Dr Michael Mitchell

Thesis topic

Can the process of triple bottom line reporting lead to enhanced sustainability? A case study with Murrumbidgee Irrigation Pty Ltd

Summary

Michael’s PhD research investigated triple bottom line (TBL) reporting, where organisations use annual reporting to account for their impacts on the economy, society and environment. Focused around a regular and publicly available output, TBL reporting processes have the potential to enable an iterative and experiential cycle of interactive learning with organisational stakeholders. With this in mind, Michael developed and published a set of criteria that organisations can use to evaluate their TBL reporting processes for improved sustainability outcomes. He also collaborated with Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) to assess the extent that improvements in its TBL reporting process could lead to enhanced sustainability outcomes. He used organisational learning theory to examine the depth of learning that evolved through MI’s TBL reporting process, concluding that even though potential existed for a deeper questioning of organisational assumptions, the sustainability issues being faced by MI required action beyond the scope of one organisation.