteers from three SE Queensland Coastcare groups.
- Follow-up focus groups with volunteers who completed the survey.
- In-depth qualitative interviews with Coastcare employees and bureaucrats to compare Coastcare volunteer responses with government responses to issues of community participation in coastal and marine management.

Further detail on my fieldwork timeline is provided below:

- Initial contact with Coastcare Queensland and introduction to my project;
- Formal letters to Coastcare Managers to request permission to approach three Coastcare groups and permission to interview key Coastcare personnel;
- Selection of Coastcare groups in consultation with Coastcare Facilitator responsible for groups operating in the SE Queensland region;
- Initial contact by phone with contact person from each Coastcare group;
- Establishing a suitable time to meet the group members, usually at a 'work day' to introduce myself, my project and request their participation;
- Distribution of surveys by either post or face-to-face(October 2002);
- Return of surveys (all returned by December 2002);
- Organising focus groups and interviews. These took place between May and June 2003;

- Transcribing of interviews and focus groups and coding using the qualitative software program, NVivo;
- Entry of quantitative data into SPSS; and
- Data/discourse analysis.

In order to gather my qualitative and quantitative data, I constructed a survey with both structured and non-structured responses. Themes from the surveys and those which emerged during my literature survey established some key areas for discussion in focus groups. I designed a focus group agenda which listed topics for discussion. Forde , Meadows and Foxwell (2002) used this method of preliminary open-ended questions and follow-up focus group discussions to good effect during a national study of Australia's community radio workers. Focus groups are often used to complement quantitative data to 'tease out the reasons for surprising or anomalous findings' (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999: 6) and to reveal rich and deeper detail. During the interviews I conducted with key Coastcare personnel, I asked similar questions to those included on the focus group agenda as well as pursuing some additional areas to address specific policy questions which were the domain of bureaucrats. The in-depth interviews were used in the critical analysis of policy documents and these results figure prominently in Chapter 4 which is dedicated to policy analysis.

During the course of my fieldwork, I distributed 36 surveys to three Coastcare groups. I selected the three groups based on their history with Coastcare (each group had more than one successful grant application), their proximity, and on advice from the SE Queensland Coastcare Facilitator. The facilitator indicated that at least one of these groups had complaints about the Coastcare program but all were very active and

successful with their projects. In their initial funding applications, these three groups summarised the goals of their project as follows:

Group 1: Victory Park South Peregrine Dune Rehabilitation Project Stage 2

South Peregrine Beach Community Association Inc.

The South Peregrine Beach Community Association Inc. is a member of Maroochy Shire Council/Greening Australia Adopt-a-Park Program and is working with these organisations by way of regular community tree planting and weekly working bees on control of weeds and introduced species, revegetation and erosion stabilisation at the dune area adjacent to Victory Park, South Peregrine. We are seeking a grant for plants and materials to continue maintenance and extension of this project which was commenced in August 1998.

Group 2: Mudjimba Wallum Heathland Regeneration Project

Mudjimba Progress Association Inc.

Coastal heathland is well documented as the most threatened vegetation type on the Sunshine Coast, supporting more rare or endangered species than any other habitat (Maher & Assoc. 1998). Since 1998 Mudjimba Progress Assoc volunteers have been rescuing wallum plants from development sites and regenerating wallum heathland on a former tip site at Mudjimba. The most successful regeneration technique has proven to be spreading wallum topsoil. Owners of proposed development have given consent to salvage wallum plants and topsoil. This project aims to transport 500m³ of wallum soil to expand the regeneration area to 8000m², install interpretative signage and walkways and print a Wallum Heathland information brochure.

**Group 3: Deadmans Beach Erosion Control, Revegetation and Walkways Project
Point Lookout Surfriders Club Inc.**

Deadmans Beach on North Stradbroke Island is one of SE Queensland's most popular coastal areas, attracting 35,000 people in peak periods. This project will fix extensive erosion resulting from constant foot traffic and dangerous random tracks. Construction of safe paths, inground and above ground steps and boardwalks will save what remains.

Each group estimated around 12 people regularly worked on their project. However, a characteristic of community participation in this domain is that some core members (approximately 6-8) in each group were more likely to regularly attend work days than others. Groups reported that at times their membership exceeded 12 volunteers but agreed that 12 was an average figure. Of the 36 surveys I distributed, 26 were returned, representing a high response rate of 72 percent. I believe that introductory meetings prior to the distribution of the surveys, frequent phone conversations with key people within the groups, and genuine interest and respect for each group's achievements, established a rapport which yielded such high response rates. Of course, the benefit of a smaller sample is that time and cost affords a more concerted and directed effort to establish a rapport with respondents. Each group I approached was very positive about my project and, typical of the volunteer, was eager to help. Two focus groups went for approximately three hours while the third group met for 90 minutes. I also conducted three in-depth interviews. Two of these interviews were with Coastcare employees while the third was with a member of the Queensland State Assessment Panel which under the original National Heritage Trust was responsible for recommending projects for approval to the Federal Minister. Each interview lasted for more than one hour.

3.4.1 Survey Design

The survey is divided into four sections: (see Appendix B for the full survey)

The first section was designed to shed some light on the cultural values of Coastcare participants. Purposefully, I asked personal questions which related to memories of the coast and recreational activities on the coast at the beginning of the survey. A series of questions about the personal experiences of participants was followed up with questions relating to their opinions on broader coastal management issues such as ‘Is enough being done to protect and preserve the coastal and marine environment?’ I avoided the traditional classification system of fishing, tourism, mining, etc. and used mostly unstructured questions to give participants an opportunity to convey their own priorities for the coastal environment. There are some obvious issues which arose during the literature survey which related to the capacity of governments and scientists to protect coastal and marine areas and also some general questions regarding attitudes to contentious environmental issues. Some of these were dealt with using a brief survey of environmental attitudes which contained (7) short provocative statements (vanVuuren, 1993) on issues such as science, tourism, economics, nature and development and asked participants to rate their potential agreement or disagreement. These issues were raised again in the focus groups in acknowledgement of their importance in overall coastal and marine management. A short question on the source of respondents’ information about coastal issues and a rating on the reliability of these sources is interesting in terms of the relations between media, journalists, communities and environmental issues although these have not been explored in any depth here. The relationship between communities, their environment and sources of environmental news and information is an area worthy of further research.

Section 2 of the questionnaire sought data on the Coastcare project and issues of administration. Specifically, this section focused on respondents' reasons for involvement and the personal benefits they gained from volunteering. This aimed to ascertain if participants at the local level saw themselves as achieving key Coastcare policy objectives, especially the goal of interaction between other bodies responsible for managing coastal areas. This section asked questions designed to uncover respondents' views on the Coastcare program.

The third section posed questions about environmental policy, respondents' knowledge of policy and if they were interested in knowing more. The assumption in coastal and marine management is that communities need 'environmental education'. I was interested to learn about active members' perceptions of and attitudes to this notion. The question which asked if respondents considered themselves 'experts' is critical to an exploration of the relations between knowledge and power which forms the central theme of my research.

The fourth section asked some basic demographic questions: age, employment status, income and gender and so on to provide detail on who is volunteering for these community programs and to enable a comparative basis to gauge the veracity of the 'usual' volunteer and anecdotal information about volunteers gained through Coastcare employees.

3.4.2 Focus Groups

The goal in using focus groups is to get closer to participants' understanding of the researcher's topic of interest....Focus groups are useful when it comes to investigating what participants think, but they excel at uncovering why participants think as they do (Morgan, 1988: 24-5).

A defining feature of focus group research is its rejection of 'statistical representativeness' in favour of a 'theoretical sample' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which aims 'to generate talk that will extend the range of thinking about an issue' and thus recruits 'groups that are defined in relation to the particular conceptual framework of the study' (McNaughten & Myers, 2004: 68). The focus groups were well-attended, averaging six participants. The appropriate number of participants in any one focus group is generally 6-10 participants though less is considered adequate especially where the discussion is to be duplicated at different venues (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999: 8). Generally, 6-10 participants is an ideal number for a focus group which allows interaction between members and avoids the confusion which can arise in larger numbers. Data revealed by the focus groups is the most significant aspect of my research and the insights I gained during these discussions provide the depth I need to explore my research question. The agenda for the focus groups (see Appendix C) was based upon initial observations in the returned surveys and themes which had emerged during the literature survey. In part, the focus groups generated debate on my topic of interest – knowledge and power relations in community participation initiatives. The agenda also sought a more general enquiry into respondents' opinions on their participation, the coast and possibilities for the future. In the course of a three hour discussion, other stories, information and events were relayed which were not on the agenda. For example, two focus groups recounted some local history which led to the establishment of their Coastcare groups. This type of unexpected information is a 'magic moment' for

the researcher and perhaps epitomises the advantage of qualitative research.

Structured questionnaires and statistics rarely create a space for participants to relay such stories and additional information providing insights into participants' experience of coastal management.

3.4.3 In-depth interviews

The interviews sought the opinion of those administering the program on various issues such as federalism and the various tensions involved, the political process of project approval, the role of communities and the success or otherwise of community participation. Due to the sensitivity of some areas of questioning, the interviews provided a forum where respondents could give their opinion without fear of retribution from colleagues (Appendix D & E). Political questioning, ranging from the role of developers to the seriousness of government commitment to the Coastcare program, is a potentially troublesome area for paid bureaucrats. The interview was an appropriate method to enable them to remain anonymous and to provide me with necessary background to the Coastcare program and government approaches to it over time. In-depth interviews were chosen for their capacity to uncover the 'private' experiences of the coast and to appease any suppression of points of view which may have occurred during a group session among colleagues (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999: 6). The interview transcripts attest to the success of this method in ensuring an honest and open dialogue beyond the institutional status of community participation in the program and how it is perceived by 'experts'.

3.4.4 Fieldwork Data Analysis

The survey contained some questions with structured responses and questions on demographics which were coded into the statistical program SPSS. This program is an excellent tool for collating quantitative data. The qualitative research software, NVivo, was used to distill themes and ideas which emerged during the interviews and focus groups. Among many other functions, NVivo enables the researcher to code discussion and/or statements into 'Nodes' (themes) which allow the researcher to immerse themselves in the data and importantly, makes it an easy task to retrieve relevant discussions when presenting research results. Another added benefit of NVivo is that discussion and statements can be coded under multiple nodes. Due to an error in transcribing, I had to code the interviews and focus groups twice which meant a particularly close reading of my research. Computer assisted data analysis enabled by programs like NVivo has attracted criticism for its propensity to alienate researchers from their data (Kelle, 2004: 473) although this has not been my experience. I have used NVivo primarily as a tool to organise and manage data. Like other aspects of my methodology, analysis has occurred in conversation with a variety of elements – one of which was the clarity enabled by organizing the fieldwork data using the NVivo program.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

Every research project has its limitations and mine is no exception. Time and financial constraints deemed a small number of interviews and focus groups with groups solely in the SE Queensland Region. The bureaucratic arrangements for Coastcare vary from state to state and geography will also influence a study able to undertake a larger sample size. For example, the Western Australian coastline differs, particularly in terms of population, from the Queensland coast. In addition, the Coastcare program itself varies in delivery from state to state. Given the depth of data I needed to answer my

research question, a larger sample would have proved difficult to select and evaluate. The sample size is small and as such it is necessary to avoid broad generalisations in the data analysis. However, given that there has been no comprehensive evaluation, quantitative or qualitative, of the Coastcare program, this study provides more in-depth knowledge of these groups and has the potential to act as a catalyst for evaluation of community participation in coastal and marine management on a state or national scale. Importantly, the methodologies adopted here ensure a more ‘grassroots’ perspective on the Coastcare program, beginning with community assessments, rather than a top-down policy approach.

3.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explored some key methodological issues which I have had to confront during this research. Mostly, these relate to fundamental challenges to the practice of research and how discussions surrounding epistemology, ontology – broadly, knowledge itself – have impacted the rationale for my methodology and the overall tenor of my research project. I have also outlined the multi-sited and multi-dimensional characteristics of my project by reflecting on academic, public and private influences which have impacted upon my methodology. Overall, I have adopted an approach – uncertainties and all – which has furnished me with systematic and appropriate ways of addressing the general lack of data on community participation in coastal and marine management from the perspective of those who volunteer. It offers the opportunity for insight into the context and discursive practices which shape the very nature of management process. The methodology I have developed here and my findings are tempered by the acknowledgement that my own position in relation to the coast, regardless of positivist or interpretist paradigms is a social construction:

...interpretive work does not produce research 'findings', bringing to light cultural facts which have lain buried like ancient iron objects awaiting a metal detector to pass over them. It constructs realities through continual interchanges that take place between researchers and their subjects (Murdock, 1997: 185)

Eventually, however, these intensely philosophical discussions are subsumed by pragmatism – the need to 'do' rather than to 'think' - and the need for a methodology which will advance our knowledge of the nature of the coastal and marine management process. Finally, I believe the methodological approach adopted here encourages communication between disciplines which can produce collegial relations between different – or juxtaposed – knowledges. Rather than elevating my own research rationale as 'truth', I have sought to understand positivism and associated knowledge systems to find connections and common ground from which productive research and policy alternatives can emerge.

Chapter 4 Community Participation in Australian Coastal and Marine Management

One of the things in this field is that it's full of true believers and people who think the whole thing is just wonderful; it gives them a great feeling to be in it and they want it all to grow without being critical about what it costs to run it and what's actually achieved apart from making a lot of people feel good (Interview No. 1, 2003).

This chapter is a critical analysis of the community participation initiatives which have emerged in Australian coastal and marine management with a particular emphasis on Coastcare. In Australia, enthusiasm for community participation (and consultation) in this domain is ubiquitous – calls for participation in various forms are found in policy statements at Federal, State and Local levels of government. Community participation and ways to ensure its success is also the hot topic in environmental science circles appearing in academic literature and conference timetables around the globe.

Hildebrand (1997: 1) defines the community-based coastal management process as the situation where 'the people who live and work in coastal areas and depend on these resources, are enabled to take an active and responsible role and increasingly share planning and decision-making responsibilities with government'. It is touted as a 'new form of partnership between governments and community-based organisations' with much debate among scientists as to whether such initiatives should be based on 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' approaches. Hildebrand's (1997) definition is typical in its lack of critical consideration for a complex entity such as 'community'. Drawing on romantic notions, policymakers and environmental scientists address communities as homogenous entities and neglect differences to the detriment of particular groups or cultures (Vasta, 2000: 110). A closer interrogation of 'community' empowers policymakers with a better understanding of their own position in the 'community' and further, offers avenues for the development of meaningful relationships with a more

representative sample from coastal communities. Through an analysis of a series of policy moments, this chapter presents an account of the historical and contemporary nature of relations between communities, governments and scientists. Initially, I will provide an outline of the conditions which have enabled the concept of 'community participation' to emerge as a 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1980) for coastal zone management and identify 'administration techniques' which have given community participation initiatives their current form. The analysis is conducted with a view to suggesting avenues which may provide potentially greater returns for coastal policy development and management.

The historical context of community participation initiatives reveals the conditions under which community participation has emerged as a policy directive. Certainly, community participation has not always been a policy goal for both environmental scientists and policy makers. Thus, the starting point for this historical analysis is the point at which these community initiatives became a focus for government administration. Accordingly, this chapter is, in part, a practical exploration of Foucault's notion of governmentalities (as discussed in Chapter 2), accepting that the 'increasing governmentalisation of social relations', including those between communities and their natural environment is a 'necessary and inescapable horizon of contemporary social and political life which, as such, conditions both the kind of practical influence intellectuals can reasonably expect to have and the manner in which this influence can be exercised' (Bennett, 1998: 61).

Governmentality draws attention to the 'institutional politics of detail' which establishes community participation in the process under consideration here as both an object and subject of environmental policy. A necessary corollary to this assessment is a critical

engagement with the evolution of community participation in coastal and management policy at the micro-level of policy design and institutional arrangements. Administration of the coast is set in terms of 'sustainability'. This has consequences for community participation initiatives which assume a homogenous community both enthused and motivated by notions of 'sustainability'.

While a deeper critique of sustainability is at issue here, I will avoid the temptation to see efforts to involve community as a hopelessly compromised and largely superficial endeavour. Community participation initiatives are premised on 'sustainability' and the concept itself is certainly not without its critics (Dovers, 2000). However, the possibilities for new knowledges and new relationships between communities, governments and scientists is hindered by analysis which focuses solely on the tragic flaws of environmental science and economics and by extension, sustainability. Unnecessarily pessimistic accounts will do little to encourage potentially new and mutually productive future relations. However, some critical analysis of existing power/knowledge relations and acknowledging that communities, scientists and governments have a history of relations which inform and, to some extent, direct policy is a step towards a deeper understanding of 'community'. To paraphrase Foucault (1990: 37), we must understand how the historical and contemporary relationships between communities and experts were made before we can unmake them. Only with this knowledge can legitimate and meaningful conversation emerge about the nature of future relations. If the task for environmental scientists is to consider 'power-sharing' with communities (Hildrebrand, 1997), then time spent critically assessing the communicative environment as it exists from a historical, social, political and cultural viewpoint seems a logical starting point from which directives for meaningful community participation can emerge. Failure to

undertake this critical task will result in the affirmation of existing power relations between communities, scientists and experts. It is a simple case of same ‘power/knowledge relations’, different policy initiative – and the promise of meaningful community participation in coastal and marine management a disappointing story of missed potential.

Community participation initiatives in coastal policy express the cultural values of those who are responsible for and who advocate their presence in coastal planning and management. Overwhelmingly, the positions of power are occupied by those with economic and/or scientific priorities for the coast. My concern here is to show how these relations of power and knowledge engender a ‘type’ of community participation which is very limited and specialist in its application and appeal to communities. The dominant presence of these discourses establishes a ‘regime of truth’ about community participation and so gives clear limits as to what can be said and what can be done—what is possible. An analysis of the techniques which have enabled the ‘community’ to become a legitimate object for environmental policy administration illuminates the effect of powerful environmental science and economic discourses on definitions of ‘community’. As the introductory quote suggests, ‘true believers’ who ‘feel good’ at the very mention of ‘community’ abound in the field of community participation. Critical inspection of the pillar upon which these community initiatives rest—ie. the definition of ‘community’ itself—has not been forthcoming. This chapter begins to deconstruct discourses around policy-based definitions of ‘community’ and to critically assess their presence in coastal policy.

4.2. Australian Coastal Policy

Obtaining a firm grasp on the history and current arrangements of Australian environmental policy generally is notoriously hampered by an acknowledged ‘ad hoc’ approach to planning and management by successive Australian governments (Dovers, 2000) as they have attempted to deal with the threat of irreversible environmental consequences. Add to this situation the absence of adequate policy evaluation, or what Dovers (2000) describes as ‘policy amnesia’, and a grasp on the triumphs and trials of Australian environmental policy becomes quite a challenge. As Dovers (2000: 11) asserts:

[C]urrent environmental management efforts are undermined by a confusion and complexity of roles and responsibilities across public and community agencies, authorities and groups, and ‘policies’ are more often than not difficult to nail down....

The confusion surrounding the roles and responsibilities of ‘stakeholders’* in coastal and marine management is enhanced by the Australian system of government where a clear insight into the roles and responsibilities of Commonwealth, State and Local government is absent. Furthermore, where a policy moment has produced a relatively clear allocation of powers and responsibilities between levels of government, a change of political party, particularly at the Federal level, shifts the goalposts again. The pernicious effects of federalism on Australian environmental policy is well-documented in critiques of Australian environmental policy (Walker 1992; 1999a).

Australian governments have expended much effort in establishing the environment as a site for government administration. For example, in the realm of government-sponsored investigations, at least 16 inquiries have been undertaken between the mid 1960s and

* An ambiguous term – who is not a stakeholder in the environment? Stakeholders often refer to those with an economic stake in coastal management.

1993 on coastal issues alone (Haward, 1995: 92). In the decade since 1993, more reporting and planning has occurred – numerous Productivity Commission reports (see www.pc.gov.au/publications), State of the Environment Reporting, State Coastal Management Plans, Australia's Oceans Policy (1998) and more regional plans, local government plans and several more international investigations such as the Johannesburg Summit (2002 – or Rio plus 10) and the Earth Summit + 5 (1997 – Rio plus 5), all of which impact upon Australian coastal policy. Add to this more than 500 pieces of environment-related legislation (including 100 pieces of Commonwealth legislation) and at least 66 international conservation treaties, conventions and protocols (Conacher, 2000: 131), and a clear picture of environmental policy becomes confusing and complicated. Fieldwork undertaken within the policy bodies acknowledges that the area is 'not clear'. One interviewee concluded:

We are knee-deep in reports and plans, especially plans – you just have to look for the number of plans that are around and in vogue just in South-East Queensland here, from forestry plans to water plans, catchment plans, river plans, creek plans, integrated plans, development plans and the rest of it. They look at what's coming next, ; what is the new thing that's in vogue, then they look at their approach and write a plan for what is going to be done (Interview No. 1, 2003)

Initiatives to incite and support community participation in coastal and marine management appear out of this quagmire of party politics, policy and legislation. It is possible to identify the 1980s and certainly, the 1990s, as heralding change in approaches and, indeed, enthusiasm for institutionalising the Australian environment. The 1990s are accepted as the watershed years in Australian environmental policy development (Crowley 1999; Haward 1995) coinciding with major international conventions and reports which have promoted the need for communities to become active in the management of the coastal zone.

Thom & Harvey (2000: 275) identify four triggers for the reform of Australian coastal management in the 1990s: global environmental change; adoption of the principles of sustainable development; application of strategic planning principles as a result of pressure for a more holistic or integrated approach to resource management; and greater community awareness of management issues and greater community participation in decision making. 'Global Environmental Change' and, particularly, the concern of greenhouse gas emissions and consequential rising sea levels was outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (1991; 1994) and the subsequent debate (Houghton, Meira Filho, Callander, Harris, Kattenburg, Maskell, 1996). This resulted in the recognition that coastal management systems would need significant modification to cope with emerging environmental consequences. As a result of the growing awareness of emerging environmental problems, the concept of sustainable development came to international prominence, being clearly outlined in the World Commission on Environment and Development publication, *Our Common Future* (1987, also known as 'The Brundtland Report'), and embraced wholeheartedly in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. The most recognisable statement encapsulating the outcomes of Rio, *Agenda 21* (1992), is the action plan for sustainable development which requires nations to pursue coastal management approaches that are 'integrated in content, and precautionary and anticipatory in ambit' (Cicin-Sain & Knecht, 1993). The result is nations pursuing sustainable development via Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICM) which has as one of its central tenets the goal of community participation and awareness of coastal management (Thom & Harvey, 2000: 275–278). The goal of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) and the policy process of ICM carry a directive to consult and enlist the participation of local communities. In either case (and

broadly applicable to overall natural resource management), community management and participation are key defining characteristics and represent an explicit acknowledgement that the participation of coastal communities is an integral component of coastal and marine management and policy (Hildebrand 1997; Thom & Harvey 2000; Clarke 2002, 2002a). ICM and ESD underpin community participation and the adoption of these principles have signaled a relatively new objective governing the administration of the environment.

This is a relatively new addition to the environmental policy environment emerging as a focus in the past 10-15 years (Harvey, Clarke, Carvalho, 2001: 162). The policy and, certainly, the popularity of ICM, provides a crucial insight into the techniques of administration which have established community participation as a legitimate enterprise for government policy—a legitimate site for governance. A host of intellectual and bureaucratic efforts have created ‘communities’ as objects for the administration of environmental policy. The discourses of environmental science and more specifically, ESD, provide the knowledge or the ‘intellectual machinery’ to legitimate government policy. Efforts to administer communities range from decisions about what role communities will have in consultation processes; what community projects are eligible for funding; and who in the community will be considered for membership of ongoing committees, etc. While this seemingly everyday practice represents encouraging signs for communities as an opportunity to participate in the policy process, the potential for new knowledges to emerge from this coastal alliance is tempered by a closer investigation of the discourses which inform and establish policies such as ICM. A discourse analysis of ICM reveals the ways in which the power/knowledge coalition of environmental science and economics act to define and limit the parameters of what can

constitute community participation in the policy arena. This is the cultural dimension of environmental politics or, more specifically, of community participation politics. The analysis reveals which ‘systems of representation’ commandeer definitions of, and approaches to, community participation in coastal and marine management and the consequences or potential of such relations.

4.3 Integrated Coastal Management

Over the past decade at least, policy documents ranging from international conventions (such as Agenda 21) to Queensland’s State Coastal Management Plan (2001) all carry reference to ICM. It is defined as follows:

A [continuous] and dynamic process in which a coordinated strategy is developed and implemented for the allocation of environmental, socio-cultural, and institutional resources to achieve the conservation and sustainable multiple use of the coastal zone (Hildebrand and Norrena, 1992).

The Rio Earth Summit (1992) is a significant moment in the enthusiasm for ICM. The section on ICM in Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 (1992) accentuates the need to achieve an integration which involves the identification of existing and projected coastal zone uses and their interactions, promotion of compatibility and balance of uses, the application of preventative and precautionary approaches, (including prior assessment and impact studies), and full public participation (Cicin-Sain, Knecht & Fisk, 1995: 94). As an indicator of the popularity of ICM in 1993, 75 countries, semi-sovereign states, and international organisations were engaged in 217 ICM efforts at the national and subnational and international levels. By 2002, these figures had dramatically increased to 145 countries, semi-sovereign states and international organisations involved in 698 ICM efforts at the same levels (Belfiore, 2003: 226). ICM is accepted in Australia, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Costa-Rica, Ecuador, Italy, Mexico, Nigeria, the People’s

Republic of China, Pohnepi State (Federated States of Micronesia), Sri Lanka, Turkey, USA, UK and Venezuela (Cicin-Sain & Knecht, 1998). Comparative analysis of the international attempts at ICM led Cicin-Sain, Knecht and Fisk (1995: 111) to distill and outline a consensus set of ICM guidelines:

Purpose of ICM

The aim of ICM is to guide coastal area development in an ecologically sustainable fashion.

Principles

ICM is guided by the Rio Principles with special emphasis on the principle of intergenerational equity, the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle. ICM is holistic and interdisciplinary in nature, especially with regard to science and policy.

Functions

ICM strengthens and harmonizes sectoral management in the coastal zone. It preserves and protects the productivity and biological diversity of coastal ecosystems and maintains amenity values. ICM promotes the rational economic development and sustainable utilisation of coastal and ocean resources and facilitates conflict resolution in the coastal zone.

Spatial Integration

An ICM program embraces all of the coastal and upland areas, the uses of which can affect the coastal waters and the resources therein, and extends seaward to include that part of the coastal ocean which can affect the land of the coastal zone. The ICM program may include the entire ocean area under national jurisdiction (Exclusive Economic Zone) over which national governments have stewardship responsibilities both under the Law of the Sea Convention and UNCED.

Horizontal and Vertical Integration

Overcoming the sectoral and intergovernmental fragmentation that exists in today's coastal management activities is a prime goal of ICM. Institutional mechanisms for effective coordination among various sectors active in the coastal zone and between the various levels of government operating in the coastal zone are fundamental to the strengthening and rationalisation of the coastal management process and must be tailored to fit each particular national government setting.

The use of science

Given complexities and uncertainties that exist in the coastal zone, ICM must be built upon the best science (natural and social) available. Techniques such as risk assessment, economic valuation, vulnerability assessments, resource accounting, benefit–cost analysis and outcome based monitoring should all be built in the ICM process as appropriate.

ICM is designed to involve government, sector interests and the community in the preparation and implementation of plans for the ‘protection and development of coastal ecosystems and resources’ (Clarke, 2002a). In Australia, ICM is a tool to thwart the deleterious effects of federalism and associated ‘tyranny of small decisions’. In Australia, ICM encouraged all levels of government to collaborate in the pursuit of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and the involvement of other interests and communities promises greater co-ordination of coastal management. The gradual ascendance of ecosystem-based management which transcends local council and state boundaries is some indication of the permeation of ICM. For example, Australia’s Oceans Policy (1998) has taken an ecosystem-based approach to management, defining eleven ‘regional marine planning’ areas.

4.3.1 ICM in Action — Prospects For Community

The ‘Uses of Science’ component recounted above (Cicin–Sain, Knecht & Fisk, 1995) clearly defines the business end of ICM as an explicitly positivist pursuit, nestled between the twin knowledge peaks of environmental science and economics. In this estimation, analysis of the ‘complexities and uncertainties’ of coastal management are neglected in the haste to affirm the propensity of risk assessment, economic evaluation, etc. to achieve ESD. And the use of business concepts like ‘Horizontal and Vertical Integration’ suggests that organising coastal management policy is similar to organising

a strategic plan for a multinational firm. Of course, this expresses the central position of economics in ESD and ICM but there is nothing 'new' here for communities, especially in terms of attempts to engage with them outside the limits of ESD. Admittedly, 'social sciences' and the need for an 'interdisciplinary' approach are mentioned in the ICM text and the suggestion here is not that all environmental science and economic discourses are necessarily inappropriate. However, the application of those principles to community participation and consultation initiatives has serious consequences for the 'type' of community participation which is established. At the margins here, where community participation and environmental science meet, is the propensity to create an inclusive and mutually informing 'type' of community participation, drawing on collectively the natural and social sciences, and expert and local knowledges. Of interest to the environmental sciences is the 'type of community' which emerges from their own knowledge paradigms and subsequently, their crucial role in defining the administrative boundaries of 'community' and 'participation'. This critical reflection facilitates the 'new partnerships' pursued by scientists and governments and is a general step in the direction toward a meaningful and, importantly, representative engagement with communities. The aim is to widen the 'administration net' so that sections of the community not excited by the prospect of knowledge about, or contributing towards, ESD are at the very least, validated in coastal and marine policy deliberations. Recent assessments of the coastal zone found that ICM efforts had failed to thwart the deterioration of coastal zones (Belfiore, 2003: 227). The deeper cultural critique of community participation in coastal zone management suggested here offers some alternatives for ICM in the future, especially in terms of motivating community participation. As the literature indicates, policy makers and scientists are willing to confront their role in community initiatives. Positive change to capitalise on the

opportunity presented by community coastal management is reliant on ‘experts’ who occupy positions of disproportionate power and who are thus well-positioned to instigate meaningful change at the level of policy administration and design.

The ‘type’ of community created by the current arrangements of coastal and marine management policy are specifically administered to carry out the objectives of ICM and ESD. Community values which exist outside the ESD objective are not incorporated and are consequently, relegated to the margins (if that) of formal policy design. The South-East Regional Marine Plan, undertaken as part of Australia’s Oceans Policy (1998), is an example *par excellence* of how specific administrative techniques are employed to ensure the continuing dominance of ESD while maintaining the semblance of ‘community participation’. Personal communication with the National Oceans Office has suggested that the SE Regional Marine Plan was one of the best examples of community consultation ever undertaken in Australian coastal management. Indeed, the SE Regional Marine Plan (2002) used an assortment of research methods to collect public input from random members of the community (1306 respondents) and various community and conservation groups (53 respondents). The random telephone survey of community members asked a series of statements to indicate their environmental attitudes to the region and also ‘self-reported levels of knowledge’ of the SE Marine Region. The level of self-reported knowledge was then used to ‘profile’ and ‘segment’ respondents (National Oceans Office, 2002: 8). Of the responses, 17 percent believed they ‘knew a lot to moderate’ amounts while 82 percent reported ‘knowing a little or nothing’ about the SE Regional Marine Region. From a critical perspective, the question, ‘How much do you know about the SE Marine Region?’ could be more precise if it were rephrased, ‘How much do you know about what government, scientists and

industry know of the SE Marine Region?...or, ‘What do you know about what we know?’

The problem is that at this fundamental level of questionnaire design, the parameters for legitimate knowledge of the coast is already heavily weighted in favour of the power/knowledge coalition of environmental science and economics. Of far greater concern to this example of community consultation is the 82 percent of respondents who reported they knew little or nothing. The critical questions must be: ‘How is it that so many reported knowing nothing about the environment in which they live?’ or ‘What knowledges of the marine environment do these respondents possess and how can we engage with them?’ And yet the discussion predictably pays more attention to the 17 percent who know a lot about what is already known in the practice of coastal and marine management. As a result, and despite all altruistic intent, the consultation process becomes an exercise in self-affirmation for the largely self-contained communities who speak the languages of economics and environmental science. The SE Regional Marine Plan shows how everyday techniques of administering communities, in even the seemingly virtuous task of seeking their opinion, is a method to affirm pre-existing relations among communities, governments and scientists. This is surely not the ‘meaningful participation’ sought by governments and scientists. It is fair to point out that alienating the majority of the community by drawing attention to their lack of knowledge about the coast is unlikely to promote community participation and awareness. Nor is it likely to produce the paradigm shift required to benefit the communities, governments, social and natural scientists from where potentially new and exciting relationships can emerge for all living, working, researching and policymaking on the coast.

4.3 Policy Path to the Coastal Community

Until the late 1980s and early 1990s, community coastal initiatives were sporadic and piecemeal (Dovers, 2000). However, by the mid 1990s, community participation had entered the formal arena of government administration. This was largely the result of the ascendance of environmental issues on the national political agenda during the 1980s. The rise of environmental issues in Australian politics is particularly evident in the 1983 election of the Hawke Labor Government that carried a manifesto to prevent the construction of the much-publicised Gordon-below-Franklin hydro-electric scheme proposed by Tasmania's Hydro Electric Commission (HEC). The Hawke Government's anti-dams policy was validated in the High Court a year later via the *World Heritage Properties Protection Act 1983*. This decision by the High Court also established a new precedent in the ability of the Commonwealth to make land-use decisions in the name of environmental protection, regardless of state government opposition. This period post-1983 was a significant one in Commonwealth-led policymaking which ensured the protection and conservation of significant forest and land areas and the prevention of some major industrial and mining projects on the grounds that environmental and/or cultural costs were too great. The environmental movement had succeeded in breaking the 'parochial confines of State-based land use decision making' and placed environmental issues on the national agenda (Economou, 1999: 65–66). By the 1990s, the nature of the Australian environmental agenda and its position in public debate had changed again. The issues-led environmental agenda still persisted but there was a growing discussion among policy actors — government, developers, unions and the environmental movement — on the details of decision-making procedures and technical questions about policy to achieve ecologically sustainable development (Economou, 1999: 66). During the 1990s, environmental issues largely became the

subject of administration, policy and pragmatics. The environmental movement's success in highlighting the aesthetic qualities of land areas (as it had done during the Franklin Dam proposal) and using this to leverage community awareness was largely lost.* The parameters for debate were policy-led and framed in terms of effective administration of the environment rather than an issue-by-issue debate led by the environmental movement outside the compromises of collaboration with governments, industry, etc.

In this context of the rise of the 'environment' on the national political agenda and the increasing preoccupation with issues of administration, the state of the coastal zone emerged on the political agenda and with it, a new policy commitment to community involvement. In 1991, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts released its report, *The Injured Coastline Protection of the Coastal Environment*, concluding that 'Australians have degraded the coastal environment, used the oceans as a sink and failed to really appreciate the value, beauty and importance of something we actually love very much, our coast' (1991: xiii). While expressing grave concerns about the discharge of sewage and industrial wastes, the introduction of pests through ballast water from foreign vessels, and water quality and the effects of development and/or tourism, *The Injured Coastline* (1991) asserted as 'fundamental' the acceptance of effective public participation at all levels of government.

The Committee (1991: xvii) concluded:

...particular problems and controversies arise in the coastal zone...as a result of the lack of public participation, the confrontationist procedures usually adopted in Australia to resolve these disputes and the failure of existing planning and regulatory schemes to adequately accommodate competing uses.

* Community protest over proposed uranium mining at Kakadu National Park is a notable exception in the 1990's

Soon after in 1992, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts released *Biodiversity: The Contribution of Community Based Programs* which contained an explicit recommendation to institutionalise a community-based coastal management program (1992: 71). Community-based management and participation in the coastal zone continued to gain popularity with consultation and publication of the *Resource Assessment Commissions (RAC) Coastal Zone Inquiry* (1993). The RAC was established by the Federal Government in 1989 with a statutory mandate to integrate ecological and economic aspects of resource management— a task destined for controversy. The RAC was globally unprecedented and despite some difficulties in defining specific goals, was impressive in its careful research and wide public consultation procedures and yet was dismantled after four short years of operation. The RAC made many uncomfortable recommendations and seemed to raise more issues than it answered—precisely because of its mandate to confront the ecological impacts of industrial economics (Dovers, 1999: 214–215). Crowley (1999: 57) describes this as a ‘greening at the institutional level’ which came complete with ‘expedient, illusory, placatory, rhetorical and symbolic policy solutions’ but an unwillingness to confront the difficulties in accommodating ‘ecological impacts’ in an industrial society. Before its premature withdrawal, the RAC undertook the Coastal Zone Inquiry which remains the most comprehensive coastal zone study ever carried out in Australia. The Inquiry involved 734 public submissions, 20 consultancy reports dealing with specialist coastal issues such as Indigenous affairs, legal issues, planning and other policy issues, the role of local government, six state case studies, nine public hearings and a host of other information papers and drafts.

The *RAC Coastal Zone Inquiry* contained a recommendation for a National Coastal Action Program which contained four elements: a set of nationally agreed coastal zone management objectives; arrangements for implementing and managing the national coastal zone program; greater community and industry involvement; and innovative management mechanisms. Riding on the success of Landcare (established in 1989), the RAC (1993: 153) concluded:

[G]iven the extensive community interest in coastal management and the range of programs that are being established piecemeal to promote community coastal management, a national coastal program modelled on Landcare and aiming to promote community based management of the coastal zone is required. Such a program could be called 'Coastcare'.

By 1995, completion of the *RAC Coastal Zone Inquiry* (1993) alongside *The Injured Coastline* (1991), the recommendations of the Ecologically Sustainable Development Working Groups, and in the aftermath of enthusiasm from the Rio Earth Summit (1992), the Australian Government released its Commonwealth Coastal Policy *Living on the Coast* (1995). This established Coastcare – 'a community action program' under the umbrella of the National Landcare Program. As per the *RAC Coastal Zone Inquiry*, *Living on the Coast* (1995: 26) also established the National Coastal Advisory Committee which gave 'representatives of peak community, conservation, industry and research bodies, Indigenous people, the National Landcare Advisory Committee and State and Local Governments' a formal mechanism to participate in coastal policy planning, implementation and delivery issues. The formal establishment of 'Coastcare' and the 'National Coastal Advisory Committee' brought community participation within the reins of government administration.

Initial funding applications for Coastcare were taken in 1995. Between 1995/96 and 2000/2001, Coastcare was allocated \$22.3 million to fund 2047 projects around

Australia's coast (Clarke, 2002a). In 1997, the Natural Heritage Trust was established and Coastcare was reestablished under the Coasts and Clean Seas Program. This aimed to address major coastal and marine management problems as identified in the *RAC Coastal Zone Inquiry Final Report (1993)* and the *State of Marine Environment Report (1995)* and was dedicated to the conservation, sustainable use and repair of Australia's coastal, estuarine and marine environments. Coasts and Clean Seas was supported by a number of complementary programs including:

- Clean Seas – to reduce the impact of sewage and stormwater on our oceans;
- Coastcare – to promote community participation in coastal and marine management activities;
- Marine Species Protection – to reduce threats to marine species of conservation interest;
- Introduced Marine Pests – to prevent exotic pests invading Australian waters and to manage existing populations;
- Marine Protected Areas – to support actions leading to the declaration of marine protected areas for conservation of marine biodiversity ;
- Coastal Monitoring – to identify and inform management decisions about significant threats to coastal and marine environments;
- Coastal and Marine Planning – to stimulate partnerships across governments, industry and the community to promote sustainable use of coastal and marine resources; and
- Capacity Building – to enhance the skills and knowledge of coastal and marine managers.

While Coasts and Clean Seas supported community involvement in other programs, Coastcare was described as the ‘flagship’ of community-based coastal management and supportive of the principles of ICM in Australia (Clarke, 2002a). In line with such principles, the Coast and Clean Seas framework established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between all levels of government in Australia. The MOU established the Intergovernmental Coastal Reference Group; financial and cost-sharing arrangements; schedules for each CCS program which outline objectives, types of projects, funding and management arrangements; promotion of CCS activities; reporting, evaluation and review procedures; the Commonwealth’s Coastal Management Objectives and Principles; and CCS Assessment Panels. Coasts and Clean Seas was also responsible for the development of *Australia’s Oceans Policy* (1998) which is touted as ‘the first comprehensive, national plan to protect and manage Australia’s oceans’ (Environment Australia, 1999: 6). *Australia’s Oceans Policy* (1998) contains a broad goal to ensure community participation in coastal and marine management. In another change of administration, the 2001 Federal Budget announced an extra \$1 billion for Natural Heritage Trust 2 (NHT2) to be delivered over five more years and established the Envirofund. NHT2 is to be delivered in three ways;

1. The Australian Government Envirofund is for small projects aimed at conserving biodiversity and sustainable resource use up to \$30,000 (GST inclusive). Envirofund supports on-ground actions to target local problems.
2. Regional Investments are the main source of funds from the Trust. At the regional level, integrated plans are being developed that will identify all the natural resource management issues in a region based on the best available scientific and technical information. Regional investments are closely aligned

with National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAPSWQ) announced in October 2000.

3. National/State Investments cover activities that have a national-state focus, as well as activities that cross over state and regional boundaries and are best dealt with at a broader scale. These investments also address matters of direct Commonwealth jurisdiction, such as those relating to Commonwealth waters.

The Envirofund has two stated objectives: to provide the opportunity and means for community groups to undertake small on-the-ground projects tackling important local problems; and to provide a mechanism through which community groups (in particular, those who have little or no previous engagement with the Natural Heritage Trust) can move towards effective engagement in broader regional approaches to natural resource management (NHT, Aust. Govt Envirofund Guide to Applications 2003/2004: 3). To this end, the Envirofund establishes and supports four NHT2 programs: RiverCare, Bushcare, Landcare and Coastcare, which replace and effectively summarise the numerous programs which operated under NHT1. Eligible areas for Envirofund grants include :

Native vegetation planting; fencing and other management techniques to protect and preserve habitat; weed control on public land; controlling stock access to watercourses to improve water quality; demonstrations or trials of new techniques for indigenous hunting, gathering or fishing; awareness raising activities; monitoring of water quality, species, habitats; relevant skill and knowledge development for resource managers and users through education and training; identifying, protecting and managing Indigenous cultural heritage resources (National Heritage Trust, 2003).

Like its predecessor, the Envirofund favours those grant proposals which have had no previous experience with the initiative. The establishment of the Envirofund has caused unease within policymaking circles and some are suggesting that it represents a (further) withdrawal from meaningful community-based coastal management. Clarke (2004) notes

a decline in applications for coastal projects since Coastcare was replaced by the Envirofund in 2003. The focus upon regional investments has affected on-the-ground relationships between Coastcare facilitators and community groups. Regional investments, as the main component of the Envirofund, are more complex and lack the very local community focus of Coastcare under the initial phase of the Natural Heritage Trust. Community groups in each state can now access grants from either local state funds or the Envirofund. Clarke (2004) describes this situation as a ‘move towards increased fragmentation and complication of agency networks’.

4.4 Coastcare and Neglect – A Critical Perspective

The establishment of Coastcare and initiatives such as the National Advisory Committee are policy programs which institutionalised community participation in coastal and marine management and thus, in part, fulfilled Australia’s commitment to ICM.

However, the few critical assessments of Coastcare (Harvey, Clarke & Carvalho, 2001; Clarke, 2002, 2002 (a), 2004) and of community-based coastal (or resource) management generally (Dovers 2000, 2000 (a)) have expressed doubts about governments’ dedication to, and motivation for, community-based programs like Coastcare. Dovers (2000: 4) writes that there is ‘growing suspicion that our [community] participation efforts are not fair dinkum’ and asks critical questions regarding the motivations of government policy:

Do governments embrace community involvement because it makes practical policy sense and because they believe in participatory democracy, or to avoid their own obligations and out of desperation borne of past policy failure?

Certainly, the tenuous nature of Coastcare funding and the lack of any ongoing commitment in terms of policy does not foster a relationship of mutual trust and faith between communities and governments. This is evident in the preference for ‘Coastcare

grants [which] favour short-term, small scale one-off projects that do not necessarily facilitate an ongoing commitment to participation in coastal planning and management' (Clarke, 2002). The sincerity of government commitment to the Coastcare program is questioned both in the academic literature and by participants in my fieldwork. One community group, although enthusiastic and committed to the program, agreed that from a political perspective, community groups were a 'tick box' (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003). From a political perspective, this community group doubted the sincerity of politicians' commitment to their local endeavours.

The uncertainty of the status of the Coastcare program between the first and second Natural Heritage Trust schemes (NHT1 and NHT2) did little to thwart the negative perception of government commitment to the program. One bureaucrat expressed frustration with the change, especially the dismantling of the National Coastcare Office, explaining:

They had a restructure down there and they thought, "Oh, Coastcare is pretty close to the end of their thing now. And all the people have been assigned to other jobs. The manager of...is now the national manager of Coastcare in her spare time – one person! She probably has an admin person and there's certain procedures that have to be done – some involving financial arrangements that make it all happen and just maintaining the basic office structures of who is working for us, what is actually happening, collecting final reports and writing ministerials when questions get asked. She doesn't know what's going on of course. So what does that tell you? It tells you about commitment to the cause...From a national perspective, it's been a poorly defined programme and all the states just ran what they thought was Coastcare and did it in their own way. The examples that I've given you just demonstrate the commitment of E.A.[Environment Australia] generally to Coastcare. They dissolved the national office when we still had 6 months to run. Those last 6 months were the focus of getting a lot of projects finished. It was a lunatic decision (Interview No.. 1, 2003).

The lack of evaluation of the community-based programs also feeds doubts about 'commitment to the cause'. *The Mid-Term Evaluation of Coasts and Clean Seas*

(1997–1999) (Environment Australia, 1999) cited eight successful Coastcare case studies out of a possible 422 projects completed during that period. The survey of Coastcare community groups failed to allow appropriate time frames for a response from members and the report admitted that future surveys should be distributed through Coastcare facilitators (Environment Australia, 1999: 71). As a result, the *Mid Term Evaluation* was a superficial exercise in terms of gauging community responses to Coastcare—the evaluation included only successful Coastcare groups and the case studies were a description rather than an analysis, critical or otherwise. The lack of a critical assessment of community-based initiatives adds to the overall institutional suspicion of the motives behind political support for the Coastcare program.

what I think is lacking in this field is the study and the definitive document that says, from looking back on Coastcare and Landcare and all the rest of it, “does community-based natural resource management work?” In some circumstances it does and in some cases it doesn’t. “When does it work, how does it work and to what ends should it be applied, to what things shouldn’t it be applied and how should the whole thing be managed?” That’s what we don’t have. The order in which it needs to be done, is to look back on what’s been done, what has worked and what hasn’t worked, over a range of areas with a number of people who are capable of critical thinking (Interview No.1, 2003).

Current evaluation of the first of the Natural Heritage Trust programs (NHT1) does not promise any substantial critical or qualitative evaluation of Coastcare. In fact, the lack of basic statistical data on the Coastcare program has proved frustrating during my own research where I have consistently confronted the typical *ad hoc* nature of the overall environmental policymaking process. Seemingly basic data is difficult to obtain and that, of course, assumes that the data has been collected and collated. On completion of NHT1, the Coastcare program boasted 2000 Coastcare groups involving 60,000 people but has only anecdotal evidence about who these people are, what motivates their involvement, what they see as their triumphs and frustrations with the program and so on. Staff suggest that important documents ‘may not have been filed’ at the time (A.

Hayes, 2003, pers. comm., April 8). Coastcare facilitators are drastically under-resourced and unable to fulfill evaluation roles though they are conscious of the urgent need for assessment. One facilitator covers Coastcare groups from Coolangatta, near the Queensland/NSW border, to Miriam Vale, outside Maryborough. It is a lengthy section of coastline – approximately 600 kilometres – and there is little time to visit groups, let alone evaluate the program. Generally, the lack of routinely-collected data and the development of some plan for gauging the success of public participation by environmental agencies (Chess 2000) does little to encourage faith in policy administrators. My fieldwork revealed internal frustrations with the lack of accountability and evaluation of the Coastcare program, particularly pertaining to the National Coastcare Office:

I've never had a single enquiry from the national office. I send a copy of all the final reports when I accept them, down to Canberra. I've never had a query about anything that was in one of them, or somebody wanting to phone me and discuss either the quality of any particular project or area, or the quality of the outcomes of the whole program. It's always been tying up loose ends, administrative procedures, "where are we up to?" but no one ever stops and says 'what are you actually achieving?' in terms of actual results. Or, "I had a look at the final report on x project and I've got a question about section 8..." The fact is that the reports get down there, an administrative person types the data into a database and then it gets thrown in the pile with hundreds of other ones. Nobody is really interested in the content of it. That's been a bit of a disappointment to me (Interview No. 1, 2003)

The systemic lack of resources for the Coastcare program suggests that public participation is firmly on the margins of the coastal policy process and while its achievements are encouraging, political will may pertain more to election success than any overarching commitment to the value of communities in coastal zone management. This is particularly evident in the grant approval process where State Assessment Panelists (who under NHT1 recommended projects for approval) noted the influence of partisan politics in the Coastcare project:

It's just that the government can't afford to withdraw funding from environmental grants to the community, which has been in place for some time. They can't close down Coastcare and Bushcare and so forth and put nothing else there. There has to be something, otherwise, they'll get electoral backlash. EnviroFund is also extremely useful for them as it has a high profile, in terms of 'there's nothing local members like better than to have a photo opportunity to be seen handing over a cheque for \$8,600 to a local group'. Local papers and TV stations love this sort of stuff. They get the opportunity to go and do that and it looks as though the government is doing something. It costs them next to nothing. EnviroFund costs the Commonwealth Government maybe \$20million a year. In terms of what it buys them, that's peanuts. They keep the thing going, they avoid backlash, they get their photo opportunities and it presses all the right buttons, i.e. 'we're working with the community, we're working with local government, we're working at the grass roots level'. Then the MP will have a photograph taken handing over a cheque to a guy wearing a Coastcare t-shirt with a tree seedling in one hand and his little trowel in the other it's priceless so why wouldn't they do that?... there's no real intent to seriously monitor what they're going to achieve or to seriously work with these people. It's a good thing though and it doesn't cost the government much to keep it going (Interview No. 3, 2003).

The influence of politics in project approval procedures was noted by one former State Assessment Panelist who indicated that the further the decision was taken up the political ladder, the more likely politics were to be involved.

The middle managers are usually real workers and the Director-Generals are usually political animals. So it's the middle managers who are passionate about their job, they know what the problems are and they can see something brewing. Because they have to submit it to someone higher than them, quite often that person higher won't see that passion, and will just say, "That's not political, it won't get us the results". So that happens. I'm actually experiencing that at the moment with a couple of the panels that I'm on. I can actually see staff leaving, coming and going. On one hand, you've got people who are passionate about their job and on the other hand, those who are political. They're not really interested in what the issues are, they just want to support high-profile and trendy issues (Interview No.3, 2003)

Another frequent criticism of Coastcare and other community participation initiatives is that they are government cost-cutting devices (Clarke 2002, Westcott 1998, 2000) where local communities provide free labour for projects which would normally be the responsibility of governments, particularly local government. However, as one

bureaucrat suggested, 'cost-cutting' is a far too simplistic if not misleading analysis of the Coastcare program and its position in overall environmental policy.

Participant: I don't think there's any kind of ethos or any little pointy-headed bean counter sitting behind a desk in some government office, saying, "if we run these programs, we're going to get all this work done that we want to be done, on the cheap". I think there are political benefits that far outweigh that. In many cases, it would actually be cheaper to get a contractor to come in and do the job professionally to the required standard, in a short amount of time, then get out of there and hand it over to the community group to do the maintenance on it. Then it would be to pay me and the facilitators to write the reports, give them the funding, manage the project, etc which would take them 3–4 years to do the same thing. You never know what you're going to get in that situation.

Facilitator: It's just an idea I read that I thought was interesting.

Participant: People in the community like to think that, and so do some community groups. Everybody has their self-image to preserve and likes a bit of kudos and esteem, especially when you do go out and work for the community for nothing. It makes you feel good and you want some kudos, but you don't always get it. There might be some cases where really efficient groups did some projects and from the point of view of the local government, who are the managers of the land, they might actually get an efficient outcome. If you look at the whole macro-economic scene, I'm sure that it's not a way of getting work done cheaply. It's more of a political tool and a social tool and all that (Interview No. 1, 2003).

The assertion that community participation is a 'social and political tool' is particularly insightful. As outlined above, community participation does have the propensity to offer partisan politics another tool to please a swaying electorate. And as Edelman (in Walker, 1999b:248) argues from a politician's viewpoint, it is as useful to be seen to be doing something about a problem as it is to be actually fixing it – a tokenistic effort or 'tick box' is enough from a political perspective. That grant approval is sometimes manipulated to serve ends other than the simple merits of the project suggests a transparent process for project selection which ideally would take place outside the walls of parliament. The current Envirofund arrangement where grant approval is the sole preserve of the federal government does not bode well for 'transparency', reducing the input of others in the grant approval process. The idea that Coastcare is a social and

political tool brings to bear a range of critical thought largely absent from even anecdotal evaluation of the Coastcare program. As a part of the broader pursuit of ICM, Coastcare is not only the ‘local on the ground component’ of ESD. In part, the participation of these communities also acts to legitimise the policy of ESD and associated beliefs in the rectitude of science and economics to deliver solutions to coastal degradation.

Current coastal policy seeks a sense of stewardship from communities to promote community awareness and participation in the protection of the coastal zone but offers legitimacy only to those expert discourses which exist beyond the reach, and possibly the interest, of the majority of the ‘community’. Community participation and consultation is geared towards those members of the community prepared to empower themselves with the knowledges of environmental science. As will be shown in later chapters, the pursuit of ESD is not the motivating factor for members of community groups. Their participation can be traced to a range of other discourses, which contradict and are often critical of ESD objectives. Nevertheless, their participation, albeit ‘feel good’, acts to not only provide local solutions like appropriate beach access but to also legitimise the current path and priority of ESD – values which Coastcare participants may or may not share. In this way, these initiatives depoliticise coastal policy by offering a path for active and motivated citizens to participate in environmental management. The community members participating in the program are given an opportunity to be a part of the political process and this, to varying degrees, satisfies their environmental concerns. Simultaneously, those members of the community who do not participate in a local Coastcare group have foregone their opportunity to be a part of policymaking and thus have a reduced platform for public complaint. Possible confrontations between communities and governments are absorbed by community

participation initiatives which administer communities as ‘allies’ rather than a reserve of untapped knowledge/s awaiting exploration by coastal experts. The power to participate in coastal and marine management is hardly ‘meaningful’ in any critical sense of questioning the status quo or the direction of current coastal management policy. Meaningful public participation occurs only ‘when community stakeholders are given a legitimate role in the ICM process, and this occurs when governments share their power base and accord communities a supported role in decision making’ (Ellsworth, Hildrebrand & Glover, 1997: 121-122). Recent initiatives like Coastcare provide avenues for participation but do not afford communities with a role in decision-making at the level of policy design. The opportunity for participation is token (or a ‘tick box’) as community members do not share the ‘power base’ so much as they *support* the continued power base accorded to experts in environmental science. A veteran of community-based initiatives explained one definition of a ‘meaningful’ role for communities

It’s all very frustrating. I’ve seen what tasks community should basically get involved in, even 10 years ago. They actually have a lot more avenues to access now, but what you still have to do and what is a fighting battle, is to get people who should be doing community consultation, to actually do meaningful consultation. For a lot of people, when they think of consultation, they think of “we’ll develop this package or plan or policy, and then we’ll take it out and tell people what we’ve done and then ask them to have some input”. That’s not community consultation. It’s still a battle to get people to really appreciate that good, meaningful consultation adds to the end product, along with good policy making. More and more, we’re relying on the community. With the new regional NRM groups, the idea is that they will be relying very heavily on community on-ground activity, but they have to make sure that they bring them along with them during the process of developing it, otherwise they’re not going to succeed, because the community shouldn’t, and I hope won’t, let themselves be used as a resource. It’s their free time, their ideas, their work that they are giving up into this – it’s their efforts and aspirations and they have to be involved in the decision about what to do and how to do it (Interview No. 2, 2003).

Community-based initiatives simultaneously motivate and placate an environmentally-aware citizenry by giving them the means to participate in coastal management but not the power to affect policy decisions surrounding the coastal zone. The lack of power afforded to coastal communities occurs at the general level of policy design which deems expertise in environmental science a prerequisite to ‘meaningful’ participation. If as a member of the community, your attachment and priorities for the coast relate to a spiritual, emotional, aesthetic or recreational dimension, then your position, while acknowledged, is not the fodder for policy design and certainly not amenable to administration under contemporary environmental policy priorities like ESD. Certainly, coastal policy aims to promote a sense of stewardship which stems from knowledge and respect for ‘Australian Beach Culture’, but this is an overall goal rather than one actively promoted and incorporated into coastal policy design. The community is offered an opportunity to participate in the culture of environmental science and engages with coastal issues via these pre-determined knowledge parameters. However, the point of supporting community participation in coastal management was to initiate new partnerships which would lead to the evolution of new parameters of knowledge for communities, scientists and governments. Essentially, Coastcare groups have been asked to ‘learn the lingo’ of environmental science with their own perceptions of the coast—their knowledges, cultures, beliefs and values—a question regrettably ignored. Cultural values such as a simple appreciation of beauty and a desire to maintain the aesthetic qualities of the coast are relegated to ‘introductions’ in policy documents—‘Australians love the coast’ etc—before moving on to the real business of ESD and the cultural values of economics and science and how these discourses can be administered in coastal policy. The rhetoric is that these community-based initiatives should lead to the evolution of new parameters of coastal management or new

relationships between communities, governments and scientists. This promise is cut down by the techniques to administer a program such as Coastcare which limit the scope for action, debate and ideas well before a community group takes to the dunes. Add to this the lack of coordination, resources and an overall situation of neglect, and the Coastcare program, despite the warm and fuzziness of ‘community’, begins to look rather cold and manipulated.

A quick perusal of the eligible areas for Coastcare funding confirms that community participation is an attempt to introduce communities to the knowledge of the environmental sciences and then have committed citizens carry out either education or fieldwork in coastal science. Other than concern for Indigenous cultural heritage, the eligible funding areas for ‘Coastcare’ projects express a continuing commitment to the natural science of the coastal zone. Where ‘education and training’ is mentioned, it refers to ‘environmental science’ education, such as the erection of ‘community education boards’ which often detail ecological processes or wildlife. Of course, there is nothing intrinsically harmful in an education project or in other monitoring or rehabilitation projects supported by the Coastcare program. Indeed, environmental science *per se* is not at issue—what is under critical review here is the way discourses of environmental science act to marginalise other knowledges of the coast and consequently, narrow the range of community ‘stakeholders’ interested in Coastcare specifically, and community participation in general. Government administration techniques narrowly define the boundaries of community-based management and further, define which knowledges are ‘important’ in terms of coastal planning. In this way, ‘regimes of truth’ are established in the arena of community-based coastal and marine management which determine

legitimate areas of community coastal concern. Following her study of South Australian Coastcare, Clarke (2002) agrees:

[O]pportunities for local stakeholders to meaningfully participate within the [Coastcare] program are constrained by government prerequisites: Commonwealth and state governments determine where funds will be directed, by favouring action-oriented projects that have measureable tangible outcomes and the community provides labour for the projects. There is little opportunity for members of Coastcare groups to directly contribute to modification of the program (such as amending eligibility criteria for funding) and there is no formal mechanism for community feedback for amendment to operational processes.

The establishment of community participation initiatives does not empower *all* members of the community to bring their own perceptions of the coast to the theory and practice of coastal zone management. Coastcare does support community participation in those specific sections of the community who are willing to undertake fieldwork in environmental science or similarly are willing to be educated and to discuss environmental science objectives. All of this occurs within the policy framework of ICM in the pursuit of ESD. In this sense, it is almost irrelevant that communities are not given the opportunity to amend the ‘program eligibility criteria’ as legitimate adjustments would be defined in terms of their support of ESD—and there is nothing new for community participation or ‘powersharing’ in that configuration. No small wonder then that these community groups have been labelled ‘communeaucracies’ and ‘bureaunities’ (Doyle, 2000) in recognition of their implicit affirmation of existing economic and scientific agendas favoured by governments and industry. This is the ‘type’ of community participation engendered by the Coastcare program. Without belittling the genuine efforts and achievements of these community volunteers, their work serves to maintain the status quo. This assessment of Coastcare does not ignore the ‘social capital’ (Putnam, 1993) which is often gained by individuals involved in community networks and community groups and policymakers are aware of this benefit. That said, the primary

purpose of Coastcare is not ‘social capital’ and it is appropriate to assess its (potential) performance in terms of its claimed goal of motivating meaningful participation in community-based coastal management.

4.5 Political Economy of Coastal Policy—Consequences for ‘Community’

The political economy of coastal policy shows that the organisation and finance of policy initiatives are geared toward initiatives which explore, research and implement ESD. In part, this is a cultural phenomenon which expresses the dominance of economic and scientific perceptions of the coast. Political economy draws our attention to the material consequences of this system of dominance. Simply, the dominance of economic and scientific discourses surrounding coastal policy is not only a cultural or symbolic phenomenon representing the values, beliefs and perceptions of characteristic groups, but also, importantly, ESD has material consequences which are expressed in the type of policy initiatives which are organised and funded. In the first instance, this means that those cultural perceptions of the coast which do not resonate with economics and science are not organised and financed as legitimate areas for policy concern. The ‘political economy of community participation in coastal and marine management’ is administered so that the only legitimate avenues for funding explicitly prioritise scientific definitions of the value of the coastal zone. Consider, for example, the extraordinary amount of finance allocated by all levels of government to environmental science R&D programs. As I have argued, this is not problematic in itself. Rather at issue is the way in which this political economy of legitimate discourses surrounding the coast marginalises other discourses which will arguably resonate with a greater proportion of the community.

In terms of policy, the most enduring and consistent discourses in Australian environmental policy have been those associated with ‘development’ (Walker, 1999a: 37). The hegemony of ‘development’ defines policy aspirations for the coastal zone. The belief that this development can be ecologically sustainable serves to block other discourses surrounding coastal issues. Walker (1992a: 235) argues:

[The] importance of hegemony lies primarily in the capability to continue the promotion and maintenance of characteristic myths—such as those about ‘development’—and the ability of those in power to ‘block’ dissenting viewpoints. In particular, by maintaining existing institutional arrangements and promoting elite consensus on their efficacy, serious consideration of viable alternative strategies may be throttled, delayed, or entirely prevented.

Political economy organises and finances the continued dominance of environmental science and concurrently, economic discourses in the field of coastal policy. In turn, the confluence of these discourses elevates ESD as the only legitimate path for the coastal zone. This is not to say that tacit support for ESD is the only consequence of community participation or that community participation can be only defined in terms of ESD.

Certainly, community members are active in the interpretation of the coast, in their criticism of government, scientists and other policy makers, etc and the presence of ESD does not make them passive dupes of policy—they are critical consumers. There is a power relation between communities and government and scientists which is not completely dominated by experts – this power relation is a site of struggle. However, the macro arena of political economy shows that our applause for community participation should be withheld until a critical analysis of both the symbolic and material circumstances of coastal policy discourses are considered. This critical insight offers policymakers a description *of to whom they are speaking* when they undertake a community initiative and further, offers avenues to engage with members of the community either ignored or maligned by the current context of community participation. This ‘widening of the net’ may lead to the organisation and finance of community

initiatives which promise to resonate with a larger proportion of the community and thus aid the success of policy initiatives.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with an overview of coastal policy and a general acceptance that the policy arena is fraught with confusion and complexity surrounding roles, responsibilities and policy direction. Through the lens of Foucault's notion of governmentalities, I drew from some significant events in the environmental policymaking process which led to the establishment of Coastcare and generally, institutional enthusiasm for community participation. A closer look at Coastcare shows the ways in which administration of community participation in coastal and marine management created a particular 'type' of community. These techniques of administering coastal communities instituted a very specific 'regime of truth' which defines the possibilities for community participation in terms of ESD. ICM, as the policy plan for ESD, is the catalyst for institutionalising community participation. In practice, however, community participation processes under ICM sought the input of members of the community within the parameters already set by environmental science and economics (ESD). In turn, the emergence of Coastcare on the Australian environmental policy scene did not encourage new relationships between communities, scientist and governments. Rather, Coastcare reproduces 'old' relationships based on the dominance of economics and science. This occurs at the fundamental level of policy design where eligible areas for funding support ESD objectives. Consequently, other perceptions or relationships between community members and their coastal environment are not validated or incorporated. The potential to create something new in environmental policy is thwarted by a lack of critical analysis of those pre-existing relations which govern the administration of community participation in coastal and marine management.

Analysis of Coastcare gives valuable insight into the techniques of administration which ensure the continued dominance of economic and scientific discourses in the realm of community-based coastal and marine management. With this knowledge it is possible to propose other techniques of administering community based coastal management. As it stands, community participation initiatives and policy neglect many discourses of the coast which may resonate with a far more representative proportion of these coastal communities. This approach assumes that governments and scientists are willing to critically assess their historical and contemporary relations with communities. The few critical assessments of Coastcare express doubts about the seriousness of government commitment to the program (Dovers 2000, 2000a, Harvey, Clarke & Carvalho 2001; Clarke 2002, 2002 (a), 2004). The lack of evaluation of the program and inadequate administration and scepticism surrounding the role of party politics in the approval process further diminishes the status of Coastcare as a conduit for meaningful participation. While politicians 'kiss another Coastcare baby', policy actors are not allocated the resources to seriously assess the program and communities themselves remain ancillary to a program which promises but fails to deliver positions of power in the overall management of their local coastal zone. The propensity for meaningful participation to emerge from these arrangements, is at the very least, seriously diminished. Expanding the range of discourses legitimised in the public domain of coastal management is an avenue to aid the success of future policy initiatives. Recognition of the 'validity of knowledge, viewpoints and identity' and the 'history and identity' of community members at the level of policy design would be a fruitful direction to ensure a representative and meaningful engagement between environmental science and communities (Nurse-Bray, 2000: 165). Of course this would mean powerful groups

such as scientists and policymakers would need to confront critical analyses of their own role in the success or otherwise of community based initiatives — from the micro-level of community participation policy to the macro-arena of political economy. This is the ‘deeper meaning of power-sharing’ which accounts for the social, political, historical and cultural context of community participation initiatives. Community participation is situated at an exciting frontier for communities, scientists and governments. In this chapter, I sought to explore the historical and contemporary conditions for community participation as a necessary precursor to the future establishment of new relations between these participants in the policymaking process.

Chapter 5 Coastcarers on Community Participation

Most cultural criticism focuses on culture's critical relation (negativity) to the dominant positions and ideologies. Politics becomes defined as resistance to or emancipation from an assumed reality; politics is measured by difference. But empowerment can also be positive; celebration, however much it ignores relations of domination, can be enabling. Opposition may be constituted by living, even momentarily, within alternative practices, structures, and spaces, even though they may take no notice of their relationship to existing systems of power (Grossberg, 1988: 170).

In this research project so far, I have primarily considered the ways in which the expert discourses of governments and scientists have constructed a regime of truth which simultaneously defines, empowers and limits the participation of communities. I have argued that the coast is administered by the knowledges of economics and environmental science which define the parameters of what is legitimate in terms of community participation in coastal and marine management initiatives. Over the next few chapters, I will present fieldwork data to offer a deeper understanding of the 'local instance' of this process and how coastal management policy initiatives are received by on -the -ground volunteers. At this level of the 'everyday', individuals and community groups from South Peregian (Queensland), Mudjimba (Queensland) and North Stradbroke Island (Queensland) act voluntarily in ways which support and are in line with governmental objectives for community participation in coastal and marine management – and coastal and marine management generally. These three groups carry out projects which are defined by the policy objectives of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) and Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and define their success in similar terms. To some extent this situation limits the possibilities for community participation. This reading of communities and their interaction with coastal policy initiatives and their coastal environment reveals much about 'critical relations' of 'the dominant positions and ideologies' as outlined by Grossberg above. However, such an analysis neglects a

deeper cultural analysis of how these 'positions and ideologies' are negotiated by actual community members and groups. Listening to Coastcare participants recount their experiences of the coast and their community participation reveals that many are empowered by their actions in the coastal zone although this is often framed in terms unintended by policymakers. These local instances of 'celebration and emancipation' have occurred alongside the disproportionate access to knowledge and power detailed by a cultural critique of the overall coastal policy domain. In essence, this is the 'structure of feeling' as expressed by actual Coastcare volunteers (Williams, 1975).

Grossberg (1987: 95) defines empowerment as 'the enablement of particular practices, that is...the conditions of possibility that enable a particular practice or statement to exist in a specific social context and to enable people to live their lives in different ways'. The ascendance of community participation in the coastal and marine policy process has potentially enabled people living on the coast to contribute to the policy practice of maintenance and protection of the coastal zone. By virtue of the presence of these groups in policy documentation, this suggests the beginnings of some changes in the ways in which the coast is administered and by extension, changes in relations between experts and coastal communities. The suggestion that something new is occurring does not dismiss the continuity in relations between communities and experts and unequal relations of power and knowledge. Contemporary enthusiasm for community participation in coastal and marine management does, at least, present a potential break in how communities and experts interact in the management of the coastal zone which may lead to more inclusive and representative understanding of the ways in which we conceptualise 'local' relationships with nature. Empowering communities to bring their

own local cultural perceptions of the coast to the management and policy arena is an avenue to promote awareness and participation in present and future policy initiatives. As outlined in previous chapters, community participation in coastal and marine management is central to the pursuit of ICM. The overarching philosophy is that coastal management initiatives require the input and support of local communities if they are to prove successful in managing, preserving and protecting the coastal zone. In Australia, there is very little evidence of the success or otherwise of ICM in procuring the participation and awareness of coastal and marine management in local coastal communities. The fieldwork undertaken for this project provides some indication of how communities are responding to Coastcare, an ICM initiative which aims to build community capacity to tackle local coastal issues. Many questions remain unexplored about the Coastcare program. For instance: Who are the participants? What motivates their participation? How do they understand their participation? Do they see themselves as contributing to broader management goals as outlined in ICM? How are they relating to experts – government and scientific cultures? These questions are not answered by a simple calculation of the number of projects and successful completions. The fieldwork I have undertaken is designed to enable a more thorough exploration of participants in this program with a view to assessing the success of ICM and to explore possible future techniques in securing a more significant presence and application of policy in local coastal communities. The principal pragmatic questions explored in this fieldwork are: What are the potentials for change? and How can policymakers seize the opportunity for new relations with communities – a critical ingredient in the success of ICM?

This chapter begins with some demographic detail on Coastcare participants I consulted, alongside anecdotal information from Coastcare facilitators in order to build a profile of the typical Coastcare volunteer. This data indicates which community members are

taking part and which segments of the community could be pursued in future community participation initiatives. Data gathered from the surveys and fieldwork reveals the reasons why these people are involved in their respective Coastcare projects and how they see themselves and their participation as contributing to coastal management or more accurately, coastal restoration and preservation. The results of the fieldwork offer a host of opportunities for policymakers and scientists to better understand and engage with Australian communities residing on the coast.

5.1 Profile of a Coastcare Volunteer

While I recognise that the sample size for this survey is relatively small (n=26), the results do allow some indication of the demographics of the typical volunteer. Further, given the high response rate of 72 percent, the survey provides an accurate representation of the general attitudes to Coastcare from the three groups I have consulted. My survey results indicate a Coastcare volunteer slightly more likely to be female (53.8%) than male (46.2%), more than 40 years of age (65.4% more than 50 years of age), pensioner or retired (52%) and receiving a weekly income of between \$300-\$500 (30.8%). Of the volunteers I have consulted, most have studied at tertiary level (30.7%) or at least have a diploma (23.1%). The overwhelming majority of those with tertiary qualifications have not studied Environmental Science or any other science (88.9%). Given that only 15 percent of the general population hold a tertiary degree (ABS 2000), the respondents to this survey are particularly well-educated. The education status of Coastcare respondents supports other research into environmental activism which reveals that the proportion of people concerned with environmental issues increases with the level of education (Conacher, 2000: 280). The level of education may indicate a higher awareness of environmental threats and thus an increased likelihood of participation in programs like Coastcare. Politically, 26.9 percent

classified themselves as ‘a little to the left’ or ‘far to the left’ , 30.8 percent placed themselves in the middle of the road while only 7.7 percent put themselves ‘a little to the right’ on the political scale. Nearly 27 percent of respondents refused to answer. If a Federal Election were held tomorrow, these community volunteers would support a Labor Government (24%) with a Greens tinge (20%). The Liberal Party was the preferred selection of 20 percent of respondents while 20 percent refused to answer.

Australia’s aging population and the tendency to ‘retire to the beach’ accounts for the preponderance of older retirees. Anecdotal information from the Coastcare facilitators affirms that most Coastcare volunteers are ‘seniors’ (Environment Australia, 1999: 18).

One volunteer suggested that the preponderance of older participants may limit enthusiasm from younger generations:

When you’re talking about the group here, one of the problems is that we’re all over the hill to 20-year-old, 30-year-old, 40-year-old people to come and work with us there’s no attraction in that whatsoever. We’re just a lot of fuddy old fogies playing around down there on the foreshore (South Peregrian)

The Coastcare groups (Mudjimba & South Peregrian) did mention occasional help from corporate employees such as *Westpac* and *The Body Shop*. Corrective Services sent some additional volunteers and some dole recipients had also participated in projects as a way of justifying a perceived ‘government handout’. The typical age of Coastcare volunteers suggest that younger generations could be a target for future Coastcare (and Envirofund) advertising. Current television advertising for community participation in natural resource management depicts volunteers planting trees – this type of marketing may appeal to enthusiastic gardeners but may fall short of motivating younger generations. Demographic groups outside the ‘seniors’ category have limited recreational time and arguably, ‘gardening for free’ is unlikely to be a priority.

Environmental science discourses of ‘gardening’ and a focus on ‘planting’ frames participation in terms which do not necessarily ‘communicate the coast’ to communities in the coastal region. There are other cultural values which may prove more successful in appealing to a wider demographic which are discussed in Chapter 7. A demographic profile of a Coastcare volunteer can provide useful information for policymakers especially in terms of knowing the market for policy initiatives. However, how existing Coastcarers understand their participation and what it means to them in the course of their everyday lives provides greater critical insight into how policy is being received by those who participate in these initiatives.

5.2 The Coastcare Communities

A definition of community and critical discussion of with whom community participation policy seeks an engagement is a necessary step in understanding contemporary relations between communities, governments and environmental science experts. This places the onus on governments and associated experts to assess romantic policy notions of community as ‘good citizens in a geographic locale’ and see their goal as much more than the simple ‘decentralisation of government authority to ‘a’ community’ (Agrawal & Gibson, 2001: 13). There is a diversity of ‘communities’ who participate in the Coastcare program. These can be described and categorised according to many criteria. For instance, ‘age’ is one classification, ‘proximity to beach’ another and membership of a residents and ratepayers association a third. Understanding the variations in communities and among community volunteers participating in the Coastcare program, alongside the variations in the broader concept of ‘community’ itself, is at issue in coastal community participation programs and more generally, natural resource management processes. In this case, the assumption that ‘community’

requires no critical reflection or definition, leads to policymaking which neglects to address community diversity and by extension, the variety of community members with differing meaning systems or cultural values pertaining to the coast. The Coastcare program may be relatively successful in embracing those sections of the community with a sense of 'environmental stewardship' and a particular sense of responsibility to the 'community', however it is perceived. However, if policymakers were to consider the communities they seek to engage with in terms of 'fluidity, contradiction and conflict' (Revoll, 1993: 120), policy initiatives may prove more successful by appealing to the multiple cultural values and identities which are characteristic of coastal zone populations.

The diversity of interests and actors represented in my own research sample affirms the need to understand both notions of diversity and similarity in Coastcare groups. Within each focus group, it was acknowledged that the members of the group contributed different things to the project. While some members could be called upon for photography or writing grant applications others were well-known for their botanical expertise. As one community participant remarked, '(T)here are some things I can contribute to the group and enjoy contributing and I think we all have something to offer and...people can offer different things and do different things' (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003). These results suggest that the definition of community participation in this context, implied in policy as those willing to pursue environmental objectives, is a limited perception of the actual community groups and the people involved. Members of the community become involved in a Coastcare project for various reasons not reducible to 'saving the environment' and they contribute to community groups a range of skills which exceeds a general knowledge or interest in coastal ecology. One significant example of Coastcare groups 'beyond ecology' is their social capital (Putnam, 1993)

and 'community spirit'. The benefit of these social relations was alluded to by participants at the Mudjimba and North Stradbroke Island Focus Groups:

But I think that's even a project thing. The fact that we're getting the people out of the homes who are like that (lonely). Or the people who you know, for whatever reason they want to be with people so they come out. I think that's a really positive thing to talk to people about because you're not just building up the surface of the environment... once again we're talking about the community and starting to talk about trying to bind the community together.[Community] – it's a word that gets bandied around... And even if you get volunteers who just don't have it about what the plants are doing now, it's still a really positive thing that we're getting people out and that should be really positive for our funding application (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

Those involved in it have to think on a broad perspective of the whole environment that they live in, and on many levels, not just on the physical environmental project they are doing, but how it affects all of the levels of the community (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

Unfortunately, the prospect of community building in Coastcare policy documentation refers only to 'community capacity building' which aims to ensure that local communities are able to handle local environmental problems and to contribute to the management of their local coast or environment (National Heritage Trust, 2003). There is another realm here which is neither explored nor promoted. This is primarily due to the narrow focus on environmental outcomes which deems other definitions and 'types' of community neglected in policy promotion.

5.3 Paths to Empowerment: Why We Are Involved.

That's why we keep coming back to 'what can we do' and work on the smaller things. You want to change the world, but you really have to work on changing inside your own family; changing yourself and in that family and really instigating the principles you want to live by and making them a reality in your life. That's what we do with the community projects. We want to change the way everyone thinks about the environment, but all we can do is work in our little area in the way that we want to work in it and at least feel like we're doing something positive and then build it out from there. That was the whole idea of doing projects that we could inspire other people to do the same thing (North Stradbroke).

In the initial survey of Coastcare volunteers, most respondents cited a friend or neighbour as responsible for informing them about their Coastcare project. The groups themselves were formed from existing local community groups (ie. The Mudjimba Progress Association; Point Lookout Surfriders Club; South Peregian Beach Community Association) and must be incorporated to apply for Coastcare funding. Thus, in this case, it was the 'social network' of 'friends and neighbours' which precipitated Coastcare involvement rather than a direct response to national policy guidelines. The mid-term evaluation of Coasts and Clean Seas does give some overall indication of the type of groups applying for funding. The evaluation cited 38 percent of Coastcare funds were being allocated to locally-based Coastcare, Landcare, Dunecare, local estuary management committees and local branches of regional and state environmental groups. A further 16 percent of funds were allocated to Lions and Rotary Clubs, progress associations, residents' and ratepayers' groups and town committees with 14 percent of funds allocated to state conservation councils and the Marine and Coastal Community Network. The only other significant allocation was to Indigenous groups such as land councils, community corporations and councils (Environment Australia, 1999: 14). In the Mid-Term Evaluation, there is no clear indication which explains the processes by which these groups first came to seek an application for funding. This

suggests that the majority of Coastcare volunteers are drawn from pre-existing environmental groups and community groups. In other words, existing networks. Interestingly, the Mid-Term Evaluation (Environment Australia, 1999: 14) cited only five percent of funds were allocated to 'recreational groups', including surf life saving clubs, board riders' clubs, dive groups, golf clubs, recreational vehicle groups, arts centres and historical societies, tourism associations, fishing cooperatives and chambers of commerce. One explanation for this is that 'recreational groups' and their 'recreational' perception of the coastal zone is marginalised by expert conceptions which prioritise economic and scientific agendas. The North Stradbroke Island Coastcare group is a rare case of a recreational group becoming involved in the Coastcare program. This group was established by the Point Lookout Surfriders Club in memory of a local surfer, Wayne Kelly who had died at the Point:

We'd been doing voluntary Wayne Kelly days every year on the headland, whereby we'd all go to the headland and do volunteer work as a club [i.e. weeding, planting, etc]. It came about as an extension of that (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

North Stradbroke Island Coastcare is an example of a group tapping into conceptions of the coastline which simultaneously provide valuable on-the-ground work and legitimise local cultural histories (discussed further in Chapter 7). Also notable is that participants at the North Stradbroke Island focus group were much younger than the other Coastcare groups formed from progress associations. The marginal representation of 'recreational groups' in the allocation of Coastcare funding suggests this is a consequence of establishing the regime of 'coastal truth' around environmental and economic discourses. At a local level, these recreational groups are surely a prime candidate for community action and awareness of coastal issues. Their 'love of the coast' is fertile

ground for astute policymakers to better engage with a more representative sample and possibly younger community.

The principal reasons for involvement in Coastcare groups related to a mixture of environmental responsibility/stewardship and community responsibility. This indicates the success of the Coastcare program in raising awareness of the need for local community participation in coastal management – at least in some sections of the community. In some cases, participant motivation stemmed from being ‘community-minded’, rather than coastal-minded.

For me, it’s not even that it’s the coast. For me, it’s where I am and what I can do for that immediate part of Australia. I really sometimes don’t even see the ocean. It’s where I am and what I can do for this part of Australia...You have a community relationship inside your home and then you have a greater community relationship outside the home. For me, that’s how I feel. Once I step out, that’s my outside community and I would do whatever I could possibly do to make that essentially Australia. And that means Australian plants and Australian animals. So, that’s how I feel about it (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

I believe I could claim to being a community-minded, and responsible person wherever I have lived (Survey No.24)

Roughly 50 percent of survey respondents agreed that involvement in the local community was a motivating factor for their participation. More than three quarters of respondents expressed a sense of responsibility for their local environment as motivating their participation, while a general concern for environmental issues and perception of a problem needing to be solved were motivating factors in about 50 percent of respondents. Only about 10 percent indicated that their involvement was a social occasion to ‘get to know people in my area’, suggesting that a concern for the natural environment was the strongest catalyst for participation. During the focus group discussions, respondents were able to expand on their reasons for involvement in the Coastcare project. Some expressed their responsibility to the environment in terms

which emphasised environmental science values and their desire to participate in policy and planning issues such as dune management:

My wife and I are involved because we approve of revegetation of the dunes and we work with a great mob of people who don't seem to mind if we don't always perform perfectly (South Peregian Focus Group, 2003).

I came from the 70s and I've always done clean-ups around the beach. I kind of gravitated towards it because I just feel that our whole coastline is badly mismanaged and it's getting increasing population pressures on it. As usage increases, you need some formalised tracks to make it enjoyable for all age groups to use the beach with minimal impact (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

Alongside this perception of contributing to environmental management, respondents overwhelmingly emphasised an aim to protect their local coastal area in the face of encroaching coastal development and to preserve their project area in its natural state. This was a common theme across all focus groups and incited some emotive and critical discussion about development in the coastal zone. In part, these Coastcarers were motivated to thwart some of the compromises that are unavoidable in tradeoffs between environmental conservation and development – and significantly, to create a space for the natural environment:

It's like the big application out the back here for a big theme park, a space park. I think they should stop all this theme park in this area and just go for a normal coastal, natural environment and make that do as the coastal strip. Have your Gold Coast and your theme parks, but don't bring them everywhere (South Peregian Focus Group, 2003).

They came here because they love the things that are here. My frustration is that people do come to an area and immediately they want to change it. They've got to have a cement footpath, and they've got to have this and that. Why did they come to an area where those things weren't? Why didn't they go to an area where they were, I don't understand it, instead of trying to change it and having this argument with people who came here expressly because they loved it as it was. They didn't want all these changes. They can live without them perfectly well (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

The Mudjimba people have forgotten this whole area. Nothing compares to what it use to be. The swamp and bushes (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

When I moved to the area as a permanent resident with my husband and children that I'd visited since my childhood, there were, of course, many changes, some good, some not so good. I guess that I was feeling that the rapid changes were threatening the very things I've always loved about the area (Survey No. 16).

In part, the Coastcare projects seem to create a space for participants to elevate their own marginalised perceptions of the negative effects of development and associated government policy surrounding the coastal zone. Looking at the groups from this perspective, the 'wallum rescues' the Mudjimba Coastcarers undertake to physically remove wildflowers and other plants from development sites and a general disdain for coastal development places communities and policymakers in an odd, and at times, contradictory partnership. For example, community action against a development formed the foundations of the South Peregian Coastcare Group:

Well, that's actually how the Association started because opposite the park down here there were two blocks that were going to be developed and the developers had plans at the council which had been approved by the council for six storeys they were going to turn Victory Park into a carpark. That was a concession that Council made to the developers, so they could use the park as a parking area. That's how the Association started. A group got together and protested and that's why the park is called Victory Park because we won.

I found some divergence between community pronouncements and policy perceptions of community participation. It is, at least, ironic that the participants I spoke to saw themselves as thwarting the consequences of development while the policy enabling their participation has as a central tenet, development of the coastline (be it in an ecologically sustainable fashion). Bennett (1998: 201) draws a similar conclusion in his discussion of government and community relations noting that it is from 'within the

practices of government that “community” acquires this paradoxical value of something that is both to be nurtured into existence by government while at the same time standing opposed to it as its antithesis’. The community members I spoke to expressed this paradox in the context of their participation. Community actions on the coast are enabled by government administration of coastal and marine management but the ‘meaning’ of their actions are largely the ‘antithesis’ of government policy. The paradox between community and government perceptions of local management efforts highlights the incomplete status of the dominance of economic and scientific discourses. Further, it draws attention to Grossberg’s (1987: 170) assertion that cultural criticism is not just about attention to ‘dominant positions and ideologies’. In negotiating government priorities for the coastal zone, community members are empowered despite ‘critical relations of domination’ and this is cause for some ‘celebration’.

At the beginning of this research, I expected my fieldwork to uncover community volunteers who were politically astute and who were using the Coastcare program as a vehicle to thwart the deleterious effects of development, industry etc. on coastal environments – in other words, to find community volunteers actively resisting the dominance of economic priorities for the coastline. To some extent my suspicions were confirmed although this was not a conscious political act against ‘dominant ideologies’ or the actions of government. I expected to find staunch environmentalists with plenty of political opinion on the current state of the ozone layer, Kyoto, coral bleaching, deforestation and issues of salinity. Much to my surprise, I found a general disdain for party politics and other environmental politics. Indeed partisan politics and the politics of coastal policy were met with near indifference by a significant proportion of focus group participants. Some responses included :

I don't think people are getting involved to make a political statement. I don't think that's the reason. It's just purely out of their love of the area that they are working in they love the place and they want to contribute. You realise that you're being used sometimes, like a chess piece, but it doesn't seem to affect you (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

Most people feel politically frustrated, like, 'We can't do anything about this, so we just do what we can'. We don't want to know about that; we want to divorce ourselves from [politics] and focus on the positive part of what we're doing, because we're actually doing something productive. We don't want to get involved. If you start getting caught up in politics and trying to change people's ideas, then that's when you start losing it. I suppose that's probably why I feel a bit more defeated now and a bit more sceptical because I started to think about what could be done in terms of politics. Then you just focus on doing the projects and how much you love the place and you're fine. You can continue to be inspired and keep on working. When you start to become involved in the politics of it all and trying to get things changed at a higher level, that's when you start getting frustrated and lose heart (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

I've always been involved in what happens at the beach and how to conserve the dunes and look at dunes system management and that sort of thing and I've formally belonged to this group since it started. But informally I've done a lot of things on my own...and so when we had the sort of frustration that we've had with council...I have to go back and do my own stuff. I get too frustrated with those sorts of things, you know... I really can't put too much energy into bureaucracy because I find it difficult and frustrating. I'd rather just go and do it and not get involved with bureaucracy (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

They seem to be saying that directing energy towards politics and bureaucracy in the coastal and marine management panopoly was 'disempowering'. In an interesting twist, Coastcare participants consulted for this project felt disempowered by the very political processes that empowered them to act in their local coastal zone. They actively negotiate (or at times ignore) the dominant discourses characteristic of policymakers and experts to their own ends and, in the process, elevate their cultural perceptions of the coast. In this way, their participation becomes primarily an act of empowerment at the local community level and is more complex than simple complicity with government administration of the coastal zone. Relegating the economic and scientific principles of ESD and ICM to the margins (if that) of their experience, these Coastcarers bring to the

fore emotional attachments to the coast which promote their personal experience or a simple aesthetic appreciation of the coast in terms of 'beauty'. At this point, their reasons for participation part company with the policy principles of ESD and ICM, as these responses suggest:-

... to retain the natural diversity of the bushland that we have and that coastal bushland this coast is under so much pressure, enormous amount of pressure and how you can gently preserve those little pockets that are left. How do you do it in the most gentle way? So that people can actually, and will experience it, we can't lock it up, but how you allow people to look through it in a gentle way (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

I think it's important for the next generation of Australians. Some of them already don't know much about these plants. The majority of Australians don't know much about them, but it's important, they're missing a lot of tremendous beauty that is their inheritance (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

I feel that our natural land and wildlife is our gift and heritage and we should not be responsible for its destruction (Survey No 14).

To some extent, this sentiment is similar to the discourses of environmental science containing shades of policy objectives such as ESD, 'generational equity', etc. The significant difference is that as a community group, their personal reasons for involvement at the local level are not administered by a commitment to the principles of ecologically sustainable development and no compromise is negotiated between development and the preservation of coastal ecologies. While policymakers share the commitment to coastal protection and preservation, this is being achieved via ICM and ESD. Essentially, this leads to a situation where policymakers are discussing ICM, ESD, etc and attempting to involve and motivate communities in a meaningful way. In contrast, the Coastcare communities I encountered are largely oblivious to institutional enthusiasm and disinterested, if not indifferent, to the politics – partisan, environmental or otherwise – of their participation. In the face of encroaching development, largely legitimised by coastal policy initiatives such as ESD and certainly the dominance of

economic priorities for the coastline, these Coastcare communities are empowered to be doing *something* to retain the natural beauty of their local coastal area. True, their participation fulfills government objectives but community members are not ‘passive dupes’ of government administrations of the coastal zone. Participants bring their own cultural values to the community participation process which seems to make their contribution a meaningful experience. And their participation is not defined by the administration of the coast in economic and scientific terms:

People that are doing the projects are feeling quite inspired and have to have high ideals and they are really motivated. They really feel like they are contributing. When you’re actually involved in doing a project, it’s very uplifting and you feel like there is hope. But a lot of people would never consider that it has a political impact. They’re just feeling like they’re doing something by contributing. To actually take a positive step in a practical, physical way makes a really big difference to people (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

From a theoretical perspective, this is an example of the way in which governmentalities can provide a practical exploration of ‘technologies of domination’ which engender scientific and economic priorities for coastal and marine management and the ‘technologies of the self’, where participants submit to the domination implicit in the Coastcare program but do so to attain a state of ‘happiness’ about their contribution to the coastal preservation, future generations, etc (Foucault, 1988). These Coastcarers participate in the program not to support government objectives for ICM or ESD, but rather to maintain a space on the coastline where their own priorities are implemented without compromise. This leads to a feeling of contentment and happiness in that they have actually achieved something tangible to preserve the natural coastal environment. The Mid-Term Evaluation showed that just under 60 percent of Coastcare projects were devoted to on-the-ground action such as dune revegetation and access control initiatives such as pathways to the beach (Environment Australia, 1999: 11-12). This data suggests that all over Australia, the majority of Coastcarers are undertaking their

projects to preserve the natural beauty of the coastline and, I suggest, may share the experience of personal satisfaction which was communicated by participants during this research project. These responses capture this idea:

The results are certainly starting to show now and I think that pleases us individually and particularly when you get a compliment here and there... People pass the comment that makes you feel that you're doing your share (South Peregian Focus Group, 2003).

These children went past and I said "Do you like this lovely garden we're making here for you? Dear little children...for them... Just for their future (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

In short, Coastcarers in these groups participated in the project to protect their natural coastal environment and their contribution made them feel 'happy' and 'worthwhile'. Their personal priority to protect the coastal environment and to elevate their own cultural perception of the coastline as a site of natural beauty occurs within the context of broader policy initiatives which do not share their priorities. In part, as one participant remarked, this 'just doesn't matter' (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003) because their local project is imbued with their own systems of meaning, their own cultural values and attachments to the coast – their own 'structures of feeling'. Besides establishing a legitimate fit for eligible funding and ensuring their project is 'ecologically sound' (plant selection, pathway routes etc.), these groups pay little attention to the economic and scientific priorities for the coastline characteristic of Australian coastal policy. Along the way, they are educated about physical coastal processes, plant identification, weed eradication etc, but this information is not the motivating factor for their involvement. They are empowered by establishing a space (or pathway) which protects their 'private' love for the natural coastal environment and ensuring, by their participation, some degree of protection and preservation of their space.

Participants were aware that governments could be accused of abusing their dedication to coastal protection and preservation to meet their own governmental policy objectives. There is, as Dovers (2000a) has suggested, the suspicion that these groups are undertaking fieldwork for the environmental sciences rather than enabling community input into the policymaking process. During my focus group discussions, I raised the issue of Coastcare as a government cost-cutting device – the responses to this suggestion were varied:

I was actually speaking to a person the other day and he said blatantly, ‘No, there’s no way I’d bloody volunteer. Because you’re doing a job that people are being paid to do in the community.’ It’s a horrible thing to say, but if no one’s being paid then who’s going to do it. That’s the volunteers. It’s a double-edged sword, isn’t it (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

I don’t believe in that. I suppose in one way it is, but then what are we all going to do? Sit on our bums and get fat? You’ve got to do something for the community. Sometimes you can overdo it. I’ve found that out. But I think on the whole there’s a lot of people who want to do things and by getting out and helping with the environment issues or maybe like people going to Meals on Wheels, helping there, everyone has an agenda that they want to help in their own way (South Peregian Focus Group, 2003).

While participants were aware of the potential for abuse, their motivation to ‘do something’ surpassed any perceived government financial benefit stemming from their participation.

5.4 Chapter Summary

Analysis of these Coastcare groups suggests that despite the overall administration of the coastal zone through discourses relating to environmental science and economics, participants drew upon other cultural values relating to the coastline in order to define and understand their experience of the Coastcare program. These values were directly

related to an appreciation of the natural beauty of the coastline which participants saw as threatened by coastal development. They were empowered by their actions to do something practical about changes to the coastline. The knowledges, discourses and cultural values that these participants attached to the notion of ‘community participation’, prioritised their aesthetic, emotional and spiritual attachments to the coast – and their actions gave them a powerful position – albeit transient – in the administration of the coastal zone. This does not detract from the broader cultural critique of knowledge/power relations in the administration of the coastal zone. Asserting the power of communities to prioritise their own perceptions of the coast by partaking in the Coastcare program does not imply, as Rutherford (1994: 53) argues, that all knowledge claims are ‘equally valid’:

Conflicts over knowledge claims occur in actual social contexts, within particular institutions and social networks which are not only tied to specific interests but also constrained by what can be counted as valid criteria for producing ‘truth’ in a field within which particular statements circulate .

The ways in which these participants prioritise their perception of the coastal environment is not a dominant ‘truth’ in the arena of coastal and marine management policy. Aesthetic, recreational and/or emotive attachments to the coast are not prioritised in policy and yet are the motivating factors for the Coastcare participants who are the focus of my study. This divergence between the policy perception of community participation as building community capacity to manage the coastal and marine environment – stemming from concepts such as ESD, ICM, etc. – and community participants’ perception of their engagement as an attempt to preserve the natural beauty of the coastal environment is an area worthy of some consideration in the coastal and marine policy domain. To what extent can policymakers expect to meaningfully engage with communities when their ‘reality’ is so reliant on compromise between

development and pristine coastal environments – while for community participants this compromise contradicts and undermines their own efforts at preservation? To what extent can governments expect to engage with communities when their own preference for business, economics, development, etc and all things ‘good’ which supposedly flow from such an arrangement, is constantly in full view of potential community participants? Putting aside the lack of resources and funding for the Coastcare program, why would a community member seek involvement in a program which seems so hopelessly overshadowed by economic priorities for their coastline? And further, that these priorities are lived and experienced by local residents and their effects are felt at the local level adds another dimension to the potential for ‘meaningful engagement’ between communities and policymakers, as one focus group participant observed:

We’re living in what’s happening right now. I’m hearing the chainsaws and bulldozers all the time, and we’re seeing it and living it daily (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

In her analysis of community environmental initiatives in the Cairns section of the Great Barrier Reef, Nursery-Bray (2000: 185) found that the local attachment to place which emphasised aesthetic, emotional and recreational perceptions is the ‘working basis for community involvement in environmental processes’. My research concurs with these findings and suggests that policymakers may find a broader base for participation and consultation in local coastal communities if they are prepared to listen to local histories and cultural perceptions of the coastline and actively negotiate these perceptions in their policy design and implementation.

There are a plethora of community groups with different interests which resonate with coastal issues. The challenge here for policymakers is not to simply make a point of imparting (scientific) knowledge to pre-existing community groups underrepresented in Coastcare, but rather to acknowledge and understand the importance of local cultural

values, beliefs and practices and to actively incorporate these into policy design. As Fischer (2000: 88) concludes: 'Thus the challenge ahead is not just more science, but rather how to better understand the interactions between science and ideological belief systems – technical facts and cultural values....' In this way, the prospects for enthusing members of a community apart from those prepared to undertake environmental science projects is increased and a holistic approach which focuses upon more than issues of erosion, dune vegetation and sea grasses, the consequence. Expanding the range of discourses used by coastal policymakers to understand and promote community awareness of coastal management issues will at the very least, give policymakers and coastal communities an enhanced opportunity to be involved in the protection and preservation of their much-loved coastal environment.

Chapter 6 Coastcare, Communities and Experts

I personally am not overly in favour of letting the community run the agenda. I think that the world is so complex and complicated that it needs to be run by specialists. Why do we send people to university? Then why do we send them back again to do their Masters? I would hope that when you're finished your degree, you'll be better at it than somebody who just walks in off the street (Interview No. 1, 2003).

Never trust anyone who allows themselves to be called an 'expert' (Survey No. 11).

The data I have presented thus far has offered a greater understanding of the reasons why community members participate in the Coastcare program along with an insight for policymakers into how their program is being received by volunteers. These community members are empowered by their participation in the Coastcare program despite the unequal relations of power and knowledge within the context of community participation policy. As the above quotes suggest, there is much suspicion, distrust and contradiction in community, government and expert relations. The focus group discussions with Coastcarers revealed a particularly ambivalent relationship with governments and experts and equally, experts were ambivalent about 'communities' and their potential role in coastal and marine management. The theoretical framework for this research suggested that there is the beginning of a transformation in relations between experts and communities heralded by enthusiasm for community participation in coastal and marine management. The fact that environmental scientists as the 'experts' are seeking the input of communities is a signal of this change. The change promises to alter the parameters of 'what counts' as legitimate knowledge and to include communities in a representative and meaningful fashion. This chapter presents a discussion on how these relations between governments, associated experts and community members are faring in my three selected local sites.

Community participation at once presents continuities and discontinuities in the administration of the coastal zone. Much of the continuity can be explained in terms of the power (and public profile) of economic and scientific knowledges in defining policy priorities for the coast. Community participation is also a site of discontinuity in the history of the environmental sciences – the discontinuity is located in the moments where environmental sciences are forced to engage with communities and to reconfigure their ‘truths’ so as to incorporate the question of communities as a significant factor in both research and policy agendas. At this moment, where there is an interpellation and ‘routine proceedings’ in the practice of environmental science are interrupted (Hajer, 1995: 60), the potential for the emergence of new knowledges and practices and new relations between experts and communities is initiated. This follows Foucault’s general concern that we should ‘avoid treating the histories of the sciences in terms of continuity, development and progress. Discontinuity within such histories is not a problem to be smoothed away; it becomes itself an object and indeed a means of research’ (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 81). The data I have gathered reveals both continuities and discontinuities in relations between experts and communities via a qualitative engagement involving community participants and some key Coastcare personnel. The data also enables a closer look at the local relationships between communities, governments and scientists. Respondents reveal some complexities of the relations of power and knowledge which is a central theme of this thesis. My findings reveal some of the finer details in relations between communities and the ‘expert’ discourses aiming to procure their participation and asserts some pragmatic avenues which point all involved in the policy process toward a process of greater understanding and cooperation in coastal zone management.

This chapter presents various insights from fieldwork designed to uncover how communities are negotiating their engagement with governments and experts. It begins with data relating to community perceptions of the role of government and their responses to government policy in the coastal zone. This data includes perceptions of the Coastcare program and how this expertise is being received and negotiated by community members and government representatives alike.

6.1 Community Perceptions of Government

The goal of ICM to involve governments, sectoral interests and communities in the management of their local coastal zone brings into question the relationship between the participants. Community participants in general expressed a distrust of governments but were more confident of the prospect for communication with local governments than with either their state or federal counterpart. Some community participants were sympathetic to governments and the difficulties in managing the coastal zone, as this response suggests:

I think Governments are quite supportive but they're only like a large household and they have to watch what they can do and what they can't do. There are limitations, and I'm wondering why a lot of other people that think Governments should do this and do that there's a limit to what they can do but I think they're quite supportive (South Peregian Focus Group, 2003).

Overall, however, research participants were dubious about government commitment to Coastcare and to the coastal zone in general. Only about 10 percent of respondents in my initial survey said they thought enough was being done to protect and preserve coastal and marine areas. Eighty percent of respondents indicated that they did not have faith in the ability of governments to protect and preserve their local coastal and marine environment. Half of the respondents felt that the views of their community were

not acknowledged and incorporated in coastal and marine policy at state and federal levels of government with the majority of the remaining respondents unsure about their impact. While participants understood the role of government in planning the coastal zone and in supporting the Coastcare program, they saw governments as compromised by development and issues related to money. The role of economics and industry in the management of the coastal zone divided respondents. To the proposition, 'The economy should be at the top of the political agenda', roughly 30 percent agreed while a further 30 percent did not agree or disagree. Responses to other economics/industry propositions, 'Tourism in Queensland is Environmentally Unsustainable' and 'Cost should be irrelevant to ensuring coastal preservation' produced similar results with approximately 30 percent of respondents sitting on the fence, offering a 'neither agree or disagree' response. During the survey, I asked participants to disregard all constraints (including money) and give some detail on how they would ensure that coastal and marine areas were preserved and conserved. Indicative of disenchantment with government-supported economic priorities for the coastal zone, one survey respondent retorted:

...[Their] answers to this question would take up more space and time than I wish to commit myself too, not because I'm not prepared to make the effort. But – because there is not that sort of money available so it is just pointless (Survey No. 24).

Given the freedom to imagine, this respondent reasserted the significance of money (or more accurately, political economy) in constraining the options available to administer the coastline. That participants involved in a program specifically designed to engender a 'partnership between communities and governments' should be so discouraged about their potential impact in government planning and policy is significant. The significance is two-fold: firstly, how these comments relate to the objectives of ICM especially in

terms of co-operation between local communities and governments in the coastal zone; and secondly, their relevance to democracy and Australian politics generally. With regard to the success of ICM in promoting relationships between communities and governments, there was a roughly even split between those who saw their project as a partnership with government and those who saw it only as a community initiative. These results suggest that Coastcarers' awareness of their role in local coastal initiatives and the ideals of 'integration' require some attention. While efforts to promote the principles of ICM and to communicate the role of communities in overall coastal management will aid relationships with environmental policymakers, the broader issues pertaining to the perception of governments by these local communities is more complex. One explanation for the disillusionment with governments and the level of distrust is the crisis occurring in Australian politics (and similar political systems globally). The general lack of faith in government to protect and preserve the coastal zone, alongside the floundering relations between governments and communities, is in part, an expression of the crisis occurring in Western democracies where representative government is increasingly under attack in the public domain. In a climate of suspicion, public participation in government policy is one avenue to legitimise the actions of government (Bishop, 1999: 13). This broader crisis is reflected in the sentiments of the community members encountered in this project who voiced their suspicions of governments while simultaneously eager to make a contribution and to 'be heard' (if only momentarily) in the public decisionmakings and management processes involving the local coastal zone:

We're not ignorant to the fact that our environment is going to the wall. We're not. None of us are ignorant to that. There are people out there who are trying to maybe curve that a bit. That's what we do. But, that's what I don't understand. Governments know about it. Quite often Governments are the one who commission the study and they know the reason because scientists have done all the investigations and so forth but nothing gets done so, you know (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

This suggests a failure on the part of government to actively and explicitly acknowledge the critical role local communities play in coastal and marine management. Government representatives confirmed the suspicions of Coastcare volunteers but their reactions were more specific in locating the role of partisan politics in compromising the ideals of the Coastcare project. One interviewee spoke of the futility in criticising approvals which had been given approval from 'above':

Sometimes things comes into this department saying, 'This is the situation, Department of State Development and the Premier's Department have already had a look at this and it has to go ahead, so don't even bother drawing a red line through it'. Where we're coming onto this is that our department is negotiating for the best terms and conditions that we can get. At the end of the day, some things are so big that they go to the Premier and he decides whether we like it or not (Interview No. 1, 2003).

Another interviewee suggested a similar role for party politics:

The middle managers are usually real workers and the Director-Generals are usually political animals. So it's the middle managers who are passionate about their job, they know what the problems are and they can see something brewing. Because they have to submit it to someone higher than them, quite often that person higher won't see that passion, and will just say, 'That's not political, it won't get us the results'. So that happens. I'm actually experiencing that at the moment with a couple of the panels that I'm on. I can actually see staff leaving, coming and going. On one hand, you've got people who are passionate about their job and on the other hand, those who are political. They're not really interested in what the issues are, they just want to support high-profile and trendy issues (Interview No. 3, 2003).

In 2003, the then Federal Shadow Minister for Sustainability, the Environment and Heritage, Kelvin Thomson (2003) released data which showed that Envirofund projects favoured Liberal and National party seats with minimal funds to (opposition) Labor party seats. From communities, government administration and from government itself, there is evidence that community participation programs are manipulated towards political outcomes. The projects are, in part, an opportunity to 'kiss another Coastcare baby'. Unfortunately, this comes as no surprise and it is probably naïve to expect anything less. However, party political influences on the distribution of Coastcare funding detracts

further from government rhetoric about funding on the basis of merit or need – and indeed affirms the somewhat superficial attempt to engage with communities to protect and conserve their local coastal environments.

6.2 Local Government

More than half of the survey respondents agreed that the local council had sought their input into local coastal planning issues on the basis of their participation in the Coastcare program. The government representatives consulted for this research agree that local government is the obvious choice for the delivery and ongoing maintenance of community participation programs:

I think the local government scene is getting better and I think that's the level at which there needs to be a lot of focus. That's the level that's closest to the ground and closest to the community. I would really like to see things like Coastcare done through local government. So there's variability there, but I think the trend is in the right direction in general. It's a good thing for them as they get kudos in the community, which is important to every level of government, for undertaking environmental projects with the community and helping them (Interview No. 3, 2003).

For most things, where it's on-ground work, the obvious liaison and helper for the community group is the local government. They are so much closer and are usually the managers of the land; they can provide help that we can't provide in that the local council has its own work guides and parks and foreshores people who work in those areas anyhow. So, if they need the necessary equipment like a bobcat or a skip for rubbish, the council has those things and can physically drop them off and pick them up. They can be a partner with those people and are their immediate level of government that they respond to. Those people are their constituents. They have a duty, an obligation and a care to do that. I think that's where it should be worked through for the basic level (Interview No.1, 2003).

Generally, these government representatives felt that local councils were their key sites for input into coastal planning issues while the upper echelons of government were unlikely to be interested or concerned with local issues. This was a view shared by Coastcare volunteers:

The smaller and more local they are, the more they work with the community. The further away it gets, the tighter they get with the money and all the rest of it, so it's hard. There are some people in there (local council) who genuinely care and genuinely want to develop a community relationship. I can also see there are much higher up politicians that are jumping in on the bandwagon, saying the words but not understanding what they are saying. The people who want to give are often in a position where they can't and get frustrated within the bureaucracy as much as we do. They have their hands tied as they're being told they 'can't do that' (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

The Coastcare groups were most vocal about their experiences with local councils.

Generally, these Coastcarers perceived local councils as the most accessible and receptive to their issues. On the other hand, they also saw local councils as responsible for the adverse effects of development in the coastal zone, as this respondent suggests:

I think the local council are really involved in nature, reserves, etc. They really, genuinely want people to have a relationship (with the area) and take responsibility. They really do want the community to. I don't think the support is there, though, to help people do that. They expect an awful lot. They do want the community to look after their area, but when you start saying 'I want to look after it and I want to do this and that', and then they start going 'No'. It's like a fairly limited idea. A lot of it is an ideal thing that they want. They keep talking about it, but when the reality of it comes through and we ask, 'What can you provide?' It starts getting tricky (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

In a similar vein to their reasons for participation, groups were critical of development decisions by local councils.

This speak about developers suddenly brings to mind the latest blue down there at Caloundra a metre too high they got away with it. The building was a metre too high. The council took them to court and there's been a ruling there's no penalty they just got away with it.

You know what will happen, don't you? They'll keep going, won't they? The precedent's been set and others will think they can do the same thing (South Peregian Focus Group, 2003).

As far as I'm concerned, the building's going up and it's done – 300 of us marched in the centre ring against the first high rise going up in Mudjimba. A lot of good it did, the council simply said they had the land we couldn't stop them from doing it (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

At the local level, the dominance of economic priorities for the coastline is understood to take preference over community perceptions of the coast. This leads to a general feeling of distrust of all governments and their motives. This perception effects how communities see their own relationships with governments in both consultation over local environmental issues, and participation in the Coastcare program. These responses were typical:

And that brings us to a major, major point: community groups are a tick box. There are a huge tick box. If any government agency can go to a community group and have at least one citizen link, that's worth a huge vote... They can say: community consultation: done (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

Well a classic example was that Maroochy Shire Council vision statement they held? What a waste of money. They had all these workshops down the hall and they had all these paper things ... and they asked you all these questions and you had to go and pick out a colour and put it up there and we told them what we wanted for our area and we got nothing. We actually wrote to the council and asked them what the outcome was. Nothing (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

The lack of feedback provided to community members through government consultation and participation processes was also noted by government representatives of coastal and marine management policy:

We've all gone to meeting after meeting and had our input. We never find out if anything has actually risen from that input, we never get any feedback, there's never any, 'We've had this wonderful feedback, therefore we're going to incorporate this into the new plan' or 'We're going to do this because of your feedback'. You can't always go back directly to the people and just say that, but often it's never reflected and you just don't know. They're not getting the feedback that their input has been valued sufficiently to actually incorporate it into changing the package that's being developed (Interview No. 2, 2003).

A lack of intimate contact with governments and their representatives does not aid a partnership between an already suspicious community and eager governments and environmental policymakers. The propensity for local governments to exercise power effectively in local environments is evident in the following example from a local

councillor on the Sunshine Coast and his own efforts to ensure residents care for their coastline:

There were no casuarinas where there should have been, because people who wanted views would go in the middle of the night and chop the trees down. So I put up 2m x 1m signs right in front of their view : 'Do not damage trees - \$500 penalty. By order of the town clerk.' Then all of a sudden, everybody started saying, 'It wasn't me, it was the person next door', so they'd dob each other in and the word went around that you don't go chopping trees down or you'll end up with a sign in front of your house. Apart from the public humiliation, it stuffed up their view (Interview No. 3, 2003).

This public display of the power of local government to manage the coastal region is precisely the reason why both 'experts' and community participants deemed local government the most promising avenue to thwart coastal degradation.

6.3 Coastcare Administration

The Coastcare program aims to build relationships with local community groups and policymakers. The bottom-line for the Coastcare program in these emerging relationships with communities is the Coastcare facilitator. As explained previously, Coastcare facilitators are responsible for a section of the coastline. The facilitator responsible for the community groups involved in this project administers the area between the southern end of the Gold Coast to Maryborough on the northern Queensland coast (a driving distance of over 350 kms). What is clear from speaking to both bureaucrats and community participants is that the demands placed on Coastcare facilitators in meeting the needs of many coastal groups means their resources and time are spread very thinly. During the Mid-Term Evaluation (Environment Australia, 1999: 18), Coastcare facilitators criticised the lack of administrative support which limited their time for direct contact with community groups. The rhetoric of government policy relating to local on-the-ground initiatives is not translated into resources, especially human

resources. Focus group participants understood the lack of resources which ultimately impacted on the amount of support they could expect from their Coastcare facilitator: a participant in the Mudjimba group responded to this limited level of support:

The only time we see them is in a meeting or when they want something from us. They never come and actually (or they don't now, originally they did), never actually come and do the work that we're doing cause they never really know what we're actually doing. It's a meeting and it's about XYZ, so they don't experience what we experience.

Acknowledging time constraints, a respondent from the South Peregian focus group noted the difficulty of the facilitators' task:

Any co-ordinator who travels from Brisbane to here, that's 1 ½ hours out and 1 ½ hours back before they even think about what's affecting the world here.

There is a general agreement that more contact between Coastcare groups and Coastcare facilitators would be useful and effective in terms of managing projects and maintaining motivation. A Coastcare facilitator remarked that they were keen to support community groups and to pursue new projects – but there was a fundamental problem:

...[The Coastcare program does not provide] sufficient time or resources to get to people and perhaps have a workshop now before the funding closes in 3 months. The biggest frustration for us is that there is so much out there, so many good people and a lot of issues. We see all these opportunities for amazing projects, but we don't have the capacity to go out there and work with everyone to build up the projects, because they're all long-term projects. Our expectations of the community in our current project are unrealistic (Interview No. 2, 2003).

Government experts and community participants agreed that current facilitators of the program were unable to fulfill a 'co-ordinating' role in local communities. The lack of contact between government representatives and communities was presented as a problem easily solved by financing an on-the-ground co-ordinator to become more involved with the actual volunteers:

I think there should be support from the state and federal governments to councils to provide a co-ordinator (Interview No. 3, 2003).

It's important enough to pay people who can perhaps coordinate an environmental task in different regions so that volunteers can come along and maybe want to do something and have passion but don't have the knowledge. So I think there's a use for volunteer groups to open the workforce. And the people who go out to volunteer mostly just want to do just that, just want to volunteer. This is the biggest opportunity there is, to put people with the knowledge as a co-ordinator or leader of the people who are volunteering and that way have the job done appropriately (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

Two of the focus groups spoke very highly of their contact with Greening Australia, a non-government, not-for-profit organisation whose primary goal is to manage and deliver nature vegetation and management and restoration services. Greening Australia offers commercial services to private and public organisations and also provides services to community and volunteer groups with similar interests. In the Maroochy Shire Council, two Greening Australia officers are housed within the Shire Council Offices and have adopted a 'quasi' and informal role in providing on the ground support for both the Mudjimba and South Peregian Coastcare Groups. One Coastcare facilitator described a reciprocal relationship between motivated Greening Australia officers and Coastcare facilitators:

We were using each other as resources. I would be going to the Greening Australia officers and they would be involved in our projects, because I knew that they knew exactly where the money should be going for resources on the ground. Unfortunately, you talk to the community groups and they're more focused in on their backyard area, usually. Whereas, the Greening Australia officers can at least give you an idea across a catchment or local council area to say, 'Yes, there's this, but there's also this other area up here and there's a group that's interested'. So they were almost like another step in the tier (Interview No. 2, 2003).

The Coastcare groups involved with Greening Australia officers spoke very positively about the 'on-the-ground' practical support provided, as these responses suggest:

In the first instance, [Greening Australia] helped with clearing the very heavy stuff the Lantana and the big trees and umbrella trees and things to start off with, which gave us a good start, and when we got a lot of rubbish [Greening Australia] organised for the council truck to come and take it away, and we had heaps of rubbish, literally heaps, head high and when some of the rubbish was too big to

cart away, [Greening Australia] organised a permit from the Fire Brigade so that we could have a burn on the dunes and get rid of the rubbish that way (South Peregrine Focus Group, 2003).

For us, we say, OK this is the area we're concentrating on, these are the things that need doing, and they provide us with mulch and plants and help us with the nursery and they'll come on a weekly basis and yes, hands-on support (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

While the efforts of Greening Australia are significant, the question of Coastcare's ability to effectively engage with local communities is of particular concern. The Coastcare culture of community neglect, despite the feel-good rhetoric, is seemingly apparent to both Coastcare 'experts' and volunteers.

One interviewee expressed a lack of faith in the attainment of meaningful participation sought by the Coastcare program, suggesting that the lack of community involvement in initial policy design was a key contributor to the lack of faith in governments expressed by volunteers:

A community group must have the ability to influence the activities of the project. To expect them to turn up and plant a few trees and go away again is not good enough. That is often not what they're after. They're wanting to say, 'We've noticed this area of land and we think something should be done to it' and they want help from us to do that. So 'meaningful' is actually them saying, 'We want to do this and this is what we think it should become'. So they've got a goal and then we should be helping them towards that goal. As opposed to us saying, 'We've got a bit of area here, it fits in with our plan and we'd like you to come along and do some work for us'. That to me is really meaningful (Interview No.2, 2003).

The definition of 'meaningful' participation offered by this government representative is offered by Greening Australia and not by the Coastcare program. The expectation that groups will 'go away and plant trees' alongside the administrative requirements for making grant applications and a tenuous funding status for recurring applications feeds

the notion of separation between communities and governments. The administrative and bureaucratic frustrations of establishing a program for people who ‘just want to volunteer’ (Interview No.1, 2003) is significant, as a key policy bureaucrat indicated – given the comparatively small scale of Coastcare projects:

It doesn't need big, strategic approaches. Those are usually not appropriate to what community groups are doing. Most community groups want to see something positive happen in their own area, if not necessarily in their own backyard. Having three levels of government and all the palaver that we go on with to fund something which at the end of the day, may involve a team of people walking to the foreshore at the end of their street, pull a few weeds out, plant some tree seedlings, put a fence around it and plonk a sign in front of it is just ludicrous (Interview No.1, 2003).

The lack of contact between Coastcare groups, alongside the lack of resources which would facilitate improved relations, leads to an overall paucity in feedback for community participants. Some feedback on their contribution to coastal and marine management, along with recognition of their accomplishments, was not forthcoming from Coastcare. A few T-shirts is the most many had received for countless volunteer hours working on the coastal region. The South Peregrian group had received extraordinary recognition with ‘Burke’s Backyard’ magazine producing a story on its dune revegetation project. South Peregrian was also responsible for motivating former Australian Tennis player, Pat Rafter, to become involved in the Coastcare program:

Did you see the segment on television that Pat Rafter did for Coastcare? That came out of the work that we’re doing down here. He was staying in a unit just opposite the park and we were working on a Thursday morning and he stopped and spoke to me, and wanted to know what we were doing and why we were doing it and how had we got involved, and he actually rang Coastcare and offered to do a publicity segment for television because of what he’d seen we were doing through Coastcare on the dunes here (South Peregrian Focus Group, 2003).

The day I visited the South Peregrian Coastcare group, they were negotiating with a local journalist who had neglected to mention their volunteer work and who had accredited the

grant approval process to a local councillor. This is some indication of the haphazard recognition from governments of the contribution such groups make to the processes of coastal management. It is not surprising in these circumstances that other researchers have questioned the seriousness of government commitment to community participation in coastal and marine management (and broadly, natural resource management). Again, local councils were the most likely to show their appreciation during local awards nights and other celebratory events. The Mudjimba group proudly displayed local awards it had received for its Coastcare projects, as one respondent explained:

Just look on the wall. All our things that we have won from our Wallum Gardens. We've won Gardener in the Sun twice, we've one Queens Beach Challenge Award, we were one of the finalists, and Sunshine Coast Environmental Council we've been recognised by them for the work that we do, so we do get recognition.

Focus group participants also reported receiving appreciation from the general public with occasional 'good work' comments from passers' by. To a large extent, these Coastcarers did not expect recognition in the form of accolades: 'You'd get a few people coming and saying "it looks great", "you're doing such a good job", "it's really good what you're doing", but generally, it's self-rewarding' (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003). Regardless of the existence of what seems to be a 'humble community', the lack of government recognition for the work of these volunteers feeds a general disdain for government and does little to instill a sense of 'co-operation and integration' surrounding local work in the coastal zone. For reasons most likely relating to financial resources and the time constraints of existing facilitators, around three-quarters of respondents reported that they had not been regularly informed of changes to Coastcare and government policy concerning the coast. This does much to explain the divergence between community perceptions of volunteer coastal management and government

perceptions of community participation. From this perspective – the lack of recognition for work achieved, lack of on-the-ground support for coastal volunteers and various other administrative requirements – it is perhaps surprising that groups continue to apply for Coastcare grants at all. Their dedication to Coastcare does not stem from support for government policy initiatives but can be understood in terms of their dedication to their local natural environment. This is clearly a privileging of the local, notably absent in national Coastcare policy frameworks. There is much which could be done in the Queensland instance of the Coastcare program (and nationally) to instill the sense of co-operation sought by policymakers. Additional funding for Coastcare facilitators to enable better communication between the program’s public face and its community participants is a necessary starting point. This would enable facilitators to adopt a pro-active role in the community and on occasions, ‘get their hands dirty’ as a visible sign of government co-operation and commitment.

6.4 Community Opinion of Experts

The appropriate role for communities in coastal and marine management is a contentious issue in the realm of environmental policy. The varied responses of community participants to expert discourses of the environmental scientists, and in turn, the responses by environmental scientists toward community ‘expertise’ suggest conflicting relationships. Exploring the relationships of power and knowledge between community participants and the experts they encounter is one goal of my investigation. Alongside this grassroots’ analysis of community participants’ perceptions, is the response by environmental scientists to the community groups which they administer. The survey questionnaire and focus groups involving community participants revealed inconsistencies in how they negotiated scientific expertise. This is particularly evident in responses to questions in the initial survey designed to gauge general environmental

attitudes. Answers to questions which related to the propensity of science and technology to finding solutions to environmental problems showed a distinct lack of faith in the ability of these knowledges to procure a safe environmental future. To the proposition, 'Science and Technology will eventually solve all our environmental problems', roughly three-quarters of respondents disagreed. The proposition that 'Increased funding to appropriate scientific and technological research bodies will enable us to control nature' produced similar results with 62 percent of respondents disagreeing. Interestingly, to the question, 'Do you have faith in the ability of environmental and other scientists to provide information on the health of your local coastal environment?', approximately 80 percent of respondents answered in the affirmative. These results suggest a particularly ambivalent attitude towards environmental scientists and others among Coastcare volunteers. On the one hand, respondents believed in the ability of experts to provide information on the health of their local coastal environment and yet on the other, lacked confidence in the ability of science and technology to provide solutions to environmental problems. Further investigation of community responses to scientific expertise during the focus groups helped clarify this apparent dilemma. This exchange during the Mudjimba Focus Group is typical of the Coastcare groups' responses:

Participant: Well I can't see how you can get the truth because if you have an environmental scientist who works for a developer there's one plant in the city and he says there's only one plant. If you then get the environmentalist from the outside who's a private enterprise guy and we as a group get him in for an opinion, he says yeah that's the one plant that only left that's available on this earth. That little extra bit. He forgot about the first part was the money issue, the building has to go up, who cares we'll make money out of it, it's only one plant, whereas the other people around are going to say well it's the only plant left in this world. Who do you believe?

Participant: Then you have the person who is completely autonomous, you know the scientist who works for themselves but knows that he or she constantly needs an income and so needs to keep the door completely open and you and I might ring this person and say can you come and have a look at this area at the back of my place and tell me about it and they'll come in and do an assessment of it but they may not put all the facts because if they are advanced by a developer or a government agency to go and do that, they want the door to be open so that the finance can find a way into their pocket.

Facilitator: Do you think it's as explicit as that, like it's a bit like the conspiracy theory, isn't it?

Participant: Well you could call it conspiracy theory. It's human nature.

Participant: You couldn't blame them because I mean that's their living.

Participant: That's their living. And not only that, I mean that's their passion. You don't go into a living or a study of this sort of thing unless you're fairly passionate about it. But there's somewhere along the line that sometimes people sacrifice or a stake in income.

Participant: I mean scientists can only work with the evidence they've got.

Discussion with community participants showed that they perceived environmental science and its practitioners as compromised by the objectives of government and economics. Comments which related to environmental scientists providing evidence to support government and/or private agendas point to a climate of conditional or qualified trust of experts. The comment from one participant who asked 'Who do you believe?' is particularly pertinent to an analysis of contemporary relations between community participants and experts – government-sponsored or otherwise. Wynne (1996: 50) criticises the 'cultural dupe' conception of public-expert relations as though lay members of the public are not critical and active agents in their engagements with expertise. My fieldwork experience with Coastcare groups supports Wynne's (1996: 50) claim that public trust in expert institutions is better characterised as 'virtual trust or "as-if" trust' which shows...

...how people incessantly problematise their own relationships with expertise of all kinds, as part of their negotiation of their own identities. They are aware of their dependency, and of their lack of agency even if the boundaries of this are uncertain; and awareness of these conditions occasions anxiety, a sense of risk, and active interest in evidence for example about the basis of their unavoidable as-if 'trust' in those experts. These lay public processes are deeply imbued with reflexivity even though no public dissent or contestation is apparent.

There is not a 'simple acceptance of experts' and in relations between lay citizens and experts, citizens recognise their social and institutional dependency but are forced to act 'as-if' they trust expert opinion while keeping doubts to themselves (Fischer, 2000: 62). The conditional status of trust between community participants (and the public generally) and experts is important information for policymakers.

The participants 'as-if' trust towards experts and clear questioning of the motives of scientific experts is also some indication of the crisis in legitimation of scientific expertise. Fischer (2000: 96) points to the increasing disputes between scientists and the lack of consensus in scientific circles as contributing to public distrust in expert opinion. This is especially evident in the environmental policy arena where policy demands precise answers in order to administer the environment, and scientists are unable to provide 'certainty' (hence the Precautionary Principle') and seem to raise more questions than they answer (Fischer, 2000: 94-95). The entry of environmental science into law and public policy occurred during the 1960s and drastically changed prior circumstances of scientific conflict:

It was one thing for scientists to be willing to express views in the more relatively protected collegial setting of a scholarly journal or a professional meeting. It was quite another to be subjected to relentless cross-examination on a witness stand. The result has been frequent conflicts with decision makers in search of answers. For decision-makers [policy], scientific uncertainty has often proved to be a troublesome problem (Fischer, 2000: 96).

It was not only that scientists could reach different conclusions about the same data – though this is hard to accept in terms of justifying policy which chooses one conclusion over another – but also of greater concern, as Fischer (2000: 103) points out, is the patterns of interpretation which follow political lines:

Given the opportunity to watch countless replays of the same policy debates, citizens could start to recognise that almost always the scientists employed by industry and the environmental movement respectively took the same adversarial positions. It was clearly one thing to say that scientists could interpret complex data differently, but quite something else to recognise *patterns* of interpretation that followed specific political lines. Stated differently, why did scientists employed by industry always argue that there was not yet enough information to say that something had been proven? Why did environmentalists always argue that the results were clear enough to take action (Fischer, 2000: 103).

At the local level, such scientific disputes are more personal and are experienced by Coastcare participants within the context of the ‘everyday’ of their local coastal environments. The Mudjimba Focus Group explained that its expertise was compromised by economics and its knowledge of the coast was ignored. Members of this focus group were concerned about the Pandanus palms in the Coolum area which were showing signs of disease, promising the death of a natural icon on their section of the coast. Showing a fair level of ‘expertise’, these participants had used GPS mapping to identify the Pandanus palms affected by the disease. They then provided the details to council who employed a contractor to inject the trees. However, the contractor did not receive the map and thus injected all the Pandanus palms he could see. This removed any comparative basis between palms which had been injected as opposed to those which had not. The comparison was intended to form the basis of funding application for an ‘injector’, owned by a Coastcare group. Participants explained the situation:

It was all mapped out, and he didn’t get the map. So he went out to inject Pandanus and he injected every Pandanus he could see because that’s so obviously what was communicated to him through Maroochy Council, and so he went thinking he was doing a great job ...But it’s sometimes a mindset: sometimes people can make decisions who are not particularly educated about it

and so they think they're doing a tremendous job by injecting as many of these Pandanus trees as he can. Then he has to look at the financial situation. 700 Pandanus and not 120 Pandanus and I'm going to get 700 multiplied by how much I get per tree or am I going to get 120 multiplied by how much I get per tree. So this is all assumption because we don't know, because there hasn't been communication (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

This experience contributes to general unease about the sanctity of scientific expertise and how an 'inadvertent' instance of a distinct lack of expertise in government administration can lead to an increasingly suspicious (to say the least) local community. During the focus group discussions, participants stressed other types of knowledge relevant to their local area which, although not making them experts in environmental science, nevertheless was 'something' known by virtue of their intimate and personal experience of the coast:

The rule usually is, with anything along the coast, the vast difference between academic and common sense knowledge. I really don't think a lot of the people guiding our beach protection really have a clue; they go by a series of photos and the photos are a millisecond in a timespan. Someone lives somewhere for 30-60 years and their finger on the pulse becomes almost spiritual to what is going on at that beach. They're talking of extending Southport which I totally oppose for the consequence up here. They claim that all the sand they pumped down the coast is the right amount because of this research, but I even know a history of their research and they couldn't have done it at a worst time to get an average. You get a lot of crew who, academically, they might pass the test compared to a total illiterate fisherman over on a dune or a guy who surfed every day, but they really rely on the sand movements and they're a lot more in tune just through first-hand knowledge (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

While participants were prepared to credit the 'experts' with knowledge, they saw a distinction between their own local observations, emotional and spiritual attachments to the coast and objective scientific data:

...they're not necessarily environmental types, they might be interested in another area. But they just work with what they've got, they're fairly unemotional about it. They just work with their data. It's like a statistic of some sort. But I'm very sceptical about someone telling me it's ok, I'm always sceptical of that...For

my own body or my environment I'm very sceptical about what [I'm told]. I'm very suspicious. I make my own decisions (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

I'd say the experts are more the ones who can say 'right, this soil is acidic'. They have the scientific facts. They can come in and examine chemical compositions of this and that. It's different knowledge, really. They're more precise and maybe they are able to make good judgements based on those sorts of facts, whereas we don't really know that. There are different types of knowledge (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

I don't think they respect the amount of knowledge. Everyone has to have a piece of paper saying they know something. There have even been a couple of crews who have worked on our project who think you have to have a degree to know anything (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

While community groups were prepared to criticise their experience of experts, their own status as 'experts' on their local area revealed some uncertainty about what they could say about their own status as experts. In the initial survey, more than 80 percent of respondents did not consider themselves an 'expert' on their local coastal environment. However, discussion of this during the focus groups indicated that community participants saw themselves as contributing to environmental expertise which may prove enlightening for environmental scientists and policymakers as these responses suggest:

On my very local area [I am an expert] that's why I initially said I'm very parochial. I mean parochial is not a highly esteemed word but I know my area where I live... I'm an expert on that because I've lived there for 30 years. So that's my level of expertise, it's not necessarily scientific fact because I don't have a natural scientific background. But you know for an expert coming in I'll always listen because ... I'm going to learn something from what they're saying, but they may also learn something from me (Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

I don't consider myself an expert, but seeing as I do have expertise in certain areas, especially from direct experience, there are some things that I could share. I know that I have done that with people in the past who have come to look at the projects and so-called experts and they actually went away having learnt something from our conversations. We always have something that we can share every single person does. It's up to the people to actually share what they do know. But it's very difficult for them to know how to get that across in a way that can be heard and understood (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group 2003).

Often, focus group participants felt that their own experiences of the local coastal environment, especially their own local knowledges and perceptions of the coastal zone, were not heard in the policy domain. The failure of Coastcare to incorporate these local knowledges into their community participation program at once diminishes the expectations of communities and provides experts with an limited opportunity to engage with communities in a process of mutual understanding and trust. Community participation initiatives force the ‘experts’ to engage with communities at the local level – spaces which are ‘known and intimate’ for community members. It is different from a space to be assessed for possible revegetation or to be used for other environmental science objectives. These spaces incorporate people’s homes, their ways of life, their cultures – ideas which seem to have a low priority when the program elevates environmental science expertise. This is the conflict which awaits environmental science experts in their confrontation with communities – on the one hand, experts have a grasp of the intellectual machinery necessary to administer the coastal zone in a specific way; on the other hand, the community participation component in the administration of the coastal zone forces experts to engage with local and momentarily powerful knowledges of local communities in order to meaningfully administer community participation initiatives.

6.5 Experts Opinion of Communities

During the formal interviews with government experts administering coastal and marine management policy, it was apparent that while communities were ambivalent about their relations with experts, the experts were equally ambivalent about their relationship with communities. In her analysis of community-based catchment research, Thomsen (2003: 2) found that experts ‘were very negative towards the value of community data and only a few were prepared to integrate such data in their projects’. While the majority

of my fieldwork focused on community groups, my experience with experts suggested something similar. Consider, for example, the response of one interviewee to the suggestion that Coastcarers become experts:

There are a small number that are (experts), but I suppose that I should ask you what your definition of an expert is. But I don't think most of them are actually 'experts'. I don't see a lot of expertise in what comes across my desk (Interview No.1, 2003).

Part of the problem in relations between communities and 'experts' is the definition of 'expertise'. When knowledge of the environmental sciences is the only gauge, community members will, more often than not, fall short. Although coastal and marine management experts are showing signs of enthusiasm for aspects of community participation, communities are nevertheless expected to contribute on the pre-determined terms of environmental science. In the context of coastal and marine management, where the discourses of environmental science and economics have the status of 'common sense', other cultural values which pertain to the coast are marginalised. Negotiating community cultural values and discourses of expertise is the critical operation in engaging communities and motivating their participation – it is the coal face of relations between 'experts' and communities. And yet policymakers and various experts have failed to consider this fundamental aspect of the impact of their own knowledges on the 'brand' of community participation and how it might be received by community members. The assumption is that the 'intellectual machinery' for coastal and marine management exists, and that the contribution of communities is assessed according to its correspondence to these existing parameters. This exchange during one interview highlights the permeation of environmental science and economic objectives into the coastal and marine management regime:

Interviewee: If you went and asked people on the street whether they've ever heard of the South-East Queensland Coastal Management Plan, most of them

would say 'no', of course. But people who nominally represent their interests have input into the plan. I'm all in favour of active grass roots engagement with people and doing that as well to find out what people think about it. Not many people sit down and think very hard about a lot of issues, as they're too busy with their own lives these days. Not that many people are interested in long-term planning of all the issues that come into integrated coastal zone management.

Interviewer: Unless they're asked?

Interviewee: Yes, but even then, if I was asked, I would say 'Look, I don't know that much about it but I would like to see environmental values protected and fish stocks preserved, and I don't want to see too many high-rise buildings built right up to the beach, spoiling it for everybody.' ...It obviously needs to engage sections of the community at all levels, but I'm sure that finally the decision has to be made by people whose job it is to do that and who have high levels of training and expertise and whose job it is to make the correct decision on behalf of everybody. I don't think the public have any more right to make that decision than the people who run the factories (Interview No. 1, 2003).

The suggestion that not many people have ever heard of the South-East Queensland Coastal Management Plan and that public interest would be minimal affirms my contention that the expert discourses of environmental science incorporated into the policymaking process precludes participation and indeed, interest by the general public. And the interviewees' summation of expected public responses in terms of 'environmental values, fish stocks and development' affirms that such responses are expected to correspond to existing policy objectives for the coastal zone. Asking communities what they value in their everyday lives within the coastal zone and what it means to them are arguably questions which would incite a more knowledgeable and confident response. The expectation that the expert knowledges of environmental science and economics are the heights to which an entire (implicitly homogenous) community should aspire creates loaded questions such as, 'Have you heard of the South-East Queensland Coastal Management Plan?' – an inability to answer is used as grounds to accuse the general public of apathy.

It is, however, those in a position of power by virtue of their expertise which deserves some sustained criticism. As Fischer (2000: 144) argues, the 'failure to participate is often as much a manifestation of institutional processes that either hinder it or render it meaningless'. In the case of community participation in coastal and marine management, where the 'community' is part of the 'expert's equation', consideration of how the administration of the coastal zone might 'hinder or render meaningless' community participation is necessary. This critical (and reflexive) consideration of how 'common sense' expert discourses might contribute disproportionately to the relative failure of community participation and consultation processes will lead to an entirely different subset of questions. Rather than asking communities their opinion of the priorities set by environmental science, questions about existing power/knowledge relations and how to engage with communities and descend from the heights of 'techno-speak' will be brought to the fore.

This critique of the institutions which administer community participation is reliant upon experts willing to concede their position of power and to reflect on the very knowledges which legitimise their own 'way of life'. A self-reflexive approach to the knowledges which empower actors in the context of coastal and marine management is not an easy feat to accomplish. This is especially the case when the knowledges which establish your status as 'expert' rest on paradigms which seek objectivity and neutrality in encounters with both natural and social phenomenon. Critical engagement with the discourses which establish the 'regime of truth' in coastal and marine management is further hindered by policymakers' belief in their expertise in 'objectivity', as this response suggests:

That is what public servants are supposed to be impartial, understand the

legislation, look at everybody's needs and make the correct decision on behalf of the whole community. I'm impartial. I'm not a property developer or have any personal interests in that area to pursue the only interest that I have is to try and make the correct decision on behalf of the whole community (Interview No. 1, 2003).

In contrast to the impartiality of this interviewee, a focus group participant provided some insight into the role of the government employed 'experts' in policy design:

I wouldn't trust an environmental scientist that was working for the government...If he's hired under contract with government, he has to work under their policies – there's no deviation. He doesn't write the policies but he does them. That's his contractual agreement. That's it. Where an outside environmental scientist, even an environmental volunteer would have a lot more understanding naturally, a lot more passion about it, and would be more free minded...(Mudjimba Focus Group, 2003).

Indeed, it is not the case that policy actors necessarily agree with all aspects of the process which establishes community participation in the coastal zone or with general coastal zone management. Policy actors have limited resources to undertake the type of critique encouraged here and their 'public' duty to coastal and marine policy is often in stark contrast to their 'private' understanding and values pertaining to the coastal environment. An interviewee with a long history of prior involvement at a community level before being employed by the Coastcare program maintained a criticism of the type of community consultation and participation procedures typical of government. And on the relevance of local knowledges to coastal management, s/he remarked:

Interviewee: ...local knowledge is still very valid. There is a lot of on-ground knowledge out there and it's absolutely invaluable, to try to access that. I don't believe it is done effectively at all.

Interviewer: So their views aren't incorporated into that very fundamental level of community consultation and deciding what needs to be done?

Interviewee: Yes. That's a classic example of the consultation not being meaningful. If it was meaningful, local anecdotal evidence like that, which is valid, can be incorporated (Interview No.2, 2003).

Perception of the value of local knowledges and the propensity for these to be incorporated into policy design is an area fraught with difficulty in community participation policy. In coastal and marine management, where the parameters of legitimacy are firmly set in the environmental sciences, local and anecdotal knowledge is an easy target for an expert to discredit, as this interviewee's response suggests:

..[in] many cases it [local knowledge] proves to be surprisingly unreliable, in terms of the people howling and moaning that the foreshore is receding and their houses are going to fall into the sea or something. Sometimes an old-timer will tell you that the beach used to be at least 60 metres in that direction when he was a boy and you show him the aerial photograph taken in 1945 and you can see the shoreline recession has been 12 metres. It's so hard to generalise about all these things. I don't underestimate it at all. There are some areas where historical knowledge is really good to have and it adds value and meaning to life, apart from its intrinsic, quantitative value of contributing to databases. There are cultural and social aspects to it. In a lot of coastal zone areas, populations are transient these days as well. Certainly in the more rural areas, you can get interesting information. Aerial photography, accurate mapping and G.P.S. have been around for quite a long time now, so our reliance on that personal, historical knowledge isn't as great as it used to be (Interview No. 1, 2003).

The discomfort apparent here suggests a great deal about the quandary facing experts when presented with terms like 'meaningful participation' and 'community'. Experts are in a position to validate their own knowledges (which in this example, discredits local knowledges) and in the same breath, embrace or at least give some credibility to ideas of 'community' and their ability to contribute something worthwhile or 'knowledgeable' to the policy domain. Another dimension to the quandary for experts, particularly those employed by governments, is their financial accountability:

The problem with that is that you're giving the taxpayers money; what kind of controls and checks and balances do you then impose on them? So finding that balance is always hard. You can't impose the sorts of controls and restrictions and requirements on people that are working voluntarily in their own time, that

the purchasing section here imposes on contractors that do work for the government and have to meet quality assurance and timelines and have penalty clauses, etc. They also submit commercial-quality documentation for what they've done and deal in a professional and commercial way. At the same time, you can't just give the community money and let them go and do whatever they feel like (Interview No.1, 2003)

The quest for community participation in Australia lacks any fundamental analysis of what the participation is supposed to achieve other than general objectives relating to environmental science values. The expectation within the Coastcare program is that the groups will become self-sufficient and the need for 'expert' input will become minimal and funding, non-existent. Broader concerns relating to ICM and the consequences for democracy and representative governments are lost in the rush to create a community which is able to fulfill the objectives of environmental science. They are the same values attached to the design and establishment of (say) a hydro-electric power station or any other technology where the aim is to design, implement and then simply let the technology do the work. Of course, dealing with people, communities and/or social beings requires a more personable engagement. My evidence suggests that this 'personable engagement' with communities as required by buzz terms like 'meaningful participation' is the cause of much frustration and confusion in community participation endeavours.

6.6 Chapter Summary

Collective citizen participation is not something that can simply happen. It has to be organised, facilitated, and even nurtured. Without concern for the quality of participation, it is better to forgo the effort. Such endeavours will almost surely fail, and the failure will only offer critics of participation ammunition to suggest the foolishness of the commitment (Fischer, 2000: 143).

This chapter began to unravel the complex relations between communities and experts in the context of community coastal management. It is clear that there are numerous

conflicts and contradictions in relations between communities, governments and scientists. In the case of community opinion of government, I suggest there is evidence for a distinct lack of faith in the capacity of governments to protect and conserve the coastal zone. This lack of faith stemmed from a belief, affirmed by government representatives, that party politics can compromise the Coastcare programs' objectives. It is also symptomatic of a broader crisis occurring in Western democracies where the public is increasingly suspicious of the aims and intentions of their elected representatives. The public is witness to public policy processes which seem to act in the interests of business and industry rather than 'for the people'. Participants in this survey asserted local governments as the obvious choice for the delivery of the Coastcare program. Community volunteers felt that this level of government, while equally suspect, was more able to respond to their needs.

Alongside a general distrust in governments, community volunteers recounted a suspicion of scientific expertise perceiving scientists as potentially compromised by the objectives of government and science. The participants clarified their 'conditional trust' in the focus groups suggesting that scientists will reach conclusions which suit the needs of their employer. These results highlight the active role community volunteers perform in their interaction with expertise. It is not simply a one-way transfer of information as is often assumed by policy designed to incite their participation but rather a relationship which requires 'nurturing' as Fischer (2000) argues in the quote above. While participants expressed a general distrust in governments and scientific expertise, equally, government representatives of the Coastcare program were unsure, at least, of their relations with communities. On the one hand, the 'experts' embraced the value of local knowledges and yet were unable or unwilling to give this knowledge equal standing

beside their own scientific frameworks for understanding the coast. Rather than any 'power-sharing' with communities in expert and policy circles, it is a hierarchical relationship where local knowledges are 'warm and fuzzy' but not really reliable or appropriate to coastal zone management. In this situation, where the experts (or those in a position of disproportionate power) are unclear about what to expect from communities, it is no wonder there is confusion about roles and responsibilities. This is not helped by a program which is underresourced and thus unable to engage, in any significant sense, with the communities it is required to support.

Community members are keen, however, to acquire more knowledge of coastal policy. The initial survey results found that over 60 percent of respondents rated their own knowledge of policy as being 'no knowledge' or 'only how it affects my area' and yet over 80 percent were interested in finding out more about policy. There is then, at least the potential for governments to make a concerted effort to educate these active Coastcare participants on their overall role in coastal management. This does not simply mean handing out documents detailing policy advice. Rather, the effort requires an 'on-the-ground' engagement with these communities to ensure that they are aware of the commitment and appreciation of all levels of government. Primarily, this requires adequate funding which would enable facilitators and other experts, the time and resources to speak at length with communities to foster the meaningful engagement mandated by policy objectives.

Chapter 7 Australian Communities and Coastal Cultures

Forget Gallipoli, the outback, and the Aussie battler and other tedious wowser myths from our Anglo-Irish puritan past; the essence of being Australian is, regrettably, something much more sensual. It is to lie on warm sand under a carcinogenic sun watching other bodies walking or lying and then to ritually clean yourself in the ocean (Blazely in Huntsman, 2001: 189).

I have argued that communities participating in the Coastcare program are empowered by their actions. And while it has been established and administered to pursue ESD objectives, Coastcarers draw upon other discourses and meaning systems to frame the reasons and motivation for their participation. These perceptions are couched in ideas and practices which relate to the aesthetics of natural beauty and private emotional and spiritual attachments to the coast fostered by engaging with the coastline in various ways. Their participation empowers them to assert their own cultural frameworks on 'the coast' which, in turn, makes them feel happy and as though they are making a 'worthwhile' contribution to their community and/or coastal environment. This fundamental mismatch between communities' perception of their work and government perceptions of the goal of community participation initiatives is a key finding from my investigation. This framework for understanding the nature of community participation is crucial for exploring methods to support existing participants and to potentially motivate other community members to become involved in local coastal planning and management initiatives. It is an avenue to promote 'stewardship' by tapping into the knowledges and experiences of communities not yet promoted, embraced or understood by government administration of ESD. By acknowledging the cultural frameworks Australian communities bring to the coast, policymakers can access a 'repertoire of discourses' which may resonate more successfully with effective policy design than the existing focus on 'coastal gardening'.

To access this repertoire, I turn to a deeper cultural analysis of how these Coastcare participants understand the coast in the context of their everyday lives. By far the critical oversight in current community participation initiatives is a lack of acknowledgement and active engagement with the meaning systems which communities bring to the coast along with their participation. In the haste to fulfill ESD objectives and to ‘educate’ the community on why they, too, should respond enthusiastically to the insights of the environmental sciences, it is forgotten that people interact with the coastline and re/produce and negotiate its meaning/s within the context of multiple relations – often with very little reliance on ESD principles. By appealing only to those in the community willing or able to participate in the power/knowledge relations characteristic of ESD, other possibilities are overlooked. Consequently, community participation initiatives such as Coastcare ignore a potential audience which might identify with ‘other cultural relations’ communities bring to the coast. In the Australian context, as the opening quote to this chapter suggests, it means that our principal relation with nature or the coast, encapsulated in the phrase, ‘Australian Beach Culture’, is marginalised.

In short, Australian culture is of a coastal ‘nature’. It is the cultural connection to nature – or the dissolution of nature into culture (and vice versa) – which policymakers fail to appreciate in community coastal participation programs and policy. This is particularly pronounced in the Australian context where a nation of ‘coastal dwellers’ live their everyday lives in a culture strongly immersed in the coastal landscape (Drew, 1994). At the local level of community participation programs, the failure to address and incorporate this aspect of our cultural relations with Australian ‘nature’ means that much

of the ‘story’ of Australian coastal management is left untold. McNaughten and Urry (1998: 104) express a similar idea in their summation of ‘writing about the environment’ arguing that this is not sufficiently embodied:

....that is, [environmental writing] has not addressed the complex, diverse, overlapping and contradictory ways in which people sense the world around them and come to judgements of feeling emotion and beauty about what is appropriately ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’ about their environments.

This focus on how people ‘sense the world around them’ or more broadly, ‘make sense’ of the world around them, satisfies a cultural approach to community participation in coastal and marine management. This shifts our attention to an understanding of the multitude of ways in which people make sense of their ‘coastal experience’.

Importantly, McNaughten and Urry (1998) bring to the fore the range of ‘feelings, emotion and beauty’ about nature which were conveyed to me during my fieldwork, aligning with my personal experience of the coast. These ‘soft’ and hopelessly subjective terms sit uneasily, if at all, in meeting criteria for programs that prioritise a dry, clinical and objective rationale.

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which Coastcare administers these relations of culture and nature. I canvass the ‘administrative’ consequences, at the local level, of the clash between community and policymakers’ differing relations. If, as the international literature suggests, the most significant contribution to environmental management and care is to come from the local level, then a deeper understanding of the ‘local level’ is required. I suggest that the achievement of reconciliation and enhanced communication between ‘experts’ and communities is the promise of community participation initiatives – it is a small break in the relations of knowledge and power which signals social change. As the experts will affirm, cultivating such change

promises significant ‘eco-impacts’. While experts debate ‘ladders of participation’, ‘quality indicators’ and the relative success or failure of ‘top-down or bottom-up initiatives’, *meaningful* consideration of who these communities are is not forthcoming, especially in terms of their relations with policymakers and the object of this policy – the Australian coastline.

Community participation programs have highlighted the distinction between the somewhat clean domain of coastal sciences and the subjective quagmire of community participation. This is the coalface of interactions between policymakers and communities and requires urgent reflection and action to procure the participation and/or attention of Australian coastal communities. In this chapter, I enlist elements of cultural geography as a cognitive framework for understanding the relations between Australian cultures and the coast. Drawing on my fieldwork and emerging literature, I introduce ‘Australian Beach Culture’ as a worthy contender in the battle to procure the participation of local communities and offer some pragmatic suggestions for policymakers and other experts to consider.

7.1 Culture and Nature – Community Participation in Context

Where in Descartes were the fragrances, stinks, blossoms, colours? Nature was too rich, too luxurious, too complex to be understood by mathematical deduction from first principles (Glacken, 1966: 357).

A critical difference between policy and Coastcarers’ perceptions of the coast is an expression of a philosophical distinction between the dialectics of nature and culture. Proceeding on modernist assumptions about what is knowable, environmental scientists and policymakers direct and administer coastal policy as though ‘the coast’ is ‘out there’, removed from our subjective experience. Fundamental to these modernist

assumptions is the separation of people and human cultures from the physical environment along with humans' ability to access nature through scientific and rationalistic inquiry (McNaughten & Urry, 1998: 15). In the scientific approach to nature, human cultures and their attendant beliefs, values, customs, rituals – their meaning systems – are removed from the process of 'knowing' nature. 'Knowing' nature in this configuration is separate from our experience of nature. The only experience which we can be sure of, as Glacken (1966: 357) suggests, is the 'mathematical deduction from first principles' or other supposedly neutral measurements of the coastal environment. The relatively recent entry of community participation programs into the coastal and marine management policy process – and resulting vigorous debate and conjecture over the appropriate relationship between communities and government administration of the coast – has accentuated the differences in 'knowing' between such elements. In administering the coast as a scientific object, environmental scientists and planners (ironically enough) 'administer' the human community out of the equation. Communities may not 'know' the coast as a scientific object but Australian communities do know about Australian beach culture/s.

Current community participation initiatives like Coastcare approach the coastal zone with a crude delineation between the coast as 'nature' and the coast as 'culture'. This division means that the very real lived experiences of coastal people are marginalised as 'subjective', 'lay opinion' and relegated to the periphery of the coastal and marine management process. One participant at the Mudjimba Focus Group confirmed these observations, remarking on emotional attachments to the coast:

I don't think it works very well but I think if you use the emotional component you need to do it in a very sophisticated way and you need to be very clear and very careful about what you do otherwise your scientific argument goes out the door

with the “you’re just a tree hugger!” Sometimes I say I am a tree hugger. I still think that that should be somehow given some credence.

The tendency to malign ‘tree huggers’ and those with a ‘love’ for the coast is ingrained in management policy. The coast is administered both as an object and subject of the environmental sciences and economics (ESD) discourses which tend to malign subjective experiences. Peace (1997: 534) concludes that the overall role of the scientific ‘gaze’ in governing the environment ‘is such as to present an environment which is mensurable and assessable, measurable and computable; in short, the environment is a preeminently calculable thing’. Governing the coast in this way means that there is little room for administration techniques which prioritise the subjective and incalculable experience of communities. The point is that the ‘power-sharing’ with communities sought by environmental policymakers is hampered by a lack of regard for the very lived experiences of coastal communities. The sentiment of community participation policies in Australia at least, is that communities will learn about environmental science and relegate to family dinner conversation, all the lived cultural experiences of their private encounters with the coast. The observation that the personal experience of the coast is missed by policymakers was echoed by one focus group participant:

The people making the big decisions don’t live here and they’re not personally affected by it. They don’t understand the spiritual connection. To them it’s ‘do that, that’s great, that’ll make us heaps of money’ without even realising personally who and what it’s going to affect (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

The sociological pursuits of Max Weber (1864-1920) provide some insight into the reasons why spiritual and emotional attachments are abandoned in the policy processes of coastal and marine management. There is some correlation between Weber and Foucault as both understand power in modern societies is exercised via an ‘impersonal

administrative machinery operating in accordance with abstract rules' (Sarup, 1993: 69). Weber *describes* the 'alienating processes' of Enlightenment thought and as the introductory quote asserts, is critical of scientific knowledges/experts delivering a depersonalized bureaucracy (McHoul & Grace, 1993: 62). In particular, Weber was interested in the relationship between the success of modern capitalism and Reformation (particularly Protestant sects) which created 'anti-traditional belief systems that sanctioned work, savings, investment, entrepreneurial success...the systematic creation of wealth as a *calling*' (Scaff, 1998: 36). Provocatively, Weber (1958: 181) uses the metaphor of an 'iron cage' in which (western) humanity is 'bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production' (Weber, 1958: 174). He grounds his social theory in the system of capitalism and its relations of power, whereas Foucault, as discussed in earlier chapters extends this conception of power so that power is productive of all social relations. Importantly, power is not only 'oppressive' but is also productive and is not the sole possession of individuals or groups. In short, Foucault sought to replace a negative conception of 'oppressive' power with a positive and productive one. In my analysis of these relations of power, 'however unequal and hierarchical', there is the 'possibility of a degree of freedom on both sides of the relation' (Dean, 1992: 15). As such, Foucault's conception of power is as interested in 'oppression' as 'emancipation'. There exists, in Foucault's perception, the possibility of freedom (as opposed to the gloomy forecast of an inescapable 'iron cage') and the possibility of social change. For the purposes of this dissertation though, Weber's insights into the consequences of the negative conception of power are particularly insightful.

Weber's preoccupation was the 'dissolution of traditional European culture and society under the impact of science, technology, industrialism, expanding capitalism and political centralisation' (Wrong, 1970: 25). He was particularly pessimistic about the outcomes of these interrelated processes arguing that they resulted in the 'disenchantment of the world' and the 'rationalisation of life' (Scaff, 1998: 36). Rationalisation of life denotes the process whereby

...abstract, intellectually calculable rules and procedures are increasingly substituted for sentiment, tradition, and rule of thumb in all spheres of activity. Rationalisation leads to the displacement of religion by specialised science as the major source of intellectual authority;...Rationalisation demystifies and instrumentalises life (Wrong, 1970: 26).

Rationalisation of life leads to disenchantment – in the negative sense of disillusionment and detachment. Disenchantment is the spiritual cost of scientific and economic progress leading to a materialist society devoid of 'vision' and 'heart' (Wrong, 1970: 28). Weber (1958:182) argues, '[S]pecialists without vision, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilisation never before achieved.' Here, Weber refers to the Enlightenment of the 18th and 19th centuries where the increasing authority of science supplanted the authority of religious and spiritual beliefs (Wrong, 1970: 26). This led to a society dominated by 'scientific rationality' where modern bureaucracies and the capitalist organisation of labour was geared towards 'mastery over the physical and the social environment' (Sarup, 1993: 69). For Weber, the bureaucratic administration of this rationality became 'self-maintaining processes no longer dependant on the rationality that created them but actually stunting and constricting the rational capacities of the men (sic) they dominate' (Wrong, 1970: 27). It was the 'calculations' towards economically and scientifically defined efficient 'means' rather than the corresponding questions of 'ends' which defined the modern West

(Wrong, 1970: 27). While answers to ‘means’ are administered by an impersonal and mechanical bureaucracy, it is unable to respond to the questions of ‘ends’ such as ‘What should we believe in?’ or ‘How should we conduct our lives?’ – these questions are removed to the private realm while the business of public life is commandeered by the ‘efficient maximisation of practical goals’ (Scaff, 1998: 39).

[As][b]ureaucracy develops the more perfectly the more it is ‘dehumanised’, the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation (Weber, 1968: 975).

Weber’s theories of rationalisation and disenchantment offer an insight into how administering the environment as an object of science dehumanises personal experiences of the coast. Unlike Weber, my outlook is not as pessimistic and sees at least the very establishment of community participation programs – and moreover, the motivations of Coastcare volunteers – as evidence of a power struggle for ‘enchantment’ or a struggle to redefine ‘truths’ of coastal and marine management. Community participation at this level is a site where rationalised public life meets a spiritual and private life, certainly not in any clear-cut sense of a delineation between the public policy of coastal management and the private beliefs of its volunteers. Rather, this research has shown how volunteers negotiate this clash of public agendas and private belief systems. It is a struggle between (*inter alia*) the power and knowledge relations of experts and coastal communities. However, in the current coastal and marine management policy environment, where science is the means and ESD the practical end, there is little room (except for gratuities) for the human aspect of relations with the coastline to emerge. The problem is that policies like ICM confront the tenuous delineation between culture and nature with one-eyed administration practices and processes which exalt the ‘natural’ at the expense of the ‘cultural’. In turn, this

detaches community participation programs from humanity and subjectivity – in a sense, the policy is ‘disenchanted’.

A possible path to ‘enchantment’ is to acknowledge that part of being human is to negotiate the reciprocally informing dualism of culture and nature. In this context, ‘enchantment’ refers to the weight and significance potentially proffered upon spiritual and emotional attachments as revealed by this analysis of Australian coastal cultures in future community-based policymaking – elevating and confronting the cultural dimension of environmental or ‘nature’ issues :

It is not that culture is our nature, but that it is *of* our nature, which makes our life difficult. Culture does not simply supplant nature; instead, it supplements it in a way that which is both necessary and supererogatory. We are not born as cultural beings, nor as self-sufficient natural ones, but as creatures whose helpless physical nature is such that culture is a necessity if we are to survive. Culture is the ‘supplement’ which plugs a gap at the heart of our nature, and our material needs are then reinflected in its terms (Eagleton, 2000: 99).

Eagleton’s (2000) assertion that culture and nature are inextricable – that humans are simultaneously captive to culture and nature – is a useful insight for scientific program managers grappling with the human dimensions of coastal and marine management. The danger is that we merely re/produce another delineation between culture and nature which, although slightly more sensitive, accentuates culture at the expense of nature. This approach is problematic as it reproduces, in a slightly more sensitive fashion, the supremacy of culture over nature and thus perpetuates a ‘brand’ of anthropocentrism (or ‘culturalism’) which is antithetical to respectful relations between community cultures and various natures – it establishes the domination of ‘culture’ over ‘nature’. And yet this is the fundamental divergence between environmental science and community priorities for the coast. The ‘scientific’ premises coastal and marine management on the supposedly clear philosophical distinction between nature and culture. It would be an

oversight then to premise a cultural understanding of community perceptions on another similar, though different, distinction which prioritises the ‘cultural’ and subordinates ‘nature’ and the ‘non-human’ as a whim of human perception. While it is possible to provide other cultural frameworks for understanding nature or ‘our’ environment, which will promote a sense of stewardship, connection and care, it is a ‘nonsense’ to then conclude that these frameworks for understanding our environment are the sole criteria on which to gauge ‘nature’s existence’ – this anthropocentrism is ‘supererogatory’. The understanding required is, as Eagleton (2000) suggests, a simultaneous acknowledgement of dependence and separation of culture (or humanity) and nature. Hochman (1997: 88) argues that the confusion surrounding the ‘cultural construction of nature’ might arise from varying definitions of ‘construction’. He distinguishes between construction defined as ‘to cause to exist’ and construction as to ‘fashion’. We clearly ‘fashion and manipulate nature but it is ridiculous to suggest that our perceptions construct nature in such a way that cause it to ‘exist’. Hochman (1997: 88) continues:

Cannot one aver nature’s existence without claiming to know the particular Framework to which that existence must conform? While existence and essence may not be ultimately separate at thought’s vanishing point, distinguishing them is hardly avoidable...it seems puerile centrism or regressive religiosity (ourselves as gods) to render all existence dependant on human senses, language, culture.

The notion that nature exists only in its interaction with cultural frameworks is as problematic as the assumption that we can encounter nature objectively without the bias or subjectivity of culture – as assumed by the positivist paradigm and associated epistemologies of the natural sciences. Slack (1994: 11) draws our attention to the complexity of the natural:

[T]he bottom line is that there is a spiritual, demanding, exacting, living, dying, beautiful, frightening, fragile, wonderful world out there – in here. It confronts us. It nurtures us, kills us, demands our attention, challenges us. So what are we to do with that?

My own experience of the coast and my experience with Coastcarers suggests that a too-easy delineation between culture and nature is unsustainable. An appropriate framework for handling relations between nature and culture accepts the complexities of relations without maligning ‘culture’ at the expense of ‘nature’ or vice versa. In community participation programs, the presumed authority and legitimacy of scientific cultures to encounter nature, and the subsequent administration of the environment based upon these knowledges, means that human community groups are ‘locked out’ long before ‘citizen science toolkits’ (Coastal Co-operative Research Centre, n.d.) are distributed. Ironically enough, the very target of local community participation initiatives – the community – is, at least, distant from programs which are supposed to encourage and support local participation. Issues of ‘power-sharing’ with communities can only meaningfully begin here where the powerful knowledges of environmental science confront their own cultural relations with nature. Indeed, as long as economics and environmental science are the benchmarks for community participation, initiatives are implicitly a ‘top-down approach’, beginning with the rectitude of the economic and environmental science knowledges and finding a fit for ‘community’ within these epistemological and ontological confines. ICM and associated programs designed to instigate community participation forces a union between community ‘cultures’ and scientific ‘natures’ which experts are not entirely comfortable with or arguably, ready to embrace or understand.

In the haste to enlist the urgent participation of local communities, policymakers fail to reflect on how their own theory and practice of coastal administration may contribute disproportionately to the failure or general lack of enthusiasm from communities for

participation policies. At the Coastal Zone Asia Pacific Conference 2004, I presented these ideas to a roomful of environmental scientists and policymakers and generated much debate. For the entire question time, I responded to the ‘experts’ of coastal and marine management policy who were genuinely surprised that the discourses of science and economics – their own cultures – had anything to do with the success or otherwise of community participation policy. When scientists – or anyone, for that matter – speak from a position of authority which is so deeply ingrained as ‘truth’, it is difficult to find a space to reflect upon the discourses, philosophies, practices, etc which engender that authority. In the apparent rush to ‘do the right thing’ for the natural environment and the human community, scientists fail to appreciate that part of this process necessarily involves an analysis of their own ‘humanity’ and how they, as humans, negotiate the unavoidable relations between culture and nature. In the case of community participation policy, the experts seem to be clear about the natural, but are found wanting in their responses to the human.

The types of relationships which Australians have with their coastal environment is mostly anathema to the perceptions of nature or the coastline promoted by coastal and marine management policy. It is, unlike environmental science claims, a collapse of nature into culture (and vice versa) which constructs a range and depth of intimate experiences between Australian culture and the coast. Acknowledgement and support for these relationships, which resonate with a broader Australian public, is the way forward for community participation initiatives. This involves a closer, critical and open-minded analysis of the ways in which nature and culture – human cultures and coastal environments – interact in the Australian context. Through the lens of cultural geography, those with an interest in community participation in coastal and marine

management can begin to understand how administering the coast as an economic or scientific entity constructs a coastal landscape. Cultural geography incorporates another 'sphere of value' (Scaff, 1998: 39) and is a path to humanise, if not enchant, coastal and marine management policy.

7.2 Human Natures and Coastal Cultures

Cultural geography provides a way through the complexities of the nature/culture dualism for environmental sciences and offers the conceptual tools for understanding and legitimating different 'cultural frameworks' of the coast. The personal, lived experiences of communities in their coastal environment – and treating the coast as much more than an object for environmental management – gives this emerging body of work a renewed focus on how culture is used as a resource in our intangible and tangible constructions of the natural environment (Greider & Garkovich, 1994: 4).

Cultural geography addresses the systems of representation which different cultures bring to the landscape. Landscape is 'the external world mediated through subjective human experience...[as] a construction, a composition of that world' (Cosgrove, 1984: 13). Focusing on the subjective interpretation of 'spaces', cultural geography signals the human or cultural as embedded in our experience of nature and environments.

Anderson & Gale (1999: 6) explain the relationships between cultures and geographies as 'mutually informing', asserting that the cultural processes through which people construct their understandings of the world also involves the construction and deconstruction of spaces, places, landscapes, regions and environments. The relevance of cultural geography here is to show how different cultures construct the coastal landscape in ways which are a product of different cultures and then to situate these cultures within wider historical, social, economic and political relations. This

focuses upon the frameworks which different groups bring to their encounter with the coast (Anderson & Gale, 1999; Greider & Garkovich, 1994). Anderson and Gale (1999:

5) explain the rationale:

In constructing cultures, therefore, people construct geographies. They arrange spaces in distinctive ways; they fashion certain types of landscape, townscape and streetscape; they erect monuments and destroy others; they evaluate spaces and places and transform them accordingly; they organise the relations between territories at a range of scales from local to global. In direct and indirect ways, both wilful and unintentional, people construct environments, regions and places.

This line of argument thus brings to the fore the ways in which nature is constructed by cultures that bring different meaning systems to their environment. They think, act and build their environments in ways which reflect their own belief systems. As a framework, cultural geography explores the relations between culture and nature and thus embraces the subjective while challenging frameworks which claim objectivity. It does not claim that our cultural frameworks cause nature to 'exist' but rather investigates the ways in which cultures 'fashion' their natural environment.

The phrase, 'sense of place', is used by geographers to emphasise that places are significant because they are the focus of personal feelings. Feelings for place are significant because they develop from the individual's life experience and also pervade everyday life (Rose, 1995: 88). This concept is similar to William's 'structure of feeling' (1979) in its emphasis on the lived human experience of the natural environment – accounting for the complexity of human relations with the landscape. A sense of place is created by both individuals and groups. Meanings given to a place can be so strong that they become a central part of the identity of people experiencing them (Rose 1995: 88). Identity in this context refers to the 'subjective feelings associated with everyday

consciousness' but also situates these experiences and feeling within wider sets of social relations. For example...

...ranchers, farmers, entrepreneurs and [native groups] have constructed different landscapes which reflect different definitions of themselves. These definitions lead to different attitudes towards potential changes in their landscapes and to different human consequences of environmental change (Greider and Grakovich, 1994: 8).

In a similar vein on the Australian coast, environmental scientists, tourism operators, developers, local councillors, boardriders, family holidaymakers or surf lifesavers fashion different landscapes which express different definitions of themselves in relation to the coast. These disparate groups will thus have different responses to changes in the coastal zone. For example, developers may rejoice in the prospect of a beachside highrise while community conservation groups may be distraught.

Sense of place is, of course, bound into social relations of power. A sense of place 'often works to establish differences between one group and another' (Rose, 1995: 104), expressing who we are and who we are not. The seminal work of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and his critical analysis of how the West defines the Orient as 'other' is a case in point. Said (1978: 12) describes the power relations as an 'uneven exchange' which establishes the politics, cultures, intelligence and morals of the West as different and importantly, superior to the Orient. In the coastal zone, the sense of place established by ESD and its followers, is powerful and defines the 'other' cultures of the coastal region as inferior and inappropriate to the task of the coastal and marine management process. Community participation policy is a process of creating Others through a sense of place (Rose, 1995, 105-106) by defining the 'legitimate' responses to coastal zone management, protection and conservation. For example, the Coastcare

volunteers in my study experienced a 'sense of legitimacy' by participating in, and gaining the knowledge of, the environmental sciences. Involvement with Coastcare has given volunteers a different 'sense of place' surrounding the coastal zone. Their participation in the Coastcare program has altered the way they have fashioned the coastline, evidenced in these responses:

Joining [Coastcare] has changed the way I feel about the coast. Before it was a beautiful place to go, now it is a beautiful place to be very concerned about and to do what I can to hold back the destruction of man (sic) (Survey No 26).

To realise that the back dunes, foredunes and the sea are as one unit is a very important issue. To impact on one, is to definitely impact on all (Survey No. 18).

The ways in which exposure to the Coastcare program changed the way these participants understand their relationship with the coast is some indication of the powerful legitimacy of environmental science constructions of the coastal and marine environment. It is also an indication of the illegitimacy of their own 'cultural geographies' in the face of the perceived legitimacy of the environmental sciences. Access to this 'repertoire of discourses' has given Coastcarers a sense of power and 'place' which supersedes their private frameworks for understanding their worlds.

The coast as a natural environment demands a dual consideration of the cultural frameworks which different groups bring to the encounter – including the cultural frameworks of the environmental sciences (Anderson & Gale, 1999; Greider & Garkovich, 1994). Greider & Garkovich (1994: 1- 2) underscore all natural environments as 'symbolic environments':

Cultural groups transform the natural environment into landscapes through the use of different symbols that bestow different meaning on the same physical objects or conditions. These symbols and meanings are sociocultural phenomena. Meanings are not inherent in the nature of things. Instead the

symbols and meanings that comprise landscapes reflect what people in cultural groups define to be proper and improper relationships among themselves and between themselves and the physical environment.

This approach offers a host of possible relations between humans and the coast to be considered in the management process. There is not only the possibility of environmental scientists admitting their own cultural relations with coastal geography, but also the admission of others. From this perspective, the differences in relations do not become a conflict to be smoothed away, but rather the process involves admission of other cultural geographies – an analysis of relations between cultures and their environments. The possibilities presented for new engagements between coastal policymakers and communities are expanded from a sole focus on scientific objects to the myriad of ways in which Australian communities have constructed a coastal landscape. The path to legitimacy and to capitalising on the small break in power/knowledge relations signalled by enthusiasm for community participation programs begins with a meaningful and indeed human engagement between human cultures and coastal natures – and the technicolour of cultural relations exposed by such an approach. It is a way of broadening the base of ‘humans’ to which community participation policies might appeal. Further, it is a path to meaningful powersharing between experts and communities by beginning with the ‘lay’ person and their meaning systems rather than relying on how to communicate expert meaning systems to an ‘ignorant public’. It offers a way of administering the coast which is receptive and appropriate to a coastal dwelling nation. It is moreover, proactive, and does not rest lazily and uncritically in simple accusations of ‘community apathy’:

Not many people sit down and think very hard about a lot of issues, as they’re too busy with their own lives these days. Not that many people are interested in long-term planning of all the issues that come into integrated coastal zone management (Interview No.1, 2003)

A simplistic allegation of a uninterested public fails to account for the complexity of relations between communities and experts. A critical analysis of these relations would consider the cultural frameworks which dominate in the coastal and marine management arena and gauge their appeal for the general public. This returns the onus of responsibility to the experts where the most significant power resides – and who have the time to consider, in a critical sense, community participation in the process. My investigation reveals the lack of power and legitimacy accorded to community cultural frameworks for understanding the coast. The ways in which communities fashion or construct the coast – their coastal geographies – are relatively powerless in the context of coastal and marine management policy.

Peace (1997: 541) found a similar situation in her analysis of a conflict between a major chemical corporation, Merrell Dow and the community of Womanagh Valley in southern Ireland. Ultimately, the concerns of residents in the area lead to an open inquiry into the Merrell Dow's proposal to build a chemical plant in the area. Peace (1997: 541) found that the inquiry process focused exclusively on the scientific evidence of pollution and waste:

Whenever local people tried to raise issues relating to their way of life, the ambience they wished to preserve, their rights as long established residents to the area, and other such intangible but, to them, deeply significant issues, the response of the [Inquiry's inspectors] was wholly negative.

She (1997: 543) concludes that the 'dominant institutions of government' uncritically 'privileg[ed] the hegemony of science over all other types of knowledge and systems of meaning (notably local ones). Moreover, they were doing so whilst proclaiming independence, detachment and impartiality'. Fundamental to this conflict is the ability to establish the notion of a 'sense of place'. In the case of the residents of Womanagh Valley, their local cultural geography was not the authoritative framework with which to

gauge possible development or policy decisions on the local area. Similarly, the ‘sense of place’ for local Australian communities is not considered in any meaningful sense in the practice and policy of coastal and marine management. The clear requirement for increasing community participation in this sphere is for the handling of difference in cultural frameworks in a more inclusive and respectful manner. The contests between different cultural geographies is likely to increase in the future, especially given the public profile of development issues and increased migration to the Australian coastline. Cultural geography offers a meaningful way for those experts with a genuine commitment to ‘power sharing’ to understand and act in ways which are respectful of different cultural constructions of the coastal zone. The relevance of these ideas to the Australian context are discussed in detail in the following section. Suffice to say here that the Australian coast and its coastal cultures provide myriad opportunities to discuss how Australians understand their coastal geographies – along with the consequences for the reality of, and our perceptions of, the natural environment.

7.3 Australian Beach Culture

The beach has become popular in an era that has come to emphasise cultural diversity rather than unity; where appeals to unifying discourses, or unifying symbols, are criticised as glossing over differences or as disguises for political or ideological agenda. But a society whose members share no common experiences or values is a society...no longer...Influences that strengthen social cohesion in non-oppressive ways should therefore be welcomed. ‘Being Australian’ is only one of the multiple and fluid identities of our complex selves; but to the extent that the beach remains a common resource and common site...it contributes to the fragile network of bonds that holds a people together despite their diverse and sometimes competing allegiances and alliances (Huntsman, 2001: 219).

It is perhaps brave to present the idea of the beach as a ‘unifying’ discourse in Australian culture. There are, as Huntsman (2001) suggests above, a deluge of different cultural groupings in Australia. Social policies of ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘reconciliation

with Indigenous Australians' direct our energies towards 'diversity' and the heterogeneity of the Australian community. Arguably, this perception has fostered an approach to 'Australianness' which, in the haste to accept, promote and tolerate diversity, has neglected those aspects of Australian culture which are common and shared – such as our experience of 36,700 kilometres of Australian coastline. The consequences of this neglect are particularly pronounced in policy designed to promote the participation of Australians in the management of the coastal zone. It is a critical oversight to offer a series of empty platitudes relating to 'Australians love the coast' without due consideration of why this might be so, and what it means in the everyday lives of Australians. This is not to suggest that there is a single homogenous Australian beach culture but rather, that the particular geography of Australia has proffered a deluge of relationships and representations between communities and the coast – a very contextual Australian cultural geography. The failure to reflect, in any significant sense, on Australian cultural geography means that the common community resource of Australian Beach Cultural Heritage remains hidden. The very aspect of coastal nature which resonates with most Australians is placed at the bottom of a list which it should head if policymakers are seeking to enhance and enlist the participation of communities in the coastal and marine management process. Cultural heritage

...denotes places and things that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special value for future generations as well as the present community. 'Heritage' can refer to archaeological sites or buildings, or to the way in which 'natural' areas are interpreted as a part of a way of life (RAC Coastal Zone Inquiry, 1993: 33).

In Australian coastal and marine management policy generally, there is special and deserved acknowledgement of 'Indigenous cultural heritage' (NHT, Guide to Applications 2003/2004) and thus some recognition of 'culture' in 'nature'. The new National Heritage Trust Envirofund (of which Coastcare is now part) states that it will

fund projects which involve the ‘application or transfer of traditional Indigenous knowledge’, the identification, protection and management of Indigenous cultural heritage resources, restoration of Indigenous cultural landscapes and demonstrations or trials of new techniques for Indigenous hunting, gathering or fishing – where these projects promote sustainability and biodiversity conservation. These areas of funding acknowledge the historical and particularly, spiritual attachment between Indigenous Australians and the land.

The significance of the coastal and marine environments for Indigenous Australians is generally unknown and unacknowledged. Sharp (2002: 7) corrects the misconception that Indigenous Australian’s are a ‘land-[D]reaming people’ tracing the ‘sea Dreamings, forms of ownership, and the sea knowledge of coastal and islander’ Indigenous Australians. She cites the 1992 High Court of Australia Mabo judgment which recognized native title rights of the Meriam people ‘above the high water mark’ as ‘half a story and half a victory’. She (2002: 6) explains that Mer Island is divided into eight clan territories which ‘extend over the foreshore and reefs’ and practice a form of sea ownership derived from local custom and law (ie. customary marine tenure). For the Meriam people, marine tenure is as important as land ownership. Of course, the Mabo judgement recognized only land ownership. In 2001, the High Court *Croker Island Seas* case (an island 200 kms northeast of Darwin) recognized native title rights to the sea. Unlike Mabo, the clans of Croker Island were not granted exclusive rights and so continue to co-exist with the public right to fish and navigate (Sharp, 2002: 9-10). Saltwater people continue to fight for rights and responsibilities relating to their sea and consistently challenge European laws and cultural traditions which assume that ‘the sea

is for everyone'. In the case of Indigenous Australians, acknowledgement of Indigenous cultural heritage in Coastcare projects is a small ripple faced by a wave of legal battles which will challenge Australian governments and the public to recognise 40,000 years or more of spiritual, cultural and material relationship with the coastal environment. With due respect and regard for Indigenous Cultural Heritage, there is some continuity between the spiritual and emotional attachments to the coast by both non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. Since 1998, the Australian public has intermittently been involved in debates surrounding the draft of a new constitution preamble. Citing the consistent references to Australian's love of the land and sea in various draft preambles, Mark McKenna (2003-04: 187) concludes:

No other nation has a constitutional preamble that seeks to explain its people's love of the land. No other nation has sought to distil the spirituality of country in constitutional language...In this light Australians, without knowing, have been engaged in something quite extraordinary and novel. We may well become the first nation to adopt a constitutional preamble that expresses the uniqueness of its land, the poetics of place, as a source and inspiration for national unity.

Of course this preamble would acknowledge the nation's Indigenous heritage and significantly join Indigenous cultural heritage and contemporary Australian identities via our 'senses of place'.

There is a case, then, for a similar, though certainly not the same, acknowledgement of Australian Beach Cultural Heritage in Coastcare projects and other community participation projects. In this configuration, the beach or the Australian coastline becomes a place of 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special value for future generations as well as the present community' (RAC Coastal Zone Inquiry, 1993: 33) and its heritage status stems from its deep seated position in the Australian 'way of life'. Potentially, this new framework for understanding the relations

between communities and their coastal environments would also highlight the relations between (broadly) non-Indigenous Australians and their cultural traditions and those of Australia's original inhabitants. This cultural heritage would include recognition of Indigenous coastal cultural heritage and the ways in which non-Indigenous Australians have either ignored, assumed or embraced these 'silences'. This would lead to some positive connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. McKenna (2002) attempts to reconcile the Indigenous and non-Indigenous histories of land he purchased on the far south coast of New South Wales. It is a contribution to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians using the landscape (in this case, a site called 'Blackfella's Point) as a conduit to unearth a tragic, unjust, at times inspiring shared history. McKenna's (2002) curiosity about the history of Blackfellas' Point could incite similar projects. Local groups, particularly recreational and community historical groups, are a possible avenue to capitalise on Australia's love of the coast in a practical sense – a consciousness-raising effort which would situate the historical relations between communities and their environments and promote a collusion between Indigenous and non-Indigenous 'spirits of place'. To encourage these types of projects funded at the local level by Coastcare would give particularly non-Indigenous Australians an opportunity to thwart the 'cult of disremembering' (Stanner, 1968) and embrace a future which would do well to exalt the connections between Indigenous spirituality and its continued presence in non-Indigenous attachments to land - a prouder and productive 'coastal cult of remembering'. To these projects in 'community coastal reconciliation', add projects which consider the historical and contemporary relations between other Australians and their cultural frameworks. This approach potentially expands the range of legitimate discourses (and presumably eligible projects for funding) to include aspects of Australian Beach Cultural Heritage

outside the pre-determined objectives of environmental science and management. It is a holistic and meaningful approach to community participation in the context of Australian culture. More importantly, the authority for projects rests with communities and what the coast means to them, in both historical and contemporary relations. In terms of 'power sharing with communities', this carries more 'meaning' than policy which begins with the 'experts' and is relevant to Australians and their way of life.

The lack of serious regard for Australian Beach Culture is not confined to coastal and marine management policy. Huntsman (2001) argues that intellectuals have not applied similar attention to the beach that they have expended on the bush and more recently, the desert:

[Because] ideas about cultural formation are based on European models, the ways in which the beach experience has been utilised in the creation of a distinctive new culture have not been recognised. While the superficial semiotics of the beach-as-exploited-by consumerism has been noted, the deeper reality of the beach as a place conducive to apprehension of the transcendent and the spiritual has been largely ignored (Huntsman, 2001: 210).

In their semiotic exploration of the beach in Australia, Fiske, Hodge and Turner (1987: 58) suggest that the principal myth of the Australian beach as 'classless, matey, basic [and] natural is rooted in the ideal' rather than a 'realistic apprehension of our urban, artificially structured society'. A myth refers to a culture's way of understanding, expressing and communicating to itself concepts that are important to its self-identity as a culture' (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery & Fiske, 1994: 192). Fiske, Hodge and Turner (1987) discuss (*inter alia*) the tensions between locals and tourists, 'clubbies' (surf-life saving club members) and 'surfriders', 'urban and suburban beaches as indicating a fundamental conflict between the 'beach as nature' and the 'beach as culture' (Fiske, Hodge & Turner, 1987). One aspect of Australian beach

culture is 'the beach as exploited by consumerism', a central theme of their analysis. The most obvious target for the commercialization of the Australian beach is the 'surfing industry'. Noteworthy in Australia are two of the largest surfing labels in the world, Rip Curl and Quiksilver, which began in the late 1960s in Torquay, Victoria. Quiksilver alone has sales on the global market of \$300 million a year (Huntsman, 2001: 141). A critical emphasis on how the beach has been 'bought', places Australian beach culture in the realm of material culture and big business. At the least, this type of critique casts doubt over other, by comparison, romantic notions which emphasise the natural and organic experience of the Australian beach. In the context of this discussion, evidence which points to real as opposed to ideal and associated semiotic critiques are not at issue. While accepting that the beach in Australian culture is, of course, a site of conflict between cultures and identities, the spiritual and private – the emotional and recreational attachments to the coast, transcend numerous 'categories' of the Australian beach experience. Huntsman (2001: 141) argues that the 'private freedom uncorrupted by the desire for belongings is more often attained than cultural critics are prepared to recognize'. Broadly, the point is that Australians do have many myths associated with the coast, which in one way or another, are a part of our identity as Australians. Like the Himalayas to the Nepalese, the coast is part of Australian cultural geography which confronts us and forces some relationship, be it love, hate, practical, spiritual, economic, scientific or mere indifference.

Early European encounters with the coast can account for the lack of academic interest in Australian coastal cultures. Upon invasion, Europeans were confronted with a landscape in stark contrast to their own and the coast 'with its savage seas and often precipitous terrain, [which] provided a symbolic barrier to entry, a genuine danger'

(Hamilton-Smith, 1998: 36). The ways in which these colonial hangovers have influenced Australian culture for much of the 20th century has been a subject for intellectuals for quite some time now. The Australian ‘cultural cringe’ (Phillips 1958) and Geoffrey Blainey’s ‘Tyranny of Distance’ (1966) are concepts which grew from early invasion/settlement and the continued comparison between ‘mother ‘ England and the harsh and frightening Australian landscape (Hamilton- Smith, 1998). Early English settlements were established in safe bays and harbours which left the open coastline untouched for many years (Huntsman, 2001: 53). During this early period, the beach was largely a ‘nuisance’, something to be negotiated to ensure the safe journey to cities and the inland of goods and services (Short, 1993: 53). As a nation of new settlers, it was notions of the ‘bushman’ and ‘pioneers’ which defined emerging ‘Australianness’. The beach failed to offer any prospect for economic wealth or settlement, nothing would grow or could be built on the beach (Huntsman, 2001: 50). Typical of this period in Australian history, A.B (Banjo) Paterson’s poem *To the future* (1934: 166) contrasts the general disdain for the coast with a love and fascination for the bush:

We cannot love the restless sea,
That rolls and tosses to and fro
Like some fierce creature in its glee,
For human weal or human woe
It has no touch of sympathy.

For us the bush is never sad:
Its myriad voices whisper low,
In tones the bushmen only know,
Its sympathy and welcome glad.

Huntsman (2001: 221) tracks the presence of the beach in Australian history, citing the twentieth century as the era where the ocean beach as a ‘meaningful space’ became an ‘index of our accommodation to life on this continent and a spiritual site, entering deeply

into our hearts and minds'. McGregor (1994: 52) suggests that the beach has superseded the bush as the hallmark of contemporary Australian culture and identity:

The outback myths of Australian culture replete with stories of inland pioneering, living on the land and of a nation 'riding on a sheeps back' are being replaced by the dominance of the 'beach' in Australian culture - contemporary Australian identity is more connected to the beach-goer than the bushman.

Taking a step further, in his reappraisal of Australian identity Drew (1994), concludes that it is the coast not the central heart of the continent that has shaped Australian identity. He uses the 'verandah' as the metaphor to depict a population which lives on the 'continental verandah of the country' arguing that as a nation of coastal dwellers, we live on the edge. Indeed, Australian culture and its relationship with the coast – our cultural geography – has changed over time and the spaces we have established by the seaside, reflect this change. McGregor (1994: 54) sums up some of the most familiar images:

...that assemblage of a day-at-the-beach, and body-and-board surfing, and bayside barbeques, and Christmas on the sand, and beer gardens and ovanite vans and FRESH BAIT signs and roofracks and beachwear shops and zinc blockout and gorilla grip and legionnaire caps and hot concrete and hot squeaky sand and that whole T-shirt-and-thongs bit...all that has somehow become emblematic of the Australian way of life.

While appealing to the unifying discourse of Australian beach culture, the specific characteristics of this culture and how it is represented in the everyday of lives of Australians (including immigrants, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, etc.) and Australian society generally are many and varied.

Contemporary impressions of the Australian bush no longer incite the confidence and enthusiasm of a past era. The ways in which Australians have constructed their

relationship with the bush has transformed in space and time. Now, it is often the ‘problem of the bush’, ‘droughts’ and despair which are at the forefront of Australian dreamings of the inland. The shift has been towards the coast. The typical ‘sea change’ population migration is some evidence of this change. The shift is especially evident in contemporary Australian arts, music, literature and popular culture, principal media for representing a nation’s cultural identity. Contemporary explorations of the Australian coast and its significance in Australian culture describe its role as a ‘national institution’ (Fiske, Hodge and Turner ,1987: 53). For example, in stark contrast to Banjo Paterson’s disparaging of the beach, in 1987 the Warumpi Band recorded ‘My Island Home’. Written by Neil Murray, the only non-Indigenous member of an Indigenous musical group, the song has become a quasi national anthem (especially the cover by Christine Anu) capturing a national connection with the idea of a ‘saltwater people’:

**My Island Home
Warumpi Band (1987)**

Six years I’ve been in the desert
And every night I dream of the sea
They say home is where you find it
Will this place ever satisfy me
For I come from the saltwater people
We always live by the sea
Now I’m out here west of Alice Springs
With a wife, and a family

And my Island Home
My Island Home
My Island Home
Is a-waiting for me

In the evening the dry wind blows
From the hills, and across the plains
I close my eyes and I’m standing
In a boat, on the sea again
And I’m holding that long turtle spear
And I feel I’m close now, to where it must be
And my Island Home, is a-waiting for me. (Written by Neil Murray)

In art, film and literature, images of Australian's relationship with the coast figure prominently. Consider Max Dupain's famous photograph 'The Sunbaker' (1937) and the image of the 'bronzed Australian' to more recent surfing artwork of Reg Mombassa with the surfwear label 'Mambo', to the increase in book titles by Australian pro-surfers such as Nick Carroll. The cult Australian film *Puberty Blues* (1979) depicts the familiarity of pubescent coastal encounters. In Neville Shute's seminal novel, *On the Beach* (1957), as death from deadly radiation approaches, Australians head to the beach while the Americans attend church (Capp, 2004: 8). In the *Picador Book of Beach* (a selection of short stories which includes prominent Australian authors), Australian author Robert Drewe (1993: 6-7) describes Australians as the 'world's best beachgoers' and as 'conducting a lifelong love affair with the beach':

Many, if not most, Australians have their first sexual experience on the coast and as a consequence see the beach in a sensual and nostalgic light. Thereafter, the beach is not only a regular summer pleasure but an *idée fixe* which fulfils an almost ceremonial need at each critical physical and emotional stage: as lovers, as honeymooners, as parents and, after travelling north to the particular piece of coastline befitting their class and superannuation... the elderly retired.

In recent times, Robert Drewe has played a central role in stimulating interest in the beach (Huntsman, 2001: 132). In *The Bodysurfers* (1983) he writes:

It was a combination of the exhilarating charge of the surf, the plunge on a wave, the currents pummelling and streaming along the body, the skin stretched salty and taut across the shoulders, the pungent sweetness of suntan oil, the sensual.

Land's Edge (1993), by acclaimed Australian author, Tim Winton, presents a collection of personal essays on what it means to be a coastal dweller. Winton has emphasized the importance of the West Australian coast in his writing and art, producing popular and critically-acclaimed adult and children's literature. Fiona Capp's *That Oceanic Feeling*

(2003) follows her return to the surf after a fifteen year hiatus and the rebirth of her connection with the ocean:

Most surfers – apart from those driven purely by the competitive urge – talk openly about the sheer joy of *being in the water* and the visceral need for an intimate relationship with the ocean. Informing this kind of understatement is a philosophy – sometimes couched in spiritual terms – about connecting with a force vastly greater than oneself, about returning to the ‘source’.

The success of Australian soap drama, *Home and Away*, set in the fictional coastal town of ‘Summer Bay’ – actually Palm Beach in Sydney – and the enormously popular ABC series, *Sea Change*, which followed the path of a successful city lawyer rejecting the urban jungle to find solace by the sea, are further examples of the way in which Australians have come to identify with images of the coast. Examples of the coastal theme are too numerous to list. Suffice it to say that contemporary Australian public culture is saturated with images of the Australian coast which point to a serious consideration and acceptance of the Australian beach cultural heritage.

With this mounting evidence then, why has the beach not been afforded serious attention by academics and intellectuals? Other than ‘colonial hangovers’, the lack of serious attention to the Australian beach can be explained by investigating what the beach represents to Australians in the context of broader social and cultural influences. Australian beach culture is largely a site for recreation. As such, it is constructed as a site of ‘play’ rather than ‘work’. Huntsman (2001: 8-9) draws parallels between infancy and childhood and the experience of the beach:

When we go to the beach and cross the threshold from the sand to the sea through the fringing waves, we gain ‘access, incomparably literal sensuous access, to that vital level of the self which is continuous with infancy’. As we move into deeper water we relive the experience of immersion, of merging into oneness with the vast undifferentiated matrix. We discover again the joy of play: of dancing through the froth, gliding up the wave face or diving through it...We are enveloped in total sensory stimulation as the cool silky water slides around

our bodies, the foam fizzles over the surface of our skin, the roar of the waves fills our ears, the taste of the salt in our mouths...And after we live this experience we return to the land, to the sand, where we may live in drowsy bliss... Or we may engage in different kinds of play: the child's busy engrossment in the building of castles and elaborate sandworks; the adult's walking along the beach and back again, to nowhere, to no purpose, in contented solitude or easy conversation with a companion; the fishermen's dreaming into the gathering sunrise or the fading dusk. Or we may sit and stand higher up the beach to watch the waves where their rhythmic, repetitive beat, their perpetual advance and retreat, bring a kind of calming reassurance: the sea always there.

McGregor (1994: 53) writes that the beach in Australian culture represents what we think life should be about, 'pleasure instead of work, leisure instead of routine, a life to enjoy rather than a life of achievement'. It is, unlike the bush and its harsh landscape and hardwork ethic, a site for joyful hedonism where the everyday pressures are repressed, if not forgotten, while Australians laze and play at the beach. The perception of the 'beach' as synonymous with 'lazy' and associated myths or lifestyles surrounding the 'beach bum' and other alternative ways of life which reject the capitalist or career clock in favour of a beach lifestyle, lead to a certain illegitimacy and disregard for Australian beach cultural heritage in formal and/or governmental contexts. Following from Weber (1958, 1968), the beach is about leisure rather than work – it is the private realm of our lives juxtaposed with the public realm of work and other 'serious' pursuits.

Community participation initiatives like Coastcare confront this binarism between perceptions of beach as play or beach as work. The very existence of these initiatives hints at some change in how Australians perceive their role as a nation of 'coastal dwellers'. These initiatives, in the Australian context, are also established at a time when the coast itself is gaining increasing legitimacy as a site of national cultural identity. This mix of enthusiasm for community participation initiatives alongside the increasing

recognition of the coast as broadly, culturally significant deems Australia in a potentially well disposed position to ‘meaningfully engage’ with its coastal communities.

7.4 Coastcarers on Australian Beach Culture

In the matrix of identities related to Australian beach culture, most are recreational and emotional attachments. For many Australians, the beach is a site of play and recreation. This is the community perception of the coast which establishes an Australian sense of place. This sense of place was certainly strong among Coastcare volunteers I have interviewed for this study but it is seen as ‘informal’ and not relevant to the ‘serious’ business of coastal management. Analysis of the fieldwork results reveals that Coastcarers maintain a clear delineation between their public ‘scientific’ work on the coast and their private and personal experiences of the coast. When asked ‘what needs to be done?’, most Coastcarers cite environmental science education to motivate a disinterested public. This is further confirmation of the pervasiveness of the powerful knowledge coalition of environmental science and economics. So embedded is this system of power relations that Coastcarers themselves deem their own knowledges – their cultural frameworks which makes the coast ‘mean’ to them – inappropriate to the management of the coastal zone. Typical is a response from a participant in the North Stradbroke Island focus group who suggested educational walks:

It would be good to have people taking them on a walking tour and introducing them to the wonders of the environment. I don’t think they take the time to stop and actually look and encounter it. They charge off to go to the beach but they’re not being introduced (to animals and plants) on the way through the track, like we do with our children. It’s an intimate encounter with the environment and that’s the level of awareness it takes. They’re so used to not even looking; just heading to the beach and not being aware of what’s around them (North Stradbroke Island Focus Group, 2003).

The suggestion from this participant is that the public is oblivious to the coastal environment and that awareness of ‘animals and plants’ (or coastal ecology) promotes an ‘intimate encounter’. Certainly, the ‘hands in the earth’ experience of these Coastcarers promotes a ‘type’ of intimacy. Overlooked by this participant are the other equally valid, though scantily promoted, intimate experiences of most Australians with the coast. This notion that a nation of ‘coastal dwellers’ is oblivious to the coast is reminiscent of the oft quoted analogy for cultural studies – the fish which swims in a bowl all day, is least aware of the water in which it swims. The approach used in my study draws attention to the ‘water’ in which Australians are immersed. Australians do have a relationship with the coast but it is often not defined in terms of environmental science or economics.

While Coastcarers were keen to promote public education as a means to raise awareness of coastal and marine management to a ‘disinterested public’, they do not draw on environmental science objectives to explain their motivation and participation. Rather they rely upon history, nostalgia and personal experiences typical of many Australians holidaying or living in the coast zone – in short, they drew upon discourses which relate directly to Australian beach culture:

When I moved to the area as a permanent resident with my husband and children that I’d visited since my childhood, there were of course many changes, some good, some not so good. I guess that I was feeling that the rapid changes were threatening the very things I’ve always loved about the area (Survey No. 16).

Once after surfing at Maroubra Beach, Sydney and experiencing the outflow from neighbouring Malabar sewage treatment, I signed up for Coastcare to help repair, and keep our area from degradation (Survey No. 19).

The Coastcarers I encountered spoke of holidays at the beach either as children themselves or as adults with their own children.

We spent every school holiday here [at Point Lookout]. I can remember running wild through the rear dunes with a bunch of other kids (Survey No. 21).

As a child about 5 years old, walking along the beach with friends, siblings, picking up driftwood, building sandcastles, rolling down sand dunes. Visited regularly on weekends and school holidays (Survey No. 16).

My earliest memories of the coast were the mudflats with the sandflies and soldier crabs at Sandgate in the 1930's (Survey No. 24).

We moved to the coast in 1969. There were only six houses here and lots of bush. As a teenager I visited Cotton Tree area and it has changed totally (Survey No 5).

Very early childhood, making sandcastles, rather flat water that was safe, large sand dunes and sunburn (Survey No 8).

These childhood memories are so familiar to many Australians. This is evident in the abundance of coastal holiday accommodation ranging from five-star resorts to basic camping facilities which fill to capacity over the holiday period. I have these memories of the coast – annual caravan holidays at Bribie Island (before the cement wall was built along the foreshore) and fishing trips with my father. I recall trips as a teenager with friends and their families to Tallebudgera on the Gold Coast and then eventually, holidays with friends *sans* parental supervision to places like Surfers Paradise, Noosa and Byron Bay. Now I live at the beach and continue to take my own family on coastal holidays. I have watched both my sons first reaction to the beach, to the water and to the sand. We have built sandcastles with moats and dug tunnels to allow the safe passage of 'brave knights'. It is all so very familiar to watch my children jump the waves or run from the shoreline as though the entire ocean was party to private game of 'gotcha'.

From a very early age, Australians encounter the coast – be it my own fortunate experiences or perhaps a local suburban coastline in a metropolitan centre. Robert Dessaix (1997: 17) affirms the familiarity of the Australian beach experience:

And there were all those childhood summers – what Australian child doesn't remember them? – salty, sandy summers that felt six months long because of all the emotional upheaval, growing up and expeditions out into the world they brought with them.

Incorporating these memories and experiences of the coastline as legitimate concerns for coastal management and *heritage* is the way to appeal to a broader Australian public and eventually motivate their awareness of, and participation in local coastal issues. My investigation suggests strongly that these private relations with the coast are the primary motivation for involvement in community participation initiatives. Further, broader analysis of Australian beach culture indicates that this sentiment surrounding the Australian coastline is a shared national identity, represented in a diversity of cultural frameworks inadequately captured and considered by coastal management programs which seek the participation of Australian communities. This is precisely where substantial improvements can be made in community participation programs like Coastcare and further, can guide new relationships and understandings between coastal experts and community 'experts'.

7.5 Communicating the Coast – A Place for Australian Beach Culture

Human scale thinking must have spiritual content. If we are to move from partial, fragmented and compartmentalized living towards completeness and holistic living, we need to put back what our dominant industrial-material-scientific world view leaves out. That omitted area is what we mean by spiritual (Porritt & Winner, 1988: 233).

This chapter began with an analysis of the philosophical foundations of the Coastcare program and in particular, its assumptions regarding the relations between nature and

culture. Current Coastcare initiatives overlook other cultural frameworks surrounding the coast. The administration of the coastal environment by scientific experts establishes the ‘truth’ of the coast as ‘nature’, separate from our subjective interpretations. This approach is adequate for the environmental sciences until the point where an engagement is sought with communities who often do not share this framework. There is a fundamental conflict between the ways in which experts and communities fashion the coastline, which can be largely ignored until community participation programs are established. The fundamental ingredient missing from Coastcare – and other community participation programs – is a descent from the clear heights of environmental science to the messy, complex and contradictory milieu of the ‘community’. This approach places the onus on the ‘experts’ to be educated about ‘community’ and to explore their relations between culture and nature.

McNaughten and Urry’s (1998: 231) study of how citizens in Lancashire perceived and understood environment and sustainability in their daily lives, noted ‘a widespread sense of powerlessness and perceived lack of political agency’. They also suggest that policy research which advocates greater public information assumes that this will engender public responsibility and action. Indeed, it can be argued that the public has sufficient information about the power of environmental science to define ‘public’ environmental issues and that a more fruitful course of action would be for the ‘experts’ to engage with ‘public’ or ‘community’ knowledges in a sincere and respectful manner. In this context, where the systems of meaning which communities bring to the coastal zone are marginalised by the expertise of science and economics, a sense of powerlessness pervades in the broader community. What if it is actually the experts who need the ‘education’ on communities rather than communities needing another education

expedition into the foreign portals of the environmental sciences? Empowering communities, as the Coastcarers in this project have shown, is an exercise in tapping into the pre-existing cultural values which local communities and individuals bring to their coastal encounters.

I have suggested that cultural geography offers a way of exploring the relations of culture and nature. This analysis of community participation in the Australian coastal and marine management process is contextual in that the distinct geography of the Australian landscape brings with it some special considerations. Different cultures create different meanings from a landscape – meanings that are created within distinctive political, economic, social and historical contexts (Burgess, Harrison & Maiteny, 1991: 500). It is perhaps nowhere more important to understand cultural geographies than in a policy process designed to instigate communities to become involved in the protection of their environments. By discounting the value of the distinctively Australian cultural geographies, community participation programs like Coastcare remove the ‘community’ from the policy equation. Formal acknowledgment and a concerted effort to include the subjective nature of community in the administration of the coastal zone is the path to empowering communities in a meaningful and respectful manner. It is not a simple matter of changing policy introductions but involves altering the administration processes and procedures such that the Australian community and their relations (alongside environmental science and their relations) are the priority.

The place of the beach in Australian culture and identity in terms of influence and currency has surpassed Australian identification with the bush. In contemporary Australia, images of the coast abound and our experience of the beach is central to

notions of Australian identity. Serious academic and government attention to Australian beach culture is long overdue and especially relevant to environmental policy and programs. This will mean confronting local coastal cultural frameworks and finding new ways to enchant an Australian public who love the coast but are not so enthused by the classification of coastal weeds. Simply, this requires administering coastal and community participation initiatives in ways which are appropriate and appeal to a nation of coastal dwellers. It is Australian beach culture that provides a central avenue for policymakers to communicate the coast.

Chapter 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

It must be recognised that general views of life and the universe can never be the products of increasing empirical knowledge, and that the highest ideals, which move us forcefully, are always formed only in the struggle with other ideals which are just as sacred to others as ours are to us (Weber, 1949: 57).

There is only a perspective seeing, only a perspective 'knowing'; and the more affects we allow to speak about one thing, the more complete will our 'concept' of this thing, our 'objectivity' be - Friedrich Nietzsche.

Scrutinising relations of knowledge and power, this dissertation presents a cultural analysis of community participation in coastal and marine management and, in particular, the Coastcare program. The intent is to integrate the critical insights of (broadly) cultural studies into coastal management initiatives. This is uncharted terrain in cultural studies and the environmental sciences and has required a novel approach. Traversing boundaries, my project supports the ideal of 'integration' in research by seeking to combine disciplinary perspectives in policymaking where communication occurs between 'previously disparate agencies, issues and sectors' (Dovers, 2005: 3). This is the fundamental challenge here – to combine different disciplines with varying 'epistemological commitments' (Schoenberger, 2001) to the task of guiding and indeed, motivating local communities to become involved in coastal and marine management. Integration of this notion in research methodologies and in the overall policy goals confronts a complexity of positions, knowledges, actors and their cultures bringing different priorities to the coastline:

The integration of environmental, social and economic considerations is a challenge that requires the development of methods, processes, data streams, and so on to create integrative capacity. The intellectual challenge is extended by the emerging realization that development of integrative capacity demands a sophisticated understanding of the interactions between highly complex, non-linear, and often closely interdependent human and natural systems' (Dovers, 2005: 3).

The findings of this project strongly suggest that those with the power in environmental policymaking and planning are still firmly entrenched in a 'science to society' framework and how to communicate their knowledges but are less conversant with 'society to science' frameworks. The proverbial Petri dish, despite altruistic efforts, still takes precedence over the local experiences of coastal communities. The lack of analysis and response to these deeper questions of knowledge and power and its effects upon expert and community relations might explain why, of the 700 integrated coastal management programs worldwide, only 45 percent are active with varying degrees of success (Sorensen, 2002). It is the confrontation between human cultures and coastal natures or, as I have argued, the collapse of culture into nature (vice versa) which challenges governments and environmental scientists in their efforts to implement community participation initiatives. Environmental scientists and associated policymakers assume implicitly that their encounter with the coast/nature occurs without the 'contamination' of subjective cultural frameworks. While this is a dubious claim in itself, the implications when applied to community participation initiatives is amplified. It is much harder to sustain a clear distinction between culture and nature when the object of your study talks back (unlike say, coastal dunes) and prioritises different cultural frameworks to understand the coast – the policy process becomes muddled and polluted by differing systems of representation of what the coast means. This cultural analysis is a 'way of seeing' community participation in coastal and marine management. It is not intended to 'throw the Coastcare baby out with the bathwater' but rather aims to add another dimension to our understanding or, in Nietzsche's terms, 'another perspective knowing', which can exist alongside and enhance existing efforts to include communities in the management of their coastal zones.

My findings indicate a lack, on the part of policymakers, of critical analysis of communities and what their coastal environments mean to them in the context of their everyday lives – this is the ‘structure of feeling’ (Williams, 1975) which surround the official policy of community-based coastal initiatives. In Australia at least, Integrated Coastal Management and the pursuit of community participation has proceeded on the flawed assumption that ‘science’ can motivate ‘society’ with its own enthusiasm for scientific objectives. Thus, the promotion of community participation in coastal and marine management largely becomes a public relations exercise for the environmental sciences. It is, overwhelmingly, about the knowledges of the environmental sciences. This is not a problem *per se* as there is an obvious need for environmental science. The problem lies with the ways in which the dominant knowledges of environmental science and economics act to marginalise or discredit other frameworks for understanding the Australian coastline. For many Australians, scientific knowledges mean little in the context of their everyday experience and knowledge of the Australian coast. Missing is a deeper and critical cultural analysis of the field of power and knowledge which guides and administers community participation processes. This dissertation goes some way to unraveling the complexity of these relations of knowledge and power. Community participation initiatives are sites of struggle where ‘sacred’ scientific ideals are confronted and challenged by those of communities. It is the clash of cultural frameworks which confronts environmental scientists and others attempting to instigate community participation initiatives. Evidence suggests that those working within the environmental sciences are prepared to embrace, or at least consider, alternative ways to motivate and implement such processes. For example, recent work emerging from the Co-operative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management promotes collaboration between the environmental and social sciences.

Whelan and Oliver (2006) adopt distinctively qualitative research methods in order to investigate the ‘barriers and bridges’ to relationships between ‘grassroots carer’ and conservation groups and the regional bodies involved in natural resource management’. Their study deals with those grassroots organizations already involved or at least interested in the community management of natural resources as opposed to motivating or ‘increasing the catchment’ of potential volunteers. There is also a very limited assessment of power-sharing and as I have argued, this is an area which requires sustained and critical attention if collaborations between communities and scientists are to prove successful. Nevertheless, the methods used to assess existing collaborations is heartening in its promotion of qualitative methods which are geared very much towards the human dimension of community participation in natural resource management.

Throughout this dissertation, I have made the rather bold suggestion that it is the environmental sciences themselves who contribute disproportionately to the relative failure of the community participation initiatives they seek to implement and encourage. While seemingly interested in exploring alternative frameworks, it is unclear whether those working within this realm are willing to critically assess this impact on community participation initiatives. This assessment would create ‘radical’ environmental scientists who are courageous enough to relinquish some power in order to critically assess the limitations of their own disciplinary commitments. In the case of Coastcare and community participation initiatives, this involves a critical assessment of how the knowledges of the environmental sciences impact upon the policy process. This is a self-reflexive project:

The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory (Gramsci, 1971: 324)

In Australia, there is much at stake in the project to involve communities in the management of the coast. As I have shown, it is not simply concerns relating to coastal ecologies, industry, etc – at stake in Australia is our way of life as a nation of coastal dwellers. Bringing this way of life – Australian coastal cultures – to the fore of policy initiatives has the propensity to make the management and preservation of the coast relevant in the context of the everyday lives of ordinary Australians. That is, to enchant a public disenchanted by current coastal policy which focuses on scientific outcomes at the expense of the emotional, spiritual and/or the cultural significance of the Australian coast. At best, incorporating this aspect of our unique Australian coastal geography may incite greater participation and awareness of coastal management issues. This does not mean we need to fall prey to 'romantic seductions of local knowledges and identities' (Wynne, 1996). It is not a choice between (at least) two competing frameworks but rather seeking new ways to negotiate expert and lay knowledges. As Fischer (2000: 88) concludes:

...the challenge ahead is not just more science, but rather how to better understand the interactions between science and ideological belief systems – technical facts and cultural values – and most importantly how to systematically integrate them in a more comprehensive analysis.

8.1 Project Summary

My intention is to create invigorated possibilities for sustainable community participation in coastal and marine management processes. I have argued that community participation initiatives like Coastcare need to incorporate 'culture' into their framework

to understand both the coasts and the Australian communities who inhabit them.

Bennett (1998: 60) defines cultural studies as...

...concerned with the analysis of cultural forms and activities in the context of relations of power which condition their production, circulation, deployment and, of course, effects. [In addition] its inquiries into such matters are guided by a practical interest in the ways in which culture functions or operates within, and as a part of, those relations of culture and power.

Community participation in this sense is a 'cultural text' which has established and enabled certain practices and this has occurred within the context of relations of power between, broadly, communities, governments and environmental science experts (at the local national and global levels). Primarily, this dissertation draws attention to the ways in which these broad groupings have established differing cultural frameworks to understand the coast. A key insight of the sociological criticism of science – the social construction of science - is to show how scientific expert knowledge itself embodies a particular culture (Wynne, 1996, 75). The effect of this critique is to expose the neutrality and objectivity of scientific cultures to subjectivity and uncertainty about the assumptions upon which their truth claims rest. The result is to show the natural sciences as compromised in the task of engaging communities. The principal reason for this situation is that the objectivity and neutrality claimed fosters a particularly undemocratic model of communication – once scientists claim 'the Truth', it is impossible for community groups to participate on a level playing field. Any models or policy initiatives are gauged by their ability, or otherwise, to maintain or deliver environmental science objectives. In this way, environmental sciences produce a 'regime of truth' surrounding community participation initiatives like Coastcare which establishes what can be said, what cannot – in short, legitimizing positivist knowledges as the truth in their interaction with communities. In this configuration, power-sharing with communities is best defined

as altruistic tokenism, rather than any meaningful effort to incorporate the opinions, ideas and knowledges of everyday community members. The primacy of environmental sciences and economics knowledges (in the pursuit of ESD) functions to administer out of the equation any potentially significant interaction or integration with communities.

However, community participation initiatives do represent some change in the way coastal experts relate to local communities. This small fissure in power/knowledge relations is inadequately grasped via an analysis which focuses upon the broader structural characteristics of a discipline such as environmental science (and its capillaries of environmental planning, policy, education, etc) – it fails to draw attention to the subtle nuances of these disciplines as they are experienced and enacted at the level of the local or ‘everyday’. In order to examine in detail the localised and detailed instance of Coastcare and its attempts to engage with communities, I turned to cultural policy studies and in particular, Foucault’s notion of governmentalities. This draws attention to the ‘institutional politics of detail and techniques’ which enables a closer inspection of the intricacies of policy administration, development and implementation. In this case, I examined the emergence of community participation initiatives in Australia, showing how the concept emerged in response to the growth in environmental problems and generally, a crisis in the legitimation of scientific knowledge/s as Truth.

Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) and its action plan, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, are responses to the growing recognition that environmental threats or problems in the coastal region require a multi-faceted response from (*inter alia*) governments, industry, scientists and communities. Overall, the aim is to promote the participation of all in the management of the coastal zone (in varying capacities) with the

general qualification that the local level is where these programs carry weight and increased importance.

In a Foucauldian sense, governmental administration of the coastal zone is a 'contact between the technologies of domination and technologies of the self', expressed by the powerful coalition of environmental science and economics (ESD), which submit Coastcarers to 'certain ends or domination' (as in legitimate projects). Simultaneously, Coastcarers are complicit with these 'technologies of domination' and do so, in order to attain a certain state of happiness (Foucault, 1988: 18-19). Their participation occurs within a system of unequal relations of knowledge and power which, at first glance, suggests a degree of complicity. However, the 'happiness' attained by negotiating the conflict between government administration of the coastal zone and their own priorities explains their enthusiasm and dedication to the Coastcare program. My engagement with Coastcare volunteers has shown how, despite governmental administration of the programs towards various 'environmental science and economic ends', these volunteers brought their own frameworks to their Coastcare efforts. Further, many of these cultural frameworks were quite unrelated (if not the antithesis) of ESD objectives. Mostly, these volunteers were concerned about the effects of development and saw their efforts as preserving the beauty of the coastline in the face of encroaching and rapid development. These volunteers used frameworks relating to spiritual and emotional attachments to the coast, mostly couched in terms of holidays and recreation. The framework which they share is encapsulated in the phrase, Australian beach culture.

I have joined others (Huntsman 2001, McGregor 1994, Drew 1994) in arguing that the beach has replaced the bush as the popular icon of Australian culture. It is a critical

oversight to not include this everyday framework for understanding the coast into initiatives which seek the participation of Australian communities. Recently, the then Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, upon releasing the new *Framework and Implementation Plan for a National Cooperative Approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management*, noted that in 2006, around 83 percent of Australians live within 50 kilometres of the coast. Noting the rapid development of the Australian coastline, Senator Campbell stated: ‘Our coasts are a precious resource and it is up to all of us to work together and conserve them for years to come’ (Media Release 23 May 2006). He then emphasized research into climate change and acid sulfate soils. This is a typical approach to government coastal policy. A bland statement about ‘Australians loving the coast’ then onto the real business of science. In my experience, this is the case, without exception, for government statements on coastal management policy. They are statements filled with ostensible human dimensions but are largely vacuous rhetoric – a warm and fuzzy plea for community participation which conceal relations of power and knowledge and which promise little in terms of a practical and significant place for communities in local environmental policy, planning and management. Worse still, communities know their worth within the overall direction of coastal and marine planning – participants in this study referred to community consultation on coastal issues (and policy issues generally) as a ‘tick box’ for governments. Recent government television advertisements promoting community-based coastal management feature examples of Australians at play on the beach. However, the legitimate parameters for participation have not changed and are still geared towards scientific objectives. These advertisements are another superficial effort to appeal to Australians via their affinity with the beach but closer examination of policy reveals continuing disregard for this aspect of the Australian way of life. In short, the

division between Australian coastal cultures and policy coastal natures is stark and does very little to foster the large scale sense of stewardship sought by community participation policy initiatives.

That said, this research has revealed a wealth of opportunities for policymakers to foster community care for the coastal zone. Australians do know the coast and it is these knowledges with which policymakers need to forge a connection. The knowledges to which I refer are not narrowly defined environmental scientific knowledges of the coast – they are knowledges which as a coastal dwelling nation, we gather throughout a lifetime of exposure and experience. They are both shared and contested within and between coastal communities, individuals, etc. And of course, local communities (and the communities within these communities) have different stories, myths, ideas, beliefs and practices which are sometimes specific to their section of the coast. There are also some seemingly salient characteristics of the Australian coastal experience such as the ‘red and yellow flags’ of the local surf life saving club, bar-b-ques and a cold beer by the beach on the weekend or the afternoon beach walk complete with setting sun and characteristic exhaustion after an entire day spent in the great outdoors – just to name a few. It is these uniquely Australian experiences, along with local coastal histories, which await investigation by policymakers enthusiastic for increasing community awareness and participation in coastal and marine management. The danger with policymakers seeking to engage with these knowledges is the propensity to homogenise a diverse range of experiences into a singular and exclusive definition of Australian beach culture. Caution is required to ensure both similarities and differences are respected as they occur within the broader concept of Australian beach culture and how this is experienced at the local level of coastal communities. Changes occurring on the coast, be they scientifically identified such as erosion or the result of human-made development, etc.

must be understood in the context of people's everyday lives. This is the essence of cultural geography which...

emphasises that what is important in any consideration of environmental change is the meaning of the change for those cultural groups that have incorporated that aspect of the physical environment into their definitions of themselves (Grieder and Grakovich, 1994: 21).

What is desperately needed in community participation initiatives is attention to the cultural frameworks which Australians bring to their encounter with the coast and then using this analysis to find ways to incite their enthusiasm and participation in local coastal management processes. By listening to people at the local level, policymakers can seize the opportunities presented by the small fissure in knowledge/power relations signaled by policy zeal for community solutions to environmental issues. These local level specifics can then fuel macro level change in relations between communities and experts or as Fischer (2000: 12) eloquently explains, '[B]y listening to the micro-order of people's sense making, we can hear the macro-order tick'. Community participation does represent an opportunity to create a new 'regime of truth' in environmental policy, which, if the experts are correct, will make a significant improvement to the state of our coastal zone. This new regime of truth lies in renegotiating community and expert relations in a more participatory and democratic manner such that what holds significant meaning at the local level is given equal credence in environmental policy and planning.

The potential for change in community relations with experts must be tempered by an acknowledgement of the influence of political economy. The broader structural issues heralded by a system of industrial capitalism which promotes and profits from the development of the coastal zone impacts upon our expectations for community participation. The concept of 'Environmentally Sustainable Development' is testimony

to the power of economic and development discourses. As I have shown, ‘development of the coastline’ (as enabled by governments in collusion with industry) is a key factor in motivating community members to care for their coast. It is problematic to empower communities to protect and conserve their coastline within an overarching policy framework which supports development – the ‘enemy’ for many coastal communities. This arrangement has serious consequences for what we can expect from community participation programs, especially in terms of power-sharing. In the broader political economy of coastal and marine management, the cultural frameworks of communities are barely audible over the sound of cash registers which are ringing for developers (and councils, governments) all along the coastline. What I have suggested is that this tempering does not mean we abandon any potential changes enabled by seeking community involvement in the coast. I am suggesting that while the impact of my research on the overall political economy of coastal management may be negligible, I can ‘focus on the fissure’ and nurture the potential break in power relations – and opportunities for Australian coastal communities therein – to foster small changes which will, hopefully, be a catalyst for a larger movement.

8.2 Further Research

There are several key areas which have arisen during the course of this project and require further academic attention. This list is by no means exhaustive, the coast and coastal communities are experiencing such rapid change that research projects abound.

This project has looked at a small sample of community participants in coastal and marine management. A much larger national project awaits which could use this project as a beginning in terms of theory and method. This project would seek qualitative data on the experiences of Coastcare (or even natural resource management) volunteers as

well as gathering further demographic data on participants. The project might canvass participants' opinions of the policy itself and further, gather information from a cultural geography framework. The types of questions asked could include: What does the coast mean to these people in the context of their everyday lives? What histories or memories are at the fore of participants consciousness when they think about the coast? Other than their local efforts at coastal and marine management, how do they use the coast?, etc. This project would be an honest example of 'power-sharing', placing the cultures of communities and the insights of its members at the fore of the research project. In an effort to thwart further damage to government reputation, this research could ensure it had mechanisms for feedback and to show how the responses of 'actual people' had been collated and implemented in the policy process.

Local governments and their role in coastal planning and development are described as the 'sleeping giants of environmental politics' (Adams & Hine, 1999: 188) and their impact on the overall management of Australia's coastal zone is more significant than financial allocations for coastal and marine planning at the local level might suggest. Local government and their responsibility for town planning/development, waste, etc alongside the global recognition that local actions have significant impacts on environments (Adams & Hine, 1999: 188) add weight to the critical role for local government. My fieldwork suggests a stronger role for local government in the administration of community participation initiatives. Local governments are far more accessible to communities and are an obvious site for effective 'hands-on' integration between communities, experts and policymakers. Further research is required to assess the role of local government in community-based coastal management and possibly, the

feasibility of community projects which investigate local cultural histories – in an attempt to ensure the relevance of policy to the lives of everyday Australians.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) reports a decline in the number of Australians concerned about environmental issues, decreasing from 75 percent in 1992 to 57 percent in 2004. However, recent media surrounding global warming and closer to home, Australia's drought may have lead to increased public concern about environmental issues. It is far too simplistic to see the decline in interest as the result of a complacent or ill-educated public. It is the responsibility of policymakers to raise concern about environmental issues. Official recognition of Australian beach cultural heritage – one of the few heritages we share as a nation – should be a research priority at all levels of Australian government. The 'cultural geography' framework I have implemented here is a useful starting point for a serious consideration of Australian beach culture. The research would suggest strategies to implement an overwhelmingly popular aspect of Australian culture into policy initiatives – perhaps by expanding eligible areas for funding within the existing Envirofund program.

In *Saltwater People* (2002), Sharp writes about the sea dreaming of the Indigenous people of the northern coasts of Australia. Sharp (2002: 21) observes that many Australians know that the Inuit-Eskimo have more than 60 names for snow but few know that Torres Strait Islanders have 80 different words for tides which are based on lunar and solar cycles. There is so much that we, as a nation, do not know about our Indigenous peoples and their coastal experiences. Huntsman (2001: 209) writes that this 'amnesia' leads to an overall insecurity about the capacity for 'successful history-making':

To the extent that we confront the past and grow in our understanding that history has been and can be made here, so we will become less dependent on overseas experience and overseas affirmation for a sense that we too are participants in humanity's history-making.

In the preface to this dissertation, I wrote about my experience of this historical amnesia. Standing on top of Norrie's Headland, I was unsure (and still am) if I was standing on a sacred site. I would like to investigate what happened before and when my ancestors arrived in my local coastal area. As it stands today, it is as if nothing existed prior to my white arrival in Bogangar/Cabarita Beach. Mark McKenna's (2002) approach in *Looking for Blackfella's Point* is one which could be pursued elsewhere on the Australian coast. His attempt to reconcile or at least understand the histories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous uses of the land is heartening in the way it uncovers and reveals a dark past steeped in racism, treachery, neglect, hurt and pain while at times allowing shards of light which show some humanity, compassion, honesty and indeed shared memories. A local Indigenous man tells McKenna (2002: 4), 'If you want to know where our sites are just look around you, we like the same spots you do'. Our unique and splendid Australian geography is an opportunity to explore shared histories and the impact of the landscape on ourselves and each other. In terms of motivating community participation in coastal management, these shared histories alongside other historical and contemporary experiences of the coast – our sense of place – are a logical starting point in the quest to instill an awareness of environmental stewardship in the Australian community.

List of References

Adams, G. & Hine, M. (1999), 'Local Environmental Policy Making in Australia', in Walker, K. J. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian Environmental Policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: NSW, pp. 186-203.

Agrawal, A. & Gibson, C.C. (2001), 'Introduction – The Role of Community in Natural Resource Conservation', in Agrawal, A. & Gibson, C. C. (eds), *Communities and the Environment – Ethnicity, Gender, and the State in Community-Based Conservation*, Rutgers University Press: New Jersey, pp. 1-31.

Alasuutari, P. (2004), 'The Globalisation of Qualitative Research', in Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. F. & Silverman, D. (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice*, Sage Publications: London, pp. 595-608.

Anderson, K. & Gale, F. (1999), *Cultural Geographies (2nd Edition)*, Addison Wesley Longman: Australia.

Atkinson, P., Coffey, A. & Delamont, S. (2003), *Key themes in qualitative research: continuities and changes*, AltaMira Press: UK.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2006), Australian Environment: Issues and Trends, www.abs.gov.au

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2004), *Australian Social Trends – Population – Seachange – new coastal residents*, www.abs.gov.au

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2000), *Australia Now*, www.abs.gov.au

Australia's Ocean Policy 1998, Environment Australia.

Beck, U. (1992), *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, Sage Publications: Newbury Park, California.

Beck, U. (1994), 'The reinvention of politics: Towards a theory of reflexive modernisation' in Beck, U., Giddens, A. & Lash, S., *Reflexive Modernisation: politics, tradition and aesthetics in the modern social order*, Polity Press: Cambridge, pp. 1-55.

Beck, U. (1998), 'Politics of risk society' in Franklin, J. (ed), *The politics of risk society*, Polity Press: Cambridge, pp. 9-22.

Bennett, T. (1989), 'Culture: Theory and Policy', *Media Information Australia*, 53 (August), pp: 9-11.

Bennett, T. (1998), *Culture: a reformer's science*, Allen & Unwin: St Leonards, NSW.

Bilteyst, D. (1995), 'Qualitative Audience Research and Transnational Media Effects: A New Paradigm?', *European Journal of Communication*, pp:81-108.

Bishop, P. (1999), 'Representative Democracy and the Place of Participation', *Canberra Bulletin of Public Administration*, 94 (December), pp. 12-16.

Blainey, G. (1966), *The Tyranny of Distance*, Sun Books: Melbourne.

Bleier, R. 1984, *Science and Gender: a critique of biology and its theories on women*, Pergamon Press: New York.

Burgess, J., Harrison, C. & Maiteny, P. (1991), 'Contested meanings: the consumption of news about nature conservation', *Media, Culture and Society*, 13 (4), pp. 499-519.
Byrne-Armstrong, H.; Higgs, J. and Horsfall, D. (eds) (2001), *Critical Moments in Qualitative Research*, Butterworth Heinemann: Oxford.

Capp, F. (2003), *That Oceanic Feeling*, Allen & Unwin: Sydney.

Capp, F. (2004), 'Solace by the Sea', *The Age Review*, March 13, p. 8.

Carey, G. & Lette, K. (1979), *Puberty Blues*, McPhee Gribble: Carlton, Victoria.

Casuarina Beach, 2006, 'New Tweed Coast puts a face to the name', accessed 12 April, 2006, <http://casuarinabeach.com.au>

Cicin-Sain, B. & Knecht, R. W. (1993), 'Implications of the Earth Summit for ocean and coastal governance', *Ocean Development and International Law*, 24, pp. 121-153.

Cicin-Sain, B., Knecht, R. W. & Fisk, G. F. (1995), 'Growth in capacity for integrated coastal management since UNCED: an international perspective', *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 29 (1-3), pp. 93-123.

Cicin-Sain, B. & Knecht, R.W. (1998), *Integrated coastal and ocean management: concepts and practices*, Island Press: Washington.

Clarke, B. (2004), 'More than the sum of its parts, a reflection on the national Coastcare program under NHT 1, 1995-2002', *Australian National Coastal Conference, Coast to Coast*, 20-23 April, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

Clarke, B. (2002), 'Coastcare: A shining model of community participation or government cost-cutting device?', *Australian National Coastal Conference, Coast to Coast*, November 4-8, Tweed Heads, NSW, Australia.

Clarke, B. (2002a), 'Towards measuring the success of Coastcare: Australia's community-based coastal management program', in Holland, P., Stephenson, F. & Wearing, A. (eds), 2001, *Geography – A Spatial Odyssey*, Proceedings of the Third Joint Conference of the New Zealand Geographical Society and the Institute of Australian Geographers, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, Jan-Feb, pp. 150-156.

Coastal Co-operative Research Centre n.d., Citizen Science Toolkit, Retrieved July 14, 2004, from <http://www.coastal.crc.org.au>

Communities connecting with the ocean - South-East Regional Marine Plan Assessments Report 2002, National Oceans Office, Australia.

Commonwealth of Australia (1995), *Living on the Coast – The Commonwealth Coastal Policy*, Department of Environment, Sport and Territories, Canberra.

Conacher, A. J. (2000), *Environmental planning and management in Australia*, Oxford University Press: Australia.

Cosgrove, D.E. (1984), *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, Croom Helm: London.

Cousins, M. & Hussain, A. (1984), *Michel Foucault*, Macmillan: London.

Crowley, K. & Walker, K. J. (1999), 'Introduction', in Walker, K. J. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian Environmental Policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: NSW, pp. 1-21.

Crowley, K. (1999), 'Explaining Environmental Policy: Challenges, Constraints and Capacity', in Walker, K. J. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian Environmental Policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: NSW, pp.45-64.

Cunningham, S. (1992), *Framing Culture – Criticism and Policy in Australia*, Allen & Unwin: Australia.

Darier, E. (1999), 'Foucault and the Environment: An Introduction', in Darier, E. (ed), *Discourses of the Environment*, Blackwell Publishers: London.

D'Cruz, H. (2001), 'The fractured lens: methodology in perspective', Hilary Byrne-Armstrong, Joy Higgs and Debbie Horsfall (eds), *Critical Moments in Qualitative Research*, Butterworth Heinemann: Oxford, pp. 17-29.

Dean, M. (1992), 'Free Thinking', *Australian Left Review*, 138, pp. 12-15.

Department of Environment, Sport and Territories (1995), *Our Sea, Our Future – Major Findings of the State of the Marine Environment Report for Australia*, DEST: Canberra.

Dessaix, R. (1997), 'The Best Year of Their Lives', *Good Weekend, Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 January.

Doyle, T. 2000, *Green Power*, University of NSW Press, Sydney.

Doyle, T. & McEachern, D. (1998), *Environment and Politics*, Routledge: London.

Dovers, S. (1999), 'Institutionalising ESD', in Walker, K. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian environmental policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, pp. 204-223.

Dovers, S. (2000), 'Still settling Australia: Environment, History, and Policy' in Dovers, S. (ed), *Environmental history and policy: still settling Australia*, Oxford University Press: Melbourne, pp. 2-23.

Dovers, S. (2000a), 'Beyond EverythingCare and EverythingWatch: public participation, public policy, and participating publics', *International Landcare 2000: Changing Landscapes, Shaping Futures*, 2-5 March, Melbourne, Australia.

Dovers, S. (2005), 'Clarifying the Imperative of Integration Research for Sustainable Environmental Management', *Journal of Research Practice*, 1 (2), Article M1 (<http://jrp.icaap.org>) accessed 12 April 2006.

Drew, P. (1994), *The Coast Dwellers: Australians living on the Edge*, Penguin: Ringwood, Victoria.

Drewe, R. (1983), *the bodysurfers*, Penguin: Australia.

Drewe, R. (1993), 'Introduction', Drewe, R. (ed), *The Picador Book of the Beach*, Picador: Melbourne, pp. 1-9.

Eagleton, T. (2001), *The idea of culture*, Blackwell Publishers: London.

Economou, N. (1999), 'Backwards into the Future: National Policy Making, Devolution and the Rise and Fall of the Environment', in Walker, K. J. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian Environmental Policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, pp. 65-81.

Ellsworth, J. P., Hildrebrand, L. P. & Glover, E. A. (1997), 'Canada's Atlantic coastal action program: a community based approach to collective governance', *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 36 (1-3), pp. 121-142.

Environment Australia (1999), *Mid-Term Evaluation of Coasts and Clean Seas (1997-1999)*, Environment Australia: Canberra.

Fischer, F. (2000), *Citizens, Experts and the Environment – The Politics of Local Knowledge*, Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Fiske, J., Hodge, B. & Turner, G. (1987), *Myths of Oz: Reading Australian Popular Culture*, Allen & Unwin: Sydney.

Forde, S.; Foxwell, K. and Meadows, M (2002) 'Creating a community public sphere: community radio as a cultural resource'. *Media International Australia* 103, pp. 56-67.

Foucault, M (1974), '*Prisons et asiles dans le mécanisme du pouvoir*' in *Dits et Ecrits*, t. II. Gallimard: Paris 1994, pp. 523-4.

Foucault, M. (1977), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Allan Lane: London.

Foucault, M. (1980), *Power and Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Harvester Press: London.

Foucault, M. (1980a), 'Le philosophe masque', (entretien avec C. Delacampagne), *Le Monde*, 6 April: *Le Monde-Dimanche*, pp.1.

Foucault, M. (1988), 'Technologies of the Self', in Martin, L., Gutman, H. & Hutton, P. (eds), *Technologies of the Self: a seminar with Michel Foucault*, University of Massachusetts Press: Arnhest, pp. 16-49.

Foucault, M. (1990), *Politics Philosophy Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984*, Routledge: New York.

Foxwell, K. (1998), *Searching for a Discursive Space: Where is the Public in Australian Telecommunications Debate?*, Honours Thesis, Faculty of Arts Deakin University, Australia.

Garnham, N. (1990), 'Contribution to a Political Economy of Mass Communication', in Englis, F. *Capitalism and Communication: Global Culture and the Economics of Information*, Sage: London, pp. 20-55

Glacken, H. (1966), 'Reflections on the man-nature theme as a subject for study', in Darling, F. & Milton, T. (eds), *Future Environments of North America*, The Natural History Press: Garden City.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago, Aldine Publishing.

Goodwin, A. (1992), *Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture*, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis.

Gough, N. (2002), 'Blank spots, blind spots, and methodological questions in postgraduate research', *Deakin University Postgraduate Research Conference*, 4-6 October.

Gramsci, A. (1971), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, International Publishers: New York.

Greider, T. & Garkovich, L. (1994), 'Landscapes: The Social Construction of Nature and the Environment', *Rural Sociology*, 59 (1), pp. 1-24.

Grossberg, L. (1987), 'Critical Theory and the Politics of Empirical Research', in Gurevitch, M. & Levy, M. (eds), *Mass Communication Review Yearbook*, vol. 6, Sage: London, pp. 86-106.

Grossberg, L. (1988), 'Putting the pop back into postmodernism', in Ross, A. (ed), *Universal Abandon? The Politics of Post-Modernism*, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, pp. 167-190.

Grossberg, L. (1992), *We gotta get out of this place: Popular conservatism and postmodern culture*, Routledge: New York.

- Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994), 'Competing paradigms in qualitative research', in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 105-117.
- Habermas, J. (1970), 'On systematically distorted communication', *Inquiry*, 13, pp. 205-218.
- Hajer, M. & Fischer, F. (1999), 'Beyond Global Discourse: The Rediscovery of Culture in Environmental Politics', in Fischer, F. & Hajer, M.(eds), *Living with nature: environmental politics as cultural discourse*, Oxford University Press: Oxford; New York, pp. 1-20.
- Hajer, M. (1995), *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*, Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Hall, S. (1980), 'Cultural studies: two paradigms', *Media, Culture and Society*, 2, pp. 57-72.
- Hall, S. & Jefferson, T. (1976), *Resistance through Rituals – Youth subcultures in post-war Britain*, Hutchinson: London.
- Hamilton-Smith, E. (1998), 'From Cultural Awakening to Post-industrialism: The History of Leisure, Recreation and Tourism in Australia', in Perkins, H. & Cushman, G. (eds), *Time Out?*, Addison Wesley Longman: Auckland, pp. 34-50.
- Hannigan, J. A. (1995), *Environmental Sociology: A Social Constructivist Perspective*, Routledge: London.
- Haraway, D. (1991), *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, Free Press: London.
- Harding, J. & Pribram, E. D. (2004), 'Losing our Cool? Following Williams and Grossberg on emotions', *Cultural Studies*, 18 (6), pp. 863-883.
- Harvey, N., Clarke, B. & Carvalho, P. (2001), 'The role of the Australian Coastcare program in community-based coastal management: a case study from South Australia', *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 44 (3-4), pp. 161-181.
- Haward, M. (1995), 'Institutional design and policy making 'down under': developments in Australian and New Zealand coastal management', *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 26 (2), pp. 87-117.
- Hawkins, G. (1993), *From Nimbin to Mardi Gras*, Allen & Unwin: St Leonards, NSW.
- Hildebrand, L. P. 1997, 'Introduction to the special issue on community-based coastal management', *Ocean and Coastal Management*, Vol 36 (1-3), pp. 1-9.
- Hirst, P. (1985), 'Power/Knowledge – Constructed Space and the Subject', in Fardon, R. (ed), *Power and Knowledge: Anthropological and Sociological Approaches*, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, pp. 171-191.

Hochman, J. (1987), 'Green Cultural Studies: An Introductory Critique of an Emerging Discipline', *Mosaic*, 30 (1), pp. 81-96.

Horsfall, D; Byrne-Armstrong, H. and Higgs, J. (2001), 'Researching Critical Moments', in *Critical Moments in Qualitative Research* (eds) Hilary Byrne-Armstrong, Joy Higgs and Debbie Horsfall, Butterworth Heinemann: Oxford, pp. 1-13.

Houghton, J. T. , Meira Filho, L. G., Callander, B.A., Harris, N., Kattenburg, A. & Maskell, K. (eds), *Climate Change 1995: The Science of Climate Change*, Cambridge University Press for IPCC: Cambridge.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment, Recreation and the Arts, (1991), *The injured coastline, protection of the coastal community*, Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts (1992), *Biodiversity: The Contribution of Community Based Programs*, Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra.

Hughes, P. (1996), 'Producing Audiences – Towards a Political Economy of Subjectivities', *Media International Australia*, 80, pp: 83-98.

Huntsman, L. (2001), *Sand in Our Souls – The Beach in Australian History*, Melbourne University Press: Melbourne.

Instone, L. (2004), 'Situating Nature: on doing cultural geographies of Australian nature', *Australian Geographer*, 35 (2) July, pp. 131-140.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (1991), *Common Methodology for Assessing Vulnerability to Sealevel Rise, Coastal Zone Management Subgroup*, Ministry of Transport and Public Works, The Hague.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (1994), *Preparing to Meet the Coastal Challenges of the 21st Century, Report of the World Coast Conference, 1-5 November 1993*, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, The Hague.

International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (1980), *World Conservation Strategy: Living Resource Conservation for Sustainable Development*, Morges: Switzerland.

Ivakhiv, A. (1997), 'Ecocultural Critical Theory and Ecocultural Studies: Contexts and Research Directions', paper presented at *Cultures and Environments: On Cultural Environmental Studies*, an On-Line Conference hosted by American Studies Program, Washington State University, June 20-22.

Jagtenberg, T. & McKie, D. (1997) *Eco-Impacts and the Greening of Postmodernity – New Maps for Communication Studies, Cultural Studies and Sociology*, Sage Publications: New York.

- Jasonoff, S. (1990), *The fifth branch: Science advisors as policy makers*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA.
- Kelle, U. (2004), 'Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis', in Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. F. & Silverman, D. (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice*, Sage Publications: London, pp. 473-489.
- Kendall, G. & Wickham, G. (2004), 'The Foucaultian Framework', in Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. F. & Silverman, D. (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice*, Sage Publications: London, pp. 141-150.
- Kendall, G. & Wickham, G. (1999), *Using Foucault's Methods*, Sage Publications: London.
- Kitzinger, J. & Barbour, R. S. (1999), 'Introduction: the challenge and promise of focus groups', in *Developing Focus Group Research: Politics, Theory and Practice* (eds) Rosaline S. Barbour and Jenny Kitzinger, London, Sage Publications, pp. 1-20.
- Kuhn, T. (1970), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press: Chicago.
- Lash, S., Szerszynski, B. & Wynne, B. (1996), *Risk, Environment and Modernity – Towards a New Ecology*, Sage Publications: London.
- Latour, B. (1987), *Science in Action*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge.
- McGregor, C. (1994), 'The beach, the coast, the signifier, the feral transcendence and pumpin' at Byron Bay', in Headon, D., Hooton, J. & Horne, D. (eds), *The abundant culture: meaning and significance in everyday Australia*, Allen & Unwin: Australia, pp. 51-60.
- McHoul, A. & Grace, W. (1993), *A Foucault Primer – Discourse, Power and the Subject*, Melbourne University: Melbourne.
- McIntyre-Tamwoy, S. (2004), '“My Barrier Reef”: exploring the Bowen community's attachment to the Great Barrier Reef', *historic environment*, 17 (3), pp. 19-28.
- McKenna, M. (2002), *Looking for Blackfellas' Point An Australian History of Place*, UNSW Press: Sydney.
- McKenna, M. (2003-2004), 'Poetics of Place', *Griffith Review*, Summer, pp. 185-194.
- MacNaughten, P. and Myers, P., 'Focus Groups', in *Qualitative Research Practice* (eds) (2004) Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber. F. Gubrium and David Silverman, London, Sage Publications, pp. 65-79.
- MacNaughten, P. & Urry, J. (1998), *Contested Natures*, Sage Publications: London.

McQuail, D. (1994), *Mass Communication Theory – An Introduction (Third Edition)*, Sage Publications: London.

May, T. (1993), *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*, Open University Press: Philadelphia.

Merchant, C. (1980), *The death of nature: women, ecology and the scientific revolution*, Harper: San Francisco.

Morgan, D. L. (1988), *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*, Sage: Thousand Oaks, California.

Mouffe, C. (1979), 'Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci', in Mouffe, C. (ed), *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, Routledge & Kegan: London, pp. 168-203.

Murdock, G. (1989), 'Cultural Studies at the crossroads', *Australian Journal of Communication*, 16, pp. 37-49.

Murdock, G. (1997), 'Thin Descriptions: Questions of Method in Cultural Analysis', in McGuigan, J. (ed), *Cultural Methodologies*, Sage: London, pp. 178-192.

Natural Heritage Trust (NHT), *Australian Government Envirolund Guide to Applications 2003/2004*.

National Oceans Office (2002), *Communities connecting with the Ocean The South-East Regional Marine Plan*, National Oceans Office: Hobart.

Nursey-Bray, M. (2000), 'Community Histories and Participation in Environmental Management', in Dovers, S. (ed), *Environmental history and policy: still settling Australia*, Oxford University Press: Melbourne, pp. 165-191.

O'Regan, T. (1992), '(Mis)taking policy: notes on the cultural policy debate', *Cultural Studies*, 6 (3), pp: 192-206.

O'Regan, T. (2001), 'Cultural Policy: Rejuvenate or Wither', *Griffith University Public Lecture Series – Professorial Lecture (26 July)*, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia.

O'Sullivan, T., Hartley, J., Saunders, D. & Fiske, J. (1983), *Key concepts in communication*, Methuen & Co: London.

Patton, M. (1990), *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, Sage: Newbury.

Peace, A. (1997), 'Governing the Environment: the Programs and Politics of Environmental Discourse', in O'Farrell, C. (ed), *Foucault The Legacy*, Queensland University of Technology: Australia, pp. 530-545.

Paterson, A. B. (1934), 'Song of the Future', *The Collected Verse of A. B. Paterson*, Angus & Robertson: Sydney, pp. 176-182.

- Phillips, A. (1958), 'The Cultural Cringe', *The Australian Tradition: Studies in Colonial Culture*, Longman Cheshire: Melbourne.
- Porritt, J. & Winner, D. (1988), *The Coming of the Greens*, Fontana Paperbacks: London.
- Putnam, R. (1993), *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press: New Jersey.
- Queensland State Coastal Management Plan: Queensland's Coastal Policy* (2001), Environmental Protection Agency: Queensland Government.
- Resource Assessment Commission (1993), *Coastal Zone Inquiry: Final Report*, Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra.
- Reville, G. (1993), 'Reading Rosehill: Community, Identity and Inner-City Derby', in Keith, M. & Pile, S. (eds), *Place and the Politics of Identity*, Routledge: London, pp. 117-140.
- Rorty, R. (1989), *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Cambridge University Press: New York.
- Rose, G. (1995), 'Place and Identity: A sense of place', in Massey, D. & Jess, P. (eds), *A Place in the World: Places, Cultures and Globalisation*, Oxford University Press: Melbourne, pp: 87-116.
- Rose, N. (1998), 'An Interview with Nikolas Rose', *Arena journal*, 11, pp. 83-96.
- Ross, A. 1992, *Strange Weather*, Verso Press: New York.
- Rutherford, P. (1994), 'The administration of life: Ecological discourse as 'intellectual machinery of government'', *Australian Journal of Communication*, 21 (3), pp. 40-55.
- Rutherford, P. (1999), 'The Entry of Life into History', in Darier, E. (ed), *Discourses of the Environment*, Blackwell Publishers: London, pp. 37-62.
- Sarantakos, S. (1993), *Social Research*, Macmillan Education: Sydney.
- Sarup, M. (1993), *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism (Second Edition)*, Harvester Wheatsheaf: London.
- Scaff, L. (1998), 'Max Weber', in Stones, R. (ed), *Key Sociological Thinkers*, Macmillan Press: London, pp. 34-45.
- Schoenberger, E. (2001), 'Interdisciplinarity and social power', *Progress in Human Geography*, 25, pp. 365-382.
- Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J.F. & Silverman, D. (2004), 'Introduction: inside qualitative research', in Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. F. & Silverman, D. (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice*, Sage Publications: London, pp. 1-12.

- Said, E. W. (1978), *Orientalism*, Routledge & Kegan Paul: London.
- Sardar, Z. & VanLoon, B. 1999, *Introducing Cultural Studies*, Icon Books: Duxford.
- Sharp, N. (2002), *Saltwater People: the waves of memory*, Allen & Unwin: Sydney.
- Short, A. (1993), *The Beaches of the New South Wales Coast: A Guide to their Nature, Characteristics, Surf and Safety*, Australian Beach Safety and Management Program, Beaconsfield: NSW.
- Shute, N. (1957), *On the Beach*, Heinemann: Melbourne.
- Slack, J. D. (1994), 'The environment matters: Complicity, ethics, theoretical rigour, intervention', *Australian Journal of Communication*, 21 (3), pp: 1-13.
- Soper, K. (1995), *What is nature?*, Blackwell Publishers: Oxford.
- Sorensen, J. (2002), Baseline 2000 Background Report: The Status of Integrated Coastal Management as an International Practice – Second Iteration – 26 August, <http://www.uhi.umb.edu/b2k/baseline2000.pdf> , accessed 20 August 2004.
- Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1990), 'Method, methodology and epistemology in feminist research processes', in Stanley, L. (ed), *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*, Routledge: London, pp. 20-60.
- Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1993), *Breaking Out Again: Feminist Ontology and Epistemology*, Routledge: London.
- Stanner, W. E. H. (1968), *After the Dreaming: Black and White Australians – An Anthropologists View, The Boyer Lectures*, ABC: Sydney.
- Thom, B. G. & Harvey, N. (2000), 'Triggers for Late Twentieth Century Reform of Australian Coastal Management', *Australian Geographical Studies*, 38 (3), pp. 275-290.
- Thomsen, D. (2003), *Community-Based Research – An Opportunity for Collaboration and Social Change*, unpublished thesis, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia.
- Thomson, K. (2003), *Coalition Pork~Barrelling at Environment's Expense*, Media release, Australian Labour Party, Canberra, 23 July.
- Thwaites, T., Davis, L. & Mules, W. (1994), *Tools for Cultural Studies – An Introduction*, Macmillan Education Australia: Melbourne.
- Toulmin, S. (1983), 'The Construal of Reality: Criticism in Modern and Postmodern Science, in Mitchell, W. J. T., *The Politics of Interpretation*, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, pp. 99-117.
- Tweed Shire Council, accessed April 12 2006, <http://nsw.gov.au/AboutTheTweed>

- United Nations (1992), *Agenda 21: The United Nation's programme of action from Rio*, New York.
- Vasta, E. (2000), 'The Politics of Community', in Vasta, E. (ed), *Citizenship, Community, Democracy*, St. Martins Press: New York, pp. 107-126.
- Walker, K. J. (ed) (1992), *Australian Environmental Policy*, University of NSW Press: Sydney.
- Walker, K. J. (1992), 'Conclusion: The Politics of Environmental Policy', in Walker, K. J. (ed), *Australian Environmental Policy*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, pp. 233-254.
- Walker, K. J. (1999a), 'Statist Developmentalism in Australia', in Walker, K. J. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian Environmental Policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, pp. 22-44.
- Walker, K. J. (1999b), 'Conclusion: Environmental Policy in the Gloomy 1990s', in Walker, K. J. & Crowley, K. (eds), *Australian Environmental Policy 2: studies in decline and devolution*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, pp. 225-247.
- Weber, M. (1949), *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, Free Press: New York.
- Weber, M. (1958), *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Parsons, T. with Foreword by Tawney, R. H., Charles Scribners Sons Press: New York.
- Weber, M. (1968), *Economy and Society – An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Roth, G. & Wittich, C. (eds), Bedminster Press: New York.
- Wescott, G. (1998), 'Reforming coastal management to improve community participation and integration in Victoria', *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 26, pp. 3-15.
- Whelan, J. & Oliver, P. (2005), *The place, limits and practice of collaboration: lessons from case studies in community participation in natural resource management*, Cooperative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management, Griffith University: Queensland.
- Williams, R. (1958), 'Culture is ordinary', in Gray, A. & McGuigan, J. (eds) (1993), *Studying culture: an introductory reader*, Edward Arnold: Melbourne, pp. 5-14.
- Williams, R. (1975), *The Long Revolution*, Greenwood: Westport, CT.
- Winton, T. (1993), *Land's Edge*, Panmacmillan: Sydney.
- World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), *Our common future*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Worster, D. (1987), *Nature's economy: A history of ecological ideas*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Wrong, D. (1970), 'Introduction', in Wrong, D. (ed), *Max Weber*, Prentice-Hall Inc: New Jersey, pp. 1-74.

Wynne, B. (1996), 'May the sheep safely graze? A reflexive view of the expert-lay knowledge divide', in Lash, S., Szerszynski, B. & Wynne, B., *Risk, Environment and Modernity – Towards a New Ecology*, Sage Publications: London, pp. 44-83.

Fieldwork References

Mudjimba Focus Group:	17 May 2003
South Peregian Focus Group:	29 May 2003
North Stradbroke Island Focus Group:	6 June 2003
Interview No. 1	20 May 2003
Interview No. 2	20 May 2003
Interview No. 3	22 May 2003

Appendix A – Random Community Telephone Survey from South Regional Marine Plan

Community Survey: Oceans

July 2001.

APPROACH:

Good (...) I am (...) from Colmar Brunton Social Research. We are doing a survey in several States on behalf of the National Oceans Office, about the deeper ocean around the southeast region of Australia. For this interview I need to speak to the person in your household who is 18 years of age or older and whose birthday comes next from today. Is that person available just now?

IF YES CONTINUE AT SCREENER 1

IF NOT, OBTAIN FIRST NAME AND MAKE APPOINTMENT FOR CALL-BACK

Call-back:
 Name: _____ Phone: _____

 Day and time for callback: Day: _____ Time: _____

REINTRODUCE YOURSELF IF NECESSARY: [Good (...) I am (...) from Colmar Brunton Social Research. We are doing a survey in several States on behalf of the National Oceans Office, about the deeper ocean around the southeast region of Australia.] **This is a bone fide survey. It is completely confidential and will take about 10 minutes. There are no right or wrong answers, your opinion is what matters to us. At the end of the interview if you have any queries I will give you a phone number to ring.**

IF WITHIN RIGHT DISTANCE CONTINUE

1. On average, how often in a year do you actually visit the coast or beach near you?

Once a fortnight or more often (about 26 or more times a year)	1
About once or twice a month (between 12 and up to 25 times a year)	2
About once or twice each 6 months (between 6 and up to 11 times)	3
Once or twice a year or less often	4
Never	5
Unsure	6

2. Do or have you ever been a long way out from the coast say out of sight of the land?

Yes	1
No	2
Unsure	3

3. Most of the survey is about the deeper ocean around the southeast of Australia.... As far as you are aware, who is responsible for managing or looking after the deeper ocean around the southeast region?

Commonwealth/federal government	1
State governments	2
Other (specify)	3
Unsure	4

4. The deeper ocean in the **Southeast marine region** is from southern New South Wales, around Victoria to Victor Harbour in SA and around Tasmania...Which of the following statement best describes you at this time?

I know basically nothing at all about the deeper ocean in the SE region	1
I know a little bit about the deeper ocean in the SE region	2

I know a moderate amount about the deeper ocean in the SE region	3
I know a lot about the deeper ocean in the SE region	4

- 5 “How interested are you in finding out (more) information about the deeper ocean around the south east region of Australia? Please give a level of interest from 1 (not at all interested) to 10 (extremely interested).”

	Rating from 1-10
<i>Interest in information about the deeper ocean in the SE region</i>	

FOR CODES 2, 3, 4 IN Q.4 ASK 5a: CODE 1 GO TO 6c)

6a What are all the places you get information about the deeper ocean?

CODE IN COLUMN A – (DO NOT READ) CODE MULTIPLE RESPONSES

ASK EVERYONE

6c “What ways would you PREFER to get information about the deeper ocean in the SE region?”

CODE IN COLUMN C – (DO NOT READ) CODE MULTIPLE RESPONSES

Information source	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D	Column E
<i>Articles in the newspaper</i>	01	01	01	01	01
<i>Television or radio news</i>	02	02	02	02	02
<i>Radio talkback</i>	03	03	03	03	03
<i>Community or other groups interested in oceans</i>	04	04	04	04	04
<i>Personal experience</i>	05	05	05	05	05
<i>Talking to friends, relatives and neighbours</i>	06	06	06	06	06
<i>Government advertising</i>	07	07	07	07	07
<i>Government publications</i>	08	08	08	08	08
<i>Politicians</i>	09	09	09	09	09
<i>Other (specify)</i>	97	97	97	97	97
<i>Never get any information about the deeper ocean in the SE region</i>	96	96	96	96	96

7a) People make a number of uses of the deeper ocean around the South-east, just from what you know or have heard, what sorts of uses can you mention? **DO NOT READ. PROBE TO CLARIFY IF NECESSARY (EG FISHING) AND CODE ANY MENTIONED**

READ QUESTION b) THEN READ OUT ACTIVITIES NOT MENTIONED IN a): CODE IF RESPONDENT HAS HEARD OF IT.

7b) As far as you are aware, are any of the following uses made of the deeper ocean in that region?

READ OUT THOSE NOT MENTIONED IN a) AND CODE IF YES... Does (...) happen in that area?

LIST OF ACTIVITIES	CODE IF MENTIONED IN a)	CODE IF YES IN b)
Commercial fishing	1	1
Recreational fishing	2	2
Oil / petroleum exploration	3	3
Scientific research	4	4
Recreational uses like deep sea diving, whale watching or yachting	6	6
Australian shipping	7	7
Conservation	8	8
Shipping from other countries	9	9
DO NOT READ OUT IN 7b) Mining/exploration	10	10
Other (Specify)	11	N/a

8 Does the federal government spend too much, enough or not enough money on looking after the deeper ocean in the SE region?

Enough money	1
Too much money	2
Not enough money	3
Unsure	4

9 The next question is about how you personally think your **tax money should be spent** on the deeper ocean in the SE region. For this it might be easier if you had a pen and paper, this would help us get through the questions more quickly. **(STRESS NOT COMPULSORY, AND WAIT FOR PERSON IF THEY WANT TO GET PEN AND PAPER)** Could you just write down the following eight things. **READ OUT EIGHT THINGS**

Now I want you to imagine that \$100 dollars is the total amount of tax money the government has to spend, and give each area where you think the government should spend money, the amount you think should be spent. You can allocate the money any way you like, a little bit to every area or just on some, any way you think best. Just make sure it adds up to \$100 when you have finished, and I'll help check it if you like. **ALLOCATE SCORES ACROSS THE 8 THINGS AND ENSURE \$100 SPENT.**

1.	Policing the Ocean	
2.	Scientific research for economic purposes	
3.	Caring for the marine environment	
4.	Developing fishing and recreation industries	
5.	Exploration	

6.	Community Consultation	
7.	Education for Australians	
8.	Scientific research for environmental purposes	
		\$100

10. Using a scale of 1-10 where 1 means strongly disagree and 10 means strongly agree, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following...**READ OUT (RANDOMISE) AND WRITE IN SCORE**

ECONOMIC	Score 1-10
Economic development of the resources in the area must come first.	
I'd rather have companies producing petrol and gas than worry about whether or not they are harming the marine environment	
Commercial use of the area is top priority for Australia	
Much more needs to be spent on research for economic development of the region	
There are already far too many controls on commercial or industrial use of the area	
ENVIRONMENT	
There should be severe controls on commercial uses to protect the marine environment	
A lot more tax money should be spent on looking after the fish and reefs	
Much more needs to be spent on research to make sure the marine environment is unharmed	
Care of the marine environment comes first before anything else	
I'd rather have everyone locked out of the region than damage the environment	
I think there should be a lot more marine protected areas	
COMMUNITY INPUT	
It is essential that the community makes sure the government manages the region well	
I am as concerned about what happens to the deeper ocean as I am about what happens on the land	
It is essential that management of the region includes educating the community about the deeper ocean	
It is essential that community consultation is included in planning for the region	
RESOURCE USE	
Overfishing by Australia's commercial fishermen is a huge problem in the area	
We need to ban foreign use of our marine resources	
Overfishing by Australia's recreational fishermen is a huge problem in the area	
We should not let any foreign fishing vessels at all into Australian waters	
There is too much damage from exploration for gas, minerals in the region	
Its essential we use the resources to ensure economic growth for the future	
MANAGEMENT	
Management must be based on looking after the marine environment	
Management of the region needs to consider commercial users first and foremost	
Management must be based on looking for new resources we can profit from	
Management must include consultations with the community about what we want	
It's important to preserve ship wrecks in the area so we can all enjoy the opportunity to explore them	
Its important to respect the rights of Indigenous Australians in the marine area	

Overall the management of the deeper ocean in the region is extremely poor	
There needs to be one central planning and management strategy for all users in the region	

11a. Macquarie Island is a long way to the south east of Tasmania, until I just mentioned it, had you ever heard of Macquarie Island?

Yes	1	ASK b)
No	2	
Unsure	3	

11b. What do you know about Macquarie Island? **DO NOT PROMPT**

A World heritage area	1
Scientific research station	2
Fishing beds	3
Near Antarctica	4
Other (Specify)	5
Not sure of details	6

12. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

13. Into which of the following age groups do you come? **READ OUT**

18-24	1
25-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-64	5
65+	6
Refused	7

14. What is your highest education level so far?
(DO NOT READ) CODE ONE ONLY

Year 9 or below	01
Year 10 or equivalent	02
Year 11 or equivalent	03
Year 12 or equivalent	04
Trade certificate or apprenticeship	05
Diploma	06
Bachelor or Honours Degree	07
Post-graduate qualification (eg Masters, PhD)	08
Refused	99

15. And are you **READ OUT**:

Employed	01
Not employed but looking for work	02
Not employed and not looking for work	03
Refused DO NOT READ	99

16. “Are you from a non-English speaking background?”
(DO NOT READ) CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	01
No	02
Refused	99

17. What is your postcode? _____

Thank you, that is the end of the survey, if you have any questions please call XXXXXXXX . My name is (...) from Colmar Brunton and your opinions will be very helpful.

Interviewer certification:

Appendix B – Coastcare Survey

Communicating The Coast Survey Questionnaire 2002

Date:

Coastcare Project:

Dear participant

I am a PhD student at Griffith University and I am researching Community Participation In Coastal And Marine Management. I'm interested in how local communities think and feel about their coastlines and whether government policies – and how they are formed – take account of local communities' ideas and feelings. By understanding how local communities and relevant governments regard coastlines, it may be possible to improve communication between them about coastal and marine issues.

My research is focused on three Coastcare groups in south-east Queensland. In each one, I would like participants to undertake the written survey that accompanies this letter. I would like to follow-up the survey by holding a discussion with your whole group – the meetings will enable people to elaborate, clarify and, perhaps, develop anything they might have said in the survey concerning the management and care of coastal and marine environments.

I hope this survey gives you the opportunity for some quiet reflection on your work in the coastal and marine environment and perhaps even generate some dinner table conversation. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers – you are simply being asked what you think/know about the coast. If you should have any reservations or questions about this survey or my project, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor, Assoc. Prof Michael Meadows on (07) 3875 8087.

Thank you for participating. I hope that my project will support your work in caring for the coast.

Regards,

Kerrie Foxwell
C/-School of Film, Media and Cultural Studies
Griffith University
Nathan QLD 4111
(07) 3865 6401

This survey should take about 30 minutes to complete. Note that your name is not required. I will be the only person reading your responses and confidentiality is assured. Returned surveys will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at Griffith University.

SECTION 1: HOW YOU REGARD COASTAL AND MARINE ENVIRONMENTS

This Section Asks You Some Questions About How You Personally Perceive The Coast And The Environment/Nature.

1. Where do you live in relation to the coast?

2. What are your earliest memories of the coast and when are they from?

3. Have there been any memorable events or experiences which have changed how you think and feel about the coast?

4. What do you do when you are at the coast? For example, camping, surfing, walking, sitting, etc.

5. **Do you think that enough is being done to protect and preserve coastal and marine areas?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

If "no", what do you think are the most important reason/s why not?

6. **Do you have faith in the ability of governments to protect your local coastal and marine environment?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

7. **Do you have faith in the ability of environmental and other scientists to provide information on the health of your local coastal environment?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

8. **If there were no restraints (e.g. money), how would you ensure that coastal and marine areas are preserved and conserved?**

**9. Please respond to each of the following statements:
Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) Or Strongly Disagree (5).**

1. Human Beings Are More Important Than Other Species.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

2. Science And Technology Will Eventually Solve All Of Our Environmental Problems.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

3. We Should Respect And Revere Nature, Rather Than Conquer It.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

4. The Economy Should Be At The Top Of The Political Agenda.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

5. Tourism In Old Is Environmentally Unsustainable.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

6. Cost Should Be Irrelevant To Ensuring Coastal Preservation.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

7. Increased Funding To Appropriate Scientific And Technological Research Bodies Will Enable Us To Control Nature.

I STRONGLY AGREE	I AGREE	I NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	I DISAGREE	I STRONGLY DISAGREE

10. Where do you obtain most of your information on coastal issues?

(Please Circle)

- a) Local Newspapers
 - b) National/State Newspapers
 - c) Commercial Radio
 - c) Government Sources
 - d) Discussion With Family, Friends
 - e) Discussion With People At Work
 - f) Books
 - g) Journals
 - h) Larger Circulation Magazines Such As National Geographic, Etc.
 - i) Smaller Circulation Magazines/Newsletters Such As WAVES, Etc.
 - j) Lectures, Meetings Including Coastcare Meetings.
 - k) Educational Institutions
 - l) Conservation/Environment Groups
 - m) Other _____
-

11. Please rate how well each of the above sources of information covers coastal issues by marking it with a number in the box provided, as follows

1 - Highly Credible. It presents different perspectives on environmental issues and its coverage is balanced

2 - Mostly Credible. It presents different perspectives but some reports are unbalanced and some viewpoints are missing.

3 – Not Always Credible. It presents information from only select perspectives on coastal issues and I am always doubtful of the information I read.

4 - Not Credible. It fails to present a balanced view of coastal issues and its reports are biased.

SECTION 2: COASTCARE

This Section Asks You Some Questions About Your Project And Your Involvement With Coastcare.

12. How did you find out about Coastcare?

- a) National Media
- b) Local Paper/Media
- c) Friend/Neighbour
- d) Other

13. Were you involved in organising the project and the application for funding?

- a) yes
- b) no

14. Is Your Project:

- a) New
- b) Continuing

If continuing, how many years has your project been running? _____

15. Why did you become involved in the project? (you may choose more than one)

- a) I could see a problem and was eager to do something about it.
- b) I wanted to become involved in the local community and this seemed a good way to do so.
- c) I feel a sense of responsibility for the local coastal area
- d) I am concerned about environmental issues in general.
- e) I wanted to get to know people in my area.
- f) Other _____

16. **How successful do you think your project has been thus far?**

- a) Highly successful
- b) Moderately successful
- c) Limited success
- d) Unsuccessful

Comments:

17. **Has your project group found it easy to work with Coastcare?.**

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please Elaborate

18. **Has your *local council* sought your input into coastal and marine management issues in your area on the basis of your involvement in Coastcare?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Unsure

Please elaborate

19. **Do you feel that the views of your community about the local coastline are acknowledged and incorporated in coastal and marine policy at *state and federal levels of government*?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Unsure

Can you give examples? Or any other comments?

20. Have you been involved in planning and writing any public submissions to governments about your local coastal environment?

- a) Yes b) No

Please elaborate

21. Do you consider your project to be:

- a) Partnership Between Your Local Community and the Government (Local/State/Federal)
- b) A Community Initiative
- c) Other (Please Explain) _____

22. Are you regularly informed of changes to Coastcare and government policy on the coast?

- a) Yes b) No c) Don't Know

23. Are you involved in any other community coastal initiatives or activities or groups such as the Surfrider's Foundation?

- a) Yes b) No

Please list

24. Are you involved in any other community groups such as Neighbourhood Watch, Gardening Group, etc.?

- a) Yes b) No

Please list

25. What personal benefits have you experienced through volunteering in your Coastcare project? You may circle more than one.

- a) Satisfaction in knowing I am doing something for my community.
- b) Satisfaction from caring for my local coastal area and more generally, the environment.
- c) I have gained knowledge about the local coastal ecology.
- d) I have gained knowledge about my community generally.
- e) I have made new friends/social networks.
- f) My volunteering gives me a sense of purpose. (continued over)

g) Other _____

SECTION 3: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

This section asks you some general and specific questions about governments' policies concerning the environment

26. How would you rate your knowledge of the protection measures and policies which relate to coastal and marine planning and management in Australia?

- a) I have an excellent knowledge of coastal and marine planning and management
- b) I have an average knowledge.
- c) I only know how coastal and marine planning and management policies affect my local area.
- d) I have no knowledge of these ideas.

27. Are you interested in improving your knowledge of Australian coastal and marine planning and management policies?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Comments:

27. Are you familiar with the following terms:

- a) "Integrated Coastal Zone Management" Y/N
- b) "Community Based Coastal Zone Management" Y/N

28. The Queensland Coastal Action Program Memorandum of Understanding (1995) states that Coastcare should facilitate interaction between the community and other bodies with responsibility for managing coastal areas.

In your experience of Coastcare, how would you rate the success of this objective?

- a) Excellent - Our group has benefited from involvement with 'other bodies' responsible for coastal care.
- b) Moderate Success - We have had some interaction with 'other bodies' but would like more.
- c) Little Success - we have very little interaction with 'other bodies'.
- d) Poor - We have no interaction with 'other bodies'. (space over for comments)

Please Elaborate

29. Leaving aside all the 'formal' knowledge and qualifications associated with coastal and marine management and planning, do you consider yourself an 'expert' on your local coastal environment?

- a) Yes b) No

Comments

30. How long is it since your Coastcare group last met with a local politician or local government representative?

SECTION 4: PERSONAL DETAILS

31. Gender:

- a) MALE
- b) FEMALE

32. What is your age?

- a) Under 20
- b) 21-29
- c) 30-39
- d) 40-49
- e) 50-59
- f) 60 And Over

33. How far did you go with your formal education?

- 1. Primary School
- 2. Incomplete High School
- 3. Completed High School
- 4. Some Tertiary Education
- 5. Completed A Tertiary Degree
- 6. Completed A Diploma (TAFE, Business College)
- 7. Some Postgraduate Study
- 8. Completed Postgraduate Degree

IF YOU HAVE NO DIPLOMAS OR TERTIARY EDUCATION PLEASE PROCEED TO QUESTION 36.

34. Have you ever studied science/environmental science at university?

- a) Yes
- b) No

35. What have you studied at tertiary/diploma level?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Politics | 5. Business/Commerce |
| 2. English | 6. Law |
| 3. Sociology/Other Humanities | 7. Information Technology |
| 4. Science/Env.Science | 8. Other (Please Specify Below) |

36. What is your employment status?

- 1. Aged Pensioner/Retired
- 2. Other Pensioner (Disability Pension etc.)
- 3. Home Duties
- 4. Employed Part Time
- 5. Employed Full-Time
- 6. Seeking Employment
- 7. Self-Employed

37. If you are employed, what is your occupation?

If you are not employed, what was your occupation?

38. What is your approximate weekly income from all sources before tax?

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. No Income | |
| 2. Less Than \$200 | 9. \$800 - \$999 |
| 3. \$200 - \$299 | 10. \$1000 - \$1499 |
| 4. \$300 - \$399 | 11. \$1500 And Over |
| 5. \$400 - \$499 | 12. Refused/Don't Know |
| 6. \$500 - \$599 | |
| 7. \$600 - \$699 | |
| 8. \$700 - \$799 | |

39. If a federal election were held tomorrow which party would you vote for in the House of Representatives?

1. ALP
2. Liberal Party
3. National Party
4. Australian Democrats
5. Greens
6. One Nation
7. Independent
8. Other _____

40. On a five-point scale, how would you describe your general political leaning — would you say you are pretty far to the left, a little to the left, middle of the road, a little to the right, or pretty far to the right?

1. Pretty Far To The Left
2. A Little To The Left
3. Middle Of The Road
4. A Little To The Right
5. Pretty Far To The Right
6. Other
7. Don't Know
8. Refused

That Is The End Of The Survey. Please Feel Free To Make Any Additional Comments Below. Thank You So Much For Your Time And I Look Forward To Meeting For A Discussion In The Near Future.

Appendix C – Focus Group Agenda

Communicating the Coast

Focus Group Agenda May/June 2003

- Introduction to my thesis and myself

PROJECT AIMS

How do you feel about your project? Success or otherwise?

Why the coast?

What are the hurdles you have come across? How have you overcome them?

What do you feel you are contributing to the community?

Do you want interaction with other groups and how could we foster this?

COASTCARE

Flexibility in program?

Recognition for work done?

Any local media coverage?

Positive and Negative aspects? Funding acquittal? Availability of Funds?

Coastcare as a cost-cutting exercise? Do you think governments are serious about CBCMM?

GOVERNMENT, SCIENCE & BUSINESS

Objectivity of science?

Relations between Government and Scientists?

Priorities of Government?

Dealing with bureaucracy?

Knowledge of Australian Coastal Policy? – Do you believe everything you read?

Experts and Local Knowledge?

Development – Tourism – Corporate Interests?

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

What would you do to motivate communities to become involved?

What would you do to protect and conserve coast?

FINALLY

What do you think about approaches to the Environment which are 'green' and more 'spiritual' – do they have a place in communities/policy?

Thank for participation, etc.

Appendix D – Interview Agenda

Communicating the Coast

Interview Schedule for Key Coastcare Personnel

- **Introduction to my thesis and myself**
- **Work and Study History**
 - Current Employment/Qualifications
- **Personal Experiences of Coast –**
 - Personal memories of coast – earliest memories.
 - What you do at the beach?
 - What motivates involvement in coast?
- **Community Based Coastal Management**
 - Funding and Administration – Staff, Adequate Funds, Efficiency, Staff, Allocations/Final Reports
 - Interdepartmental and Legislative Co-operation – State Coastal Plan, National Heritage Trust, National Oceans Policy, Regional Marine Plans, Coastal and Marine Planning Programs – Coastcare
 - Tensions between Local, State and Federal Governments
 - Role of Developers and Industry
 - Thoughts on Integrated Coastal Management – is it achievable? Should it work from the bottom -up or top-down?
- **Coastcare**
 - Coastcare as an adequate response to the trend toward community solutions? Strengths and weaknesses.
 - Which projects successful and which problems?
 - Does Coastcare foster 'meaningful' participation from communities – How?
 - Your experience of the communities involved – participation rates, enthusiasm, etc.
 - Are local communities experts on their part of the QLD Coast?
 - Is Coastcare a cost-cutting exercise for government?
 - Any 'types' of community projects which you see as worthy of funding or not given priority funding under current arrangements.
 - SAP adequacy of representation
 - Corporate Involvement in Coastcare
 - Indigenous Representation
- **Role of Science**
 - Role of environmental science/scientific ecology in guiding environmental policy - How are environmental problems identified?
 - Relationship between environmental scientists/bureaucracy and governments – How does this relationship work – what is the nature of the relationship?
 - Where do communities fit in this relationship?
- **What needs to be done?**
 - Personal opinions on future for community based management
 - Opinions on Australian Integrated Coastal Management and directions for coastal management in Australia.
 - What would you do to motivate communities to participate in coastal management?/what can be done to improve community participation in coastal and marine management/

Thank for interview, etc.

