The Senate Standing Committee-Climate Change & environmental impacts on Australia's coast

Attn. Kate Sullivan.

24 5 08.

Dear Committee Members,

Climate change,the most crucial issue ever to have faced humanity demands paradigm shifts in thinking & behaviour if we are going to hand over the world we borrow from the world's children in a reasonable state.

Coal royalties will be required to put in place a staged withdrawl of the built environment from low-lying coastal areas.

It would be preferable to retrieve useful building materials from coastal developments so that such material can be recycled as building materials for buildings that will be rebuilt in and above the projected sea level rises.
It may be useful to leave in place buildings and building shells it is not easy to deconstruct. Such canal developments could be considered as genuine "bottom of the harbour schemes" and will become excellent marine habitats as artificial inshore reefs.

I believe it would be preferable to relocate coastal communities particularly along rail transport corridors.

WE can anticipate the migration to Australia of an ever growing number of environmental refugees,courtesy of climate change.
To best cope with ever increasing population and a harsher future climate,far greater urban consolidation will be vital. The urban consolidation needs to be along effective public transport links part of which should be large,consolidated shopping and business hubs.

As well as a far greater use of rail and light rail and bus, there needs to be far greater provision for walking,bicycle riding and with our ever growing ageing population, far easier access for adult tricycles.

In all coastal areas that will no longer be habitable it will be vital to revegetate coastal areas with local native vegetation. The vegetation mix required will be somewhat inexact due to the changes in temperature and rainfall.
Not only will coastal areas have to be revegetated to provide natural erosion control but flood plains will have to be revegetated so that they can once again become natural flood plains. Riverine corridors will also have to be widened to help cope with extreme flood events.

Fossil fuels will continue to become ever more expensive,so to minimise the transport and refrigeration costs of foods it will be essential to retain the maximum arable land available adjacent or close to population centres for food production.
It is a totally bizarre suggestion for example to construct the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam in a rural area which now provides 12 % of milk and other farm produce.
Certainly the proposed dam might well suit the cement industry,an industry that is a massive producer of greenhouse gases.
However,courtesy of a changing climate, we do not know how much water will fall in the proposed dam's catchment area.
Taxpayers' money would be far better invested in the manufacture and installation of a ranwater tank on every house and building;in effect these are mini-dams that catch the rainwater exactly where it falls.The water would be used on-site for secondary uses thus avoiding two huge water costs,namely the costs of treating and transporting the water.
The additional bonus is the thousands of Australian jobs that would be created in the manufacture and installation of the water tanks.

The other very simple water saving initiative that must occur sooner rather than later and that is far more effective as our populations become more consolidated is to start to give consideration to the amount of water and other inputs embodied in the products we choose to manufacture and use.
Aluminium,glass,most plastics and steel are extremely durable materials that are best suited to products that are durable,reusable or refillable,reliable or where possible,repairable.
But amazingly, still today we continue to use such durable materials for ever increasing quantities of single-use disposables,products best suited to a throw-away world.

The penny is starting to drop that material resources are finite-oil and water to name but two.So how long can we continue to promote infinite growth in material goods?
To help adjust to and address climate change will require a far greater uptake of many of the material goods listed in "The Green Circle for Earth Employment"(Attachment 1)now somewhat out of date, many of these suggestions would still be useful today.

However when we consider the changes we will have to make,the rising cost of fuel and our ever ageing population I believe we require growth in the following areas:-eduction,health,welfare,sustainable housing and transport,recreation and the Arts.

Education is fundamental for the entire community to help make the transition to a sustainable lifestyle as painless and inclusive as possible.
To date I do not think enough thought has been given to the sort of recreational activities that will be both suitable to an ageing population,where fuel and travel costs continue to rise. I think more consideration needs to be given to finding a range of recreational activities that are both healthy,have a comparatively low cost per hour and enable the maximum participation of the maximum numbers of community members in the war effort to help restore our coastal areas.

These formerly populated coastal strips will become one of the urban populations' major recreational,tourism and educational areas.In time these areas will become coastal gems that will be readily accessible by walking,bicycle,tricycle,skateboard or public transport. They will be accessed by bushwalkers,campers,birdwatchers and other nature lovers and bush carers and bush regenerators. Marine and river and estuary areas will be enjoyed by all the boating fraternity and by the most popular recreational activity in the world,across all age groups and income levels-the angling fraternity.

Revegetation of our coastal areas will require countless millions of plants on an on-going basis, since different plant successions will be required to keep pace with our ever changing climate.
I believe the provision of suitable plants that will have to be pricked out and potted up ready for community plantings would be an ideal on-going activity particularly for groups of older ladies in all communities. Many such ladies enjoy gardening but in the latter stage of their lives,may no longer have their own garden,may not be up to the more robust tasks of weeding and site preparation and may be somewhat divorced from the wider community whilst living in a retirement village. Women tend to have good fine motor skills and I'm certain many could be happily involved in local community nurseries performing this vital step in the process of bush regeneration as an actively participating community member.

Fresh,local produce will become increasingly important and I think it's important to retain every small scrap of arable land in our denser cities for local food production. Some areas of school grounds not required for sporting activities could be converted into school fruit and vegetable gardens by the students in school term time and nurtured by the local community in the school vacations.

We are still basically a western society living in the Asian part of the world and as we become more influenced by the part of the world in which we live I believe we can learn much about small, local food production from our Asian neighbours.

"Populate or perish" used to be the watchword.But today the truth is "populate and perish."
I think it's about time that population was factored into the climate change equation.
I am happy to appear at a local, public hearing.
Yours faithfully Harry Johnson

HARRY JOHNSON.

Attachment 1

Green Circle for Earth Employment

4 days

Every 1,000,000 extra people join the Earth, so we have no shortage of people who want to work, whatever their ability level.

Machines that run on finite resources such as oil, use resources only when they are operating.

People, unlike machines, use resources whether they are working or not. People run on renewable resources like bread, rice or weetbix and are our greatest underutilised renewable resource.

Until we decide to stabilise population growth, now running at 2% per year, it seems rather short sighted to continue to try to minimise the labour component in our activities.

Sustainable growth in education, health, welfare, transportation systems, recreation and the arts would be of great benefit.

The International Environment Update August '92 prepared for the Swedish Government, suggests a cost of $U.S.1.87 trillion to repair the world's environmental damage, with this figure growing by $U.S.50 billion a year.

To provide the world with water, housing, food and health care would cost $215 billion a year; that is 15% of the world's military budget.

Also, some of the following Australian-made products and life style options won't cost the Earth . For, as the Chinese proverb states, "Unless we change the direction we are headed, we may end up where we are going".

Australia wide we want:-

- Solar heaters, gas stoves, rainwater tanks, dual flush toilets, composting toilets, smart electric meters, water meters, butane/propane fridges, microwave ovens, front load washing machines, 'grey' water reuse and plumbing, energy efficient light bulbs, skylights, shower flow restrictors, tap aerators, non radioactive smoke/heat detectors, cloth nappies, refillable glass bottles, 'volume based' collection of rubbish, 'enviro' or 'bio' paper plant pots, paper roofing insulation, cardboard coffins, recycled 'white' paper, unbleached paper, recycled timber furniture, photo-voltaic electricity, cottage crafts, local markets, home based employment, reusable cardboard boxes, paper mulch mats, B.Y.O. drinking cups, 'Living libraries' roof whirly bird ventilators, ethical investments.
- Designated bicycle lanes, bike tracks linked to public transport, adult tricycles, upgrade public transport systems, 'green' train carriage for bikes, trikes, wheel chairs and strollers; local mini bus service, kneeling bus, high occupancy transit lanes, bus priority traffic lights, traffic calming, school walkers, expand rail and sea freight. bike lockers at train stations, bus interchanges & schools 'walking bus' to & from local schools.
- Hardwood plantations, softwood plantations, replant creek, riverbank and wildlife corridors, microwave, straighten and compress logs to a square form, export acacia seeds, acacia seed flour, cull feral animals and weeds, expand local and organic farming, methane digesters, large scale composting, worm farming, reed bed sewage treatment, land based sewage treatment, effluent fertiliser, oil recycling, expansion of walking tracks, camping areas, National Parks. radially sawn timber Value added farm produce for exports - dried fruits, olives etc.
- , school/community recycling stations, wave, wind, water energy, solar thermal energy.
- Total school, community and media Environmental Education, Environmental educators, auditors, designers, scientists, lawyers, planners, transport engineers, environmentalists, ecologists.

Harry Johnson

Harry Johnson (volunteer)