

# Health Impact Assessment Quarterly



International Association for Impact Assessment

Health Impact Assessment Quarterly  
October 2007

## Health Impact Assessment in the New Thai Constitution

Ben Harris-Roxas and Decharut Sukkumnoed

Thailand's new constitution was passed following the country's first referendum held on Sunday 19 August 2007. The constitution has far-reaching implications for HIA's use in Thailand.

Decharut Sukkumnoed, Director of the Thai Healthy Public Policy Foundation, has provided this translation of the relevant sections of the constitution:

### Section 67(2)

"Any projects and activities, which may cause serious impacts on the environment, natural resources, and health, cannot be done without conducting an impact



Image: Apichan Weerawong

A Thai man casts his vote on the constitutional referendum

## Upcoming HIA Events

Ben Harris-Roxas

### 8th International HIA Conference

**Dublin 16-17 Oct 2007**

With over 14 speakers and introductory and advanced pre-conference workshops this promises to be an interesting conference.

### HIA2007 South East Asia & Oceania HIA Conference

**Sydney 7-9 Nov 2007**

Brings together HIA practitioners from across

the Asia Pacific for the first time, with over 100 delegates registered so far.

### IAIA08

**Perth 4-10 May 2008**

The IAIA08 conference isn't until next year but the call for abstracts will be circulated in the next month. Start planning your visit to Australia now!



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### Health Impact Assessment in the New Thai Constitution Cont.

assessment on environment quality and the health of the population in the local community and organising a public hearing process for affected people and stakeholders. Moreover, these projects and activities cannot be started without comment from independent organisations, which are comprised of environmental and health NGOs, and the representatives from higher education institutes

which provide education on environment, natural resources, and health."

#### Section 67(3)

"The rights of local people to sue against any governmental organisations in order to make them follow the previous principle [i.e. section 67(2)] will be protected by this constitution."

The constitution's provisions for HIA's use follows the Thai National Health Act B.E. 2550 (2007) that

was proclaimed on the 9th of March, which allows Thai people the right to demand a HIA be conducted and to participate in the HIA process.

The interpretation and implementation of these provisions in the constitution and the National Health Act are still being determined. I'm sure HIA practitioners will follow developments in Thailand with considerable interest.

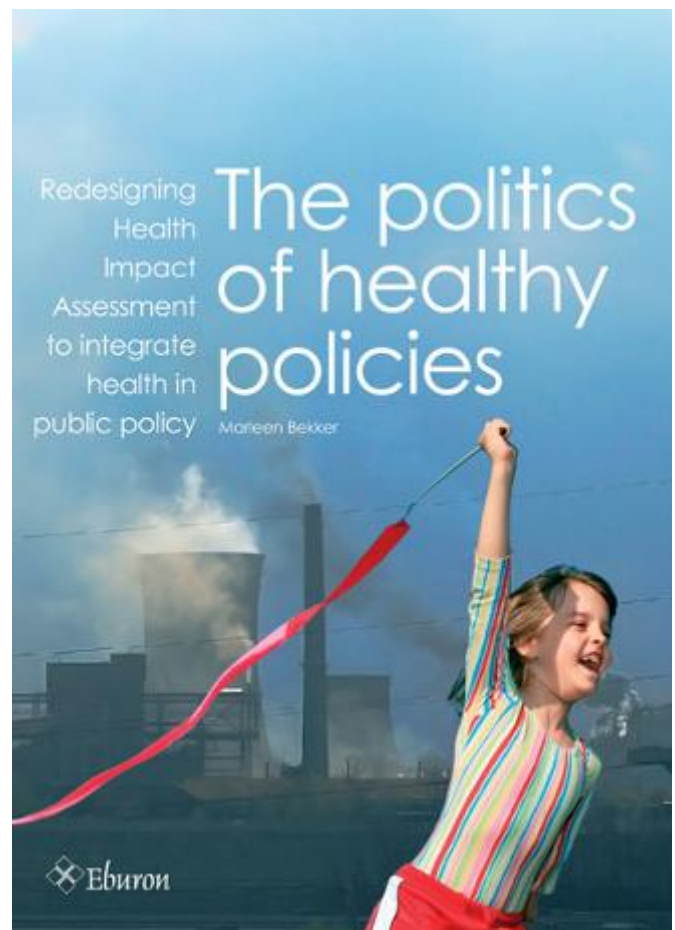
### New HIA Book: The Politics of Health Policies *Redesigning Health Impact Assessment to integrate health in public policy*

Marleen Bekker

The outcomes suggest that a re-orientation of HIA is necessary in order to mobilise other sectors to prevent or mitigate public health problems. Marleen Bekker proposes an interaction-oriented, reflective design and a new definition of HIA.

On 12 September Marleen Bekker, HIA section member and former editor of the *HIA Quarterly*, presented her research on the relationship between Health Impact Assessment and public policy at Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

Public health issues, such as obesity, lung disease from air pollution or mental health complaints from living in an unsafe neighbourhood, are complex, intractable policy problems. The causes are dispersed at the individual and the collective level among different sectors. One strategy to integrate health in other sectors' policies for developing effective and cooperative policy solutions is to provide evidence through health impact assessment



## New HIA Book: The Politics of Health Policies Cont.

(HIA) of proposed policies and projects. Despite fifteen years of HIA practice, policymakers and academics nevertheless continue to express concern about its effectiveness.

In *The Politics of Healthy Policies* a conceptual and empirical analysis is presented of the role of HIA in policy development. Marleen Bekker identifies different uses and purposes HIAs, including for indicating societal problems and democratic deficits from a governance perspective.

She suggests that the technical design of HIA to assess causes and effects insufficiently addresses the political and normative issues of cooperation without institutional requirements or incentives.

Four Dutch HIA case studies of national and local policies are analysed, including a game simulation of health advocacy without HIA. The outcomes suggest that a re-orientation of HIA is necessary in order to mobilise other sectors to prevent or mitigate public

health problems. Marleen Bekker proposes an interaction-oriented, reflective design and a new definition of HIA. The book is especially relevant to HIA practitioners and health policymakers at different governmental levels. Many of the implications are highly relevant to other forms of impact assessment as well.

*Marleen Bekker is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Health Policy and Management at Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.*

## Health Impact Assessment in Urban Settings Special Issue of New South Wales Public Health Bulletin

Ben Harris-Roxas

A new issue of the New South Wales Public Health Bulletin is now available. The issue focuses on HIA in urban settings and describes the contribution HIA can make to sustainable urban growth by establishing health as a core outcome. The issue has nineteen articles on urban planning and HIA, including nine HIA case studies.

*Health Impact Assessment in Urban Settings (Special Issue)*  
Volume 18, Number 9-10,  
2007

[www.publish.csiro.au/nid/226/issue/4093.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/226/issue/4093.htm)

### Articles

#### *HIA in Urban Settings*

Health impact assessment in urban settings (editorial)  
*Patrick Harris, Ben Harris-Roxas and Lynn Kemp*

Influencing urban environments for health: NSW Health's response  
*Sarah Thackway, Andrew Milat and Elizabeth Develin*

International perspective on health impact assessment in urban settings  
*Salim Vohra*

Health impacts of urban development: key considerations  
*Anthony Capon*

A planner's perspective on the health impacts of



Health Impact Assessment in Urban Settings Special Issue

[www.publish.csiro.au/nid/226/issue/4093.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/226/issue/4093.htm)

"The issue...

describes the contribution HIA can make to sustainable urban growth by establishing health as a core outcome"

## Health Impact Assessment in Urban Settings Cont.

urban settings  
*Susan Thompson*

Learning by doing: the value of case studies of health impact assessment  
*Ben Harris-Roxas and Patrick Harris*

*HIA Case Studies*  
Bungendore health impact assessment: urban development in a rural setting  
*Andrew Gow, Lorraine Dubois*

An equity-focussed social impact assessment of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy  
*Venessa Wells, Karen Gillham, Milly Licata and Anne Kempton*

Greater Granville Regeneration Strategy  
*Kay Tennant and Christine Newman*

A health impact assessment of the Liverpool Hospital redevelopment  
*Michelle Maxwell*

Rapid versus intermediate health impact assessment of foreshore development plans  
*Susan Furber, Erica Gray, Ben Harris-Roxas, Leonie Neville, Carolyn Dews and Sarah Thackway*

Health and social impact assessment of the South East Queensland Regional Plan (2005–2026)  
*Kate Copeland and Andrea Young*

Lessons in applying health impact assessment to regeneration schemes: the Victorian experience  
*Jessica McCormick*

Greater Christchurch Draft Urban Development Strategy 2005  
*Anna Stevenson, Karen Banwell and Ramon Pink*

Health impact assessments in London: assessing the London Mayoral strategies  
*Caron Bowen*

*Reflections on HIA in Urban Settings*  
An overview of the regulatory planning system in New South Wales: identifying points of intervention for health impact assessment and consideration of health impacts  
*Patrick Harris, Ben Harris-Roxas and Elizabeth Harris*

Building health impact assessment capacity as a lever for healthy public policy in urban planning  
*Jenny Hughes and Lynn Kemp*

Channelling Edwin Chadwick: beyond utopian thinking in urban planning policy and health  
*Stephen Corbett*

Health impact assessment and urbanisation. Lessons from the NSW HIA Project  
*Patrick Harris, Ben Harris-Roxas, Elizabeth Harris and Lynn Kemp*

## New Zealand's Whanau Ora Maori Health Impact Assessment Policy Tool

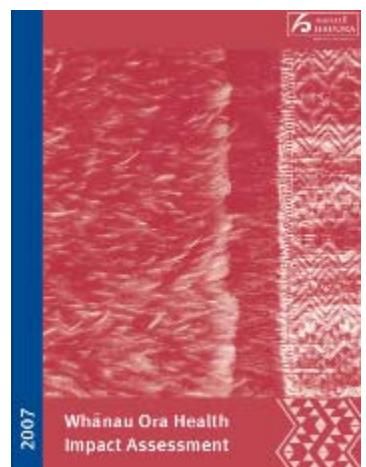
“The overall aim of He Korowai Oranga [Maori Health Strategy] is whanau ora: Maori families supported to achieve their maximum health and wellbeing.”

The New Zealand Ministry of Health has released a HIA policy tool with a focus on impacts on Maori. From the tool:

“The overall aim of He Korowai Oranga [Maori Health Strategy] is whanau ora: Maori families supported to achieve their maximum health and wellbeing.

..the Whānau Ora HIA looks at whanau ora as an aim and emphasises determinants of health that are known to have a particular impact on Maori.”

[http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/6022/\\$File/whanau-ora-hia-2007.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/6022/$File/whanau-ora-hia-2007.pdf)



Whanau Ora HIA



## New Centre for Health Impact Assessment Launched

Salim Vohra

The Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM), based in the UK, has set up a new Centre for Health Impact Assessment (CHIA) to take forward its work on environmental and occupational health and wellbeing.

The vision of CHIA is to be an international Centre of Excellence for:

1. HIA theory and practice
2. Evidence-based analysis of the impacts of policies and programmes on health



3. Understanding the wider determinants of health and wellbeing
4. Healthy urban planning and development
5. Tackling environmental and health inequalities

For more information on the work of the Centre and opportunities for collaborative working please contact:

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## Social Capital Indicators in the UK

Ben Cave

A report on social capital indicators in the UK was recently prepared for the Commission for Racial Equality by Ben Cave Associates. The report may be of interest to IA and HIA practitioners who include consideration of social capital in their work.

[www.cre.gov.uk/research/socialcapital.html](http://www.cre.gov.uk/research/socialcapital.html)

### Background

Social capital is a concept that is both contested and often indistinctly defined. It runs throughout discussions about social cohesion and the integration of deprived and minority groups who are socially excluded from relations with mainstream society.

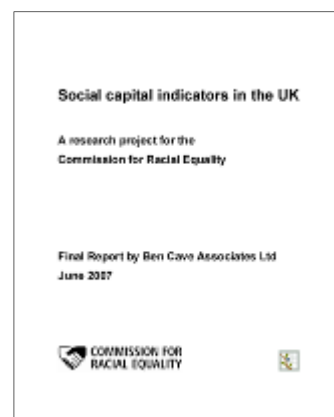
The report theorises that social capital is a network-based process that can generate both positive and

negative outcomes through social norms and trust, and that these are shaped at the societal, neighbourhood and individual level.

The research project had three main objectives:

- Understand the available data sources underpinning social capital indicators in the UK;
- Provide clear information about available data sources underpinning social capital indicators in the USA
- Understand the extent to which UK data can reliably map onto indicators in the USA

The ability to measure social capital will, in theory, allow policy-makers to gauge levels of social cohesion and integration in



### Social Capital Indicators in the UK

[www.cre.gov.uk/research/socialcapital.html](http://www.cre.gov.uk/research/socialcapital.html)

neighbourhoods and communities. This will in turn suggest ways in which policies might be adapted to nurture and strengthen integration and social cohesion.

“The ability to measure social capital will, in theory, allow policy-makers to gauge levels of social cohesion and integration in neighbourhoods and communities.”

## Social Capital Indicators in the UK Cont.

### What did the report recommend?

The main recommendation of this report is that the Commission for Racial Equality should work towards the development of indicators of bonding and bridging social capital at individual and community level.

Social capital analysis can assist us in understanding, and therefore supporting, those factors which can drive society down the path towards integration. However, in order to do so, it is essential that the UK develops methods of measurement to:

- assess the make-up of social capital networks; and
- go beyond national samples towards more embedded means of assessment which al-

low analysis to relate findings to specific social contexts.

The report also recommends building on the work done to date in the UK, by using the Office for National Statistics' Harmonised Question Set as a basis to which further indicators can be added.

The Commission for Racial Equality should work with other interested agencies, such as the Home Office and other government departments, and in collaboration with the UK Office for National Statistics, to develop such indicators and conduct the surveys that will carry them.

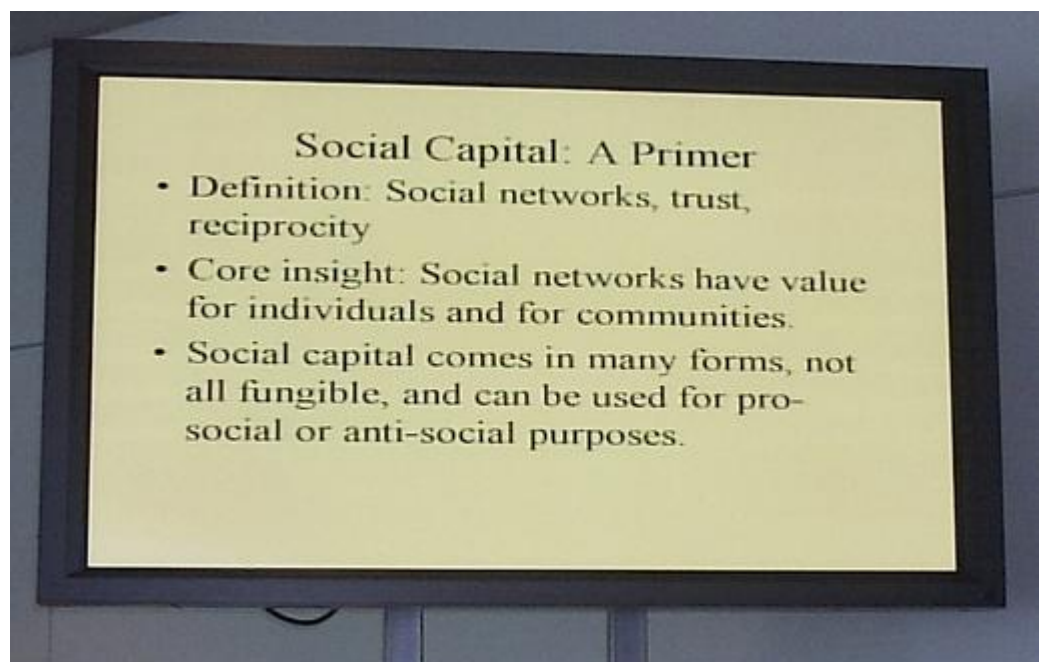
It should also seek to broaden its list of partners in this project further, by reaching out to UK academic communities which have an interest in this

field, such as the social change initiative carried out at Manchester University and Harvard University, or the Leverhulme Programme on Migration and Citizenship.

The Commission for Racial Equality has three main duties:

- to work towards the elimination of racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
- to encourage good relations between people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds
- to monitor the Race Relations Act

“Social capital analysis can assist us in understanding, and therefore supporting, those factors which can drive society down the path towards integration.”



Slide explaining social capital

## Wacky HIAs

### *HIAs of free newspapers and public spitting*

Salim Vohra

I'd love to someone to do a HIA on free newspapers.

In London we now have at least four newspapers everyday that are given away at tube stations, railway stations and major bus stops. We have the Metro, the London Paper, London Lite and the City AM.

From a sustainability perspective this is unsupportable as all that paper is junked mostly in regular bins and not recycled. Worse from a public health and environmental perspective there is a huge amount of litter and hazard created by people throwing these papers in streets and inside stations.

And yet, free newspapers through their provision of news, ideas, information, entertainment and gossip do generate some form of social capital, social inclusion and civic engagement.

The question therefore is how to keep the positives and reduce the negatives?

I'd also love someone to do a HIA on public spitting. Every day as I commute into central London I see spit and people spitting. On the streets, inside



Free newspapers in Utrecht

tube stations, on the platforms and on buses.

Okay, so public spitting in strict public health terms probably isn't so bad in a country like the UK, where infectious disease levels are low and yet there are social, civic and cultural effects from this. Spitting in public shows a disregard both for public spaces and for the people who use them. Or maybe I'm just getting old and taking things too seriously.

What do you think of my ideas? What novel and wacky HIAs would you like to carry out, or have carried out, if you had the chance?

What novel and wacky HIAs would you like to carry out if you had the chance?

Contribute to the discussion online at <http://tinyurl.com/2qj4dy>

## New Asia Pacific HIA Listserv

Ben Harris-Roxas

A meeting of HIA practitioners from across the Asia Pacific region was held during the last IAIA conference in Seoul. It was decided during the meeting that there was a need for an email discussion list to facilitate information exchange across the region.

I have established an Asia Pacific HIA Email List, hosted by the University of New South Wales. The list currently has 261 subscribers from 19 countries, making it the largest email list for HIA practitioners globally.

If you would like to join the list please send an email to majordomo@explode.unsw.edu.au with

"subscribe hia-seao" as the body of the email (further details below).

### Members

This list is intended for practitioners and those with an interest in health impact assessment from across the Asia Pacific region.

### Purpose

To provide an mechanisms for information exchange and networking across the Asia Pacific region.

### To Subscribe

Send an email to majordomo@explode.unsw.edu.au with "subscribe hia-seao" as the body of the email.

### To Unsubscribe

Send an email to major-domo@explode.unsw.edu.au with "unsubscribe hia-seao" as the body of the email.

### To Send an Email to the List

Send your email to hia-seao@explode.unsw.edu.au

### More Information

For more information on the Asia Pacific listserv, as well as other email lists, please go to [www.hiaconnect.edu.au/asia\\_pacific\\_HIA\\_listserv.htm](http://www.hiaconnect.edu.au/asia_pacific_HIA_listserv.htm)

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#### HIA Quarterly

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**Published  
something?  
Let us know!**

## Journal Watch: Reports, articles and websites

Ben Harris-Roxas

### Reports

Campbell S, Benita S, Coates E, Davies P, Penn G (2007) *Analysis for Policy: Evidence-based policy in practice*, Government Social Research Unit, HM Treasury: London. ISBN 9 7818 4532 3035  
[www.gsr.gov.uk/downloads/resources/pu256\\_160407.pdf](http://www.gsr.gov.uk/downloads/resources/pu256_160407.pdf)

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Cromar N (2007) *Using Health Risk Assessment in the Development of Guidelines for Recreational Coastal Waters*, Public Health Bulletin South Australia, 4(2): 4-6. Accessed 27 August 2007.  
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## Journal Watch Cont.

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Nooteboom S (2007) *Impact assessment procedures for sustainable development: A complexity theory perspective*, Environmental Impact Assessment Review, 27(7): 645-665. doi:10.1016/

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