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A Stakeholders' Perspective

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# Analysis of Three Australian State-Level Public Policies: A Stakeholders' Perspective

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*Abstract: This article investigates how different stakeholder groups perceived Tasmania Together, South Australia's Strategic Plan, and Western Australia's State Sustainability Strategy as overarching holistic sustainability public policies. In real politics, perception matters more than reality. Hence, understanding stakeholders' perspectives enabled us to evaluate the perceived benefit and political implications of these policies at the Australian subnational level. In order to execute the research objectives, we conducted semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with a wide range of stakeholders (primary, secondary, and tertiary) across three states: Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia. The study revealed that socioeconomic-political discourse of a jurisdiction and the type of public policy adopted by a government are an outcome of geo-economic endowments of the jurisdiction. Lastly, the study also demonstrated how a particular group of stakeholders (primary, secondary, and tertiary) can be more useful over other groups to understand and evaluate certain specific aspects of a public policy.*

*Keywords: Policy Evaluation, Holistic Sustainability (Economic, Social, and Environmental), Stakeholder Analysis, Semi-Structured Interview, Australian Subnational Public Policy Analysis*

## Introduction

A public policy is an ideological offspring of a political process or of the governing political party. In the early 2000s, when the Australian Labor Party came to power in most of the Australian states, they introduced a new vision of public governance. The key theme of this new political vision was to formulate a holistic sustainability value-based strategic plan or sustainability strategy for the public sector. In addition, the key intention of this policy vision was to integrate public agencies toward collective functional efficiency. This was contrary to the previous policy ideology that had been inspired by New Public Management (NPM) governance model. The NPM advocates for working toward each individual agency's internal goals, which is a counterproductive silo (Gallop 2007a). The Labor Party's new political vision—strategic planning for the public sector—was in fact a policy learned from the State of Oregon in the United States. In the early 1990s, the State of Oregon formulated Oregon Shines—an overarching strategic plan for the state. Over time the policy model organically incorporated the sustainable development concept, by addressing the key economic, social, and environmental challenges of the state. Oregon's policy makers felt that many of the state's issues were interconnected; hence, they require a holistic sustainability (economic, social, and environment) approach (Kittredge and Kissler 1998).

Oregon's strategic planning model was structured around the sustainable development-based benchmarking system and it was replicated in Australian sub-national jurisdictions (Kissler et al 1998). So, when the policy makers of the Australian Labor Party adopted the Oregon policy model, their newly drafted strategic plans were also structured around the holistic sustainability-based benchmarking system, by default. Other than the influence of Oregon Shines, Western Australia's former Labor Party Leader (Professor Geoff Gallop—the former premier) and a notable academic (Professor Peter Newman—also an adviser of Professor Gallop) both acted as additional catalysts in Western Australia to adopt the State

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Sustainability Strategy. Both were strong believers of sustainability values. The strategic plan-based policy experiment started in Queensland, with the adoption of the Smart State Plan in 1998 by the Beattie government. In 2001, the Brack-led Labor government in Victoria and the Bacon-led Labor government in Tasmania launched Growing Victoria Together and Tasmania Together in their respective states. In 2004, South Australia's Strategic Plan was adopted by the Rann-led Labor government. In Western Australia, Better Planning: Better Services and the State Sustainability Strategy were launched by the Gallop government in 2003 (Martin and Christof 2011). Finally, New South Wales's A New Direction for the Future was implemented in 2006 by the Iemma government (Gallop 2007b; Tagliaferri 2011).

Previous research has looked at these Australian sub-national strategic plan-based public policies from various dimensions other than the stakeholders' policy evaluation perspective. From these state-based policies, we have selected three such policies as a case study. Hence, our study investigated how different stakeholder groups perceived and viewed Tasmania Together (TT), South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP), and Western Australia's State Sustainability Strategy (WASSS) as examples of overarching holistic sustainability-based public policy. In addition, understanding stakeholders' perspectives enabled us to analyze the perceived benefit and political implication of these policies at the Australian state level.

## Literature Review

Over the years, the sustainable development concept has been disseminated and accepted in many jurisdictions, at the national, subnational, and local levels. In this section, we discuss literature that focuses on sustainable development-based policies at the subnational level. Marks, Hooghe, and Schakel (2008) defined the subnational level as jurisdictions between national and local levels of government. Since the late 1980s, several US state governments have launched state-based strategic planning with holistic sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) targets and benchmarks to guide public policies. In a three-tier democratic political structure, the subnational jurisdiction (usually called a state, province, or canton) has a range of policy implementation responsibilities. Since the late 1980s, many subnational jurisdictions have initiated sustainable development-based policies. However, the contents of a sustainable development-based policy are dependent on domestic conditions (Happaerts 2012).

Happaerts and Van Den Brande (2011) pointed out that major global summits on sustainable development, such as the Brundtland Commission (1987), and the Rio Earth Summit (1992) and Johannesburg (2002) conferences, immensely influenced the dissemination of sustainability values. However, the determination of political actors is also a key factor that triggered sustainable development policies in many subnational jurisdictions. Many subnational governments showed a desire to participate in international sustainable development governance. This also led to the formation of transnational networks (Happaerts and Van Den Brande 2011).

In the 1980s, the Australian public policy-making process was guided by the NPM philosophy. Over time, the narrow focus of an "agency-centric" effectiveness approach was replaced by "whole-of-government" strategic planning processes centered around sustainable development values or holistic sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) values (Andrews and Van de Walle 2013; Considine, O'Sullivan, and Nguyen 2014; Gallop 2007b; Johnston 2000). With this change in public governance, many Australian state governments embraced strategic planning, and incorporated sustainability and the triple bottom-line approach as core values within their policy-making process (Gallop 2007a, 2007b).

Between 1998 and 2006, many Australian states adopted strategic plans or strategy. Adams and Wiseman (2003) described this phenomenon as an alternative policy paradigm to withstand an increasing global uncertainty. Crowley and Coffey (2007a, 2007b) called these policy experiments a new macro-policy framework and classified these policy initiatives as an

apolitical bottom-up process. Nabben (2011) analyzed one of these policies as a community development tool, whereas Manwaring (2010) claimed that although policy champions were open to community consultation processes, their efforts failed to garner public enthusiasm.

Gallop (2007a, 2007b) saw state-level strategic planning as an institutional alternative to the NPM policy model. He felt that if strategic planning were combined with the concept of sustainability, it would provide a good framework for policy making. Althaus (2008) pointed out that all these states' plans were a tool for managing political risks as well as a communication mechanism to manage government credibility. Van Schoubroeck (2008) called the process of adoption of strategic planning at the state level a new orthodoxy in the post-NPM era. McMahon and Phillimore (2013) analyzed all the state strategic plans that were adopted by various Australian state governments between 2001 and 2011 and showed how each state's plan fulfilled its purposes and functions as a monitoring, managing, and marketing tool.

The aforementioned discussion showed literature analyzed the public sector-based strategic plan or strategy from various points of view (an overview is presented in Table 1). However, none of the literature evaluated these policies from stakeholders' perspectives. Stakeholders' perspective is an important policy evaluation tool. Therefore, we present stakeholders' perspectives on the three selected policies: TT, SASP, and WASSS.

Table 1: A Snapshot of Previous Research on State-Level Strategic Plans

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Previous Research's Perspective</i>
Adams and Wiseman (2003)	Focused on Growing Victoria Together and viewed state-level strategic planning as an alternative policy paradigm
Crowley and Coffey (2007a, 2007b)	Compared Growing Victoria Together and Tasmania Together and analyzed the features of these plans
Nabben (2011)	Analyzed Growing Victoria Together as a community development tool
Manwaring (2010)	Analyzed the 2006 public consultation process of the South Australian Strategic Plan
Gallop (2007a, 2007b)	Argued that the state strategic plan can be an alternative model to promote the sustainability agenda
Althaus (2008)	Analyzed state strategic plans from the perspective of political risk management
Van Schoubroeck (2008)	Analyzed political actors' perceptions of Western Australia's state strategic planning
McMahon and Phillimore (2013)	Focused on all state strategic plans and analyzed each plan's purpose and function as a monitoring, management, and marketing tool

Source: Goswami 2018

## Methodology

The concept of sustainable development is multidimensional, as it simultaneously tries to optimize three different agendas (environmental, social, and economic sustainability). To round out this complexity, sustainable development-based policy analysis also demands multi-stakeholder perspectives (Runhaar, Dieperink and Driessen 2006). In addition, public policy is the overall framework within which government's decisions and actions are undertaken to achieve society's goals, whereas stakeholder analysis is one of the policy evaluation tools to understand the effectiveness of a policy.

In order to understand the different perspectives on these overarching sustainability policies, we conducted open-ended, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with a wide range

of stakeholders. A stakeholder can be an entity, a group, an organization, or a community that is directly or indirectly influenced, affected by, or has an interest in, the event, decision, issue, or policy (ANGOC 2014; ODI 2009; Schmeer 1999; World Bank 2001). Stakeholders can be classified as primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary stakeholders are those who are directly influenced or affected by an event or a decision. Secondary stakeholders are those who indirectly influence or are affected by an event or a decision. Finally, tertiary stakeholders are those who can influence, or may have an interest in, the issue, event, or decision. They may be directly or indirectly involved in the process or the result of policy making.

An understanding of stakeholders' perspectives provided useful information on the impact and level of acceptance of these policies in the respective jurisdictions. During this research, a wide range of stakeholders were interviewed from all three jurisdictions.

These stakeholders include:

- senior ministerial staff and senior policy advisers of the relevant ministerial portfolio;
- related shadow cabinet ministers or their senior policy advisers;
- relevant senior executives at directorial or managerial levels from key public agencies;
- apex pressure groups from industry, social, and environmental organizations;
- each state's respective local government association; and
- relevant academics (from a range of disciplines, including politics and public policy; economics; and social, environmental, and urban planning).

These groups of stakeholders were closely involved with these policies in their respective states. These stakeholders were either involved in the policy formulation stage or were part of the implementation process or associated with the government as an adviser or closely monitored the policies or wrote extensively about these policies. Hence, these stakeholders can theoretically be categorized as primary, secondary, and tertiary stakeholders.

In this research, relevant public agency executives, parliamentarians, and their associates are categorized as primary stakeholders. The representatives of the apex pressure groups from industry and the social and environmental sectors as well as representatives from the respective state local government associations are categorized as secondary stakeholders. Relevant academics are categorized as tertiary stakeholders. In total, 123 face-to-face interviews were conducted from all three jurisdictions with an average interview duration of about thirty to thirty-five minutes. The breakdown of the interviewees in all three categories from the three states is presented in Table 2. Due to a lack of access, equal numbers of interviewees in each category could not be accomplished (cf. Table 2).

Table 2: The Breakdown of Interviewees

<i>States</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Tertiary/Academic</i>	<i>Total Interviewees</i>
<i>Tasmania</i>	Parliamentarians or their associates: 5  Public sector executives: 10	Representatives of the apex pressure groups: 3  Representatives of local government and local government associations: 0  Others: 2	Academics: 13	33
<i>South Australia</i>	Parliamentarians or their associates: 8  Public sector executives: 22	Representatives of the apex pressure groups: 9  Representatives of local government and local government associations: 6	Academics: 9	54
<i>Western Australia</i>	Parliamentarians or their associates: 3  Public sector executives: 14	Representatives of the apex pressure groups: 7  Representatives of local government and local government associations: 3	Academics: 9	36
<i>Total Interviewees</i>	62	30	31	123

Source: Goswami 2018

The interview participants were identified by studying the organizational structure of the selected organizations or because of their extensive contribution to the literature related to these three selected policies. Once the potential interviewees were shortlisted, they were then given a formal invitation to participate in the interview process. Upon acceptance of the formal invitation, each interviewee was provided with a research information sheet and a consent form prior to the appointed interview date.

In order to obtain detailed responses, the semi-structured interviews included questions on the following:

- TT, SASP, and WASSS
- Each state's different sustainability issues
- Sustainable development
- Each state's specific contemporary issues (as raised in the state-specific literature)

All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed with prior consent. In the analysis stage, the textual data was tabulated in matrix formats. In the first stage, the stakeholders' comments were classified into three broad segments: (1) policy-specific comments, (2) key issues of each state, and (3) relevance of sustainable development in general or with respect to each case state. In the second stage, more insightful knowledge was extracted from the tabulated data. The second matrix helped to identify common patterns in the stakeholders' comments in terms of positive comments on policies, impacts and benefits of these policies, political implications of these policies, operational issues and criticisms of these policies, and each state's economic outlook and view on sustainable development. Hence, matrixes-based data analysis helped us to evaluate each group of stakeholders' perspectives on these three selected policies.

## Briefly about the States

Tasmania is Australia's only island state as well as the smallest state in the Australian Commonwealth. The jurisdiction covers only 0.9 percent of the country's total land mass. The state has a below average revenue-raising capacity, with high service delivery costs because of its above average number of people in the low socioeconomic category (CGC 2010). At the same time the state is also considered as one of the pioneering jurisdictions of the world for green politics.

South Australia covers 12.7 percent of the country's total landmass, and it is one of Australia's less populous industrial states. The state is metropolitan centric, with a rich history of social innovation. The jurisdiction has a below average revenue-raising capacity. The state also suffers from below-average population growth and has an above-average number of older and low-income populations (CGC 2010, 2015).

Western Australia is the largest state in the Commonwealth. It occupies around 33 percent of Australia's landmass, with a diverse climate ranging from the tropical north to the temperate south. The state has a high revenue-raising capacity because of its huge mining production, property transfers, payroll taxes, motor vehicle registrations, and land values. During the mining *boom* (2004–2014), the state experienced high population growth. It also has an above average share of indigenous population and people living in remote areas.

## Research Findings

The overall stakeholders' interview process revealed the source of inspiration and political contexts of policy making (strategic plans and sustainability strategy) in these subnational jurisdictions. This section provided a range of analogical explanations and perceptions of stakeholders on TT, SASP, and WASSS. Our findings revealed how effective these policies were from the public policy point of view. In addition, the interview process also provided an insight on sustainable development in the context of these states and presented some of their contemporary sustainability issues.

### *TT and Tasmania*

The interview process revealed the source of inspiration for Tasmania Together, who introduced the idea of strategic planning to the Tasmanian Labor Party, and under what political context the Labor policy makers thought that Oregon's strategic planning could be replicated to revive Tasmania's socioeconomic situation. In this context, one of the public officials mentioned that the policy-learning process started in the mid-1990s, during former premier Michael Field's study tour:

Back in mid-1990s we were in the process of developing a policy for the Labor Party and we want[ed] to look [for ideas] and to develop a long-term strategic plan for Tasmania and the leader of the opposition then [he was Premier at one stage Michael Field] gets a study tour overseas. He decided that he would go to a couple of places. One of which was Oregon in the United States. (Tas-Public Agency Staff)

Michael Field and his team saw some similarities between Tasmania and Oregon in terms of industry composition, socioeconomic conditions, and environmental endowments. In those respects, they felt that the Oregon Shines policy model would suit Tasmania. They also expected that by adopting Oregon's policy model, Tasmania's economic fortune could be turned around.



## GOSWAMI AND GERRITSEN: ANALYSIS OF THREE AUSTRALIAN STATE-LEVEL PUBLIC POLICIES

The Labor Party embraced TT (an Australian version of Oregon Shines) as a *silver bullet* policy model or saw TT as a *blueprint* to revive Tasmania's socioeconomic situation. At the same time, some saw TT as a tool for formulating various other public programs with an in-built monitoring process, a catalyst for behavioral change, and an instrument for budgetary allocations for critical issues. One of the respondents explained how TT tried to introduce change:

It would not have occurred without Tasmania Together. [For example] the regional jobs program. That was one of the important benchmarking programs.

Benchmarks that helped to drive a policy agenda...I suspect there were number of government initiatives that wouldn't have gone through the budget process without Tasmania Together's benchmarks. (Tas-Public Agency Staff)

At the same time, the interview process also provided counternarratives. One such view was that the policy was a complete waste of time, as TT benchmarks had no policy or budgetary support. The interviewee mentioned that

That's stopped now. That was a creature of the Bacon Government. [Is there any outcome?] Nothing...Nothing...It was a complete waste of time. Because it set up all those targets and benchmarks but did not have any particular policies specifically designed to reach them. Some of those targets were quite unrealistic. For example, creating a population growth target which will be close to the national average...are really a set of aspirations. No policy was dedicated to that benchmark...they did not guide decision making anyway. Budgets...didn't influence; Policies...didn't influence...so it sat quite outside the policy development process...in [our department] we thought it was a complete waste of time. (Tas-Public Agency Staff 03)

Some bureaucrats also felt that overexcitement about TT was limited to a group of key ministers and to some civil servants who were directly involved in the process. Other than that, the policy did not make any significant impression on the general public's mind. This view is reflected in the following statement:

The public had no idea about this. Some of the Ministers were quite excited about this [Tasmania *Together*] and some of the public servants were told to be excited about it [Tasmania *Together*]. But public did not know about it [the policy]. The notion that projected...benchmarks and targets adopted by the communities...is bull dust. (Tas-Public Agency Staff 03)

The interview process also revealed TT's operational issues. Some of the public agencies saw TT's benchmarking reporting obligation as an overlapping task and as one of many responsibilities of the agencies over and above their other day-to-day statutory functions. So, many felt that these responsibilities were "a tyranny of the benchmarks on the agencies." An analytical response of an interviewee was as follows:

There were so many different benchmarks, benchmarks then become the responsibility for various and different parts of the government...lots of those benchmarks were taken up by the government...But in lots of other cases they were resisted or resented by the agencies. I used to call it, in the meeting, a tyranny of the benchmarks on the agencies. Really, they did not appreciate external pressure on their agencies to pursue goals on of the communities. When they were already doing other things...they didn't want competing tasks for a limited budget. (Tas-Academic 02)

Furthermore, TT's success was linked with improvement of benchmarks or indicators. Hence, TT was under the pressure of measuring all performance, and as a result, the system became too pedantic and dogmatic. It tried to measure "anything to everything" and even that which were non-measurable. In the end, it lost its purpose as it tried to measure the immeasurable. Similar idiosyncrasies were also highlighted in the case of Oregon Shines. One of the most commonly used benchmarking folklores about Oregon Shines was that "the Oregon Arts Commission claimed that it could help reduce teen-age pregnancy by funding museums to stay open between 4 pm and 7 pm, when teens are most sexually active" (Leichter and Tryens 2002, 18). In the case of TT, the agencies were asked to count and report on the number of multicultural events in order to measure the sense of multiculturalism or to improve feelings toward multiculturalism within the community. A public agency employee shared an example of an operational issue of the benchmarking criterion:

All policies have strengths and weaknesses...I do not think some of the indicators and measures were really trying to measure... for example...do you measure multiculturalism by simply counting the number of multi-cultural events...the answer is no. (Tas-Public Agency Staff 04)

The interview process also highlighted the real political agenda for adopting TT. One respondent argued that the then Labor government did not adopt the sustainable development-oriented TT because they believed in sustainable development. The interviewee explained that the framework was primarily used as a political tool to regain the lost electorate, rather than for truly embracing a sustainable development-based overarching policy framework for Tasmania. In this context, the interviewee quite aptly highlighted the essence of the political dimensions of sustainable development:

They did not believe in sustainable development. They introduced Tasmania Together because the Labor Party had to claw its way back from an absolute rock bottom vote share...[the Labor Party] thought how can we engage with communities to get back [in office]? It is going to take us a couple of terms and a couple of elections to get back into office so what can we do?...So as leader of the opposition Michael Field went to Oregon and learnt about Oregon Shines. He thought if we bring it back to Tasmania, we can use this as a way to keep us close to the Tasmanian communities...when we will be in government. Tasmania Together will stop us drifting away from the community. With Oregon Shines bringing it to Tasmania...came environmental economic and social emphasis. It is their own survival...but they picked up an instrument that they bought to Tasmania which touched all key problems. So, it touched on economic, environment and social...So they ended up advocating sustainable development...in sort of a de-facto way. Because, that was the approach of Oregon Shines. (Tas-Academic-02)

Regardless of its political motivation, TT was also praised for its innovative way of bringing together communities from different strata of the society onto one platform and integrating everyone's aspirations into one document:

The process of putting it together was a fantastic opportunity for the Tasmanian community...to bring people on the same page on what is important. So, on that level I think it was a critical thing for the state. Because it was championed by one political party, other political parties took issues with it...when they shouldn't have necessarily...So there were some political issues around it but the value of the process

and the value of the KPIs that were embedded in that were fantastic. (Tas-Sustainability Practitioner)

Despite such support, this overarching policy formally ended after ten years. A senior agency staff member provided a pragmatic insight into the reason why TT was abolished. He stated that, in general, the fate of any public policy diminishes after a certain time. According to the respondent, the life span of a public policy depends on how long its patron, or the government that formulated it, stays in power. As the new leader or government comes with a new mandate, the new leader's loyalty lies with his or her electorate's aspirations, irrespective of the merits of the existing policy. Hence, TT's slow death or decreasing importance was inevitable. The interviewee described the process of the change in his or her words:

Tasmania *Together* was brought in when there was a Premier who brought in whole heaps of other reforms...who had intention to increase consultation with Tasmanians...[then we had ] a change in leadership in the government... The vision [changed] and that's the way government operates...the vision it might or want to work on...or trying to develop together with the community changes as the leadership within the government changes...[old vision changed as leadership was replaced]. (Tas-Public Agency Staff 04)

On asking how the sustainable development concept can fit in with Tasmania's economic geography, most stakeholders held the view that the concept of sustainable development was the most suitable policy model for Tasmania, keeping in mind that it is an environmentally sensitive island with challenging economic and social circumstances. It was also felt that the concept had the potential to bridge the ideological gap between the island's developmental advocates and its conservationists.

However, the overall perception of TT is still positive even after so many years, notwithstanding that it had some operational shortcomings. The stakeholders still felt that it was a good planning tool. The strategic plan was appreciated by academics and widely recognized for its genuine commitment toward community planning, although the perception of many is that it was probably not institutionalized enough in the Tasmanian political system. A brief overview of the Tasmanian interview process is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: An Overview of Stakeholders' Perspectives on Tasmania Together (TT) and Other Sustainability Issues

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Primary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Secondary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Tertiary/Academic Stakeholders</i>
<i>On Tasmania Together (TT)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There was serious difference of opinion on TT between economic and noneconomic agencies on its influence on public policies and state budgets.</li> <li>▪ Agencies highlighted operational issues. For example, reporting on TT was an additional job over and above the agency's statutory functions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TT was able to keep the spotlight on economic, social, and environmental issues. However, afterward there was a slow decline in TT's importance.</li> <li>▪ TT was an inspirational attempt to govern humanity better and to produce better social, environmental, and economic outcomes in tandem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The hidden political motive in adopting TT was to regain the lost electorate rather than embrace a sustainable development-based overarching policy.</li> <li>▪ TT acted as an innovative tool to bring communities from different strata of the society onto one platform.</li> </ul>

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Primary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Secondary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Tertiary/Academic Stakeholders</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Due to a lack of political support in terms of budgetary allocations and the lack of champions both at the political and bureaucratic levels, TT “became an orphan.”</li> <li>▪ Life span of a public policy depends on how long its patron leader or government stays in power.</li> </ul>		
<i>On Tasmania’s Overall Sustainability Issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Underlying green values are present across Tasmania’s political parties irrespective of their political ideology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most importantly, wilderness is Tasmania’s key contemporary political issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainable development–based developmental model is required in Tasmania for the very nature of its geographical identity.</li> <li>▪ Tasmania suffers from a comparison problem. Even though it is a state, in reality, the state is like any big regional, nonmetropolitan area.</li> <li>▪ Tasmania’s political environment is also gripped by a radical green ideology.</li> </ul>
<i>On Sustainable Development</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The normative concept of sustainable development acts as a standard for policy making.</li> </ul>

Source: Goswami 2018

### ***SASP and South Australia***

The interview process in South Australia also highlighted the political context and other internal dynamics of policy making. In 2004, Premier Rann launched SASP. By creating this overarching public policy he tried to project himself as a political reformer who reinforced “public accountability and transparency” as the mantra of his government. However, a political analyst noted that SASP’s implementation was also akin to a double-edged sword: If SASP’s objectives were met, people would say that the government was supposed to achieve those as part of good governance. On the other hand, if the government could not meet the objectives, then it would be wide open to criticism by the opposition and the electorate for not meeting

their expectations. However, with the landslide victory of 2006, the pressure for accountability was reduced and complacency crept into the government. Hence, the post-2006 election period was the prelude to SASP's gradual decline in political relevance. The analyst elaborated on this fact:

When the Labor government was elected in 2002 and, Mike Rann became Premier, he was very keen to establish a number of directions for the government and one of those was around engagement with the community...he was open to follow some of the initiatives that were seen elsewhere...So in 2004, what Mike Rann did was...divide some of the resources within the Premier and Cabinet to identify the targets across areas and use them as political benchmarks in number of intriguing ways. He was very public about it...and I was thinking at that time...it was a very unusual step for a government to do...because you are in a sense hiding nothing...if you achieve the targets you [promised]...then people will say you are supposed to do these things anyway...and if you fall short of those targets then you are giving the opposition a stick to beat you up. (SA Academic)

In addition, this interviewee mentioned that after 2006's massive electoral victory, the Rann government was emboldened by its huge mandate. It started focusing on new priorities and became more of a risk taker. However, SASP had some impact on the budget in the initial years, and its elements did benefit the Rann government, even though it didn't resonate among the general public. The interviewee explained how the strategic plan lost momentum even though it did initially influence budgetary allocation as promised:

I think it is true to say that the plan ran out of momentum after 2006 and that sort of thing emboldened them...he became in risk-taking mode...new things to do...impact on budget was quite a bit...had some impact...some elements of SASP did benefit them. (SA senior ex-public service official)

Nevertheless, the stakeholders agreed that SASP was a comprehensive document that addressed various economic, environmental, and social issues and included input from a wide range of stakeholders during its initial drafting and subsequent revised version phases. The interview process also revealed that the Department of Premier and Cabinet saw some virtues in SASP as a plan, as it intended to bring accountability and long-term thinking to both the government and its agencies. The interviewee explained SASP's comprehensiveness and how it was viewed by relevant public agencies:

I think there was curiosity to start with, that was my sense...I know that within the Department of Premier and Cabinet they saw it as a really useful way [for accountability]...having a target you are accountable for...it forced the government to think in bit of a longer-term way. (SA Academic)

Even though SASP was praised for its innovative and comprehensive nature, the political-economic reality was different. The interviewee mentioned that there was an economic sweet spot during the pre-Global Financial Crisis (GFC) period to formulate such types of overarching policy. First, the state's fiscal situation was in a better position because of the previous Liberal government's prudent economic decisions. Second, South Australia obtained increased Goods and Service Tax (GST) revenue from the Commonwealth government due to the mining boom in Western Australia. To Premier Rann's credit, he was able to use these golden opportunities to his favor. This was his great political capability and success. The analyst highlighted the political-economic situation during the Rann government's tenure:

The other side of the coin is that the Liberal party were really in a weak position in 2006...Mike Rann and Treasurer Kevin Foley were able to take advantage of the hard work and the politically deadly work that the Liberals put in place...that was privatization of electricity and that managed to pay down the state debt...[as a result ] the Labor Party able to get the great benefit of this upgrade...the State's AAA rating...Labor was opposed to privatization of power [but] they were the main beneficiary of that at least in the early periods and being able to prove it to the credit rating agencies...the credit rating agencies said Labor were the prudent...solid manager of the public finance...well [both] yes and no...the main reason you are in that position was the privatization of the earlier period. The point is we did have that upgrade in 2004 or early 2005...it was all part of a picture that made Mike Rann win that big victory in 2006...at the same time he knew how to govern that state...the government was confident...the State Strategic Plan and its various boards painted that picture...so triple AAA rating played a big part...in addition there was other factors...that was the beginning of the big boom. South Australian treasury was able to get lots of extra money from the Commonwealth because of the GST revenue...it was not the hard time to govern the economy...from 2004 through to the global financial crisis in 2008...that four-year period was a sweet spot [to govern]. (SA Academic)

The interview process also revealed that, as the economic circumstances changed in the post-GFC period, the government's focus shifted from long-term to short-term issues. Thereafter, as the anti-incumbency factor crept in, the government became more interested in how to win the next election, and thereby, the SASP lost its importance. Nevertheless, some political analysts still think that the government should be commended for having the courage to create such a policy model:

Then from 2008, with the onset of GFC...with the decline of the economy...with the growing level of the unemployment in South Australia...with a decline of the GST revenue...the government was less interested in looking at the horizon, where we want to be in ten years [rather] was much more concerned with the hand-to-mouth [situation]...more concentrated on short-term decision making...with the election in 2010 coming, that was a much more pressing need for Rann at that time. Also, in the run up to that election there were a number of other domestic matters...the government was much more focused on the immediate issues...and winning this battle or that battle...short-term victories rather than looking at a distance. I don't recall in 2010...the State Strategic Plan was a big part of the campaign. It was more around what the priorities of the Liberals were...particularly what would be meant for the public-sector employment. (SA Academic)

Furthermore, contrary to the government's projections of SASP as a plan based on community aspirations, the reality was that SASP had little or no resonance among ordinary voters, as pointed out by some of the stakeholders we interviewed. Rather, it was a document by, and for, the power elites. It was prepared in order to give the impression that the government had a plan, and direction. In this respect, it was a policy document with the main purpose of political reputation management. It was seen by political analysts as Premier Rann's and Treasurer Kevin Foley's document. As they lost their political credibility, SASP also lost its political patronage and importance. At certain levels, government departments gave the impression of embracing it, even though they were only paying lip service to it. One of the political analysts interviewed highlighted the gap between perception and reality:

GOSWAMI AND GERRITSEN: ANALYSIS OF THREE AUSTRALIAN STATE-LEVEL PUBLIC POLICIES

People didn't understand what it is...it is more of a thing of the government to say we have direction...of the bureaucracy...for all the heads of the departments this is a framework. You can call them the elites that govern...For the power elite it was important...not in the eyes of the voters...in the eyes of power elites, bureaucrats, ministers, leading business associations of the state, media, top journalists...in that respect, it played an important role in saying...government knows, what it is doing...it has direction...it has benchmarks...more of a reputation management.

The general public was not excited about it but at the policy and program level it was significant but my disappointment was it blocked out the community engagement which it was intended to achieve...It was closely tied with the personalities of the Premier and Kevin Foley...so when public got tired of those leaders...strategic plan lost its impetus...I think government department knew that they had to embrace it, seen to be embracing it, many government departments paid lip service to the State Strategic Plan. (SA Academic 03)

However, having said this, the fact is that SASP did fulfil its purpose in the initial four to five years prior to the GFC. It did influence budgets and the government's funding for various projects, as was intended in Premier Rann's Economic Summit in 2004. In this respect, it had a period of high political relevance and a period of low political relevance, the two being clearly separated by the occurrence of the GFC:

The state benefited for a period of four and five years...if you are talking to a Minister, or you have a proposal for the government, you have to clearly put in the context of State Strategic Plan and its indicators...say we have a particular proposal on a particular issue and want more funding for that issue...you have talk to the Minister and the department...and say here is our proposal and here is how it will impact certain indicators of the Strategic Plan. (SA social sector interest group 01)

Table 4: Highlights of Stakeholders' Perspectives on the South Australia Strategic Plan (SASP) and Other Sustainability Issues

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Primary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Secondary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Tertiary/Academic Stakeholders</i>
<i>South Australia Strategic Plan (SASP)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During the Rann government's tenure, various policies were formulated that encapsulated principles of sustainable development, and SASP was one of them.</li> <li>▪ Targets were more clearly defined with SASP, whereas economic priorities and seven strategic priorities were very broad and nothing specific was proposed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SASP was formulated to reinforce a sense of transparency in the government, but the government did not show the same sense of transparency when they decided to replace SASP with Jay Weatherill's Seven Strategic Priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SASP tried to reinforce public accountability.</li> <li>▪ SASP was one of the most comprehensive documents that addressed various economic, social, and environmental issues under one overarching policy model.</li> <li>▪ Political complacency and the GFC are the key reasons for its reduced importance.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The government projected SASP as a community aspiration. In reality, SASP had no or little resonance among ordinary voters. Rather, it was a document of the power elites.</li> <li>▪ In the initial four to five years, SASP did fulfil its purpose, and the plan did influence budgets and the government's programs.</li> </ul>
<i>South Australia's Overall Sustainability Issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In political circles, there was immense concern on the after effect of the–Holden factory closure and its impact on the economy. change in the state's economy.</li> <li>▪ Defense, retail, tourism, and experience industries are the future of the state.</li> </ul>		

Source: Goswami 2018

**WASSS and Western Australia**

WASSS was quite inspirational, even though its implementation process faced setbacks. The policy was made against the backdrop of a popular public discontent against the Regional Forests Agreement in 1998. During the 2001 Western Australian State Election, the Labor Party, under the leadership of Professor Gallop, made two key electoral promises: (1) to address the old-growth forests agenda and (2) to formulate a holistic sustainability strategy for the state that would address its overall sustainability issues. The stakeholders' interview process provided a comprehensive overview on the lifecycle of this policy. According to the stakeholders' feedback, Premier Gallop himself was keen to incorporate sustainability values into the state development model. Hence, he proposed a policy model that was intended to strike a balance between the economic, social, and environmental agendas of the state. In this context, one of the interviewees mentioned that

I read it as very much Geoff Gallop's personal agenda...in his previous publications prior to his premiership, he spelled out a vision for the state...and sustainability was very much a centre piece. So, he wanted to see a kind of development that would not just see a thriving economy...but at the same time to have a state that remains environmentally intact and also thrives socially...So, the framework that he proposed was one that was meant to strike a balance between economic development and social



and environmental interests...it is also a fact that for the very first time really, someone tried to pause and actually look at how development perhaps could be done better or differently...so, when it comes to motivation, I think he was personally very much interested in seeing a different form of development in the state. (WA Academic 01)

As mentioned earlier in this article, during the early 2000s, all Labor-led state governments embraced sustainability-based strategic planning. The Western Australian government also prepared a strategic plan for the state entitled "Better Planning, Better Services." According to Schoubroeck (2010), Western Australia's strategic plan was also influenced by the Oregon model. However, it was a half-hearted attempt with no plan or targets. At the same time, the government came up with the SSS, which was an elaborate and detailed document. On Western Australia's strategic plan and SSS one interviewee stated that:

As I had mentioned, NSW had lots more targets, Queensland had about four, Tasmania was bit different, and South Australia was a bit different. But WA had no plan. We had one plan after everyone had one. So, we better have something. We came up with "Better planning, Better services" in about 2004, but it was 10 pages long, with no targets, no plans, nothing. It was just motherhood statements. But at the same time, the State Sustainability Strategy was coming up. That was about a hundred page...long with many targets and strategies...[but] it was never clear whether it was actually a statement of the government's intent or a policy that people have to follow. (WA Academic 02)

The apparent narrative of the literature is, in response to electoral promises, WASSS was conceptualized and became an accepted policy model within the Labor Party. The reality is that there were considerable differences within the government, as well as with various public agencies, on the SSS's merits. At the same time, there was a fear of accountability and a fear about the future reputation of the government. The fear was, suppose the government could not fulfil the promise of the proposed policy model? A political analyst described the inter-dynamics of policy making:

I remember when the plan was released. There was a big conference [the 3rd Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development] in Fremantle. There was lots of opposition within the government to the State Sustainability Strategy...within the Premier's Office...lots of people did not like it. Peter Newman [informed Geoff Gallop] that we had a big international conference in Fremantle...and that would be a great time to release the strategy and Geoff agreed...they released the strategy. (WA Academic 02)

After the release...there was a conflict within the government over whether or not they had even agreed with this strategy. Because they were all worried...like all state plans governments on one hand like them from a marketing point of view, on the other hand they do not like them because they are worried...they have got targets...like election promises. Oh dear, if we release...then people might hold us for not doing these. So, there was a problem there. (WA Academic 02)

There was also tension between the minister of environment and the minister of commerce and industry. Similarly, there was resistance from bureaucrats of certain departments as the sustainability agenda contradicted their departmental objectives. The interviewees also highlighted the differences in agenda within the Gallop government:

[There was resistance] from the bureaucrats, yes but also from some of the Ministers...of course, sustainability tries...or argues that inherently or necessarily there is no conflict between environmental, social, and economic goals. But for the Minister of Commerce or for the Industry and Development [portfolio] on the one hand...[Ministry of Environment]...there might well be...if not conflict...certainly tension between the two. (WA Academic 02)

I do not think bureaucrats ever supported it...but a large couple of organizations like Treasury...they were not supportive...they did not believe in it...[their] view of the world is that the market will sort it out and this view is also shared by a number of other departments...for example, the Department of Mines and Energy, which is now the Department of Mining and Petroleum, they did not believe in it, they saw it as another hurdle in their way of developing mines and petroleum, they saw it as a barrier. (WA Member of Parliament 01)

It is also evident from the stakeholder interview process that Gallop's personal belief in sustainable development was one of the factors that led to the drafting of this policy, in addition to gain future electoral advantage. Sharing Gallop's vision, Professor Peter Newman acted as a strong internal champion and architect of the policy. In this regard, one of the close associates provided insight on Gallop's leadership:

Geoff is personally more of a thinker...he has written lots of articles. In his books and speeches...he wrote on the need to move away from the purely economic perspective to economic, social, and environmental integration and bringing people along all those sorts of things...the triple-bottom line way type. The philosophy of the government was from where he came from...so just fitted in what he wanted to do. Environment was a big issue in the 2001 state election and as a result...logging of native forests like in Tasmania...we had a big battle over here in Western Australia...so, in doing that he introduced lots of environmental and sustainability type policies...so that is where the motivation came from. Labor showing it is different from Conservatives. Peter Newman acted as a champion...it is always good to have an internal champion. (WA Academic 02)

However, selling the final version of the policy within the government remained the biggest obstacle. During the interview process, a closely involved political analyst mentioned that, at the political as well as agency levels, the argument was that the intent may have been good, but it was not practical enough to operationalize across government, as it was too ambitious. On the contrary, Professor Newman took a moral and visionary stand, and he argued that the time for sustainability had come. Hence, it was the collective responsibility of all agencies to embrace sustainability values in their activities. However, in the business of day-to-day practical electoral politics, an idealistic view proved difficult to sell. An analyst described this viewpoint as follows:

But it is also true to say that not all of government was sold on the idea of a sustainability strategy. And also not all of the government was sold on the particular manner on what has to be done...Because we all can have a strategy which is 20 pages long with 5 goals...and 12 outcomes...or we can have a strategy that is 150 pages long with 73 different targets and things that's lots bigger...and there are good and bad things in strategic planning...about what works and what does not works...many people were [critical] about it and they thought it was far too ambitious...and to

implement it throughout the whole of the government and it would be lost. It would be better to have few small targeted things. (WA Academic 02)

[On the other of side of] Peter's argument is that by covering the whole of government, it makes sustainability everybody's business...It also meant that everybody had goals to strive for and it showed that it was an all-encompassing feature of government...so, there are pros and cons on both sides...But as a practical thing...I think probably being too big was a problem for getting outcome instantly...but over time, you can imagine different agencies would have incorporated some of those goals into their own planning. (WA Academic 02)

Although the strategy was never implemented due to its lack of political support, the policy did create normative values that percolated within certain departments and manifested in their official policy arguments as well as documents. For example, the Department of Planning and Transport still uses WASSS, and the term "sustainable development" is used as a vision and moral compass.

Although the grand sustainability strategy did not transform into practice, the sustainability values of the strategy trickled down to some of Western Australia's progressive local councils. Certain progressive local councils embraced sustainability practices, and the state government also acted as a catalyst to advance a waste management and renewable energy agenda:

In terms of waste management and renewable energy, there have been some moves by the state government towards waste to energy that might help to reduce waste to landfill and will reduce methane emissions...one of the greenhouse gases...local government will provide feedstock for those plants and the energy generated from those plants will go to the grid...but all these plants are in the planning stage...Lots of local councils are advancing sustainability in their own ways...for example: application of geo thermal for swimming pools...providing free electricity for electric cars based on solar panels on the roofs of the council building...all these are happening because of political support at the council level...again one big council formally introduced sustainability reporting and they are using Global Reporting Initiatives [GRI] and they have integrated GRI in their annual report. (WA LGA)

One of the challenges of embedding sustainability values in Western Australian politics and into public policy was that the state's political-economic system is an outcome of its geological endowment. Western Australia's political boundary contains abundant extractable economic resources, including hydrocarbons, and these resources are the source of the state's economic independence. As a result, within the state's political culture, there are inherent conflicts between the agendas of economic development and environmental conservation. An interviewee quite aptly explained Western Australia's political-economic dynamics:

Western Australia is full of mining...oil and gas...Do you want oil and gas sustainably? Or do you say from a bigger perspective that oil and gas are also fossil fuels...so, we should not do them at all. Hence, we all try to find a way for transition out of oil and gas completely...especially Western Australia's state government has always been a strong resource development state. Was never going to happen. (WA Academic 02)

So, in trying to incorporate sustainability into government decision making, understandably, there will be resistance...or conflict...or...negotiation...and battles...but I guess what it did was...to introduce sustainability thinking...about what

do we mean by sustainability for our future rather than just development as usual.  
(WA Academic 02)

The challenge for Western Australia is to choose between urgent and important issues. A vast majority of the state’s electorate understand the importance of renewable energy. Nevertheless, when economic or national security issues are supposedly endangered, public opinion immediately swings away from the sustainability agenda. One of Western Australia’s sustainability practitioners explained the conflict between urgent and important issues:

the first issue is to get some consensus on the notion of sustainability...sustainability is downplayed...urgent is always displacing something which is important...even if you take away the hysteria of security, then comes the budget emergency [balancing the budget]...[hype] of urgent agenda hijacking important agenda. (WA Sustainability Practitioner)

Table 5: An Overview of Stakeholders’ Perspectives on Western Australia’s State Sustainability Strategy (WASSS) and Other Sustainability Issues

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Primary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Secondary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Tertiary/Academic Stakeholders</i>
Western Australia’s State Sustainability Strategy (WASSS)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gallop himself was keen to incorporate holistic sustainability values in the state development model.</li> <li>▪ There was considerable difference in points of view at the agency as well as the government level on the merit of the sustainability strategy.</li> <li>▪ There was a fear of accountability and fear of future reputation of the government if it could not fulfil the promise of the proposed policy model. At the same time, there was also tension between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.</li> <li>▪ The strategy had operational issues across the government as it was too ambitious.</li> </ul>

GOSWAMI AND GERRITSEN: ANALYSIS OF THREE AUSTRALIAN STATE-LEVEL PUBLIC POLICIES

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Primary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Secondary Stakeholders</i>	<i>Tertiary/Academic Stakeholders</i>
Western Australia's Overall Sustainability Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The challenge of embedding sustainability values into Western Australian politics and public policy is that the state is full of extractable economic resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Western Australia's mining boom had mixed impact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the present scenario, the perception is sustainability cost the economy and jobs.</li> </ul>
On Sustainable Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ "Lots of local councils are advancing sustainability in their own ways." For example, by installing geo-thermal heating systems for swimming pools, by providing free electricity for electric cars by installing solar panels on the roofs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainability is an important policy agenda but not yet an urgent agenda, and that is one of the biggest challenges to advance this policy agenda</li> <li>▪ One of the core values of sustainable development is the <i>polluter should pay</i> idea, and it should be incorporated into the economic model. However, no jurisdictions will implement it unilaterally because it will hurt the economy.</li> </ul>

Source: Goswami 2018

## Discussion and Conclusion

The overall analysis of the interview transcripts provided some key insights. Our analysis revealed that primary stakeholders provided information on the operational efficiency of these policies, whereas secondary stakeholders and tertiary/academic stakeholders provided an analytical and evaluative perspective on these selected policies. Based on this insight, we can theorize which type of stakeholder can provide what types of information to conduct a policy evaluation study. Therefore, we propose that to investigate the operational efficiency of a policy it is necessary to interview primary stakeholders, whereas secondary stakeholders and tertiary/academic stakeholders are suitable to understand analytical perspective as well as to explore general perception on the policy.

To analyze stakeholders' viewpoints, comments were categorized into six groups: a) positive comments on policies; b) impacts and benefits of these policies; c) political implications of these policies; d) operational issues and criticisms of these policies; e) each state's economic outlook; and f) view on sustainable development (as illustrated in Appendix Table 6). Across the board, stakeholders felt that these policies were unconventional. They

acknowledged that the TT, SASP, and WASSS policy models had a comprehensive approach, and those policies aptly integrated economic, social, and environmental issues under one overarching policy model. Therefore, these policy-making processes can act as a role model for community engagement, reinstating public accountability and to promote holistic sustainability values in a jurisdiction.

The political implications of these policies showed that drafting a public policy based on sustainability values has the ability to reconnect with a lost electoral base and to reposition a party's or government's image. The holistic sustainability concept encompasses three dimensions—economic, environment, and social—therefore, a policy based on holistic sustainability value has the ability to address agendas for all sections of the society. It was also widely acknowledged by stakeholders that these policies were able to infuse a sense of accountability within public institutions. However, the very idea of measuring all performances or trying to measure non-measurable performance indicators for accountability can demotivate public agency staff. Thus, one of the stakeholders in this context termed the situation as a “tyranny of benchmarking.”

Our findings showed that a public policy with good intentions can also fail if all public agencies do not believe in the core values of that policy. In the cases of TT and WASSS, the data showed that the public agencies responsible for financial management didn't embrace those policies wholeheartedly. At the same time, the interview process also revealed that the high political relevance of these policies among the power elites does not necessarily mean that the policies are popular among the general public. Furthermore, our analysis showed that while accountable policies are an ideal solution for many fundamental issues, in day-to-day and practical politics, such types of policies may not be politically tenable. Hence, a policy may need to stay within the political accountability threshold to have an extended life span.

In addition, the interviews revealed that, in all three cases, the concept of sustainable development acted as a standard for policy making. An important insight gained from the stakeholder interview process was that, from a societal point of view, the sustainability agenda is still an important agenda, though not yet transformed into an urgent policy agenda. This difference in priorities acted as a major hurdle for the advancement of the sustainable development agenda. Hence, until or unless the sustainability agenda transforms from important to urgent, it will not become a regular vote-earning political agenda.

The analysis of stakeholders' interview data also revealed that the socioeconomic-political discourses of a jurisdiction are an outcome of its geo-economic endowments. Since both Tasmania and Western Australia have contrasting geophysical endowments, both have contrasting economic and political discourses that are inherently built upon two opposing worldviews. Tasmania's political discourse revolves around green ideology, whereas Western Australia's discourse is focused on resource extraction. Even a right of center political party in Tasmania has more green values than its Western Australian counterpart. There are strong views, debates, and arguments among stakeholders on what should be the core values for economic development in both Tasmania and Western Australia or what sort of economic model each state should adopt. It is ironic that even the more economically prosperous Western Australia could not escape this debate.

In line with the qualitative research approach of this study, stakeholder analysis provided an enriched qualitative perspective on these three selected policies. Our study also highlighted the inner dynamics of policy making and provided a new perspective on how these three overarching policies were created and implemented and how these policies were viewed by stakeholders, which was not covered in previous research literature. In addition, these policies acted as a tool to hold public governance accountable. Finally, regardless of the operational difficulties of TT, SASP, and WASSS, these three policies had a positive impact in trying to bring communities together, and these policy models enabled incorporation of an economic,

social, and environmental sustainability-based benchmarking system to improve accountability and governance standard.

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## Appendix

Table 6: An Overview of Stakeholders' Analysis

Category	Categorization of Stakeholders' Key Comments on Tasmania Together, South Australia's Strategic Plan, and Western Australia's State Sustainability Strategy	Type of Stakeholder Group		
		Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Positive Comments	<p>Tasmania Together (TT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TT was able to keep the spotlight on economic, social, and environmental issues.</li> <li>TT was an inspirational attempt to govern humanity better.</li> </ul> <p>South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SASP was a comprehensive set of documents that addressed various economic, environmental, and social issues of the State.</li> </ul> <p>Western Australia's State Sustainability Strategy (WASSS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding WASSS, Premier Gallop was himself keen to implement sustainability values in the state development model.</li> </ul>		X*	X
Impact and Benefits	<p>TT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TT was an innovative tool to bring communities together.</li> </ul> <p>SASP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SASP tried to reinstitute a sense of public accountability and transparency.</li> </ul> <p>WASSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In regard to WASSS comment was "[there was] some influence or tentacles of the State Sustainability Strategy was in some departments. So, the whole push towards density in urban development in Western Australia...you can argue that to some extent...may have come out of that State Sustainability Strategy." So even though it was not implemented, the strategy to some extent was able to introduce the <i>sustainability</i> narrative in the policy domain.</li> </ul>		X	X
Political Implications	<p>TT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The real political intention was to regain the electorate's trust and reputation management rather than to whole heartedly embrace a sustainable development-based policy model TT "became an orphan" due to lack of political and budgetary support once there was a change in leadership within the government.</li> </ul> <p>SASP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[SASP] was closely tied with the personalities of the Premier [Rann] and [Treasurer] Kevin Foley...so when public got tired of those leaders...strategic plan lost its impetus.</li> </ul> <p>WASSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In regard to WASSS, there was a fear of accountability and fear of future reputation of the government if they could not fulfil the promise of the proposed policy model.</li> </ul>	X		X

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SUSTAINABILITY POLICY AND PRACTICE

Category	Categorization of Stakeholders' Key Comments on Tasmania Together, South Australia's Strategic Plan, and Western Australia's State Sustainability Strategy	Type of Stakeholder Group		
		Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Operational Issues and Contradictory views	<p>TT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TT was seen as an extra job over and above the agency's statutory functions.</li> <li>There was difference of opinion on TT between economic and noneconomic agencies on its influence on public policy and state budgets.</li> </ul> <p>SASP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some tertiary stakeholders may have bit of a contrarian view on SASP and mentioned that it had no resonance among common people; however, senior SA agency staff praised it.</li> </ul> <p>WASSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WASSS was seen by some departments as too ambitious and too big to implement.</li> </ul>	X**		
Outlook: Past, Present and Future	<p>Tasmania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilderness is the key contemporary political issue in Tasmania.</li> <li>Green values are present across Tasmania's political parties, irrespective of their political ideology.</li> <li>Tasmania's political environment is also gripped by radical green ideology.</li> <li>Niche and value-added industries are the future of Tasmania.</li> <li>Tasmania suffers from the <i>comparison problem</i>.</li> </ul> <p>South Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After the Holden Factory closure, SA's future depends on defense industry and experience industry.</li> </ul> <p>Western Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The state's extractable economic resources dependency is a challenge of embedding sustainability values into Western Australian politics and public policy.</li> </ul>	X	X	X
On Sustainable Development	<p>General comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable development conceptual framework acts as a standard for policy making.</li> </ul> <p>View from a Tasmanian stakeholder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable development and Tasmania are inseparable because of the state's geographical identity.</li> </ul> <p>View from a South Australian stakeholder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In SA, climate change agenda was repositioned as economic and job agendas.</li> </ul> <p>View from a Western Australian stakeholder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainability is an important policy agenda but not yet an urgent issue and that is one of the biggest hurdles to advance the agenda politically.</li> <li>The core value of sustainable development is the <i>polluter should pay</i>, and the idea should be incorporated into the economic model. However, no jurisdiction will be able to implement it unilaterally because it will hurt the economy.</li> </ul>	X		X

\*Mostly by secondary stakeholder. \*\*Other stakeholders who all closely associated with the policy

Source: Goswami 2018

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