

Rural policy that works

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Rural policy that works

- Need a moral position
- Need to foster and facilitate strong community participation
- Need strong central State support
- Need to focus on the positive values of rural society

Need a moral position

- What do I mean by a 'moral' position?
- I mean a valued principled stance that values diversity and equality
- A position that values people's right to choose where to live
- A position that values all of the spaces and places within a nation

Need a moral position

- A living Australia needs policies that respect and value rural and remote areas
- An Australia that values and respects indigenous people needs policies that support and protect remote and very remote areas
- Norway offers good examples

Need to foster and facilitate strong community participation

- Teaching my granny to suck eggs in Wangaratta!!
- Need a proper understanding of what a policy will mean for rural areas
- Examples from Northern Ireland
 - Lottery funded projects
 - Women's Resource and Development Agency teaching computer skills

Need to foster and facilitate strong community participation

- Communities know what works
- Experiential knowledge
- Shared experiences
- But need to be careful... 'community' can hide internal divisions, power differences, gender, social class
- How to ensure everyone's voice gets heard?
Your own lessons for the world in this respect

Need strong central state support

I'M FROM THE
GOVERNMENT,
I'M HERE
TO HELP



Need strong central state support

- Community engagement and participation is not enough on its own – need strong state support (John Bryden)
- Need an oversight function
- Redistribution of welfare state
- Norway's welfare state has a spatial dimension because of the extent of remoteness of some regions
- Need state support to address service needs of rural areas

Focus on the positive values of rural areas

- Why should politicians *want* to support rural areas and rural policy?
- What are their values?
- Do they value the spatial idea of Australia? Its international identity?
- Do they care about indigenous people?

Focus on the positive values of rural areas

- Increasing desire to rejuvenate mental well-being in nature
- The importance of ecological diversity
- The importance of ethnic diversity
- Food production
- The contributions of rural and remote areas to the national economy

Rural policy that works

- I am very keen to hear your views and discuss your experiences!
- Let the kitchen table conversation begin...
- Thank you for hosting me!