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| **Research Theme for research cluster:**  **Climate Change and Regions in Transition:**  **Description:** A multidisciplinary cluster (economics, law, ethics and values, management, marketing) to examine how a region makes the societal transition to a low-emissions economy. This cluster will aim to investigate the modelling of a paradigm shift to sustainable development.  Elements in the research cluster would include:  # social learning (education)  # strategic niche management (economics)  # strategic regulatory policy (law)  # social values (sociology/psychology)  # developing a theoretical model for future empirical research  # corporate response and learning (CSR, stakeholders and triple bottom line)  The aim is to derive a transition model (or models) at the intersection of economics, law and management using the "transition towns" concept as a guide. The context will be the large "tyranny of distance" setting in Australia's regional economies. The cluster aims to complement both the Regional Futures UB research theme and the CRIC work on environmental decision-making and diffusion of current sustainable technologies to sustainable development. |
| **Justification and Location:** The research focus of this cluster is intended to complement the research activities presently carried out by such organisations as DSE (through the Victorian Climate Change Adaption Program), CRIC, BREAZE and SEAANZ. It is recognised and acknowledged that CRIC, in particular in its Regional Futures theme, focuses on regional enterprise and its ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions. In support of CRIC, the focus of the cluster will be on social learning and transition aspects of climate change in regional Australia. What we propose is to utilise the transition towns’ model as an approach to transition of regional communities in the context of climate change and resource issues; and then to examine how the various aspects of public and private management, policy, learning and communication can integrate with local communities to identify and address social change. This involves linking the community-based transition town model with the policy-based structures of powerful public and private organisations. We believe that regional Australia has unique features (including the so-called “tyranny of distance”) that must materially affect the approach that is finally adopted in dealing with problems arising from climate change and its consequences, and that therefore the transition model offers a valuable community-driven framework for clarifying how those features can be addressed in concert with the political and economic centre. |
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