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Dear Professor,

Thank you for the opportunity to write a letter giving my opinion and ideas on sustainability.

I am currently studying Certificate IV in Land Management at Challenger Tafe in Murdoch, and am required as an assignment to write and submit this letter to you.

I think that sustainability is a worthwhile but also imperative pursuit that we need to give more of our attention to, and become more active in its implementation than we have in the past. To continue our current and generally unsustainable use of Western Australia's resources won't be possible forever, and it's now that the research, policies and technology need to be implemented to ensure the availability of necessities for the current and future population of Western Australia. The implementation of sustainable use of resources is one that will take time; some solutions to the problem can be put into place in the short term, however many of the solutions to the problem will take a long time. One of the biggest challenges will be to convince the public, who in general are more concerned and interested in solutions to problems and policies that can be implemented in the short term, to invest in the well-being of Western Australia's future.

In the past proposals of strategies concerning the well being of the environment - while in print sound optimistic and sincere - have often only been implemented with a half-hearted attitude by the government. Part of this may be because of the lack of awareness within the general public of Western Australia's sustainability problems.

For the strategy to work the government needs to make people more aware, through various media, of the environmental and sustainability problems of our state, by providing the bare facts. Then it is the obligation of the government (to begin with) to make sure of the full implementation and integrity of the strategy when it is brought into practice.

One of the most obvious opportunities for sustainability is providing power by use of wind farms. As with Albany, the wind farms could generate a large percentage of the metro area with power. However, probably the biggest problem in this state is the salinisation and erosion of soils in the Wheatbelt, leaving it infertile for crop growth. The solution to this is both one that will be over the long term and take a considerable amount of money. The plants and trees most tolerant to salty conditions need to be researched and chosen for widespread planting in the Wheatbelt to begin the reversal of the salinity. Other sustainability opportunities that could be pursued are a more available alternative to petrol, for example solar power, hydrogen, electricity and gas. Replanting of trees in Jogged forests, and lowering carbon dioxide emissions also need to be given attention.

To prevent the increase of unemployment levels, the government will need to design its strategies while keeping in mind the need to create new jobs in areas of sustainability, as job losses within previous and unsustainable resource suppliers must to be expected.

The western world has an overproducing and over consuming lifestyle that needs to be addressed. It needs to stop the use of unnecessary products that are using up our resources and very often are not biodegradable and cause even more damage to the environment. As an example- the unnecessary use of disposable plastics such as shopping bags which can be replaced by bags made from materials that last for years. This could be made an obligation simply by not supplying plastic bags in shopping centres. This leads into law reform, which is a big part of the implementation of sustainability strategies. There needs to be laws that will ensure people do the right things in the assistance of sustainability.

The best thing that Western Australia can do to contribute to the national and global progress of sustainability is to establish itself as a leader through development and implementation of new and successful ideas for other states and countries to follow.

All said, it is Conservatism that is the biggest wall standing in the way of the implementation of sustainability.

Yours Faithfully

Brett Ranford