



Plenary 1 - Population and Policy in Australia's Future **Napier 102 Wednesday 6th December 9-10.30 am**

Population Policy from the Perspective of Endogeneity

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Economists, planners, environmentalists conventionally treat future demography as 'exogenous' to their models, that is, outside of or independent of their models. Work in these subject matter areas takes future demography as a 'front-end' to their own models. Future demography is estimated statistically from past demography and is then taken as a given to be fed into the economic, planning or environment model. Effectively, this approach assumes that future demography will not be affected by the state of the future economy, the nature of social institutions, the future environment or by infrastructure planning initiatives. Demographers conventionally contribute to this exogenous approach by making their own projections in complete isolation from likely economic, social or environmental futures. However, when examined at the micro or individual level, it is very conventional to assume that demographic behaviour is very much influenced by the state of the economy, social organisation or the state of the environment. Rather than future demography being pre-determined inevitably and inexorably by past trends in demography as is conventionally assumed, estimates of future demography should be made as an endogenous component of models that incorporate future economic, social and environmental projections. The aim should be to build new models that recognise this reality. In the absence of such models, we should at least ask: what demographic futures are likely as an endogenous component of desired or likely longer-term economic, social and environmental goals? The paper addresses these potential futures.