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Community Sustainability in Rural Australia:

A Question of Capital?

Edited by Chris Cocklin and Margaret Alston

What factors underpin the sustainability of our rural communities and how sustainable are they? This important new book presents six detailed case studies of community sustainability in rural Australia – Narrogin (WA), the Gilbert Valley (SA), 'Tarra' (Victoria), Tumbarumba and Guyra (NSW) and Monto (Qld).

The authors draw on the concept of 'capitals' – natural, human, social, institutional and produced capital – with the objective of evaluating sustainability in the context of rural communities. While the authors find the concept of capitals useful, the book also offers considered reflection on this approach to assessing sustainability.

Individually and collectively, the six stories offer valuable insight into the difficult circumstances that small rural communities face, but they also point to the various factors that have enabled them to survive in the face of their many challenges. Each of the communities has displayed remarkable resilience, anchored in what is broadly described as 'social capital'.



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