

Report from ANZAPS

Ali Memon

1. What is ANZAPS and what does it do?

The acronym ANZAPS stands for the **Australia and New Zealand Association of Planning Schools**. ANZAPS is a network of planning educators covering New Zealand and Australia. It serves as a forum for the exchange of information between academics and planning programs in the two countries. Another way to describe ANZAPS is as an *informal* community of planning scholars down-under. Comparable organisations exist in other global regions such as Europe, Africa, North America and Asia but these tend to operate in a more structured fashion.

Information about ANZAPS is available on its website: www.anzaps.org. The two main activities of ANZAPS are as follows:

- a. A free web-based mailing list replan@maillists.uwa.edu.au. This mailing list is used extensively by academics and PhD research students within the region to circulate information on a range of topics related to teaching, forthcoming conferences of interest to planners and academic career opportunities.
- b. The annual ANZAPS conference. Planning schools in Australia and New Zealand take turns to organise the annual conference. Registration for the conference is free to encourage staff and senior post-graduate students to participate and present papers relating to teaching and research in the discipline of planning.

Apart from being a forum for informal networking, the conference also provides an opportunity to discuss issues of interest related to the well-being of the planning discipline on both sides of the Tasman ditch (see brief report on the 2009 conference below).

The ANZAPS conference in 2010 will be hosted by Lincoln University and will be held back-to-back with the joint Planning Institute of Australia/New Zealand Planning Institute conference in April. Visit the conference website at <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/news--events/conferences/anzaps20101/>

ANZAPS is one of the members of the GPEAN (Global Planning Education Association Network). Very briefly, GPEAN is the global counterpart of regional associations such as ANZAPS. A key activity of GPEAN is to convene the five yearly World Planning Schools Congress. The next GPEAN conference will be held at the University of Western Australia in Perth in 2012. The website for GPEAN is www.gpean.org. Currently, Ali Memon (Lincoln University) and Jo Rossier (University of the Sunshine Coast) act as the ANZAPS representatives on the GPEAN Co-ordinating Committee and the Conference Steering Committee.

GPEAN also edits the annual *Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning* series published by Rutledge and undertook a global study of planning education for the UN Habitat *Global Report* published in 2009 (Stiftel et al 2009 in research publications list in this LUPR issue)

2. The 2009 ANZAPS conference

The 2009 conference was jointly organised by the planning schools in Queensland and held at the QUT in Brisbane in August. About twenty papers, both refereed and non-referred, were presented during the first one and a half days by academics and postgraduate students on a broad range of themes. The abstracts and some of the papers can be downloaded from the ANZAPS website.

The last half day of the conference was allocated to discussing two general issues:

- a. ranking of planning journals for the Australian equivalent of the five yearly exercise undertaken in New Zealand by the Tertiary Education Commission to rank all academics on strength of their publication record. This recently completed exercise has major implications for funding of academic disciplines in Australian universities and it is pleasing to note that ANZAPS was asked to undertake this exercise on behalf of the Australian planning schools. Hopefully, this is a precursor to what may transpire in New Zealand in the near future.
- b. PIA/NZPI/ANZAPS Education Policy/Accreditation. Both PIA and NZPI are in the process of adopting new education policies and accreditation procedures. One of the issues this raises is divergence between the two institutes in this arena and implications for reciprocal membership. It was felt that ANZAPS should play a stronger role in this area.