



DECEMBER 2009

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

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.

Australian households embrace recycling – e-waste an exception

Almost every Australian household (99%) participated in some form of recycling or reusing of waste, according to a new report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

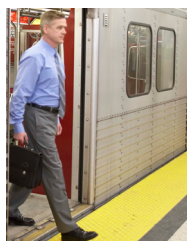
However, nearly a quarter (23%) of electronic equipment and more than half (51%) of household appliances disposed of in the 12 months prior to March 2009 were put in the non-recycled garbage or kerbside collection.



Paper/cardboard/newspapers were recycled or reused the most (95% of households), followed by plastic bottles (94%), glass (93%) and plastic bags (90%).

Just over half (51%) of Australian households recycled or reused kitchen or food waste.

Australians increased their use of public transport to get to work or full-time study over the past decade, rising from 12% in 2000 to 14% in 2009. However, the overwhelming majority of Australians still travelled by car – 80% in March 2009 compared to 82% in 2000.



New South Wales and Victoria had the highest level of public transport use at 17%. This is a 4 percentage point increase for Victoria (up from 13% in 2000), but a 1 percentage point drop (from 18%) in New South Wales.

The main reasons reported for not using public transport were 'no service available at the right/convenient time' (27%), 'no service available at all' (26%) and 'convenience/comfort/privacy in private vehicle' (22%).

Half of Australian households had at least one working bicycle kept at their home. Bicycle ownership was highest in the Australian Capital Territory (66% of households) and lowest in New South Wales (46%).



About 6% of people usually walked or cycled to work in 2009, steady since 2000.

Further information can be found in *Environmental Issues: Waste Management and Transport Use* (cat. no. 4602.0.55.002) or contact Graeme Brown 02 6252 5920, graeme.brown@abs.gov.au

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RECENT RELEASES

25 June 2009	Energy Account, Australia, 2006–07 (cat. no. 4604.0)
29 September 2009	Alternative View of Electricity and Gas Supply Activity, 2006–07 to 2007–08 (cat. no. 4647.0)
10 November 2009	Principal Agricultural Commodities, Australia, Preliminary, 2008–09 (cat. no. 7111.0)
20 November 2009	Environmental Issues: Waste Management and Transport Use, March 2009 (cat. no. 4602.0.55.002)

NEW RELEASES

Alternative View of Electricity and Gas Supply Activity, 2006–07 to 2007–08 (cat. no. 4647.0)

In response to ongoing demand for information on the energy sector, in September 2009 the Australian Bureau of Statistics released an alternative analysis of electricity and gas activity in Australia. The analysis presented key economic, financial and physical measures associated with the supply of electricity and gas to the Australian economy.

The analysis found there was an increase in the value of all three key financial data items for businesses engaged in electricity supply activity between 2006–07 and 2007–08. Industry value added (IVA) increased from \$14.8b in 2006–07 to \$15.6b in 2007–08, sales and service income increased from \$38.2b in 2006–07 to \$43.1b in 2007–08, and wages and salaries increased from \$4.3b in 2006–07 to \$4.6b in 2007–08. Similarly, there was an increase in the value of all three key financial data items for businesses engaged in gas supply activity between 2006–07 and 2007–08. IVA increased from \$20.3b in 2006–07 to \$21.4b in 2007–08, sales and service income increased from \$28.3b in 2006–07 to \$30.6b in 2007–08, and wages and salaries increased from \$1.3b in 2006–07 to \$1.6b in 2007–08.

For further information, contact Kai Wallenius on 02 6252 6019, kai.wallenius@abs.gov.au

Energy intensity patterns in Australian industry

In June 2009, the ABS released the *Energy Account, Australia, 2006–07* (cat. no. 4604.0). A feature of this publication was a chapter that analysed energy intensity in Australian industries.

The energy intensity of an industry is a measure of the energy consumed to produce one unit of economic output. A high energy intensity figure does not necessarily imply that an industry is using energy inefficiently. By their nature, most industries engaged in physical transformation of raw materials will use more energy than service industries.

A decline in energy intensity in an economy may be attributable to factors other than more efficient use of energy arising from technological improvements and/or energy price rises. It may indicate structural shifts in the economy as a whole or within industries.

Over the 30 years from 1976–77 to 2006–07, Australia's total energy use increased by 71%. In contrast, during the same period, energy intensity fell by 36%. Across the major industries energy intensity levels and trends varied considerably. Energy intensity in the "Agriculture" and "Mining" industries showed a significant increase (41% and 50% respectively). In the "Agriculture" industry, increased energy consumption and reduced crop production during drought conditions were the significant factors. Higher energy consumption (523%) due to increased coal and iron ore mining, coupled with a shift to open cut mining contributed to increased energy intensity in the "Mining" industry.

The "Construction" and "Transport" industries showed a significant decrease in energy intensity (74% and 49% respectively). The significant improvement in the "Construction" industry can be largely attributed to structural changes. While large increases in fuel prices contributed to improved energy intensity in the "Transport" industry.

For more information contact Andrew Cadogan-Cowper on 02 6252 7472, andrew.cadogan@abs.gov.au



UPCOMING RELEASES

Great Barrier Reef survey

The ABS will release *Land Management Practices in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment, 2008–09* (cat. no. 4619.0) on 22nd December, 2009.

The Great Barrier Reef is a national icon. It is notable for its significant contribution to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the country. The Reef is at risk from poor water quality – in particular the impact of excess nutrients, chemicals (herbicides and pesticides) and sediments discharging from the adjacent Reef catchments. The information from this survey will assist the Australian and Queensland Governments in assessing whether investments have significantly improved the adoption rates of land management practices contributing to improved water quality.

Data from the survey will provide details of the extent and type of land management practices applied in each catchment and by different agricultural activities.

This survey is being funded by, and conducted under the Reef Rescue program, a component of the Australian Government's 'Caring for our Country' initiative supporting the effective management of Australia's natural resources.

For more information, contact Eric Morris on 02 6252 7332, eric.morris@abs.gov.au

Agricultural water use 2008–09

An expanded range of water data has been collected from the 2008–09 Agricultural Survey. As well as the crop irrigation data collected on an annual basis, data has also been collected on water management, water sources and irrigation methods.

These data will be published in *Water Use on Australian Farms, 2008–09* (cat. no. 4618.0) in April 2010, with data available for Australia, states and territories, Natural Resource Management regions and the Murray-Darling Basin. Data on water use and management collected from the Agricultural Survey will also contribute to the 2008–09 Water Account, Australia (cat. no. 4610.0), which is due for release in December 2010.

For further information, contact Steven May on 02 6252 5593, steven.may@abs.gov.au

*The Great
Barrier Reef*





WORK IN PROGRESS

Review of household energy use and conservation survey

The 'Environmental Issues' series is an annual publication that provides data on environmental behaviour and practices of Australian households. Topics rotate each year and are as follows:

- Energy use and conservation (cat. no. 4602.0.55.001)
Released 1994, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008
- Waste management and transport use (cat. no. 4602.0.55.002)
Released 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009
- Water source, use and conservation (cat. no. 4602.0.55.003)
Released 1994, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007

A user consultation process is conducted in the year prior to the survey.

If you would like to participate in the consultation for the Energy use and conservation survey please contact Fiona Clarke on 02 6252 5180, fiona.j.clarke@abs.gov.au

Sample size for environmental household survey restored

Environmental household survey data collected in 2010 will benefit from improved accuracy.

The environmental household survey sample is based on the monthly Labour Force Survey that will see a reversal of the previous 24% reduction in sample size in 2008–09.

For those supplementary surveys conducted during the period of the reduced sample in 2008–09, the reduced sample size meant reduced accuracy. The data published in *Environmental Issues: Water Use and Conservation* (Nov 2010) will be produced under the fully reinstated sample.

For more information on reductions in sample size, see the *Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design*, November 2007 (3rd Ed (cat. no. 6269.0)), or contact Graeme Brown on 02 6252 5920, graeme.brown@abs.gov.au

International engagement

ABS hosted two officials from Malaysia's Department of Statistics, in October, to study ABS environmental accounting work. The seven days of discussions shared the expertise of the ABS' Environment and Agriculture branch as well as its National Accounts Branch.

It covered the SEEA Framework, supply-use tables and the balance sheets of the Australian National Accounts as well as Environment Protection Expenditure statistics and ABS Energy, Water and Environment surveys and accounts including water, energy, minerals and fish accounts. Feedback from the Malaysian delegates was that the visit was intense and very valuable.

For more information contact Andrew Cadogan-Cowper on 02 6252 7472, andrew.cadogan@abs.gov.au

ABS attends the NRMCC meeting

Following on from a presentation to the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee meeting in September 2009, the ABS was invited to attend the 16th meeting of the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council held in Perth on 5 November 2009. The ABS took the opportunity to outline the range of work being undertaken to provide environmental data and statistics to support prioritisation and development of policy on climate change and land and water management among others. This included work in the areas of environmental accounting, irrigated agricultural production, perceptions of a changing climate, and land management practices in the Great Barrier Reef.

A feature of the presentation was an animated aerial 'fly-over' of the Murray region of the Murray-Darling Basin illustrating the value of dryland and irrigated agricultural production to Australia's economy for small regional areas. The 'fly-over' utilised Google Earth and the meshblock coded estimates from the 2005-06 Agricultural Census.



WORK IN PROGRESS

Energy, water and environment survey 2008–09

In August 2009, the ABS sent the 2008-09 Energy, Water and Environment Survey (EWES) to just under 15,000 small, medium and large businesses across Australia. This survey will provide important information on water use and management; energy use and management; environmental innovation; and other environmental management activities by Australian industries. Results from this survey will be available on the ABS web site from mid-2010.

For more information, contact Sarah Coleman on 02 6252 7715, sarah.coleman@abs.gov.au

Waste industry survey 2009-10

The ABS has recently undertaken user consultation to identify and prioritise data needs for a national Waste Management Industry Survey for 2009-10. The ABS last comprehensively surveyed the Waste Management Industry in 2002-03. Since that time, waste generation has continued to grow and the Waste Management (& Resource Recovery) sector has undergone a number of changes, and will continue to do so over the following years.

This survey will provide information on the Australian Waste Management (& Resource Recovery) industry at a time when there is increased focus on waste at a national level, including the recent announcement of a National Waste Policy to set a clear direction for Australia over the next 10 years.

The survey will be sent to a sample of businesses and local governments across Australia in August 2010, and results from the survey will be publicly available on the ABS web site from mid-2011.

For more information, contact Sarah Coleman on 02 6252 7715, sarah.coleman@abs.gov.au

Agricultural Census – opportunity for feedback

The ABS five-yearly Agricultural Census collects data on water use, land use and commodity production at the small area level. In October 2009 the ABS released an Information Paper, Agricultural Census: ABS views on Content and Procedures, 2010–2011 (cat.no. 7103.0.80.002) inviting comment on any aspect of the collection.

Although the date for submissions has passed, please contact Karen Connaughton on 02 6252 5337 or karen.connaughton@abs.gov.au as soon as possible if you wish to provide feedback on the development of the 2010–11 Agriculture Census.

ABS Contribution to the next London Group meeting and the SEEA

The Environmental Accounting team has been actively involved in resolving many of the complex issues in environmental accounting as a member of the United Nations Statistical Division 'London Group' on Environmental Accounting. The ABS hosted the 14th London Group meeting in April 2009 in Canberra. The meeting was followed by a workshop that aimed to inform Australian policy makers of international experience in the use of environmental accounts.

The 15th London Group meeting will be held in Weisbaden, Germany from 30 November to 4 December 2009. The Environmental Accounting team is producing a number of papers that will be presented in the meeting.

UPCOMING RELEASES



CEES welcomes director back after UN posting

Michael Vardon has returned to the Environment and Agriculture Branch after spending three years working for the United Nations in New York in the area of environmental accounting. Michael has responsibility for Land, Agriculture and Industry statistics.

Contact Michael on 02 6252 7348, michael.vardon@abs.gov.au

Expected release date

December 2009	Land Management Practices in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment, 2008–09 (cat. no. 4619.0)
January 2010	Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends, 2009 (cat. no. 4613.0)
April 2010	Agricultural Commodities, Australia, 2008–09 (cat. no. 7121.0)
April 2010	Water Use on Australian Farms, 2008–09 (cat. no. 4618.0)
May 2010	Queensland Water, Energy Use and Conservation (cat. no. 4602.3)
May 2010	Household Choices Related to Water and Energy, Western Australia (cat. no. 4656.5)
May 2010	Energy, Water and Environment Management, Australia, 2008–09 (cat. no. 4660.0)



Contact us

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Email environment@abs.gov.au

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