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# Environment & Energy News

*Welcome to the latest edition of Environment and Energy News, the newsletter of the ABS Centre of Environment and Energy Statistics (CEES). Environment and Energy News is published twice a year, highlighting developments in environment and energy statistics.*



PROVIDING GREATER LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY STATISTICS



## New Business Survey on Energy, Water & Environmental Management



The ABS has developed a new survey to collect information on energy use, water use and environmental management by the business sector.

In August 2009, the Energy, Water and Environment Survey (EWES) 2008-09 will be sent to a sample of approximately 15,000 businesses across Australia.

The survey will provide robust industry-wide information which will inform and contribute to a number of high profile and current policy areas including:

- climate change (e.g. energy efficiency, renewable energy

and the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme)

- sustainable management of water resources
- sustainable energy supply and use
- innovation in Australian industry.

Results from the survey will be publicly available on the ABS website from mid-2010.

Data on water use and management will contribute to the development of the ABS Water Account for 2008-09.

For further information, contact Sarah Coleman on (02) 6252 7715 or email [sarah.coleman@abs.gov.au](mailto:sarah.coleman@abs.gov.au)

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## Recent releases

Mar 2009	NSW State and Regional Indicators (cat. no. 1338.1)
May 2009	Water Use on Australian Farms, 2007–08 (cat. no. 4618.0)
May 2009	Land Management and Farming in Australia, 2007–08 (cat. no. 4627.0)
May 2009	Experimental Estimates of the Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production, 2000–01 to 2006–07 (cat. no. 4610.0.55.008)
May 2009	Australian Industry, 2007–08 (cat. no. 8155.0) includes additional detailed data relating to the Energy Supply industry
June 2009	Environmental Views and Behaviour, 2007–08 (cat. no. 4626.0.55.001)

## London Group meeting and environmental accounting workshop

Experts from national statistical agencies and international organisations met in Canberra in April to discuss the complex area of environmental economics.

The 'London Group' has been working on a request by the United Nation's Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) to solve a number of issues required to elevate the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) from a handbook of best practice into an international statistical standard.

ABS hosted the meeting in Canberra which made significant progress towards resolution of many of the complex issues involved in this process. SEEA is due for release as an internationally recognised statistical standard in 2012.

The ABS also hosted a workshop following the London Group meeting that aimed to inform policy makers of international experiences in the use of environmental accounts.

Presentations included: *Accounting for emissions and emissions trading schemes*, by Thomas Olsen (Statistics Denmark); *Environmental information systems*, by Viveka Palme (Statistics Sweden); and *Integrating environmental and national accounts*, by Mark de Haan (Statistics Netherlands).

Gary Stoneham and Mark Eigenraam from Victoria's Department of Sustainability and Environment presented a session on: *Creating environmental accounts for diffuse-source environmental problems*, which reported on the creation of, and outcomes from, pilot auctions for land-holders to supply environmental goods and services in Victoria's Corangamite catchment. Gary and Mark, with some assistance from the ABS, have developed a set of environmental accounts that link modifications in land use and cover with a range of consequences arising from these modifications, including changes to run-off, carbon sequestration and habitat quality.

For more information, please contact Peter Comisari on (02) 6252 5381 or email: [peter.comisari@abs.gov.au](mailto:peter.comisari@abs.gov.au)



# NEW RELEASES

## Irrigation water use down

Australia's irrigation water use fell by 18% in 2007–08 from the previous year to 6,285 gigalitres (GL), according to an ABS report.

All states/territories reduced irrigation water consumption, except Queensland.

The major use of water nationally was pasture, cereal and other crops for grazing which accounted for 26% (1,641 GL) of the nation's irrigation water. As in 2006–07, rice growers reported a substantial decrease in irrigation water use (down 89%) in 2007–08, as did cotton growers (down 64%).

The publication *Water Use on Australian Farms 2007–08*, released on 26 May 2009, includes information from the Bureau of Meteorology outlining climatic conditions over the period July 2007 to June 2008 to assist in interpreting these data, as climatic conditions affect both the need to irrigate and availability of water for irrigation.

For further information, see *Water Use on Australian Farms 2007–08* (cat. no. 4618.0) or contact Adrian Bugg on (03) 6222 5850 or email [Adrian.Bugg@abs.gov.au](mailto:Adrian.Bugg@abs.gov.au)



## Land Management and Farming in Australia 2007–08

An ABS report has found that nearly two-thirds of all farms used fertiliser. Urea and ammonium phosphate were the most widely-used (by area).

The ABS released estimates of land management activities on Australian farms for 2007–08 on 29 May 2009. Data were presented at the national, state and regional (Natural Resource Management region) levels.

*Land Management and Farming in Australia* (cat. no. 4627.0) found that of those farm businesses grazing stock on pastures or crops, just over two-thirds (69%) monitored the amount of ground cover in paddocks and more than half of these had established targets for minimum ground cover levels.

Of all agricultural businesses preparing land for crops and pastures, around half employed 'zero-till'. Zero tillage accounted for 17.5 million hectares, nearly two-thirds of all land prepared for crops and pastures. Western Australia had the highest proportion of area prepared with no cultivation (almost 80% of all prepared land).

For further information, contact Adrian Bugg on (03) 6222 5850 or email [Adrian.Bugg@abs.gov.au](mailto:Adrian.Bugg@abs.gov.au)

# NEWS

## Energy Account, 2006-07 (cat. no. 4604.0)

Australia is one of the world's leading producers of energy resources. As well as supplying power on which industry and households depend, the supply of energy provides employment, investment and export opportunities, all of which contribute substantially to the welfare and standard of living of Australians.

The ABS will shortly release the Energy Account 2006-07, that will present a range of outputs including estimates of Australian supply and use of energy products over the period 2001-02 to 2006-07.

This issue will contain experimental monetary estimates of use of various energy products for 2004-05, alongside corresponding estimates of physical use. It will also feature a time series of energy intensity measures related to Australian industry and guide to interpret these measures.

For further information, contact Andrew Cadogan-Cowper on (02) 6252 7472 or email [Andrew.Cadogan@abs.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Cadogan@abs.gov.au)

## Experimental estimates on the value of irrigated agricultural production



The ABS has released experimental estimates that show the economic value of irrigated agriculture.

The estimates apply to the period 2000-01 to 2006-07 for regions including Australia, all the states and territories, and the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB).

Some of the findings included:

- in 2006-07, irrigated agricultural land comprised less than 0.5% of Australia's agricultural land
- the gross value of production from irrigated land was \$12,319 million, which represented about one-third (34%) of the total gross value of agricultural production
- fruit and nuts contributed the highest value to total irrigated production of \$2,913 million, followed by vegetables

(\$2,526 million) and dairy production (\$1,697 million).

- These three commodities accounted for more than half (58%) of total GVIAP in 2006-07.

In 2006-07 the MDB had irrigated production to the value of \$4,936 million, or 40% of Australia's total value of irrigated production. In contrast, the value of irrigated production in the MDB in 2000-01 was \$5,085 million, or 53% of the total value of irrigated production for the nation at that time.

The ABS welcomes comments on these experimental estimates. For further information, see *Experimental Estimates of the Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production, 2000-01 to 2006-07* (cat. no. 4610.0.55.008) or contact Steven May on 02 6252 5593 or email [steven.may@abs.gov.au](mailto:steven.may@abs.gov.au)

# Work in progress

## ABS and RET combine to analyse EEO data

The Centre of Environment and Energy Statistics is currently assisting the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) to analyse data collected under the Energy Efficiency Opportunities (EEO) program.

An ABS officer is on secondment to Resources Energy and Tourism for six months to assist with database design, data editing strategies, production of estimates and analysis of the results.

Data is collected by the Department of Resources Energy and Tourism under the legislative arrangements set out in the *Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act 2006*.

The EEO program collects energy consumption, energy savings, net financial savings and other rich data from companies which trigger a mandatory assessment and reporting threshold of 0.5PJ of energy consumption per annum.

Both Government agencies benefit from this temporary transfer of staff and skills.

For further information contact Graeme Brown at ABS on (02) 6252 5920 or email [graeme.brown@abs.gov.au](mailto:graeme.brown@abs.gov.au)

## Did you know?

- There has been an increase in insulation in homes, up from 52% of dwellings in 1994 to 61% in 2008
- Only 4% of households reported that they had installed insulation in order to save energy
- The main reason for having insulation was to improve comfort, cited by 83% of households that installed insulation

Further details are available in *Environmental Issues: Energy Use and Conservation* (cat. no. 4602.0.55.001)

## Great Barrier Reef survey

The ABS has been asked by the Australian Government Reef Rescue team to conduct a survey to provide a baseline of the current agricultural land management practices occurring in catchments draining into the Great Barrier Reef. This new survey will also ask questions about the particular land management practices associated with the agricultural activities in the region.

The Reef Rescue program is a component of the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country natural resource management initiative. The aim of this program is to reduce the decline in water quality reaching the reef lagoon by providing assistance to land managers to accelerate the uptake of improved land management practices that will reduce the run-off of nutrients, pesticides and sediments entering the reef lagoon.

The survey will be designed to enable outputs to be provided for the 30 or so catchments within the 6 NRM regions adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.

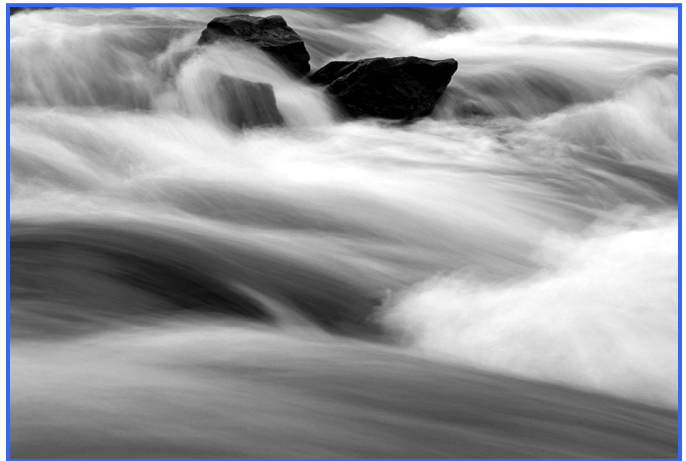
For further information, contact John Ovington on (02) 6252 6854 or email [john.ovington@abs.gov.au](mailto:john.ovington@abs.gov.au)

# Environmental views and behaviours

Most Australian adults (82%) were concerned about the environment in 2007–08, and more than half thought the natural environment was declining (53%) rather than improving or staying the same.

However, only one-third (34%) participated in environmental activities, such as donating money, volunteering or signing a petition.

These were some of the findings of the environmental views and behaviour survey conducted in 2007–08. Extra spreadsheets released in mid-June this year, also included information on energy and water consumption behaviours, waste and recycling behaviours and views on climate change and water restrictions.



For further information, the release is available on the ABS website, *Environmental Views and Behaviour* (cat.no. 4626.0.55.001) or contact Kay Barney on (02) 6252 6766 or email [k.barney@abs.gov.au](mailto:k.barney@abs.gov.au)

## Upcoming releases

### *Expected release date*

June 2009

Energy Account (cat. no. 4604.0)

Sept 2009

Alternative View of Electricity and Gas Supply in Australia (cat. no. 4647.0).

Nov 2009

Environmental Issues: Waste Management and Transport Use, March 2009 (cat. no. 4602.0.55.002)

## Contact us

*Environment and Energy News* features articles and developments in relation to work done within the ABS Environment and Energy Statistics program. If you would like to be placed on our free electronic mailing list, please send an email and include your address details.

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